

Health and Wellness:

Autoimmune Disease: Stop Your Body From Attacking Itself

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With over 70 autoimmune system diseases affecting many different organs, ranging from type 1 diabetes, lupus, multiple sclerosis, osteoporosis, psoriasis, rheumatoid arthritis and many more, this topic begs more attention. Suspected causes of autoimmune system diseases are genetics, hormones and the environment with over 50 million Americans having at least one of these diseases – a six-fold increase in the past few decades.

All of these diseases have a common immune response which is caused by systemic inflammation that leads one's body to attack itself. Ordinarily, our immune system is very complex and keeps us safe by identifying foreign substances from entering or coming in contact with our body. When the immune system deems anything is dangerous, it produces antibodies to ward off harmful intruders. An autoimmune disease is born when the body works hard to defend itself against something potentially dangerous, such as an allergen, a toxin, an infection, or even a food, and it fails to differentiate between the intruder and parts of one's own body. If the body mistakes certain types of tissues for harmful substances, it turns these antibodies against itself, wreaking havoc.

What can you do to prevent one or more of these diseases?

- **Eat Well.** Eat a healthy well-balanced diet (e.g., eliminate or at least reduce a poor diet);
- **Take Nutrients.** Take immune-balancing nutrients and supplements, including vitamin D-3, essential fats and probiotics;
- **Avoid Harm.** Avoid anything that is potentially harmful (you already know most of these);
- **Reduce Stress.** Although easier said than done, make life changes to minimize stress;
- **Relax.** Practice daily deep relaxation to reverse stress response; and
- **Follow Below Tips.** Consider incorporating the below tips.

What can you do if you suspect one or more of these diseases?

- **Elimination Diet.** Under a doctor's supervision, participate in a comprehensive elimination diet to remove the top twelve inflammatory foods making sure to remove all grains and legumes. The reason behind this approach is lectins in grains and legumes have been implicated in autoimmune diseases.

What can you do to reverse one or more of these diseases – if you really want to get better?

- **Right Doctor.** Find a “functional medicine physician” who address autoimmunity in your area to get to the root cause of your illness(es) and to help you reverse your disease(s).
- **Poop Test.** Some doctors believe that over 80% of our immune system is in our gut. A comprehensive stool test which evaluates level of good bacteria and checks for infections and leaky gut is critical.
- **Blood Work.** The right doctor will know to check blood levels for various antibodies and search for various antibodies and hidden and/or underlying infections.
- **Hidden Toxins.** If symptoms are still present, look for hidden toxins such as mercury, mycotoxins and other heavy metals.

An autoimmune disease is scary, overwhelming and confusing. Because conventional medicine only offers treatment of the symptoms, it is important to search for a real solution to the disease to get to the root of the problem. Just remember that when you treat your body in this way, you will be helping yourself to avoid many other health problems as well. You will feel much better!

As always, you are encouraged to read and learn more about this topic for you and your family. Here are some of the links used to produce this article:

- (1) <http://www.mindbodygreen.com/0-8843/10-signs-you-have-an-autoimmune-disease-how-to-reverse-it.html>
- (2) <http://www.webmd.com/women/features/5-top-female-health-concern>
- (3) <http://donnajacksonnakazawa.com/autoimmune-epidemic/>
- (4) http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dr-mark-hyman/autoimmune-disease-how-to_b_283707.html

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