

healthy living

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Nutrition for Hashimoto's



Hashimoto's disease is not caused by just one toxin, nutritional deficiency, or pathogen. Rather, thyroid problems are more likely the result of a number of different factors, including environmental exposures, pesticides, chemicals, and a number of deficiencies in nutrients that result from improper diet, toxic overload, or autoimmune disease (such as Celiac, Lupus, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Multiple Sclerosis, or Diabetes). Finding the right balance among a number of approaches is the best way to restore your thyroid health. In my practice, we aim to address food first. Secondly, therapeutic repletion with the proper nutrients from high-quality supplements may be necessary. Also important - together we will focus on the importance of lifestyle measures to help you feel your best. Tools to help you reduce stress, practice self-care, optimize sleep, and implement an appropriate exercise routine are also part of the program.



Consider Food's Effects on Antibody Levels

In the case of Hashimoto's, foods themselves may be creating problems. Food sensitivities, particularly to foods containing gluten/wheat, as well as to synthetic hormones added to conventionally-raised meats and dairy, for example, can disrupt the overall endocrine system. When you have elevated antibodies, such as those found in Hashimoto's disease, your body has found something antigenic (something it perceives to be a "foreign body") and the body feels a need to be extra vigilant and essentially launch an attack. Our goal through nutritional therapy for Hashimoto's is to improve digestive function, eliminate foods which may be triggers for symptoms, support the immune system and restore overall balance in the endocrine system.

Many clients report that their thyroid symptoms decrease once their food plan is clean and home-cooked with high-quality ingredients. Lab testing confirms that antibodies decrease when the diet is modified and certain trigger foods (food sensitivities) are

eliminated. That is because when the immune system no longer continually sees a foreign material in the bloodstream, its efforts to clear out the foreign substance and its overall heightened or inflamed response diminishes. So, for example, if you have bacteria or yeast that has compromised your thyroid, when you eat foods that contain refined sugars, you feed the bacteria or yeast, which can aggravate the inflammatory and antigenic response, and antibody levels will go up. In this case, a sugar-free program, as well as regular detoxification, can be particularly helpful to improving symptoms.

For all clients I see with Hashimoto's, I recommend a whole foods approach, using organic foods. It is also vital that the diet is sufficient in quality animal protein, as protein is needed to stimulate the thyroid gland, and also repair the tissue of the affected area (where antibodies have attacked the gland). Finally, an abundance of healthy fats has been shown to be extremely helpful for most clients suffering from Hashimoto's.

In my practice, I focus on nutritional solutions. However, unlike some holistic approaches, I do not oppose the use of thyroid medications, and I frequently work with clients who are on thyroid hormone replacement drugs. It is important that we work together with your doctor to monitor your progress through labs and symptom checklists to determine if our programs are working for you. You may choose to begin nutrient support in concurrence with a medical treatment plan, and then make a decision with your doctor as to whether or not you can taper down medication dosage over time. It is important to speak to your doctor about nutrition and lifestyle changes you are making for the benefit of your thyroid and overall health. I look forward to working with you!

For more information and to book your appointment online, visit www.sarapeternell.com