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Tackle your wheat belly

Tuesday, 15 January 2019 | Dr KK Aggarwal

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More than 37 per cent Indians have belly obesity, which is defined as abdominal circumference, greater than 80 cm in women and 90 cm in men. The reason for this is the every day consumption of wheat in diet.

Wheat is a part of staple diet, particularly in North India. Traditionally, Indians have been asked to do one wheat fast a week, extra wheat fast on the day of Ekadashi and nine-day wheat fast every three months during Navratras.

Why drop wheat

Wheat contains amylopectin A, gliadin and gluten. Amylopectin A is a chemical unique to wheat. It is a trigger of small LDL particles. When wheat is removed from the diet, these small LDL levels reduce by 90 per cent.

Gliadin is a protein, which stimulates appetite. Eating wheat increases the average person’s calorie intake by 400 calories a day. Gliadin also has opiate-like properties, which make it “addictive”.

Gluten Sensitivity

Gluten is inflammatory to the gut. Wheat eating patterns changed in the 70s and 80s, when newer techniques came to be used to increase yield, including hybridisation. It was bred to be shorter and sturdier and also to have more gliadin. Corn starch, rice starch, tapioca starch or potato starch are the four basic ingredients of gluten-free products. These dried, powdered starches increase the blood sugar even higher.

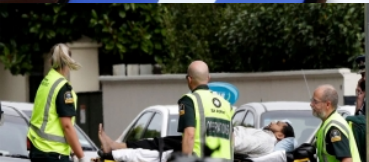
According to Dr Tom O’Bryan, an international expert on wheat and wheat-related disorders, for every one person who has intestinal manifestations of wheat sensitivity, there are eight who don’t have any Gluten intolerance (GI) symptoms. No human has the capability to breakdown wheat. But, whether wheat causes a problem for them depends on whether they have crossed the line of tolerance. The inflammatory mechanisms begin once all tolerance is lost, which trigger the immune system resulting in an autoimmune disease. Females are three times more likely to develop autoimmune celiac disease than males.

Earlier, the term gluten sensitivity was used, but now wheat sensitivity is used as wheat has several components other than gluten, which may be a problem.

All people are wheat sensitive to some degree, so wheat can be called an inflammatory diet. The defense mechanisms vary between individuals; while some may react to it, some may overcome it, until they cross the line of tolerance. If after eating wheat, you get discomfort, you should get yourself tested or try a wheat elimination diet.



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