

Anti-Inflammatory Diet and Lifestyle **Dr. Ron Cherubino, DC, AMD, D.A.C.F.E.**



Recent research has identified a causative link between inflammation and disease. Scientists are finally catching up with what practitioners of natural medicine have known for many hundreds of years. Inflammation plays a causative role in the current epidemic of chronic, life-threatening diseases. This new understanding of inflammation is associated with a state of chemical toxicity.

This information about the anti-inflammatory diet and lifestyle is offered as an introduction to the subject with the clear recommendation for the reader to seek out professional counsel and treatment with an appropriate holistic practitioner. I am frankly amazed at the number of people that I talk to that do not have an alternative doctor or other alternative health care practitioner that they see on a regular basis. So often in today's do-it-yourself society people attempt to doctor themselves. You might as well try to fill your own cavities instead of turning to a dentist.

With that being said, I encourage anyone that reads and understands this information to begin implementing the basic recommendations that follow. This is a wonderful opportunity to begin the process of improving your current state of health and preventing the establishment of future diseases and conditions.

I. An Epidemic of Chronic Degenerative Disease (cutting the wires to the fire alarm)

Chronic degenerative disease has reached epidemic proportions in the United States and around the world. This is not simply my opinion or a belief that I hold; this is simply a statement of current factual information. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has documented these diseases and the percentage of people in the United States that are suffering from these chronic conditions.

Diseases such as heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, arthritis, obesity, chronic fatigue syndrome and a host of other diseases are epidemic not only in United States but worldwide. Allopathic, chemically-based medicine has been profoundly ineffective at curing these diseases and in fact has allowed these diseases to continue at a sub-symptomatic level. The fact that the vast majority of pharmaceutical chemicals being used today do not target the cause of disease but are designed to have a symptomatic effect on the body, has allowed this epidemic to fly under the radar for many decades.

Medicine in America has typically identified a symptom and covered it up with a drug. By confusing cause and effect we have come to view the symptoms of a disease as the cause of the disease. In this way the very symptoms that are designed to alert us to a more serious underlying problem are quieted. Unfortunately, so is our impetus to get at the root cause of our conditions. It is apt, if cliché, to remind ourselves that quieting a symptom is like cutting the wire to a sounding fire alarm rather than putting out the fire.

II. What Is Inflammation?

Inflammation is one of the natural stages of healing that occurs when cells and tissues are damaged. In a healthy body, it is a brief, normal and productive process. In an unhealthy body, inflammation becomes chronic and destructive and is a sign of electrochemical imbalance, toxicity and a weakened immune system.

The more we understand about inflammation the better able we are to identify and eliminate it. The dictionary defines inflammation as “a local response to cellular injury that is marked by capillary dilatation, leukocytic infiltration, redness, heat, pain, swelling, and often loss of function and that serves as a mechanism initiating the elimination of noxious agents and of damaged tissue.”(Merriam-Webster's Medical Dictionary, © 2002 Merriam-Webster, Inc.)

Medicinenet.com tells us that "inflammation is a basic way in which the body reacts to infection, irritation or other injury, the key feature being redness, warmth, swelling and pain. Inflammation is now recognized as a type of nonspecific immune response."

Here's the information that I add to the official definitions: "Inflammation is the reaction of a part of the body to injury, infection, chemical disruption or poisoning. I see this as the all important definition because it takes into account toxicity."

To sum it up, inflammation is a natural immune system reaction to cellular insult of any kind. This includes but is not limited to injury, infection or toxicity. From a physiological standpoint inflammation occurs to whatever degree necessary as part of a natural process of healing when any of the body's trillions of cells are in need of repair or replacement. In a healthy functional body this process is brief, controlled, and most importantly, temporary. The less functional a body is, i.e. less healthy, the more difficulty it will have in progressing from the inflammation stage to the next phase of healing. Once we look at inflammation from this perspective we realize that chronic inflammation is a sign of underlying weakness, impaired function and ultimately poor health.

III. What about Anti-Inflammatory Drugs?



You may be asking yourself, why not just take anti-inflammatory medications? The answer is, because anti-inflammatory medications don't correct the underlying cause of the inflammation. They also do not help the body heal past the inflammation stage. Interestingly, the wide array of anti-inflammatory drugs and the many conditions they are used for are ironically indicative that inflammation is indeed causatively associated with disease. Anti-inflammatory medications—NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug) such as aspirin, ibuprophen (Motrin, Advil, Nuprin) , naproxen (Aleve, Naprosyn), Celebrex, Daypro, Voltaren, Vioxx and steroids such as Prednisone, cortisone, Remicade, Advair and Kenalog are used to symptomatically approach diseases from emphysema to Chron's disease to arthritis. The concept to remember is that anti-inflammatory treatment is symptomatic rather than curative because it suppresses a natural reaction to an unaddressed condition of toxicity.

Since we have just discovered that inflammation can only be present for extended periods of time in an unhealthy dysfunctional body, a medication would have to help the body through the inflammatory stage of healing in order to be appropriately classified as anti-inflammatory.

What anti-inflammatory medication does do is to stop the body's natural inflammatory reaction by chemically blocking the body's immune system. This causes a buildup of toxic cellular debris which acidifies and further poisons the already inflamed and damaged cells and tissues. It also places an increased burden on the vascular and lymphatic systems.

Clearly, natural alternatives to anti-inflammatory medications are preferable since anti-inflammatory drugs actually make the problem worse.

IV. The Connection Between Inflammation and Disease

So what is the connection between inflammation and disease? Simply put, inflamed cells function poorly. Poorly functioning cells result in poorly functioning tissues, which result in poorly functioning structures and organs. This is the basic definition of disease. (Bodily structures include muscles, joints, arteries, veins, nerves, brain, spinal cord, tendons, ligaments and all organs) Diseases and conditions that have been linked to chronic inflammation include:

- heart disease (cholesterol is the natural way that the body patches and strengthens weakened arteries -- which can eventually cause blockages)
- arteriosclerosis (inflammation and hardening of the arteries)
- varicose veins (inflammation and weakening of the veins)
- colitis (inflammation of the colon)
- diabetes (low-level inflammation associated with insulin resistance)
- gastritis (inflammation of the lining of the stomach)
- chronic fatigue syndrome (higher than normal levels of inflammation associated with adrenal overload)
- fibromyalgia (increased levels muscle and nerve tissue inflammation)
- obesity (inflammation associated with enzyme and hormonal imbalances)
- headaches (migraine, cluster and tension headaches associated with nerve inflammation)
- cellulitis (inflammation of the cells of the skin and other structures)
- arthritis (inflammation of the joints)
- tendonitis (inflammation of the tendons)
- gingivitis (inflammation of the gums)
- tinnitus (inflammation affecting the inner ear)
- vertigo (inflammation of structures affecting balance)

V. The Connection Between Toxicity and Inflammation (The Inflammation Equation)

The human body is made up of 50-75 trillion cells. Each cell is a living organism and requires nutrients, enzymes, proteins, water, electrical energy, vitamins and minerals to survive and thrive. Healthy cells require a healthy environment. What we breathe, eat and even think helps determine the environment in which our cells live. Air pollution, poor quality food, water pollution, drugs, emotional stress and physical stress are just some of the negative factors that determine our cellular environment.

A percentage of the cells in our body are continually dying and new replacement cells are constantly being formed. Cells therefore have a breakdown rate and a buildup rate. Negative factors increase the breakdown rate and decrease the buildup rate.

Positive factors such as good nutrition, a peaceful emotional state, a healthy and functional nervous system, sufficient quality sleep, the breathing of clean air and adequate clean water intake have the opposite effect. Positive factors therefore decrease the breakdown rate and increase the buildup rate.

This cycle of cellular death and cellular regeneration is the engine that fuels what is known as the *inflammation equation*. As cellular breakdown occurs the body responds by increasing inflammation. Remember, by definition inflammation is the process by which the body eliminates noxious agents and damaged tissue. In other words inflammation is part of the cleanup crew. Simply put, there is only so much clean up that the body can do on a minute to minute, hour to hour and day to day basis.

In order for the equation to balance and the healing process of cell replacement to succeed, the dying cells and their toxic byproducts must be sufficiently cleaned up in order for the rebuilding process to occur.

As a matter of fact, toxins from any source whether they be from cellular death or other negative factors must be cleaned up as well. A clean environment equals maximum healthy cell growth.

The inflammation equation therefore has two sides. One side consists of the amount of chemical toxicity that the cleaning crew needs to keep under control and the other side consists of the body's ability to form new healthy cells and to assist in the cleanup process and a capacity *other than an inflammatory immune response*.

VI. Your Body's Single Most Important Function

Perhaps the single most important function of the human body is to manufacture and support new healthy cells. This process is profoundly complex. Some experts estimate that all of the combined scientific understanding of the physiology of the human body amounts to less than 1% of its actual functions and abilities. While there is no way to know what we don't know, it is clear to even the most casual observer that there is still much to be learned.

What we have learned is that healthy functional organs play a vital role in the process of making and maintaining healthy cells. From the liver to the adrenal glands, the heart to the kidneys and the thyroid gland to the colon the function of all of the organs that make up the body depends on two very important factors. The first one is electrical and the second one is chemical. The body's nervous system controls and regulates every cell, tissue and organ through the transmission of electrical nerve impulses. The body's chemical environment is determined by many factors including nervous system function, nutrient intake, water, sleep, air, etc.

An excellent resource is www.AskDrRon.com for written information, audio and video. Check out the following: NID, EMI, The Seven Essentials to Natural Health Care, Dr. Ron's 4 Steps to Health, Dr. Ron's Vitamin Challenge, The Ask Dr Ron Radio Show Podcasts and Archives, Book Lists and Interviews with Health Experts, among many other resources.

VII. Getting Started With Your Anti-Inflammatory Diet And Lifestyle

The following is an outline of some of the recommendations that we make to our patients at the Cherubino Health Center. For those of you who are already seeing a natural healthcare doctor, you may want to run it by him or her depending on your individual health circumstances. If you are inclined to run this information by your medical doctor you may want to make sure that he or she is adequately trained in alternative health care before doing so.

As always, you are welcome to "Ask Dr Ron" free of charge by e-mail or by phone. (Info@AskDrRon.com, 800 - 554 - 3776)

Phone Consultations are also available with Dr Ron for a nominal fee.

VIII. Specific Recommendations

The recommendations that follow include suggestions that will facilitate a slow and steady detoxification. Depending on your individual level of health, I encourage everyone to have a thorough natural health evaluation that includes a health consultation, review of health history, nutritional evaluation and an EMI examination. I also recommend that this be followed up by appropriate lab tests that include the newest saliva and urine tests.

IX. Detoxification Is More Complicated Than People Think

Understanding that dangerous, chronic inflammation is a response to cellular toxicity leads to the conclusion that the cure is detoxification. While I will quickly admit that detoxification is necessary, there is a lot more to it.

One thing I must warn against is to not fall into the trap of thinking that you can force health on your body. The human body is a highly intelligent organism that is capable of functioning at a much higher level on it's own than our minds are capable of understanding. So many of the ads that you hear on radio and television today are making it sound like detoxification is a purely mechanical process. This fosters the misconception that many people have that their body is like a simple machine. They'll say things like, "oh, I get it, so there is a buildup of poison in my body and I need to remove it. I'll take that new product that I heard advertised to clean my colon."

I've heard people compare their colon to a stopped up drain. It is somewhat similar but at the same time very different. For example, in order for poisons to build up anywhere in the body there are numerous natural defense mechanisms, aberrant, compensatory physiologic changes, and many organs that are weakened and compromised. It is important to remember that a state of toxicity will always be accompanied by some degree of organ malfunction that will need to be addressed in order to safely detoxify. The organs that are required to function in order to detoxify are already overtaxed.

Therefore, I highly recommend professional guidance and appropriate testing. In my three decades of experience I have found that a nervous system-based technique, such as pulse energy technique (PET), administered by a qualified natural healthcare doctor is the best starting point. If you need more information about this check the information online or give us a call at the health center. (info@AskDrRon.com, Cherubino Health Center toll-free 800 - 554 - 3776)

X. Anti-Inflammatory Diet

An anti-inflammatory diet is beneficial in any condition where chronic or acute inflammation of a body part or tissue is present. This can include muscles, joints, sinuses, colon, stomach, vasculitis, lymphatic system, liver, heart or any internal organ or tissue.

By way of example, an inflamed intervertebral disk (the cushions in between the bones of the spine), depends on a healthy blood supply and lymph drainage in order to function properly. Should this structure become injured, the demand on these functions increases dramatically. The fact is many people find out that they have insufficient blood and lymph function only when they have difficulty healing from an injury or they have developed a chronic inflammatory condition.

Recommended Diet Changes:

Add:

Water -- 8 to 12, 8-ounce glasses of pure water per day

Increase intake of raw and steamed non-starchy vegetables (including green leafy vegetables)

Fresh fruits

Whole grains and brown rice,

Lean meats such as chicken

Cold water fish and walnuts, which are a great source of omega 3's

Avoid:

Refined sugars

White flour

Pasteurized milk products

Salty foods

Refined and processed foods, (deli meats, hot dogs, sausages containing nitrites, high-fat meats, fast foods, and sodas).

Alcoholic drinks -- beer, wine, spirits

Inordinate emotional stress

Recommended "health" drinks: (one drink per day)

Recipe #1 -- 10 ounces of pure water with one tablespoon of organic, unheated and unprocessed cider vinegar

Recipe #2 -- 8 ounces of raw carrot juice (either by itself or with any combination of cucumber, celery, zucchini and/or summer squash mixed in).

Supplementation:

1. Essential Oils -- flax, borage and/or fish oil (purified, heavy metal free)
2. Bromelain -- 500 mg two to three times per day
3. AP vitamin C (fat-soluble C) -- 1000 mg per day
4. Multivitamin mineral supplement (nutrient 950) -- 4 to 6 per day
5. Turmeric
6. Ginger