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Multiple Sclerosis

Multiple sclerosis (MS) affects about 350,000 Americans and is about twice as common in women as in men. This disorder is an autoimmune disease that affects the myelin sheath (insulation around the nerve). Essentially, your own immune system begins to attack your normal myelin sheath that surrounds or essentially insulates the nerve. The breakdown of the myelin, called demyelination, results in impairment of the function of the nerve while presenting clinical symptoms of multiple sclerosis. This is the process that essentially forms the plaques that are so characteristic of this disease.

Dr. LeVine first proposed a hypothesis in 1992 that multiple sclerosis was caused by the hydroxyl free radical found in excess within the myelin sheath. Other investigators have further documented that oxidative stress is very high during active progression of multiple sclerosis when compared to those individuals whose multiple sclerosis is in remission or when compared with normal controls. Several other studies have demonstrated strong evidence that the underlying cause of multiple sclerosis is oxidative stress. [See the bibliography below]

There have not been many clinical trials using antioxidants in patients with multiple sclerosis. However, because of the growing evidence of

the involvement of oxidative stress in this disease, there will surely be future clinical trials using antioxidants in these patients.

Multiple sclerosis is an autoimmune disease. This means that the body is essentially attacking itself. One's own immune system attacks the myelin sheath around the nerve and causes an inflammatory response. It is actually the oxidative stress caused by this reaction that is damaging the myelin sheath. The clinical course of MS is definitely varied. Some of my patients progress rapidly and are wheelchair bound or bed bound within a few short years. Other MS patients actually have a fairly normal life and will go years before they have any kind of a set back. In fact, physicians are actually just looking at the clinical course to determine the classification of your disease. They are usually called relapsing-remitting, secondary progressive, primary progressive or progressive-remitting MS.

Why is this disease so varied? The most logical explanation is that some individuals have a stronger immune system and more potent antioxidant defense system than others. This is why I strongly recommend that my MS patients begin a very aggressive nutritional supplement program as soon as they have had the diagnosis of MS. I feel this gives the patient the best chance of having a more benign course of their disease.

I was taught in medical school that autoimmune diseases were the result of an overactive immune system, since the body was essentially attacking itself. Consistent with our training, almost all of the medical therapies that physicians offer patients with an autoimmune disease are based on this premise. This is why most of these patients are placed on chemotherapeutic medications, which primarily suppress the immune system. Medications like Methotrexate, Plaquinil, and Immuran are just a few of the potent medications that are used. Corticosteroids like Prednisone are also used not only because of its strong anti-inflammatory qualities but also because they suppress the immune system. However, in MS these medications have not shown much success.

Overactive or Confused Immune System

Since specializing in Nutritional Medicine, I have seen amazing results in my patients with autoimmune diseases who are using an aggressive nutritional supplementation program. My only explanation for such unbelievable results in my patients is the fact that they are not dealing with an over active immune system, but rather a confused immune system.

The immune system is intended to be our great protector. It is always checking for self (one's own body) while it is looking for non-self (any foreign substance or abnormal cell). When the immune system finds a virus, bacteria, abnormally growing cell or foreign body it destroys and eliminates it from the body. However, in autoimmune diseases the immune system actually attacks itself rather than a foreign substance. If it attacks the joint space, a person is diagnosed as having rheumatoid arthritis. If it attacks the bowels, it manifests as Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis. When the connective tissue is attacked, a person might end up with scleroderma or lupus. If the myelin sheath around the nerve is the target, multiple sclerosis (MS) ensues.

In the case of autoimmune diseases, I believe one's immune system is not able to distinguish self from non-self. Being confused, the body is essentially destroying itself. This immune response creates oxidative stress that destroys normal tissue. In MS, this not only causes the destruction of the myelin sheath, but studies also show that there is a significant depletion of antioxidants in the surrounding normal tissue.

Traditional Medical Treatment

Like all other autoimmune diseases patients with MS were initially treated with drugs that suppressed the immune system. However, the MS patients did not respond like patients with other autoimmune diseases. They actually became worse in most cases. This has led to a change in the approach to treating patients with MS. They are treated with medications like Betaserone, Capaxone, and Avonex, which are interferon-like drugs that actually build up the body's immune system rather than suppressing it. Still they are not only very costly, but have detrimental side effects. Many of my patients are not able to take these medications.

Overall, the treatment of MS has improved with the introduction of these types of drugs. It is accepted now to build up the immune system in patients with MS.

Complete and balanced nutritional supplements that are of high-quality accomplish the same goal. Nutritional supplements have been shown in many different clinical trials to build up our body's natural immune system while at the same time building up our body's natural antioxidant and repair system. My patients with MS tolerate the aggressive nutritional supplement regime I recommend with no significant problems. This supplementation program is not alternative, but instead, complimentary. It can be used in patients with MS who are on some of these

traditional medications or are not taking any of these drugs.

Aggressive Nutritional Supplement Program

I recommend that all my patients with MS begin an aggressive nutritional supplement program. In doing so, I am not only building up their NATURAL antioxidant defense systems, but also I am building up their own NATURAL immune system. I find this helps my patients on both sides of the disease.

I believe their immune system becomes less confused and begins to recognize "self" again. This means the immune system more readily identifies outside invaders--not attacking "self" as much. In addition, my patients' antioxidant defense system is also being optimized. The body is not attacking self as much and when it does there is less damage because there are enough antioxidants available to handle the number of free radicals being produced. This brings the root cause of the damage--oxidative stress--back under control. Therefore, it is absolutely critical that I place my patients on the most potent antioxidant combination available.

I recommend what I refer to as cellular nutrition to all my patients with MS. This is providing all these antioxidants and their supporting nutrients at these optimal levels or those levels that have been shown to provide a health benefit in our medical literature. I then add to this cellular nutrition two key enhancers. The first is at least 400 mg of a high-quality grape seed extract and 200 mg powder-form (or 60 mg of gel-form) of CoQ10. These products must be pharmaceutical-grade, follow USP, and be complete and balanced to have any chance of a positive result in a difficult disease like MS. I also inform my patients that it takes a minimum of 6 months on this aggressive nutritional supplement program to know whether you are going to have a positive result or not. It just takes this long to begin to build up your body's

immune system and antioxidant defense system.

Am I promoting alternative medicine?

Absolutely not. I never take my patients off of their medications until they've experienced significant improvement. Nutritional supplementation is always used in tandem with their present medical regimen. They not only tolerate their medications better, but I believe the nutritional supplements actually enhance the pharmaceutical effect of their drugs. My goal is to have patients improve so much that their neurologist or primary care physician is able to decrease or eliminate some or all of their medications. Physicians tell their patients that the medication they are prescribing will only help slow down the progression of their disease. However, many of my patients with MS have actually seen significant improvement in their disease. They realize that it is the aggressive nutritional supplement program that is the reason. However, I can't emphasize this enough. No one should stop taking the medications that have been prescribed to him or her by their specialist without their approval. They should only discontinue or change their medication under the direct supervision and orders of their personal, local physician.

Amazing Clinical Results

In my practice and with multiple sclerosis patients, I am seeing amazing results. Several patients are not only maintaining their present level of function, but several patients are also gaining strength and function. Not all of my patients with MS have responded to this aggressive nutritional program. However, when you witness some of the amazing clinical improvements I have, you feel that it is certainly worth a trying for 6 to 8 months to see if you are one of those who are going to respond.

I have now been involved with several MS patients who have gone from wheelchair-

bound to walking again. I have had several MS patients who started this aggressive nutritional program early in the course of their disease who have not had a major setback for 10 to 12 years. I have seen patients who have lost feeling in a significant part of their body actually regain that feeling. The body has a tremendous ability to heal itself. It just needs to be able to bring oxidative stress back under control to have a chance to accomplish this goal.

One of the main concerns a physician has when his or her specialty is nutritional medicine is the fact that you are dealing with a totally unregulated market. You have no assurance that what a nutritional company states on the label is actually in the bottle. Completeness and balance of your supplements are also a major concern. I am results oriented. You will see amazing clinical stories in my books and in my newsletters. Many readers just go out and try to put this together by themselves and then become frustrated when they do not experience any positive results. I am only able to share the specific nutritional supplements I have used in my practice to achieve these amazing results in the form a consultation. This is why I have developed my online medical practice at www.drraystrand.com. If you have MS, I would strongly encourage you to become a member of my medical practice, which specializes in nutritional medicine.

My “Online Medical Practice”—Specializing in Nutritional Medicine

I would strongly encourage you to consider becoming a member of my online medical practice at www.drraystrand.com. This will allow you to have direct access to me via an email or phone consult at a very reasonable price. I maintain electronic medical records of my consults and my website is HIPAA compliant (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act). You will also have access to my Standard Specific Nutritional

Supplement Recommendations for over 100 different diseases including multiple sclerosis at no additional charge. Whether you choose to receive my Standard Specific Recommendations or want to consult me personally, I believe it is certainly worth the time, money, and effort to give yourself an opportunity to regain your health.

Complete access to this website costs only \$49 US annually and not only does it allow you to receive my bi-monthly newsletters and frequent health nuggets, but you also have direct access to all the resources on this website:

- Immediate access to a variety of resources that will educate, motivate, and guide you into those effective healthy lifestyles that will give you the absolute best chance of protecting or regaining your health
- You will receive periodic emails explaining the health benefits of taking high-quality, complete and balanced nutritional supplements
- You will receive my Bi-Monthly Healthy for Life Electronic Newsletter
- You will have access to my standard specific nutritional recommendations for over 100 different diseases many of which have been translated into French and Spanish.
- Members have the privilege to have direct access to me via an email or phone consult at a very reasonable charge. A confidential electronic medical record will be established for each member who consults me directly for better continuity of care.
- Members have the ability to order blood work through my online medical practice at a very reasonable charge.

I have been able to help literally hundreds of patients with multiple sclerosis. Most of these patients have lost all hope of getting their health and life back. How valuable is to you to

possibly be able to get your life and health back? Check out my website at www.drraystrand.com or visit with the individual who shared this newsletter with you.

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