

# A Multitude of *Critical Health Issues*



Dr. Yanuck counsels a patient about the path to health.

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**H**ealth problems sometimes linger and become chronic because of a failure to address and correct a problem with one or more of the body's fundamental biological functions. There are several basic functions that must be working correctly for your body to recover from a health problem, restore balance, and achieve resolution. Here are a few of the most important ones.

**Delivering oxygen to your brain:** If your hands and feet are cold, you may have poor peripheral circulation and trouble delivering oxygen to your extremities. Your head is one of your extremities, so cold hands and feet may reflect difficulty with oxygen delivery to your brain. Or, if you are anemic, you may also not be delivering enough oxygen to your brain. Your brain cells are the most oxygen-dependent cells in your body. Without enough oxygen, your brain cells may not function as well, leading to brain fog, depression, balance problems, and other problems.

**Delivering glucose to your brain:** Your brain cells also depend on glucose (blood sugar) for fuel. If your blood sugar gets too low, your brain cells are out of gas. If you feel shaky, irritable, or light headed when you haven't eaten in a while, your blood sugar may be getting too low and your brain may be running out of gas. If you feel tired after you eat, your blood sugar may also be poorly regulated.

**Immune system balance:** Your body's ability to resolve inflammation and infection depends on proper immune system balance. Chronic infections, digestive irritation, sinus problems, or chronic respiratory problems may indicate that the immune system is having trouble returning the body to a state of balance. When the immune system is functioning normally, problems that come up are met with a robust immune response that then shifts into a resolution phase. If the immune response is not balanced, this resolution phase cannot occur, and the problem becomes chronic.

**Liver detoxification:** Failure to clear toxins from the

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body results in hormonal imbalance, increased inflammation, impaired energy production, and a host of other disruptions of function. Your liver's ability to maintain the detox process depends on several vitamins, amino acids and other substances. Individual genetic differences also create different patterns of strengths and weaknesses that determine how effectively each person's liver can clear specific kinds of toxins.

**Neurotransmitter synthesis:** Your brain needs to make neurotransmitters, the tiny chemicals that your brain cells use to communicate with each other. Differences in the ability to make these chemicals can lead to problems with mood, clarity of thought, motivation, and other brain functions.

**Digestion:** Your digestive tract must deal with the food you toss down into it. To do so, you make stomach acid, digestive enzymes, and bile; you select what you want to absorb; and your immune system attacks any microbes that aren't supposed to be present. This enormously complex process is how we derive both caloric and nutritional benefits from food. Imbalances in gut flora (too many unfavorable microbes), a lack of stomach acid, bile, or digestive enzymes, or a lack of proper digestive transit timing (diarrhea or

constipation) can impair the proper function of the digestive tract, increasing toxicity and inflammation.

Imbalances in these core biological functions can combine, creating problems that can be difficult to resolve, unless you see the underlying causes and their connections. The following cases illustrate the need to keep these core biological functions in mind when working with patients whose problems have persisted despite attempts to resolve them.

## **HYPOGLYCEMIA, FATIGUE, AND INSOMNIA**

Brenda, a woman in her 30s, was completely exhausted, but she never slept well. She would wake multiple times each night and always felt tired in the morning. Her history revealed that she didn't like to eat breakfast, and that she would sometimes go too long without eating, until she felt shaky and irritable. This is a classic pattern of reactive hypoglycemia, in which the blood sugar imbalance leads to other problems like insomnia and the inability to sustain healthy cellular energy production.

Brenda felt tired all the time, but her sleep was too disrupted by the impact of the hypoglycemia on her endocrine system, so she never got enough rest. On top of that, Brenda's B vitamin status was too low, because she lost B vitamins in her urine, another consequence of the hypoglycemia. Without the B vitamins, her cells couldn't produce energy. Properly addressing Brenda's hypoglycemia and B vitamin deficiency restored her body's ability to make energy and achieve restful sleep.

## **CHRONIC PAIN AND ANEMIA**

Bob, a man in his 50s, presented with chronic back pain that he'd been living with for several years. Though he had been through physical therapy and other appropriate forms of care, his back never seemed to get stable. Routine lab work showed that Bob had a form of anemia caused by a lack of vitamin B12. Because Bob was a vegetarian, he wasn't getting enough B12 in his diet. The anemia meant his blood wasn't carrying enough oxygen, so his brain wasn't getting enough oxygen. For Bob, this meant that the cerebellum, the part of the brain that controls the stability of the back, wasn't functioning properly. No matter what Bob did to treat his back, his brain wasn't sending signals to his back muscles to keep his back stable. When Bob resolved his B12 anemia, his cerebellum began to get enough oxygen to function properly. When his cerebellum reestablished proper stabilization of his back, Bob's back pain went away.

Bob and Brenda both had a combination of problems affecting more than one core biological function. Each required a solution tailored to restore the function of the core biological functions that had become imbalanced; both achieved complete resolution of their problems. **h&h**

*Dr. Yanuck treats patients from all over the U.S. He uses a broad range of clinical tools to help people in all stages of health and illness. He is a Fellow of the American College of Functional Neurology, and a Fellow of the International Academy of Medical Acupuncture.*

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