

How Dr. Michael Olson became a gluten practitioner

By Dr. Michael J. Olson, River of Life Wellness

About the only experience that I had as it relates to gluten in the first 32 years of my chiropractic practice was studying about celiac disease in college back in the early 1970s. In 2010, my wife was diagnosed with celiac disease. Fortunately for both my wife and me, she took her diagnosis seriously and became a model patient for living the gluten-free lifestyle. As for me, I just did not want to believe that there wasn't the opportunity for her to "cheat" and eat a little bit of gluten every now and then.

Learning how to eat a gluten-free lifestyle had its challenges at first. Some mistakes were innocently made as gluten seems to be hidden in many things. Fortunately, since my wife's diagnosis in 2010 it seems that the world is beginning to wake up to the fact that many people are significantly adversely affected to the consumption of gluten.

To say the least, I was a reluctant participant. When I took Dr. Thomas O'Brien's seminar in 2011, reality slowly started to sink into my thick skull. I started to use Cyrex Labs on a number of my patients whom I suspected of having gluten sensitivity (thanks to the knowledge I gained from Dr. O'Brien). My treatment protocols began to change based on the results that I was getting by taking people off of gluten (stop putting gasoline on a fire) and by addressing the damage done to their small intestine's (repair the damage).

My wife, from time-to-time, would suggest to me that I should try going without eating gluten. I grew up on a dairy farm and worked and ate side-by-side with my grandfather and my father. Grandpa Oscar, father John, and son Michael ate three very large meals a day. The right hand was for your fork and the left hand was for your homemade piece of bread. Therefore, I was not about to change that eating tradition.

When I found out that Dr. Tom O'Brien offered a "certified gluten practitioner" educational program, I decided to invest the time and money into learning more about this fascinating topic. One day while I was listening to one of his training DVDs, a statement was made regarding "serum transglutaminase" and the weakening of the blood brain barrier. This caught my attention because both I and my oldest son Michael Jr. had been victims of meningitis. It was because of this I decided to order some lab work from Cyrex labs for both my son Michael and me. Both of us were positive for serum transglutaminase weaknesses. Yes, we both tested positive for gluten sensitivities (Array 3.) We both tested positive for intestinal permeability issues (Array 2.) We both had positive findings as it relates to cross-reactive foods (Array 4.)

Although, I was looking at all these positive findings as it relates to gluten sensitivity issues, I was not yet ready to throw in the towel and stop eating gluten. At the end of May 2012, Cyrex Labs introduced Array 5. In simple terms, this test panel checks for the presence of autoimmune antibodies as it relates to multiple organs in our bodies. Out of the 25 tests that were run in this group, I had 12 positive findings. That's right, my body is fighting itself as it relates to such mundane organs as my brain and central nervous system, my gastrointestinal tract, my heart and cardiovascular system, my endocrine system, my musculoskeletal system, and my adrenal glands. After I pulled my jaw up off the floor and recomposed myself, I made a commitment to go gluten free. Do you know what? It's not that bad. It certainly beats the myriad of conditions that I may develop if I do not correct what ails me!