

Autoimmunity Explained: Cross Reactivity

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In short, this happens when the body can't tell the difference between offending foods (gluten, dairy, soy, etc.) and body parts because they have similar proteins. The immune system will attack foods that it doesn't "like". So if your body doesn't like dairy, your body will TAG dairy, so the immune system sees it as a pathogen and kill it. It may do the same to body parts that **have proteins similar to** dairy because *it doesn't know the difference*.

Longer Explanation:

When your immune system reacts to an inflammatory food – it tags it with antibodies so it can more quickly recognize it in the future – and attack it.

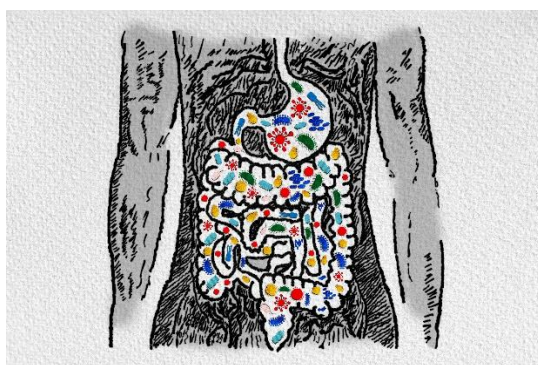
Cross-reactivity occurs when **the immune system confuses tissue in the body with food it doesn't tolerate** because they are similar in structure. As a result, it attacks and destroys the food proteins and the tissue as well.

For example, if you are sensitive to gluten, your immune system creates antibodies to gluten. These antibodies tag gluten to alert the immune system to destroy it every time you eat it – even if you ingest a tiny amount.

Gluten has protein (sequences) identical to protein in the brain, thyroid, pancreas, GI tract, joints, and other tissues in the body.

If the gluten-sensitive person continues eating gluten, eventually, the gluten antibodies may begin to tag, attach, and destroy one or more of these other tissues in the body right along with the gluten. This happens because the antibodies can't tell the difference between gluten and the body parts with similar proteins.

This is why I may have placed you onto some form of an elimination diet. For now it will calm your immune system which will be less reactive and less likely to destroy body parts. Eventually we may add back one food group at a time to see if your body can tolerate them.



Before we do that, it's very important to heal your gut which is allowing the food protein to leak into your circulation - which is often at the root of these problems.