Navigate Histamine Intolerance: Find Relief Transcript

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Summit Introduction and Personal Context

Welcome to our Reversing Mast Cell Activation Syndrome and Histamine Intolerance Summit. I'm your host, Dr. Meg Mill, and I am so thrilled to be here with you today.

This topic is near and dear to my heart. For personal reasons, I've spent years with histamine issues and finally gotten to a place where I know what's going on and what to do about it.

And I want that for you too. I see so many people coming in with these reactions and not understanding why these certain symptoms are happening in their body, and really not getting the answers that they deserve.

You know, being told we're fine because there's not an easy way to diagnose it. But this histamine can be a really cross system issue for a lot of people.

And so once we really know how to work with it, know its purpose and know what to do about it. That's the best part. We start to see such improvement in symptoms.

So I am excited to dive into this topic. Let's talk a little bit about what histamines are. So histamines are compounds made by our white blood cells, mast cells, and Bay's cells.

These cells are armed at all times because they're packed with granules. These granules are inflammatory mediators and one of which is histamine. So when the immune system detects an allergen, histamine is released from the mast cells and bags of fluid, and it increases the permeability of blood cells.

And it allows our immune cells to actually reach the areas more effectively. It gets a bad rap because of all the negative symptoms that a lot of us feel, but actually does have a purpose in our body, so we need it for immune defense.

It's a key mediator in our immune response, like we said, to protect us actually against pathogens. It actually is involved in inflammation. So we think of inflammation as a bad thing, which it is for us when it's out of control.

What Histamine Does in the Body

But inflammation is actually a vital process in our body for healing and fighting infections. It helps recruit immune cells to the site of infection or injury.

It actually regulates gastric acid secretion. Histamine stimulates the production of gastric acid in the stomach, which is actually essential for digesting and absorbing our nutrients, particularly our proteins.

And it also affects neurotransmitter activity. So it can actually be involved in our mood and our wakefulness and our cognitive function and our alertness.

And that's why we get all of these different symptoms, too, because there's different types of receptors, which we'll get into. It also aids in wound healing.

It causes vasodilation. It increases blood flow to specific areas to deliver the immune cells and nutrients to the tissues that need repairs. It also has an allergic response that expels harmful agents.

And just like parasites and pathogens, it can cause broncho constriction so that our lungs can expel what they need so that the pathogens don't get too deep into our airways.

And so it has all of these functions. But what starts to happen is it can start to get out of balance. So we need for histamine to be broken down in the same rate that we are having histamine come into our body.

So let's use a bathtub analogy here. So you fill your bath. You're filling your bath. You're draining you're filling your bath. You're draining. You're you're keeping it at the same level.

But what happens if either the bathtub gets too full? You keep pouring the water in too fast. You turn that spike it up and it's going in. It's going into that tub, or you plug the drain and it can't go out.

Then we get the overflow, and that's when we start to see all of these symptoms start to happen. Because we're not in balance. We're not in this homeostasis.

We're getting too much histamine and it's not being broken down. So let's start by talking about how histamine is actually broken down. We have two main pathways that break down histamine in.

The first one is in our gut. So that's why your gut is cornerstone. I can't say that enough with resolving histamine intolerance. And we also need to look at that very specifically for this population.

And that's why sometimes gut healing will backfire if we're not doing it right. But we break down histamine with diamine oxidase. And it's an enzyme responsible for breaking down histamine in the intestinal tract.

And this can be decreased because of inflammation and the disruption of our gut microbiome. So it can cause histamine to actually accumulate because it can't be broken down.

And this happens because of several factors. Like we said, a main reason is that gut bacteria impact the production of diamine oxidase. So conditions like having a parasite infections, inflammatory bowel disease, celiac disease, leaky gut can impair the intestinal mucosa where the diamine oxidase is actually produced, and it can lead to reduced enzyme activities.

We can also have genetic variants that affect the production of diamine oxidase. And we can see that through genetic testing. So some people are predisposed.

Now generally, you know, if you think about it, histamine intolerance symptoms don't come till later. So generally even if we have this genetic impairment we're really also getting something else.

It's not usually the genetic impairment alone that's causing this myriad of symptoms. Or we would be seeing them from birth. So you want to keep that in mind of that a factor.

That's one of the puzzle pieces. But it's generally not the whole picture. We also need certain nutrients to make diming oxidase.

How Histamine Is Broken Down

So you need vitamin B6. You need copper. You need zinc, you need vitamin C for optimal activity. And so when we start getting these deficiencies we also don't break down histamine as well.

So we're going back to gut health again. Even if you're eating a perfect diet, even if you're taking supplements, if you're getting all these nutrients, but you're not digesting and absorbing the nutrients, you're not getting the benefit.

And you may not be making enough diamine oxidase. So we have to keep those things in mind. You know, you could just be eating a lot of histamine rich foods, and drinking alcohol can be another thing that can inhibit Dao activity.

So we need to keep that in mind. There are certain medications that can interfere with its production. And then we have to look at hormones. And this is where you know we're looking again always at cross systems.

So we're looking at multiple systems in the body at the same time. So fluctuations in hormones especially estrogen can influence diamine oxidase activity.

We can start to see that histamine can increase estrogen and estrogen can decrease diamine oxidase which increases histamine. So we can get in this cycle where estrogens increase in histamines increasing estrogen.

And we start to see this cycle start to happen. The other thing that start to happen, particularly in people with perimenopause, is that we lose progesterone earlier than estrogen.

Most likely we can become estrogen dominant. Progesterone actually helps us produce diamine oxidase. So lower levels of progesterone can actually also influence this enzyme.

So we start to see maybe your estrogen is increasing and your progesterone is low. So you're not making as much. And then we can get off balance. So hormones can actually be another place where we're seeing this issue.

Then we need to look at the other pathway that we were talking about. The other pathway is the HNMT or Histamine N-methyltransferase pathway. And this is where histamine is converted into methyl histamine via the action of agent utilizing a methyl group from Sami.

Now this may sound very complicated and there's a whole process, but I just want to hit some of the main points of this. And we do have some talks that go a little bit further into genetics.

But I just want to give you a main overview of kind of how it's broken down. So what happens is it's turns into methyl histamine. But the problem here is that methyl histamine can be toxic, especially to the central nervous system.

So sometimes we've all heard about mTOR probably it's getting a lot of press. So we have knowledge okay. We need to take methylated B vitamins. And that's great.

If a lot of people do have more of our genetic variants. But we sometimes can take methylated B vitamins and we get more methyl histamine because we're actually able to use that pathway more.

But you need to look at other pathways further down the pipe that can get clogged. And sometimes we have clogs further down before we can actually eliminate it through the kidney.

So we also need to look at things like our monoamine oxidase and make sure that this pathway is converting that methyl histamine into histamine aldehyde.

And then we need to look at our liver detoxification and our liver health. Sometimes things like B1 or thiamin can help support this detoxification process and open that traffic jam to help us clear our histamine load so it can become, you know, we see this process become compromised for several reasons, and we can see certain genetic factors like we talked about polymorphisms or snips, we call them, that can affect some of these enzymes in the pathway.

It also relies on nutrients. We said Sami need it needs to have Sami as a methyl donor. We know that deficiencies in nutrients that contribute to methylation, such as B6, B12, folate, can impair the production of Sami, and that can turn off that an HNMT function.

The liver is also really active in that breakdown. So conditions that cause liver disease like alcohol consumption, toxics exposure can affect our agent activity.

We also can see medications can sometimes do this. So we start to see these clogs in the plug in histamine starts to have the inability to break down effectively.

We also can start to see the buildup of histamine. And we're that's where we're seeing the mast cell activation

syndrome. That's why we're seeing the histamine foods.

Like we're seeing the invaders the toxins. What's bringing that load higher. So those are the clogs. That's how it's processed. But we also need to look at what is filling the bathtub too.

And once that imbalance starts to happen, we see so many symptoms. We start to see nasal congestion. We start to see asthma and allergies, headaches and migraines, fatigue, heart palpitations, dizziness, anxiety, depression, difficulty concentrating, brain fog, fluctuations in body temperature, irregular periods, flushing, joint pain, PCOS, sleep disturbances, high or low blood pressure, hives, vertigo.

So you're seeing all of these symptoms. And as you can see, some of these symptoms are similar to other symptoms of other things. And so it can be really hard to unpack.

Symptoms and Common Triggers

So sometimes when I'm seeing people come to me and they're saying, okay, I have IBS, I have migraines, I have hormonal imbalances, maybe I have allergies.

And they're thinking of all of these symptoms up here, and we're looking at that stream that connects all of these symptoms. And there's a lot of people that have issues with histamine that are not even aware that histamines even playing a role because their symptoms don't seem to be connected.

You're not necessarily thinking, oh, I have fatigue and brain fog. Maybe it's histamine. Oh, I'm waking up with anxiety in the middle of the night. It's histamine.

You know, histamine played a huge role in my anxiety, and I didn't even have any idea. When we're thinking of anxiety, we're thinking, you know, sometimes medically we're we're putting neck up as anxiety, okay.

We're working on it's a mind issue. But histamine can be causing sleep issues. It can be causing anxiety issues. It can be causing, you know, symptoms hormonal.

All of these symptoms can be related. So I want you to just take a new lens and look at some of your symptoms and think, oh, could histamine be a problem.

And so we want to start to see some other things that can lead to histamine intolerance. So the gut health is foundation. Histamine is present in our foods.

And it's also produced by gut bacteria. So under normal circumstances histamine in the gut is mobilized and broken down. And we are talking about the pathways.

But when we start to get this imbalance in bacteria, we can start to see that there are certain bacteria that are actually histamine producing. We know things like Klebsiella, like citrus actor.

There's a long list of bacteria that are producing histamine. Morgan is a huge one. So if you have these bacteria, even if you don't have some of the other things going on this bacteria alone, I want you to hear this, this bacteria alone can be producing extra histamine.

I did have someone who was having extreme itching, to the point where he had to take several drugs every day, and as soon as they wore off, he was getting shots.

He was trying all of these things for 20 years, and he had no GI symptoms. And we did a stool test. I said, we just have to check and we had Morgan, Janella, we had some clubs, yellow, we had some of these different has been producing bacterias.

And he was like, this is not connected. I had to really push because he was like, there's no way. But he can

remember 20 years ago when it started. So I'm thinking, okay, could it have been mold, could it have been?

But we need to start here. We heal this gut. Within three weeks he had no more itching. And it's just this 20 years of this extreme situation. And it was just a few weeks and there was this massive change.

So I just want you to keep that in mind. I know a sidetrack from that story, but these are real, life changing things that start to happen when we look at this, another thing that can start to happen is we get increased intestinal permeability.

So we start to see the things that were intended to stay in the gut, actually be able to leave the intestinal wall into the bloodstream. And then the histamine can travel to various parts of the body and bind to histamine receptors and cause things we were talking about like headaches, rashes and other symptoms so we can start to get this feedback loop.

Another thing we're talking about in this segment is mast cell activation syndrome. So our mast cells just become overly sensitive and they start releasing histamine all the time.

And it's happening to stimulus that we see every day. So we can it can be stress. It can be temperature changes. The triggers are unknown in our body is just firing at all times.

And we're going to talk much more deeply about this and other talks in the summer. So now we talk about the fun stuff. What do we do about it? So I'm sure if you have research histamine, you've heard of the low histamine diet.

And so I want to talk a little bit about the side. Because this diet can be good and it can be informative, but it's often done wrong. A lot of people are so focused on the diet.

And what can actually start to happen is two things. One, you're never really getting to the root of why you have this in the first place. And two, you can start actually becoming more sensitive to more foods.

And we're going to actually do a whole separate talk on the low histamine diet and navigating foods, and make sure you check out that one. I'm not going to go too in-depth here.

I'm just going to give you a broad overview and listen to that one so that you can get more on the diet, but we want to use this as a starting point. It's a great investigative tools to see if bringing down histamine foods are actually a changing things for you.

Low Histamine Diet Overview

Does that make a difference? So you want to use it as that tool to look at, okay, what histamine foods are in my eating. And it may really surprise you that you see some patterns.

You may say, okay, where every time I eat that avocado or banana or things that you feel like are healthy, which are but can and contain histamine, then you're starting to have these reactions and it can be a great tool, but it's not the long term solution.

And that's what I want to focus a little bit on what else we need to do, but we'll do a quick overview of the low histamine diet. So we're looking at things like fermented foods.

And that's another thing I want to take another sidetrack. Sorry I keep sidetracking. But when you hear fermented foods that's most of the time when you're hearing gut healing, you're hearing fermented foods, which are good for gut healing most of the time, but not when you have histamine in heart.

So you need to work with someone who understands histamine intolerance when you're doing the gut healing. Because a lot of the things even certain probiotics are histamine producing, there's things that people aren't looking at and they're actually exacerbating your symptoms a lot of times.

That's why if you've done the work and it hasn't helped, that's probably why. But I like I said, we'll talk about this in another talk, but I just want to give you some highlights of the low histamine diet.

So you have an idea. So things like fermented foods sauerkraut, soy sauce, vinegars, aged cheese, alcohol cured and processed meat, smoked and canned fish.

We also see things like spinach, eggplant, avocado, bananas, pineapple, mushroom, soybeans, lentils, peanuts, strawberries, citrus, oranges. You can see the list goes on.

And some of the foods are high in histamine. Some of them reduce diamine oxidase and we'll dive deeper. Another thing I just want to mention is that a lot of the histamine diets out there are not accurate.

And it's variable from individual to individual. So I have a resource where we actually can see the things that actually are generally bothersome, are generally safe and variable.

And so it gives you a much more clear idea. But you just want to be careful when you're looking at resources. Because I've seen a lot of variability and this is a restrictive diet.

So if you're going to do it you want to really make sure that you're doing it right and you have the right resources, because you could be eliminating a lot of things that are unnecessary and actually healthy in your diet.

Another thing I want to bring up is that you also have to watch for leftovers. And this is really tricky when we're talking about the low histamine diet, because you could be a meal prepper and you could be doing all of this food elimination, and then you're eating leftovers or you're meal prepping and you're actually histamines grow in food.

We just have to be careful of how we prepare our meals, too. And that's another thing that we can look at. And I have all of these resources at in our Summit Guide at megmill.com/summit.

I encourage you to check those out. So let's move on to what we need to do. The first and foremost I really want you to hear is focus on gut health. And we have to be careful in the way we're doing it.

Because did you hear me say sour kraut was one?

Gut Health, Lifestyle, and Supplement Support

Bone broth is another thing that can bother people. Probiotics. We know that certain strains of probiotics actually also create histamine. So we can be doing things that heal our gut, that are backfiring.

And that's why if you've done this work and you have not seen success or it's actually exacerbated, you could be doing it wrong. So when you're doing this, you really need to work with someone who understands histamine because things are done differently.

So it's not done in the same way that a lot of people can handle it, because you have a different issue that we need to take into account. We also want to look at things that are in lifestyle like stress management, rewiring our nervous system, getting adequate sleep, you know, making sure we're moving our body.

We want to have nutritional support. We want to make sure we have those nutrients that support dough like it's vitamin C, quercetin, B6, zinc, copper and make sure you're eating a balanced diet.

There are certain cooking techniques that can help you reduce histamine, and keeping a symptom diary can be a great way. If you're looking at those foods, you can keep track.

I have people do that all the time. You don't have to write everything you eat down, but really just looking at, okay, I'm having this symptom. What did I eat recently that could be triggering these symptoms?

And then looking at your environment and reducing your exposure to allergens and chemicals can also be helpful. We have supplements also that help. You can take the DAO Enzyme.

It's in your summit resources page. It's a wonderful supplement for people with histamine intolerance. It helps you be able to have more variety in your diet.

I also have a great combination product that I've seen a huge success with. We also see things like quercetin, stinging nettle, vitamin C, bromolin, ginger, and curcumin.

There's a long list and I'll link all of those in our resources. So again you can go to megmill.com/summit. You're going to learn so much about histamine on the summit how it's affecting your body.

So make sure you lean in to the practitioners, learn from them. And I'm going to do classes after the summit. So I'm going to teach you exactly what you need to know.

We'll go more in depth. I'm trying to give you a broad spectrum here so we can get a lot of information in, but we'll dive more deeply and give you some solutions.

So be sure to add info@megmill.com to your safe list, and I will be in touch with you. And you can also find me at megmill.com. And like I said, our supplements and other resources and our histamine lists and all of that will be at megmill.com/summit.

So I would love to support you in any way I can. And if you'd like more information on how to get permanent access to the summit interviews, just email support@drtalks.com support@drtalks.com and the team can help you get it all sorted out.

So until next time, take care. Have a great day!