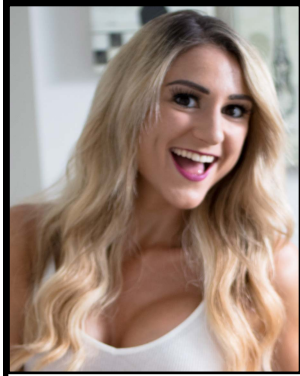


MEDICAL FILES



Healthy Living Healthy Eating

from Marissa Liana

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Should you eat gluten?

There is a lot of buzz around gluten intolerance and celiac disease these days, so I figured it would be informative and fun to dive a little deeper into the real issues surrounding gluten.

As well, as a nutritional practitioner, it is important to always be aware and able to recognize a client's symptoms and understand how they may relate to different food allergies or sensitivities. This blog will cover the definition of gluten, the difference between gluten sensitivity and a gluten allergy, explanations why these problems may be on the rise, and healthy alternatives to this grain!

What is Gluten?

Gluten is the lectin protein found in grains such as wheat, barley, spelt and rye, which is incredibly hard for the body to digest.

The digestibility of gluten may be a bigger problem for some individuals than others, and blood type plays a large role in determining our body's ability to digest gluten.

In sensitive individuals, especially blood type O individuals, gluten has an agglutinating effect, literally meaning "glue-like" effect on the cells of the body, specifically the villi in the small intestine. This causes substantial pain, inflammation and irritation of the lining of the digestive tract.

Many individuals will respond differently to gluten, and this often determines the severity of the sensitivity or intolerance.

The symptoms/effects of eating gluten can include gas, bloating, headaches, constipation, diarrhea, fatigue, irritability, and increased cravings for more sugar and carbs.

What is the difference between a person with gluten sensitivity compared to a gluten intolerance (or Celiac Disease)

What is gluten intolerance (allergy)?

Gluten intolerance signifies an actual immune-mediated response, triggered when dietary gluten enters the body of susceptible individuals. A food allergy is an immediate reaction to food that is triggered by IgA antibodies. In the case of gluten as the allergen, this is termed celiac disease.

The auto-immune reaction triggers the process of agglutination, where antibodies in the blood view gluten as a foreign invader. This essentially glues the gluten together to be removed by the body but causes inflammation and destruction of local cells, especially the villi in the small intestine which are responsible for nutrient absorption.

Gluten also stimulates ZONULIN, a protein that increases gut permeability which opens up the tight junctions that normally protect the small intestine of bacteria and undigested food. This also causes a heightened immune response to the gluten.

If left untreated, celiac disease significantly increases the risk for certain cancers, osteoporosis, malnutrition and neurological conditions such as depression

What is gluten sensitivity?

A gluten sensitive person will still have an increased immune response to gluten but is not as elevated as it would be in a person with an auto-immune mediated reaction to gluten. In other words, food sensitivities are delayed reactions to specific foods that are triggered by IgG antibodies (compared to a true allergy which is mediated by IgA antibodies). Ensuring you receive the right test is crucial to determining whether you have a true allergy to gluten, or if your immune system is overly sensitive to gluten.

Why have gluten sensitivities and intolerances increased so much over the last several years?

There are a few different reasons why gluten sensitivities and intolerances are on the rise.

GMOs: Firstly, since the 1950's, all wheat, even organic wheat (According to the book Wheat-Belly), has been genetically modified. Instead of containing its 14 original chromosomes, it now has a whopping 42! This makes the GMO grain hard for the body to digest.

In other words, the gluten content of the stains of genetically modified wheat contains five times more gluten than their non-hybridized ancestors.

UNSPROUTED GRAINS: Secondly, un-sprouted grains such as wheat have anti-nutrients present in them, inhibiting their digestibility, and also the body's ability to absorb calcium, magnesium, iron, and zinc.

WESTERNIZED DIETS: Thirdly, the frequency of celiac disease is increasing in many developing countries as their diets are becoming more westernized and consuming more GMO wheat products

What are the Alternatives to Gluten Containing Foods and are they any Healthier?

The food industry has made millions of dollars capitalizing on the advertisement of "Gluten-free foods", but this does not necessarily mean they are healthy. Many of these alternatives contain ingredients such as potato starch, cornstarch and rice starch, which have high glycemic indexes and can even lead to weight gain.

Better alternatives would, therefore, be, quinoa, an amazing grain and complete source of protein, as well as coconut flour, high in fiber and incredibly low on the glycemic index scale.

So what's the take-home message?

You must now be asking yourself, so what do I do?! Do I eat gluten, or do not eat gluten?

If it were up to me, the answer would always be no! Simply because nearly ALL wheat crops are GMO and extremely hard for the body to digest.

However, if you ARE going to eat gluten, safety tips include:

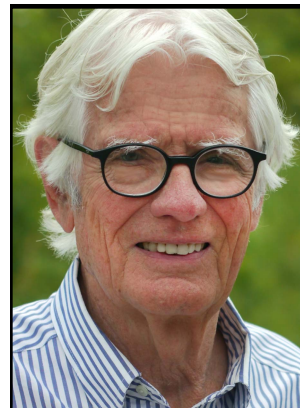
- Sprout your grains or buy sprouted grains to make them more easily digestible
- Limit their overall consumption

Take an L-Glutamine and zinc supplement to rebuild the cells on the small intestine so they replicate and decrease the likelihood of excessive permeability due to digestive damage

Taking a probiotic can also be extremely beneficial as they help to control inflammation in the body, which is definitely happening in someone with a gluten allergy or sensitivity. A probiotic can also strengthen the lining and function of the colon which helps protect the mucosal barrier from the invasion of harmful invaders/organisms from getting into the bloodstream.

Until next time, Stay well. Marissa Liana

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The Doctor Game W. Gifford-Jones M.D. Marijuana for Gifford-Jones?

Why would I, at my age, want to start smoking pot, when I'd much prefer a glass of chardonnay? It's because I've suffered annoying neck pain for years due to an old injury which happened in Japan. Besides, my experience with the plant may help others who suffer from chronic pain day after day, and find no relief from other painkillers.

My interest in marijuana dates back many years. At that time several readers asked for my support to obtain medical marijuana. Some patients had found that marijuana decreased nausea while undergoing chemotherapy. Others with spinal cord injuries, accompanied by painful muscle spasm, also reported relief. But many could not find a doctor to prescribe marijuana. So I argued in my column, without success, that the government should make medical marijuana available for patients.

Now, Dr. Margaret Gedde, a Stanford University trained pathologist, relates how she became disenchanted with conventional medicine. She reports that when medical marijuana was legalized in Colorado, a sizeable influx of patients moved to the state, even though many had never previously used it! She added that data suggests the increased use of medical marijuana resulted in fewer people dying from opioid overdoses.

What shocked Gedde the most was her discovery that this natural remedy helped so many patients. She knew that patients who continue on painkillers too long suffer increasing risk of complications. But, according to Dr. Gedde, patients can stay on marijuana for months or years without adverse effects.

Why is this the case? In 1992 the Journal of Science reported that in all tissues of the body there are receptors for marijuana. This means that, unlike prescription drugs, our bodies are prepared to make good use of this ancient plant.

There are two kinds of marijuana. The THC type creates a "high". The other, CBD, is associated with pain control. Gedde, and other experts, refer to the "sweet spot" when discussing the effects of marijuana. Namely, that in some cases, a combination of the two provides the best relief of pain.

So it becomes a matter of finding the right dose and combination of strains of marijuana that are most effective for the individual. In other words, the shoe does not fit all feet. Or, as it's been aptly said, "different strokes for different folks."

My research shows that the medical use of marijuana has been underestimated, underused and grossly misunderstood by the majority of North Americans, including doctors who remain resistant to natural remedies. And one has to ask why it has been so vilified.

Some reports say that smoking pot was looked on as an act of disobedience during the Vietnam War. That it was heavily targeted by the U.S. government to get rid of hippies who were looking for a "high". Some even suggest that it provided a reason to put questionable elements of society in jail.

So, am I going to be smoking pot while writing this column? Hell will freeze over before that happens. Inhaling smoke in any form is an unhealthy habit. In fact, those still smoking tobacco should see a psychiatrist. But I could easily accept marijuana in my smoothies, if it relieves pain.

Luckily, there are more ways to get the benefit of medical marijuana than smoking it. For instance, marijuana oil can be rubbed on the skin. And there's an oral oil preparation as well.

I have recently completed my personal medical documentation for the application of legal, medical marijuana. As you might suspect, I can hardly wait to see if it has any effect on my neck pain.

But I admit to being highly skeptical that it will ease pressure on a nerve. After all, I've tried acupuncture, manipulation by chiropractors. I've had repeated red and infra-red therapy and massage without relief. In fact, I've joked that the only cure for me would be the guillotine!

But I keep an open mind for new ideas. One thing is certain. Regardless of what happens, you will be the first to know the result.

Next week, what shocked me at my first visit to a medic to obtain medical marijuana. It proves once again that commonsense is an uncommon commodity, even in 2018.

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5 Antioxidant-Rich Superfruits That Absolutely Need to Be in Your Life

While we might not be able to reverse the harmful and degenerative effects of free radicals on our bodies from outside factors like air pollution and pesticides, there are still things we can do to reduce the amount of damage they do. Keeping your consumption of things like alcohol and fried foods to a minimum is one way of giving your body a better chance, and another way is to moderately enrich your diet with foods that aid in your body's quest to counteract them. Small changes make big differences, so if you're new to this, stock up on the following berries that boast free-radical-suppressant benefits and give your body an antioxidant boost.

Goji Berries

There's more to these shriveled berries than their sweetness. Goji berries have been used as part of traditional Chinese medicine since around 200 BC and have as much of a place in modern life because they contain compounds such as lutein and zeaxanthin, which aid in slowing degenerative eye diseases, and ethanol Lycium barbarum, which is said to have anticancer properties.

Wild Blueberries

As wild blueberries are most likely to be found in Maine, Atlantic Canada, and Quebec, you're best looking out for the frozen kind. Although the cultivated blueberries you get at the supermarket contain the same antioxidants as wild blueberries, the latter have a higher amount per serving. Whether you opt for wild or cultivated, you'll be benefiting from high levels of the flavonoids quercetin and anthocyanidin, which aid the body in fighting cancers and cardiovascular diseases.

Elderberries

A serving (around 70 grams) of these underrated berries contains almost 45 percent of your daily value of vitamin C. They contain high amounts of anthocyanins, which create the deep red, blue, and purple pigment found in berries. They're a type of flavonoid that helps to boost the function of the immune system and whose anti-inflammatory properties can reduce the symptoms and duration of colds and flu.

Cranberries

These Autumnal faves aren't just flavorful, they're also high in flavonol and proanthocyanidin, which suppress the growth of certain cancer cells and aid in heart health. Although you can enjoy them as juice, cranberries have their highest concentration of antioxidants in their skins, so eating the berries will give you a higher hit of antioxidants and the added benefit of their fiber content.

Blackberries

Blackberries have high levels of several antioxidant-rich phenolic compounds including ellagic acid, gallic acid, and anthocyanins. As a result, blackberries boast a reductive effect on the growth of certain cancers like breast, colon and prostate cancer.