

WHEAT---a grain to avoid if you want a long, healthy life

Cardiologist Dr. William Davis, MD in his recent best-selling book entitled “Wheat Belly” believes we have survived forty years of excessive carbohydrate consumption. Having indulged in carbohydrate-rich breakfast foods, lunch, dinner, and snacks, we’ve been exposed to wide fluctuations in blood sugar, increasingly severe insulin resistance, expanding abdominal fat with inflammation, all of which leads to tired, beaten up pancreases that are unable to keep up with the demand to produce insulin. Continued carbohydrate challenges have led us down the path of prediabetes, diabetes, hypertension, lipid abnormalities, arthritis, heart disease, and stroke.

Wheat contains a protein called gliadin (part of wheat gluten) which is present in all forms of wheat, from Wonder Bread to organic multigrain bread. Gliadin has the unique ability to make the intestines more permeable, by releasing a protein called zonulin from the fragile intestinal wall. Zonulins have the effect of weakening the connections between cells which line the intestines by disrupting the tight junctions. When this occurs, unwanted proteins enter the bloodstream, activating the immune system and initiating diseases such as celiac disease, thyroid disease, joint problems, and asthma [Drago, S et al (2006) Scand J Gastroenterol 41:408].

In the mid-sixties, while working at the Philadelphia Veterans Administration Hospital, Dr. Dohan decided to remove all wheat products from meals provided to schizophrenic patients. Four weeks later after wheat removal, there were remarkable improvements in all the patients, with reduced auditory hallucinations, fewer delusions, less detachment from reality. All symptoms returned when wheat was reintroduced into their diet. Dr. Dohan repeated the wheat-withdrawal two more times, with the same dramatic clinical improvement. This study was repeated at the University of Sheffield in England with similar conclusions. At Duke University, a seventy year old schizophrenic woman suffering from delusions, hallucinations, and multiple suicide attempts over 53 years, was completely healed of her disease after 8 days on a wheat-free diet [Kraft, BD (2009) Nutr Metab 6:10].

Dr. Davis describes in his book, a middle aged man who came to him for treatment of cholesterol elevation. Knowing the potentially severe side-effects of statin drugs (including dementia), the patient wanted to try other means of correcting his cholesterol profile. His LDL was 190, HDL 39, and triglycerides 173. Three months after **replacing wheat** with raw nuts, eggs, aged cheese, vegetable, free-range meats, avocados, and nutritious oils like olive oil, and coconut oil, the patient's cholesterol levels had dramatically improved, and he had lost 14 lbs and a pant's size from his belly. Making healthy eating choices (no white bread, whole wheat bread, multigrain bread, bagels, muffins, pretzels, crackers, breakfast cereals, pasta, noodles, pancake, or waffles) changed his lipid profile. There was no longer the need to take statin drugs.

Wheat is *not* just another carbohydrate, no more than nuclear fission is just another chemical reaction. Genetic modification and hybridization of the wheat plant over the past 100 years, which has given us the high-yield, created-in-a-laboratory, unable-to-survive-in-the-wild dwarf wheat has robbed this grain from all it's goodness. And what is left, has toxic consequences to human physiology.

See you in the produce aisle.

Excerpted from "Wheat Belly: Lose the Wheat, Lose the Weight and Find Your Path Back to Health" by William Davis, MD (2011).