Can We Reverse Food Sensitivities? - Hot Take Transcript

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Introduction to Food Sensitivities

Can food sensitivities be reversed? This is going to be kind of a hot take because I know that many people who have irritable bowel syndrome, who has migraines, have Hashimoto's and other types of autoimmune diseases have found that elimination diets make a significant difference in their symptoms in the lab markers.

Now, I used to think that foods were a root cause, that we just needed to get rid of inflammatory foods in order to heal. I'm going to tell you that this is actually something that I've changed my mind on and that is a dangerous slippery slope to get on.

When we categorize foods as either good or bad, we can get into a situation where we essentially lose that intuitive communication with our bodies and we can become more restricted in our eating.

Hi, I'm Dr. Isabella Wentz, your thyroid pharmacist, and this is Thyroid Pharmacists Healing Conversations podcast. Today, i'm going to dive deep into how to reverse various food sensitivities.

So if you are somebody with food sensitivity, s I want you to listen up and I Let's go back to the beginning. So, what are food sensitivities? Food sensitities are going to be different than food allergies.

They are essentially going be delayed reactions that you have to foods. You can have symptoms like migraine attacks, skin issues, digestive distress, For example, irritable bowel syndrome symptoms, acid reflux symptoms bloating, constipation, you can have anxiety, mood related issues, fatigue, all as a result of consuming a specific food.

Now, this is something that functional medicine has been really great about raising the awareness on. Elimination diets are the gold standard to figuring out your food sensitivities.

What Food Sensitivities Are and How Theyu2019re Tested

We do know that food sensitivity are going to be implicated in various autoimmune conditions and getting off of the foods that are inflammatory in your body can help you feel significantly better.

Now, there are also lab tests that can determine if you are sensitive to a particular food. I will say that not all lab test are created equally. And so I've gone down the path a decade ago of recommending certain food sensitivity tests, that were just very inconclusive.

So a person would get the lab report and the report would say they were sensitive broccoli, and red onions, that they were sensitive to blueberries, so on and so forth.

These individuals would take the foods out of their diet and they would not see any results in their digestive symptoms. They would see not any improvements in the lab markers.

There's a lot of different tests out there on the market. they're all considered experimental and all use different methodologies. I will not recommend most tests on the market.

However, I have gotten a lot of feedback from different clients over the years where they've said I've done a food sensitivity test, tried to eliminate the foods, and I saw no benefit.

The only test that I done multiple times over and over on myself and clients and family members that has produced helpful results where they are clinically relevant.

What I mean by that is this says you're sensitive to ginger. Holy cow, we removed ginger from your diet and you no longer have acid reflux. Or this, says your sensitive eggs.

Wow, turns out that eggs were causing those rashes for you. And so this is going to be the OLLATESS, A-L-E-T- E-S- S-I-G- G, food sensitivity tests. They have a panel of 96 foods and 184 foods.

I'm going to provide a link to Rupa, which is a lab self order option if you wanted to order that for yourself. I will say in defense of food sensitivities and elimination diets, getting off of foods temporarily can be a really big game changer for people.

So you can see a lot of symptoms vanish. Where I get concerned though is when people go on these long-term elimination diets and they're off of these foods forever and their healing starts to plateau.

So maybe initially their bloating went away and all of a sudden their bleeding is coming back and then they become sensitive to additional foods and eliminate more foods.

And then, they get to a situation where they are on a super restricted diet and still not feeling their best. I have to say this did happen to me early on in my healing journey.

I had irritable bowel syndrome and Hashimoto's and acid reflux and felt awful most days. And so this kind of spearheaded my heeling journey and I decided to get off of gluten and dairy as a recommendation from an integrative doctor.

Also, this is something that I has seen gluten Hashimoto's connection and research and then the dairy Hashimoto's connection. There was a woman that wrote a blog post about how dairy free helped her get rid of her Hashimoto's.

And of course, both of those foods are implicated in irritable bowel syndrome, too. So I decided to go for it. This was hard for a Polish girl. You know, I had to give up my beloved pierogi for little while and I got off of the foods within three days.

my symptoms vanished. So the acid reflux, bloating, irritable bowel syndrome, this completely went away.

Why Elimination Diets Can Help but Also Backfire

And I was like, I'm not bloated anymore. This is amazing. For a while, a lot of my systems began to improve, but then they plateaued. Then I thought maybe it's more foods.

I decided to go do the specific carbohydrate diet. and eliminated more foods. Then I decided to go grain-free and decided do the paleo diet and eliminate more food, got back on the specific carbohydrate diet, and was eating a lot of nuts and seeds.

And lo and behold, my skin looked dull and gray. My hair was falling out. I was tired again. i got really, really thin. my husband called me rail thin and he was very concerned about my appearance.

and I started to get bloated again And I remember going to work one day and this physician that I used to worked with said, wow, are you expecting? Congratulations.

I was like, no, that's just my bloated belly. And so then at that point, I like do I eliminate more foods, right? At that point, I didn't really know what to do because I was on such a limited diet that there was not many more foods for me to eliminate.

I ended up switching my diet around a little bit. and I found out that I had a protozoal infection known as blastocystis hominis. This has been implicated in irritable bowel syndrome, chronic hives, which I also had, and Hashimoto's, as well as a whole host of other inflammatory chronic conditions.

Lo and behold, when I treated that infection, a lot of my food sensitivities actually vanished. So grains, I was no longer sensitive to them, Here's the thing, a true food sensitivity is usually just one or two foods, maybe three foods.

So if you were truly, that was your root cause, you might just have celiac disease and be gluten sensitive, or you just might have a dairy sensitivity.

Maybe at tops you should have three food sensitivities, but when you are reacting to a whole bunch of different foods, this is something to consider. The food sensitivity are not your root cause, they are a symptom of the root causes.

Really what's going on when have multiple food sensitive is you have some degree of intestinal permeability, and there's something causing it. It could be an infection.

You can have some immune dysregulation. There could something be causing that. you can also have deficiencies in cofactors. So you might not be metabolizing the foods properly.

We might also be deficient in digestive enzymes, so you're not breaking down the food properly Do you see where this is going? So in order for us to thrive and feel our best, we want to figure out what's that thing that's contributing to our illness.

and take it away and are we missing something that could really help restore our health? And of course, add that in. So we're going to talk about food sensitivities and what to do about specific ones.

Now I share the example of blastocystis hominis, this is a very common protozoal infection. In fact, I did a whole podcast episode on that. I'm going to link that for you in the show notes.

This is going be a common root cause of IBS Hashimoto's and hives. finding and treating the root cause of irritable bowel syndrome. It's present in up to 73% of people with irritability syndrome, and this is something that's really, really important to treat.

My Healing Journey and the Root Cause of Reactions

Otherwise, you're just going to keep getting more food reactions and be more sensitive to more foods. With this particular bug or root cause, the common foods that you're going to react to include sugar, wheat, dairy, rice, corn, carbonated drinks, alcohol, and fruit.

And now when I look at that list and I think about some of the popular diets for Hashimoto's, autoimmune paleo really comes to mind because that's a grain free diet, right?

And it eliminates so many other different types of foods. So Here's the deal, we wanna figure out what's driving us to be food reactive. And I have a list of foods here, food categories I should say, and I'm gonna tell you what to do if you're sensitive to these foods.

You could do an elimination diet to figure if your sensitive these food, you could a food sensitivity test like the one I recommended to see if here sensitive this foods, or perhaps if just have some weird symptoms, your not sure what do with them, that could be another avenue to consider.

So starting off with fatty containing foods, if you find that you get diarrhea after you eat fatty foods or have digestive distress, this is oftentimes a sign that are deficient in pancreatic enzymes or in bile acid.

You can test your pancreatic enzyme function with a stool test, such as the gut zoomer or the GI map, and you will wanna look at your elastase levels.

Your fecal elastase should be above 500. If it's under that, that means that you are not going to be properly

digesting your fatty-containing foods, and you're not gonna feel your best.

You might have dry skin, you might dry hair, or you may have vision issues because you won't be absorbing any of your fat-soluble vitamins properly like vitamin A, vitamin D, E, K, fatty acids, fish oils, etc.

So the solution for that is going to be to take pancreatic enzymes, they can be incredibly helpful, or some ox bile to help you break down that fat because fat breakdown is kind of a complicated process and oftentimes we need a couple of things to make that happen.

Pure Encapsulations has a product called Pancreatic Enzymes. I know that the name is so original, right, that you can utilize. And there's also prescription versions of pancreatic enzymes such as Creon.

how big of a meal that you're eating and the fat content and so on and, so forth. But this could be a really big game changer for how you feel. Now, I will say sometimes you might have pancreatic enzyme deficiencies because you have SIBO or because, you could have something like a parasitic infection in your small intestine.

Now, this is like a root cause pathway. So it's not that fatty foods are bad for you. It's that you don't have enough digestive enzymes. And sometimes it is just replacing the digestive enzyme.

Sometimes it realizing that your digestive tract has been damaged by an infection or an overgrowth.

Fat, Sulfur, and FODMAP Sensitivities

The next category of foods that I oftentimes feel can be very, very problematic for people is sulfur-containing foods. These would include eggs, garlic, onions, crucifers, and in some individuals they might have digestive distress after they eat them.

For some people they may have dry skin or kind of sulfury, angry rashes. and this occurs because we're missing cofactors that help us break down sulfur and we can end up with a sulfur overload.

This can also be exacerbated by something like sulfur SIBO and it can be also exacerbate by taking a whole bunch of high sulfur foods and supplements and acetylcysteine would be one example.

I induced this reaction in myself when I tried chelation therapy with DMSA, which is a sulfur compound, and I found myself with a full body rash. I know, not super glamorous, but it actually was the second time that I figured out that foods were not the enemy and that i can get rid of food reactions.

Now, I will say you might need to get off of foods for the time being as you're processing the sulfur backlog and the supplements, But once you reestablish that pathway, you should not react to those foods again.

So the things that really help, the number one thing to help with that sulfur pathway is going to be a molybdenum supplement. Anywhere from 500 micrograms to 1000 micro grams of that can really helped to move the sulfur oxidase Enzyme, which can get congested when we have, like I said, when have sulfur SIBO, sometimes candida, can really impact that enzyme or we've just overdone it on some of these high sulfur compounds.

The other things that can help include butyrate and then hydroxycobalamin B12, type of B-12 and L-carnitine. Now, this is something that could start working in three days to two weeks.

It's really quite incredible. The other thing, the other common thing I see in people with IBS is FODMAP reactions, right? And so, FodMap reactions. This is a whole bunch of different foods, that belong in the FDMF category.

I'm not going to go through them all, but if you know, you You know what they are and you know if you're sensitive to them, your onions and garlics and crucifers among just among some of the common reactive foods, you are probably told that you have IBS and need to get off of these foods.

This can be something helpful short term for symptom management, but in the long term, it doesn't treat the root cause of IBS, which is an overgrowth of bacteria in a small intestine.

It just doesn' give them the substrates for them to feed on. and they're still there. They're just quiet now because they are not burping from these foods.

Instead, you're also going to be limiting your own microbial diversity because these food actually feed good bacteria in your gut, so in the long term you can get nutrient depleted, have lowered microbio diversity, and still have SIBO and intestinal permeability and all the darn symptoms that come from having SIBo.

such as restless leg and vitamin malabsorption, so on and so forth. And so in this situation, your goal is not to eat a low FODMAP diet forever and ever and hope for the best.

Your goal to eliminate the SIBO. How do you eliminate SIBo? One of the most powerful ways to address SIbo is through a short-term elemental diet, usually one to three weeks.

I did a whole podcast on this with Debbie Steinbach, and I also cover that approach in my book, The IBS Root Cause. You can also take herbs such as oil of oregano and berberine for a 60-day period.

you could take medications like rifaximin to help get rid of SIBO. When you get out of SiBO, then you don't have those bacteria in your small intestine that are going to cause you reactions, you're no longer going be sensitive to FODMAP foods.

Again, if you're on a long-term FODMAP diet, I'm sorry to tell you that this probably just made you worse in the long term, even if it made better in a short term.

The other common food reaction that people are talking about these days is histamine intolerance. Now, histamines intolerances can occur from foods like fermented foods.

It can also occur in things like bone broth. so on and so forth, foods that we typically think are healthy for us, slow-cooked meats, avocados, bananas.

Now, histamine intolerance doesn't mean that high-histamine foods are bad per se. It just means that, we are probably deficient in something that helps us process histamines, and perhaps we have a histamin burden that's too high, not necessarily coming from the foods, but potentially something, that is coming form our own GI tract.

Histamine, Oxalate, and Salicylate Intolerance

So, let me talk about this real quick. In order for us to properly break down histamine, we need the DAO enzyme. There are things that block the dao enzyme such as black tea, so this might be something to put aside for the time being.

You can take the Dao Enzyme externally as a supplement to help break those foods. Another common thing that you need for breaking down the histamines is vitamin B6.

I prefer the P5P version, but this is a required cofactor for breaking down histamines. And then the other thing is methionine. The SAMe version of methioneine is really helpful.

Unless you have something like bipolar disorder, then I would not recommend that. You can normalize your histamine metabolism by utilizing a few of these things.

The other thing to consider is, well, what's causing you to have histamine issues? Many times it's going to be something that is living inside of your gut.

So it could be a protozoal infection. It could a mold colonization or a candida colonisation or SIBO. And so figuring

out if that's what causing to you have his histamines issues is more important than being on a low histamin diet for the rest of you life.

because even if you were on a low histamine diet, if have SIBO, mold exposure, or protozoa, then you're still going to have potentially long-term health consequences and the histamines reactions are essentially just a messenger.

Another favorite food of mine to talk about that many people find is going to be problematic for them is oxalate sensitivity. So they will say, oh, I can't eat things like beets and chard.

I end up having really bad pains in my body. i have digestive distress. l have urinary tract symptoms, maybe some burning with urination, kidney issues.

Now, low oxaly diet, again, this is a temporary measure. You want to find out why you're having oxaloid issues, and I could tell you for most people, it's going be a few different things.

One of them could be because you have mold or candida colonization in your gut. Candida and aspergillus mold can actually grow Oxalates in your body. Many, many more oxalate than you can get from a beet.

So every time you put more axolates into your system by food, that's when you're going to react to the foods. Now, the treatment for that isn't to not eat beets ever or not eating healthy foods with oxolate.

The treatment is actually to get rid of the candida or mold colonization. And if it is mold, which can be problematic, you might need to test your mold and clear out your environment in you home.

The other things that can help for this is going to be magnesium citrate or calcium citrates with oxalate-containing foods that could neutralize some of that.

Probiotics, certain probiotics help to break down oxylates in our system. I have found that mega-spore probiotic, the spore-based probiotis and Dr. O'Hara's probiotix are two potential options.

Again, vitamin B6 or P5P, this is helpful to metabolize oxalates. It helps that oxalyte pathway. There is something else to consider. I have seen people who have B6 deficiencies, and again, I like the P5P version.

It tends to build up less in the body. They oftentimes are going to react to glycine and glycylate and even glutamine. For example, a supplement like magnesium glycinate.

I actually did a video on magnesium and how sometimes magnesium-glycinate can make people feel worse when they have IBS and Hashimoto's and digestive issues.

But essentially, when you take too many of these glycine or glycynate or glutamine compounds as supplements or potentially as bone broth or collagen even, you can essentially push one particular pathway of your body known as the glycoxylate pathway which is an internal manufacturing plant for oxalates in your body.

And I have seen, unfortunately, people who overdo it on magnesium glycine because it's so trendy. It's everywhere, and everybody should be on it, right?

And they over do it with that, they start taking glycin, then they're doing their bone broth, so on and so forth. They're very B6 depleted and they end up with terrible oxaloate issues.

So sometimes it might be temporarily reducing your intake of those glycyne substrates, while you address your B6P deficiency and you addressed some of your terrain, whether that's candida or mold growing inside.

The other potential food that I oftentimes see people reacting to is salicylates. Salicyylates are very much those food groups that, I'm like, ugh, because a lot of salicylate-containing foods are healthy foods.

Yet, people with salicellate sensitivities, they can have asthma, allergies, ADHD, all kinds of symptoms from saliciolate containing foods like strawberries or, you know, apples.

Very, very healthy food, right? And so, For many of them, a low salicylate diet is recommended, where the reason why many them can have saliculate issues is because they might be glycine deficient, right?

So glycein helps us metabolize salicellates.

Broad-Spectrum Supports for Reducing Food Reactions

So many times when I see a person with gly… with saliciolate intolerance, and that could be asthma, allergies, so on and so forth, then we're going to put them on a glycyne supplement.

Of course, if they're B6 deficient, then they would also want to take B 6 for a while before they get on glycine to make sure that they are not turning that glycein into oxalate.

Sometimes we can trade one food sensitivity for another, so we don't want you trading your salicylate sensitivity, for oxylate sensitivity. And so these are just some examples of how you can get rid of various food sensitivities.

Just because you're sensitive to our particular food doesn't mean that you are going to be sensitive forever, especially if you do the work on your terrain and you figure out how to break down the food properly.

I didn't really get into digestive enzymes, I just gave one example of a particular digestive enzyme that can help. But there are protein digestive and there also enzymes that help us with digesting some of our more fibrous foods.

Also, our microbiome actually helps us break down a lot of our fibrous foods and so sometimes probiotics, butyrate resistant starch is actually a way to build up those beautiful bacteria that help us digest our high fiber containing foods.

So fructose, when you have frictose intolerance, oftentimes this is going to be a SIBO or a parasite issue. So a lot of these strategies on how to get rid of food sensitivities and figuring out your root causes and what to do about them are going to be mentioned in my book, Finding and Treating the Root Cause of Irritable Bowel Syndrome.

This is now available. You can get that everywhere that fine books are sold. And I'm going extend my pre-order bonus because I have an entire guide on How to Get Rid of Food Sensitivities that comes with this when you order the book.

We initially reserved it just for the pre-order bonus, but I'm going to extend it for another week. If you get the book during pub week, you can get those preorder bonuses, which includes the food sensitivities guide, a quick symptom solutions guide as well as the entire chapter on how to get inflammatory bowel disease into remission.

Before we go, I wanted to leave you with a couple of things broad spectrum supplements that you can utilize to get rid of food sensitivities. One of them would be systemic enzymes.

They are taken on an empty stomach. and they help to break down circulating immune complexes. Many people with food sensitivities have these complexes, people who have autoimmunity have complexes and it's basically a way for the immune system to remember its enemies.

Essentially, when we break these down complexes we can reduce our food reactions, we reduce pain, inflammation, and a lot of those autoimmune antibodies as well.

Butyrate is one of those excellent supplements that you can take to help feed the good microbiome so you become less sensitive to all different types of foods.

Buterate is a short-chain fatty acid that helps us to break down a lot of different foods and it creates a favorable

environment in our gut. Zinc. Anywhere from 15 to 30 milligrams a day, I love zinc carnosine, this can help with healing the intestinal lining.

This can be really great for overcoming food sensitivities, especially if they're driven by that intestino permeability. Sarcomyces boulardii is a beneficial yeast What it does is it raises our levels of secretory IgA, which is our gut's internal protection.

And this can help us get rid of various infections like the infection blastocystis hominis I talked about. Yeah, and it can helps us tolerate more foods because having optimized secretoria Ig A levels means that our got immune response is going to be balanced.

It's not going be overactive. But it's going under active. And then last but not least, ginger. Ginger is actually something that can be very helpful for supporting the digestive process, so you could utilize that with your foods.

If you can take it as a supplement, or I like the yoghurt ginger tea, that could be really, really tasty for many people. I lied, I have one more. Another thing to do is to consider digestive enzymes.

So I do love broad-spectrum digestive enzyme as a starting point. These can help with digesting proteins, fats, and veggies and carbs and all kinds of things where you would take some chewable digestive enzimes with your food.

IBS Root Causes and Closing Thoughts

Hopefully, this will all be really helpful on your healing journey. I really appreciate you being here, spending time with me, being excited about some of the new research things that I've discovered.

I wrote this book, uh, in the last couple of years. It's been a long time in making. Initially wanted to write the book on IBS right after I write my book Hashimoto's, but life kinda got in a way and I, I thought somebody else would just write a book of I. B. S.

and honestly I have seen so many different causes and triggers where I'm like, why isn't anybody talking about anything other than like SIBO and elimination diet and the lefadmed diet, maybe a little bit of stress?

There are so many different drivers to IBS. I've learned a ton about Ibs in the last decade plus, and I also learned through writing this book, actually, potential root causes that I didn't know about.

I consider IBS a umbrella term where there are multiple potential root causes that can fit under that umbrella, anything from digestive enzyme deficiencies to bile acid malabsorption, nutrient depletions, toxins, infections, so on and so forth.

My book does cover all of the different potential triggers that I'm aware of, and it covers on how to address those triggers too. So this is something that you can work through if you have a history of IBS.

Even if your not symptomatic anymore, there's a really good chance that the underlying triggers are still there. A lot of times people will say, well I got off of a few foods and my symptoms went away.

And sometimes it is the foods, but sometimes there might be something else that's out of balance that causing you to be sensitive to those foods and getting off of the food is basically like putting a bandaid on the problem.

And then, of course, if you are symptomatic with IBS, this book will help you become symptom free. If you are somebody with an autoimmune condition or with Hashimoto's, I would also highly recommend that you get this book because many times when people have Hashimoto's and when they have any kind of auto immune disease, there's a good chance that they had intestinal permeability.

Intestinal Permeability also means leaky gut. And this can be tested for, of course. And some of the symptoms for it can't be very much similar to the systems of IBS, but there are about 50% of people that have intestinal

permeability that don't have any digestive symptoms.

So again, if you are somebody with food sensitivities, autoimmunity, with Hashimoto's, or history of IBs, inflammatory bowel disease, I hope that this book will serve you on your journey.

I put a lot of blood, sweat, and tears into this cost me a lot of years, cost a lots of my adrenals, so I'm really hopeful that this information will get to the people that need it.

And I want to wish you all the best on your healing journey. Until next time.