

... FOR THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

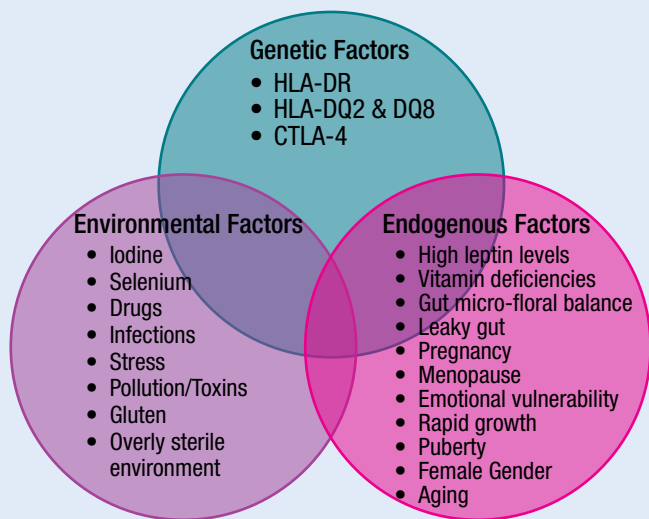
AUTOIMMUNE DISEASE

WHAT IS AUTOIMMUNE DISEASE?

An autoimmune disease develops when your immune system, which defends your body against disease, mistakes your healthy cells and organs as “foreign,” or not belonging to your own body. As a result, your immune system attacks healthy body cells and organs. Depending on the type, an autoimmune disease can affect one or many different types of body tissue.

Though many of them have similar symptoms, autoimmune diseases usually fluctuate between periods of remission (little/no symptoms) and flare-ups (worsening symptoms). Seventy-five percent of those affected are women. African Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans also have an increased risk of developing an autoimmune disease.

Causes of Autoimmunity



PREVENTION POSSIBLE?

Although there is not much good evidence regarding prevention of most autoimmune diseases, some links have been established that could be worth pursuing. Those that suffer from autoimmune diseases tend to have lower levels of:

- Vitamin D: found in sunlight and in fish.
- Omega-3: can be obtained through fish and walnuts.
- Antioxidants: taken in by eating lots of colorful fruits and vegetables.
- Vitamin E: found in sunflower seeds, almonds, and spinach.

COMMON AUTOIMMUNE DISEASES

Type I Diabetes

- The immune system attacks the pancreas, an organ that produces insulin. The production of insulin, a hormone that transports blood sugar into cells for energy, is then impaired.

Rheumatoid Arthritis

- The immune system attacks the joints and surrounding tissue causing inflammation.

Hashimoto's Disease

- The immune system attacks the thyroid, one of the glands responsible for regulating our metabolism.

Addison's Disease

- One of the causes of this disease is that the immune system attacks the adrenal glands, decreasing production of cortisol and aldosterone.

Multiple Sclerosis

- The immune system attacks the protective sheath (myelin) of the nerves causing disruption of the nerve signals.

Y / N Do any of your immediate family members have a history of these or other autoimmune diseases?

Talk to your Coach about which of these diseases concerns you most.



Coach's Quick Take

Autoimmune diseases affect every system of the body, as our immune systems attack our own tissues.

Although there are few known cures, we can take some steps through diet, rest, exercise, and lifestyle changes to possibly prevent, and certainly slow, the progression of these diseases.

AUTOIMMUNE DISEASE SYMPTOM CHECKLIST

Check if you have the following conditions

- Chronic joint pain, muscle pain, weakness or a tremor
- Insomnia, heat or cold intolerance or rapid heartbeat
- Recurrent rashes or hives, sun-sensitivity, a butterfly-shaped rash across your nose and cheeks
- Difficulty concentrating or focusing
- Excessive fatigue, unexplained weight gain or loss
- Hair loss or white patches on your skin or inside your mouth
- Abdominal pain, blood or mucus in your stool, diarrhea or mouth ulcers
- Dry eyes, mouth or skin
- Numbness or tingling in the hands or feet

ALLEVIATE SYMPTOMS OF AUTOIMMUNE DISEASES

Although autoimmune disease may not be able to be cured, here is a list to things to do to help alleviate the symptoms:

- Eat a balanced and healthy, anti-inflammatory diet
- Exercise regularly, but start slowly
- Get plenty of rest
- Take vitamin supplements, if there are any vitamin deficiencies
- Take anti-inflammatory medication, if joints are affected
- Get physical therapy
- Learn to manage stress
- Limit sun exposure
- If recommended by a doctor, receive blood transfusions, take hormone replacement or immunosuppressive medication.



If you suffer from an autoimmune disease, which of the above behaviors are you most ready to change in your own life?



RESOURCES

www.webmd.com

www.nlm.nih.gov

www.mayoclinic.com

For More Information visit
www.WellnessCoachesUSA.com