

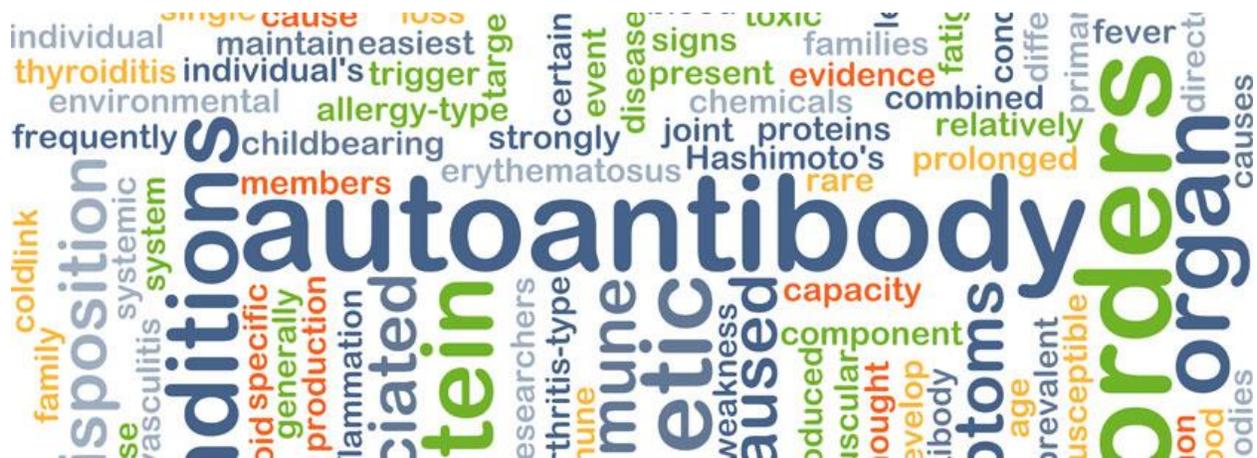
IG Living Blog



Dedicated to bringing comprehensive healthcare information, immune globulin information and community and reimbursement news.

Autoimmune Disease: The Importance of Knowing Your Family Health History

By Dr. Chad Larson



The information you gain when you look into your family's past is vast and full of pertinent knowledge. You might learn the geographic location of your ancestors and what social or political positions they held. More importantly, you can also find out crucial information regarding the health history of your family members. There are over 23.5 million Americans who suffer from **autoimmune diseases**, which are caused by an abnormal immune system response. This abnormal response produces antibodies that attack healthy cells and tissues, which leads to the deterioration and possible destruction of those tissues. Though **genetics**

are not the sole cause of autoimmune diseases, like multiple sclerosis or rheumatoid arthritis, your likelihood of developing an autoimmune disorder increases if your family members have suffered from conditions like these.

With this information in mind, having knowledge of your family history is essential for not only your own health, but your children's health as well. To get started, begin documenting the health of your immediate family and branch out from there. Be sure to include your grandparents from both sides. If any of your family members are deceased, know the cause and age of their death. Also include aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews. You will need to record things like current age, medical conditions and age at the time of the diagnoses. Compile this information, and make sure your family members have it as well. Most importantly, share your family's health history with your healthcare providers on a regular basis.

If any of your family members has been diagnosed with an autoimmune disease, you need to take action. Get to know the symptoms of the disease, and pay close attention to your own health, making note of any changes in how you feel. Understand the risk factors and other possible disease triggers. Talk to your doctor about what, if anything, you can do to mitigate the risk of getting the disease. You might also consider asking your doctor about any related tests to consider. For instance, if one of your family members is diagnosed with celiac disease and you are suffering the same symptoms, it might be worth considering getting tested for gluten reactivity. If you show symptoms, talk to your doctor about additional tests to consider. Early intervention is key because you want to have the opportunity to address the changes necessary prior to the tissue destruction and deterioration that result from autoimmune diseases.

When it comes to your health, knowledge is power. By asking yourself, 'Do I have my family's health history?', you will empower yourself and your family to possibly prevent autoimmune diseases and other illnesses. Sharing this

knowledge with a medical professional will allow you to collaborate on ensuring a healthy future for you and your loved ones.

By Dr. Chad Larson, NMD, DC, CCN, CSCS, holds a doctor of naturopathic medicine degree from Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine and a doctor of chiropractic degree from Southern California University of Health Sciences. He is a certified clinical nutritionist and a certified strength and conditioning specialist. He particularly pursues advanced developments in the fields of endocrinology, orthopedics, sports medicine and environmentally-induced chronic disease. He is also an advisor and consultant on a clinical consulting team for Cyrex Laboratories.