

Emerald City Clinic

Newsletter

September 2003

Fatigue: The Number One Complaint

The number one concern of my clients is fatigue. "I feel terrible." "I have no energy." I wanted to help distinguish some of the different fatigues I observe in clinical practice. The four I would like to focus on are anemia (or poor oxygenation of the blood), thyroid issues, gastrointestinal maldigestion, and adrenal exhaustion. None of these stand alone, but are multi-faceted health concerns. To assist you in addressing these conditions, I am going to describe the symptoms of each in a simplified fashion.

The fatigue experience from anemia usually presents itself in exhaustion upon physical exertion. If you get winded climbing the stairs in your home, anemia should be considered. Thyroid exhaustion usually hits middle-aged women, but sometimes does affect men. It manifests often with hitting a wall at 9 PM at night. Other symptoms include low body temperature, cold hands/feet, gastrointestinal disorders, difficulty losing weight, PMS and headaches.

Fatigue from gastrointestinal distress results from poor absorption. If you have routine heartburn, flatulence, and you do not have at least one formed stool per day, you do not have a fully functioning gut. This could be the cause of your fatigue.

The most prevalent reason for fatigue is adrenal exhaustion. Our adrenal glands sit on top of our kidneys and have the major responsibility for maintaining our adrenaline and cortisol. These hormones are what allow us to respond rapidly to situations. They are also paramount to our "fight or flight" response. Adrenal exhaustion manifests as no energy to get out of bed, poor energy mid afternoon or just generally feeling lousy. Since most Americans live in an environment that stimulates our adrenal glands constantly, it is important to support them conscientiously on a daily basis. This is the basis for "Dr. Molly's 5 Point Health Plan":

1. **Water:** 1/3 of body weight in fluid oz/per day + 8 oz/per vice + 8 oz/per hour of exercise.
2. **Diet:** 10-15 grams of protein for breakfast. 1-2 pieces of fruit and 3-4

servings of vegetables per day.

3. **Sleep:** Interrupted Sleep? and/or Difficulty going to sleep? (Americans are sleep deprived, often by choosing not to go to bed). Sleep long enough to feel rested each day!
4. **Exercise:** 1 hour/per day.
5. **Supplements:**

A good multivitamin

Omega 3 oils (4 oz of fish OR 1 Tbs. Flax or fish oils, OR 3-4 caps of supplement),

Calcium/Magnesium supplement

Other preventative health habits: People should get physicals once per year. Fasting blood work should be done every 3-5 years in the healthy population that is from 20 – 40 years of age, every 2-3 years for those 40 –50 years of age, and annually for those over 50 years old. These tests reveal tendencies that with early intervention could address issues of fatigue. Human beings should generally be feeling like an 8 or 9 out of a scale of 1-10. If you find that you feel lower than an 8, it is time to address why. Maybe this little reminder about good health habits will inspire you to take care of yourself. Every person needs maintenance to fully enjoy the gifts we have been given.

Molly Linton, ND, LM



New Product:

Vitalzyme is an exciting new systemic enzyme supplement. Enzymes are the first line of defense against inflammation. The benefit of using systemic enzymes in fighting inflammation is that they do not disrupt the lining of the intestines, tax the kidneys, nor are they toxic to the liver as are aspirin, ibuprofen, celebrex, and viox. In fact each year 20,000 Americans die from over the counter use of these anti-inflammatory drugs and another 100,000 end up hospitalized with liver damage, kidney damage, or bleeding intestines from the side effects. Systemic enzymes are safe and free of dangerous side effects. Our initial trials have shown an immediate reduction in pain and a shorter healing period.

Third Party Reimbursement: An Experiment Gone Bad

In 1997, I was approached by Regence BlueShield to become a provider, which I did in 1998. At that time, I chose to become a provider for the benefit of my clients and my profession. I saw it as a step in the right direction for society to start to recognize alternative medicine. Looking back I also committed to myself that it was an experiment for 2 years to see if it worked for my office and the medicine. Now, 5 years later, the experiment is done and the conclusion is that it was not in the best interest of my clients or my office in the long run. For those of you on Regence, you are painfully aware of the battle we have been having over the past year. For my other clientele, I wanted to explain what has happened.

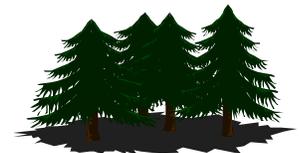
Regence audited me last summer and accused me of fraudulent billing. This is after 4 years of glowing site visitations and amicable relationships with our Regence Representative. The issues were many including, but not limited to, improper charting according to Regence, Residents treating Regence patients, use of language like “detoxification” which is limited to drug and alcohol rehab in allopathic billing, and too much time spent in education and dietary advice, etc. The bottom line is that Naturopathic Medicine, as you all know, does not fit into the allopathic medical model. The outcome is that after a year of legal battles, Regence terminated my contract. It has caused major changes in the office. Many staff have been laid off and the staff that is available is stretched to the limit. Still, we are maintaining a positive attitude and outlook!

Personally, this has been a difficult time for me because I have tried my hardest to “make insurance work” in my practice because of the financial savings to my clients. At the same time I have been committed to providing nothing less than the quality care I have always given, without diluting Naturopathic Medicine. I have discovered that it is not economically feasible for me to remain true to my medicine while making the adaptations that insurance companies require. So I will not be contracting with any other third party payer. I am returning to a strictly cash based practice. As most of my non-Regence clients know, many companies pay out of network providers, meaning my services for you may be reimbursed by these companies at some level. The other option that many of my clients are considering is purchasing catastrophic insurance and spending their savings in premiums directly. We will provide all our clients with the necessary paper-

work, called a “superbill,” to bill your company directly. We recently found out that some Regence plans have “out of network provisions”. These seem to be primarily PPO plans that have been negotiated as special plans such as the city employees plans. It is worth contacting Regence to see if your plan will pay non-contracted ND’s.

I encourage any Regence client to voice your opinion to Regence about the quality of care you have received from Naturopathic Medicine, and specifically the care received here at Emerald City Clinic. Please limit your remarks to positive comments. It will not be useful to the cause of alternative medicine to be inflammatory. If you are leaving Regence as a result of my departure from the network, please let them know that. They need to hear the value you place on Naturopathic Medicine and the quality of work that I do for you. I would recommend that you address your letters to:

Jeffrey Robertson, MD
Senior Vice President
Chief Medical Officer
Regence Blue Shield
PO Box 21267
Seattle, WA 98111



Please send us a copy of your letter. The Naturopathic community is working on a class action suit because other Naturopaths have been similarly audited and terminated.

Amidst the political and economic turmoil I am rolling with the punches. I love being a Naturopathic Physician and am committed to providing each and every one of you with quality healthcare. All I ask is that you realize that due to the reduction in staff, services that you have counted on to be smooth and efficient will take longer. The Front Desk staff really appreciates your patience and planning to allow enough time so you are not rushed when you are here for visits or to purchase supplements. They will serve you as quickly as possible. Once we are completely finished with processing insurance billing for Regence, it will take us less time to check you out and meet your requests. Thank you for your continued support.

Healthy Facts:

1. A 5% reduction in hydration (eg water) will result in a 30% reduction in energy.
2. A three hour plane flight at altitude over 25,000 feet is equivalent to a full body MRI radiation load. To counteract that it is wise to take an epsom salts bath

upon arriving at your destination. It should be a super saturated solution, which means that you should feel some of the salts on the bottom of the tub. You should remain in the tub for at least 30 minutes. **HAPPY SOAKING.** You deserve it.

3. Halloween Preparation: The consumption of refined sugar reduces an individual's white blood cell count for 4 hours. Halloween is the start of the holiday season of sugar gluttony. The "flu season" starts then as well, and people start getting sick because of their weakened immune system. My advice is to limit the holiday to a few days; buy the candy from your children (do not eat it yourself ☺), or replace sugar with activity. Make sure you are following "Dr. Molly's 5 point Health Plan" and consider giving some extra vitamin C and/or echinacea.
4. We now have available "no mercury added" DT immunizations. Mercury free tetanus will not be available anytime soon, so this is the best alternative. If you have been postponing your child's immunization until the arrival of the DT shot, please contact the office for an immunization appointment.

Administrative Issues:

Due to reduced staffing we ask a few things of our clientele to assist us to serve you better and to reduce the stress on our front desk:

1. When you are finished with your appointment please have a seat in the front office and the staff will call you up as soon as they have things ready to check you out. Please do not stand at the front desk and wait—this insures privacy for every patient.
2. Allow extra time for check out as we are down to one person at the front desk.
3. Please arrive on time for your appointment.
4. Please schedule blood draws and immunizations so that the paperwork can be properly handled. We cannot provide these services on a drop-in basis.
5. If you are coming by to pick up pharmacy items, try calling ahead for us to pull the product. We are happy to take your Visa or MasterCard information and have your order paid and ready for you when you arrive, if time permits. If you are having tinctures made up for you, we require that they be prepaid because these medicines are individualized and cannot be reshelfed.
6. You may get voice mail more often. Medically urgent messages left for us prior to our stated closing time will be responded to the day you call. We check the messages frequently and will get back to you as soon as we can. Page us if your problem is acute and you have not had a response within 15 minutes.

ADHD and Autism

Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is the most common behavior disorder in children manifested as a range of abnormal behaviors such as attention deficit or inattention, impulsivity, and hyperactivity. Autism is characterized by dysfunction in social interaction and communication and is manifested by restrictive, repetitive, and stereotypic behaviors. Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a term used collectively to describe autism, Asperger's and other autism-related disorders.

Although these are separate and distinct disorders, doctors and researchers sometimes group ADHD and ASD together because they share similar features like gastrointestinal difficulties, food allergies, and immune system challenges.

Diet is important: Many children diagnosed with ADHD/ASD benefit from a diet avoiding casein and gluten containing foods, such as dairy and some grains. Other foods of high suspicion are those with additives, preservatives, artificial flavors and colors, sulfites, salicylates, corn, and soy.

Nutrition is important: Many ADHD/ASD conditions are proving to respond to targeted nutritional supplements that address the complex nutrient deficiencies and biochemical challenges that these children face. For example: Coenzyme Q10 greatly increases energy production and is a powerful antioxidant¹. Antioxidants have proven to be useful in enhancing a child's ability to learn. The nutrient DMAE (dimethylaminoethanol) may enhance the production of an essential neurotransmitter called acetylcholine. A research study of children with learning disabilities, including hyperactivity, showed significant improvement in terms of learning and behavior in the group using DMAE². Acetyl-L-carnitine, which improves the energy production in the brain, has been shown to reduce hyperactive behavior³.

A comprehensive treatment program for the child with ADHD/ASD should include appropriate supplementation targeted at supporting brain development, immune system regulation, optimizing digestion, and detoxifying from daily exposure to toxic elements. We recently learned about a new line of supplements designed to address these needs specifically for the ADHD/ASD child. Information is available upon request about these supplements.

¹ Tomasetti M, Aleva R, Borghi B et al. In vivo supplementation with coenzyme Q10 enhances the recovery of human lymphocytes from oxidative DNA damage. *FASEB J* 2001; 10.1096/fj.00-0694fje.

² Lewis JA, Young R, Deanol and methylphenidate in minimal brain dysfunction. *Clin Pharmacol Ther* 1975; 17(5):534-540.

³ Dhitavat S, Oritz D, Shea TB, et al. Acetyl-L-carnitine protects against amyloid-beta neurotoxicity: Roles of oxidative buffering and ATP levels. *Neurochem Res* 2002; 27(6):501-505.

Heavy Metal Poisoning

Over the past few years I have become more keenly aware of the levels of toxic metals in my patients. The top three heavy metals in the Seattle area are arsenic, lead, and mercury. Our arsenic exposure is from the Tacoma smelter, no longer in operation, but having polluted our soil to the extent that we are a superfund site for arsenic! Our lead exposure comes principally from our water pipes.

I would like to address our mercury exposure in more detail. The exposures to mercury in most of our lives are from the amalgam fillings in our teeth, and from eating fish. Mercury poisoning is associated with decreased senses of touch, vision and taste, a metallic taste in the mouth, fatigue or lack of physical endurance, and increased salivation. It can progress to headaches, hypertension, irritability, immune suppression, and anemia, to name a few. I suspect it in chronic sinus infections, gynecological issues and systemic candida or resistant fungal infections. I thought I would publish some of the mercury levels found in fish for your information. This is a summary of recommendations found at www.thegreenguide.com in the archives section of the November/December 2002 newsletter.

Key: **F:** farmed **W:** wild **GC:** Gulf Coast **P:** Pacific **A:** Atlantic **GL:** Great Lakes **C/PW:** Children and Pregnant Women

“Yes” fish (Low mercury, not over-fished):

Abalone(F), Anchovies, Catfish (F), Caviar (F), Clams (F), Crab, Crawfish, Herring, Hoki, Rainbow Trout (F)

“NO” fish (for mercury): Cod (A), Salmon (GL), Halibut (A), King mackerel, Marlin, Oyster (GC), Pike, Sea bass, Shark, Shrimp, Swordfish, Tilefish, Tuna

“NO” fish (for overfishing): Chilean seabass, Flounder, Grouper, Haddock, Monk fish, Scallops, Snapper, Sole (A)

“Maybe” fish (limit to 1x/month): Blue Crab (GC, C/PW), Blue mussel (C/PW), Cod (P, C/PW), Flounder (P), Eastern oyster (C/PW), Mahi Mahi (C/PW), Mussels (F), Oysters (F), Pollock (C/PW), Salmon (P), Sole (P), Striped Bass

Testing for these poisonous metals in your system is fairly easy and reasonably priced. Urine mercury testing is \$55 and is performed on a 6 hour urine sample collection. If you are concerned about your mercury levels or think it is part of your health picture, please contact us.

Volunteers Needed: Dr. Molly Linton will be teaching clinical classes to the Bastyr Medical students this fall and winter at her office. She needs models for these classes; she is looking for children of all ages, and women for pelvic exams. If you would like to volunteer or know someone who might, please contact the office: (206) 781-2206 or email: d2rmolly@aol.com. Dr. Linton is willing to exchange a return office visit for your time or a service of equal value.

Single Mom’s Night: Are you feeling overwhelmed and need a break? I am inviting all my single moms to a free night of saunas, steam showers, jacuzzis and company. I need it myself. Wednesday night November 19th from 7 PM – 9 PM. Please contact me directly by email and let me know you are coming-- d2rmolly@aol.com. I thought we could potluck hors d’oeuvres and drinks. Bring a swim suit or go buff!

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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