**Blog Post #1**

**What Is Behind the Autoimmunity Epidemic?**

**"Leaky Gut"-Intestinal Permeability and The Autoimmune Triad**

This blog post is designed to share essential information and to answer specific questions that individuals suffering from an autoimmune disease commonly have. More information is available on the blog post video - What is behind the Autoimmunity Epidemic - Found on our website @centerfornaturalhealthcareredwing.com.

1. **Introduction: what is autoimmunity?**

Autoimmunity is when your body's immune system/defense system attacks your tissues and organs, resulting in injury and destruction of tissues, leading to a loss of health**.**

1. **How common is autoimmune disease?**

It is estimated that more than 23.5 million Americans suffer from an autoimmune disease, making it the third most common illness category in the United States after cancer and heart disease.

1. **What are some of the most common autoimmune diseases that people suffer from?**

* Hashimoto's thyroiditis-hypothyroidism
* Rheumatoid Arthritis
* Sjogren's disease
* Scleroderma
* Celiac Disease and other inflammatory bowel diseases, such as ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease
* Psoriasis/psoriatic arthritis
* Multiple Sclerosis
* Systemic Lupus Erythematosus
* Mixed Connective Tissue Disease
* etc.

1. **How many different types of autoimmune diseases are there?**

According to the Autoimmune Association, there are over 100 autoimmune diseases, many occurring in clusters. Clusters mean that more than one autoimmune condition or disease develops after the initial one starts. So, for instance, a person develops Hashimoto's thyroid disease and then celiac disease shortly thereafter.

1. **Is an autoimmune disease at epidemic proportions?**

Many researchers say that autoimmune disease has become a modern epidemic, affecting more people than heart disease and cancer combined.

1. **Is autoimmune disease easy to diagnose?**

No, autoimmune diseases have a "mixed bag" of presenting symptoms that don't seem to fit together. Because of the complexity of symptomatology related to autoimmune disease, patient presentation can oftentimes be very confusing. This is why it takes the average person five years and visiting at least five different doctors before they receive a diagnosis of autoimmunity. Because of the confusing symptom presentation of most autoimmune diseases, many patients with autoimmune disease, very few medical doctors, and even natural holistic doctors know how to identify, properly screen for, or treat autoimmune diseases.

1. **What causes the development of autoimmune disease?**

This is the most important question I've been waiting to answer today for all those listening! This is the conversation I have with all patients struggling with a diagnosis of autoimmune disease or those we are screening for autoimmune disease or autoimmune activity.

It is called the Autoimmune Triad, or the three underlying factors predisposing an individual to the development of autoimmune disease. The autoimmune Triad was first identified by Dr. Alessio Fasano, MD, a world-renowned gastroenterologist, and medical researcher. I have modified the concept as follows:

The way I like to describe the autoimmune Triad is to think of it as a three-legged stool-

* The seat of the stool is whatever autoimmune disease an individual is suffering from.
* Leg 1 of the three-legged stool is an individual's Genetics. Genetics is genetically-DNA inherited from an individual's parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, etc. Therefore, there is often a family history of autoimmune disease in the family.
* Leg 2 of the three-legged stool is known as "triggers." Numerous triggers create an environment for the development of autoimmune disease. Common triggers include alcohol consumption, food additives, a variety of environmental toxins that we all are exposed to in our water, pesticides in food, food allergens, medications, drugs, stress, etc. Researchers have found more than 200 measurable chemical toxins in newborn umbilical cord blood.
* Leg 3 of the three-legged stool is "leaky gut,"- also known as intestinal permeability in the medical literature. "Leaky Gut" is when the small intestine's lining becomes damaged and injured, leading to the breakdown of the single-cell lining. The resulting inflammatory injury creates microscopic holes in and between the cells, allowing uninvited food particles-also known as antigens- and microorganisms, such as viruses, bacteria, parasites, and yeast, to leak into the bloodstream. This creates an adverse immune response in the bloodstream, which has been associated with igniting the autoimmune process in an individual's body.

1. **What treatment can be done for autoimmune disease? Is there any help?**

Medical help for autoimmune disease consists of prescription drugs such as corticosteroids and immune-modulating medications such as chemotherapy to dampen or squelch the immune system's attack against the body tissues. The medical approach has minimal results and does not begin to address the Autoimmune Triad discussed in question number seven which includes genetics, triggers, or intestinal permeability - "leaky gut" syndrome.

Our approach is decidedly different; early intervention is always best. An ANA-antinuclear antibody test in conjunction with tissue-specific or disease-specific antibody testing is also recommended when autoimmune is suspected.

Our approach includes the following safe, natural steps:

* Identify all food sensitivities determined through lab testing-pinpointing food sensitivities/ allergies.
* Eat allergy-free whole, unprocessed foods-low lectin content preferred.
* Naturally treat and address infections and bad bug overgrowth's-G.I. stool testing assessment.
* Rebalance your inner intestinal ecology with prebiotic, probiotic, and post-biotics-rich foods and nutrients.
* Improve, support, and boost digestive health.
* Consume sufficient levels of healthy fats in the diet, including omega-3s.
* Repair "leaky gut"; intestinal permeability microscopic holes.

**Key Point**

*The American Journal of Pathology, November 2008, states that "the autoimmune process can be arrested if the interplay between genes and environmental triggers is prevented by reestablishing intestinal barrier competency."*

If you have questions regarding autoimmune disease, the Autoimmune Triad, "leaky gut," food sensitivity testing, G.I. stool testing, or anything else discussed in this blog, please visit our website at www.centerfornaturalhealthcarered wing.com to schedule a no-charge 15 minutes telehealth or telephone consultation or call us at 651-388-1211 to schedule your appointment today.

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