

We had another interesting Functional medicine Discussion Group meeting on Tuesday. The topic was preventing and reversing Alzheimer's Disease and we used the paper by Dale Bredesen and the interview on Functional Medicine Update in February 2015 as the starting point for the discussion. For those of you who have not listened to Dr. Bland interview Dr. Bredesen, group members can get a free subscription to Dr. Bland's Functional Medicine Update from now till the end of the year and that will enable you to listen to any of the older recorded discussions by sending an email to Linda Blodgett at [lindablodgett@jeffreybland.com](mailto:lindablodgett@jeffreybland.com). I highly recommend it.

I started the discussion by pointing out some interesting things mentioned by Dr. Bredesen in the interview, including

1. That the ApoE4 gene that is associated with Alzheimer's Disease risk is an important evolutionary gene and it codes for an inflammatory state. But why would evolution select for inflammation? Such an inflammatory state would be advantageous for primitive man in order to help fight off infections from eating raw meat and getting cut in struggles with animals, etc.
2. Dr. Bredesen compared Alzheimer's Disease with Osteoporosis. With osteoporosis there is a balance between osteoblast cells that are building bone and osteoclast cells that are breaking down bone. When the balance is shifted towards osteoclastic activity, bone loss occurs. Likewise, in Alzheimer's Disease there is a balance between synaptoblastic influences and synaptoclastic influences and when the balance gets tipped towards the synaptoclastic activity, neurodegeneration advances. The challenge is to shift the balance in the opposite direction.
3. Dr. Bredesen talks about the network of pathways that influence brain function and it reminded me of the cancer pathways discussed by Nalini Chilkov in her seminar on Cancer and Nutrition, in which she showed us a link to the Genentech web site with the dozens of molecular pathways and how most drugs only target one pathway and how some nutrients, like curcumin, can target 15 or 20 pathways. Likewise, Dr. Bredesen uses lifestyle and supplements to target 36 different pathways that affect neurological degeneration.

None of the attendees seemed to have had much experience with patients with Alzheimer's disease, probably because such patients usually forget to show up for their appointments (ha, ha). Suzanne Starler discussed a patient with an ALS type condition that she had been able to stabilize using lifestyle changes and Rachel West discussed using ozone therapy for ALS patients that showed some benefit. We did discuss the benefits of coconut oil for degenerative neurological disorders and many other conditions and how a number of patients do not have enough fat in their systems and how this leads to lower HDL levels. We talked about Bullet Proof Coffee and how to make ghee and why it is healthier than regular butter, since at least some of the toxins are removed through the clarification process. There was a challenge to whether toxins are really removed by Sherri Fitzgerald. We also discussed how vigorous aerobic exercise has been shown to be beneficial for regeneration of neurological tissue. Adam Banning from Metagenics rattled off several studies including one that supported the use of Huperzine A for supporting brain health.

And finally we talked about using the HCG 500 calorie diet for weight loss and Rachel explained why HCG is beneficial, though several members, including myself have some serious concerns about both about using a pre-hormone and about such low calorie diets. The topic of fasting came up, which Sherri pointed out promotes a short term increase in HGH, and intermittent fasting, including how you can simply stop eating at 7 pm and not eat until 7 am and how this constitutes a 12 hour daily fast.

We strayed quite a bit from the original topic, but that is fine with me as long as there was meaningful intellectual exchange and some new ideas were presented or challenged. **"What we need is not the will to believe but the will to find out." - Bertrand Russell**

And Metagenics once again provided some healthy food. Next month we'll be meeting on Tues Dec 15 at 6:30 to accommodate our special guest, Lise Alschuler, who is one of the country's leading experts on cancer and nutrition, will be joining us via Skype. The topic will be antioxidants and cancer and I'll be sending out a few articles and videos next week to watch before that meeting. I am currently looking for an oncologist to join us, so let me know if you know one who might be willing to attend. Looking forward to a big turnout for the next meeting.

Several group members have asked for a list of group members with their contacts. I see it as part of creating a sense of community for functional medicine practitioners on the west side so that we can collaborate with and learn from each other and even refer to each other, since we all have our strengths and weaknesses. Anybody wishing not to have your contact info shared with group members in the future, please let me know.

The following group members were in attendance:

1. Jessica Seaton, DC [drjessica@drjessicaseaton.com](mailto:drjessica@drjessicaseaton.com)
2. Lauren Cornell, RD [laurencornellnutrition@gmail.com](mailto:laurencornellnutrition@gmail.com)
3. Olga Pope, MD [olgapope@sbcglobal.net](mailto:olgapope@sbcglobal.net)
4. Denise Weisner, LAc [denisewiesnerlac@gmail.com](mailto:denisewiesnerlac@gmail.com)
5. Roseanne Dembeck, DC [doctorroseann@gmail.com](mailto:doctorroseann@gmail.com)
6. Suzanne Starler, DC [drsuzan@starler.com](mailto:drsuzan@starler.com)
7. Sherri Fitzgerald, DC [scfdc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:scfdc@sbcglobal.net)
8. Dorothy Bernet, RD [dorothy@healthy4lifenuitrition.com](mailto:dorothy@healthy4lifenuitrition.com)
9. Tamara Tiftt, LAc [tamaratiftt@gmail.com](mailto:tamaratiftt@gmail.com)
10. Rachel West, DO [rachelwest14@hotmail.com](mailto:rachelwest14@hotmail.com)
11. Tracy Garrigan, CHHC [tracygarrigan@bonhealth.us](mailto:tracygarrigan@bonhealth.us)

The following are group members who have attended previous discussion groups:

1. Adam Toulon, DC [drtoulon@gmail.com](mailto:drtoulon@gmail.com)
2. Jeffrey James, DC [jeffreyjamesdc@gmail.com](mailto:jeffreyjamesdc@gmail.com)
3. Jeanette Ryan, DC [dr.jeanetteryan@verizon.net](mailto:dr.jeanetteryan@verizon.net)
4. Eric Dahlstrom, DC, LAc [drdahlstrom@cs.com](mailto:drdahlstrom@cs.com)
5. Howard Elkin, MD [howkelkin@gmail.com](mailto:howkelkin@gmail.com)
6. Marc Wishingrad, MD [mwishing@ucla.edu](mailto:mwishing@ucla.edu)
7. Amber Hoch [sportsdiva444@gmail.com](mailto:sportsdiva444@gmail.com)

The following are functional medicine practitioners who have expressed interest in attending:

1. Cynthia Watson, MD
2. Melanie Gisler, MD
3. Karlis Ullis, MD
4. Eleanor Kong, Pharm.D
5. Susanne Bennett, DC
6. Chett Mallet, DC
7. Eric Miller, LAc
8. Joy Bozzo, ND
9. Verma Nandini
10. Phillip Goglia, PHD
11. Steven Benedict, LAc
12. Karima Hirani, MD
13. Howard Liebowitz, MD
14. Andrea Tjmes, nutritionist

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"Those who think they have no time for healthy eating will sooner or later have to find time for illness."

- modified from : Edward Stanley (1826-1893) from The Conduct of Life

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