One patient’s learning from eczema and asthma (autoimmune conditions) from 2011 to 2018:

Bottom line – a sensitive and over-active immune system, with mind-body interconnections, is not easily treated by today’s conventional medicine focused on reductionism and symptom management. We need more scientific research of holistic / integrative diagnostics and treatments.

Conventional treatment for eczema (paid by insurance based on scientific research) – Dermatology: topical cortisone cream like Triamcinolone for skin flare-ups and antibiotics for skin infections from over-scratching. Allergy: Zyrtec, Allegra, or other allergy medications.

Conventional treatment for asthma (paid by insurance) – inhaler to stop wheezing.

Due to family history, her eczema and asthma seemed to be linked to genetics. However, she learned that some lifestyle changes could help to prevent flare-ups. These conditions appear to be aggravated by stress, shallow/over breathing, pets, dust, exercise, and foods / spices / dairy & irregular meal timing.

See below regarding a patient’s journey with her eczema and asthma. It illustrates her allergy-irritants-bucket being full and how she dealt with it. Also see a separate fishbone diagram for her conditions.

Allergy diagnostics, which have helped her, included allergy skin prick test and IgE blood test (her insurance did not fully cover it) to detect which allergens bothered her and to what extent, so she could minimize the irritants. These tests provided her a better view of her allergies / food sensitivities than a typical food elimination diet. She found elimination diets restrictive and difficult to follow. Allergy shots to boost her tolerance for pets, temporarily worsened her symptoms during the 5-year allergy shot period, but have desensitized her to better able to live with pets.

At the bottom of this document is a list of her allergies / food sensitivities which she addressed mostly by changing her lifestyle - like food avoidance or taking digestive enzymes, doing double rinse of her laundry, wearing cotton / more loose-fitting clothes, and using hypoallergenic and gentle (low perfume or odor free) body lotions / creams / makeup. Regular stress reducing & breathing exercises (like Qi Gong / Tai Chi / Yoga / Singing) and aerobic exercises (like running and dancing) helped her with deep breathing and better circulation. Nature / meditation / spirituality philosophies / self-care also provided her inner peace, motivation, mind-body-spirit wellness.

Avoiding the highest food offenders according to IgE testing definitely helped her to avoid food allergies. Prior to 2011, she has been eating healthy with little processed foods, so too much stomach acid was not an issue for her. However, she has found HCL betaine helpful for digesting some hard-to-digest foods. In addition to food / spices avoidance, digestive enzymes with probiotics taken daily definitely helped with her digestion. Lactase specifically helped her with her dairy sensitivity.

Because of her hypo-glycemia, she has cut her sugar consumption way down (trying to eat lower glycemic index foods and also eating enough of the good fats and protein to maintain even blood sugar). She needed to eat meals regularly to avoid low blood sugar. She has learned that a daily enteric coated aspirin is good to reduce digestive inflammation. Eating a wide-variety of foods and rotation diet (not eating the same foods but waiting 4-5 days) may help.
Because of the dry weather where she lived, she found eating “good fats” and GLA / Evening Primrose to help with skin, in addition to hypo-allergenic topical moisturizers. Eating gluten free (GF) also helped to reduce bloating.

Because of her family history with colon cancer, she has learned to eat very little red meat, more vegetables, and lower fat (minimal oils in stir fry or no frying at all).

She is also getting regular cancer screening, choosing life paths with lower stress, increasing exercises, eating higher fiber (like oatmeal, prunes, high fiber GF breads, and monitoring her hormones regularly).

With stress, she tended to carry a lot more muscular tension. Other vitamins and supplements that appear to be helpful for her autoimmune and neuro-muscular issues include: vitamin D3 and calcium / magnesium / zinc, vitamin B complex, and other anti-oxidants like curcumin and NAC.

Chiropractors and massage therapists have helped her with her scoliosis / jaw / neuro-muscular issues and circulation. Proper ergonomics was huge for her neuro-muscular well-being. Drinking plenty of fluids with electrolytes helped with the proper functioning of her muscles, and prevented mild dehydration. Because of her TMJ, she has found mindfulness, jaw / swallowing exercises helpful. She has also learned that nasal breathing is preferred over mouth breathing for minimizing bacteria from entering the body.

Coconut oil pulling and vitamin C – taken early when she first felt colds coming on have helped her fight off sore throat. Nasal spray (like XLEAR) helped her to prevent nasal infections / runny nose if applied early. Eye drops (without preservative help) and proper corrective lens prescriptions helped with her dry eyes.

She has found that going away on vacation, over 7-10 days, has helped to improve her skin and digestion, probably because she is away from pets, dust, and mental stress. She could then breathe more deeply with lowered stress.

From IgE blood testing, below is a list of her allergies / sensitivities (pets being the highest offender) from 2011. Most are under control today with lowered stress, eating meals regularly / controlling sugar consumption / maintaining blood sugar, pets / foods /spices avoidance, digestive enzymes, probiotics, and good fats. In addition to list below, she is sensitive to nickel jewelry, some restaurant unhealthy cooking oils (hydrogenated soybean?), and harsh chemicals. Sometimes she would get diarrhea from drinking cold water after a fatty / oily or spicy meal.

Cats / dogs (5 year allergy shot)
Pork
Milk
Dust
Chicken
Beef
Spices (garlic, black pepper, and spicy peppers)
Mushroom
Pinto beans