

Tuesday Minute Transcript

This Week's Topic

When Treating Skin Conditions... Take A Look Under The Hood

"When I see eczema or psoriasis or any other skin condition, the first thing I think about is EFA deficiency."

Essential fatty acids as we know and love them can do wonders with cardiovascular health or reducing inflammation. But let's talk cellular mechanics. Here are some applications for using essential fatty acids that you may not have considered.

EFA's are necessary for healthy cell membrane function. Each cell membrane contains at least 2 lipid layers. It is estimated that we have 10-75 trillion cells depending upon our age and size. Cell membranes are amazing as they distinguish what they will "let in" and maybe more importantly what they "keep out". If we have "leaky gut" cell membranes, we probably have leaky "blood brain barrier" cell membranes as well. If you think about it, that means much of what our cells "are" or "are not" exposed to is dependent upon the right oils.

So if you have a patient with a poor diet, think how can I help change the patient's oil, cell membrane oil? We all know that trans fats and hydrogenated oils molecularly are more like



plastic than food. I am so sad when I analyze someone's diet and realize they live on snack foods, French fries, processed meats, and bakery goods that are saturated with these life robbing fats. If they only understood how bad these cellular poisons were, they would never consume them.

The good news is the body is designed genetically to repair and rebuild; so by increasing the good oils in a person's diet, the body will do its best to expel and replace the trans and hydrogenated fats out of the cell membranes. So when you increase EFAs, you are not just treating

heart disease and reducing inflammation, you are increasing the cellular mechanics of the entire body.

Think of the skin as a reflection of EFA/cell membrane status. When I see eczema or psoriasis or any other skin condition, foundationally, the first thing I think is EFA deficiency. Eczema has been associated with food intolerances particularly dairy and wheat.

Food intolerances can also cause an increase in antibodies and can cause increased gut permeability. Remember the gut consists of cells and part of that permeability-

ty involves cell membrane permeability. Let's apply that clinically. One doctor shared with me how his 3 month old son had serious eczema. There is nothing worse than to watch your new baby face turn red and swollen, producing a weepy almost pus like material, and scratching all night long. He said the redness was so severe that it almost looked like a bad burn. And we know when baby doesn't sleep, nobody sleeps.

The first thing he did was to change organic formulas from milk to soy. He saw some results. Next, he tried evening primrose oil for 3 weeks with little results. I learned from Dr. George Goodheart years ago that it takes about 3 weeks to see a difference clinically due to the half life of the oils. As a rule of thumb, that's been my experience. That means if I don't see an effect in 3 weeks, I start thinking about other options.

Next, he tried black current seed oil for 3 weeks and saw a minor improvement. One of his associates had some success using organic apple cider vinegar with eczema patients; that didn't seem to help. Finally out of desperation, he gave his son a tablespoon of Optimal EFAs from Biotics Research.

Optimal EFAs is a mixture of fish oil processed from small fish caught off the coast of Chile, organic flax seed oil, and organic borage oil. Each tablespoon yields 1900 mg of ALA, 1000 mg of EPA, 600 mg of DHA, 750 mg of GLA, and 1500 mg of Oleic acid with a mild lemon flavor.

The next day the baby's face cleared up and the skin looked pink and fresh as if it was a week old. Now this is a unique story. Babies have a fast metabolism and someone so young can really show improvement rather quickly. Don't expect results that fast with the average patient.

I share this story for 2 reasons. One is that sometimes we have to use higher doses. 1 tablespoon of EFA for a baby is a pretty hefty dose. Some of the newer data show that 3 or even 4 grams of fish oil are being used for optimal benefits. Even though this seems like a lot, remember, we are changing cell membrane function; and if we increase other

healthy oils like avocado, coconut, or olive oil, and stop the hydrogenated oils, we probably don't need as high a dose.

The other point is that if high doses are used, we want to make sure other essential oils are not displaced. Dr. Alex Vasquez and others have articulated that if we increase EPA, we decrease GLA and Oleic acid. Dr. Vasquez shared with me how with really ill patients he will use ½ a bottle, which is 2 ounces of Optimal EFAs every day for a few weeks to knock down inflammation and reduce pain. Optimal EFAs contain a balanced ratio of EPA, DHA, GLA, and Oleic acid. On a link below you can download a great article on EFAs by Dr. Vasquez.

Always remember if people burp up or taste oils, we want to make sure they are digesting their fats. I use Beta TCP to help thin and mobilize bile if they have a gall bladder. If they don't have a gall bladder, we have to give exogenous bile to digest fats. I use Beta Plus, a bile formula with organic beets.

Another reason patients may be burping or experiencing an after taste could be due to rancid oils. We've all had patients bring in a fish oil product that they purchased from a discount store. I spoke to one of the quality control staff from Biotics Research the other day and they told me a manufacturer tried to sell them oils that would have produced a shelf life of 10 days. When they did the quality control, they realized the oil was already going rancid. If oils are discounted, that means the manufacturer is probably not investing in the quality control before or after the product is put in bottle or capsule. This is one more reason to get your nutrients from quality manufacturers.

Remember; think cellular mechanics when you think essential fatty acids. Skin problems may be one of the symptoms; but if you look under the hood, the cell membranes probably need a good oil change.

Thanks for reading this week's edition. I'll see you next Tuesday.