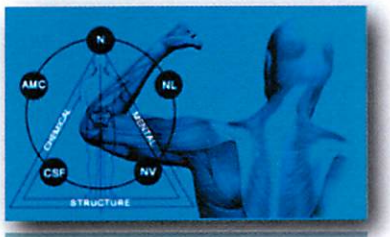
FROM THE INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE OF APPLIED KINESIOLOGY - USA CHAPTER VOLUME 3, ISSUE 2

Pathways To Health



A Healthcare and Selfcare Newsletter From The International College of Applied Kinesiology - USA Chapter

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Your doctor of applied kinesiology is uniquely trained and qualified to provide care for the health issues covered in this newsletter.

Please share this newsletter with friends and family!

*The information in this newsletter is not intended to diagnose or treat the individual.

Food reactions are a common cause of a multitude of chronic health problems

Food Allergy vs Food Sensitivity vs Food Intolerance

Food Allergy vs Food Sensitivity
Many patients ask me the simple question, "What's the difference between a food allergy and a food sensitivity?" It is easy to assume they are the same, yet there is actually a considerable difference.

When the term food allergy is said the images of a person's throat closing after eating a peanut, or a rash some children get after eating strawberries come to mind. A food allergy can be caused by even the smallest exposure to the offending food. Sensitivities often have less noticeable symptoms, but are just as destructive.

What is a Food Allergy?
When one consumes a food they are allergic to an immune response occurs. The response is due to the blood antibody, IgE. This type of reaction typically occurs very soon after eating the food and is easily noticeable. Examples of the allergic response includes eczema, rashes, anaphylaxis, etc. A food allergy is not typically life threatening, but can be in certain cases, so it needs to be approached with extreme care. A true food allergy can be hard to eliminate, but there are often ways to decrease the effects one has when exposed.

What is a Food Sensitivity?
Food sensitivities are much more illusive since the symptoms often are less specific and don't always occur immediately after ingestion. We might observe a window of adverse reaction 24 hours later, or more. Those who suffer frequently from headaches, migraines, irritable bowel syndrome, depression, fatigue, brain fog, muscle aches, and a host of other symptoms, would do well to consider testing in the office of their local applied kinesiology specialist.

Dr. Steve Gangemi, DC, illustrates a great example in the weekly tips section of his Sock Doc website: "Ever wake up with a stiff neck (a crick in your neck)? Most likely it's because of what you ate or drank for dinner the night before rather than how or where you slept."

Many people have not learned to piece together why they get these aches and pains, headaches, congestion, rashes, bowel disturbance, etc. Identifying these sensitivities can be difficult for many because the symptom does not often occur immediately afterwards. Another confounding variable is the same food one is sensitive to may not always cause the same symptom, or even any symptom at all!

Confused? For example, if one has a food sensitivity towards oranges, consuming an orange is going to cause internal tissue inflammation and an immune response, but it may not cause an outward detectable sign. If your body is in a healthier state (less overall stress [physical, emotional, & biochemical]) then you can handle the orange better. The total overall load of stress is not overwhelming to the system. When another form of stress occurs on the same day, thus increasing the total load, consuming the orange as an additional stress will push your body past its total load, leading to outward/physical symptoms.

At other times a food one is sensitive towards will only cause a reaction if one eats it frequently, while if they have sparsely it may not cause the same symptoms.

Food sensitivities don't often cause life threatening health conditions, which food allergies occasionally do, but they do make living life much less enjoyable.

Make a list of responses you might be suspicious of. Take your list to your applied kinesiologist and begin the journey toward a healthier life.

What is a Food Intolerance?

A food intolerance doesn't necessarily cause the same histamine reaction that a food allergy or sensitivity causes, but is because ones body doesn't contain the correct enzymes to properly breakdown a food. This is commonly seen in people with Celiac disease or those who are lactose intolerant. If one is lactose intolerant they don't produce the enzyme lactase, or they don't produce enough of it, meaning they can't properly break down the lactose (a milk sugar) and it will continue to travel through the digestive tract intact, causing abdominal bloating, spasm, gas, etc.

Food Sensitivities and Dysbiosis

Food allergies and food intolerances (where one genetically does not produce a certain enzyme) can be hard to eliminate, but can be helped very greatly by lowering other stressors in your body. Food sensitivities can often be eliminated by getting rid of dysbiosis in ones body.

Dysbiosis means an imbalance of microbes in ones body and can be caused by an increase in viruses, bacteria, fungus, and candida. Getting checked for dysbiosis is one key thing that must be done to help one suffering from food sensitivities, and by eliminating the dysbiosis many patients have been able to greatly increase what they are able to eat without symptoms.

How to Treat a Food Allergy vs Food Sensitivity

All forms of food allergies and sensitivities can raise histamine. Elevated histamine levels can cause anaphylaxis and many other symptoms. AK and lab tests can be used to check if histamine is an issue. Vitamins C, B6, and folic acid and the mineral zinc may be needed to help regulate histamine based on AK findings.

Treating just the histamine levels won't often get to the root cause though. Getting not only checked for food sensitivities and dysbiosis, but also many other stressors including heavy metals, emotional stress, environmental toxins, etc. are key to improving ones overall health.

Why a Professional Applied Kinesiologist is ideal to treat Food Sensitivities?

Professional Applied Kinesiologists (PAK) are specially trained to help one with food allergies, sensitivities, and intolerances. Manual muscle testing (MMT) gives the doctor and patient instant results on what foods should be avoided. MMT also checks for other sensitivities besides just the common IgE testing done by many physicians.

A PAK doctor can also use diagnostic testing to find the root cause of the food sensitivity, which can be structural issues, emotional causes, nutritional deficiencies, or dysbiosis. Correcting these will greatly help you handle your food sensitivities and also improve your overall health and wellbeing.

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AK and Allergy

Applied kinesiology testing has been found useful for testing patients for food allergies and/or sensitivities. One study showed a high level of inter-examiner reliability and correlation with provocative food allergy testing.[1] Another study showed a 90.5% correlation between IgE and IgG food allergies via RAST (blood) laboratory testing and AK MMT (manual muscle testing) positive for food allergy.[2]

Food allergies, as measured via IgE and IgG antibodies, are more common in IBS populations when compared to controls, particularly to milk, wheat, and soy.[3] A food allergy model for IBS is supported by the observation that both the numbers of mast cells and their mediators are increased in the intestinal mucosa for patients with IBS.[4,5]

IBS populations have higher arachidonic acid (AA) levels than control populations, along with the pro-inflammatory metabolites of AA, prostaglandin E2 and leukotriene B4. This suggests that prostaglandin imbalances are a factor in IBS and decreasing AA rich foods in the diet (most animal fats and corn, soy, and canola oils) and increasing omega 3 rich foods (walnuts, sesame, flax, fish, range fed meat, dairy, and eggs).[6] Intake of hydrogenated oils (HOs) in the diet should be limited in IBS patients since HOs impede production of anti-inflammatory prostaglandin groups PG1 and PG3.

Insufficient bile appears to be a factor in abnormal intestinal permeability.[7] This condition can be diagnosed by AK physicians via history, exams, laboratory findings, and MMT.[8,9]

References

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- *Multiple food allergies are likely secondary to leaky gut syndrome*
- *Leaky Gut Syndrome has been tied to diabetes, Crohn's disease, and other autoimmune diseases*

Leaky Gut Syndrome: A Common Cause of Multiple Food Allergies

A person with multiple food sensitivities will most likely have as the underlying cause a condition of chronic inflammation of their intestinal tract. This is commonly referred to as leaky gut syndrome. The scientific term for this is increased intestinal permeability. It sounds silly that our guts would be leaky so what does this really mean? Normally the cells that line our intestines fit tightly together and act as a barrier between our bodies and the foods we ingest. Broken down foods are then selectively taken into the cells and allowed into the bloodstream.

In leaky gut syndrome the cells no longer have tight junctions because they are inflamed. Inflammation causes swelling as the body tries to bring healing fluids and immune cells for repair. This swelling prevents the normal barrier function and allows the molecules to enter the bloodstream unchecked. The body then sees these molecules as invaders and provokes an immune response against them perpetuating the problem.

It is quite a large problem because it makes the immune system easily provoked. When simple foods provoke an inflammatory response like this it increases the likelihood of developing an autoimmune disease. If this provocation is constant it can become misdirected. The autoimmune disease that follows is a consequence of where the damage is taking place. Hashimoto's hypothyroid is the result of autoimmune attack against the thyroid. Crohn' s disease damages the small intestine, ulcerative colitis attacks the large intestine, and rheumatoid arthritis affects the joints. Often other things that irritate the gut directly compound the issue. Food additives have been shown to increase gut permeability and other environmental factors like genetic modification of food, antibiotic use, and pesticides compound the problem by altering the gut microflora. These are the bacteria in our intestines and they play a leading role in impacting our immune system.[1, 2]

Another key component is the proper breakdown of proteins. When stomach acid and digestive enzymes work properly these proteins are less likely to become irritating to the system. A low carbohydrate diet is also important as sugar can stress the immune system and promote the growth of harmful gut flora.

Most likely a person with leaky gut will have multiple food sensitivities and will present in the office with weak quads, rectus femoris, or other small intestine related muscles. This can lead to pelvic instability and symptoms like low back pain. Leaky gut is also associated with Diabetes, Crohn's Disease, and a number of auto-immune conditions.[3]

Rectifying leaky gut syndrome is not very complicated although it can take quite some time and require very individualized care. First, focus on improving digestive capacity. There may be a couple of key foods to avoid for a time. These are likely the ones that were eaten with the most frequency; typically wheat, diary, and corn are culprits. Your doctor can challenge your body with certain foods to assess if this is needed.

They may suggest therapies to restore the microflora and to nurture the intestinal cells. Decreasing inflammation also requires sleep, exercise, and a whole food based diet. Butter and steamed or juiced cabbage and carrots are nutritive for the intestines because they are high in butyric acid, glutamine and vitamin A respectively. Your AK Doctor will recommend a focused treatment plan to walk you through restoring your gut integrity.

References

Angela Darragh, ND practices in Scottsdale, AZ. She founded the AK Club at the Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine where she now teaches applied kinesiology AK as an elective.

Q&A

How is the body's inflammatory response different in food allergies, sensitivities, and intolerances?

There are blood tests that measure your body's inflammatory response. They measure something called immunoglobulin (Ig), which are the body's signal to promote an inflammation response. They are responding to what is called an antigen, something the body recognizes as harmful. In this case it is testing for the body's response to the proteins that it thinks are harmful. Immunoglobulin (Ig) gets produced in multiple tissues and there are different ones for different roles.

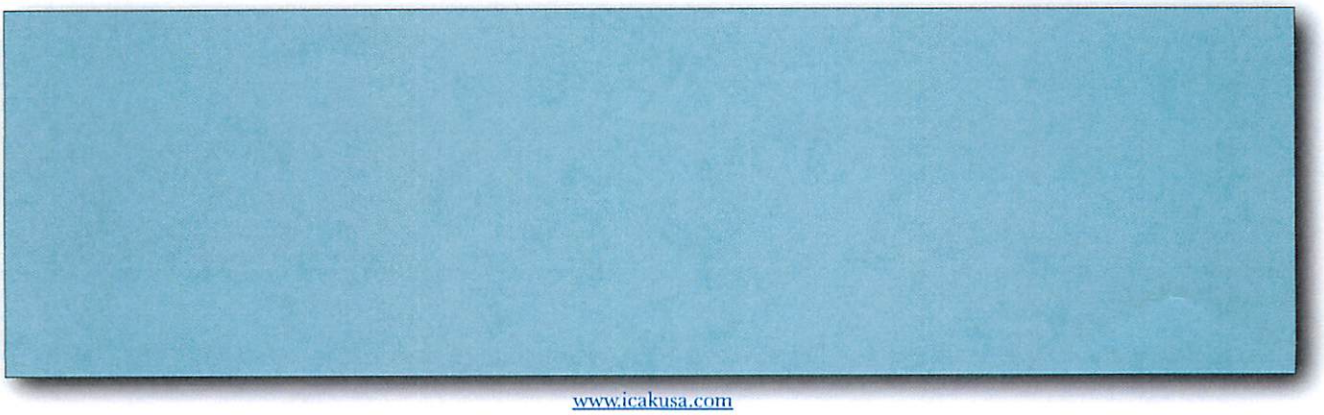
In a classic allergy, IgE is produced and there is immediate intense swelling of the tissues that can be problematic and can even contribute to asthma. In a food sensitivity IgA can be seen as elevated because it is secreted from the gut lining and skin as our first line of defense. It does not seem to have immediate dramatic effect, but can contribute to a slight runny nose after eating a problematic food. The body's memory of a sensitivity is seen in IgG testing which has a global impact on our body systems.

How do I know if I have food sensitivities?

There are a few ways of testing that. Your AK Doctor can have you smell or taste the foods you are curious about to see how your body responds. There are also food sensitivity panels that test the IgG, IgM, or IgA levels. (See previous Q&A) These tests can be helpful in more complicated cases but they can also have misleading or overwhelming results.

If more than three foods show up on a panel (often 96 or 196 foods are tested) than we know that the patient has more of a leaky gut picture. Sometimes twenty foods will show elevated immunoglobulins but avoiding all of them is not conducive to enjoying your life. In these cases avoiding main triggers is key and rotation of other foods is emphasized.

Are most people that practice a gluten-free diet allergic, sensitive or intolerant?

Generally they have a sensitivity unless they have Celiac Disease. The way that wheat is being grown and processed here can make it very irritating to the gut. The chronic exposure to something irritating could eventually lead to leaky gut syndrome because the inflammatory reaction is very damaging if it is persistent.

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