



EVOLUTIONARY HEALING™ I N S T I T U T E

ANS

Your Autonomic Nervous System and Your Health

Your Autonomic Nervous System can tell your doctor many things about how healthy you really are and what needs to be done to restore and improve your health.

For centuries, doctors both traditional and alternative have asked the question: is there a universal or shared understanding of the nature of disease and human suffering? Scientific discovery shows that the human Autonomic Nervous System (ANS) may provide the answer to that question. The ANS has a far greater influence on our health and happiness than anyone could have possibly imagined. Recent breakthroughs in research suggest "most illness and injuries cause or result from an imbalance between the branches of the Autonomic Nervous System."¹

Your Autonomic Nervous System is the part of your nervous system that functions to maintain and balance your life. It controls your heart, lungs, digestive system, blood pressure, immune system, temperature, hormones, sexual function, muscle tension, posture, state of mind, and most importantly the rate of healing and repair in your body.

Your Autonomic Nervous System has three branches, or parts. The two major branches are the Sympathetic branch and the Parasympathetic branch. A lesser-known branch is the Enteric Brain, or gut brain, which is located in the abdomen.

The Sympathetic branch is more in control when you are stressed, exercising, injured, angry, fearful, sick, or in "fight or flight" mode. The Parasympathetic branch is more in control when your body is healing, sleeping, digesting, coordinating immune responses, recovering after exercise, or meditating.

The Parasympathetic branch is electrically twice as fast as the Sympathetic branch, and quickly begins to counter any activation of the stress response by the Sympathetic branch.² The general action of each of the branches of the ANS is to oppose the other, working in unison to maintain homeostasis (balance).

Persistently elevated levels of tone in one or the other branch of the ANS are not healthy.³ These elevated levels eventually create dysregulation.

The Enteric Brain, or gut brain, makes dozens of chemicals, including 95% of the body's Serotonin,⁴ the anti-anxiety and anti-

depressant neurotransmitter. It also produces innate relaxants, like Valium® and Xanax® without any side effects.

The Vagus nerve is the largest nerve in the body, and part of the ANS. It wanders throughout the major organs in the abdomen. The Vagus nerve has a major influence on the ANS, connecting the Enteric Brain to the higher brain. The Vagus can positively influence Parasympathetic activity, and ANS balance.⁵ This nerve has a major affect on the immune system. Imbalances can result in various symptoms such as gastritis, chronic fatigue, irritable bowel syndrome and even autoimmune diseases. It has been discovered that the brain can control the immune system via the Vagus Nerve, i.e. the "inflammatory reflex."⁶

Studies show that the negative effects on the ANS can also be cumulative. That means every stress, trauma, illness and injury not dissipated and integrated can add up over years.⁷

Common occurrences can produce traumatic after-effects that are just as debilitating as those experienced by veterans of combat or survivors of childhood abuse. Traumatic effects are not always apparent immediately following the incidents that caused them. Symptoms remain dormant, accumulating over years or even decades. Then, during a stressful period, or as the result of another incident, they can show up without warning. There may also be no indication of the original cause. Thus, a seemingly minor event can give rise to a sudden breakdown, similar to one that might be caused by a single catastrophic event.

-Peter Levine, PhD⁸

These stored-up energies force the ANS dangerously out of balance, a state called Dysautonomia, or Autonomic Dystonia.⁹ There is significant scientific research that shows that an imbalance in your Autonomic Nervous System can result in problems anywhere in the body—^{10,11} including neck and back pain, TMJ headaches, sleep loss, post traumatic stress, high blood pressure and heart disease, anxiety and panic attacks, stomach and bowel disease, depression, sexual problems, and immune system weakness and disease.

The ANS can hold on to stress, trauma, injury and loss, keeping us stuck in what is referred to as *Survival Mode* (See the EHI hand-out on *Survival Mode*). Survival Mode sets in when your nervous system is overwhelmed by a traumatic or stressful physical injury, illness, emotional pain, or trauma of any kind. Our ANS often becomes frozen with this non-dissipated energy and acts as if the stressor is still going on. This phenomenon of imbalanced ANS is very common, but unfortunately most people treat only the symptoms and not the root cause. For example, a stressed and traumatized ANS is why a soldier's nervous system often develops post traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD), or why an infant who is deprived of human touch can go through life physically ill. An ANS imbalance may be related to why statistics show that 90% of alcoholic females have a history as victims of sexual abuse or violence as children.¹² Recent studies also suggest that ANS imbalance is the reason for the majority of back, neck, and chronic body pain in general.

ANS balance is a key to health and happiness. Every single cell in the body is affected by the Autonomic Nervous System... This is why it is important to have your ANS checked and balanced on a regular basis.

The ANS acts like a gateway of our humanness. That is, every loving act, word of compassion or sensitive touch gets downloaded into the nervous system in a positive, cell-nurturing way. Yet the opposite is also true, that humans in all their unconsciousness hurt themselves and others. This is not cell-nurturing; this process creates pain, disease, and suffering from generation to generation... Disease and illness can result from the numbing response to overwhelming pain, which we automatically impose (both physically and emotionally) in order to move ahead in life. This in turn causes the brain to lose feedback with the body, allowing disease to start up unnoticed. There is also a process called somatization and conversion in which our emotions, thoughts, feelings, and traumas internalize through the ANS into real-time physical pain and disease. This condition may be the most unrecognized diagnosis in all of medicine.^{13 14 15 16}

In conversion disorder physical symptoms that are caused by psychological conflict are unconsciously converted to resemble that of a neurological disorder.

-Merck Manual, Home Edition

If you are not balancing the ANS you may be burning the ANS out by creating what is called *Dysregulation*.¹⁷ By constantly reactivating un-dissipated life stress, fear, anger and unresolved traumas, it can lead to chronic pain, depression, anxiety, or even worse, a heart that's beating 200 beats per minute on its way to a heart attack.

The good news is that finally there is a new ground-breaking way to test the ANS Heart Rate Variability and other factors with scientific equipment,¹⁸ and most importantly an effective way to balance the Autonomic Nervous System with (UHT) Unified Healing Therapy™.

Through his work, Dr. Paul Canali has discovered that humans possess an autonomic self-regulating or righting reflex. He has discovered a specific **Somatic Autonomic Balancing Reflex™ or (SABR™)**, which puts into motion a powerful systemic self-regulating system. We call this the Master System because of its systemic effects on the whole body and all its systems, from hormones to neurotransmitters. The Master System has the power to heal and change the negative implications of an imbalanced ANS (Dysregulation) such as those from Post Traumatic Stress, auto accidents and illness of all kinds.

Incredibly, the experiences of the (SABR) response not only balance the **Autonomic Nervous System** but also help develop an expanded somatic or sensory language with our bodies. This heightened state of consciousness or awareness allows for feedback and early detection of disease, before it can become problematic!

The therapeutic benefits of this approach can turn stressors and illnesses that would previously have overwhelmed our ANS into positive stimulation for growth and evolutionary development.

The normal functioning of the autonomic nervous system day and night, from heartbeat to heartbeat, plays a largely unconscious but vital role in our livelihood. It is not surprising, therefore, that autonomic abnormalities, though they are usually more difficult to recognize than a severe pain, or sensory loss or paralysis of a limb, may be even more important in impairing equality, and even jeopardizing the continuum of life.

*- National Dysautonomia Research Foundation
www.ndrf.org*

We feel that this discovery of the first true autonomic regulating or righting reflex is a milestone in human history. The results achieved through autonomic re-regulation therapy such as Unified Healing Therapy™ are unprecedented. We invite doctors, patients, therapists and researchers to join us to bring this into the world!

Further Information Sources:

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- Bruce Lipton, PhD, *The Biology of Belief*, Mountain of Love/Elite Books, 2005.
- Robert Scaer, MD, *The Body Bears the Burden, Trauma Dissociation and Disease*, The Hawthorn Medical Press, 2001.
- Robert Scaer, MD: www.traumasoma.com.
- Peter Levine PhD, *Waking the Tiger, Healing Trauma*, North Atlantic Books, 1997.
- The Foundation for Human Enrichment: www.traumahealing.com.
- Dr. Joseph LeDoux, Neuroscientist at N.Y.U., www.cns.nyu.edu/home/ledoux.

For further reading from Evolutionary Healing Institute™ see the following handouts:

- *Evolutionary Healing Institute™*
- *Somatic Fusion™*
- *Enteric Brain Technique™*
- *What is Suffering? A Message from Dr. Paul Canali*
- *Consciousness & Healing*
- *Unified Healing Therapy™*
- *Survival Mode*

Notes

- 1 The Ansar Group [Online] Available: <http://www.ans-hrv.com> 2005.
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- 4 Gershon M. *The Second Brain*, New York: Harper Collins, 1998.
- 5 Porges S., *Orienting in a defensive world: Mammalian modifications of our evolutionary heritage. A Polyvagal Theory*. Copyright 1995 Society for Psychophysiological Research.
- 6 Kevin Tracey, *Inflammatory Reflex*, *Nature*, Vol. 420, Dec. 2002.
- 7 Scaer R., *The Body Bears the Burden*, The Haworth Press Inc. 2001.
- 8 Peter Levine PhD, *Waking the Tiger*, North Atlantic Books 1997.
- 9 D.Goldstein MD PhD, D. Robertson MD, M.Esler MD, Strauss MD, G. Eisenhofer PhD, *Dysautonomias: Clinical Disorders of the Autonomic Nervous System*, 2002 American College of Physicians-American Society of Internal Medicine.
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- 11 Scaer R., *The Body Bears the Burden*, The Haworth Press Inc. 2001.
- 12 Dolores J Walker, director Cedar Springs Behavior Health System, Colorado Springs, CO.
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- 14 Scaer R. *The Body Bears the Burden*, The Haworth Press Inc. 2001.
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- 16 H.R. Eriksen and H. Ursin, *Subjective health complaints, sensitization, and sustained cognitive activation (stress)*, *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, Volume 56, Issue 4, April 2004, pp. 445-448.
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- 18 The Ansar Group [Online] Available: <http://www.ans-hrv.com> 2005.