

HEALTH ADVISORY

What is Systemic (whole body) Inflammation? The Smoldering Fire Within...

Would you like to live in better health, have greater longevity, have a reduction in symptoms of chronic disease, have greater mental acuity, and have improved physical performance? I think that most of us would answer yes to these questions. So, how can that all be achieved? It is achieved by keeping the inflammation in your body under control.

We have all experienced things like a sore throat or an infected wound and we understand that this is a type of inflammation in the body. Inflammation is a natural and necessary response in the body to injury and assault. It is part of the body's natural defense system. Any type of inflammation sets in motion a cascade of events in the body which mobilize white blood cells and various chemicals to defend against any type of foreign invader.

So, inflammation is not totally bad. But, when the body is overwhelmed, the immune system shifts into high gear spreading the fire of inflammation throughout the body. It is this type of silent, systemic inflammation that wreaks havoc in your body.

Because of the foods we eat, the toxins in the environment, hidden infections, unknown allergens, and just plain stress, one might say that we are ALL on fire to some degree. If we can find the fire and initiate ways to cool it down, we have implemented one of the true keys to wellness. By keeping eicosanoids within a certain range, our future health looks a lot more promising. When they surge out of balance, our future health could be jeopardized. You might ask, "Why is this so?"

It is because eicosanoids control inflammation, and that is becoming recognized as the underlying cause of many, if not all, chronic diseases. Control the inflammation, and you have done a lot to minimize, if not reverse, the symptoms of the chronic disease states that would threaten your health and wellness. In fact, everything that is important in your life (health, longevity, physical and mental performance, and emotions) is ultimately controlled by your hormones. That's why keeping all of your hormones in appropriate balance assures wellness in mind and body and staves off the degenerative diseases that can come with age.

Wellness is not just a state of mind; it is something that can actually be measured and quantified in your blood. (Testing is available through Total Health Solutions). Wellness is ultimately dependent on the levels of inflammation, and especially silent inflammation in your body. There are specific tests that can measure levels of inflammation in the body. One specific test can measure the ratio of arachidonic acid (AA) to eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA). Examining this particular marker can indicate the balance between the "good" eicosanoids and the "bad" eicosanoids, and provide a pretty accurate snapshot of the levels of these same fatty acids in the rest of the cells in the body. It is the ratio of AA to

EPA that is considered to be the precise indicator of silent inflammation. This test can alert you years, and even decades in advance of imminent trouble.

By simply consuming more fish oil, managing your insulin levels, and changing your dietary habits, you can decrease AA, increase EPA, and begin to reverse silent inflammation. EPA and DHA are the key omega-3 fatty acids found in fish oil. When purchasing fish oil, you have to be aware of the contaminants such as PCBs and dioxins that are often found in fish oil capsules. The one solution to this problem is to purchase pharmaceutical grade ultra-refined fish oil (EPA/DHA). Check out www.totalhealthsolutions.org to purchase pharmaceutical grade fish oil.

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