

PGAD Perspectives

The following slides are
opinions and suggestions
offered on the basis of current medical research, in
combination with personal observation and experience.
'Sherlock'

PGAD: A multifactorial condition

PGAD symptoms can arrive in your life from different directions.

- Purely anatomical problems
- Purely neuro-hormonal reasons
- A combination of both



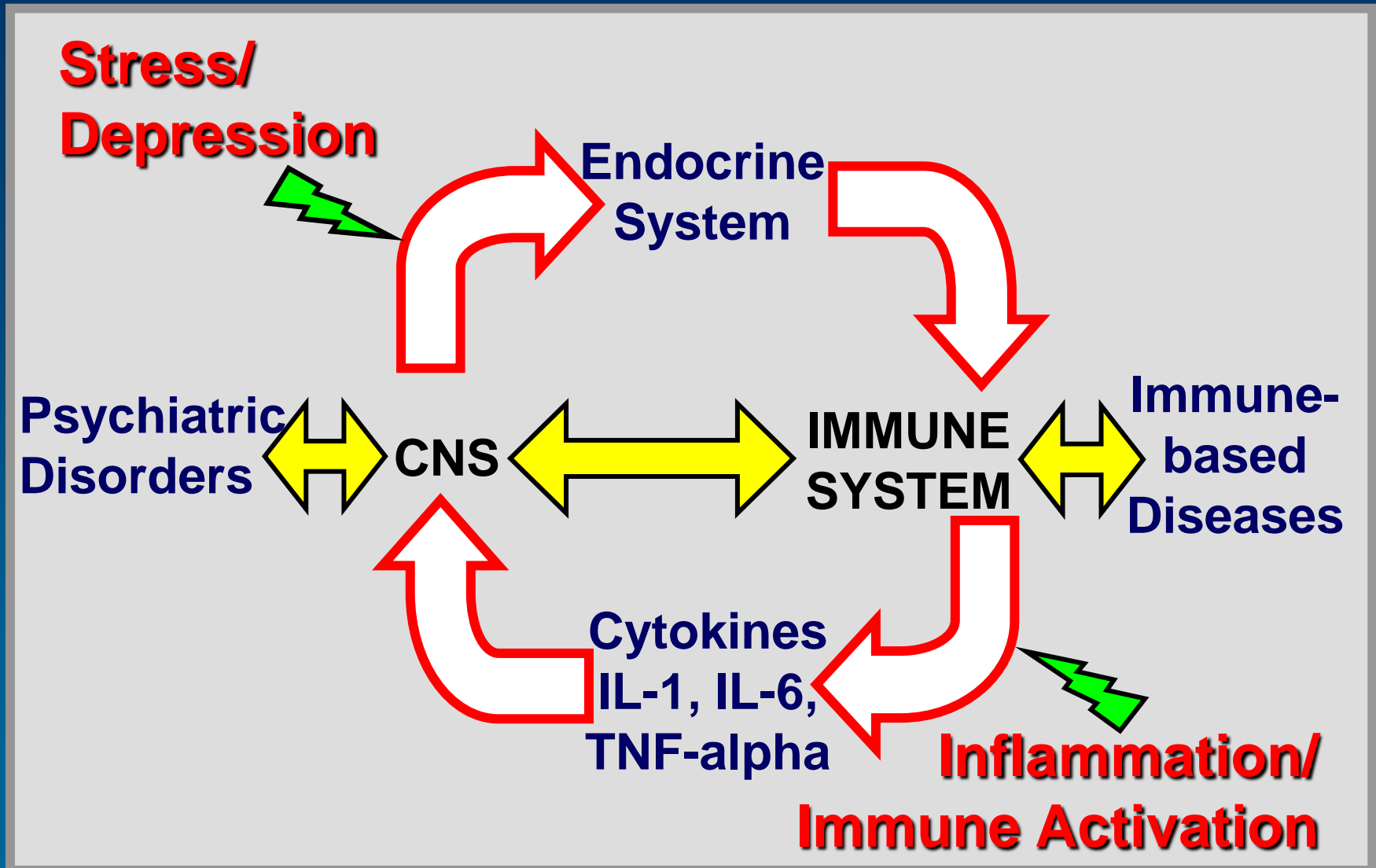
PGAD: A multifactorial condition

- **The three factors that appear to combine in different proportions for each person with PGAD are:**
 - **physical and emotional stress,**
 - **the body's inflammatory response**
 - **various aspects of pelvic tension.**

Stress changes us!

- Research shows that stress (and stress-induced depression) can affect the level of inflammation in your body.

Stress-induced upregulation of inflammation

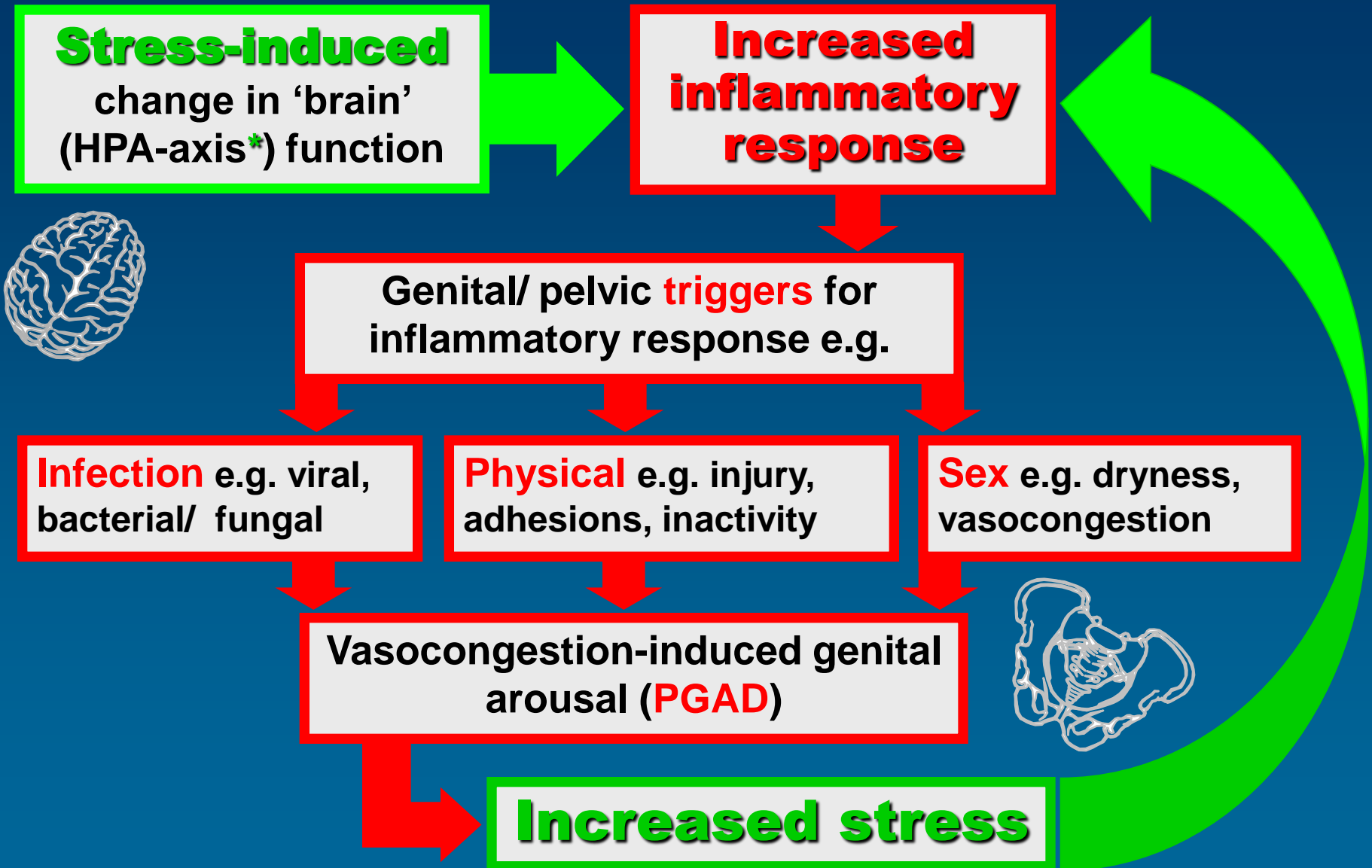


Re-drawn from: Miller A.H., "Cytokines Sing the Blues: Inflammation and the Pathogenesis of Depression" New York Academy of Sciences eBriefing 2007

PGAD: A product of stress-upregulated inflammation?

- This change of inflammation 'behaviour' may lead to vasocongestion in the genital area and produce PGAD symptoms.

Possible etiology of PGAD



* Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Adrenal Axis

The Way Out: Good stress management

- **Managing *emotional stress* via:**
 - Meditation and relaxation
 - Psychotherapy/ Lifestyle Counselling
 - Regular Exercise
- **Managing *physical stress* via:**
 - Quality Sleep
 - Balanced Diet
 - Proper treatment of physical disorders e.g.
 - **Inflammatory conditions e.g. Irritable Bowel Syndrome**
 - **Type 2 Diabetes**
 - **Sleep Apnea**

Breaking up the home for inflammation

Localised massage:

- Massage around the path of the pudendal nerve.
- Use fingers or knuckles to try and get in as deep as possible to move the tissues around.
- Not very glamorous but **very** effective!!



Stretch exercises



NOTE: The best stretches are the ones that work for you!!!

Undoing pelvic vasocongestion

- Initially, I spent about 10 mins every 2-3 hours during my day doing the exercises and massage.
- **The improvement was gradual.**
 - At first, stretching and massaging seemed to *aggravate* my PGAD symptoms. But, day by day, PGAD seemed to lessen.
 - After two weeks I felt a *definite* improvement but it took me 6 months before I was *convinced* I had broken free from PGAD.
- I still do a little local massage each night and go to an exercise class 3-4 times per week

Reducing Inflammation: L-Arginine

A number of women have found L-Arginine to be a helpful PGAD treatment:

- L-arginine is a protein found in food.
- Taken in modest doses, it is harmless.
 - **Note:** it *may* trigger cold sores (herpes simplex) and some can feel too 'hyped-up' from taking it.
- Purchase at health food shops
- If it is going to work, it will work quite quickly - a week would be sufficient to see if it was effective.
- The amount to take is *around* 5 grams per day, broken up into 2-4 doses (Adjust up or down)
- Don't take more than necessary

Reducing Inflammation

- A number of women have found ongoing benefit from a non-prescription anti-inflammatory called InflammZyme. It is an Australian product – more information from:

<http://www.bioceuticals.com.au/documents/art-4InflammZyme-101.pdf>

(Note: InflammZyme contains proteases, which may interfere with blood-thinning medications such as Warfarin)

- Inflammatory agents create 'oxidative stress' within the body. This parallels the aging process..... so for general good health and early-aging prevention, anti-oxidants are a sensible idea.

A practical consideration

- Sex can definitely provoke PGAD, as nothing heats and swells the genitals like it!
- Orgasm only appears to provide relief from PGAD (probably via released opiates and temporary reduction in vasocongestion)
- Once triggered, an over-responsive, over-active inflammatory response *does not switch off easily*. For those with PGAD, it produces a process that re-ignites the feelings of sexual arousal.
- Unfortunately, it appears that sexual abstinence is advisable until the person with PGAD has some means of controlling symptoms.