

## *Histamine Intolerance/Mast Cell Activation Guide*

*Ami Kapadia, MD, ABIHM*

*Kwan Yin Healing Arts Center*

### **Some Common Symptoms of Histamine Intolerance:**

- skin: eczema, hives, angioedema, pruritus, contact dermatitis, oral allergy syndrome, itching
- GI tract: bloating/distention, indigestion/GERD, N/V/C/D
- respiratory: rhinitis, allergic conjunctivitis, serous otitis media, asthma, laryngeal edema
- Nervous system: migraine, HA, hyper, fatigue, dizzy, irritable
- Tachycardia/palpitations
- other: urinary symptoms, bed wetting, muscle aches, fevers, sweats, pallor, dark circles, brain fog, fatigue, panic attacks, etc.
- many more

### **Supplements that may be helpful in dealing with Histamine Intolerance:**

- DAO enzyme (Diamine oxidase)
- Vitamin C: up to 1 gram 3x/day (can take with meals if food triggers; need vitamin C to make DAO)
- Quercetin: 1-3 grams/day (in onion, apple skin, onion soup concentrates it, etc.) can be as effective as cromolyn. Safe in kids.
- Curcumin
- Vital Nutrients BCQ (boswellia, curcumin, quercetin blend): 2 capsules 2x/day to start
- Magnesium (needed to make DAO)
- Fish oils
- B vitamins (B6, thiamin, etc.)
- Copper (needed to make DAO; although I rarely find low copper levels in patients)
- Antronex by standard process
- Lactobacillus plantarum (Donna Gates starter has this species)
- Other probiotic strains may be helpful

### **Medications that may be helpful in dealing with Histamine Intolerance:**

- Cromolyn
- Ketotifen
- Traditional Antihistamines: Claritin, Zyrtec, Allegra, etc.
- H2 blockers: Zantac, etc.

### **Diagnosis/Treatment:**

- Per expert Dr. Janice Joneja: best way to diagnose is through 7-day diet history. If has symptoms and allergy testing negative, dietary history suggestive, then consider low histamine diet.
- Can respond within a few days with low histamine diet (taking out avocado, tomato, shellfish, soy, fermented foods, canned fish, etc. see diet guides below under “Additional Reading Materials”)
- If improvement but still symptomatic with diet changes, consider medications/supplements and treat predisposing factors.

### **Predisposing Factors that are Associated with or can Contribute to Histamine Intolerance:**

- History of anaphylactic type reactions (can be associated with low levels of DAO: decreasing overall levels of histamine in body *may* help severity of anaphylactic reactions)
- History of idiopathic angioedema, hives/urticaria
- Imbalances/Changes in gut flora: own microbiome/mycobiome can be contributing to histamine load (so explore gut imbalances)
- Environmental toxicity: heavy metal/mold exposure, chemicals, pesticides, etc. (decrease exposures through personal care products, environment, etc.)
- Stress

### **General Notes on Histamine/Foods:**

- Dose related problem, each have our own limit of tolerance to histamine
- Things like pollen allergy, pet allergy, etc. can add to “histamine bucket”
- High histamine diet adds to bucket
- Fish don’t have high histamine but if not frozen immediately after caught and gutted: bacteria start to breakdown protein of fish from histadine to histamine
- Shellfish are not gutted so bacteria convert histadine to histamine
- Anything fermented or processed will contain histamine
- Fresh meat is fine

- Eggs: do not contain histamine, but egg white is a “histamine releaser”, smaller amounts in baked products, etc. seem to be tolerated fine
- Kimchi, cheese, kefir, buttermilk, yogurt; fermentation process releases histamine
- Red colored fruits/veggies generally need histamine to ripen so tend to be high histamine foods: tomatoes, cherries, etc. BUT green tomatoes tend to be fine
- Some berries high in benzoates, which can release histamine (strawberry, raspberry, cranberry). Blueberry usually OK. Mango is fine. Lemon is a problem.
- Cinnamon high in benzoate: releases histamine, as do clove, anise, nutmeg.
- Most herbs are OK, but spices depends
- Legumes: soy and red beans are problematic
- Cacao/chocolate is a problem
- Additives that release histamine: benzoates, sulfites, tartrazine
- If you lower your overall load, you will do well just avoiding higher histamine foods, don't need to avoid all. Don't need to avoid everything, just basics.
- Sometimes need to treat histamine intolerance before any other therapies are tolerated
- Freezing prevents the buildup of histamine in leftovers: may do significantly better eating only *fresh foods or frozen leftovers* (so, freeze leftovers instead of refrigerating them)

#### Podcasts/Blog casts for more Information:

- Jill Carnahan, MD: <http://www.betterhealthguy.com/episode20>
- Interviews with Dr. Janice Joneja, international expert:  
<https://healinghistamine.com/dr-janice-joneja-histamine-intolerance-interview-transcript/>  
<https://healinghistamine.com/dr-janice-joneja-histamine-intolerance-interview-pt2/>

#### Websites for more information:

- <https://healinghistamine.com/>
- <http://www.jillcarnahan.com/2016/10/31/mast-cell-activation-syndrome-mcas-when-histamine-goes-haywire/>
- <https://chriskresser.com/could-your-histamine-intolerance-really-be-mast-cell-activation-disorder/>
- [https://avivaromm.com/histamine-intolerance/?inf\\_contact\\_key=3cddad06a3d76888ae43abe699dce46b426859f86c15e93f9b6a0c54945618ce](https://avivaromm.com/histamine-intolerance/?inf_contact_key=3cddad06a3d76888ae43abe699dce46b426859f86c15e93f9b6a0c54945618ce)

- <http://www.amymyersmd.com/2016/02/everything-you-need-to-know-about-histamine-intolerance/>
- By international expert on histamine related disorders, Dr. Janice Joneja: <http://www.slideshare.net/jmjoneja/diagnosis-and-dietary-management>
- <https://selfhacked.com/2014/08/01/deal-histamine/>
- <http://mthfr.net/histamine-intolerance-mthfr-and-methylation/2015/06/11/>

#### **Additional reading materials:**

- Histamine elimination guide based on Dr. Joneja's work (link to both PDFs)  
<http://www.mastocytosis.ca/MSO%20HT%20Restricted%20Diet%20Nov2012.pdf>  
<http://www.allergynutrition.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Histamine-intolerance.pdf>
- Histamine elimination guide (link to PDF): <http://fullcircleintegratedhealth.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Histamine-Intolerance-Guide.pdf>
- Histamine elimination guide (link to PDF):  
<https://ainotes.wikispaces.com/file/view/Histamine-free+Diet.pdf>

#### **More technical reading material:**

- Dr. Afrin PDF summary guide (link to PDF):  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3069946/pdf/1756-8722-4-10.pdf>
- Dr. Theoharides, Ph.D, MD: <http://www.mastcellmaster.com/index.php>
- Histamine intolerance in pediatric digestive complaints (link to PDF):  
<http://www.grupoaran.com/mrmUpdate/lecturaPDFfromXML.asp?IdArt=4620568&TO=RVN&Eng=1>