

If All is Energy, Why am I so tired?

Energy. The buzz word of the 21st century. Renewable energy. Energy dependence. Energy policy. Energy medicine (homeopathy being one of the best known and most effective forms). $E=mc^2$ (Einstein's revolutionary finding that energy and matter are interconvertible/ interchangeable – the scientific fact that everything in the universe is Energy). Energy bars. Even Energy vampires (those people who suck your life force from you and leave you feeling like a wet dishrag).

Since we're constantly hearing how scarce our energy resources are, fueling (no pun intended) the long overdue "greening" of our country and our world, is it any surprise that we have an epidemic of fatigue ("low energy") in our midst?

Study after study indicates that fatigue is one of the most common concerns patients present to their primary care physicians. Unfortunately, conventional doctors are woefully ill-equipped to help these patients, as millions of them can attest to. And if the doctors can't figure out what's making you tired, then by golly it must be in your head so you're off to see the shrink.

Thankfully, Holistic Medical Doctors such as myself have undergone a great deal of post-graduate training and we are able to help most patients who suffer from this sometimes debilitating symptom. The first order of business is to diagnose the underlying cause of fatigue and to rule out serious, potentially life-threatening causes such as cancer, anemia, diabetes, electrolyte disturbances, silent heart attack, infections, and countless others.

In addition to a comprehensive history and physical exam (I spend a full hour with new patients), I offer a wide range of Complementary and Alternative tests to help uncover why a patient's energy has plummeted. I test for heavy metals, Candida, Parasites, pathological gut bacteria, urine neurotransmitter levels, vitamin and mineral deficiencies including iodine, blood, and saliva hormone levels (most importantly for adrenal and thyroid function). I also perform special tests for celiac disease/gluten intolerance and for chronic infections including Epstein Barr virus, Lyme disease, Chlamydia and Mycoplasma. Patients presenting with one or more signs or

symptoms of low thyroid function (cold intolerance, difficulty losing weight, constipation, hair loss, slow pulse, swollen ankles, depression) despite normal thyroid blood tests (so-called “sub-laboratory hypothyroidism”) will also undergo further testing and often find relief when proper treatment is administered. Even if your fatigue remains undiagnosed after extensive testing, Classical Homeopathy may restore you to vibrant health because it does not rely on an allopathic (Western) diagnosis to do its magic. We’ve got ALL the bases covered!

Anna is a 37 year old married woman with two young children who first consulted me last April with a laundry list of debilitating symptoms. On my intake form she enumerated the following problems: panic attacks, severe hypoglycemia, fatigue/exhaustion for two years, dizziness for two years, depression for twenty years, insomnia for “15-18” years, chest pains, muscle soreness, memory loss, difficulty concentrating, heartburn/acid reflux, headaches, acne, back pain, indigestion, shortness of breath, joint pain, gas, and sugar cravings. Phew! Imagine trying to take care of two young kids feeling like that! The worst of her problems had begun two and a half years previously, after she experienced a photosensitivity reaction while taking St. John’s Wort for her depression, a well known side effect of the herb, resulting from exposure to sunlight. And compounding it all, although Anna’s depression and anxiety were longstanding, they greatly worsened in 2002 when her 5-day-old baby died of congenital heart disease.

Anna’s blood sugar was very unstable and bouncing all over the place. “I get lightheaded and dizzy after I eat or if I don’t eat. I’m damned if I eat and damned if I don’t. Sometimes the hypoglycemia triggers visual disturbances and stuttering. Every night as I am drifting off to sleep, I wake up with a full blown panic attack – lump in my throat, shortness of breath, heart pounding, fear that I’m dying – I REALLY feel like I’m dying. I now have a fear of falling asleep because of the panic. The fatigue has been awful – I lie down for hours during the day.”

Anna’s physical exam as well as her extensive blood work were unremarkable. I ordered an Adrenal Stress Index (salivary adrenal hormone profile) and started her on high doses of chromium, magnesium, phosphorylated serine, (an amino acid which reduces cortisol, the body’s main stress hormone), B complex, and homeopathic Arsenicum album 12C.

I saw her back the following week, fine-tuned the dosage of her supplements, and added ACE (Adrenal Cortical Extract), a glandular which also supports adrenal function. Sixteen days after her initial visit, she reported the following: “My energy is much better since starting the ACE – tons better, 80% better. I’m able to accomplish a lot more. I love the Arsenicum; it’s been very effective, works very quickly. Within 10 minutes, I feel much more relaxed. I haven’t had any panic attacks at all since starting Arsenicum. Lightheadedness is 50% better.”

On June 12, 2007:

“Feeling 95% better! I’m excited about being alive again! Having more good days than bad days. I have energy to clean the house. Hypoglycemia is off the charts better. Arsenicum completely resolves my anxiety in 3 minutes – same relaxed feeling as with Ativan, but it took 45-60 minutes to work.” (Arsenicum is all natural and has zero addictive potential – Ativan is highly addictive).

We saw Anna last on September 24, 2007. She was feeling even better than she had in June. She was walking 30 minutes 3-4 times a week. The lightheadedness was gone. Her memory was back. The “horrible excessive urination” (a symptom she had not before mentioned to me) had vanished. There is more work to be done on the depression she has been battling since Junior High, but she is not the same person who walked into my office last April.

The medicine I practice is extremely individualized. By spending as much time with you as I do, I am able to clearly understand who you are as a person and discover the precise imbalances robbing you of your vitality and well-being. For instance, in this case Arsenicum worked just as it should, for Anna. It is not a cure-all remedy for panic, although it does help some people with a diagnosis of panic attacks. And it is particularly useful for anxiety that arises while drifting off to sleep which is so severe the person is convinced they are dying, especially when coupled with exhaustion.

When the precise, preferably natural, medicine(s) is found that targets exactly what is ailing you, your health is restored and you too will be able to feel energy pulsating through your body. Everything in the universe is energy; it is your birthright to feel fully alive.