

# **Chronic Inflammation: *The Silent Enemy Burning Within***

Are you experiencing pain, heat, redness and swelling somewhere on your body?

If you are, these conditions are sure signs of acute inflammation, or as the ancient Greeks called it, “the Internal Fire.” In the aftermath of an injury, the body ignites an inflammatory response to ward off infection and jump-start tissue repair. In some people that inflammatory response is triggered inappropriately or never fully shuts off, potentially resulting in a state of *chronic inflammation*.

Chronic inflammation continually drains energy from the body as it keeps-trying to put out “the internal fire,” weakening your immune system, making you vulnerable to other conditions. Chronic inflammation is at the basis of age-related diseases such as arthritis, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and some cancers. It’s also at the root of Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s, asthma, multiple sclerosis, and other autoimmune disorders. Chronic inflammation persistently steals life forces from the body, while igniting a variety of common symptoms.

For many people, the quick fix for their health concerns is over the counter or prescription medications. However, commonly used non-steroid anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) can have serious side effects. And, while statins drugs have demonstrated effectiveness in lowering cholesterol levels, they also have the risk of serious side effects, such as muscle aches from a CoQ10 deficiency.

To determine if testing and treatment is appropriate for you, we recommend discussing your symptoms with your Chiropractic Physician.

## **Managing Your Chronic Inflammation**

Chiropractic care uses an all-natural and holistic approach to fighting autoimmune conditions. While traditional medicine focuses on minimizing and treating symptoms, chiropractic focuses on the person. Chiropractors work on improving your innate ability to heal yourself, and to improve your physiological functions. Chiropractors are specially trained doctors who are trained to make specific and precise adjustments to restore your vertebral alignment, freeing your nervous system from interference and allowing your musculoskeletal system to move better. This treatment improves your range of motion and brain-body communication, supporting your frame, and strengthening the function of every single system in your body.

## **Causes of Chronic Inflammation**

Researchers now believe that chronic inflammation results from a combination of genetics, diet and lifestyle choices that hamper the body’s ability to squelch the internal fire of the inflammatory response.

Women and older people tend to suffer more inflammatory illnesses and diet is also a primary cause. As a result, many people have become nutritionally and biochemically primed for powerful, out-of-control inflammatory reactions. Once your body is primed for inflammation, any number of triggers can provide the spark. Common triggers include frequent infections, environmental stresses such as tobacco smoke, allergies and food sensitivities. Injuries, especially among an aging population, can also lead to chronic

inflammation. Additional triggers include hypertension, hyperglycemia, and diet imbalances. If you are overweight, you have a greater risk of developing adult-onset diabetes.

A 2003 study suggested two possible keys regarding estrogen's effects on inflammation: first, the type of estrogen, and second, the method of administration. A depletion of cortisol, the "stress" hormone, is also often implicated in furthering an inflammatory condition. The problem with cortisol occurs when inflammation doesn't stop, and constant stress means constant secretion of cortisol. With the chronic stress, you can create more visceral (belly) fat. This condition causes a new round of cortisol secretion, resulting in you getting fatter and winding up with chronic silent inflammation.

## **Implications for Disease**

Inflammation may be the underlying reason for high levels of LDL cholesterol, which is the best marker of future cardiovascular disease. Research showed people with high inflammatory marker levels were 4.5 times more likely to have a heart attack. Women with the highest levels of inflammatory markers were almost 16 times more likely to develop diabetes. High levels exist in people who suffer recurrent heart attacks or angina. Inflamed arteries can also trigger the formation of clots and plaque along with a risk of stroke and Alzheimer's disease, and some cancers. Other heart disease risk factors, such as obesity, lack of exercise, smoking, and high blood pressure, are all known to increase inflammation.

Obesity is associated with inflammatory conditions. Body fat produces hormones, including those that control our immune system. Too much of certain hormones can put your body in a chronic state of insulin resistance—and low-level inflammation.

## **Treatment - Putting Out Your Fire**

In search of better ways to "cool off" the body's inflammatory responses, treatments are now looking beyond the medicine cabinet to the kitchen cabinet and the gym. It is recommended patients start a healthier lifestyle, specifically quitting smoking, and improve their diet and workout habits. Diet is key to putting out the burning ember within and recommended dietary changes and nutritional supplements help squelch the body's inflammatory response and normalize the body's immune response.

Our doctors can provide a personalized diet and exercise plan, that can include eating right, getting exercise, losing weight and reducing stress, all designed to stop the overproduction of hormones that cause chronic inflammation. A typical "anti-inflammatory" diet seeks to amplify the body's own anti-inflammatory substances. Recommended "anti-inflammatory" foods are protein eaten in moderation, carbohydrates and dietary fats. One diet separates foods into "hot" and "cold" groups. Hot foods set the stage for inflammation. They include: most vegetable oils and food fried in them, margarine and most salad dressings, baked goods, many packaged foods, fast food meals, and sugared beverages. "Cold" foods help douse inflammation. It is recommended to consume more: olive oil, fish (particularly cold-water species), fresh vegetables, low-sugar fruits, free-range beef, chicken, and game, and mineral water. By replacing "hot" foods with "cold" ones, you boost your levels of anti-inflammatory vitamins, minerals, proteins, and omega-3 fatty acids, while reducing your levels of inflammatory fats.

Plus, an anti-inflammatory diet also reduces body fat and helps to curtail excess insulin levels, providing additional health benefits. Avoiding situations that trigger inflammation is necessary for giving your immune system time to "cool off" and dial down the inflammatory response.

Successful treatment has changed people's lives and has motivated patients to make lifestyle changes.

## Getting the Help, You Need

If you think your immune system is not working properly, don't ignore the warning signs something is wrong. Your health choices are in your hands, so consider booking an appointment and get your health back on track. Please call our office and schedule a consultation, 305-666-1402.

We look forward to being of service to you and your family.