



Holistic Medical Centre

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Anxiety or is it?

In a holistic model, it is important to acknowledge the importance of both emotional and physical wellbeing. When it comes to emotional distress, as many of you know, we commonly discuss life circumstances that are important and relevant to ones wellbeing. However, we are very interested in understanding biochemistry in a way that enables us to support our patients in the very best way possible. The way we do this is by making sure the body is as balanced as possible. It seems that a person who has plenty of energy, sleeps well and is well fed is better able to withstand the normal ups and downs of life. There are many names for anxiety and anxiety disorder is a diagnosis we are very reluctant to give. As well as the idea that this is an illness which cannot be helped, this is a diagnosis that can adversely effect health insurance which some of you have discovered to your consternation. This article will discuss the many and varied physical things that can contribute to someone experiencing a feeling of being anxious. Where we make reference to details in other articles, these can be found on our website under the newsletters tab. The most

common and obvious (and therefore overlooked) problem is **low blood sugar** (hypoglycaemia). When blood sugar falls then there is an adrenaline response which causes the typical adrenaline signs of shaking, clammy skin and heart palpitations. The quick response to this is sweet foods or bread and crackers. This temporarily raises blood sugar but drops it just as fast. Increasing **protein** in the diet is the answer to this. (Please see the newsletter on protein). Ask us for protein recipes at your next visit. Some people are sensitive to **caffeine** and it creates a very similar response. It is wise to stick to a level of consumption that doesn't create an adrenaline effect. All the chemicals your body makes that are calming are made from **protein** so its importance cannot be overstated. A good example is a substance called **GABA** (Gamma Aminobutyric Acid) which is made in your body and is very calming to the nervous system. This is the substance that Valium has an effect on. A great number of you have had first hand experience of how amazing **Magnesium sup-**

plementation can be for calming an agitated nervous system. The dramatic improvements some have experienced have been a surprise even to us at times. Why so many people respond to magnesium is still largely unknown but it is a very alkaline mineral and may be used up more quickly in someone who had a more acidic system. **Adrenal Fatigue** as mentioned in our previous newsletter is one of the most common problems associated with anxiety and this is easily treated. Low **hormone** levels can certainly contribute to anxiety (see newsletter about hormones) and this is particularly noticeable in perimenopausal women. **Vitamin D** deficiency can also contribute to anxiety (see newsletter on depression). Supplementation with some **B vitamins** (especially B3 and B6) can be of great use. We have noticed that some people develop acute anxiety with severe insomnia post operatively after a general anaesthetic. This needs a particular treatment and will require a visit with the doctor.

Our favourite quote

"The effect of fine persons is felt after we have left their presence".
Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)

Health tips

Zinc! Just about everyone seems to be low in this vital mineral. It is needed for the formation of dozens of substances in the body including serotonin, melatonin and thyroxine to name just a few. It is also important for reproductive function, bones, skin and helps to ward off colds and flu. As you may know the richest source of zinc is oysters and a very distant second is brazil nuts. For those who cannot stand oysters, consider topping up on your zinc twice a year For those of you love oysters, make sure you take very good advantage of Bluff oyster season!

Happy Patient File

Many of you have had to address your dental health with us as part of your treatment. One amazing story is from a women who had been diagnosed with an inflammatory disorder of the mouth called Lichen planus. The cause of this is unknown but presents with a rash inside the mouth that can progress to cell changes in some cases. The problem part of the mouth was adjacent to some amalgam fillings so we asked her to have these replaced. After she had done this, her dentist commented that he had never seen Lichen planus resolve without steroid therapy in 20 years of dentistry.

Early cell changes

As you may know, early cell changes are the early sign that that something more sinister *may* develop. Although early cell changes are a sign, there are many factors that cause the cells to progress beyond this point; including nutritional, hormonal, emotional and genetic considerations to name just a few. So why do cells change? At a cellular

level this is a common response to chronic irritation or inflammation as an adaptive process. In the trachea of smokers one cell type changes to another in response to the irritation of the smoke. The former cell type has a protective function while the second type can withstand the chronic irritation better but does not function as well for respira-

tory tissue. The example above would suggest the amalgam fillings could have contributed to the inflammation in the mouth. It is worth considering the elimination of any potential sources of irritation or inflammation; e.g. don't let an irritable bowel go untreated for years. Replace the normal healthy bacteria in

the digestive tract and vagina after antibiotics to stop thrush and bowel symptoms. Get your liver checked and look after it. Drink plenty of fluids to keep your kidneys healthy. (Not too much caffeine). Our next newsletter will focus on ways to reduce your overall tendency towards inflammation.