

Genetic Lifehacks

Learn. Experiment. Optimize.

Hi everyone,

This week's featured article is a big revision of my article on tryptophan metabolism from several years ago. Updated information on the kynurenine pathway's connections to chronic diseases (such as long-term COVID, ME/CFS), mental disorders, and cognitive issues is included in the new article.

If you've been dealing with brain fog, or long Covid, skin problems, or mood issues, this article may be important for you.

Additionally, I've included recent research on how the kynurenine pathway links to other chronic diseases such as hidradenitis suppurativa, obesity, and gut changes. Yep - this is one biological pathway that hits on a lot of different health issues.

Wishing you well,

~ Debbie Moon

Member's Only Survey:

[What would you like me to write about next?](#)

Thanks to everyone who voted already on what I should write about next! I'll leave the survey up for another few days if anyone else wants to chime in. Currently, it looks like I'm going to write about brain fog first, and then all the rest of the topics. Plus, I have received some good "other" suggestions.

In hindsight, I probably shouldn't have allowed multiple responses on the survey -- looks like I'm going to end up writing on all the article topics this summer :-)



More interesting that you would think :-)

Tryptophan Pathways: Kynurenine, Serotonin, and Melatonin

For a lot of people, tryptophan brings to mind napping on the couch after eating a huge amount of Thanksgiving turkey. (Turns out that tryptophan in turkey is probably not making you sleepy – but the post Thanksgiving dinner nap phenomenon is definitely real at my house.)

There's a lot more to the tryptophan story than just turkey. This essential amino acid influences your mood, sleep, neurotransmitters, immune response, and more.

In this article, I'll explain how tryptophan is absorbed, converted, and utilized by the body. Your genetic variants impact how you react to tryptophan on an individual level. I'll show you how to check your genes to see if you are more likely to convert tryptophan into kynurenine, and also explain the implications of increased kynurenine metabolites.

[Read the article, view your genes...](#)

Health professional? Family health guru?

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What I've been reading:

[Facebook Is Receiving Sensitive Medical Information from Hospital Websites](#) (The Markup)

33 of the top 100 hospitals in the US had Facebook trackers installed, according to this piece by The Markup's investigative journalists. These trackers, called Meta Pixels, are sending information on patient appointment scheduling to Facebook.

From the article: "On the website of University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center, for example, clicking the "Schedule Online" button on a doctor's page prompted the Meta Pixel to send Facebook the text of the button, the doctor's name, and the search term we used to find her: "pregnancy termination."

Also: "The Markup also found the Meta Pixel installed inside the password-protected patient portals of seven health systems. On five of those systems' pages, we documented the pixel sending Facebook data about real patients who volunteered to participate in the Pixel Hunt project, a collaboration between The Markup and Mozilla Rally. ... The data sent to hospitals included the names of patients' medications, descriptions of their allergic reactions, and details about their upcoming doctor's appointments.

Most disturbing, to me, is that the hospitals have not removed the Meta Pixel tracking even after being contacted by investigators about it. I just don't understand how this doesn't violate health privacy laws.

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Summer is here, MT

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