

5th March 2013

To Whom It May Concern

Mine is not a cancer story – although at times I wish it had been because it would at least have been a definitive diagnosis. Mine was called an “episode” that had unexpected repercussions. The unknown can be more stressful than a specific diagnosis – it is what you do about it that is significant.

In November 2009 my right hand started to swell and with it significant pain. I have a high pain threshold; however this was almost unbearable. I took myself off to emergency and was given morphine and intravenous antibiotics for suspected cellulitis then sent home. By the next day the pain and swelling had intensified dramatically so much that I could not sit still. I returned to emergency and was sent for x rays and had a biopsy done of the fluid syringed from the swelling.

These tests showed that my white cell count was extremely high and that I had infection in my hand. I thought I would be sent home with antibiotics. I was shocked when a hand surgeon was called in and I was in the operating theatre that night to clear out the infectious fluid in my hand. The fluid had been sent for testing and as yet unknown. An infectious disease specialist recommended high potency antibiotics in massive doses to prevent the unknown bacterial spread. I was being treated for spontaneous septic arthritis with no clear entry point for infection.

Still in hospital, after 3 days of lab testing, there were no conclusive results to the cause of infection. I started to experience chest pain and on the advice of a heart specialist, had chest x- rays, MRI and other scans to check if bacteria had infected other areas of my body. A PICC line was put into my heart to help the antibiotics work faster. I underwent surgery again on my wrist to check joints and there was further spread of infection which was then cleaned out. Still on very strong antibiotics yet no identification of bacteria. Complications set in and I started to have difficulty breathing and a lung specialist called in to determine cause. This resulted in being placed on 24 hour oxygen till further notice.

Five days after I entered hospital the bacteria was identified as “golden staph” a major bacteria that is usually associated with surgery. The baffling part for all the specialists monitoring me was the fact that I had gone into hospital with the infection already hibernating in my hand. I remained in hospital for 2 weeks. In that time my body reacted negatively to 4 different antibiotics until I was able to tolerate one.

All the testing done in the hospital had been done to ensure the bacteria was not hibernating in any other organs of my body. However; my autoimmune system had been compromised and my GP referred me to a rheumatologist who was to oversee my sore joints, and infectious arthritis that had developed. Again I was prescribed significant drugs and weekly blood tests to monitor my reactive protein in my body which showed that I was still harbouring infection. My hand would only have limited movement.

A reaction to one of the drugs that I was taking caused further issues – loss of balance, dizziness, needing support when walking. This caused more anxiety than I would have thought possible. I was referred to a neurologist who did brain scans and balance and hearing tests. The results showed that I had benign positional vertigo, I had lost all balance in my left hemisphere and loss of hearing none which could really be explained.

Over a 2year period I tried every treatment possible to recover the healthy person I was before November 2009. Massages, acupuncture and all that Western medicine had to offer. Finally after all the possible avenues I stopped taking all medications but continued massages as my

muscles were making it increasingly difficult to move without pain-fibromyalgia was probably the cause. At this point my vertigo was increasing. My frustration, stress and level of extreme tiredness were not helping.

In the September of 2012 I had my regular visit to my neurologist and was told that my balance remained unchanged and hearing would decrease and vertigo increase. I was going to the gym doing yoga doing anything to prevent it worsening. I took leave from my job as a teacher.

A friend of mine insisted I travel with her to China to get medical advice. After seeing medical professionals there I was prescribed Chinese herbs which I took for the week I was there and I felt immediate results in my energy levels. This gave me hope after 3 years. I returned with a prescription in Mandarin and immediately began looking for someone to help me with this new prescription. My proactive GP gave me her full support and suggested someone, but after talking to a friend who had suffered badly from Menieres disease and been helped – recommended someone who “helped save her life”. That someone was Dr Chen.

After every avenue I had been through I was reticent to say the least. However my first visit with Dr Chen was not only encouraging but enlightening. His calm demeanour and ability to look at my history as well as interpret the prescription I had bought back from China was impressive. He said to me I can help you.

Dr Chen then proceeded to explain the method of acupuncture and Chinese herbs and how they would help my body. He was very clear that it would be a long process that I would need to persevere with for at least 5 months to see any results. He assured me that I would feel the difference. The idea of taking herbs 3 times a day was not what I wanted to do after my experience with other medications.

In the October of 2012 we started my treatment. Acupuncture and herbs weekly then fortnightly visits. I have to confess I started to feel the difference in my body after the first 4 weeks. His calm explanations and positive energy caused me to relax and not stress. Stress is not conducive to positive energy he would say each time I saw him.

I had to have a full blood count done in the December of 2012. For the first time in 3 years my blood reading was normal! I can't tell you how relieved I was, how excited my GP was and Dr Chen nodded confidently. Even the fact that my hand has limited movement is not an issue.

After 3 years of uncertainty where very little could be explained, I am at the end of Dr Chen's treatment. Every organ in my body seems to have recovered equilibrium. Dr Chen has treated all of me whilst focussing on my vertigo and hearing both of which I can honestly say have absolutely improved. Not only that, my stress levels about the unknown, my increased energy levels and the understanding of how to interpret the energy levels in my body and how important they are to maximum function has been due to Dr Chen. I cannot speak more highly and his level of commitment and care for me. I have referred friends to his practice with the knowledge that the experience will be beneficial.



Kerrie Corne
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