Greetings!

This week, I want to explain how stress affects the immune system in many ways. Let me begin with a few stories on how stress caused severe pain, inflammation, and a near-death asthma attack in my own life.

In 2000, I was planning Modern Manna’s 10th Annual Health and Healing Crusade in Lodi, California. Planning an event of this size is extremely stressful. Only four of us planned the whole event that year which drew thousands of people. We scheduled he
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speakers, ordered food for thousands of meals, executed a large advertising campaign, organized 100-space exhibition hall, and equipped the two kitchens for the hungry mob. An unbelievable amount of work goes into an expo of this size. You cannot imagine the months of stress we experienced.

One morning due to the overload of stress, I found my co-worker on the floor writhing in pain. He looked like he had a large melon under his shirt, but we learned it was a swollen liver. In fact, both of us would wake up in the middle of the night soaking in in sweat and struggling to breath from anxiety attacks. On top of the stress of organizing the event, I was also writing four presentations for the four-day event. The panic attacks happened on several occasions.

Then in 2002, my secretary quit two weeks before the Crusade. This threw me into my first-ever near-death asthma attack. I could barely breathe. I woke up my wife and told her to rush me to the hospital. I was close to going into respiratory arrest, and the crawl to the car seemed like a mile. I did not think I was going to make it, and offered what I thought might be my last prayer to the Lord. When the nurse wheeled me into the emergency room, the doctors took immediate action. Thank God for crisis care! Not only was my blood oxygen very low, but an X-ray of my chest showed pneumonia as well. The doctor said: "You are lucky to be alive, for this was a very close call." I knew my guardian angel had delivered me in time.

Five days in the hospital gave me time to think. I had never had an asthma attack before. I learned the trigger was stress -- Stress Induced Asthma. The doctor prescribed two medications and told me I would have to take them for the rest of my life. I immediately started a "de-stress program" that included fine-tuning my lifestyle habits, taking supplements and herbs to relieve the stress, and a serious exercise program. I started more aerobic exercise and played racquetball five days a week. Soon I built up my lung capacity and was able to discontinue all medication.

The Stress Syndrome

In 1936, Hans Selye stumbled upon the idea of the General Adaptation Syndrome (G.A.S.) which he first wrote about in the British journal Nature. The G.A.S.,
or stress syndrome, is what Selye came to call the process under which the body confronts stress. In animal studies he discovered that animals exposed to stress demonstrated similar responses.

- First, the animals developed ulcers.
- Second, the adrenal glands became swollen.
- Third, the thymus gland and lymph nodes atrophied. The thymus gland and lymph nodes are very important parts of the immune system. They are primarily involved in fighting infection and inflammation. (Selye 1998).

In the G.A.S., Selye explained, the body passes through three universal stages of coping.

1. Alarm Reaction: The body prepares itself for “fight or flight.” No organism can sustain this condition of excitement, and a second stage of adaptation ensues.
2. The Stage of Resistance: We begin to adapt and the immune system responds with increased activity in the T- and B-cell response to invaders and antigens. Our bodies begin to work overtime, to combat emotional, physical, or disease stressors.
3. The Stage of Exhaustion: Finally, if the duration of the stress is sufficiently long, the body wears out and gives up. Even mild levels of stress can trigger an alarm reaction. Now think about continual fear, anger, bitterness, resentment, grief, unforgiveness, etc.

Alarm Reactions

Psychological factors can alter or change our immune systems. Stress can create an alarm reaction in our bodies. An alarm reaction stimulates the adrenal gland to release adrenaline and when the central nervous system is stimulated, blood sugar rises, the heart beats faster, the lungs breathe more rapidly, the eyes dilate, and blood is sent to organs such as the brain and muscles for flight or fight.

What causes an alarm condition? Here are a few possibilities: unforgiveness, resentment, retaliation, anger, hatred, guilt, shame, sorrow, loneliness, fears, grief, self-hatred, being rejected, rejecting others,
fear of rejection, jealousy, and envy. Another way of putting it is to say we suffer from constant stress rather than the occasional fight or flight response.

**Stress and Excessive Cortisol**

The adrenal cortex produces two of the most critical stress hormones, cortisol and DHEA. Cortisol is a steroid hormone, with effects very similar to Prednisone. It blocks inflammation and suppresses the immune system. DHEA balances out cortisol.

With the onset of stress, the adrenals increase cortisol by 50% and DHEA levels decrease. But with prolonged stress cortisol rises to nearly 240% of normal and DHEA drops to near zero. The elevated cortisol with its Prednisone-like effects and no DHEA to counteract it, wreaks havoc on a variety of the body organ systems. (Diagnostics, 1991)

**Detrimental Effects of Excessive Cortisol**

- Accelerated tissue breakdown (skin diseases) and aging
- Stimulates conversion of noradrenaline to adrenaline.
- Blocks the conversion of T4 thyroid hormone to the more active T3, and possible hypothyroidism.
- Suppresses antibody production and T-cell activity, thus increasing chance of infection.
- Protein breakdown increases 38% while manufacturing of protein drops 28%.
- Rheumatoid arthritis activity correlates with emotional stress.
- Heavy metal chelation is blocked.
- Elevated cortisol also suppresses natural killer cells.
- Cortisol blocks insulin and controlling blood sugar levels.
- Stimulates the conversion of DHEA to estrogen in fat cells (especially abdominal fat).
- Cortisol "fries" the delicate dendrites in the brain that are necessary for transfer of information.

**Pathophysiology: The Biological Basis for Diseases in Adults and Children**
- Coronary Artery Disease - Fear, anxiety, and stress besides lifestyle habits
- Hypertension - Fear and anxiety can be root causes.
- Stroke and aneurysms - Rage and anger; root can be bitterness.
- Asthma - Anxiety and stress; fear of abandonment and rejection. Remember my secretary abandoned me.
- Ulcers, Irritable bowel Syndrome, Ulcerative Colitis - Anxiety and stress.
- Tension Headache and Muscle Contraction Backache - Anxiety and stress.
- Autoimmune Disease - Self-rejection, self-hatred, self-bitterness. Guilt, regret, sorrow, and shame are negative emotions that are evidence of self-hatred. The body agrees with the mind and starts attacking itself. Lupus, Crohn’s, diabetes, and MS are examples.
- Anxiety, fear, and stress are synonymous. In ulcers, the fear and anxiety come first and the bacteria and viruses show up after the immune system is compromised.

A PERSONAL TESTIMONY

In 2004 for the Health Crusade, I was writing a presentation called "Can Attitude Affect Your Healing?" It seemed I was to learn beforehand that stress can cause pain and inflammation in the body, especially in the bowels. That year I had a new co-worker who thought she knew more than I did, even though this was her first crusade and my tenth. She was very stubborn and nearly impossible to work with. As a result, the day before the crusade was to start, I got an excruciating pain in my abdomen that sent me to my knees. It got worse over the hours. Because I thought it might be an appendicitis attack, I called my doctor and scheduled an appointment later that afternoon just in case.

While lying on the floor, my cell phone rang and it was "little miss know-it-all." The pain became excruciating. I hung up the phone and prayed for the tenth time that day. The Lord showed me that the stress in my mind was telegraphed to my bowels and causing the inflammation and pain. I learned the true meaning of anal retention that day. The painful
episode would soon become the opening story of my next day's presentation. The Bible confirms stress and negative emotions can affect certain body organs: "Mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled, my liver is poured upon the earth, for the destruction of the daughter of my people." Lamentations 2:11.

That is all for now. Next week, I will continue with the Mind/Skin Connection called Psychodermatology. Scientists have reported studies that show our emotions, particularly stressful ones, can unleash a torrent of free radicals and stress hormones such as cortisol that not only age our skin but cause a wide range of allergic and inflammatory skin ailments.

Happy Holidays,
Danny Vierra
Modern Manna
BellaVita Lifestyle Center

View the new trailer of BellaVita the Movie.

Learn more about the 10-Day BellaVita Program

HEALTH TIP OF THE WEEK

Charlotte Gerson said: “It is much easier to prevent cancer than to cure cancer.” I totally agree. To prevent cancer, avoid animal foods and their byproducts. Avoid oils except flaxseed oil and use virgin cold-pressed olive oil sparingly. Refined oils are carcinogenic and should be avoided. Eat lots of fresh organic fruits, vegetables, beans, sprouts, and other antioxidant-rich foods daily, and drink pure water without chlorine or fluoride. Be careful of what chemicals you put on the outside of your body, for they are absorbed. Charlotte pointed to the red finger nail polish on a cancer patient and said: "Get that off, your nails breathe!" Exercise daily, cleanse the body regularly, have a great attitude, and seek the Lord daily by spending time in His Word and in prayer. Blessings in this holiday season!

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diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. For informational purposes only.

**Coming Events & Speaking Engagements**

Call 800-655-3228 for more information

**SUNDAY 5:30 PM (PST)**
AMAZING FACTS TV
Adventures in Health
Every Sunday in 2011

January 11, 18, 25, Feb. 1
Lodi Memorial Hospital
PCRM Cancer Project
Food for Life Program
209.482.1631

Fresno Central Valley SDA Church
3901 East Clinton Avenue
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 226-3901

February 6, 9, 13, 16, 2012
Learn How To Be Well Series &
Raw Food Classes, BellaVita Movie
Church of God - Seventh Day
2100 Tienda Dr.
Lodi, CA
209.334.3868

March 9-11, 2012
136 Fire Island Ave
Babylon, NY 11702
631.774.8025

March 18-27
BellaVita Lifestyle Center 10-Day Detox
Lodi, CA
209.334.3868

April 13-15, 2012
Bible Explorations
Terra Bella, CA
April 27-29
Grass Valley SDA Church

Coming Engagements and Programs:
BellaVegan School of Raw Cuisine, Lodi, CA
Food For Life Nutrition Classes - PCRM
LIFEBOAT - Life-Enhancing Support for Women
Medical Missionary Training Weekend
Health and Healing Crusade 2012
Lodi Grape Festival Grounds (Planning stages, TBA)

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Take a tour of BellaVita by clicking on the link below.
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One Final Note

I would greatly appreciate your prayers. Time is short and Jesus is coming soon. The signs are all around us.

Please help Modern Manna reach the world with the health message and the gospel. Donations can be made online at www.modernmanna or just drop me a note at danny@modernmanna.org or call 1-800-655-3228. Perhaps we can encourage one another.

God bless you,
Danny Vierra
Modern Manna

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