



INFLAMMATION and Auto-immune Disease

Across the diverse range of chronic diseases a common feature is an increase in low-grade inflammation which predicts both the appearance and progression of disease.

There are various factors influencing inflammation – these include

- environmental triggers such as diet, exercise deficiency, stress, and infection
- physiological triggers including overweight, toxicity, digestive problems, cell replication, oestrogen and other hormonal imbalances

Left unattended, a low-grade inflammatory state **produces dysfunction and disease**, feeding on itself to perpetuate an **immunological imbalance** which may lead to **autoimmune disorders**.

Conditions classified as autoimmune include Rheumatoid arthritis, Hashimoto's Thyroiditis, Multiple Sclerosis, Type I Diabetes, Psoriasis, Crohn's disease, Ulcerative colitis, Sarcoidosis, Alopecia, Vitiligo, Raynaud's syndrome, recurrent abortions, acute allograft rejection, sunburn, Alzheimer's dementia, Parkinson's disease, Sjorgren's syndrome, Systemic Lupus Erythematosus, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, ALS, Grave's Disease, and Irritable Bowel Syndrome.

Autoimmunity arises when the body's immune system cannot differentiate between self and other resulting in self destruction of tissues. While an estimated 5% of the population have a diagnosed autoimmune disease, early stage autoimmune symptoms and immune dysregulation are present in 10-20% of the population, making autoimmune disorders nearly as prevalent as chronic diseases such as hypertension and metabolic syndrome. It is easy to speculate that, like many common diseases, **chronic low-grade inflammation acts as a precursor to the development of autoimmunity**.

Common **side effects** of medications used to treat autoimmune diseases include:

- ⊗ gastropathy
- ⊗ kidney damage
- ⊗ cardiovascular risk
- ⊗ opportunistic infections (such as tuberculosis)
- ⊗ lymphoma
- ⊗ anaemias
- ⊗ bone loss and breakdown of connective tissue and skin



The natural approach

In the past attempts to understand autoimmune disease were based on studies of the affected organ. However, recent scientific investigations support the naturopathic approach adopting a more cross-disciplinary approach with the aim of understanding the common mechanisms underlying the development of these diseases. (Bell E. *Autoimmunity* – Nature Vol 435, Issue 7042, 2 June 2005. www.nature.com/nature)

Identifying and addressing environmental and physiological factors forms a comprehensive part of natural health management. Approaching the management of inflammatory and autoimmune diseases with an informed view and a range of trialed and effective natural products is critical to optimising clinical outcomes and restoring health to your life.

The following is information published following research into the dangerous side effects of Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory (NSAID) medications available by prescription as well as over-the-counter.

Source: International Journal for quality in health care, Volume 15, Supp. 1

Adverse drug events and medication errors in Australia

William Buchanan, Elizabeth E Roughead, Susan J. Semple and Robert J Adams

“Adverse drug events (ADEs) are common in the Australian health system. Anticoagulant, anti-inflammatory and cardiovascular drugs feature prominently as preventable, high impact problems and collectively make up over one-half of all ADEs.”

Source: Dr Mercola (www.mercola.com)

Finally -- FDA Admits That ALL Anti-Inflammatories May Kill You

It has been discovered that nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, or NSAIDS, such as Cox-2 inhibitors Vioxx, Bextra and Celebrex, lead to an increased risk of cardiovascular problems. However, it turns out that these prescription drugs are not the only painkillers that should be avoided: The FDA has urged the public to limit the use of over-the-counter pain medications and to use them in strict accordance with the label directions.

Over-The-Counter Pain Relievers to be Wary Of

- Aleve
- Aspirin
- Ibuprofen

Aleve (made by Bayer) is the first non-prescription NSAID to be added to the list of painkillers associated with heart attacks and strokes. In fact, Aleve is so detrimental to one's



health that those who have been taking the drug for nearly three years have been advised to stop using it, while those who opt to continue taking it should take no more than two pills a day for no longer than 10 days (unless otherwise advised by a doctor).

People taking the prescription version of Aleve, Naprosyn, are also being directed to take the drug with extreme caution.

Further, a study administered to discover whether Aleve or Celebrex could prevent Alzheimer's disease showed that those taking Aleve had an estimated 50 percent higher risk of heart attacks and strokes than those taking a placebo.

[USA Today](#) December 23, 2004

[USA Today](#) December 20, 2004

Dr. Mercola's Comment:

Folks they are dropping like flies. The leading NSAID in the world, Vioxx, led the cascade in late September; Vioxx was the beginning of the end of conventional medicine. (Merck will lose \$50 billion.) A few weeks later the second COX-2 inhibitor, Bextra, bit the dust. Then the third and final cox-2 inhibitor, Celebrex, got hit. Pfizer is the number one drug company in the world and their stock dropped \$25 billion over the weekend.

Now, it appears that all NSAIDs may be problematic, not just the COX-2 inhibitors. The NIH told us that the popular over-the-counter pain reliever, Aleve, has been linked to an increased risk of heart attack and stroke. The director of the FDA's drugs division, said consumers should take Aleve only as directed on its label: No more than two pills a day. Aleve is the first OTC drug to enter the NSAID mess, but it is still available as prescription strength.

So the warning is about the OTC drug that only has 200 mg of naproxen. But guess what? The prescription product has more than twice the dose of the OTC brand and has 500 mg. The recommended dose is up to 1500 mg. This is nearly FOUR TIMES the dose the FDA now advises consumers not to exceed.

Do you want to hear what deputy director of the FDA's Office of New Drugs said about Aleve? Well, here you go:

"This is a very confusing situation...there is little data about the long-term effects of naproxen or any other related pain reliever."

The FDA has finally admitted that the entire class of drugs known as NSAIDs is expected to fall as a result of this new information. So that means that if you are taking Advil or any other NSAID, you will want to consider finding a healthier option ASAP, as the drug you are taking could actually take your life.

So what can you do to treat pain in a way that not only addresses its cause but also makes you healthier?

There are two steps that will help the vast majority of people with pain. That is to start a high quality fish oil (cod liver oil) at this time of year and to avoid sugar. Omega-3 fats are precursors to mediators of inflammation called prostaglandins. In fact, that is how Vioxx and



other NSAIDs work -- they manipulate prostaglandins. However, when you do it in an unnatural drug way, there is frequently another price to pay, like side effects, which can lead to death. Further, when you use natural methods like omega-3 fats and stopping sugar, the side effects are good health.

Sugar and grain avoidance for most people will lower insulin levels. Elevated insulin levels are one of the most important reasons why inflammatory prostaglandins are produced. That is why stopping sugar and sweets are so essential to controlling arthritis pain and other types of chronic degenerative illness.

Most people were using Vioxx for osteoarthritis and other types of pain. But for those that were using it for the less common rheumatoid arthritis, it is important to know that optimizing **vitamin D is one of the most important physical measures one can take to treat RA**. Sun exposure is clearly the best way to achieve this however at this time of year the only alternative to a month's vacation in the Caribbean that most of us can't do is to consume healthy vitamin D from cod liver oil. Cod liver oil is clearly the safest form of vitamin D supplementation as contains vitamin A, which can balance against absorbing too much vitamin D.

Metabolic typing is another tool that I have seen work in thousands of patients to reduce their pain. Also, eating according to your metabolic type is absolutely amazing, especially when combined with an effective energy psychology tool like kinesiology which can address previous emotional traumas that cause bioelectrical short circuiting predisposing one to immune dysfunction.