

Gluten Update: New Study Identifies Wheat Protein Link To Chronic Health Conditions

By: [Eureka Alert!](#)



Scientists have discovered that a protein in wheat triggers the inflammation of chronic health conditions, such as multiple sclerosis, asthma and rheumatoid arthritis, and also contributes towards the development of non-celiac gluten sensitivity.

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With past studies commonly focusing on gluten and its impact on digestive health, this new research, presented at UEG Week 2016, turns the spotlight onto a different family of proteins found in wheat called amylase-trypsin inhibitors (ATIs). The study shows that the consumption of ATIs can lead to the

development of inflammation in tissues beyond the gut, including the lymph nodes, kidneys, spleen and brain. Evidence suggests that ATIs can worsen the symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, asthma, lupus and non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, as well as inflammatory bowel disease.

ATIs make up no more than 4% of wheat proteins, but can trigger powerful immune reactions in the gut that can spread to other tissues in the body. Lead researcher, Professor Detlef Schuppan from the Johannes Gutenberg University, Germany, explains, “As well as contributing to the development of bowel-related inflammatory conditions, we believe that ATIs can promote inflammation of other immune-related chronic conditions outside of the bowel. The type of gut inflammation seen in non-celiac gluten sensitivity differs from that caused by celiac disease, and we do not believe that this is triggered by gluten proteins. Instead, we demonstrated that ATIs from wheat, that are also contaminating commercial gluten, activate specific types of immune cells in the gut and other tissues, thereby potentially worsening the symptoms of pre-existing inflammatory illnesses”.

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Clinical studies are now due to commence to explore the role that ATIs play on chronic health conditions in more detail. “We are hoping that this research can lead us towards being able to recommend an ATI-free diet to help treat a variety of potentially serious immunological disorders” adds Professor Schuppan.

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