

## FOOD ALLERGIES, SENSITIVITIES AND LEAKY GUT SYNDROME

Adapted from the book, [Hope for Health](#), by Dr. Scott Monk

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### LEAKY GUT SYNDROME

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Decades of ingesting refined sugars, bad fats, and processed foods—the ‘sweets and grease’ of the Standard American Diet—will inevitably lead to functional problems of all kinds. The lining of the small intestine simply cannot withstand this toxic barrage indefinitely. With every bite of processed food, the immune system increases its activity, ramping up its output of macrophages, phagocytes, and eosinophils, which are the cells responsible for cleaning up the mess. As the response increases, it challenges the stability of the small intestine. Ultimately, the lining transforms for the worse. What was once a tightly knit cellular wall allowing only selected items to move past, now contains gaping holes through which entire proteins pass directly into the blood stream.

Proteins leaking, or translocating, into the blood stream cause a further burst of immune system activity. Antibodies form and attach themselves indiscriminately to everything that comes down the pipe. This means that people with a leaky gut are often allergic to a majority of what they eat. Even the simplest foods, like brown rice and green vegetables, can cause severe bloating and abdominal pain.

Leaky Gut Syndrome is the slippery slope of functional illness. If left unattended, digestive trouble will soon spill over, causing strain on the liver, kidneys, and bladder. These are the detoxification organs responsible for cleaning up the waste products of digestion. With an inflamed small intestine, they must now work around the clock to eliminate the massive load of chemical waste products produced by the restless immune system, creating a state of auto-intoxication. Signs of poor detoxification will always manifest in those with an inflamed digestive tract. Allergies, chemical sensitivities, digestive complaints of all kinds, headaches, brain fog, memory loss, and fatigue are all common.

Long before the gut can become leaky, a natural barrier must first be overcome. The microflora, or flora for short, is the name for all the good bacteria of the intestines. Up to 700 kinds of organisms make up the approximately five pounds worth of floral material. Acting as a semi-organ, the flora is responsible for helping the body make certain B vitamins and for assisting the immune system by keeping parasites, bad bacteria, and yeast in check. However, this first line of defense has vulnerabilities.

Antibiotics, alcohol, caffeine, food preservatives and additives, and infections from other foods and beverages will all lead to changes in the gut flora. Other chemicals, such as birth control pills and prescription or over-the-counter pain medications add further insult to injury. When ratios of good

to bad bacteria become altered significantly, the flora enters a state called dysbiosis. If not addressed quickly, Leaky Gut Syndrome will soon follow.

Chemicals, both from normal metabolic processes and from the diet, create free radicals through oxidation. As explained in the chapter, *The Fountain of Youth & Anti-Aging*, this constant bombardment drains the body of the important antioxidant glutathione. Once its levels are depleted the tissue-destroying agent iNOS runs rampant. Its presence is directly related to Leaky Gut Syndrome and autoimmune disease.

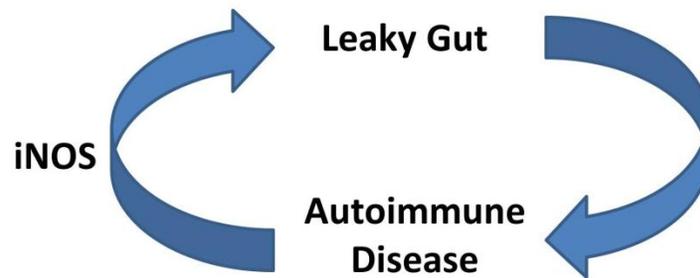


Figure 1: Vicious Cycle of iNOS

From the standpoint of hormetic nutrients, Leaky Gut Syndrome often leads to several mineral deficiencies, including magnesium, zinc, copper, calcium, boron, silicon, and manganese. Even if these minerals are high in the diet, they may not be getting to their target tissues. The inflamed linings of the small intestine disrupt the normal attachment of a mineral to its carrier protein - the taxi that drives the mineral to the cell hotel. Abandoned minerals never make it out of the gut. Fibromyalgia patients, those with chronic whole-body pain and fatigue, consistently demonstrate low red blood cell magnesium even with high magnesium consumption through diet and supplementation.

Once the gut becomes leaky, just taking deficient minerals will not be enough to help. The gut wall must first be healed. Herbs such as slippery elm bark,<sup>i</sup> marshmallow root<sup>ii</sup> and deglycyrrhizinated licorice<sup>iii</sup> gently repair the mucosal linings of the small intestine.

Functional medicine doctors believe a healthy gut equals a healthy person. They are right. Without a healthy digestive system, overcoming chronic illness is simply not possible. So, proper nutrition is critical. However, all the best nutraceuticals in the world will do nothing to correct Leaky Gut Syndrome if the diet is not changed.

A diet designed to heal Leaky Gut Syndrome would be free of processed and preservative-filled foods, which would protect the gut from dysbiosis. To prevent blood sugar spikes and insulin surges, it would be low in sweet foods and be protein-based. It would be absent of gluten and most other grains, which would prevent autoimmune reactions. To reduce cellular inflammation, it would

contain plenty of natural unheated oils. Finally, it would be full of a variety of colored foods to increase antioxidant activity.

## FOOD ALLERGIES

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As mentioned above, an overactive immune system will target whatever passes by. This includes food. Food allergies in civilized countries are increasing at a steady rate. In 2007, around three million children had allergic reactions to food. This number represents an 18 percent increase in just a decade.<sup>iv</sup> Wondering why this is so, researchers are rightly looking to the flora for answers. Not surprisingly, big differences are present in the flora of those with or without food allergies.<sup>v</sup> However, the flora is just one piece, albeit an important one, of a much bigger functional picture.

Diet determines flora. The bacteria composition of those who eat a diet of mostly vegetables and whole grains will look much different than the flora of those who eat a plethora of refined and processed foods. In the latter case, the gut environment is an ideal place for inflammation and food allergies to spawn.

Food allergies can range in severity from a gas-producing nuisance to a life-threatening anaphylactic reaction.<sup>vi</sup> No matter the intensity, food allergies always elicit an inflammatory response. The continuous ingestion of foods strenuous to the digestive tract leads to a hypersensitive immune system. Hypersensitivity is a dangerous thing. Doctors can find the symptoms of it in those who swell, itch, and break out in hives for “no apparent reason.” In time, these temporary discomforts will likely mature into something much worse. In many cases, arthritis, for instance, directly relates to food allergies, a phenomenon studied for more than 50 years.<sup>vii</sup> The foods most associated with arthritis include the following things: corn, wheat, pork, oranges, milk, eggs, beef, and coffee.<sup>viii</sup> Scariest still are the autoimmune diseases that are emerging in epidemic-like proportions. This topic is discussed in the chapter *Infection or Autoimmunity?*

## FOOD SENSITIVITIES

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From a functional illness perspective, a true food allergy need not be present in order for foods to cause damage. Many people suffer from food-related ailments even though blood analysis does not reveal antibodies, which define a true allergy. Foods can become troublesome simply by eating the same thing too often. There is no such thing as a perfect food. This means the body will need to use some degree of resources in the form of hormetic nutrients to process and eliminate food. This is true for the good foods as well, such as spinach and broccoli.

Healthy foods often have high levels of specific nutrients, like iron in spinach for example. This may sound good at first. However, in a patient low in zinc or copper, excess iron would be detrimental. FBA practitioners have reported that mysterious joint pains, nose bleeds, uterine cramping, and headaches have all abated simply by having the patient stop eating spinach. This, of course, does not mean that people should remove spinach from the dinner table. It simply illustrates that people need to use wisdom in all things. It also indicates that the food proverbs of the past are safe to challenge. What is good for one may be harmful to another.

## TREATING ALLERGIES AND SENSITIVITIES

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The immune system generates all the symptoms associated with an allergy or sensitivity. If these reactions were slowed or halted, the symptoms would necessarily abate. Treating allergies and sensitivities is possible in impressive fashion via natural techniques designed to override the typical allergic response. N.A.E.T.,<sup>ix</sup> BioSet,<sup>x</sup> Acupuncture,<sup>xi</sup> laser therapy, specialized chiropractic procedures,<sup>xii</sup> and certain forms of energy balancing<sup>xiii</sup> are all viable options based essentially on the same fundamental idea.

Step 1 is to expose the patient to the allergen itself in order to initiate a mild immune response. The safest way to do this is either to have the patient hold the offending substance in his hand or to simply place it on the body as the person reclines in a relaxed position. This method prevents any potential extreme reactions or anaphylaxis that could occur if the individual tasted or smelled the substance. The proximity of the substance is more than enough stimulation via the electromagnetic matrix for recognition by the nervous and immune systems (see the section *Everything is Electromagnetic* for more details). Once the body detects the substance, the immune system takes action, but the reaction is in a much milder than if the person ingested the substance. It is this low level response that makes Step 2 possible.

Step 2 is to override the immune response with another, more powerful stimulation. This action desensitizes the immune system to the substance. What is important is that the new stimuli be greater than the irritation of the allergic substance and, just as importantly, that the stimuli focuses on organs or tissues related to the immune system. Just adhering to these rules has resulted in remarkable success with natural allergy treatments. FBA can do even better.

The more precise a treatment can be, the better the overall outcome. A sensitive or allergic food will generally cause a strong muscle to weaken if it is on or near the body. When the test muscle weakens, the FBA practitioner can search for the PEP that restores strength. The energetic point that manifests is unique to the patient; it is not likely to be the same for everyone, even if they have the same allergy. Each body reveals which energetic point will do the most good counteracting the allergen. Not surprisingly, paying attention to the specific requirements of the body provides superior results when compared to those with a one-size-fits-all approach.

The anecdotal and laboratory evidence for the effectiveness of natural allergy elimination is abundant. So much so, that many books cover the topic and natural clinics that specialize exclusively in allergies have been opening up everywhere.

Desensitization protocols may be the only hope for relief from allergy symptoms for those with multiple underlying issues. Of course, their effectiveness is greatly enhanced by a holistic approach. A good place to start to produce the best overall result is to do whatever possible to reduce inflammation. Remember, all allergies are inflammatory. Inflammation is like a fire. An influx of water can put out a fire, as can removing the fuel it needs to burn. Stresses of all kinds, like blood sugar and hormonal imbalances, are the fuel. Hormetic nutrients and corrective lifestyle changes are the water. By reducing stress through diet, exercise, and detoxification, people take away the fire's fuel. Doing this at the same time quality nutritional therapy is begun is a sure way to fix the trouble and to prepare the body for allergy elimination techniques.

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<sup>i</sup> Gill RE, Hirst EL, Jones JK. Constitution of the Mucilage from the Bark of *Ulmus Fulva* (slippery elm mucilage); the Sugars Formed in the Hydrolysis of the Methylated Mucilage. *J Chem Soc.* 1946 Nov:1025-9.

<sup>ii</sup> Deters A, Zippel J, Hellenbrand N, Pappai D, Possemeyer C, Hensel A. Aqueous Extracts and Polysaccharides from Marshmallow roots (*Althea officinalis* L.): cellular Internalisation and Stimulation of Cell Physiology of Human Epithelial Cells in Vitro. *J Ethnopharmacol.* 2010 Jan 8;127(1):62-9.

<sup>iii</sup> Marks IN, Boyd E. Mucosal Protective Agents in the Long-Term Management of Gastric Ulcer. *Med J Aust.* 1985 Feb 4;142(3):S23-5.

<sup>iv</sup> Food Allergies. <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/foodallergies/>

<sup>v</sup> Landau, Elizabeth. Why are Food Allergies on the Rise? <http://www.cnn.com/2010/HEALTH/08/03/food.allergies.er.gut/?hpt=C2>

<sup>vi</sup> US Food and Drug Administration. Food Allergies: What You Need to Know. <http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/ucm079311.htm>.

<sup>vii</sup> Turnbull, JA. "Changes in Sensitivity to Allergenic Foods in Arthritis." *Am J. Dig. Dis* 1994; 11:182

<sup>viii</sup> Brownstein, David. *Overcoming Arthritis.* Medical Alternative Press, West Bloomfield MI, 2001. P. 141

<sup>ix</sup> Nambudripad Allergy Elimination Technique; <http://www.naet.com>

<sup>x</sup> BioSet; <http://www.drellencutler.com>

<sup>xi</sup> Nambudripad, Devi. *Say Goodbye To Your Allergies.* 2003

<sup>xii</sup> Brimhall, John. *Six Steps to Wellness.* <http://www.brimhallwellnesscenter.com>

<sup>xiii</sup> Cutler, Ellen. *Live Free from Asthma and Allergies: Use the BioSET System to Detoxify and Desensitize Your Body.* Celestial Arts, Berkeley CA; 2007.