

## *Module 6 Lesson 2*

### **Transcript**

Today we're talking all about the role of nutrition in autoimmune disease, and we're really going to get into the nitty-gritty here. Nutrition plays such a huge part in the management of autoimmune disease. Just eliminating certain foods or food groups and replacing them with something different can make a world of difference in how a client feels, and you will feel so fulfilled helping clients make some of these changes.

In today's lesson, we're going to discuss the diet recommendations I give to all my clients with autoimmune disease. We'll talk about specific foods, food groups, and nutrients I recommend to these clients, the science that support these foods for clients with autoimmune diseases, how you can help clients fit more of these foods into their diets, and what these clients need to absolutely steer clear of. Let's just get this out of the way. There's no single diet that we know of that can cure or even manage autoimmune diseases, and the client dealing with type 1 diabetes may have a very different diet than the client who's looking to calm a psoriasis flareup.

Obviously, you'll crack different recommendations for the celiac client than the Crohn's client, and I don't need to go into more elaborate detail to make this point here, but I think you get it. So there are a few things that I do recommend to all of my autoimmune-struggling clients and I want to take a minute to share them with you. I'll run through the list now and then I'll go back through with more details. The nutrients and foods I absolutely recommend for clients with autoimmune diseases are Omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin D, turmeric, cinnamon, garlic, fermented foods, green tea, and sulphur-rich foods.

All right, now let's go back and chat a little bit about the why's behind these recommendations. You may not be surprised that I'm starting off with Omega-3 fatty acid-rich foods like salmon, chia, flax, and of course my favorite, nuts and seeds. People who are living with autoimmune diseases are living with inflammation all of the time. Omega-3s reduce inflammation, why I love Omega-3s, and help to modulate immune activity.

There have been several clinical trials showing the benefits of fish oil in autoimmune diseases including rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, psoriasis, lupus, and multiple sclerosis, and migraine headaches. This is an area that's really well studied, so Omega-3s are at the top of my recommendations list.

Vitamin D is another top recommendation. It's linked to reduced risk of rheumatoid arthritis and research shows a low vitamin D status may play a role in the etiology of autoimmune diseases such as MS, type 1 diabetes, IBD, and arthritis. Fish, like halibut, salmon, mackerel, and sardines, and then egg yolks and mushrooms are all whole food sources you can focus on.

Next up: spices. One thing I actually tell my clients to do is add in spices and/or herbs, herbs or spices, to every single meal. You can even sprinkle spices and herbs onto eggs in the morning. You can get them in everywhere. Turmeric, garlic, cinnamon, and all kinds of spices are great anti-inflammatory foods and pack in a ton of flavor, so they also make food more satisfying.

Research is strong here too, suggesting foods such as curcumin-rich turmeric can reduce inflammation in IBD, rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, and psoriasis suffers. Scientists are looking at the role of cinnamon in treating MS with promising findings, and garlic has been shown to be beneficial in managing type 1 diabetes. I could seriously spend an entire lesson or maybe even a course just talking about the benefits of spices. Now you know why I love them so much, and seriously for all of your clients, not just clients with autoimmune diseases, you should be suggesting spices all the time.

You can say that fermented foods are processed, but they're one of the few that I solidly green light when it comes to supporting the immune system and overall health. We know that foods like sauerkraut, kimchi, pickled ginger, and even beer can play a role in diversifying and supporting the gut microbiome, which can only help the gut junctions which we know are fragile in immune disease-suffering clients. As we know from our lesson on gut health, the gut is connected to every single thing happening in the body, so supporting your gut health is key in managing an autoimmune disease.

Moving on to green tea. Green tea is a no-brainer to add to a client's plan. I promote green tea pretty much to all of my clients, but especially those with autoimmune diseases. Green tea is full of EGCG, which plays a role in differentiating T-cells and strengthening the immune system. Finally, get those sulphur-rich foods into your autoimmune-struggling clients. Things like brussel sprouts, cabbage, broccoli, and cauliflower are rich in glutathione, which slows inflammation and prevents oxidative stress.

Glutathione status diminishes in people with autoimmune disease and everyone actually as they age, so these foods can play a key role in alleviating all kinds of symptoms. So I really do look to add these foods and nutrients into anyone's diet who is suffering from autoimmune diseases, but also I really work hard to pull out as many processed things from their diets as humanly possible.

I'm sure you've heard the same arguments from your clients that I have, and I get that eating a processed diet can be sometimes faster and more convenient than eating a whole foods diet.

I troubleshoot this with each client individually, as I'm sure you have done many times before. Check out the handouts attached to this lesson for some more creative ideas to help you swap processed foods for fresh whole foods for your clients. A couple of quick examples here include nuts to replace granola or a protein bar, lentil soup to replace the usual turkey sandwich on whole wheat bread, air-popped popcorn to replace the packaged pretzels, dried fruit without sugar to replace the candy jar, and a bowl of oatmeal to replace the sugary muffin.

Also remind your clients that they don't have to be perfect, they just need to keep trying to do a little bit better each day. Small changes, especially in this population, matter a lot and can make a big, big difference. Here's where you need to be super supportive.

We covered a ton of information in this lesson, so let's go back and review the key info. There's no single diet that we know of that can cure or even manage all autoimmune diseases, but there are some foods and nutrients that have lots of promising research. The foods and nutrients I always recommend for people with autoimmune diseases are Omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin D, turmeric, cinnamon, garlic, fermented foods, green tea, and sulphur-rich foods. And while you're working with clients to increase these foods in the diet, be sure to also swap out, of course, all the packaged processed foods as much as possible, which have been shown to aggravate symptoms of autoimmune disease. I'll see you in the next lesson.