



# DR. BEA'S August 2001 NEWSLETTER

## Wheat and Other Food Sensitivities

Many of you know how shrill I can become when you tell me that you just "can't give up wheat." Well, the following just may change your mind about the malevolent power of a wheat sensitivity: Wheat can destroy your brain. Do I have your attention now? "Gluten sensitivity appears to be a cause of ataxia or altered gait and limb movement problems, (eg. staggering drunkenly with no martinis in your system) even in the absence of gastrointestinal symptoms of celiac disease." (This last part means you don't have any convenient warning system of your wheat allergy via gas, or fatigue or many of the other symptoms that a wheat sensitivity can produce.)

"Neurologic examination revealed peripheral neuropathy (numbness and/or tingling in hands and/or feet) in 19 of the 28 patients, and MRI showed evidence of cerebellar atrophy in six. The new data suggests that the severity of this manifestation may increase with disease duration, and that the immunologic damage to the cerebellum may be irreversible. Some of the patients in whom the diagnosis of gluten ataxia was made experienced complete resolution of their symptoms after strict adherence to a gluten-free diet." *Townsend Letter, Feb/Mar, 1999*

Here's the scenario: It seems to come out of nowhere – the stumbling and the tripping. Of course, you get scared and think you have something terminal and horri-

ble. You make an appointment with a neurologist who puts you through lots of expensive and uncomfortable tests. She comes up with nothing and gives you a very broad diagnosis like "cerebellar ataxia, etiology unknown" and gives you a referral to a psychiatrist. You are back to square one, and no one has tested you for a wheat allergy. Except maybe me or someone like me.

Regarding Ataxias: Since we are speaking of these stumbling disorders, there is a hereditary one called Familial Cerebellar Ataxia – of which I believe my father had a mild form. Either that or an undiagnosed wheat allergy. Mayo Clinic put him through a battery of tests in the 60's and found nothing.

Wheat allergies tend to run in families, especially those families of Northern European ancestry (I am wheat sensitive and of Northern European ancestry) and it could be that

this "hereditary" and "familial" ataxia is yet another undiagnosed wheat allergy wreaking havoc through generations of unsuspecting people.

The cerebellum, which is the part of the brain that orchestrates all movement, for some reason develops transmission problems in the signals that coordinate muscles. Nobody has known what to do with the nonspecific ataxias. Could it be – more specifically – wheat? However, *Science News* reports in its April 21, 2001 issue that one of my favorite supplements of all time – CoQ10 – improves this particular ataxia, dramatically liber-

ating the disabled from their wheelchairs. This could lead us to infer that some ataxias may be a result of an oxygen deficit in the mitochondria (little cell engines). CoQ10, being a first class oxygen carrier, would restore the oxygen in the mitochondria. I can only wonder if my father's symptoms would have improved or even disappeared with the simple elimination of wheat and the addition of 200 mgs of CoQ10 daily.

To further scare you to death, researchers have also made a connection between long-standing gluten sensitivity and a variety of senile dementias, including Alzheimer's disease. (*Jeff Bland, Ph.D. Aging Seminar, 1999*)

Gluten intolerance can also trigger a systemic antibody response which can inflame brain tissue and lead to headaches. Gluten is not only in wheat, but in rye, barley and oats as well. Researchers at the Royal Hallamshire Hospital, England, described 10 patients with headaches and unsteadiness who also had abnormal MRI's. (*Neurology, 2/13/01*) The symptoms of 9 patients improved after removing all gluten from their diets. They adhered to a gluten-free diet for six months which is how long it takes the nasty antibodies to be eliminated and the sensitivity reactions to calm down. (You can't just give up wheat for a few days and expect symptoms to change – it takes a while.)

Here's the rub: You never know when you will sensitize to wheat gluten. It can happen at any moment, with any bite of sourdough bread, and you may not really be aware of it in any noticeable way, as a wheat allergy can masquerade as many different things – as trivial as some lower



## Letter to the Editor:

Dear Dr. Bea: I have a client who can't sleep. What would you suggest?

—JR from Palo Alto

Dear JR: This sleeplessness thing isn't all that easy, JR. First of all, does your client have sleep onset, sleep maintenance, (wake up several times a night) or early morning awakening? Just nice to know, although all three are treated similarly.

The obvious: How is the diet? Often I find that food allergies will affect sleep patterns. Try eliminating the most common allergens like wheat, sugar, milk, and corn. Vegan would be best for awhile. Stop all caffeine or at least after noon o'clock. Eliminate all drugs and alcohol.

Are there electromagnetic problems? Is this person in front of the computer 4-6 hours a day? Often when the body is compromised with EMFs, the "dead" brain tries to jump start itself by periods of hyperactivity. For the EMF problem, I would recommend sleeping in a pitch black room, getting special shades if necessary. Remove all electrical stuff within 6 feet of the head, and don't use one of those red LED alarm clocks: When you open your eyes in a dark room and see the clock's red LED staring out at you, the brain's pineal gland stops squirting out all the good hormones, thinks it's time to get up and won't work for the rest of the night.

Any dysbiosis ("dysfunctional biology" or bugs in your body that don't belong there) can keep you up, too. Make sure you don't have parasites, yeast, fungus, molds or chemicals disturbing you.

Stop all late afternoon exercise, but make sure to get some exercise during sunlight hours. Spend time in the sun – about a 1/2 hour minimum – without anything between your eyes and sunlight (no contacts, sunglasses or regular glasses) as this will reset the circadian clock in the brain's pineal gland which I find is always muddled up in sleep issues.

Try the lavender bath routine before bed, and don't have a conversation with your TV at night, as this fake light will disturb the brain waves. Try a protein-tryptophan rich snack before bed, like turkey or hot milk. Try 1 gram of niacinamide before bed – this works especially well on the sleep maintenance problem. Get some liquid calcium-magnesium and take a slug (about 1T) before bed. Very often, just the addition of some calming minerals can stop the sleeplessness cycle.

I have two products that I suggest for sleeplessness: One is called Sedaplus from Thorne Research and it

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## Syndrome X: A Huge Problem

What is it? Some hallmarks of this pre-diabetic condition are: Abdominal obesity (apple shaped) hypertension (anything over 145/90), hyperlipidemias and increased uric acid. In laboratory analyses we see increases in LDL's and triglycerides, C-reactive protein, cortisol levels and glucose levels and decreases in HDL, antioxidant levels and DHEA.

How do you know you may have it? Are you developing a pot belly? Do you crave carbohydrates or do you eat a lot of pasta, pizza, bread or cereal? Do you have a fasting glucose of over 100? Do you take medications to lower blood pressure, cholesterol, reduce weight or lower blood sugar?

Many of us are of the "thrifty genotype" which just means that we have the genetic predilection to store fat and salt. We thrifties don't handle sugar and refined carbohydrates very well either. Paradoxically, and to the chagrin of many unsuccessful dieters, the more the thrifty starves, the more fat the body will deposit. Furthermore, we are not eating evolutionarily - refined carbohydrates dominate our diets. To my knowledge there were no Krispy Kreme stores in the Pleistocene. Furthermore, many of the foods we eat combine the dreaded trio of sugar, fat and refined carbohydrates: The main promoter of Syndrome X is your diet.

What is the physiology behind Syndrome X? Too many sugars and carbohydrates create an increase in glucose. The pancreas then secretes insulin to carry glucose into the cells. The glucose is then either burned for energy (chasing the woolly mammoth for your food or being chased by the sabre tooth tiger for its food) or it is stored by the liver as glycogen – "for the lean times" – of which there are none in modern day America.

Too much insulin for too long a time overwhelms the insulin receptors which in turn become "resistant" or insensitive and they then start ignoring the call to neutralize glucose so the

liver misbehaves and starts dumping glucose into the blood stream. The blood glucose rises and bingo – lots of bad stuff starts happening, like auto-intoxication from too much unused sugar, insomnia, snoring, skewed blood chemistries, weight gain, depressed immunity, decreased mental clarity.

A rather disturbing result of hyperinsulinemia in women is Polycystic Ovary Syndrome. For some reason, the ovaries – under ordinary circumstances, not insulin sensitive – seem to take the brunt of the increased loads of sugar in the body and start creating cysts. No one really knows why. Some of the diagnostic criteria for PCOS is acne, excessive hair growth (due to increased testosterone), truncal obesity and abnormal menses. Since PCOS is an indicator of increased risk for endometrial and breast cancer, it's wise to diagnose early: Fixing the insulin problem will usually help the PCOS. (*Gerald Reaven M.D. in an interview with Jeffrey Bland, July 2001. Also, Alternative Medical Review, Vol. 6, Number 3, 2001*)

You might want to check your fasting insulin levels: 3-6 is normal, if it is 6-10 you are developing a problem, if it is over 10 you are considered insulin resistant. You can ask me or your M.D. to order this lab test for you. (NB. There is also a "metabolically obese, normal weight" Syndrome X where you may not be overweight – which is usually the hallmark for hyperinsulinemia – yet you may still have biochemical abnormalities. So, don't think because you don't have any of the hallmark symptoms, you aren't insulin resistant.)

Note: It would be better for an insulin resistant person – the Syndrome X person – to eat a plate of lard than a plate of sugar!

What can I do about it? First of all don't starve or try to juice fast your body into submission. You should just assume you are of the thrifty genotype

in which case your body will get panicky, shift into starvation mode and start storing everything you put in your mouth, even those 600 pathetic calories from your carrot sticks and celery diet. In fact, if you are ever hungry, miserable or feel deprived, I can guarantee that you are eating wrong. You can eat lots and lots of food, but it has to be the right kind of food. You also must eat your foods in certain combinations for maximum digestive efficiency. I have a food combination chart. Ask me for it at your next visit or send me a \$1 and a SASE.

**EXERCISE:** 30 minutes daily until you are breathing hard and sweating.

**DRINK WATER:** At least 64 oz daily.

**PRACTICE MEDITATION OR YOGA:** On a daily basis.

**CHANGE THE WAY YOU EAT:** Try Sugar Busters or Atkins or one I can give you in which I have combined several food plans. I know it works because it worked for me.

**BE TESTED FOR SUPPLEMENTS:** These may include alpha-lipoic acid, Vit E, Vit C, Chromium, Milk Thistle, Flax or fish oil, L-Glutamine, CoQ10, Magnesium, Manganese, Selenium, Gymnema Sylvestre, Fenugreek, Bitter Melon.

Start now eliminating the concept of DIETING. This is not dieting. This is a healthy food plan for life and this is the way you should approach it. It will take some time to make the switch to healthy eating – old habits die hard – but six months or a year from now you will feel fantastic and wonder why you didn't do it sooner.

As with any new eating program, you must always be prepared to give yourself every possible opportunity to allow your new food plan to take permanent effect. Here are 6 convenient tips that may eliminate the need for you to veer off the road at the nearest MacDonalds in a weak moment of dizziness and low blood sugar.

1) Don't skip meals: This is a recipe for failure. Make sure you eat allowable snacks so you never feel too hungry.

2) Don't adopt an "all or nothing" mentality: If you do succumb to a Big Mac and fries, don't let that isolated event convince you that you might as well give up because you've blown it. "The key to success is persistence, not perfection." (*Michele Bloomquist, 1999*)

3) Plan Ahead: This is perhaps the most important tip. Make a list of groceries you need ahead of time, buy them and cook meals ahead. This way you won't be tempted – out of laziness and unpreparedness – to eat out.

4) Drink a lot of water: Take a bottle every where you go. The hard plastic Nalgene quart bottles are handy and the hard plastic makes them healthier (although not as healthy as glass) inasmuch as the nasty feminizing phthalates won't leach out into your water and turn boys into girls, like it's doing to the fish in polluted streams. Water will flush toxins and wastes out of the cells of your body, leaving you cleaner and leaner.

5) Don't ever do anything "radical:" Just keep on keeping on, plodding along, putting one foot in front of the other for however long it takes to change your bad eating habits. I'm sure you've heard the old adage, "a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single footstep."

6) Don't forget your very own personal reasons for wanting to change the way you eat: Getting healthy, losing weight, feeling better and having more energy, wearing a size 6, finding your man, finding your woman, being more clear-headed, lookin' good in your bikini in Cancun in January. Just keep your eye on the goal whatever it is for you.

Suggested reading: *Lights Out* by T.S. Wiley

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contains kava kava, valerian, hops, passiflora and chamomile. Take this product about 1 hour before bed. Another good product is 5-hydroxy-tryptophan. This one is very good for sleep maintenance: When you wake up in the middle of the night, grab your bottle of 5HTP, take about 150-200 mg and soon you will be back to sleep.

You will find all sorts of homeopathic products at the health food store with intriguing names like "Insomnia," "Quiet Rest," "Anxiety." You will be tempted to buy all of them. Don't. They are useless. (My humble opinion.)

## Ten Deadly Sins

(Paraphrased from Robert Nash, M.D. in Townsend Letter, May 2001.)

Ten Deadly sins as reported by the Federation of State Medical Boards. This, of course, is the allopathic/conventional viewpoint and they think that the following 10 are useless if not unconscionable treatment methods:

- 1) Chelation Therapy
- 2) Electronic Diagnostic Devices
- 3) Any Clinical Ecology diagnosis especially Candida
- 4) Vitamin/Mineral/Herbal sales in physician's offices or anywhere else for that matter
- 5) Homeopathy
- 6) Prolotherapy
- 7) Laboratory Tests (squirrely tests by squirrely doctors.)
- 8) Diagnosis of chronic fatigue (bizarre practitioners using bizarre tests)
- 9) Unorthodox cancer treatments
- 10) Unholy alliance between physicians and chiropractors for disability; questionable treatments for pain.

Dr. Nash—who appears to be a more liberal-variety allopath—responded to the allopathic ten deadly sins by creating his own "10 deadly sins of conventional medicine."

- 1) Invasive coronary artery treatments
- 2) Cytotoxic cancer treatments
- 3) Overuse of prescription medications
- 4) Under use of nutritional supplements and vitamins
- 5) Undertreatment of sleep disturbances
- 6) Current treatment of diabetes mellitus
- 7) Inappropriate hospitalizations near the end of life
- 8) Overmedication while in the hospital
- 9) Inappropriate treatment of pain
- 10) Dearth of outcomes based on research on non-conventional treatment modalities

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bowel gas now and again or a headache that won't go away or as serious as schizophrenia or ataxia or early dementia.

As you go merrily along eating the free bread specials at Great Harvest, your wheat allergy will be silently stripping your gut lining of its tiny villi. These little guys – graceful like the seaweeds waving in the currents of the Caribbean – allow us to absorb nutrients, and when they are gone, there ain't no getting the goodies out of the organic food that you so carefully buy and prepare. This permeable gut is called Leaky Gut Syndrome, from which you will eventually get massive nutrient deficiencies which then will give you major diseases which may or may not relate to your gut. For example, breast cancer has been implicated in leaky gut syndrome (caused by your wheat allergy) as has rheumatoid arthritis and almost all the auto-immune disorders. So you see that wheat allergies can be devastating, long reaching, slow, silent and deadly.

The good news is that Leaky Gut isn't necessarily permanent and the devastating sequelae from your wheat allergy is also not permanent. In fact, by eliminating wheat – and this is the

toughie since we are such a wheat-based society – and rebuilding your gut, overtime you can usually reverse all the damage. Start now.

Food allergies continued: Another problem with not honoring your food sensitivities – not just wheat – is that it will increase blood levels of eosinophils, which are the white blood cells that are clinical benchmarks for allergic reactions and parasites. Researchers report in the April *Nature Immunology* that “allergic reactions to food coincide with an accumulation of eosinophils in the small intestine” and furthermore, such a buildup “contributes to intestinal inflammation, damage to nearby nerves, weight loss and stoppage of digestion.” This may be why some people feel so horrible after eating due to the rush of the eosinophils to sites in the gut that have released granules that contain toxins from the ingested sensitive foods.

Similar to the cleanup work Pauly Walnuts does for Tony Soprano, these beneficent little eosinophils are just trying to clean up our messes by getting the balance of power back to where it should be. But when we indulge ourselves in our food allergies, the eosinophils are so busy trying to

handle the allergic reactions, they don't have time to do their really important job which is cleaning up parasites and their debris. This is why I find that people who are allergic to foods and are still eating them are always overwhelmed with parasites and yeast (which seems to be a symbiont of parasites). This deadly duo spells major ill health. My advice to you: Find out what foods you are sensitive to and stop eating them. Clean up the parasites and yeast. And take digestive enzymes for life

Regarding the oldie but goodie Coca's pulse test: This is an easy way to figure out what foods aren't particularly good for you. Measure your pulse rate – on your wrist in the usual place – before you have the food that you suspect you may be sensitive to. Eat the food. Twenty minutes later take your pulse again. Irregular beats, increased pulse pressure or more than a ten beat increase is a good sign that your body is rebelling against the food you just put in your mouth. Do you get throat phlegm after eating? Fatigue or sleepiness within two hours after eating? Brain fog or depression? These are all key signs of a food sensitivity.

## Newsblips

**Lung Cancer** is the leading cause of cancer death among American women. Statistics show that lung cancer kills 68,000 women annually compared with 48,000 for breast cancer, and accounts for 1 in 4 cancer deaths among American women. The majority of these deaths are preventable, as smoking is almost always the cause. About a quarter of all American women smoke. (*Johns Hopkins Medical Letter*, July 2001)

**Backyard Barbecues:** It's August and it's prime grillin' time, but of course there is a downside to that wonderful slab of organic grilled London Broil, or grilled halibut or even

your assorted grilled vegetables. And it's called PAH's or polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons which is what is released when you grill stuff over hot coals. PAH's are carcinogens and it is wise to reduce your exposure to them. But it's easy. First of all, just marinate all your grilled foods. For some unknown reason, any kind of acidic marinade (add lemon or vinegar or orange juice) reduces the release of PAH's by as much as 99%. And secondly, force yourself to cut off and discard all the delicious charred portions on the meat/fish/veggies. Just say no to charred PAH's!

Please feel free to email me at [beakj@earthlink.net](mailto:beakj@earthlink.net) with your questions and suggestions.  
I guarantee privacy on all matters, and will try to answer all of you personally.

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Dr. Bea Knight-Johnson, D.C. • 948 North Street, Suite 1. • Boulder, CO 80304 • 303-440-6526

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