

Alternative Treatment for Allergies

Recently, I visited with my son's new preschool teacher. One of the first questions that she asked me was if my son had any allergies. I was pleasantly surprised. Honestly, my biggest fear in having my son begin school was that his food sensitivities would not be accommodated. When I mentioned that he had gluten sensitivity and peanut sensitivity, she exclaimed, "That's great! We have plenty of gluten-free snacks in the classroom and the school is a peanut-free zone!" In fact, she mentioned that the only snacks that they provide to the children in the classroom are those that can be eaten by everyone.

Now, I know that not every classroom is as allergy-friendly as this one. But it leads us to consider a future of more possibilities. Allergies are becoming so commonplace today. There is a rare family that does not have a child and/or parent with allergies. There are many signs and symptoms associated with allergies, including: eczema, headaches, asthma, abdominal discomfort, low back pain, chest discomfort, swallowing difficulty, constipation and diarrhea, bloating and swelling, and much more. These signs and symptoms are diverse and many are correlated with inflammation. Inflammation is at the root of most dysfunctions, including allergies. Certain foods are 'pro-inflammatory' which means that they produce inflammation in the body when ingested. Gluten is a good example of a pro-inflammatory food. Gluten is found in wheat, rye, barley, and oat. There are many individuals that eat gluten and do not realize that they are sensitive to it because their reactions may not appear related. According to Dr. Thomas O'Brien, a clinical nutritionist and chiropractic physician that specializes in gluten sensitivity, most gluten sensitivity tests are inaccurate and often lead to false negatives.

Today, there are many options for treatment of allergies, including alternative and traditional approaches. One traditional approach involves allergy injections which can sometimes lead to adverse side effects and often presents with no beneficial results. Another traditional approach involves pharmaceuticals to help combat the effects of allergies. The challenge with using drugs is that they purely 'mask'

symptoms. When you stop the drug, the symptoms often come back and sometimes with additional issues.

There are many alternative approaches for the treatment of allergies, including NAET (Nambudripad's Allergy Elimination Technique), nutritional supplements, elimination diets, and Integrative Manual Therapy. These alternative approaches are 'non-invasive' and when used in combination, can lead to elimination of allergies and related signs and symptoms.

NAET is a comprehensive approach to the treatment of allergies. NAET involves a series of sessions that utilize a combined approach based on acupuncture/acupressure, chiropractic medicine, applied kinesiology, and nutrition. Many health practitioners utilize NAET in conjunction with nutritional supplements plus elimination diets to treat and correct allergy dysfunction.

Integrative Manual Therapy (IMT) is a hands-on approach that is practiced by many health disciplines, including physical therapists, massage therapists, chiropractors, and more. IMT follows the 'Integrated Systems Approach.' We are comprised of many different body systems, such as the skeletal system, the connective tissue system, the circulatory system, the immune system, and more. When we have a sign or symptom, it can involve one or many of these systems. IMT uses gentle hands-on techniques to correct dysfunction in many body systems. Let's consider back pain as an example. Back pain can be a result of joint compression in the sacrum or pelvis; it can be secondary to irritation of the colon, and even inflammation of the ureters (the tubes that travel from the kidneys to the bladder supporting elimination of toxins from the body). If someone was unaware that they had gluten sensitivity and continued to eat foods that contained gluten, this could cause irritation of the colon or ureters and lead to back pain.

IMT uses a hands-on integrative diagnostic process to determine where the primary site of dysfunction is in the body. IMT practitioners develop an individualized treatment plan for each client that outlines the specific IMT techniques to be performed on the person. These treatment plans typically include a nutritional

program outlining a supplement program along with specific elimination diets that would be beneficial to help correct the body's dysfunction and reduce signs and symptoms.

Elimination diets are often short term and help to highlight specific allergies in the body as well as provide the body with an opportunity to 'deload', or desensitize to a particular food. Some foods are harmful to everyone, such as gluten. Other foods uniquely affect specific people. The best way to discover whether you are allergic to a particular food is to perform an elimination diet for four months. During these four months, it is important to 100% eliminate the food. To perform a gluten elimination diet, you would eliminate wheat, rye, barley, and oat. During these four months, you may expect to find a reduction in general body aches, reduced headaches and back pain, reduced abdominal cramping and bloating, improved energy, improved mental clarity, and more. Remember that the signs and symptoms associated with allergies are not always obvious! When elimination diets are combined with IMT, nutritional supplements, and NAET, remarkable changes can be made in the realm of allergies.

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