

Endorphin-Enhancing Therapy

In chapter 4, we discussed the fact that Lyme and the TBDs may cause the body's immune system to lose its ability to regulate itself, thereby increasing the chances of an "autoimmune-like" reaction. When this happens, the result is chronic inflammation caused by the immune system itself. The solution to this problem would include getting rid of the infection and improving the regulatory ability of the immune system.

An often-effective approach for regulating the autoimmune dysfunction associated with Lyme and other TBDs is to increase your body's ability to produce endorphins. Endorphins are chemicals manufactured by your body that act as natural painkillers. Endorphins are also associated with improved mood and enhanced feelings of well-being. An additional function of endorphins is regulation of the immune system. In fact, many of the white blood cells of the body contain receptors on their surfaces for endorphins.

Therapies, therefore, that help to improve and normalize endorphins are among the most promising and exciting of all immune regulation, inflammation management, and pain control modalities. Three of the most effective therapies in this category are acupuncture, bodywork and massage, and low dose naltrexone (LDN) therapy. I have already discussed the first two modalities. Now I would like to discuss LDN, which has excellent potential to help a dysfunctional immune system to learn to regulate itself again.