

Five Ways to Optimize Diet for Highly Sensitive Body

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Highly Sensitive Body (HSB) describes a special population of people who have highly sensitive nervous system and easily develop neurogenic sensitivities to food and environmental factors. Neurogenic sensitivity is a type of sensitivity-related inflammatory reaction, called neurogenic inflammation, triggered by

Respiratory system	asthma, sinus congestion, ear infection, cough and hay fever symptoms
Digestive system	Heartburn, stomachache, bloating, gassy, constipation and diarrhea
Skin and connective tissue	skin rash, itchiness, eczema, urticaria (hive), muscle ache and joint pain
Circulatory system	Headaches and heart palpitation
Urinary system	Urinary tract symptoms and interstitial cystitis
Nervous system	Anxiety, depression, focus issue and autism

nerve endings' release of inflammatory substances. Overly sensitive to their surroundings, HSBs easily develop neurogenic inflammation that leads to a variety of clinical conditions:

Although neurogenic sensitivities can be desensitized and treated with various natural therapies, dietary changes are necessary to avoid developing food sensitivities in the first place. Food sensitivities for each person could be different. However, over exposure to certain food for a long period of time can definitely increase the chance to develop sensitivity to that food. Thus, properly managed dietary plan is necessary to keep sensitivity low for HSBs.

First of all, control sugar intake. According to the US Department of Commerce reports and the USDA, the US sugar consumption increase steadily from 6.3 pounds per person per year in 1822 to a maximum of 107.7 lb/person/year in 1999. The rate is still steadily increasing over time. Over consumption of sugar has great impact to our health. It is known to cause insulin resistance and further develop Type II diabetes.

Frequent intake of sugar also weakens the body's ability to balance blood sugar and causes hypoglycemia. Frequent hypoglycemia may result in mood swing, irritability, anxiety, panic attack and sleeping disorders. Over consumption of sugar may also result in yeast over growth inside the body. Mycotoxin from the yeast, *Candida albicans*, is the cause of many inflammatory symptoms including various pain symptoms, brain fog, sinus and ear inflammation, indigestion and sleeping issues. High inflammation level greatly increases neurogenic sensitivity of the body. All symptoms due to neurogenic sensitivity get worse during *Candida* outbreak in the body. Thus, to control sugar intake is the number one strategy to keep a healthy balance of the HSB.

Second, try to avoid wheat product. Wheat is the most common food in American diet. For most Americans, every single meal and snack contains foods made with wheat flour. Over exposure to wheat product causes body's immune responses that lead to not only neurogenic sensitivity but also real allergy to a special wheat protein called gluten. Celiac disease, an immune reaction to eating wheat protein gluten, is a severe autoimmune disease that causes damage to small intestine. Mayo Clinic research suggests the disease is four times more common now than 60 years ago, and affects about one in 100 people. It believes that many more cases are undiagnosed and unaccounted for.

According to Dr. William Davis in his book, *The Wheat Belly*, the wheat of today is not the same grain our forebears ground into their daily bread. It has changed dramatically in the past 50 years under the influence of agricultural scientists. Wheat gluten proteins undergo considerable structural change with hybridization. Genetic differences generated via thousands of human-engineered hybridizations

make for substantial variation in composition, appearance, and qualities important not just to chefs and food processors, but also potentially to human health.

In addition to causing immune responses, wheat product also affects blood sugar level. Wheat starch molecule consists of a long line of glucose, which is converted to blood sugar easily during digestion. Glycemic Index (GI) is a measure of glucose level increase from carbohydrate food. Foods with carbohydrates that break down quickly during digestion and release glucose rapidly into the bloodstream tend to have a high GI. Wheat products such as bread and cereal have a higher GI than table sugar, soft drink and candy bar. Frequent intake of wheat product is equal to or even worse than eating sugar frequently. Thus, reducing wheat intake is absolutely necessary to maintain a healthy balance of the HSB.

The third, watch for dairy product. Dairy product such as milk, cheese, butter, ice cream and yogurt is another common food category in typical American diet. Dairy consumption and its effects on the human body has been a subject of debate for quite a while. No matter if “**Milk helps our bones**” is a MYTH or not, dairy is known to be hyper-allergic food and promote inflammation to the body. It increases mucus production in upper respiratory system and causes sinus and ear inflammation. It also inflames the gut lining and causes digestive disturbances along the way such as bloating, constipation, diarrhea, or even long-term irritable bowel syndrome. With the way that milk is massively produced and processed in dairy farms, it is likely contaminated with high amounts of antibiotics, hormones, pesticides and genetically-modified substances. Many people with chronic sinus congestion, asthma and digestive problems benefit greatly by staying away from dairy product.

Next, keep a rotation diet. HSBs easily develop food sensitivities. When you discover food sensitivities,

you remove those foods from your diet and find foods that are “safe” to eat. Then, through convenience or comfort, you fall into a pattern of eating the safe foods over and over. Sometimes, you’ll eat some of the exact same foods every day. This pattern puts you at high risk for developing new sensitivities. After a while, you will realize that you have nothing to eat. In addition to desensitize food sensitivities and get treated with natural therapies, the best thing to do to avoid adding new sensitivities to the list is to rotate food on at least a four-day rotation. This means you want to spread food out by at least four days. Rotation diet helps to manage food sensitivity and allow the “safe” food last longer. For example, if you eat salmon on day one, you want to wait to eat salmon again until day five. This allows salmon to be completely eliminated from your system before introducing it again and therefore lowers your chance of developing sensitivity to it. Rotation diet is a good long-term strategy for HSB maintaining a healthy immune function; even you don’t have many food sensitivities.

Finally, eat a variety of food with proper combination. Keeping a rotation diet requires that you have a variety of food selections. If you only eat five foods, there is no way to manage a rotation diet. Eating a broad spectrum of food is necessary to supply healthy nutrients that the body needs to function. Each meal or snack should contain a combination of carbohydrate, protein and healthy fat. Never snack with a banana or a cookie alone because sugar alone always triggers insulin surge that may lead to hypoglycemia later on. A salad with protein such as grilled chicken or nuts will help the body balance blood sugar much longer than salad and fruit combination. If you desire an optimal health and keep sensitivity away, maintaining a healthy diet is the key.

Please visit Dr. Harry Hong’s website at www.highlysensitivebody.com for details or email to harryghong@hotmail.com for a consultation.