



# AUTOIMMUNE DISEASE IDEA KIT

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**1** Consider Changing how you eat. Everyone with an AD has an issue with the proteins in Wheat and cow's milk dairy products. When we say "wheat" we also mean rye and barley. These grains all contain the problematic proteins gluten and gliadin. Wheat actually contains 62 different proteins that cause injury to the gut. Butter tends to be ok for most people as it is 99.99% fat, with almost none of the protein. Also, know that butter is a good fat. It is the only food source of a very important nutrient for the gut, n-butyrate. Products made from cow's milk can include milk itself, cheese, yogurt, and ice cream. Also know that cow's milk can be found in many processed foods as well.



**2** Consider how you feel after starting a wheat and cow's milk dairy free nutritional eating style. If a person avoids completely the foods that are making them sick, they should feel a lot better. Thus, if wheat and cow's milk are the only foods that bother you, you will feel so much better. If you don't feel that much better after a few weeks or 2-3 months? You have other foods that are bothering you besides those 2.

**3** Consider trying to avoid other foods if you don't feel a lot better with avoiding the 2 foods that you know are problematic because of the autoimmune disease situation. 2 good options are an elimination eating program or testing for the foods that are still bothering you. An elimination "diet" involves avoiding the foods that tend to bother people in this type of situation. In trying to avoid all the foods that truly bother you, some foods will be taken out that don't actually bother you. But, that is ok. The second option is doing an IgG food sensitivity test to find out specifically which foods are bothering you. Everyone is unique in exactly which foods bother them.



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Consider that foods can bother you in a couple different ways. 2 important ways are called immediate and delayed hypersensitivity reactions. Immediate hypersensitivity reactions cause you to feel bad quickly and dramatically enough that you can figure these foods out yourself. You will actually be better than the traditional tests in figuring out these foods. The tests usually done for this type of reaction are the skin tests and blood tests run through hospital labs. Delayed hypersensitivity reactions start to occur days or even weeks after eating the offending foods. This reaction doesn't hit you dramatically like the immediate one. Instead, inflammation is produced which builds and builds over time until you have multiple health problems. You start to think, "where is all this inflammation coming from?" It is coming from foods that bother you in this delayed manner. This is when the IgG food sensitivity test can be so helpful in determining specifically which foods are causing issues in this way.



Consider optimally managing stress. Cortisol, the stress hormone, is always involved in autoimmune disease. To the body, stress is stress. Physical, emotional, biochemical, and spiritual stress are all the same to the body. Too much of any or in combination, will cause cortisol levels to rise and get stuck in a higher than ideal position. Get stuck in the "on position" or the "stress mode." This is the "flight or fight mode," the "life or death mode," or the "bear chasing me 24 hours a day, 7 days a week mode." There are many different "bears chasing us" at the same time by the time a person develops an autoimmune disease. The biggest, baddest "bear" of all will be that cortisol stuck in the "flight or fight mode." Creating calm in the body thru activities like meditation, deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, body scanning, repetitive prayer, and getting out into Nature have all been shown to create profound positive change in our bodies. By creating calm, we have gotten rid of the "life or death" situation due to the biggest, baddest bear chasing us. Now, the body can focus on healing everything.

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Consider trying to optimize sleep. During sleep is when the body heals. Turn off all electronics at least an hour before you are planning to get into bed. Do some of the calming activities we mentioned above. Only be in bed to sleep. Don't spend time in bed doing activities such as watching TV, reading, and playing on your phone. This will confuse your body into thinking that sometimes we should be awake while we are in bed. We want the body to think that the only activity that should occur while we are in bed is sleep.

Consider trying to cool down the body's core temperature to improve your sleep. In order to induce sleep and maintain sleep thru the night, the body needs to cool the temperature deep within you, your "core" by about 2 degrees fahrenheit. The body's ability to do this on it's on can get disturbed. But, we know ways to do this for our body and get the quality sleep we need in order to heal. One way is to take a warm bath just before bedtime. As you get out of the tub, notice how your skin is pink or red. This is the blood vessels near the surface opening up so your warm blood can offload some heat to the surrounding air. Notice also, the steam coming off your body. This is more heat being released into the air around you. By getting rid of some heat, your core can cool down. You can also put socks on while you are in bed. This fools the body into thinking that it is too warm and the core will try to cool down in response. If that bath you took had epsom salts in it, this will also help with sleep. Epsom salts are magnesium salts. The magnesium will be absorbed into your body through the skin. Magnesium is very calming and will help you sleep better.

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Consider seeing a functional medicine practitioner. Functional medicine is the specialty that looks for the cause of the chronic health issues that someone is having. By knowing the causes, they can be addressed so as to reverse the disease process and create health again. The body's natural default mode is to always move towards health and well-being.



If you stub your toe, it may hurt oh so bad, but you know you will not have terrible toe pain the rest of your life. You know, as you are hopping around in pain, that if you only give the body 2 minutes, all the pain will go away. The body will just naturally fix the problem. The same goes for any health issue. If you have an autoimmune disease, you know the body is trying to fix it. When it isn't fixing it on it's own, you know there has to be a good reason. Something is getting in the way so it needs to be removed in order to allow the body to heal. Or, the body is lacking something that it needs to heal. So, we just give it what it needs, what it is lacking, and the body now starts to heal. Functional medicine will find out what needs to be removed and what needs to be given to the body in order to allow the body to heal as it was designed to do in the first place.

## Who is Dr. David Bilstrom, MD



Dr. Bilstrom, MD, is the Director of the International Autoimmune Institute & Bingham Memorial Center for Functional Medicine in Blackfoot, Idaho. He works closely with experts in a number of medical specialties to evaluate, diagnose and treat autoimmune diseases.

To know more about Dr. Bilstrom visit <https://drdavidbilstrom.com/>