

The Tuesday Minute

Nutritional information.... one byte at a time

This Week's Topic

How To Evaluate Biliary Health... In Seconds.

Do you know what happens when bile becomes thick, sludgy, and sticky? What is bile? Bile is the body's emulsification mechanism to break down fats and oils. Just as soap works to break down fats, making them water soluble, bile works in a similar mechanism.

Bile consists of a mixture of bile salts, bile acids, cholesterol, bilirubin and phospholipids, mostly phosphatidylcholine. Bile salts are a major eliminative pathway for heavy metals and other toxins. For this reason alone it is critical that the biliary channels are open and free flowing.

After being made by the liver, bile is collected and concentrated by the GB to 1/5 to 1/10th of its original volume. It is then released for the emulsification of fats, fatty acids, cholesterol and other lipids which need to be digested and assimilated. Examples of this are fat-soluble vitamins like A, D, E, K, and CoQ.

These nutrients must be emulsified before they can be utilized; so if your gallbladder isn't functioning right, you're not absorbing fat soluble nutrients the way you should.

The same bile acids are usually released and reabsorbed several times for each meal because they are recycled.

Another important GB mucosa function is to recover sodium, chloride, bicarbonates and other small electrolytes necessary to keep a healthy acid/alkaline balance. In this way GB helps alkalize and maintain intestinal pH for healthy gut flora and discourages pathogenic bacteria, fungal forms like candida, and many types of amoeba and parasites from taking up residence.

If the liver and gall bladder are doing their job of making and releasing healthy bile, many of the GI problems we see today would not exist. Unfortunately the American diet is not conducive to healthy bile flow whether it is from the abuse of hydrogenated oils, excess sugar and refined carbohydrates or the reduction of fiber. The result is that bile often becomes thick and sluggish. The gallbladder becomes tender and swollen.

It's amazing to me how many people have this problem. Sugar cravings, hormonal issues, gas, bloating, inability to tolerate fatty meals, headaches, pain between the

shoulder blades or under the left shoulder or just a generalized feeling of discomfort after eating can all be attributed to biliary stasis.

Fortunately there is a simple test that I use a lot that can evaluate biliary health in seconds. This quick test is so easy you really should do it on every patient. It is called the Murphy's sign and here's how to do it.

Have the patient lie on their back with their knees bent. Slowly insert the tips of your fingers (palm side down) under the rib cage on the patient's right side approximately 3-4 inches from the zypoid process as the patient inhales. Point your fingers toward the gall bladder. Watch their facial expression; and if they wince, gasp for breath or make a face, you know the sign is positive for a swollen/unhealthy gall bladder and begin treatment.

When you do this test it is important to go slow and be sensitive to tenderness. You

will be surprised how many people have a positive Murphy's sign. If the Murphy's sign tests positive, use betaine, taurine, vitamin C and pancrealipase to thin bile and open the flow. My favorite product for this is Beta TCP. Start with 2 tablets and increase to 4 tablets with each meal over a 6 week period if they have a gall bladder.

If the gallbladder has been removed or stools are light or clay colored, use Beta Plus instead and dose at 1-3 tablets with each meal. You'll know the problem is fixed when the tenderness is gone.

The Murphy's sign test is a quick test and easy to master. If you have questions, you are welcome to contact us at 800-373-1373 or support@tuesdayminute.net. Well, thanks for reading. I'll be with you next Tuesday.