

Lesson 4: Transcript

Inflammation, Allergies, and Gut Health

Hey everyone, how are you feeling today? You a little bloated, maybe a little gassy? Have you ever been bloated or gassy? Have you ever tried to eat a certain way and realize that it didn't help you lose weight at all, but for some reason it helped your friend lose weight? Are there foods that have maybe ever made you break out but for your friend they make them look great? This is because we are all different. We are all unique and just like we can't eat X amount of calories and expect to lose Y amount of weight, just like our bodies don't work perfectly like that because of all these other factors, hormones, stress levels, our genes. Just like calories don't affect us in a black and white way, other components of food also don't affect us in a black and white way.

We are all unique. We have different stress levels, we have different genes, we have different lifestyles, we are not robots. For one person, something's going to affect them one way and cause maybe gas or bloating. For another person, it may make them feel great. For somebody else, they may have an intolerance. For another person, that type of that food might give them an incredible amount of energy. We are all different and today we're going to talk about some of those issues around food that cause us to feel our best or cause us to not feel so great.

The first thing I'm going to talk about today is something we all have. We all have a little bit of inflammation in our body. Some of us have loads of inflammation in our body but we all have a little bit of it and inflammation is one of those words that is thrown out left and right and most people have no idea what it means. So what is inflammation? There are two types of inflammation, acute inflammation and chronic inflammation. Acute inflammation is what you can think of when, cutting your finger and it bleeds and then it might swell a little bit and then you get a scab. That's your body protecting itself from being injured.

Chronic inflammation occurs when you don't heal properly and you continue to have that inflammation. It also arises from things like stress, stress is a huge factor for inflammation, toxins and foods we eat. Inflammation throughout our body, systemic inflammation is so bad for us

because it can cause a whole host of conditions and diseases. Everything from increasing our risk for cancer, it's also been linked to heart disease, it's been linked to mood issues, it's been linked to migraines, it's been linked to digestive issues. Inflammation is linked to literally hundreds of conditions.

Stress, one of the biggest factors linked to inflammation, we have already learned many times throughout this course is also linked to weight gain. So here you are, you're very stressed out. You have inflammation in your body, which puts you at risk for a whole host of issues. You also increase your weight. When you're overweight, you have more fat cells. Those fat cells also increase inflammation in your body, so now you have even more inflammation again, putting you at even greater risk for all of these different conditions. Research has shown that losing weight, even 5% can reduce your markers for inflammation. Okay, so we know that stress can make us gain weight. Weight increases inflammation. Stress increases inflammation. Losing weight can decrease inflammation. So of course we need to lose weight, we need to be healthier, we need to reduce stress, things that we've been talking about throughout this entire program.

So what can we do via food to specifically target reducing inflammation? There's a few specific foods and things that we can avoid that will help us to reduce inflammation. And then there are also specific foods that we can add into our diet to help fight inflammation. You've probably heard of an anti-inflammatory diet. An overall healthy, healthy diet is going to be a good anti-inflammatory diet, but there are some specific foods that work really hard, work for you to fight that inflammation.

So let's start with the bad stuff. What do we need to avoid to decrease our risk of inflammation? I have a whole list attached to this webinar, but here are just a few that I want you to be aware of. Trans fats, otherwise known as hydrogenated oils are associated with an increase in C reactive protein. C reactive protein is a marker for inflammation and also an independent risk factor for cardiovascular disease. Sodium, we all know that most of us consume too much sodium and most of the sodium that we consume is unfortunately in packaged processed foods which also often have a lot of other ingredients we shouldn't be consuming, including trans fats. And we also know that sodium intake is linked to your risk for hypertension and hypertension has been associated with inflammation as well. Nitrates, a common preservative found in packaged meats have been linked to

cancer, but they've also been linked to C reactive protein, which now I've said a whole bunch of times already in this webinar and C reactive protein is that marker for inflammation.

Okay, so I want to get away from the negative stuff. Let's talk about the fun stuff, the stuff I love to talk about, foods that work for you, foods that are going to fight for you and make you healthier. Again, I have a whole list attached, but here are a few. In general, antioxidants fight free radicals which cause inflammation. Antioxidants do everything from fighting heart disease to cancer, to inflammation in general. So think dark green, leafy vegetables, orange and yellow fruits and vegetables and beautiful berries. Just think antioxidants and you are going to be eating healthy foods, loaded with water volume, loaded with fiber, and loaded with antioxidants that are going to help you fight inflammation.

I love, love, love herbs and spices in general. Herbs and spices, add flavor, they add lots of tastes, they add fiber and they do all of this for virtually no calories and they also add other health properties from things like antioxidants and they have antimicrobial and antibacterial properties. But one spice I love in particular is cinnamon. The smell of cinnamon alone has actually been associated with reducing stress, which we know stress is associated with inflammation, but cinnamon also has been shown to fight inflammation.

I always talk about taking out all the sweetness and taking all that sugar and enjoying the natural sweet flavors of food. But if you do need a little dose of sweetness, here's how I want you to get it. Honey has anti-inflammatory benefits, so if you are going to have a little bit of sweet in your diet and you do need to satisfy that sweet craving, do it in a way that you're also getting some health benefits. Try a little bit of honey. You are going to get some antibacterial, antimicrobial benefits, but you're also going to get some anti-inflammation benefits as well.

An important point to remember is that all of these foods that are good for you, all of these foods that I say are working for you are working for you for many different reasons. They usually don't have one thing in them, one nutrient in them that is fighting for you. Let's look at strawberries for example. Strawberries are loaded with vitamin C, a powerful antioxidant that also acts as an

anti-inflammatory agent, but strawberries also have another compound called glutathione. Glutathione is also an important nutrient in helping fight inflammation.

So when you think about eating an anti-inflammatory diet, think about incorporating a variety of real foods, a variety of these fruits and vegetables, herbs and spices that are going to give you multiple benefits and work together to really give you the most impact in improving your health and in fighting all of these different conditions that can arise from too much inflammation in your body and your brain. Also remember, if you're focused on eating to prevent and minimize inflammation, you're also eating foods that are high in antioxidants, you're also eating a healthy diet and you're probably going to also lose weight. When you lose weight, a byproduct of that is going to be reducing inflammation. Your adipose tissue, your fat tissue increases inflammation. So by reducing that, you're also going to reduce inflammation. You're also going to reduce your risk for disease like heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.

So remember this all works together. When you follow a healthy diet for one reason, you reap benefits in many other ways. An overall healthy diet works together. Sort of like when I talk about a nutritious life. You want to be in this good cycle of health. When you sleep well, you eat well. When you eat well, you sleep better. When you sleep better, you have more energy to go to the gym. All of these things work together, similarly to following a healthy diet and how you reap all these different benefits.

The next topic I'm going to cover today is allergies. First, I want to say that allergies are serious. Allergies can be life threatening. But I also want to say that there are many people walking around today that say they have an allergy to this, an allergy to that, and many of those people actually don't have true allergies, they have intolerances. And that doesn't mean that we shouldn't take it seriously, but all of those people out there that say that they have an allergy or you may be thinking to yourself, I think I have an allergy to this or an allergy to that, it's probably not a true allergy. So it's really important to know the differences in the way foods affect our immune system and our digestive track.

A true allergy has an immune response. Your body sees something in food, usually a protein, as a foreign invader and your immune system response, hives, rashes, and in the worst case, anaphylactic shock where your throat closes up. When you have an intolerance to a food, you have a GI reaction, usually something like gas, bloating or diarrhea, but intolerance also can cause other issues like migraines and skin and rash issues as well. Then there are also certain components of food which cause an autoimmune reaction and this is what you would have if you had celiac disease. Your body starts attacking itself when you consume things with gluten.

From 1997 to 2011 food allergies have increased 50%. although we don't know the exact reason why, we do know that they're on the rise. However, on the flip side of that, 80% of people that say they have a food allergy, when tested do not have a true food allergy. So there also are many people out there that are walking around thinking that they have a true food allergy when really they have some type of an intolerance to food.

So this is what's really important for you to know. When someone comes into your office, you have to remind them, a real food allergy is going to have an immediate response, an acute response, whether it's rash or hives or again, worst case scenario, anaphylactic shock. There's going to be an immediate response. An intolerance may cause some discomfort, but it is going to be long term problems and it might even be something that's lingering that's there that someone's been living with for a while, but there isn't that immediate response. Remember, a true food allergy will come on suddenly, will happen even when you eat a small amount of that food, will happen every time you eat that food, and can be life threatening. A food intolerance may come on gradually, may happen only when you eat a lot of a specific food, may not happen every time you eat that food, and is not usually life-threatening. Even though we can be debilitating.

If you want to be tested for an allergy, you can have a skin test and a blood test and/or do a food challenge. But before you even do that, you can also try an elimination diet. And this is something that I do with my clients all the time to help determine allergies but also intolerances. When you're following an elimination diet, you take out the things that are most likely to cause an allergy or an intolerance and you take them all out for usually four weeks. I have a whole elimination diet attached to this lesson so you can follow along with that for yourself and your clients. And then you add

foods back in one at a time, and since foods when they're causing an intolerance, don't necessarily happen right away. It's not an acute response like an allergy.

You have to wait at least three days before adding in another food because if you add in one food that might cause an intolerance and then the next day at another one in because you didn't have a problem the day before, you may then have a problem on the third day and you don't know which food it is that's causing that problem. Other things to remember, if you do have a true allergy, you are going to have a response every time you have that food and that means that you need to be incredibly careful when you're dining out. You have to ask about everything that is in that food and make sure that the foods you are ordering and the food that's prepared for you does not have the ingredient that will cause an allergic reaction.

You also have to be careful when you're buying packaged processed foods. Many times you're buying one food and it has nothing to do with the type of foods you're allergic to, but you know what? There is an ingredient in there. Some people are allergic to soy and they're buying bread. They don't realize that there's soy in that ingredient list. You have to read labels and read the ingredient list meticulously. Also, if you have a real food allergy, you're probably going to have to carry an EpiPen.

One of the things I take out when someone goes on an elimination diet is dairy. Dairy is one of the most common things to cause allergies, but really it's not a true allergy. Some people do have an allergy, an immune response to the two different proteins in dairy, casein or whey, but most people that think they have a dairy allergy actually have an intolerance. An intolerance is going to be something that causes that bloating, gas, diarrhea, may even cause skin issues, may even cause migraines and headaches. But most people truly don't have a real allergy, but regardless, when I put someone on an elimination diet and they add dairy back in and it causes discomfort, I still want to take that out of that person's diet. It doesn't matter if it's an intolerance or an allergy. It's something that causes discomfort and needs to be removed from that person's diet.

We also have to remember that intolerances can cause inflammation. When you're continually putting foods into your body that are not good for you, are not good for your individual body to be

consuming, you're also taxing your body. Your body's working hard and your body will create more inflammation. In an elimination diet, I also eliminate all gluten containing foods. You're going to find gluten in wheat, barley and rye, and also in many other products. That's why you need to read labels very carefully. I have an attachment to this webinar so we have a complete list, but the reason I eliminate gluten is not because, Oh, you probably have 10 friends that lost weight on a gluten free diet. It's because it can be very problematic for people for different reasons.

I can't tell you how many people have said to me, I'm going to go gluten free, my friend lost weight on gluten free. And I say, have you had any problem with gluten? Do you have an intolerance to gluten? Do you have any gas, bloating, headaches, fatigue, anything coming up that might make you think that you should be eliminating gluten? And they'll say, no, I just want to lose weight. Well, the reason people do lose weight on a gluten free diet is because the gluten free diet really is just a healthy diet. I am personally not gluten free, but I would say that my diet is 95% gluten-free because a healthy diet is naturally gluten free. Nuts, seeds, healthy fats, fruits, vegetables, lean protein, legumes, they are all gluten free. When you go on a gluten free diet and you take out things like cookies, cakes, pastas, breads, you're going gluten free, yeah, but you're just taking out junk that shouldn't be in our diet for many other reasons.

So yes, you may go gluten free and you may lose weight, but you're really just improving the overall health of your diet. You're just improving your diet. You're eating the way that you should be eating anyway. You also want to remember, if you do go gluten free, you don't want to replace all those packaged cookies, cakes, and pastas with gluten free versions, because usually those have the same amount of calories, they're more expensive, and oftentimes they're also filled with other types of artificial ingredients to give those packaged processed food, the right taste and texture. So you're not necessarily replacing those packaged foods with anything any better for you, unless you truly had a gluten sensitivity or had celiac disease and had to take gluten out of your diet.

But in that case, you should be only eating those packaged processed foods very rarely anyway, the same way any person should be having a cookie, cake, or pasta on minimal occasions as conscious indulgences. Remember, if you do decide to go gluten free and you do take out all the bread and the pasta and things that contain gluten, you do want to make sure that you still get in the B vitamins

and the fiber and the other minerals that you would normally find in whole grains. Just replace the breads and pasta with small portions of better options for you, which are really better options for everybody. Think about some of those ancient grains like a quinoa.

I mentioned taking out all gluten containing products when I put someone on an elimination diet, the exception would be if I think someone truly has celiac disease, you want to go and see a doctor first. You want to be tested for celiac disease before you take the gluten out of your diet because once you take gluten containing foods out of your diet, your small intestine will begin to repair itself and you may not be diagnosed even though you may actually have celiac disease. So if you think you have celiac disease, you need to go and be tested first. Don't try to self diagnose and take the gluten out of your diet. The only known treatment for celiac disease is going completely gluten free. That means you cannot have any gluten containing products whatsoever.

Celiac disease is an auto immune disease. If you have celiac disease and you eat anything containing any amount of gluten, your immune system is going to attack your small intestine, the villi, those little finger like components in your intestine that are so important for absorbing nutrients, become damaged. They become so damaged when you continue to eat gluten that you're not able to absorb nutrients properly. This is why celiac disease is associated with other conditions like osteoporosis, a thyroid disease, and even cancers. Gluten sensitivity is different. It's six times more common than celiac disease and the symptoms are often very similar. There's also a lot of other symptoms including everything from fatigue to migraines to skin conditions. The difference is that your body, however, does not produce the same antibodies and have the same intestinal damage as you would if you had celiac disease. But you need to take it just as seriously and you need to make sure that you do avoid foods with gluten.

Assuming you don't have celiac disease and you don't have a sensitivity to gluten, is there room in your diet for any whole wheat products? Yes, there is, but you want to remember what I said at the beginning of this gluten conversation. I was talking about the fact that our diets should be almost gluten-free to begin with. That's because we really don't need that many starchy foods in our diet anyway and when we do get them, we want to get them from a variety of grains that are whole grains and most of the gluten containing products in our diets come from highly processed foods,

even whole wheat bread, something that we think of as being very healthy for us because it contains fiber and it contains protein. The problem is that even for those of us out there that don't have celiac, that don't have a gluten sensitivity, we may even be a little bit more sensitive to gluten.

And this may be one of the reasons that gluten sensitivity is on the rise and that is because the way wheat is processed in this country is different than it was processed years and years ago. That processing of wheat has increased the amount of gluten found in our wheat. So the answer is you can have a little bit of wheat in your diet if you don't have celiac disease and if you don't have a gluten sensitivity. But remember, we don't need a lot of whole wheat products in our diet to begin with. We need a small amount of these starchy types of foods or we need, remember, that right proportion of starchy foods in our diet and when we have them, we want to get a variety of them and we want to make sure that they're in the least processed version, the highest fiber, lowest sugar, least processed version. So think quinoa and buckwheat, not barley and rye.

We talked about a whole bunch of things today that may be wreaking havoc in your body, but remember, you know your body best. You need to listen to your body. And when I say listen to your body this time, I don't mean just think about being slightly hungry and being slightly satisfied. I mean really listened to everything going on. Do you feel moody? Do you feel headachy? Do you feel like you've got some gas or bloating? What foods are working for you and what foods may be working against you? You need to be aware of all of these things and you need to help your clients be aware of those things too. Because remember, no one knows their bodies better than themselves. When you figure out what works for you and what is working against you, you can flip that switch in your mind and begin to feel so empowered putting those best foods into your body, the foods that work for you. Think, it's not I can't have that chocolate cake. It's, I can have those blueberries.