Integrative Medicine & Crohn’s/ UC

Raneth Heng, MD
Scripps Center for Integrative Medicine
Integrative Medicine

- art & science of healing that addresses care of the whole person: body, mind, & spirit
- integrates conventional & complementary therapies to promote optimal health and to prevent & treat disease by addressing contributing factors
- promotes relationship-centered care: a partnership which encourages self-care and healing
- honors the values, needs, knowledge, and insights from both parties
Who Am I?

- Board certified in Family Medicine; Integrative & Holistic Medicine
- Fellow of the University of Arizona’s Center for Integrative Medicine, founded by Andrew Weil, MD
- trained in hypnosis, healing touch, and Ayurvedic Medicine
- integrative medicine consultant for Scripps Center for Integrative Medicine since 2005
Integrative Medicine Consultations

- hear your story
- determine underlying causes
- determine contributing factors
- investigate: labs, studies, physical examination
- treatment plan: lifestyle (nutrition, movement, stress management, spiritual), herbs/supplements, modalities (biofeedback, acupuncture, hypnosis, healing touch, etc), medications, other
Case History: John

- 40 yr old with Crohn’s, treated with Canasa and cortisone suppositories, as needed
- health-conscious and wanting to use natural therapies
- >20 yrs working as a driver for FedEx: 12 hr intense days, with very little breaks to eat or go to the bathroom
- mouth & anal lesions; bloody diarrhea; arthritic pain in his hands & feet
- eager to stay in this job for 4 more yrs for early retirement
John’s Hectic Day

- 5-6am work out at the gym
- 7am show up to work to check out his route
- 8:30 starts his route
- 11-11:15 break (rests)
- 12:30-1pm 30 min lunch break
- no further breaks
- 7-9pm finishes route
- returns home for dinner and sleep
John’s Other Symptoms

- fever, chills
- weight gain
- fatigue
- swelling in hands & feet
- abdominal pain, constipation, bloody diarrhea
- headaches
- insomnia, anxiety, panic attacks, depression
- sexual difficulties
Social History

- No smoking, no alcohol
- Anti-inflammatory diet, but does eat fast food and junk food
- Exercises 1.5 hrs/day; no other form of relaxation
- Single; close with family; minimal friends
- No spiritual practice
Assessment

- very stressful lifestyle
- poor sleep
- diet can be improved
- potential food intolerance/sensitivities
- inflammation in multiple places: gut, joints, head
Treatment Plan

- Diagnostic workup
- Stress Management
- Improve Sleep
- Reduce Inflammation
- 4 R’s (Remove, Repair, Replace, Restore)
- Integrative Modalities (acupuncture, biofeedback, hypnosis, etc...)
Diagnostic Work-Up

- Spectracell micronutrient assessment
- Salivary cortisol measurements
- Vit-D 25 (OH)
- Comprehensive Digestive Stool Analysis (CDSA)
- Celiac testic (Prometheus labs)
Stress Management
Image of gut immune sys
The Brain in Your Gut

The gut’s brain, known as the enteric nervous system, is located in sheaths of tissue lining the esophagus, stomach, small intestine and colon.

SMALL INTESTINE CROSS SECTION

Submucosal plexus
Layer contains sensory cells that communicate with the myenteric plexus and motor fibers that stimulate the secretion of fluids into the lumen.

Myenteric plexus
Layer contains the neurons responsible for regulating the enzyme output of adjacent organs.

Lumen
No nerves actually enter this area, where digestion occurs. The brains in the head and gut have to monitor conditions in the lumen across the lining of the bowel.

Mesentery
Attaches the bowel to the body wall and contains major arteries, veins, lymphatics and external nerves.

Source: Dr. Michael D. Gershon, Columbia University
Stress Management

- Break up the day (10 min breaks morning, noon, afternoon; 30 min break before bedtime)
- Do something special on the weekends
- Don’t wait until the weekend, vacation, or retirement
- Establish healthy boundaries
Relaxation Techniques

- hobbies, exercise, prayer, meditation
- spending time with nurturing people
- breathing techniques, music, guided imagery/self hypnosis
- simplification
- setting *realistic* goals
- eliminating, decreasing, and/or accepting *perceived* stressors
- forgiveness
for John

- wrote a letter to his boss: 15 min breaks 2x/day, 30 min lunch, off by 7pm
- breathing exercises
- tips for stress management
- wind down before bedtime with gentle stretching
Offerings at SCIM

- Yoga
- Tai Chi/ Qi Gong
- MBSR
- Spirituality classes
- Group support
- Music & wellness
- Lifestyle Change Program
Improving Sleep

- Healthy sleep hygiene
- Regular schedule
- Bladder training/ evening water restriction
- Comfort, darkness, quiet
- Bedtime routine, following the laws of nature
- Assess for sleep apnea
Decreasing Inflammation

- Anti-inflammatory diet
- Anti-inflammatory supplements
- Stress management
- Minimizing alcohol intake
Anti-Inflammatory Diet
Anti-Inflammatory Foods

1. Carotenoids (orange colored fruits/veggies, leafy greens, citrus)

2. Flavenoids (green tea, darkly pigmented berries, cherries, peppers)

3. Isoflavones (soy, as long as not intolerant)

4. Omega 3’s (ALA, EPA, DHA)
   1. salmon, sardines, herring, mackerel, black cod, and bluefish (EPA, DHA)
   1. Ground flaxseeds, walnuts (ALA)
Anti-Inflammatory Foods

5. Tumeric (Curcumin)
6. Ginger
7. Quercitin (red wine, apples, cruciferous)
8. (parsley) Sage, rosemary, thyme
9. Olives
10. Foods rich in anti-oxidants (green tea, red wine, darkly pigmented berries)
Fiber

- binds toxins and other molecules that may trigger an inflammatory response

- decreases transit time for stool, reducing antigenic exposure and waste and toxin exposure to gut lining.

- promotes growth of healthy bacteria suppresses growth of harmful bacteria -- whole grains, fruits and vegetables
Pro-Inflammatory Foods

1. Trans-fatty acids/ hydrogenated oils
2. Foods with ↑glycemic index (HFCS, refined carbs)
3. Excessive Ω6 (LA, AA, GLA)
   1. Margarine
   2. Corn oil
   3. Sunflower & safflower oils
   4. Soybean oil
Pro-Inflammatory Foods

4. Known food allergens
   1. Casein
   2. Gluten
   3. Peanuts
   4. Soy

5. Animal protein high in saturated fat
   1. Beef
   2. Whole dairy
Anti-Inflammatory Diet In Summary

“Eat food, mostly plants, and not too much”

Michael Pollen *The Omnivore’s Dilemma*
Anti-Inflammatory Supplements
Fish Oil

- Crohn’s Disease Study looking at rate of relapse and Omega 3’s in *N Engl J Med* 1996 Jun 13

- 2.7 gms of fish oil vs placebo
  - daily relapse in fish oil: 11/39 (28%)
  - daily relapse in placebo: 27/39 (69%)
  - 1 yr remission in fish oil: 23/39 (59%)
  - 1 yr remission in placebo: 10/39 (26%)
Fish Oil & UC

- 4000-5000 mg/day
- significant improvement in
  - weight gain
  - decreased steroid use
  - improved disease activity & histology scores
Bromelain

- Duke/NCCAM
- Decreased pro-inflammatory cytokines and chemokines that are elevated in IBD and factor in the progression of IBD
- Conclusion: bromelain can potentially benefit IBD patients
Curcumin

- Pure curcumin in UC & Crohn’s 1gm 2x/day with black pepper
- All proctitis pts improved: reduced mds 4/5
- 80% Crohn’s had lowered Crohn’s Dx Activity Index & sed rates
Psyllium

- Psyllium seeds as effective as mesalamine in decreasing recurrences of UC
- Psyllium may be used as a bulking agent for mild-mod diarrhea from either UC or Crohn’s
Aloe Vera

- active UC
- oral aloe vera 1/2 cup 3x/day taken for 4 wks produced a clinical response more often than placebo
- reduced histological disease activity
- appears to be safe
Healing the Gut: 
The Principle of 4 R’s
Leaky Gut
Remove

Elimination diet to identify potential food intolerances

Most common food triggers:
- gluten, dairy, nuts, soy, corn, refined sugars

Symptoms of food intolerance: bloating, changes in bowel movements, headache, joint pains, fatigue, decreased mental clarity
Repair

- **Glutamine**: non essential amino acid
- energy source for highly metabolic cells
- increases intestinal villi height
- stimulates mucosal cell proliferation
- decrease permeability of cells and bacterial translocation
- decreases gut cytokine release thereby decreasing inflammation
- increases glutathione & protective heat shock proteins
Restore Gut Flora

- healthy gut contains 5-7 lbs of healthy bacteria, which help to produce some vitamins, cell energy and help to absorb nutrients

- inflamed, “leaky” gut has lower amounts of healthy bacteria, which is replaced by pathogenic bacteria and/or yeast
Probiotics

- Nonresponsive UC study
- Lactobacillus, Bifidobacterium (3 strains), and Streptococcus salivarius
- Remission: 53%
- Additional 24% improved
- Biopsy: probiotic bacteria present in diseased areas of colon

*American Journal of Gastroenterology, July 2005*
Probiotic Dosing

- Mixed species
- Start with 1 billion units 3x/day
- Gradually increase over a month to 20-30 billion units/day
- Can go up to 200-500 billion units/day
- VSL#3
B-complex vitamins such as folic acid (400 mcg/day) and vitamin B6 (50 mg/day), and particularly vitamin B12 (50 mcg/day)

Iron (300 mg/day), magnesium (350 mg/day), selenium (200 mcg/day), zinc (30 mg/day), Vitamin A (5000 IU/day) are frequently found in patients with Crohn’s disease.

Patients with Crohn’s disease are usually under increased oxidative stress and have lower levels of antioxidant vitamins. Supplementation with vitamins C (250-500 mg/day), beta carotenoids (10K IU/day), CoQ10 (50-100 mg/day), and E (400 IU/day) reduces oxidative stress.

Long-term use of corticosteroids warrants the inclusion of supplemental calcium (citrate 600 mg 2x/day) and vitamin D (2000 IU/day) to prevent corticosteroid-induced osteoporosis.
Healthy Gut
Integrative Modalities
Acupuncture
Biofeedback
Hypnosis
Healing Touch
Follow up with John

- Rare flares
- No further need for steroids, Canasa
- Energized, getting fitter
- Committed to caring for himself
- Happy & grateful
Questions?
Thank You

- Raneth Heng, MD
- Scripps Center for Integrative Medicine
- La Jolla, CA
- Contact: 858-554-3348
- [http://www.scripps.org/services/integrative-medicine](http://www.scripps.org/services/integrative-medicine).