

Your Monthly Update

Dear Colleague

Welcome to the May 2009 newsletter from Pure Bio Ltd.

Did you know:

Sea Buckthorn berries are a rich source of omega 7 PUFAs, as well as containing omegas 3, 6 and 9. They also contain the antioxidants tocopherols, tocotrienols, carotenoids and vitamin C. Omega 7 fatty acids promote tissue regeneration and have an anti-inflammatory effect in the skin and mucosa.

The chosen topic for this month is:

Endometriosis

Protocol Summary

Ranking	Nutritional Supplements	Botanical Medicine
Secondary	Vitamin C and vitamin E (in combination)	
Other	Fish oil	Vitex
<p>Primary – Reliable and relatively consistent scientific data showing a substantial health benefit.</p> <p>Secondary – Contradictory, insufficient, or preliminary studies suggesting a health benefit or minimal health benefit.</p> <p>Other – An herb is primarily supported by traditional use, or the herb or supplement has little scientific support and/or minimal health benefit.</p>		

Symptoms

Endometriosis is a common chronic inflammatory illness of the reproductive system, affecting women of all ages. Pelvic pain, especially menstrual pain or pain during ovulation, is the most universal sign of this illness, although the character and timing of the pain can be very variable. While some women may be completely asymptomatic, others feel pain that ranges from mild to excruciating and disabling. Sharp pains felt during intercourse and bowel movements are other possible symptoms. Some women experience infertility. Heavy periods can occur with endometriosis.

Causes

Endometriosis occurs when small pockets of the uterine lining grow outside of the uterus in the pelvic area, for instance on the pelvic floor, bowels, bladder or ovaries. Less commonly, it can also extend into the cervix. The pain is believed to be due to the inflammation and irritation that the displaced tissue causes. Scars can form as a result of chronic inflammation, and this may lead to infertility. What triggers the displacement of uterine tissue is unclear; however evidence suggests a weak immune system. Another theory is that menstrual blood backing up through the fallopian tubes causes these pockets to develop.

Alternative theorists suggest that endometriosis is caused by an embryonic defect in cell differentiation as opposed to retrograde menstruation. Current theory states that lesions bleed monthly. A new surgical treatment for endometriosis has been developed called “near-contact” laparoscopy. Reports say that little recurrence of lesions following removal of both typical and atypical lesions.

This alternative theory claims that endometriosis is a positionally static disease while conventional gynecologists claim it is a progressive disease. Historically it was believed that endometriosis affects primarily women over thirty; however, it is now apparent that it can affect all females regardless of age. The new theory believes that endometriosis is independent of menstruation, is associated with multicoloured lesions and is not an actual cause of infertility. It is maintained that removal of typical and atypical lesions by the newly-developed special surgical techniques provides complete relief for seventy-five percent of cases.

Without intervention, endometriosis ceases almost entirely after menopause. Retrograde menstruation and implantation is still the most accepted theory on the cause of the disorder. Although retrograde menstruation occurs in most women, the actual development of endometriosis is dependent on many other factors including the health of the immune system which, in turn, is dependent on nutritional status.

The most obvious symptom of endometriosis is painful menstrual periods. However, fifteen to twenty percent of sufferers report no pain or discomfort. Their endometriosis may be associated with infertility or a pelvic mass.

Lifestyle Modification

Unrefined, cold-pressed seed and nut oils, e.g. flax seed oil, sunflower oil or walnut oil, contain essential fatty acids which the body uses to manufacture anti-inflammatory prostaglandins. Use these oils daily on salads or in sauces to help inhibit the body’s production of inflammatory substances and to correct the prostaglandin imbalance which often accompanies endometriosis. Seafoods and sea vegetables should be included in the diet. They provide iodine, a deficiency of which can trigger the development of endometriosis. It is safe to say that optimizing the iodine in one’s diet is desirable. Good food sources of iodine include kelp, dulse, Swiss chard, turnip greens, watercress, pineapples, pears, artichokes, citrus fruits, egg yolks, olives and seafoods. The oil of fatty fish such as salmon or mackerel provides eicosapentanoic acid (EPA), which is used by the body to manufacture anti-inflammatory prostaglandins.

It is important to avoid animal meat and dairy products, since the excess oestrogen they contain causes a susceptibility to endometriosis. Also, avoid chocolate, coffee, salt, sugar, fried foods and processed foods. These foods rob the body of essential nutrients and aggravate the symptoms of endometriosis.

Preliminary research suggests that women who consume more than 5 grams of caffeine per month (about 1.5 cups of coffee a day) are more likely to have endometriosis. No study has investigated whether avoiding caffeine improves the symptoms of endometriosis.

Preliminary studies suggest that women who exercise two to four hours per week have less risk of developing endometriosis. However, the benefit seems to be limited to those women who participate in vigorous exercise, such as jogging or other activities that raise the heart rate. Whether exercise will reduce the symptoms of existing endometriosis is unknown.

Nutritional Supplement Treatment Options

[Iodine](#) - Epidemiological studies show that a low iodine intake may produce a state of increased pituitary gonadotrophic activity which may lead to the development of endometriosis as well as endocrine disorders such as hypothyroidism. It is also known that strenuous exercise decreases the risk for endometriosis. If the diet available is poor in iodine, supplementation with sea kelp or iodine capsules (preferably in the form of potassium iodide) at a dosage of up to 250mcg daily is a good alternative. *Signs of excessive iodine supplementation may include acne and inflammation of the thyroid gland (thyroiditis).*

In a study of women with pelvic pain presumed to be due to endometriosis, supplementation with [vitamin E](#) (1,200 IU per day) and [vitamin C](#) (1,000 mg per day) for two months resulted in an improvement of pain in 43% of women, whereas none of the women receiving a placebo reported any relief from pain.

Other studies have reported moderate imbalances in prostaglandin levels in women who suffer from endometriosis. It is known that supplementation of [omega-3](#) and / or [omega-6](#) oils (according to individual need) can inhibit the action of pro-inflammatory chemicals in the body and optimize prostaglandin hormone levels.

Essential fatty acid therapy should be complemented by [vitamin E](#), B vitamins, calcium and magnesium (according to individual need). These and other antioxidant vitamins and minerals may be important in the prevention of adhesion formation in endometriosis. Recent studies indicate that free radicals are involved in some aspects of the disease process.

In addition, [vitamin C](#) with bioflavonoids provides cell membrane stability to keep excessive bleeding to a minimum. [Vitamins A](#) and [E](#) are likewise helpful for bleeding and hormonal balance. If heavy bleeding is a problem, [iron](#) levels should be monitored. Insufficient iron in the body can cause additional bleeding, besides causing anaemia. Vitamin C aids iron absorption.

Research indicates that the excess estrogen consumed via meat and dairy products may be contributing to the increased incidence of endometriosis. Optimizing liver

function is therefore important in assisting the body to deal with the increased toxic load from food intake.

Botanical Treatment Options

Increase circulation to the pelvic area to promote drainage, discourage adhesions and facilitate the removal of inflammatory substances. Hormonal balance should be re-established with herbs and improve liver and digestive functions.

[Vitex \(Agnus castus\)](#) is recommended either alone or in combination with other herbs, such as [dandelion root](#), [prickly ash](#), and [motherwort](#), by some practitioners to treat the symptoms of endometriosis.

[Blue cohosh](#) calms spasms and pain due to blood stagnation and stimulates the uterus.

[Witch hazel](#) also stimulates the circulation of blood without causing irritation.

[Shepherd's purse](#) helps stop bleeding.

[Dong quai](#), [raspberry leaves](#) and [Siberian ginseng](#) help relieve the symptoms.

For anaemia resulting from endometriosis, take the iron-building juice of [stinging nettle](#) to help rebuild the blood.

Homeopathy

Homeopathic treatment is constitutional.

Integrative Options

Acupuncture has been reported anecdotally to help control the pain associated with some cases of endometriosis. One small, preliminary study found that auricular acupuncture (acupuncture of the ear) was as effective as hormone therapy in treating infertility due to endometriosis.

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