

HEALTHY LIVING - ARTHRITIS: NUTRITIONAL CAUSES, NUTRITIONAL CURES

By Veronica Collings, DC

Chatting with one of my dance buddies at a recent workshop, she asked for my recommendations for a holistic approach to arthritis. We only had a few minutes left on our break. I knew I could not do justice to that question in such short time, so, I chose it for this article knowing that many will benefit from the answer.

Initially, I need to clarify some terms. I'm going to address two kinds of joint degeneration: the inflammatory type and the type where calcium deposits form where they don't belong. In the latter, there is no inflammation (heat) generated in the destruction. The suffix "itis" technically means "inflammation of" - e.g. col-itis, inflammation of the colon, tendon-itis, inflammation of tendons, etc. Arthro means joint. So it is really a misnomer to call the calcium deposit type of joint destruction osteoarthritis, but you argue with the academics, I have bigger fish to fry.

I'll deal with the inflammatory type first. Swelling, heat and pain that have good and bad days characterize this type. The reason is that, some days, you are breathing, contacting, drinking, or eating the substance that your body is reacting to and sometimes you are not.

What does "reacting to" mean? Our immune system is responsible for protecting us from outside invaders. Its primary job is to identify self from non-self. Sometimes, our immune system mis-identifies normal substances as dangerous and launches an attack on them. This is known as an allergic reaction. This attack comprises lots of cellular and chemical activity that result in inflammation and fluids (immune cells and their metabolites), causing what is supposed to be a temporary reaction, like when you sprain your ankle and it swells. When the ankle tissue is healed, the inflammation goes away. If the irritant is always present, the inflammation doesn't go away. So identifying this reactive substance is the primary goal of this holistic approach.

The top five food groups that I find most commonly reactive follow. First are wheat products. Any kind of wheat, whole wheat, bleached wheat, whatever kind of



wheat. Most baked products are produced with this grain. I've had the comment from patients when they test positive for this: "but I don't eat wheat; I eat white bread only." The average person doesn't realize it's the same grain just with less or more processing. The people most susceptible to this reaction are of Eastern European descent, but not exclusively.

Next are gluten products. Gluten is the protein fraction of primarily five grains. Wheat is included in the gluten family of grains, but, if you are reactive to wheat it does not mean you necessarily are reactive to gluten, too. If you are, the primary grains that contain gluten are wheat, rye, barley, other varieties of wheat (such as spelt and kamut), and, for some, oats. Although very common, you do not have to necessarily have digestive distress to have this allergy. I've seen it devastate people's health with no digestive complaints at all. The best scientific explanation of this phenomenon that doesn't put you to sleep reading it can be found in Robb Wolf's book, *The Paleo Solution*. I highly recommend this book because it is a comprehensive approach to discovering if this is your problem and what to do about it.

Some not so lucky people are allergic to all grains. The downside is that the Standard American Diet eater will have to make quite a few changes to comply with this elimination; however, I have found that those in this category also get the biggest amount of benefit from this discovery. It seems that, if this is you, this

allergy adversely affects almost every area of your health even your mental wellbeing.

Commercial cow dairy products, except butter are also big. One of my colleagues calls commercial cow milk "a white chemical cocktail." Between the homogenization, the pasteurization, the preservatives, the antibiotics and the hormones added to it, no wonder it makes so many people sick. No, it does not "do a body good." For the gullible among you, the "Dairy Council" is the advertising arm of the large corporate dairy farms, if you even want to call them "farms." If at all, cow milk products should be raw. More easily digested and much less reactive are goat milk products. I've only found a couple of people in trouble with goat milk over the years, compared to countless problems with cow milk. Goat milk is much more similar in composition to mother's milk and, even though mammals are really not designed to drink milk after they are weaned, I indulge liberally in goat cheese and yogurt, too. There are fabulous varieties of these. If you experiment and find ones you like, you won't feel like you are giving anything up.

Foods containing genetically modified organisms or GMO's: although too big a subject for this article, the best explanation of just how destructive these foods are can be found in an article by Dr. Mercola, "Monsanto's Roundup Herbicide May Be Most Important Factor in Development of Autism and Other Chronic Diseases." There is a video interview with a biochemist that connects the dots beautifully. You can find this article and video readily on his website.

Next, to explain the calcium deposit type of arthritis: this is where the damage is done by the least suspected food group, the nightshade vegetables. Here is a list of common nightshade vegetables that can help you get started on your elimination diet: capsicum, cayenne pepper, eggplant, goji berries, gooseberries, ground cherries, okra, paprika, pepino melons, peppers, sorrel, tomatoes, tomatillos, tobacco, and white potatoes. The nightshades are considered "calcinogenic."

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They cause toxic calcium deposits in the tissues because they contain a too potent form of vitamin D (calcitriol), and are not meant to be eaten by mammals.

Remember about too much of a good thing. I talked about unopposed vitamin D supplementation, several articles back:

“SAD, Seasonal Affective Disorder.”

Well, calcitriol is Vitamin D on steroids - quite literally, because calcitriol is considered by some to be the most potent hormone in the body. It is the end product of vitamin D metabolism in the kidneys which tightly controls this calcium balance. The full story on this can be found in an article entitled “Nightshades,” written by Garrett Smith, NMD and can be found on www.westonprice.org.

So what to do if you want to give this concept a try? The easiest thing is to find a practitioner like myself who does some form of electromagnetic field resonance testing, which was in my article, “The Electromagnetic You.” This will quickly determine which, if any, of the above applies to you. Remember, these are just the most common. I have over 1,500 substances in my office which I can test for reactions. Secondly, you can eliminate these, one by one, and see where you get the most relief. By eliminate, I mean 100% abstinence for one month. You will clearly see the result in that time, if it applies to you, or you can get Robb Wolf’s book and he’ll guide you step by step. This can be life changing. If you are tired of popping joint destructive pills to ease your joint pain - yes a side effect of NSAIDS is joint erosion, give finding the cause of the problem a try.