



Red Tide & Neurotoxins

Jerry Dodtill

By Dr. Eric Gordon, MD

The consumption of larger fish from tropical waters can impact the quality of our health if those fish consumed fish that grew in red tide (algal bloom) areas. The recent red tide that wreaked havoc on local abalone is an example of this. People can get sick when an algal bloom occurs in tropical waters or eastern shore estuaries.



Ciguatera is the name of one neurotoxin that Dinoflagellate (algae) produces. The neurotoxins, concentrated in the food chain, are not destroyed by heating, so cooking is no protection. Most people affected by this illness develop acute gastro-intestinal symptoms like abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting. These toxins are fat soluble and in some cases not recognized by the immune system. The toxins can recycle and affect the nervous system for years.

In 1997 Doctor Richie Shoemaker of Pocomoke, Maryland observed that a patient he treated for severe gastro-intestinal symptoms also had relief from neurological symptoms consisting of severe fatigue, headache, body pain, and brain fog. When the patient's symptoms including severe diarrhea were resolved he realized the cause of illness was a fat soluble toxin. That summer Dr. Shoemaker saw many unusual symptoms that he determined were probably related to the unusual algal blooms in the Pocomoke River.

Over the next 14 years he explored and identified causes and treatments

for these illnesses. He found multiple fungi and bacteria had developed in water damaged buildings were also producing similar neurotoxins. The symptoms produced by recycling neurotoxins have been difficult to explain and until recently challenging to provide good treatment for. Many people with these symptoms are labeled as having fibromyalgia,

chronic fatigue or multiple sclerosis. These are the lucky ones, as others are labeled as depressed or malingerers. The symptoms these toxins produce are varied but among them are dizziness, vertigo, difficulty concentrating, headache, numbness of extremities, diffuse itching, joint and muscle pains, weakness, shortness of breath, sweating, and chills. Obviously, not everyone with these symptoms has a problem with neurotoxins but this is a diagnosis that should not be excluded as new and exciting treatment options are available.

Gordon Medical Associates presents a **BENEFIT** workshop - **Biotoxin Illness: the science behind accurate diagnosis and successful treatment** - for Dr. Shoemaker's Center for Research on Biotoxin Associated Illnesses **Oct. 22- 23** at Hyatt Vineyard Creek in Santa Rosa. Scholarships available. www.gordonmedical.com

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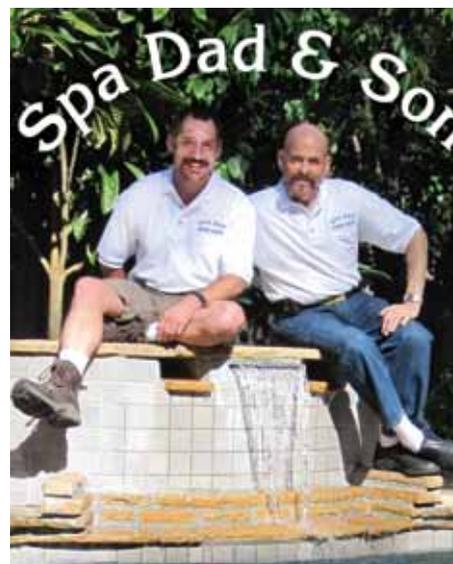
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