

June 2018
Volume 3 Issue 4

We know that diet is a major component of healing. While the Foundation has its own recommendations, questions often come up about the value of other popular diets. We will look at four of them and discuss how they fit into an MC diet plan.

We tend to concentrate on diet, but should not neglect the role of mental and emotional health in the healing process. The final article in the newsletter addresses this important point.



Autoimmune Protocol Diet (AIP)

The autoimmune protocol diet aims to remove known inflammatory foods for a period of time, generally 30 days, and then slowly reintroduce those foods to identify which of those are triggers. AIP advises to initially eliminate grains, legumes, dairy, eggs, nuts, nightshades (except sweet potatoes), alcohol, sweeteners, refined sugars, refined oils, food additives and processed foods. The protocol promotes eating quality meat (including organ meat), fish, shellfish, vegetables, fruit, high quality fats, bone broth and probiotic/fermented foods.

Although some of these suggestions can be problematic for those suffering from microscopic colitis, the diet can be modified and individualized to aide in achieving remission. For example, fermented foods can trigger a reaction for those with microscopic colitis due to high histamines. Additionally, cruciferous vegetables (such as cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, bok choy and Brussel sprouts) and leafy green can also cause digestive issues. For these reasons, one can choose to also eliminate these foods when following the AIP diet. A day of meals on the AIP diet can look like:

Breakfast: Homemade bone broth with well cooked meat and carrots

Lunch: Salmon, sweet potato and well-cooked squash noodles.

Dinner: Turkey, yucca and a baked apple

Snack: Banana

For more information about the autoimmune protocol diet, please visit <https://www.thepaleomom.com/start-here/the-autoimmune-protocol/>

Paleo Diet

The theory behind the Paleo Diet is that humans evolved over the past two and a half million years as hunter-gatherers. But in the past 10,000 years or so, as farming developed to support larger populations, diets changed radically from



mostly meat, fruit and nuts to a heavy reliance on grains and dairy. Then in the modern era, highly processed food containing lots of fats and sugars have become prevalent. These changes occurred faster than humans could adapt their genetics, resulting in many of the health problems we see today such as diabetes, obesity, and digestive problems.

The Paleo Diet tries to adapt available modern foods to mimic as much as possible the hunter-gatherer diet. This means eliminating all grains, dairy, and legumes such as soy and beans. Also, avoid refined sugar and processed foods. The emphasis is on grass-fed animals, wild caught fish, vegetables, nuts and oils from non-grain oils such as olive and grapeseed. Fruits, vegetables and nuts are important.

Many of these principles are part of our microscopic colitis diet. We have found that the most common allergens are wheat, dairy and soy (legumes). Some other aspects of the diet don't work well for us, especially at the beginning. For example, nuts, salad greens, fruit, and raw vegetables are too irritating on a healing gut. Also, each person with MC can have unique sensitivities to particular food items that need to be identified. So the Paleo Diet can be a good place to start, but usually needs to be modified for the individual.



Specific Carbohydrate Diet (SCD)

This diet is designed for people with GI disorders. The theory is that if you eliminate hard-to-digest complex carbohydrates from the diet, inflammation in the gut will be reduced and healing will take place. It is a very restrictive diet, as it eliminates almost all grains, starchy vegetables, and

sugars. The only carbohydrates and sugars come from natural food sources, such as those found in unsweetened fruit and some non-starchy vegetables.

Lactose-free dairy products, such as aged cheeses are allowed. Some legumes, such as bean, peas and peanuts are allowed, while others, such as soybeans and chickpeas are banned. Protein and fats are not impacted in this diet, although unprocessed, lean meats are suggested. Many other foods are also eliminated, if you look at the long list.

This is a very restrictive diet, that doesn't work well with MC. Lactose-free dairy is allowed, but many of us are sensitive to the protein casein found in dairy, not just the lactose. But we need calories, and most of the carbs that the SCD allows include legumes that don't work for us. The SCD also eliminates starchy vegetables like potatoes that do work for many of us. So between what the SCD allows and what doesn't work for MC, it would be hard to modify this diet for us and find enough calories.



FODMAP Diet

FODMAPs stands for Fermentable Oligosaccharides, Disaccharides, Monosaccharides, and Polyols. Diets that avoid certain foods referred to as FODMAPs are popular now as a way to treat various digestive issues.

It's claimed that FODMAPs are poorly absorbed by some people and because of that they can cause digestive problems. That may well be true, but when I look at a list of the foods that are considered to be high-FODMAP foods, I see a list of high-histamine foods. And when I look at a list of recommended foods (because they are considered to be low-FODMAP foods), I see a list of low-histamine foods. Now not everyone agrees on exactly which foods should be classified as high-histamine and low-histamine. And likewise, there is considerable disagreement between lists that rate the FODMAP status of various foods.

High-FODMAP foods are mostly high-fiber and high-histamine foods. While it's true that not every high-FODMAP food is also a high-histamine food, the FODMAP diet is irrelevant for MC patients who are using diet to control their symptoms. Here's why: If someone is following the diet recommendations for controlling MC, including limiting fiber, sugar, spicy foods, and foods that cause their immune system to produce antibodies, as well as foods that are considered to be high-histamine, then they have no need to worry about high-FODMAP foods because they are already minimizing all of them. Just compare a few lists and you'll see what I mean. So the FODMAP diet is irrelevant for anyone who is already using diet to control their MC.

Magnesium and Histamine

Diets that have been proven to reduce cardiovascular disease and other health issues that can lead to increased mortality are high in magnesium content. Magnesium deficiency is very common among the general population. Magnesium deficiency can cause an increase in histamine levels and inflammation. The fact that magnesium deficiency is often associated with MC, and the tendency of a magnesium deficient state to induce a shift in the gut bacteria profile toward higher histidine-producing species could explain how gut bacteria might promote inflammation that leads to the development of, or the perpetuation of, microscopic colitis, in certain cases. Microscopic colitis, together with all other autoimmune-type diseases may be perpetuated by mast cells, possibly as much or more than lymphocytes, in some cases. This is despite the fact that the medical community generally doesn't realize that mast cells may be associated with the disease.

Mental and Emotional Aspects of Healing
by Gabes Ryan



There was interesting information from the movie Heal. It is a documentary that looks at various aspects of 'healing', with inputs from various functional doctors/practitioners.

This was not a blockbuster, and it was probably not shown or advertised at any mainstream movie theatres.

One key point that many participants talked about was that the current health system is geared towards "acute care" for major injury, major organ issue, etc.

In these cases, then yes, hospital is the best place. Functional medicine cannot help a stab wound or burst appendix. Then again, the health system is not geared to support chronic illness, where time is needed to confirm the root cause, and treat the root cause.

Another key part of the movie was the research done by Kelly Turner, PhD. She authored "Radical Remission: Surviving Cancer Against All Odds". Over the past decade she did research in 10 different countries and analyzed over 1500 cases of radical remission of cancer. There were over 75 different aspects that the patients tried, but there were 9 key things that most implemented:

- Radically change diet
- Take control of health
- Follow your intuition
- Herbs/supplements
- Release suppressed emotions
- Increase positive emotions
- Embrace social support
- Deepen spiritual connection
- Have strong reason for living

Seven of the nine are about the mental /emotional aspects of healing. I have spent the last 8-10 years on a wellness journey, not just from MC but from other health issues. I have found during that time that the people who do get well, optimize their wellness by doing the mental /emotional work of healing. It's not just about the right eating plan and the right supplements.

