



Holistic Medical Centre

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What am I eating?

As many of you know, we are very interested in looking at food intolerances, especially with digestive & skin problems, headaches, asthma and recurrent infections. The most important thing when looking at foods is **additives**. The most important additive to avoid is **MSG** (monosodium glutamate). This is especially so if you have digestive problems, asthma, headaches, migraines, & any skin problems including eczema. I know most of you avoid this flavour enhancer, but you may be very surprised to know that it is in many everyday foods. On labels it is only known as 621 or Flavour Enhancer 621. The foods to watch for are: flavoured potato chips (stick to plain salted), flavoured crackers including rice crackers (stick to plain salted but check labels as some still have MSG), deli meats such as shaved ham, salami, luncheon, sausages (please stick to unprocessed meats or buy from an organic butcher whom you trust). You can ask for a printout of the ingredient list of the shaved meats from the supermarket & you will be surprised to know that there is colours, preservatives, soy protein & milk powder in these wannabe meats. Other foods to watch are instant noodles, instant soups, gravy powders & stocks. One patient who had years of migraines removed MSG at our recommendation & her migraines completely resolved. If

you want a broader description of the effects of MSG this is easily found online. **Preservatives** have a strong association with sinus, hay-fever, itchy skin conditions including eczema and scaly red skin irritations around the eyes. These are the **'200'** numbers such as 221, 222, 249 etc. These can be found in fruit drinks & sauces, processed meats as above, wine & beer. Unfortunately, all wines have preservative, but if you limit your intake of these types of alcohol to three times a week, this is very helpful. It is usually the daily intake of wine that causes problems and if you think you have allergies to wine you may be pleased to know that it is the preservatives that are more often the problem. **Colours** are known as the **'100'** numbers such as 161, 161g etc. These really should be avoided generally but especially if you have skin irritations and headaches. After removing offending substances you should be noticing a significant improvement in symptoms within a week. If there is only a mild improvement, it is probably due to other problem foods/additives still in the diet. Now onto the foods! Think of **dairy** foods if there is wet asthma, eczema, recurrent chest infec-

tions, and recurrent ear infections. Avoid the obvious ones & read labels. **Raw soy foods** are very often a problem too. It is interesting to note that soy is only eaten in its fermented form in traditional diets. Fermented soy includes, tofu, miso, tempeh & Tamari (naturally fermented soy sauce). Soy milk, soy protein & soy flour are a recent western invention. Soy is a cheap bulking agent and is found in commercial breads, processed meats (make sure your burgers are pure beef/lamb), vegetarian meat substitutes & other baked goods. Think about soy if there is digestive problems, sinus problems, constant runny nose, recurrent ear infections and especially eczema. Eczema is associated with soy foods just as much as dairy foods but soybean oil is no problem. **Wheat** can be a problem with eczema & asthma, but less frequently than dairy. It should be avoided if there is lots of fatigue, joint aches, other body aches and digestive problems. The good news is that when you get it right symptoms are usually noticeably better within 1 week. **Orange coloured citrus** (oranges, mandarins & tangelos) can aggravate eczema & other dry itchy skin problems.

Our favourite quote

“The best way to have a good idea is to have lots of ideas” Linus Pauling

Health tips

Following on from our last newsletter regarding Echinacea. We use a practitioner-only Echinacea in a tablet form in the clinic. However when buying over the counter Echinacea, there is a big difference in the quality. I highly recommend using the following guidelines: Get a combination of E. Angustifolia and E. Purpurea that is close to 50/50. We recommend a dose of 2400 mg of Echinacea twice a day. This equates to 2 tablets twice a day of the practitioner brand we use.

Happy Patient file

In previous newsletters we have mentioned the importance of keeping Vitamin D levels over 100. We have an interesting story of a male patient who had classic symptoms of irritable bowel for as long as he could remember with pain, gas & bloating. Our usually successful treatments such as probiotics, hair allergy testing etc provided little improvement for him. After we brought his vitamin D levels up to optimum, his IBS symptoms 'miraculously' disappeared which was a surprise to us. He is still symptom free after three months. It just goes to show that sunshine is important & there is always something new to learn!

What can I eat instead?

We call these intolerances rather than allergies because problems are usually due to too frequent ingestion. We usually recommend a complete elimination for 4 weeks. After this the problem foods are usually well tolerated 2-3 times a week but every day

will see a return of symptoms. 'Simply Organic Brown Bread' can be found in most Supermarkets & is free of dairy & soy. Rice milk is great in tea but not in coffee so black coffee may be on the menu temporarily. Coconut milk in curries or Thai food

instead of cream based sauces. Eat plain meats or visit a local organic butcher for good sausages, hams etc that are dairy, soy, wheat & additive free. Just meat...fancy that! Wheat-free breads and additive-free soups, stocks & sauces are available

in some supermarkets or your local health food shop. There are plenty of dairy-free spreads & dips in the supermarkets & health food shops. If you don't want to experiment with elimination you can do a hair allergy test with us.