Histamine Intolerance: The Hidden Driver Behind Anxiety, Reflux, and Bloating Transcript

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Introduction to Histamine and the Podcast

My biggest question to determine, well, is it really the genes or is some type of catalyst or multiple types of catalysis? My question is, were you able to live a normal life before a significant event, before viral infection, or a vaccine, a dental procedure?

Is there a time where you can say, okay, my life was very different prior to this event? Then what that's telling me is no, it's not really genetics that we can blame and it is that, we need to look at all the things that were filling up your histamine bucket.

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Hey, how's it going? This is Dr. Ivan Rosilko. Welcome to Lifestyle Medicine Podcast powered by Access Medical Labs. If your physician is not checking your labs, they're not a physician.

And today we have Heather. She's a FDN specialist. One of the coolest people we've had on a minute, she specializes in something that not all of people do, which is histamine.

So we're gonna get into a bunch of histamines type issues today, where I actually have some personal questions that I hope she can actually get answered for me, because no other physicians can.

Heather, thank you so much for being here. Yeah, thanks so for having me. So talk to me, tell me what got you into histamine and actually what you do for a living, because I find it fascinating.

Yeah, so I had no real intentions of specializing in histamines intolerance. You know, I initially became an occupational therapist and very shortly after becoming an OT I was like, okay, now what?

And I have gradually over the years gotten into natural health.

Heather's Path Into Histamine Specialization

It first started with having some allergies. I took some astragalus and I like oh my God I don't have allergies anymore. And I took another herb, rhodiola, and it really helped balance my cycles.

Even just taking magnesium. I was like, oh my God, I feel so much better. So essentially I started looking into how can I combine being an OT and also this whole like health obsession.

And so I learned about becoming an FDN practitioner, and I got my certification shortly after becoming in OT. And then working in health care, especially being a therapist, it's just part of the culture where you work multiple jobs.

It's very easy to get jobs in different settings. So I was working and skilled nursing, And I essentially started working three jobs, like 60, 70 hours a week.

And of course, my health deteriorated. I was also commuting two hours, four hours at a total, and then found myself in a toxic relationship. So the histamine symptoms started happening.

Looking back now, I can put all the pieces together and understand why I had, was experiencing histamines issues my entire life. And I was fortunate enough when things were really starting to fall apart, I did a stool test and I came

across another coach.

And, you know, miraculously, she actually knew about histamine intolerance and she was teaching other individuals and had no idea about any of this, but she looked at my stool tests.

I told her my symptoms and said I think you have histamines issues. And so this was all in the very early stages of me becoming a coach. And of course, being a nerd, I just tried to learn everything I could about it.

So when I finally did become a Coach, you know, like I'm just going to specialize in hormone and gut health. But I would occasionally post on social media about histamine and I noticed when did, it was wildly popular and women were like, oh my God, really thought that my hormones and my histamines were connected, but everyone thought I was crazy.

Even then, I didn't think I was going to specialize in it, but things just kind of snowballed because I noticed every time I posted, people were really excited about it and had more questions.

Things just really evolved over the years. That's basically how I started specializing in histamine intolerance and now 90% of the people that I work with have histamines issues.

But we could also talk about like why histamin is blowing up over the past few years, because there's a lot of reasons I am definitely seeing that widely affecting the population.

No, for sure. I can only start to theorize, but first and foremost, can you explain some of telltale signs of a histimine reaction?

What Histamine Does and Common Symptoms

Yeah, for sure. So, I mean, first we should talk about like, you know, histamine. The way that I talk, about it often sounds like it's the bad guy, but it is really essential.

We couldn't survive without histamines. You know it has three main functions. It is part of our digestion. Its a neurotransmitter, so it helps to keep us alert.

and awake, and then what most people attribute it as is part of the immune and allergy response. So, you know, when individuals start experiencing histamine issues, it looks like they have an allergy.

And so they go get allergy testing, except they had no allergies. They go to an immunologist and oftentimes they're like, well, we can't find any allergies, but here, take some Zyrtec and take Allegra.

And that's kind of the extent of it. But, you know, because we have histamine receptors throughout our entire body and within multiple systems, it's very, very individual person to person.

So, sure, some people will present with those classic like hives, red, itchy eyes, swelling, angioedema, but other people it can affect their brain. They can be anxious, they can have insomnia.

Other people, it can impact their hormonal cycles. So they might have PMS or PMDD because of the relationship between histamine and estrogen. Even things like vertigo and tinnitus, that could also be a system.

And of course, impacting the GI system, so acid reflux is a really big one that's very common that a lot of people don't necessarily attribute to having high levels of histamina.

That's actually what I was exactly going to ask you about is actually any type of acid reflux and the whole histamine relationship, I guess you could say.

Can you explain how histamines can actually cause acid reflex? Because that's something I'm just like, okay, you

got me on this one. I am very curious on that.

Right. Yeah. So, I mean, it does make sense because when we think about somebody goes to their doctor and they say that they have acid reflux, one of the first things they're going to do is put them on a PPI or tell them to take Tums.

And what that's doing is it's helping to lower histamine in their body and thereby it is going lower acid production and acid release. And so, one of the other big things as to why I see individuals who have acid reflux is because they have an overgrowth of H.

pylori. With H pilori, you need strong hydrochloric acid in order to kill Hpilor and to keep it at bay. double whammy where it's like okay you might have acid reflux because you have H.

pylori and then you get put on PPIs or something acid suppressing and now it is making that problem even worse except of course you don't necessarily have the symptom to tell you that.

Of course H pilori is so common so many people have it and they don t even know it. A lot of times it s partners that are passing it to individuals because it's highly transmissible via saliva.

So that's probably the most common reason that I see individuals with H. pylori, you know, ask the reflexes because of H pyrori and it, it has to mean producing itself.

There's different bacteria that produce a lot of histamine and then there's some bacteria to break down histamines in the gut. Oh, very interesting. Well, now I know.

That's actually very, cool. What would you say the biggest symptom of a histamine overload would be though? What is the most common thing you see amongst your patients?

Histamine, Acid Reflux, and H. pylori

Yeah, I mean because I work with a lot of individuals and I worked with lots of injuries with like mast cell activation and you know our mast cells are a part of the immune system that they are responsible for like alerting your body when something's there that shouldn't be and so histamine is one of chemicals that it can release.

I see so many different things. Honestly, probably one of the most common ones are GI imbalances, constipation, diarrhea, bloating. And then the other one is anxiety.

A lot of times I'm talking about women in my content, but I do see men who are impacted by this for a multitude of reasons. It seems like for men, it's more kind of neurological.

So they're anxiety, insomnia, migraines. And then you will see some GI and some skin stuff happening as well. Okay, do you see like a big correlation with things like tineaversa color, seborrheic dermatitis, things, like eczema?

Or is this more like more, major skin like acne and things? Like that? or maybe are basically a collection of both? Yeah, I don't think so much, you know, acne, usually that's kind of like blood sugar, maybe androgen excess or something like, just general liver congestion.

But yeah, definitely all the skin conditions that you've just listed off, which most of the time are connected to leaky gut and or fungal overgrowth that is driven from like toxic mold.

Okay, that makes sense. So, say a patient comes into you, how can you diagnose a histamine overload? Is it blood testing? is it urine? Or how do you go about doing stool, as you kind mentioned?

Yeah, that's a great question. And so many people ask that for obvious reasons. It seems logical that we would want to check and see what your actual histamine levels are.

But it's not something that I recommend because to actually see a high plasma histamines in your blood is very difficult. For most people, what that means is they're going to have to go to the lab when they are having a reaction and get the blood drawn.

Then that has to be sent to a lab. it has be maintained cold. So it is difficult and it very expensive. At the end of the day, I can just tell from someone's symptoms whether or not they have high histamine.

And one of the easiest ways that people can test this out for themselves is if you eat low histamines, do you feel any better with any of your symptoms?

And that's going to tell us, okay, that histomine is part of a problem. Okay. But otherwise what I'm doing is I have a really thorough intake and then the general panels that I am running is a stool test, I'll do Dutch testing for hormones, mycotoxin testing or like other toxins like heavy metal or environmental toxins.

So those are all the things that are going to really irritate your mast cells and cause your body to release more histamine.

Testing, Root Causes, and Trigger Foods

I want to look at the root cause and not just like, oh sure, histamines high, now what are we going do? Oh, for sure. So what are some foods that are extremely high in histidine?

Yeah, so, you know, some processed foods. If you look at a charcuterie board, pretty much everything on a short-cutery board. And then you have your glass of wine or any alcohol, which is going to be really high in histamine.

But then where it gets really frustrating for clients is it's a lot of healthy foods, so things like spinach, tomatoes, strawberries, and fermented foods which we know are so good for our gut and other things, like bone broth and kefir and kombucha, but those are really in high histamines because of that fermentable bacteria.

People, you know, rightfully so, I understand it's very frustrating eating a low-histamine diet because it can feel so restrictive, which is why we have to look at this as a tool and not a long-term strategy.

And that's where a lot of people get stuck, is they think that they need to be on this diet forever. Very, very true. So besides diet modification, lifestyle modification what are some of the protocols you actually use and do the protocol is different between patients, men, women, sex, different ages like that or is it kind of a one size fits all since you're going after one specific thing?

Yeah, no, it's definitely not a one-size-fits-all. And this is where I see other functional medicine practitioners or other doctors falling short, is because they're just going to say, let's heal your leaky gut.

Let's use glutamine. Lets address H. pylori, maybe with antibiotics or a herbal protocol. Then they are missing the bigger picture, which a lot of clients, yeah, that's part of it.

That's something that we have to build into it, but for many of them, its driven from mold. And the way I address mold and mycotoxins is it's very specific to the mycotoxin that we see that your body is actually excreting.

So if I see you that you have high ochratoxin, I know, okay, well, ochro toxin hits multiple organs of the body, but I'm going to look at your intake and see how is this affecting you.

Does it seem like it is affecting more neurologically or does it seems like its hitting your kidneys and your liver a little bit harder? And then that's how it will direct me to give your specific body supports.

Oh, very, cool. So I mean, there's it's a very multifaceted attack strategy, if you will. Okay, I dig that. When it comes to don't really hear about histamine too much when it come to like, longevity and wellness and regenerative.

Where do you think most physicians fall short when It comes this just not understanding what histamines can do when comes a lot of lifestyle factors? Or is it just, you know, not not being educated enough?

Yeah, I'm sure it's a matter of not being educated enough and just kind of thinking it as, you know, histamine means allergies, means allergy medication, and that's kind it, even thinking about like toxic mold, it still doesn't really have a diagnostic criteria.

You know, so much of that is missing from their education. So the idea of like mold can, you know environmental mold, can cause histamine issues is not really that well understood.

I find at least with conventional doctors. And so, that's why it's something that I educate about thoroughly because it is one of the causes next to things like, parasites and some of harmful bacteria and then the like other heavy metals and things.

Okay, so great, great leading. What are some of the predisposing factors you think that, you know, may make somebody more susceptible to a histamine issue?

Was it, like you said, heavy metals? Is it chronic infections like EBV and CMV? is it just lifestyle? It's stressful events in their life or what do you see mostly or maybe just very menopause or something like that?

So women are more likely to struggle with histamine issues because of the estrogen factor. So we look at, you know, when they're starting to get their cycles and the hormones are starting become a little bit more irregular.

And then same thing with perimenopause. You know what's happening with period menopaus is we are ovulating less and less, and it's less strong on the body.

Mold, Stress, Viruses, and Vaccine-Related Triggers

We really need that progesterone to balance out estrogen because progeterones also helps to upregulate our DAO enzyme. And so when we lose that buffering process, that's when perimenopausal women are really struggling with histamine surges, oftentimes for the first time in their life.

So that is a big risk factor. There are some genetic risk factors, but when I'm talking to somebody, my biggest question to determine, well, is it really the genes or is some type of catalyst or multiple types of catalysis?

My question is, were you able to live a normal life before a significant event, before viral infection, a vaccine, or a dental procedure? Is there a time where you can say, okay, my life was very different prior to this event?

Then what that's telling me is no, it's not really the genetics that we can blame. It's that, we need to look at all the things that were filling up your histamine bucket over a lifestyle.

So yeah, the genetics, you know, viruses, vaccines, and then antibiotics are really big ones. So many people that I've worked with, they've had significant history of antibiotics in childhood, And then things were popping up in college.

You know they were getting sinus infections all the time. You know, again, dental infections can be a really big one that people aren't thinking about.

So those are some of the major root causes that I'm looking at when I, you know trying to figure out, okay, well, what are all these things filling your histamine bucket?

And then how do we prioritize addressing all of this? Oh, that's great. I love that. The histamines bucket. What would you say the biggest contributor to the histamin bucket would be?

I would say likely mold and then chronic stress and probably the viruses as well, especially COVID. It's something

that the body really has never seen before.

And the people who I find are most vulnerable to that are people, who basically already had a full histamine bucket. it just wasn't overflowing just yet.

Then they have that really big catalyst and now everything has to be addressed in order for us to empty your bucket and to get you back to your baseline.

Well, makes total sense. So I think we kind of let into that. You said recently you've seen a lot more, I guess you'd say larger uptake in histamine related issues.

Do you think that has anything to do with the vaccines that people have been taking very recently or? Yes, I thought that was the case. Yeah, yeah, for sure.

You know, the thing with the spike protein is we're seeing that it can unfortunately inhabit any area of the body. And so then we are seeing the, you know spike, protein levels when we were checking like antibody levels, even three, four years later in the thousands.

So the body is not clearing this out. And so it's like it has this constant acute infection. But even before, you know, the COVID vaccine, traditional vaccines can do it as well, because what's happening with the traditional vaccine is they're stimulating the TH2 part of your immune system that's responsible for producing histamine.

So if they just injected you with a virus, your body wouldn't do anything. It wouldn' have any type of response because that's not how we interact with viruses.

So what they do is they insert the adjuvant, things like aluminum and mercury and other toxic chemicals, so your immune system's like, oh, hey, what's that?

Oh, this is not supposed to be here, and then it's mounting that response. And so you keep getting flu shot after flu-shot every single year. You keep stimulating the immune systems.

Sometimes you just push it to the point where It can't come out of that state. There's no TH1 and TH2 balance anymore and it's just stuck in that TH-2 state Now with that, you basically stress in the immune system past its breaking point.

You see a lot of people who have histamine reactions also have autoimmune disorders, cancers, things like that as well. I can't say that I work with a lot of individuals with cancer, but maybe I'm, you know, just not necessarily attracting that.

Autoimmune conditions, I mean, definitely a lots of individual with Hashimoto's. Occasionally, some individuals, with Lupus as well. But I, you know, probably why maybe not as much is because I'm not talking about it.

And I would also think, okay, once they've identified they have a lupus issue, they're probably not looking for histamine or it's not something that they are necessarily investigating because they were going down that autoimmune track.

I don't know that individuals who specialize in auto immune are really talking histamines. No, make sure. So, I mean, we're talking about cancers and autoimmune.

What about when it comes to neurological symptoms like anxiety and depression? Is there a linkage between those two? Yeah, for sure.

Hormones, Leaky Gut, and Lifestyle Factors

And so this is something that I have looked into quite a bit and like specifically because there was a point last year

where I felt like for a month or two months I was just getting an influx of new clients and they were telling me, I've been on antidepressants, i've be on SSRIs and I started developing histamine symptoms after I'd been in them for long time or I starting having histamines symptoms once I start coming off of this and so You know, I'm looking through the literature and trying to see, well, what's the connection between like serotonin and histamine or, you know being on these different types of drugs and a histamines response.

And so it's not clear and it is not uniform across the board, but it does really seem I found some studies to support it and then some study to counteract it as, as is the case when you're looking for things in literature.

But, you know, I can definitely tell you there's a lot of clients that I've worked with that, have a history of being on SSRIs and then histamine symptoms started happening.

And I think there is a multitude of things going on there with the way that SSRs affect gut health and specifically gut motility and slowing down the gut, increasing your risk of like SIBO, which is the major root cause of histamines.

So I there are probably a lots of reasons for that. But that's just something I have investigated a little bit and that is kind of what I found. But what about things like leaky gut?

I mean, like that has to play some kind of role in it, correct? Oh, yeah. Leaky Gut is huge. It's definitely a major root cause for a lot of people. But my question is always like, well, what's causing the leky gut, because what we don't want to do is just give somebody a lekey gut protocol and say that they're fine.

You know, a of times it's insufficient pancreatic enzymes, insufficient hydrochloric acid again, we're not breaking down our food, and then also insufficient bile.

So we want to make sure that we are addressing digestion, you know, things that are happening before it's even getting to the small intestine. And that's what we're talking about with leaky gut.

It's that, that small intestinal is permeable and things are passing through that shouldn't be. But absolutely it is a major root cause for everyone. That's really where I see other practitioners failing is they are like, we just have to fix the leakey gut and then everything else is going to get fixed with histamine.

Okay. that is one part of it, definitely, but it isn't all of that. No, no, for sure. It's unique because I'm sure you have a view of patients of every different race, religion, sex, whatever it could be.

Who do you find to be your most successful or your best cases when it comes to actually controlling this versus your worst? Yeah, so it's definitely the individuals who really understand that nervous system needs to be prioritized and then it is the other individuals that actually make the lifestyle changes.

And so I've heard you talk about this on the podcast and this is something that in the beginning I thought I don't need to talk with these clients about because they know they need be sleeping.

They know that they have to eat regular meals to keep their blood sugar balance. are ignoring it and they don't think it's as significant as it is. And I'm like, listen, you can do all the fancy detoxes and do the all fancy biohacking, but if you ignore these lifestyle factors, You're not going to get anywhere.

So I really dedicate the first month, the two months to focusing on nervous system and focusing those lifestyle habits because otherwise you're just going be wasting your money.

No, for sure. Did you see in your practice, is it more men or is there more women who have these kind of issues? With what I just said or just with histamine in general?

In general, I'm super curious now. This is a battle of the sexes. Who has the worst histamines management? Yeah, I mean, it's definitely women because of the estrogen and histamine relationship.

But, you know, again, because men are into the ones who are going to be really vocal about what's going wrong with them. You know they might be used to having gas and bloating and diarrhea and acid reflux and they're like, well, that's just my normal life.

So I think that is probably a factor. By far I probably see like 80% women, 20% men. Okay, makes sense on that one if everything's tied to estrogen. Now, so you've been doing this for a specific amount of time now.

Is there anything that you're doing now versus when you first started doing that, if you could go back and say, let's just kind of manipulate this other and go more this way?

Or has it been kindof consistent throughout your entire time of treating people? Oh, no, it's definitely evolved. So, you know, in the beginning, I even as being somebody who went through the journey of like being really sensitive, You know I pushed myself too much and I hurks, various amount of times and so I am so, so sensitive minded with individuals and even things as simple as B vitamins or something like B flavor or magnesium glycinate.

Like these are things that these individuals are very likely to react to. So there is a specific time and place that I will use this with them. And, you know, definitely not in the beginning, often not even for like the first three months.

Okay, wow, fair enough.

Treatment Approach, Supplements, and Peptides

And so if you had to average out the amount of time somebody would sit there and see actual results from actually going after histamine, how long does it take to really see a change in your physical, your mental, you're emotional health, and how you look and all that kind of stuff?

Yeah my goal for each client is I want to see like at minimum a 10% improvement each month and of course sometimes it's more and sometimes is less but you know usually what I tell them is by the third month if you're not feeling you, know 20% better then we need to re-evaluate what's going on here and especially re evaluate the environment or how much stress you are really dealing with whether that's at home or a stressful job like there's some type of likely external stimuli that needs to be changed or needs To be altered.

Okay, yeah, makes makes total sense on that one. Again, I think lifestyle is probably the most important thing with with actually what I do here in Miami and like, you know, like you focus on histamine, and I focus the hormones or peptides, this, that and the other.

Do you combine therapies with the actual histamines? Are you using like peptide using anything like that as well? I've had some clients experiment with peptides and I have seen mixed results.

So, you know, KPV is kind of the big one that a lot of people talk about with stabilizing mast cells, but the thing that individuals don't realize is that it's also an antimicrobial.

If you try to introduce that early, it could really be causing somebody to flare. Um, so there's definitely a time and a place for, you know, KBV or TA1 or even BPC 157. But it's not necessarily something that I'm going to be using early on, but for some individuals, yes, I will use something like that.

Okay, what are your top, because I know you talk about how you use supplementation to help you on your personal journey. What are the top three supplements that somebody could find online even, if you will, who think they might have a type of histamine issue.

If you had to pick your three top ten, I'm sorry, your 3 top 3 supplements, What would they be and why? Yeah, so I love magnesium malate. I tend to recommend that over magnesium glycinate is because for some individuals magnesium glistening can be stimulating and this has to do with the way they are converting their neurotransmitters.

So that you know 300 milligrams at night of course you can start low and slow you could start with 100 milligram and then slowly work up. The other one is skull cap.

So Chinese skullcap. I really like this as a mass cell stabilizer and it's very calming to the nervous system. Um, so supreme nutrition is a favorite of mine.

And then another one would be DAO, diamine oxidase. That helps break down histamine in the gut. It's not going to be helpful for everyone if their histamines symptoms aren't coming from the got, but at least we know.

for sure. Great. I love that. Of course, I'm writing these down over here. So thank you again. At the end of every podcast, always like to ask, you know, two questions to every person who's on and I am super curious to see how this translates into the whole histamine aspect of it.

If you're a person, who might have a patient now that I've been talking about, might some of these kind of symptoms or whatever it is and you are looking to find somebody such as yourself, what is something that you should be looking for in a practitioner, a healthcare specialist, whatever could be a therapist, that person should really be focused on to make sure they are getting the best care possible.

Yeah, so I would say they need to be running, you know, full functional lab. So checking your hormones. I really prefer Dutch tests and I do use some blood testing for that as well.

Doing a comprehensive stool test, always checking for mold. And then I, of course, ask them, well, what's your track record like? What have you seen as far as the timeline of how someone with histamine symptoms should improve, do you see that they still need medication or they need a low histamine diet when it's all said and done?

Because that's essentially going to tell you, are they just using a band-aid approach or are really getting long-term success with their clients? Oh, that's great information, by the way.

But now, let's kind of flip it. If you're a tech, a therapist, or practitioner, anybody in the healthcare industry who's looking to get into this and kind-of focus on something such as this, what are some things or some tips and tricks that you've done this for a while now?

What are tips or tricks you can actually lend to them to make them the most efficient practitioner possible?

Finding the Right Practitioner and Closing Remarks

Yeah, so, well, I get similar questions about this because, you know, other practitioners ask me, Well, where did you learn all this information about histamine?

Like what course have you done? And I'm like, unfortunately, You know, unfortunately, I'm just a super nerd and I've bootstrapped it. So, you know different podcasts and really studying the top mass cell doctors, even just like online summits that are specializing in mold and gut health and all of that.

So you do kind of have to dig for it. I am currently creating some practitioner trainings because there's just such an obvious need to teach practitioners the right and the wrong way of how to work with these.

So I'm going to have some upcoming trainings that I've developing right now. And then I do have a course for clients, but I have practitioners who are also using it and finding it really helpful.

That could be an option as well. Well, that's awesome. So please, where can we find you? Where can patients and practitioners reach out to kind of get a hold of your wealth of knowledge?

Yeah, for sure. My Instagram is Revive underscore with underscore Heather. And then of course my website is revivewithheather.com. You can see all the different ways that clients can work with me and my team.

Then if you get on my email list, I'll be able to share more information about when those practitioner trainings are coming. For sure, we'll make sure we share everything on this one.

And Heather, thank you so much for stopping by. Again, usually I come on as back and forth. I didn't really know much about histamine. So now I'm gonna probably sign up for your courses.

Super excited, I love it. Thank you for stoppin' by, this has been the Lifestyle Medicine Podcast. We're powered by Access Medical Labs. You can find us on YouTube, Spotify, pretty much anywhere podcasts are actually produced, you'll find this there.

But again, Heather thank so you much, for teaching us about Histamine today. Yeah, thanks so for having me. Alright guys, rock and roll, have a good one.

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