



Autoimmune Disorders

What Happens When the Immune System Misfires?

The immune system is like body's military forces, because the immune system is designed to defend the body against anything that can damage it. An army of white blood cells is always on hand to find and destroy foreign agents called antigens. Antigens include bacteria, viruses, environmental toxins, cancer cells, foreign proteins and any other irritant to the body. When the immune system is working properly, it identifies things that do not belong in the body and sends its forces out to neutralize these intruders.

To do this, the body must be able to tell the difference between what is part of itself, and what is foreign to itself. Sometimes, the immune system fails to do this and the immune system misfires, attacking parts of the body. It's like the "friendly fire" in a combat zone; it doesn't matter whether the bullets are coming from the enemy or your own forces, they can still kill you. So, if the immune system gets confused about who the "enemy" is, it is going to cause problems.

In autoimmune disorders the white blood cells are producing antibodies that attack various tissues of the body, usually in the nerves, glands, joints or digestive tract. In some cases the immune system can completely destroy glands or organs, resulting in death.

Autoimmune disorders are growing more and more prevalent in our society. The actual cause of these health problems has not been firmly established by science; but we do know some probable contributing factors to their development.

For starters, people can be genetically susceptible to autoimmune disorders. We know that women are more likely than men to suffer autoimmune disorders, as 75% of the 23.5 million autoimmune sufferers are women. However, even though females have higher susceptibility to autoimmune disorders, men seem to suffer more severely from these diseases when they do get them. People with blood type O are also more prone to these disorders.

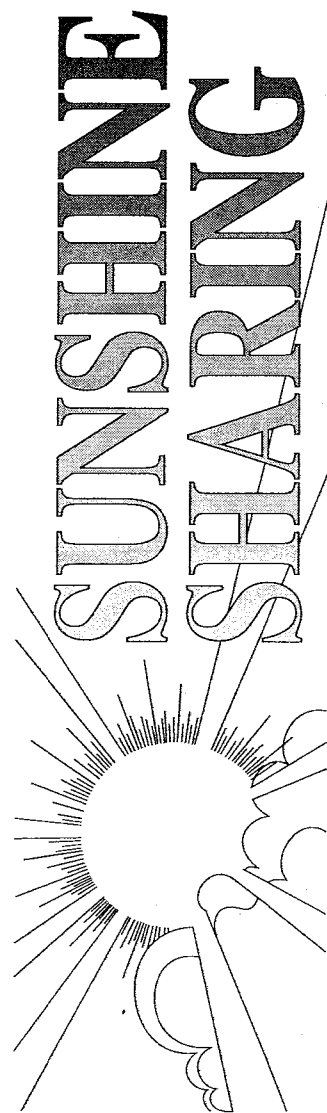
Chemical Toxicity and Autoimmune Conditions

It is likely that autoimmune disorders involve environmental toxicity. The fact that they have become so prevalent in modern industrial society is a major clue that this is the case. In particular, heavy metals seem to play a major role in autoimmune diseases because they confuse the immune system when they get into cells.

Tissues don't normally absorb heavy metals very easily, but when heavy metals are accompanied by solvents like formaldehyde they can be carried into the cells. The solvent dissolves the fatty membrane of the cell so the heavy metal can enter it. Vaccines contain both heavy metals (like mercury and aluminum) and solvents and may be one of the major factors in the rise of autoimmune diseases.

When heavy metals enter the cells, the body's immune system will seek to destroy the damaged cells, giving rise to the idea that the body is attacking itself. In reality, it may just be attacking severely damaged and abnormal cells.

Other factors that contribute to autoimmune diseases include nutritional deficiencies (which again cause weakened cells the body may see as defective), low-grade viral infections, food allergies and leaky gut syndrome, stress and adrenal fatigue, and electromagnetic pollution. But, whatever the case, there are natural therapies that can help these conditions, which is the theme of this issue of *Sunshine Sharing*. Read more inside.



Important Notice

The information in *Sunshine Sharing* is for educational purposes only and should not be used to diagnose and treat diseases. If you have a health problem, we recommend you consult a competent health practitioner before embarking on any course of treatment.

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Eight Basic Therapies for Autoimmune Disorders

There is no blanket natural therapy for all autoimmune disorders and even people with the same autoimmune disorder may require slightly different approaches in order to heal. However, the following eight natural therapies have helped people recover from autoimmune disorders.

These therapies can serve as the foundation for any healing program for someone with an autoimmune condition. Choose the therapies and products that most closely match individual needs, and be sure to consult with trained professionals to monitor your progress and assist you in choosing the products and lifestyle changes that are right for you.



Therapy #1: Feed Yourself Right

Conventional medicine suggests that the immune system is attacking healthy tissues in autoimmune disorders. However, many natural healers believe that the immune system is actually attacking unhealthy tissue. And, strengthening the tissue through better nutrition has helped many people with autoimmune disorders to improve dramatically.

To feed yourself right, start by getting rid of all high-glycemic carbohydrates in your diet, which include all simple sugars and refined carbohydrates, and even fruit juices, honey and other sources of simple sugars. High sugar levels increase inflammatory responses, something that needs to be calmed down in autoimmune disorders.

Be sure to eat good fats as these help modulate immune functions and reduce inflammation. Particularly important are omega-3 essential fatty acids. Try taking **Super Omega-3 EPA** or **flax seed oil**. For autoimmune disorders involving the nervous system also consider **DHA**, an important fat for nerve function.

Look at the specific tissues the body is attacking and use nutrients that strengthen them. Eat lots of non-starchy vegetables, particularly green vegetables, organic meats and moderate amounts of fruits and whole grains.

Also consider following the blood type diet as this helps reduce immune confusion in the body. Talk to the person who gave you this newsletter about getting charts or books that help you select foods appropriate for your blood type.

Therapy #2: Heal Your Digestive Tract

It's likely that everyone who has autoimmune disorders has issues with digestive function, because a large part of our immune responses center on the intestines. Enzyme supplements like **Proactazyme Plus** or **Protease Plus** are usually helpful for people with autoimmune conditions.

Yeast or parasitic infections may also be a contributing factor. **Candida Clear** or the **ParaCleanse** program may be helpful if this is an issue. Leaky gut syndrome and intestinal inflammation may also be a big problem.

Therapy #3:

Rebuild Exhausted Adrenal Glands

Corticosteroid drugs are prescribed by doctors to reduce inflammation associated with autoimmune disorders. These drugs mimic an adrenal hormone called cortisol. So, supporting the adrenals so they can produce cortisol naturally can be a useful therapy for people with autoimmune diseases.

Adrenal Support is often very helpful for people with autoimmune conditions. **Pantothenic acid** and **vitamin C** can also help to rebuild the adrenals.

Herbs like **yucca** and **licorice** can also supply a cortisol-like effect and reduce the inflammation and pain associated with autoimmune disorders. Licorice root inhibits the breakdown of cortisol from the adrenals, prolonging its effectiveness. Yucca alkalizes the blood while it reduces inflammation and pain.

Therapy #4: Cool the Fires of Oxidative Stress and Inflammation

In all autoimmune disorders the normal process of inflammation, the body's response to tissue damage, has spun out of control, like a forest fire. Anti-inflammatories and antioxidant nutrients are needed to get the inflammation back under control.

The dietary recommendations found under Therapy #1 will provide a lot of support for reducing inflammation and oxidative stress. For extra support consider **Thai Go** or **Super ORAC**; both are powerful sources of natural plant antioxidants.

To reduce inflammation and help ease pain consider **IF Relief**. This powerful blend contains mangosteen pericarp, turmeric, willow bark and other herbs that can reduce inflammatory responses and ease oxidative stress.

Another tip with autoimmune disorders is to stay cool, because most autoimmune disorders are aggravated by heat. So, it is best to avoid hot tubs, saunas, extremely hot baths, electric blankets and hot pads with autoimmune conditions.

Therapy #5: Avoid Immune Stimulants and Modulate Immune Responses

Because the immune system is causing damage to the tissues of the body, we don't want to stimulate the immune system when dealing with autoimmune diseases. Instead, we want to modulate the immune system, which means to regulate immune reactions so they target the real "enemy" and not the body's own tissues.

Remedies to **avoid** include: Immune Stimulator, echinacea, Ultimate Echinacea, goldenseal, Echinacea/Golden Seal, Trigger Immune, Korean ginseng, Colostrum with Immune Factors, Fizz Active Immune, anamu and possibly astragalus. As a basic rule, avoid any supplement designed to stimulate immune responses or that has "heating" effects on the body.

Some herbs and supplements which can modulate immune responses so that the immune system works in a more balanced

way include adaptagens like **Adaptamax** and **Eleuthero root**. These remedies also work to reduce stress.

Glycoessentials supplies essential sugars that cells use to create structures the immune system then uses to identify the difference between cells that belong to the body and cells that don't. It can help regulate immune responses. So can **Chinese Blood Build**, which contains ganoderma, a medicinal mushroom known to help modulate immune reactions.

When a person with an autoimmune problem has an infection, **Silver Shield** is the best choice for fighting it. It does not stimulate the immune system and will not aggravate autoimmune symptoms.

Plain **colostrum** (not Colostrum with Immune Factors) is also immune-modulating. Other remedies that may help include licorice root, **omega-3 essential fatty acids** and digestive enzymes like **Protease Plus** and **Proactazyme Plus**.

Therapy #6: Get Moving

Exercise is an important part of staying healthy. Keeping the lymphatics moving through physical activity helps to gently detoxify the body. Physical activity also helps maintain blood sugar levels, muscle tone and proper weight. Rigorous exercise programs, however, can be counterproductive in people with autoimmune conditions. Exercises like yoga, tai chi, walking or swimming are great choices because they stretch the body and gently oxygenate the blood. Although the exercise should be gentle it also needs to be done regularly with an individualized pace and rest as needed.



Therapy #7: Detoxify

Autoimmune disorders appear to involve at least some level of toxicity in the tissues. As stated on page one, heavy metals and solvents may play a role in autoimmune disorders, so detoxification is an important part of working with these conditions. However, in autoimmune diseases it is best to detoxify gradually, as harsh cleansing programs can aggregate symptoms.

Start by avoiding toxins. Purify your water and filter your air if you live in an area where there is a lot of air pollution. Avoid processed foods with their chemical additives, dyes, preservatives and flavoring agents. Use all-natural, non-toxic household cleaning products and personal care products. Read labels. If you work at a job that exposes you to a lot of chemicals (beauty parlors, painting, dry cleaning, etc.) you may even have to change jobs.

Gradual detoxification can be achieved by taking small doses of appropriate cleansing formulas. For heavy metals, take one **Heavy Metal Detox** per day along with 6-8 **algln** capsules. One capsule of **Enviro-Detox** per day can be taken for general cleansing, along with a fiber product like **Psyllium Hulls Combination** or **Everybody's Fiber**. Everybody's Fiber is the best choice if you have inflammatory bowel disorders.

Cleansing can also be assisted by soaking in warm baths with Epsom salts and your favorite essential oils. Ionic foot spas can also be used to accelerate detoxification.

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Common Autoimmune Disorders

There are many different types of autoimmune disorders which are characterized primarily by the tissues the immune system is attacking. There isn't space to cover them all, but here are some of the major ones.

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is caused by the immune system attacking the central nervous system, particularly the myelin sheath that surrounds and insulates nerve fibers. This causes nerve impulses to "short circuit" causing muscle weakness, difficulty moving, balance problems, speech problems, fatigue, visual problems and chronic pain. MS generally occurs episodically, with worsening conditions and symptoms in each relapse.

Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) is also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. It is similar to MS in that the immune system attacks the nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord that control voluntary muscles. This results in the degeneration of nerves and muscles, eventually causing paralysis and death. Iron in the tissues increases oxidative stress in ALS.

Fibromyalgia is characterized by chronic muscle pain and stiffness. This disorder is one more commonly seen in women with symptoms of fatigue, inability to sleep, and headaches.

Rheumatoid Arthritis is a form of arthritis where the immune system is attacking the joints, causing pain, swelling and stiffness. Deformities in the joints occur over time and the disorder may affect the heart, lungs and eyes.

Systemic Lupus Erythematosus, more commonly known as lupus, is characterized by the immune system attacking the connective tissues of the body. The main symptoms include joint pain, swelling and redness, rashes on the nose and feet, chest pain and coughing, sunlight sensitivity combined with rash and fever, fatigue, and pain with inflammation.

Hashimoto's Thyroiditis involves an immune attack on the thyroid gland and is believed to be the most common cause of underactive thyroid.

Other diseases considered to be autoimmune in nature include chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS), Sjogren's, scleroderma, type I diabetes, Grave's disease, Crohn's disease, celiac, ulcerative colitis and autoimmune hepatitis.

Additional Help and Information

For more information about how to design a natural health program for autoimmune disorders, contact the person who gave you this newsletter. Their contact information should be found at the top of page four. They have additional handouts and resource materials to help you. You can also consult some of the following sources:

The War Within: Understanding the Mystery of Autoimmune Disorders DVD with Steven Horne (www.treelite.com)

The Comprehensive Guide to Nature's Sunshine Products by Tree of Light Publishing

Do you (or someone you love) suffer from an autoimmune disease like the following?



Multiple Sclerosis-MS

Guillan-Barre

Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis-ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease)

Fibromyalgia

Myasthenia Gravis

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

Lupus-Systemic Lupus

Eyrthematosus

Rheumatoid Arthritis

Scleroderma

Type I Diabetes

Hashimoto's Disease

Graves' Disease

Crohn's Disease

Ulcerative Colitis

Autoimmune Hepatitis

If so, your immune system is "off track." Learn eight secrets to getting it back on the right path inside.

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Therapy #8: Heal Your Emotional Wounds

Healing emotional wounds is the last important therapy to for people who have autoimmune disorders. Autoimmune disorders are caused by the body attacking itself and can be influenced by your tendencies to attack yourself mentally and emotionally. In our society, people tend to put each other down a lot. We're told that we're not fast enough, strong enough, smart enough, thin enough, rich enough and just plain not good enough. This can undermine our sense of self-worth and lead to not taking good care of ourselves and our feelings.

Learning to be gentle and positive with yourself will help your body to do the same. Forgiving yourself will give you greater ability to take care of yourself. Reduce your stress and emotional issues

through meditation, prayer, keeping a journal, and relaxing with activities that you, yes you, find enjoyable.

You can also take remedies to help you relax and reduce your stress level. **Magnesium Complex** is often very helpful, especially for autoimmune disorders that affect joints and connective tissue. **Fibralgia** (a combination of magnesium and malic acid) is good for fibromyalgia.

Nervous Fatigue Formula may be helpful if you suffer from fatigue and disturbed sleep patterns. It also supports the adrenal glands.

The exact therapies that a person needs will vary, but these eight therapies will give you a great start. For more specific assistance, talk to the person who gave you this newsletter.