



Following Lyme Diet Key to Improving Symptoms

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July, 2013 - Lyme disease is an infection with the spirochete *Borrelia burgdorferi*. The bacteria are inoculated into the skin through the bite from a tick of the genus *Ixodes*. It is a common disease in the U.S., and widely distributed around the world.

While both conventional and alternative physicians are looking to find better and more effective therapies, the first strategy to improve the symptoms of Lyme still remains the diet. There are different therapeutic strategies for Lyme disease. For example, the therapy should aim to kill the bacteria while at the same time boost the immune system and digestion. Physical and emotional stressors, particularly heavy metal toxicity, hormonal imbalances and nutritional deficiencies, should also be addressed.

Dietary changes are essential to boost the immune system, reduce underlying inflammation, improve hormonal balance, alkalize the body's pH and can also aid in heavy metal detoxification.

Although many diets have been proposed, an anti-inflammatory type Lyme diet would likely benefit most Lyme sufferers. There is chronic underlying inflammation and this inflammation is responsible for a variety of symptoms including joint swelling and pain, muscle aches, extreme fatigue, memory problems and headaches.

The principles of an anti-inflammatory diet are the following: the diet should aim for a variety of foods and should include as much fresh organic food as possible. Processed foods and fast food should be completely eliminated. Fresh fruits and vegetables should be eaten in abundance with three to five servings daily.

Pro-inflammatory foods such as gluten, red meat, processed foods (which are high in sugar, saturated fats, and artificial additives), butter, high fat cheese and dairy products should be eliminated from the diet. Healthy fats such as those found in nuts, fish and flax oil have anti-inflammatory qualities and thus should be consumed more often. Organic white meat from chicken and turkey can also be consumed a few times a week. Mushrooms are also a great source of healthy proteins. Healthy herbs and spices such as cinnamon, turmeric, cumin, parsley and cayenne pepper can be consumed in unlimited amounts and can also successfully replace salt and sugar. Significant dietary fiber must be consumed to help maintain a healthy digestive tract not to mention that 70% of our immune system resides in the gut. Therefore, the consumption of

berries, beans, whole grains and ready-to-eat cereals should be monitored and increased if needed. 2-3 liters of filtered, purified water should be consumed daily, while avoiding coffee, alcohol and other high sugar beverages. Healthy sweets such as organic dark, plain chocolate should be consumed sparingly.

Ideally, vitamins and minerals should be taken from your diet. However, in most cases, supplements are necessary. Along with the anti-inflammatory diet, the following supplements are beneficial due to their anti-oxidant and anti-inflammatory qualities: vitamins C, E (mixed tocopherols), selenium, mixed carotenoids and vitamin D3. Other anti-inflammatory supplements include fish oil, coenzyme Q10, as well as turmeric and ginger extracts. Spirulina and chlorella can help detoxify the body, while milk thistle is particularly beneficial for liver detoxification. Food allergies should be also tested in Lyme patients.

References

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