



NUTRITION / DETOXIFICATION

Treating Pain With Nutrition

THE THREE PHASES OF CARE

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Back in 1910, when D.D. Palmer published *The Chiropractor's Adjuster* and introduced the world to what he called the "triad of health" - thoughts, trauma and toxins - he explained that the body can only be made optimally healthy if all three aspects of health are addressed.

But too often, we only address the "trauma" aspect of this equation, and forget how important (and simple!) it is to provide treatment for toxicity as well.

Most patients don't realize that their pain is only partially due to trauma. Without healthy, holistic nutrition, your patients may not be able to resolve the underlying inflammation that contributes to their pain - which is why it's so important that you teach them how to make healthier choices!

If your patients understand that much of their pain is caused by toxins in the body (the result of poor nutritional choices), they'll be able to target their pain, not only through the treatment in your office, but also from what they eat, and have a better chance of resolving their problem for good.

For best results, you can provide targeted nutrition for each phase of care:

- Acute care
- Corrective care
- Wellness care



Ideally, it is helpful for your patients to begin with a cleanse. This helps to detoxify the body and enhance the impact of the nutritional care you provide. While not all patients will be willing to do this, many will; those who do will thank you for helping them get better results.

Acute Care

Pain, aching and soreness are usually the result of inflammation and swelling somewhere in the body. And while these are the body's natural defense mechanisms, they can be detrimental if excessive inflammation and swelling are the result of poor nutrition. When the body is unable to heal an affected area, the tissues will stay swollen and irritated, sending pain signals from nerves to the brain. If your patients are taking pills to dull the pain, they are only blocking these signals without addressing the underlying problem. Without treatment, the pain will only continue to get worse.

With these things in mind, let's look at some of the nutritional tools you can use to help relieve your patients' pain:

- Protein - rebuilds tissue and helps heal nerve damage¹
- Omega-3 fatty acids - curb joint stiffness and increase the effectiveness of other anti-inflammatory agents²
- Vitamin A - supports the immune system by fighting inflammation and blocking free radicals³
- Vitamin B6 - corrects B6 deficiencies associated with arthritis⁴
- Vitamin D - reduces inflammation associated with age-related diseases⁴
- Vitamin E - slows the release of damaging inflammatory substances⁴
- Vitamin K - reduces levels of inflammatory markers⁴
- MSM - breaks up calcium deposits that promote pain and helps cells absorb nutrients⁵
- Glucosamine - inhibits inflammation and stimulates cartilage cell growth⁶
- Chondroitin - gives cartilage strength and resilience; slows degeneration⁷

In addition to filling dietary gaps, these supplements can help to reduce inflammation the all-natural way. When combined with topical anti-inflammatory products (for example, creams that include menthol, camphor and capsaicin), these products can make a pretty big difference in your patients' level of pain!

Corrective Care

During the corrective phase of treatment, it's important for patients to get all the nutrients their bodies need to heal completely, prevent further injury and stay on track for long-term wellness. To facilitate this process, consider recommending the following supplements:

- Flaxseed oil is rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which can counter the inflammatory response in the body.⁸
- Vitamin B12 plays a vital role in the functioning of the brain and nervous system, and also aids in formation of red blood cells.⁹
- Antioxidants can prevent some forms of cell damage by blocking free radicals.¹⁰

In this phase of care, you should continue encouraging your patients to use the supplements recommended for the previous phase in order to promote continued healing and injury prevention.

Wellness and Maintenance Care

At this point, your patients should be seeing a substantial improvement in their level of pain, if not a complete reduction. Now, it's important to maintain their enhanced quality of life by continuing to fill dietary gaps and support long-term rebuilding.

For long-term maintenance, patients need a good blend of protein, vitamins, minerals, digestive enzymes and probiotics. If a patient is eating a poor diet, the foods he or she eats will work against the supplements you're prescribing - which is why it's so important to provide dietary guidelines as well! This way, your patients will have a clear understanding of the foods that will help them maintain long-term wellness.

Here are some basic guidelines you can recommend to patients in the "maintenance" phase of care:

Recommended Eating

- Very limited or zero grains and dairy
- Lots of organic, dark leafy greens and brightly colored vegetables
- Limited quantities of organic fruits
- Organic poultry and eggs
- Wild-caught fish
- Sparing organic, grass-fed red meat
- Unrefined, cold-pressed olive and coconut oil

Acceptable Eating

- Whole-grain products
- Conventional (non-organic) fruits and vegetables
- Conventional (non-organic) poultry and eggs
- Farm-raised fish
- Refined olive and coconut oils
- Unrefined cane sugar, natural sweeteners (honey, maple syrup, agave)

Foods to Avoid

- Refined grains (white bread, pastries, cookies, crackers, etc.)
- Refined vegetable oils (soybean, canola, sunflower, etc.)
- Refined sugar (found in soda, candy, ice cream, etc.)
- All fast food and junk food (anything heavily processed and refined)
- Large amounts of red meat (beef, pork)

Alcoholic or caffeinated beverages

As you can see, it's important to steer patients away from processed, refined foods (basically anything in a box, bag or can), and encourage them to eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables.

The Big Picture

As you implement these nutritional guidelines and begin to see the difference they make, you'll feel energized and motivated to continue changing patients' lives for the better. Don't forget how important nutrition can be in managing patients' pain! By prescribing simple, easy-to-use supplements and recommending basic dietary guidelines, you can help patients live happy, healthy, high-quality lives.

References

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