

**Cycle 6- Hives and Shoulder
2605 - Hives and the Immune System
SCRIPT**

(1)

JOHN CHASE, MD:

Autoimmune means that there is a part of the immune system in our own body that is attacking certain parts of our own body. And in this case, oftentimes our immune system is attacking certain skin cells that contain a lot of histamine.

(2)

WILLIAM CRAWFORD, MD:

When your immune system is attacking your skin to cause the hives it's attacking a particular type of a cell called mast cell. We all have mast cells scattered all throughout our body. When your immune system attacks your mast cells the histamine gets released. When the histamine is released in your skin it causes the itchy, bumpy, welty rash that we call hives. A lot of patients ask me, "Does that mean my immune system is weak? Is my immune system down? Is that why I'm getting the hives?" Well, not really. If anything it's your immune system is being too strong. It's being too active. It's doing more than it needs to be doing, and attacking things that don't need to be attacked.

(3)

YANA SAMARASENA, MD:

We know that for chronic hives, something has triggered their immune system, be it a viral infection, be it a significant stress, to now develop these hives.

(4)

AMBER BURNETTE, MD:

It's very common that people go online and find these terrifying causes like autoimmune conditions or they worry about cancer or that something's very seriously wrong with them. But in most cases that's not the case. A trained physician or allergist will know what symptoms to worry about if the hives are worrisome in some way and need serious further evaluation. But most people's hives don't have a serious cause and with time will resolve on their own. So we focus on symptom management.

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