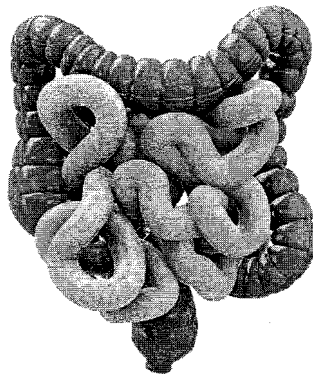


# Inflammatory Bowel Disease

## Finding Lasting Relief from Gastrointestinal Inflammation



The term Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) is a broad term referring to any disease characterized by inflammation in the gastrointestinal tract. The two most common types of these diseases are Crohn's and ulcerative colitis. Both of these conditions can make your life miserable with symptoms such as diarrhea, abdominal cramps, rectal bleeding, fever, joint pain, loss of appetite and fatigue, not to mention fistulas and complications that can require surgery to remove part or all of the colon. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that about 1.4 million Americans suffer from IBD, and 10% of those are children.

The main difference between Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis is the location and nature of the inflammation. Crohn's can affect any part of the gastrointestinal tract, from mouth to anus, although most cases start in the ileum. Ulcerative colitis is restricted to the colon and the rectum. Microscopically, ulcerative colitis is restricted to the epithelial lining of the gut, while Crohn's disease affects the entire wall of the bowel.

### Celiac Disease and Gluten Intolerance

A closely related problem is Celiac disease. This is also a condition involving gut inflammation, but is an autoimmune disorder involving an intolerance to gluten. Gluten is the protein in wheat (and other grains like rye and barley) that makes dough elastic. Celiac disease tends to run in families (suggesting genetic origins) and, like other autoimmune conditions, can be triggered by a physical stress such as surgery, pregnancy, childbirth and viral infection. Sometimes, severe emotional stress can set it in motion.

In Celiac disease the immune system damages the microvilli, the tiny protrusions in the small intestines necessary for proper absorption of nutrients. This can lead to malnutrition in spite of the nutrients one is consuming in food. Symptoms of Celiac disease include recurring abdominal bloating and pain, chronic diarrhea, foul-smelling, greasy or discolored stool, weight loss, anemia, bone pain, fatigue, delayed growth and failure to thrive in children and infants.

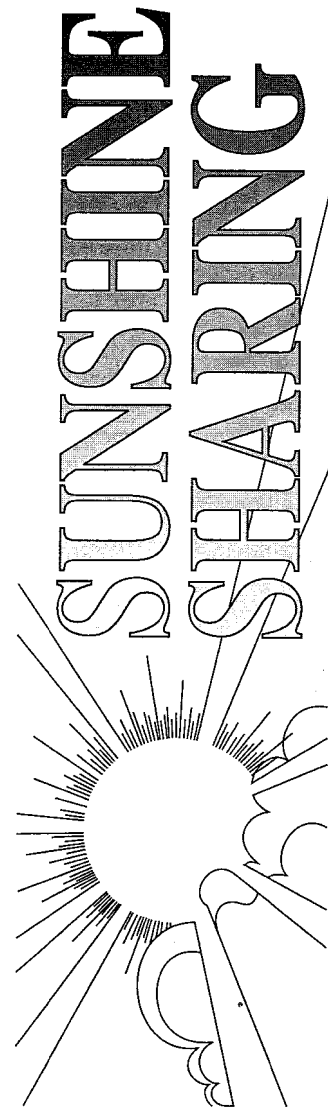
People who do not have Celiac disease may still have an intolerance to gluten, causing intestinal inflammation and immune system problems. This is called gluten sensitivity and probably plays a role in IBD, which is why we are including information about Celiac disease in this newsletter, even though it is not considered an IBD.

### Leaky Gut Syndrome

Diseases involving inflammation of the intestines damage intestinal membranes and increase their permeability, allowing partially digested proteins, fats and waste, not normally absorbed, to leak from the intestines into the blood stream. This condition is known as leaky gut syndrome. This is why IBD and Celiac disease can be the root causes of other autoimmune diseases such as Hashimoto's thyroiditis and rheumatoid arthritis. They may also contribute to allergies, asthma, depression, irritability and even "mental" illness.

Incidentally, inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) are quite different. Unlike IBD, IBS does not cause inflammation, ulcers or other damage to the bowel. In IBS, the digestive system looks normal but doesn't work as it should. Symptoms of IBS, once referred to as "spastic colon," include painful cramping, bloating, gas, mucus in the stool, diarrhea and constipation. However, IBS can have similar root causes to IBD, so some of the natural remedies discussed inside may be helpful for IBS as well.

**Look inside to learn how to find lasting relief from intestinal inflammation...**



### 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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# Healing the Gastrointestinal Tract

Even though IBD (ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease), Celiac disease and IBS are different, they have common root causes and natural therapies. So, we're going to discuss all of them in this newsletter. However, in working with these conditions, especially IBD and Celiac, it is important to get a proper medical diagnosis and to have

medical supervision, as these illnesses can cause life-threatening health problems.

To understand how to work with these conditions naturally we need to understand what causes them, as natural healing is all about fixing causes rather than treating effects. Even though medical science has not fully understood the causes, we can extrapolate some of the causes by looking at risk factors.

Although it is well established that intolerance to gluten (which may have genetic roots) is the direct cause of the symptoms of Celiac disease, the intolerance to gluten often appears to lie dormant until something triggers it. Furthermore, many of the same factors that trigger Celiac disease also trigger IBD, which include diet, the use of certain drug medications and emotional stress. Here are some of the triggers.

## Risk Factors for Intestinal Inflammation

People who live in Western countries have a higher risk for developing IBD than people in other countries. However, as countries industrialize and adopt Western diets and lifestyles, IBD increases. So, there is definitely a lifestyle cause.

Smokers are at higher risk of developing Crohn's disease, whereas they are at lower risk of developing ulcerative colitis. Research has linked long-term oral contraceptive use to a higher risk of both ulcerative colitis and Crohn's. Other drugs, such as isotretinoin (Accutane), could also play a role. Pain-relieving NSAIDs (like ibuprofen) can worsen IBD symptoms but are not thought to increase the risk of getting the disease initially.

One Japanese study reported an increased risk of Crohn's disease for women who consume a lot of animal and milk proteins. Other studies report a possible link to overconsumption of foods high in omega-6 polyunsaturated fatty acids, which suggests a lack of omega-3 essential fatty acids may be involved.

A big factor may be the balance of bacteria in the gastrointestinal tract. Healthy intestines contain trillions of good bacteria or friendly flora. These organisms play a role in digesting certain foods (especially dairy), protecting the body from infection and regulating the immune responses.

Antibiotics and other drugs can disrupt the balance of these intestinal bacterial, as can infections with harmful bacteria such as salmonella and campylobacter. Both of these bacteria have been associated with IBD. They are ingested in contaminated food and are responsible for thousands of cases of food poisoning each year.

Since stress can trigger these bowel disorders, it's possible they may have emotional triggers, too. Adrenal fatigue results in lower

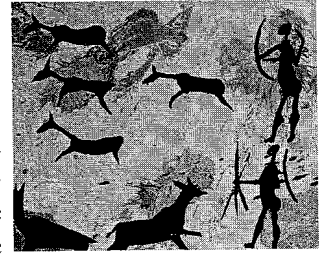
levels of cortisol, which controls inflammation. Also, stress can be a factor in the regulation of the immune system, which may aggravate the autoimmune factor in intestinal inflammation.

## Strategies for Healing the Intestines

The following measures have shown to help bring Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis under control. Many of these same strategies will help Celiac disease.

### Adopt a Paleo Diet

Just a few thousand years ago, practically all human beings lived on what has been called the hunter-gatherer or paleo diet. These people simply collected the foods nature provided, which means they ate wild game and fish, raw milk and wild plant foods. Grain was not a significant part of this diet, and what grains and seeds were consumed were typically soaked and/or fermented before consumption. In addition, foods were not sterilized, so people had a wider range of gut microflora (probiotics) than people do today.



As mankind learned to farm, diets changed. Today, we consume a large amount of grain and simple sugars. The meat and dairy products we consume are also raised on grain instead of grass. Dairy products are no longer whole and raw. Naturally fermented foods and other foods containing probiotics are not consumed. These changes in diet are probably the underlying cause of all of these diseases of the intestines.

The place to start is to avoid all gluten-bearing grains, which include wheat (including bulgur, durum flour, farina, graham flour, semolina), barley (including malt, malt flavoring and malt vinegar), rye, triticale, spelt and kamut. This is an absolute necessity when working with Celiac disease, but it can also be helpful for IBD.

Usually rice, corn, amaranth, buckwheat, millet and quinoa will be OK because they don't contain gluten. However, some people have found that in the beginning stages of therapy, it can be helpful to avoid **all** grains to give the intestines a better chance to heal. Many people also find it's a good idea to avoid all legumes (beans, soy products, lentils and peas) as well.

It may also be necessary to avoid all dairy products. Some people will do all right with cultured dairy like yogurt and cheese, but many people have to eliminate all dairy foods.

It is also important to avoid eating refined sugars of all kinds and may even be helpful to eliminate honey, maple syrup and sugary fruits. In addition, people with IBD and IBS should avoid products sweetened with manitol, sorbitol and xylitol.

Ideally, the diet should include servings of meat from grass-fed animals, eggs from pasture-raised chickens, wild-caught fish and game, and lots of vegetables, particularly non-starchy ones like zucchini, greens (such as mustard greens, beet greens, Swiss chard and kale), broccoli, cauliflower and cabbage. Good fats, like butter from grass-fed cows, coconut oil and avocados are also acceptable.

## Use Natural Anti-inflammatories

Consuming soothing mucilaginous herbs has proven helpful in treating all types of inflammatory bowel disorders. A good remedy to consider is **Whole Leaf Aloe Vera Juice**. A double-blind, randomized trial examined the effectiveness and safety of aloe vera in the treatment of mild-to-moderate cases of IBS. Researchers gave 30 patients 100 milliliters of oral aloe vera and 14 patients 100 milliliters of a placebo twice daily for 4 weeks.

Results with the aloe vera were: clinical remission in 9 patients, improvement in 11 patients and a positive response in 14 patients. The results for the placebo were just 1 clinical remission, 1 improvement and 2 positive responses.

Another good herbal remedy for soothing the intestinal tract is **slippery elm**. It is best used in bulk form and made into gruel. Combine one teaspoon of the powder with one teaspoon of honey and two cups of boiling water. Stir well. Flavor with cinnamon and drink one or two cups twice a day. Bulk slippery elm may also be blended with juice or nut milks if honey can't be tolerated.

**IF Relief** is a general anti-inflammatory remedy that contains turmeric root extract, mangosteen pericarp extract, andrographis paniculata, boswellia gum extract and white willow bark extract. Although all of these ingredients may be helpful for IBD, one of them, boswellia, has been clinically proven to do so. A 1997 study of people with ulcerative colitis found that 82% of those who took 350 milligrams of boswellia extract three times daily experienced remission.

Herbalist Jeanne Burgess formulated an herbal blend that many people have found very helpful for ulcers, Crohn's, Celiac disease and colitis. It's called **Intestinal Soothe & Build**. This formula contains chamomile, marshmallow, plantain, rosehips, slippery elm and bugleweed, which help to soothe and heal irritated gastrointestinal membranes. Many people have found this formula very helpful, especially when used with another of her herbal formulas, **Stress-J** (see below for more information).



## Manage Stress

Stress often acts as a trigger for IBD, IBS and Celiac disease. This is why nervine herbs can also help to manage them. **Stress-J** is a particularly good formula for this and was designed to work with **Intestinal Soothe & Build**. **Stress-J** contains chamomile, passion flower, fennel, feverfew, hops and marshmallow. Chamomile is helpful here because it calms the nerves, regulates digestion and reduces inflammation.

Coffee, cola drinks, energy drinks, black tea and other sources of caffeine should be avoided. Caffeine stresses the adrenal glands and can increase feelings of anxiety, as well as inflammation. Also avoid stimulant drugs and alcohol.

Learn stress management skills. Practice breathing exercises to relax. Massage, yoga, regular exercise and meditation can also be helpful. Also consider using biofeedback, hypnotherapy or guided imagery to use the mind/body connection to heal the gut. You may even want to consider psychotherapy or cognitive behavioral therapy to work on emotional conflicts that can exacerbate symptoms.

## Use Probiotics

A healthy digestive system contains thousands of species of friendly bacteria and people who live closer to the earth tend to have more species than people living in more sterile environments. It is very likely that the disruption of the friendly flora has a lot to do with the development of Crohn's, Celiacs, colitis and IBS.



Research shows that probiotic supplements can be helpful with IBD. For example, a University of Alberta study examined 34 people with mild-to-moderate active ulcerative colitis who were unresponsive to conventional treatment. The researchers gave them a probiotic supplement providing a total of 3,600 billion bacteria a day for 6 weeks. At the end of the study, 18 people (53%) demonstrated remission and an additional 8 people (24%) had a favorable response.

In another study, researchers at the University of Dundee analyzed bacteria from rectal biopsies of patients with active ulcerative colitis and healthy control subjects. There were significantly less bifidobacterium numbers in the ulcerative colitis biopsies, which suggested that these probiotic bacteria might have a protective role in the disease. In a further study, 18 people with active ulcerative colitis were given a bifidobacterium supplement or a placebo for one month. Sigmoidoscopy, biopsy, and blood tests showed significant improvement in the probiotic group compared with the placebo group.

**Probiotic Eleven** provides 11 species of live microorganisms that support digestion, promote immunity, and aid in the elimination of toxins and is probably the best choice as a probiotic supplement. **Bifidophilus Flora Force** has only three species, but may also be helpful.

There are over 1,000 species of friendly bacteria in the intestines. So, it may also be wise for people with IBD to try naturally-fermented foods such as yogurt and kefir (if dairy can be tolerated), raw sauerkraut, kim chi and other naturally pickled vegetables and fermented soy products like miso to obtain other species of friendly bacteria.

## Omega-3 Fatty Acids

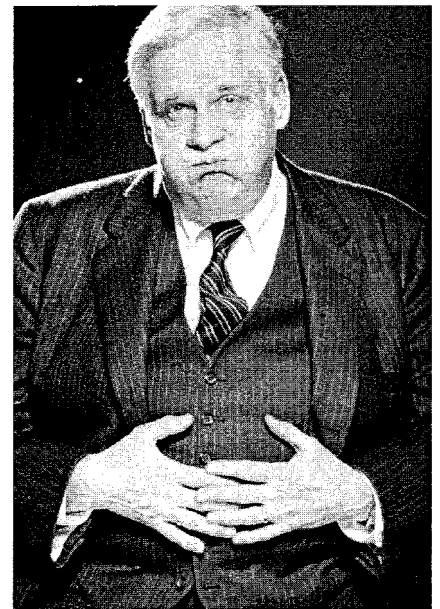
Some studies have found that omega-3 fatty acids, like those found in **Super Omega-3 EPA**, may reduce inflammation in people with ulcerative colitis. A critical analysis published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* looked at controlled trials published from 1966 to 2003 concerning IBD and omega-3 fatty acids. Although the researchers concluded that more research is needed, three studies found that omega-3 fatty acids reduced the need for corticosteroids.

In other research conducted at the Cleveland Clinic, an oral supplement containing fish oil, soluble fiber, and antioxidants (vitamins C and E with selenium) was given to adults with mild-to-moderate ulcerative colitis. In the study, 86 patients with ulcerative colitis consumed 18 ounces of the supplement or a placebo each day for 6 months. Patients taking the oral supplement had

**Continued on page 4**

# Are you troubled by: Crohn's? Colitis? Celiacs? Irritable Bowel?

Millions of Americans suffer from inflammatory bowel diseases (IBDs) like Crohn's and ulcerative colitis. Millions more suffer from Celiac disease and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). If you're one of those millions, this newsletter will provide you with practical tips to help ease your gastrointestinal distress and find lasting relief.



## *Continued from Page Three*

a significantly lower rate of need for prednisone over 6 months compared with the placebo group. Both groups showed significant and similar improvement in clinical and histological responses.

**Super Trio**, which contains **Super Omega-3 EPA**, **Super Supplemental** and **Super ORAC** (an antioxidant supplement) would supply nutrients similar to those used in the above study. One might also consider using **Krill Oil with K-2**.

## **Additional Tips**

A high fiber diet may also be beneficial, but during the active stages of the illness, raw fruits, vegetables, seeds and nuts will irritate the digestive system. **Everybody's Fiber** is a good fiber supplement for people with IBD and IBS. Digestive enzymes like **Proactazyme** and **Food Enzymes** taken with meals can also be helpful. To regulate harmful intestinal bacteria that may be involved in this disease,

one can try **GastroHealth** or **Uña De Gato** combination. These formulas also contain herbs that reduce intestinal inflammation and promote healing of intestinal membranes. **Silver Shield** is another option for controlling harmful microbes in the gut.

## **Additional Help and Information**

For more help in selecting the right remedies to help manage your IBD, IBS or Celiac disease, contact the person who gave you this newsletter. Their information should be found at the top of this page. You can also consult the following sources:

*The Comprehensive Guide to Nature's Sunshine Products* by Tree of Light  
*Why Doesn't My Doctor Know This: Conquering Irritable Bowel Syndrome, Inflammatory Bowel Disease, Crohn's Disease and Colitis* by David Dahlman, DC