

BRAIN DISEASE FROM TOO MUCH...MILK??

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In early May of 2007, news came out of *Duke University* regarding a preliminary study they had done showing a possible link between too much calcium and vitamin D intake and increased risk for degenerative brain disease. The way the news was presented sounded sensational and sober, I imagine prompting many listeners to fear that measures they were taking for their health might be robbing them of it instead.

The study's authors admitted, "Since our study only looked at diet and brain lesions at one point in time, we cannot conclude that calcium or vitamin D caused the brain lesions that we found," but added that "our finding of a relationship between brain lesions and consumption of both calcium and vitamin D raises the question about a possible downside to high intakes of these nutrients."

What is not mentioned in the literature surrounding this study is how calcium and/or vitamin D might possibly impact brain health in a negative way. I will say right off the bat that I believe vitamin D has nothing to do with it, and I believe most of us need much more vitamin D than we are getting, but I'll save that for another day.

In actuality, there is a very clear scientific explanation as to how calcium contributes to brain cell death, and this is not new news at all, although it has not been publicized in mainstream media, and few are aware. So...I am going to share with you a very simplistic overview of this sobering information, and, instead of worrying about drinking too much milk, you will want to completely avoid drinking *diet soda*, any foods containing aspartame, any foods containing monosodium glutamate (MSG), or any of its disguised forms, the list of which is pretty lengthy. This might seem a daunting task, but simply remove processed foods from your cupboards and you'll be just about there!

Our brains are overwhelmed by an overabundance of certain food additives known as "excitotoxins." Food manufacturers use these additives because they are flavor enhancers; they are the reason you can't eat just one *Dorito* or why drinking *Diet Coke* becomes addictive. These flavor enhancers make you want to eat or drink more and more, which is obviously the goal of manufacturers. MSG – hidden or declared – is not only present in so-called junk foods; just read a *Campbell's Soup* label!

Neurotransmission – the firing of messaging signals from one neuron to another – relies on the careful regulation of the calcium channel blockers, special pores or channels that regulate entry of calcium into the cells. These channels play an important role in the normal functioning of neurons. When a neurotransmitter comes into contact with the receptor – or "lock" – on the neuron fiber's membrane, the calcium channel opens only for a fraction of a second, allowing only tiny amounts of calcium to enter the neuron.

The presence of excitotoxins causes the calcium channel blockers to remain open for too long, and calcium then floods into the cell, and the cell explodes! Again, this a very, very simple explanation of a very, very intricate and complex process, but, as Russell

Blaylock, M.D. says in his book *Excitotoxins: The Taste That Kills*, we are literally “exciting cells to death.”

I believe an ominous epidemic of brain disease is in the future of many based on diet. It takes a long time for brain disease to manifest, though the degenerative process has been going on for years, even decades. For example, when the first tremor of Parkinson’s disease is noted, around 80% of the cells in the substantia nigra portion of the brain have already been destroyed!

So what to do? First, completely remove the offending additives from your diet. Second, make sure you get adequate magnesium daily; using a supplement is very important. My favorite forms of magnesium are glycinate, chloride, and malate. Citrate is also good, but avoid magnesium oxide, the most common form, as it is poorly absorbed and pretty worthless. Magnesium is a natural calcium channel blocker, and it also is a potent ATP (cellular energy) booster, helping to furnish the high level of energy required while brain cells are working hard to avoid death. Interestingly, supplemental magnesium is actually more important for bone health than calcium, because magnesium is sparse in most modern diets and because it is magnesium that pulls calcium out of soft tissues and lays it down in the bones where it belongs.

I caution every single one of my clients regarding excitotoxins and provide each one with a list of additives to avoid. It is especially important that pregnant women not consume these substances, as they have been shown to readily cross the placenta and to interfere with normal brain development in the fetus. For further information, I refer you to Blaylock’s book. I have not found it in print in recent years, but you will probably be able to find a copy on www.alibris.com.

Bottom line? “If God didn’t make it, don’t eat it!”