THE TUESDAY MINUTE

THIS WEEK'S TOPIC

Asthma... Triggers & Treatment

"Low grade systemic inflammation compounded by inflammatory responses are major factors to consider when treating asthma."

Let's consider some overall principles that may help you connect the dots with your asthma patients. These same principles may also guide your therapies as you treat patients with other conditions. But first, have you ever wondered why so many different therapies are recorded in the literature to treat asthma?

We know the IgE mediated response will have an immediate shortness of breath for some patients. However, the effects of delayed food sensitivities can be just as profound. Many integrative physicians believe food allergies are the underlying cause of asthma.

By the way, I am aware that several other studies concluded that hidden food allergies were not a common cause of asthma. However, these studies relied on skin tests or dietary history rather than the more reliable elimination diet.

Think for a second what happens when someone experiences food sensitivity? Remember Will Smith in the 2005 movie "Hitch?" After eating shrimp his face became swollen and inflamed. Shellfish are a known offender. So food sensitivities will provoke an inflammatory reaction.

Let's hold that thought and look at another kind of asthma, exercise induced asthma. What does exercise propagate or enhance? Well what happens to us when we are exercising and push the envelope too hard? Muscles become stiff or sore the next day. What do we call that process? That's right, inflammation. So, "Low grade systemic inflammation compounded by inflammatory responses are major factors to consider when treating asthma."

Let's look at the conventional asthma triggers: environmental cigarette smoke, animal dander, dust mites, cockroaches and mold. What do these asthma triggers have in common? You guessed it; they increase the process of inflammation in your airways which causes a worsening of asthma symptoms.

From a pharmacological perspective, what is the therapeutic goal physicians are trying to achieve? Generally, reduce inflammation whether it is

through inhaled or oral steroids, or the newer leukotriene modifiers.

If I want to find the cause of patients' asthma or at least treat their asthma naturally, I have to look for causes of inflammation. What are the factors that traditional medicine considers essential when addressing Asthma? Food allergies; respiratory infections; gastrointestinal reflux; obesity; exposure to irritants like sulfites, food dyes, histamines that are found in some foods or wines; air pollution or MSG. Another way to say this would be to look for factors that may over stimulate the immune system which can bring on inflammation.

By the way, Dr. Russell Blaylock notes that the cells lining the bronchioles and alveoli contain a number of glutamate receptors and that high blood levels of glutamate cause these receptors to overreact and lead to bronchiospasm. A meal containing MSG can cause a 30-50 fold rise in blood levels of glutamate and levels can remain elevated for hours.

All of these factors involve free radicals and ultimately increase systemic levels of inflammation. That knowledge gives an understanding why some nutrients you wouldn't normally consider can be effective. Any nutrient that can reduce inflammation or quiet cytokines that cause inflammation is a potential therapeutic agent in treating asthma.

So to calm down the inflammatory processes we want to use diet, lifestyle and nutrients. Start by eliminating the top allergens for 30 days while keeping a food journal to see how different foods affect breathing. One study suggested the most common symptom evoking foods were milk, eggs, chocolate, soy, legumes and grains.

"Exercise induced asthma" can be induced by hidden food sensitivities. The top foods being wheat, milk, celery, tomato, shellfish, chicken, nuts, apples, peaches, grapes, lettuce, potato, fennel and any source of MSG.

I always ask myself, is it the food they are sensitive to or are they reacting to the heavy metals, food additives or pesticides that might be present in the foods? So optimally we want to eat unprocessed food as close to organic as possible.

In terms of nutrients, one of my favorites, OOrganik-15, and a case study are featured on another Tuesday Minute below.

It seems there are 2 other lines of thought: one, use nutrients that enhance cellular energetics which indirectly will increase the energy supply to the respiratory muscles. This would include Coenzyme Q10, phosphorylated or activated forms of the B vitamins, Acetyl-L-Carnitine, Lipoic Acid, vitamin K and magnesium.

Interestingly, these nutrients as well as others are found in Biotics' VasculoSirt. Although VasculoSirt was designed for vascular support because of the cellular energetic ingredients, it could easily be used as one's multivitamin / mineral foundation.

Secondly, use nutrients that reduce systemic inflammation which will ultimately affect the lungs and bronchioles.

Many of you may be familiar with Biotics Research botanical anti-inflammatory product KappArest. KappArest contains a blend of Curcumin, Boswellia, green tea, ginger, resveratrol, celery extract, sprouted pea culture and BioPerine to increase absorption. You can see a link below on dosages and other considerations.

Now to connect the dots as you read the literature, you will see these two lines of thought in almost all chronic diseases. Ultimately, we want to increase cellular energetics and then find ways to naturally reduce inflammatory cytokines.

Thanks for reading this week's edition. I'll see you next Tuesday.