

ANTI AGING PART 4: THE ROLE OF THE THYMUS IN HEALTH AND ANTI AGING

by Gary Null Ph.D.

The thymus gland is the central control organ for the immune system. When it is functioning properly, the thymus gland acts like a thermostat to provide the right balance of immunity. It turns up to help the body fight infection or tumor and down to prevent autoimmune disease.

The thymus gland may experience physiological changes which make it less effective, such as stress and the process of aging. This is problematic as studies reveal that an underactive thymus gland is associated with increased incidences of cancer and infections.

It is imperative then to support thymus function. Dr. Terry Beardsley explains how to do so naturally:

Zinc. Zinc has been studied as a critical mineral for immune function. Dr. Robert Good, who is considered one of the pioneers in understanding thymic function, has shown over the years, with many studies, that zinc is a critical mineral for immunity.

Thymic hormone replacement. Numerous studies have shown that the blood levels of thymic peptides decline with age. So, it's likely that you'll need some kind of replacement of that function, much like hormone replacement therapy has been shown effective in other age-related processes. Taking a thymic-derived peptide may be helpful in preventing some of these age-related declines in immune function....This is based on animal studies as well as studies in AIDS and cancer patients, where we've shown that we can induce an increase in T4 in half the population and the T4/T8 ratio, which is critically important in providing the proper balance. We have not done any specific studies on aging at this point; we can only extrapolate from our studies with other immune-deficient models that replacing these peptides on a regular basis with supplements may help prevent the decline.

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