Crohn's Stories

Derek Bemis' Story

I was diagnosed with Crohn's disease in 1992. Although looking back I believe I had it most of my life but never made the connection. I had always been on the thin side, and as a child I was prone to stomach aches and such. The doctor would shrug it off ascramps the pains were short and would go away as quickly as they came, so that is what we thought they were. They always seemed to occur at times of stress however particularly around Christmas time when we would be anticipating the arrival of Santa.

Later in life at the high school level, and more so at the college level, finals would be a real time of pain for me. I would have problems, but I would push them aside as "cramps" and tell myself to quit being such a baby and push on. I remember going through Basic Training at Ft. Knox in 1983. Now this is an atmosphere ripe with stress, in fact that is its sole purpose, to induce stress.

I began Basic at a comfortable 160 lbs. In fact that was the heaviest I had ever been. A year of dorm life and consuming the beverage of choice, Point Beer, had definitely cushioned me. After six weeks of training I had dropped almost 40 lbs. I would stuff my face with food, or as the Drill Sergeant would say "shove it in your mouth and chew it as you leave" meals were short and very stressful, not a good combo for someone at the onset of full blown Crohn's. There were many days I could not keep the food down, and doing that amount of work on little food is very conducive to weight loss. My clothes were falling off of me, and even with a belt I was having a hard time keeping my pants up.

After Basic and back at College the pains were slightly more frequent and definitely more severe. I continued my training in R.O.T.C. and Majored in Forestry. At this time I believe I was anemic, but didn't know it at the time. I was having trouble keeping up with the R.O.T.C. training program and was struggling to pass my Physical Fitness test that we needed to pass twice a year. I thought that it was the "good life" that I was leading being back at college and decided I needed to put in some more training time. So I took on extra physical training put on by the Dept. of the Army. Even with all that I felt my strength slipping. I passed all my tests however, and once again told myself to suck it up and pushed on.

I met my future wife Christy about this time, and things changed for the better. I didn't realize at the time what a calming effect she had on me, and how much it helped to calm my "cramps". Little did she know, that she was in for quite a ride, I would not have wanted anyone else there with me, she was, and is, truly a blessing.

The "cramps" were pretty scarce or easily handled until starting my new job. They came back with more frequency and intensity, and I finally went to the doctor. The initial diagnosis was that I had a stomach ulcer. I was treated accordingly and given a regiment of medicine. It helped slightly and allowed me to carry on for some time, but after awhile the pain was back and getting worse.

Then came 1992 the year that I will never forget, I had a bad horse accident that put me in ICU at the Stoughton Hospital. I was training a trotting horse that we had purchased, and one thing led to another and before I knew it I was rolling down the road in a cart behind a runaway horse and nothing I could do would stop him. Many things run through your head at a moment like this and the one that kept entering my head was "GET OFF". I decided to jump for it, I planned on a soft spot up ahead, but about that time the horse broke the other way and my soft spot became the hard pavement at about 40mph. I got back to my feet, how I don't know, but adrenalin is a powerful thing, and started walking home. I was going to go home to lay down for awhile because at the time I didn't believe I was that hurt, but none of my limbs were working quite the way they were supposed to, and my knee kept buckling backwards.

Christy was following in the truck and stopped to help, but my main concern at that point was the horse. I told her to get the horse and I would start walking back. I made it about a quarter of a mile and saw the horse coming at me at a dead run dragging the mangled cart behind it.

I tried to raise my arms to slow him down but realized that only one arm was working. The horse, fortunately for us, ran directly back to his stall, he was scared and sweating, but none the worse for wear. I, on the other hand, had a class III separated shoulder, torn ACL ligament in my right knee, a concussion, a puncture wound that went completely through my ankle and a major road rash on my back, not to mention numerous deep cuts to my head; what kept me on my feet and walking only the Lord knows.

After several surgeries and lengthy rehab I was back on my feet, but my "cramps" were much worse after all this, and were coming back with more frequency.

I continued to push on trying to ignore the pain in my abdomen convinced that the medicine needed time to work. It was then that I had a major GI bleed that landed me back in ICU at the Stoughton Hospital, a place I had come to know so well.

I was at first incredibly tired, I had just finished some work in the barn and could not figure out why I would be this tired. I had laid down for a few minutes then I felt that I needed to go to the bathroom. Not an unusual occurrence for me since I had been dealing with severe diarrhea for about a year now, something that I also had medicine for. Only this time it was blood, about 2 pints of it.

Christy took me to the hospital, where I was immediately admitted to ICU. I went through a battery of tests in the days to come, with the final diagnosis Crohn's. I had no idea what it was, and with the World Wide Web still in its infancy, information was not as easy to come by. The doctors did their best to explain it, and a few books from the library filled in the rest. I came to find out that it wasn't curable, but was treatable, for the most part.

I was given a regiment of medicine from painkillers to steroids. I had such a hard time with cramps on the steroids that it was getting hard to do much of anything. The pain was almost constant at this point and many days I would come home from work, curl up in a fetal position and try to sleep, but even sleep was rare at that point.

I came across a book entitled Eating Right for a Bad Gut, by Dr. James Scala. This was another major turning point in my battle against the Crohn's. It was the game plan for my new attack against it. Through the book I started eating better and was introduced to supplements as a means of treating it, my search for the supplements led me to Shaklee products and specifically Margaret Trost and Barb Lagoni. Margaret and Barbs visit was the beginning of the end to a long and tiring battle.

Barb set up some meal plans which consisted mainly of homemade soups and steamed vegetables. Light meats such as fish and chicken, and light on the dairy products. Yogurt became one of my main sources of calcium, and was very easy on the intestines.

The start of my supplement regiment was taken with each meal and was as follows:

2 tps. Liqui-Lea
4 Calcium
1 Vitamin E
2 B-Complex
5 Alfalfa
3 EPA
1 Vita-C
3 tbs. Soy Protein
2 tbs. Meal Shakes

I started slowly to allow my system to become accustomed to the supplements and continued to add until I was up to amount listed previously. I was eating very little at this time, because the pain was so bad the thought of putting food in my mouth and aggravating the "cramps" more was not an appealing thought.

I was skeptical at first, I have to admit, but I took the supplements and the medicines that the doctors had given me. After about a week the pain was lessening and I could function fairly well. I felt some strength returning, and by the end of the first month, I was convinced that they were really helping.

I went to the doctor on my regular visits and even he noticed an improvement. Further test revealed that the irritation from the Crohn's was lessening, and the pain I was feeling was mainly the scars that had narrowed my intestines to the point that food was having a hard time passing through.

The doctors decided that surgery was my best option at this point. Something that I did not want, but knew that I needed. So at 107 lbs I entered the hospital on December 1, 1993. I will spare you the details of the surgery, that is another story in and of itself. I will say this much, they removed about a foot of my small intestine and about 6 inches of my large. This area of the small intestine is what regulates the amount of water into the large and is also the part that absorbs the B vitamins into the body.

I was treated as if I were a recovering POW as my doctor put it, because I had been eating so little my body was beginning to feed on its own organs. I was in all practical terms starving. With zero percent body fat, and still anemic, I was definitely a sight. They started a feed line in my neck and gave me 6,000 calories a day along with a intravenous container of lipids (fat) a day.

As soon as I was able, I started back on my supplements and the diet that Barb had laid out, but this time I put the medicine aside. I started regaining my strength, and I could tell on almost a daily basis that I was getting stronger. I was eating better and putting on weight.

I continued on the supplements, and never took any more medicine after the surgery. I am convinced that the vitamin E and the other supplements helped reduce my scarring and kept my intestine supple after the surgery. I tripled the amount of B complex after the surgery and added daily fiber mix as well. The doctors told me that I would always have trouble with diarrhea and that I would need monthly B12 injections. I have had neither. My B12 levels are always well into the normal range, and at one point I was high on the B12, which I think really amazed them.

It has been 12 years since my surgery, and I have had very few problems. I still have some trouble with Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS), but it is manageable. Over the years I have cut back slightly on the supplements, and my diet has slipped slightly. I can eat anything that I want. A few things such as nuts and very fibrous things can cause some problems, but anything in moderation.

My supplement plan today is:

1 Vita-Lea
1 Vita-C Sustained Release
4 B-Complex
4 Calcium
1 Vita-E Complex
1 Zinc Complex
2 Immune Building complex
2 Lecithin
3 EPA
10 Alfalfa
3 tbs. Soy Protein
4-8 tbs. Daily Fiber (Both a.m. and at bed time)
1 Optiflora

The Optiflora has been a huge help to me, and I wish it had been available when this all started. I also use the EZ Gest particularly when I know that I may be eating something other than my normal diet, which by the way, is almost exclusively Thai food at this point. I think after not being able to eat or wanting to eat all that time. I wanted to experiment with different cuisines, “try it all as you would say,” and have always come back to Thai food. It is light, and the combination of tastes is unbelievable.

So it has been almost 12 years now that I have been in remission. I had a colonoscopy about 2 years ago, and although there was a little redness near the staples that connect my small intestine to my large, the doctor saw no signs of the Crohn's.

About a year ago I began running and biking, and have dreams of being in the Madison Ironman one day. I workout 5 days a week and logged more miles than I care to think about, and not once have I felt that I couldn't do it. I know that if I am to reach that dream, Shaklee products will be with me every step of the way. I am now almost 41 and I am probably in the best shape of my life. My current weight s 150 lbs. which is right where it should be.

The Lord has truly blessed me with a loving wife to see me through this and allowed me to find the help I needed through Margaret and Barb and Shaklee Products. I do not like to think of where I would be now without them.

Subj: Terri's Crohn's Vitamin Regimen
Date: 1/28/01 8:58:21 PM Central Standard Time
From: BreathngEZ

In a message dated 1/28/1 14:54:13, TLCDAB wrote:

Hi-
This is what I try to do every day to feel better and keep my Crohn's under control and it works pretty well for me.

I do a Shsaklee 180 w/ teaspoon of Daily Fiber and my Optiflora powder in it or orange juice w/ Soy Protein, Fiber, and Opt. powder.
I Vita Lea 2 X daily
2 B complex
1 GLA
1 Optiflora pearl
3 Alfalfas
3 Calcium Mag. 2 X if remember
1 Vita E Plus
1 Carotomax
1 Formula I
1 Vita C

I have been taking EZ-Gest when I know I may be eating something I should not be eating or if something has upset my stomach and it seems to be working great.

Now you know that Crohn's is an immune deficiency disease and we need to build our immune system to take care of our bodies. I have not been sick with any infections this year for the first time in many and I did not end up in the hospital this year with anything weird, so I know that I am building a healthy body that is now helping take care of me. With Crohn's, you cannot do dairy products, Canola oil, fats, grease, and eggs. Egg beaters are great. Safflower or Olive oil are better oils for you. Just keep track of what upsets you and try to avoid it. And if you cheat, take the EZ-Gest. I do have a milder form of this disease, so for people with a more severe case, you may have to figure out how much you need of these products or add Herb-Lax to your program.

I do know my life is so much better now and I will always do my Shaklee.

Terri Cochrane.

Please e-mail me at TLCDAB@aol.com if you want to talk or have questions.
I will be happy to help you.

Hannah Sharapan's Health Story (Crohn's Disease and How I Was Helped with SHAKLEE Food Supplements)

When I was two years old, I had a bleeding rectal fissure. It reappeared when I was ten, and then in High School it began to give me real problems. Beginning in Jr. High, it seemed like I was missing a lot of school with rather indistinct symptoms. In High School, my stamina was worse. In my senior year I became extremely fatigued. I was tested more than once for mono, once for an ulcer, and I saw the doctor regularly. I missed a good portion of the last few months of my senior year, including the day that I was inducted into the National Honor Society, the day of my Senior Prom. In fact, in Pennsylvania schools were supposed to hold back a student who missed more than 29 days. However, because I had done well, my school simply marked my report card as having missed 29 days.

In addition to the fatigue, by my last few months in High School, I was also vomiting almost daily. I went down to 70 pounds, and I am 5'2". I wonder sometimes if today I would have been wrongly diagnosed as an anorexic? Unfortunately, I wasn't diagnosed at all--with a guess that maybe it was psychosomatic. I can remember lying in bed, day after day, wondering how I could be doing this to myself. Was I crazy? The next moment my thoughts would go to "what if I had some dread disease and the doctors were missing it?" I had just finished reading Death Be Not Proud, and I worried more.

Somehow, I mustered enough strength for graduation and, thinking that I looked a lot better, took my place in line for the Grand March. Imagine my dismay over how I really looked when a teacher handed me smelling salts. I never heard a word that went on at Graduation. I went to College in the fall, a little bit stronger and about 8 pounds heavier. I had alternating constipation and diarrhea, with regular rectal bleeding, distention of my abdomen, and not infrequent nausea and vomiting. By mid-term of my sophomore year, I was falling asleep even sitting up. Then, hospitalized, tests revealed the elusive culprit--Crohn's Disease--a serious intestinal disease Having to withdraw from College for the term caused me great agony. I'd be a term behind everyone else. I wouldn't graduate with my friends. Would my boyfriend find someone else?

The disease was so rare in 1962 that I felt stranger yet. To try to build me up, the doctor recommended daily milkshakes, not knowing that most of us with Crohn's Disease can't tolerate milk. I did pretty well for the next few years--in fact, right up through my Wedding Day when I married Allan, the boyfriend whom I had worried would leave me. However, the day after our wedding, I was in extreme pain. After a large injection of Cortisone to try to stop the pain didn't work, we found eventually that I had been perforating. I was so ill for the next seven months that I had to go to stay with my parents who lived two hours away, seeing Allan only on weekends. The next two years I was on a treadmill heading downwards. My diet was now only tea, jelly, and soda crackers, and my doctor didn't believe in supplementation. I had now vomited daily, often more than once a day, for nearly six years. My skin pigmentation lightened, my teeth went yellow, my hair began to gray. If only I had known about SHAKLEE. Allan and I saw each other under such duress that it was tough on our young relationship. I was so weak that my mother was bathing me and brushing my hair.

Although I greatly feared surgery, the doctors decided that it was the only way that would enable me to lead any sort of life. The x-rays showed the disease had spread throughout my intestines; so they said the best that they could do was to remove just the worst parts. Since it wasn't emergency surgery, I convinced them to wait for a few months while I psyched myself up for the surgery. I'd lie in bed seeing myself well and picturing the disease localizing to a point that it could all be removed. It was not until I was in SHAKLEE and learned about visualization techniques that I realized that I'd been using them. I can still see my doctor's beaming face when I awoke, and he said, "Hannah, we got it all. It was localized in just three places!"

Greatly improved by surgery, Allan and I were finally together. During the next six years, I led a relatively normal life, except for occasional impactions, lots of fatigue, and picking up many cases of the intestinal flu which could keep me in bed for a month. Being advised not to get pregnant, we adopted Halle, and four years later adopted Danielle. During this time, I had developed some allergy problems and had gotten fibrocystic disease in the breasts (they think as the result of the ACTH that they had me on for the Crohn's). I did become pregnant, though, when Danielle was a small infant.

During the pregnancy I did have some problems--from straining so my cervix dropped so far that I almost lost the baby. After three weeks in bed for that, I then got a rectal abscess, one of the most painful things that I ever went through. Toward the end of the pregnancy, I began to need daily rectal dilations, having to drive 45 minutes each way to the doctor's office. This treatment was so painful that when I'd get up from the table, there would be a ring of perspiration where I had been. Our oldest daughter, Halle, was starting kindergarten, and I had looked forward to walking her to school that first day, but, instead, I was in agony with another impaction. These impactions were a result of a rectal stricture (which is scar tissue) from the Crohn's. The doctors agreed that removal of the scar tissue would just cause new scar tissue to form.

After delivering Ashley, I continued to have rectal dilations weekly for the next six years. Then in 1979 we found SHAKLEE. We were introduced by way of the business opportunity, but we believed that we had to be totally sold on the products. I hoped I would be able to tolerate the supplements, because I couldn't handle any of the ones I had bought at the store. I hoped, also, that the SHAKLEE supplements might give me that sorely-needed energy which I lacked; and perhaps that vitamin-C might reduce my colds. I truly believed that that was the most that vitamins and minerals could do for you; and with even those results I would have been thrilled!

Was I ever in for a pleasant surprise when I did get the energy. Plus I gained three hours a day because of needing less sleep. Then my digestion vastly improved. In fact, for the first time in a long while I was really absorbing my food. Since SHAKLEE, I am able to keep my weight with little effort after a lifelong struggle with being way too thin. My allergy symptoms virtually disappeared; and within months so did the cysts. In July1979 I began the SHAKLEE supplements, and July 1979 marks the month of the last of the rectal dilations.

Four years later I went to the doctor and he said that as long as I was there, he wanted to check the stricture. Reluctantly, I agreed. I was shocked! I had only what I would call normal discomfort. The doctor looked at me in disbelief and exclaimed, "Hannah, the stricture is gone!" As he sat down to write on my chart, I can still see him, his head shaking; as he recorded and barely audibly repeated, "The stricture is gone--no more scars!"
Me! He has told me since then that another doctor examining me would say that the examination showed an essentially normal rectum.

He added, "You are a living testimony to your products!"

* * * * *

This is the SHAKLEE Food Supplement program I follow:

I started very slowly, like this:

1st Day--1/2 tablet of Alfalfa at breakfast
2nd Day--1 tablet of Alfalfa at each meal and 1 at bedtime I gradually built up to taking 4 each meal and 4 at bedtime.

After the first day or so when I could feel that I tolerated the Alfalfa well, I added 1 B-Complex at breakfast Anyone with a digestive problem knows that it is a good idea to try one new food at a time, so I suggest the same with supplements.

Based on personal experience and experience in working with others, I do fee1 that anyone who sticks to working out a program will be able to tolerate all the supplements and feel much better on them. Every person, however, will have to find his/her own rate of adding on other supplements and amounts thereof.

The next day, I increased to 1 B-Complex a meal, and now I eat 2 a meal and 1 at bedtime.

Next came Calcium. Now I eat Calcium Complex Chewables. I eat only about 4-6 a day.

I have read that there is a zinc and Vitamin-C deficiency in Crohn's Disease cases. I eat 4-6 zinc a day and 12 Vitamin-C Sustained Release, divided up over mealtimes and bedtime; I do increase these two supplements if I feel a cold or flu coming on.

Next came the Vitamin-E 400 IU tablets. Vitamin-E is reputed by many nutritionists to break down scar tissue, and based on my personal experience; I have to believe that that is true. I eat 6 Vitamin-E tablets daily.

I eat 8 Vita-Lea for Children each day.
I now use a minimum of 3 tablespoons of Instant Protein at breakfast, but, again, gradually I built up to that from a slow beginning. I began mixing 1/4 teaspoon at breakfast, then 1/4 teaspoon per meal, on to 1 teaspoon per meal and then up to 3 tablespoons of Instant Protein at breakfast.
Generally I drink my Instant Protein in apple juice or a blend of apple juice along with other juices, such as cranberry or apricot nectar.

I began with Herb-Lax when I started the Alfalfa. If someone has the constipation that I did, that person will often take Herb-Lax initially, too.

More often Crohn's patients suffer from a chronic diarrhea and are concerned with taking too much Herb-Lax. Sometimes they have to experience results before gaining the confidence in the products. I have heard many people say that they felt that Herb-Lax had actually helped them get over diarrhea problems. The way I began with the herbs was to lick a tablet the first night; the next night I broke off a crumb, then subsequently 1/8 of a tablet, then a 1/4, then a 1/2, etc.--cutting off a bit at a time.

When Fiber Wafers came out, I added 1 a day--that seems right for me. When EPA and Beta Carotene came out, I added them, eating 3 of each day.

As far as diet is concerned, once I started to do much better and to feel much better because of the supplements, I became interested more in adhering to sound nutritional ideas. Over a period of time, I found improvement by eliminating red beef, seeds, sugar, and pop. I had gotten off milk years ago. I rarely eat anything fried. Now I eat lots of brown rice, chicken, fresh vegetables, and some fresh fruits and fruit juices (not citrus).

Summary of the SHAKLEE Food Supplements I now take:
:
After gradual build up and experimentation, my daily regimen is as follows.

These supplements are divided up by taking some four times a day, at meals and at bedtime.

Alfalfa--16 or more Herb-Lax--1 (at bedtime only)
B-Complex--7 Calcium Complex--4 Zinc--6 Vita-C (Sustained Release)--12*
*I add Chewables if I feel a cold or infection coming on)
Vita-E 400IU Tablets--6 Instant Protein--3 or more Tbs (at breakfast)
Vita Lea for Children--8 EPA--3 Beta Carotene--3 Fiber Wafers--1 In closing, let me emphasize the importance of checking in with a client who has Crohn's Disease every two days until you have them on a complete SHAKLEE program. They need constant reinforcement until they get results.
Hannah Sharapan

Crohn's Disease Testimony

This is a note to let you know how much Shaklee has helped with my maintenance of my Crohn's.

Approximately 6 years ago I had been told I had Irritable Bowel Syndrome and was treated basically with huge amounts of fiber that my body couldn't tolerate since I was not drinking ten gallons of water a day. I was a busy college student and not into carrying water bottles with me all the time. I ended up with a continuous cycle of constipation and diarrhea.

I developed anal fissures which bled and had very low energy levels. Finally I was diagnosed with Crohn's about 4-1/2 years ago. I was put on a course of treatment with taking 16 - 250 mg capsules of Pentasa daily. I was treated for the anal fissures and began my recovery. I was told I may not be able to become pregnant and that my chances of miscarriage would be higher than average if I conceived.

When my husband and I moved into our home we had a free Shaklee demonstration. I liked the idea of taking vitamins I felt were safe for my system. I tried the basic vitamins and felt they were helping my energy level and my overall health. I was provided with some information from my Shaklee sponsors about what supplements other people take who have Crohn's.

I toned down the amounts a little because I had not had any serious flare-ups since I began my Pentasa. These are the supplements I take daily:

2 Vita-Lea
2 Vita-C sustained release
2 Vita-E plus selenium
2 B-Complex
10-20 Alfalfa Tabs
4 Cal-Mag
2 Zinc
3 Acuity Plus
3 Lecithin
1 Energizing Soy Protein drink

Since taking these supplements, some positive changes have occurred in my life:

1. I no longer have any anal fissures. In fact, the scar tissue has reduced significantly so that I no longer feel them during bowel movements.

2. I have had my Pentasa reduced to 3 - 250 mg capsules 2 times daily as maintenance dose.

3. I am now 36 weeks pregnant and there been no complications during my pregnancy. I am not even required to take prenatal vitamins. My doctor's office looked through my supplements and said I should be just fine without additional vitamins.

I know that I am different from others with Crohn's disease and that I have not had as difficult a recovery as some. Each person has a different experience and I hope mine will help you. I owe Shaklee thanks for the help they have provided me.

Sincerely,
Sara Jane Heesch

Best Wishes,
Shirley Armstrong

Physicians Say Steroids Still Widely Used to Treat Crohn's Disease, Despite Known Serious Side Effects

Newer Medicines May Help Patients Reduce Use of Steroids

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Oct. 12 /PRNewswire/ -- Corticosteroids remain the leading therapy for Crohn's disease despite the possible risk of serious side effects, according to a new nationwide physician survey released today. Among physicians who use medications to treat Crohn's disease, 88 percent choose steroids to treat flare-ups in patients with severe cases, while 75 percent prescribe them for moderate cases.

The survey, conducted by Yankelovich Partners and issued by Vanderbilt University, found that widespread reliance on steroids continues, even though more than half (55%) of physicians identified osteoporosis as a potential long-term side effect associated with their use. Furthermore, almost one- third (29%) cited cataracts and high blood pressure (27%) as other common steroid side effects.

``While steroids can be effective in controlling symptoms for the short- term, physicians need to carefully monitor patients' response to treatment and evaluate their progress to minimize side effects -- which can occur even after a brief period of time and may be irreversible," said Charles A. Sninsky, M.D., associate director of Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition, Vanderbilt University Medical Center.

Physicians surveyed indicated they would utilize steroid therapy for long or indefinite periods. More than three-fourths (76%) of physicians would keep Crohn's patients on steroids from six months through an indefinite period to maintain remission. One-in-five (19%) would keep patients on steroids for one year. Overall, the average length of time physicians would use steroids to treat patients in remission is nine months.

``The bottom line is that steroids are generally not effective for the extended maintenance of Crohn's disease, and therefore alternative therapies should be explored," said Dr. Sninsky.

Some of the other side effects that were frequently cited as results of steroid use included weight gain (36%), fluid retention (21%), mood swings (9%) and moon face (8%).

Editor's Note:

Using Shaklee's Nutritional Supplements have given many Crohn's sufferers "side benefits not side effects".

Malky -
My girlfriend has Crohn's disease and has had incredible results from the following:

EPA - 3 to 6 daily for inflammation (start slowly)
GLA - 3 daily
B-Complex - 6 daily
Cal/Mag - 6 daily (natural muscle relaxer that helps with cramping)
2 Vita-Lea daily
Opti-flora twice daily
Vita-C 2 daily
Vita-E 4 daily (to prevent future strictures from forming)
DTX - 3 daily
Also, she finds valerian to be helpful in times of stress.

Missy

Inflammatory Bowel Diseases
Phone conference with Barbara Lagoni & Nedra Sahr, MS Nutritionist Notes by Shirley Koritnik
(Koritnik & Associates, 1639 Fairview Blvd., Winston-Salem, NC 27127, (336) 785-4151.)

Intestine or bowel gets inflamed, Causes diarrhea. Ulcerative colitis or Crohn's. On the rise in developing countries as well as us. As early as 5or 10 years old.

Ulcerative colitis. Bleeding from large intestine only.

Crohn's can be lower small intestine AND large.

ITIS means inflammation.

Main symptoms gas and bloating. Diarrhea alternating with constipation. Lots of pain. Abdominal cramping. Bleeding. Can lead to anemia.

Can be found in the mouth, lead to arthritis, and inflammation of the eyes.

Some researchers speculate that rheumatoid arthritis is really irritable bowel.

Cause? Unknown. Three possibilities. Immune low. Infection. Diet. Stress always increases the severity of the disease. "What is eating you?"

along with "What are you eating?"

Common thread. Leaky gut syndrome. The intestinal wall has become compromised and things leak through. Undigested proteins, if they pass through the wall into the blood stream where they don't belong-then the body's immune system attacks the proteins. Autoimmune disease-body attacks itself. Protein passing through is undigested and are large molecules an can pass the blood brain barrier (and probably causes chronic fatigue by getting to the brain), etc.-causes so many problems.

All doctors have not kept up with this.

Remove, Replace, Reinoculate, Repair is the strategy.

Remove the stimulation in the GI tract. Yeast overgrowth. Bacteria pathogens. Allergy-producing foods.

Replace with good foods. Some need digestive enzyme.

Reinoculate. Acidophilus and bifidus (OPTIFLORA)

Repair with supplements to heal the walls and mucosal tract.

If you take away, you need to replace. People get testy when you take things away!

Fat inflames. Chips and fried foods need to go down to non-existent. Eliminate dairy products (recommended way back in 1989 in GUT magazine=85pediatric research, too). Even take out yogurt for awhile. Red meats. All the junk food has to go. So many Crohn's patients are sugarholics. Think of yourself as carrying a 1000-pound block of cement on your shoulders-that's the stress that bad food puts on you.

Remove gluten. Lancet study in 1994. Whole wheat and bran made the conditions worse. No wheat, rye, oats, barley, and spelt. 100% clean of these. Spelt is not gluten free, though many think it is=85 No bread, muffins, wheat pastas, soups made with flour. People crave these products.

Diarrhea and constipation have been known to go away in a week when these are eliminated! 95% are helped this quickly-getting rid of pain, constipation, gas, bloating. Eating out and eating prepared foods is where we get in trouble.

I LOVE DIETING helps people because it eliminates the glutens and carbohydrates. Nedra agrees with it. For some people with intestinal distress they may have to cook the veggies for awhile, instead of eating them raw in the program.

Brands that are good: Savory Thins crackers. KAME crackers. Both okay. Look for just rice, salt, and a little bit of oil. Anything rice is fine.
Quinoa pasta is also good. Comes in pearls or pastas. JUST DELICIOUS.

Couscous is wheat, so unacceptable. Millet is acceptable. Amarynth is acceptable. Look for the gluten-free section in the health food store. Look at cereals labels. No wheat, spelt. Corn pasta is really good if you can find it and if you can eat it.

Recipe books have a varying degree of recipes. There's nothing perfect out there (so she may write one). Soups are easy to make gluten-free. Corn and kale chowder. Look in your existing cookbooks. There's a whole new world of food waiting.

Beans, lentils, squash, sweet potato, white potato, etc. are fine. GO FOR THE VEGGIES. If there is inflammation, have to go easy with fiber until there is healing.

Drink 8-10 glasses of clean water. Being dehydrated is a BIG problem for these people. Add PERFORMANCE to water, when there is a lot of dumping of electrolytes through diarrhea.

Use unflavored Fiber Plan. =BD to 1 teaspoon at breakfast and dinner time to start. Fiber tabs are based on soy and citrus, so you can do 3 and 3.

GUT Magazine is a favorite and read widely by gastro-enterologists.

Replace--dairy with soymilk, rice milk, soy and rice ice cream and cheese.
Knock off everything first for a few weeks rest your gut then take in soy and rice.

Inoculate with OPTIFLORA. It's the best on the market. Guarantees live delivery to the lower intestine. Inulin has the most favorable effect on liver and intestinal detoxification-better than oat fiber, etc. Inulin is in OPTIFLORA. Powder is FOS (fructooligosaccharides). If people have inflamed situation, may get gas initially. Start with a teaspoon with the pearl If that's too much, then go to 1/8. Work up to 1 teaspoon. Some need to take two servings a day. Divide and take the powder twice if once is too much. The FOS helps them colonize and create a better system.

1935 report. Way back then they knew Acidophilus helps. Yale University Press. It's been there all these years in the literature!!!!!

Repair. Start with soy to start the healing process. Recommend twice a day-especially because you're eliminating dairy, etc. Take soy powder in soy or rice milk or water. Don't use juice right now so you don't feed the yeast overgrowth with fruit sugars. Later on you can dilute juice and use it.

They're almost always deficient in almost all of the Bs, A, D, K, essential fatty acids. B-12 is only one part of the picture. B relates directly to the stress issues. Barbara used to teach stress management. Bs are cofactors, coenzymes for digestion, etc. B will help with cravings, too.

Recommended SHAKLEE nutrients: (400) Vita-E, Vita-C (start with 2 and increase), arotomax-epithelial tissues is very delicate and the carotonoids really help with this. At least one.
EPA reduces inflammation. Is anti viral, anti fungal. Dr. Bloozy 1996 study EPA reduces possibility of relapse. 3-6. Depends on how courageous they are. 1-2 per meal.
Will reduce joint pain, too.

Start with Peppermint-Ginger tea, or Valerian tea to let irritation die down before starting on Vita-Lea. They really need it because they are usually low in iron and zinc, etc. Some people can start immediately. Others need a week.

Generous amounts of alfalfa are helpful for digestion and also have some anti-inflammatory properties.
Cal-Mag, 2 per meal, to help with cramping. Zinc.

Story. Woman with IBD. A soap called Lever 2000 was causing the symptoms of IBD! Another person went off it and got symptom relief too! Remember that 60% of what's on the skin goes into the body. So Meadow Blend Bar is a significant, safe alternative.

Be very intentional about everything. Laundry, dishes, etc. Eliminate all possible sources of irritation.

Word of hope. People on this program have reduced dependence on steroids. The program speaks well for itself. Motto. Remove the offending factor. Replace with good food. Reinoculate. Repair.

Ulcers and H-pylori. H-pylori is caused by bacteria overgrowth. Ulcers are caused by diet. Need to eliminate the possibility of toxic things growing in the lower intestine.

Diverticulitis. Inflammation in the pouches. Pouches pooch out. Have to be really careful of diet. No nuts, seeds, roughage. Program will help this, too. Have to cook veggies for quite awhile. DTX will be important and Herb

Lax to clear out toxins and impacted matter.

Hannah Sharapan. Herb Lax helpful for her. Caution. Used to start everyone on this. Given the high incidence of intestinal problems, don't do that anymore. Don't want to exercise inflamed tissue. OPTIFLORA, fiber, water replace Herb-Lax, which is used as a laxative (when inflammation is not an issue).

Doster says DTX every day for everyone. Increased toxins in the environment.

Acid reflux. Injury to the tissue. Diet-related. Small frequent meals.
Clean up the diet. Same as program above. It's a backing up of the digestion system. Cleaning up the lower intestine (OPTIFLORA) and eliminating more regularly will help the reflux.

Every one of us would get benefits from this diet. Let's not wait till we have digestive problems.

How long does it take to start? Pain often reduces in a week, two weeks.
So often it's only four days. Some people need stool analyzed by a lab to make sure everything is better. Lab work in six months to see what you still have to work on. Some are completely healed by then, lab work shows.

Garlic is wonderful, too.

Some just swallow peppermint-ginger tabs and doing that helps sometimes when the tea form doesn't work as well. Valerian (tea or tabs) also soothes irritated tissue.

Best Alternative Treatments for Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis by Steven Bratman, MD

Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis fall under the heading "inflammatory bowel disease" (IBD). Unlike irritable bowel syndrome, which produces similar -- though milder -- symptoms, these conditions involve visible injury to the colon wall. The cause appears to be antibodies targeted by the body against itself.

Like all auto-immune diseases, IBD ebbs and flows, flaring into severe illness, then diminishing to quiescence. Symptoms include severe cramping, diarrhea with pus and blood, and rectal fissures and abcesses. Non-digestive symptoms may occur too, such as fever, weight loss, anemia, liver disease and inflammation of the eyes. Finally, IBD seems to increase the incidence of colon cancer.

Medical treatment of IBD involves steroids and other special anti-inflammatory medications, plus surveillance for many possible complications.

Although alternative medicine is not sufficient for acute flare-ups of IBD, during periods of relative calm it can help prevent exacerbation. For a disease as difficult to treat as IBD, however, it is usually necessary to combine several alternative approaches at once to achieve noticeable results.

Treatment Approaches

Lifestyle interventions are the first to consider. Because stress can trigger IBD, it is essential to adopt a comprehensive program of stress reduction, including relaxation techniques and regular aerobic exercise.

Another fundamental recommendation is to clean up the diet by eliminating caffeine, dairy, alcohol, fatty foods and concentrated sugars.

Several herbs can be used to provide some stabilization of the digestive tract. Generally recognized as safe, these herbal treatments seldom cause any side effects:

* Licorice -- as deglycyrrhizinated licorice, 750-1500mg three times daily between meals
* Marshmallow root -- two caps, three times a day * Triphala -- an ayurvedic herb, 2000mg three times daily

The omega-3 fatty acid rich food supplement flax oil also seems to provide some benefit when taken at a dose of one tablespoon a day.

High doses of digestive enzymes sometimes provide noticeable benefit as well. The most inexpensive and yet effective digestive aid is pancreatin USP 10x, taken at a dose of 500-1000mg three times daily before meals. It may also be worthwhile to increase stomach acidity by taking 1 tablespoon of vinegar or two pills of betaine hydrochloride with each meal.

Friendly bacteria such as acidophilus and bifidus can improve the functioning of the digestive tract by creating a generally healthier environment. These may be taken in pill or liquid form, or as yogurt (if there is no question of dairy allergy).

On the subject of food sensitivities, identifying and avoiding food allergens often (though not always) relieves symptoms of IBD. This method, however, is arduous and time-consuming, and should be reserved for when other methods fail.

Similarly, acupuncture and Chinese herbal treatment may be beneficial for IBD, but they are more difficult and costly than the methods described above.

Costs

In the US, pancreatin 10x may be purchased generically through pharmacies for practically nothing. Marshmallow costs about $15 per month, friendly bacteria $10-$20, flax oil $12-$20, triphala $20 and DGL $25-$50. The combination of acupuncture and Chinese herbal treatment may exceed $200 per month.

By comparison, sulfsalazine (a drug commonly prescribed for IBD) costs $15-$30 per month in the US, depending on the necessary dose.