

Cytokines, Interleukins and Allergies

Pollen allergies are a major problem in the southwest. Most New Mexicans seem to be allergic to something. Whenever the pollen count is high they endure red itchy eyes, a runny nose, coughing and sneezing. Finding relief is a challenge - and allergy medications don't seem to be a very good solution.

An allergy is an exaggerated immune response or an immune over- reaction. The immune system normally protects the body from harmful substances such as bacteria or viruses and foreign substances, or allergens. In a person with allergies, the immune response is overly sensitive. When it recognizes an allergen, it releases histamine and other chemicals. This leads to those uncomfortable and bothersome symptoms.

Many people use antihistamines to diminish the allergy symptoms, but these are not without potential problems. Possible side effects include drowsiness, dry mouth, urine retention and blurred vision. Benadryl, another popular product for allergies and hay fever, has even more potential side effects such as drowsiness, coordination problems, indigestion or heartburn, fatigue, restlessness, excitation, nervousness, irritability, shakiness, insomnia , tingling or numbness, vertigo, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, constipation, nasal stuffiness and menstrual changes. Some people visit an allergist for desensitization shots, but these can be expensive and may not be totally effective.

So allergy treatments can cause more problems than the allergies themselves. Of course, there are options. In past articles I have talked about decreasing allergy symptoms by strengthening the membranes of the lungs and sinuses, supporting the adrenal glands and reducing inflammation. These are all good and helpful. Recent research offers an exciting addition to the treatment of allergies through the use of interleukins and cytokines.

Cytokines are small cell signaling protein molecules that regulate interleukins (a group of multifunctional cytokines that are produced by a variety of lymphoid and nonlymphoid cells) to influence immune function. There are a number of different interleukins that do some marvelous things. They are very much involved in keeping you healthy by controlling infections, inflammation, and allergies.

Your body makes interleukins naturally, but pharmaceutical companies now produce them as medications. Unfortunately, in this form, they can cause some pretty nasty side effects such as fever and chills or flu-like symptoms, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, increased risk for infection, anemia and/or bleeding, confusion, drowsiness, memory loss, changes in liver function, racing heart, generalized aches and pains, swelling of the face, ankles or legs, breathing difficulty, itching and fatigue.

Interleukins in a highly diluted homeopathic form, by contrast, can be extremely effective, without the harmful side effects. Manufacturers in Europe have recently combined homeopathic medicines with interleukins resulting in a very potent treatment for a number of health problems, including allergies and autoimmune diseases. Guna International, an Italian pharmaceutical manufacturer is the company spearheading this work. We have been using a number of Guna products for some time, but the new interleukin products are very exciting.

So if you are tired of the misery of allergies, give us a call, and get on the road to being allergy free.