

Study: Gluten Linked to Brain and Nervous Disorders

Wheat, rye, spelt, kamut and barley all contain an ordinary protein called gluten. It is a storage protein which is sticky and binds to the walls of the small intestines. It quite commonly results in immune system and digestive conditions.

Gluten Brain Connection

The most prevalent disorder associated with gluten sensitivities is referred to as Celiac disease. It causes the villi of the small intestines to flatten. There are also a number of immune system reactions that result due to gluten sensitivity and this can affect a wide range of various tissues. When this happens the term non-celiac gluten sensitivity is used or NCGS. NCGS is considered an epidemic, which is thought to be responsible for inflammatory, brain and nervous system disorders.

Clinical studies have revealed that the correlation of these disorders and gluten sensitivity present in most all neurological systems, which includes the spinal cord, brain and peripheral nerves. Movement disorders, cerebellar disease, neuropathy and numerous other conditions are thought to have been triggered by gluten in a very large number of instances.

Consuming gluten may have negative effects on the body that can continue for months after the actual consumption. The immune system of many people today is extremely stressed as a result of any number of causes, including vitamin D3 deficiencies, parasites and environmental toxins. For this reason it is crucial that these individuals strictly adhere to a gluten-free diet.

Elements of Gluten Sensitivity

The sticky component of gluten is known as glutenin, and gliadin is the protein portion. The latter can be broken down into gamma, omega and alpha gliadins. In most cases, lab tests only examine the alpha gliadin antibodies; however, these are only a minute portion of the entire molecule. At those times lab tests will have negative results because the patient is actually affected by the other portions of the gluten molecule. Commercial food processing commonly includes the deamidation of gliadin molecules to create a substance which is more water soluble. Gliadin, that has been through this process, incites serious immune system reactions in countless individuals. This is not indicated on those types of tests either.

Going Gluten-Free Can Have Severe Side Effects

A group of opioid peptides known as gluten exorphins are produced when the body digests gluten-based proteins. There is a medical test available to determine if the body is producing antibodies to prodynorphin and/or gluteomorphin. Introducing a gluten free diet to individuals who have an opioid sensitivity can result in serious withdrawal symptoms, similar to those withdrawing from heroine. This may include dramatic mood swings, severe depression, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea or constipation. These symptoms can continue for days or even weeks.

Immuno-Responses and Nervous System Dysfunction

The human immune system can sometimes mistake one protein for some other protein. When this happens it is called immune cross reactivity. Gluten proteins have many similarities with those found in thyroid and nervous system tissues. The body may sometimes produce antibodies to these normal tissues during the process of producing them in response to gluten.

This cross reaction can lead to brain damage as well as damage to the thyroid and/or additional neurological tissues.

Individuals only need to consume a very small amount of gluten for this to take place. The most common area for this cross reaction to take place is in the cerebellum. This results in vertigo and anxiety, as well as the loss of balance and motor control. There are several studies published on *Pub Med* which report on the effects of Celiac disease or gluten sensitivity on psychiatric and neurological manifestations.

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