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Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
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Sick And Tired Of Feeling Sick And Tired??

By Patty Blair

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Are you one of the unfortunates who suffer from ailments your doctor can't diagnose? I was, and went through a living hell for months. I was shuttled from doctor to doctor (nine specialists in all), only to be told "It's all in your head."

I was finally rescued from these `diagnoses' of hypochondria by a perceptive doctor who identified my problem as Candida Albicans, a systemic yeast infection — a common but often elusive ailment that frequently escapes doctors' attention.

Since being diagnosed and following some simple remedies, I have my life back and now feel better than ever. If you have mystery ailments and aren't getting satisfaction from your medical providers, you might want to hear my story:

In the summer of 1997 I found a lump in my neck. It didn't hurt, didn't bother me at all, so I ignored it. Then one lump became two, and two became three. I was still ignoring them since they weren't painful. I had to go to my primary-care physician (an Internist) to renew my Prozac prescription (I've been depressed as long as I can remember, and on Prozac for 2 1/2 years) so I mentioned the lumps...

Since then I have seen nine (yes, nine!) different doctors, specialists, and physicians assistants. I've had more blood tests than I can count (I swear the doctor's have more of my blood than I do!). I had ultrasounds of my neck. I saw two endocrinologists, two surgeons, a hematologist, and none of them could even agree! Through all this I still felt NORMAL (which for me includes being tired, depressed, irritable, and having frequent headaches.).

On January 15, 1998, I had the original lump (a swollen lymph node) removed. The lab work showed it WASN'T Cancer, Cat Scratch Fever, Aids, or Psittacosis (parrot fever). But, they still didn't know what it WAS.

I was left with a two-inch scar, painful 'pins and needles' across my jawbone and down the front of my neck, and NO answers. Then I started to feel miserable. I had pain from the surgery and started

Sick And Tired Of Feeling Sick And Tired??

sleeping 14 to 16 hours a day. I couldn't stay awake! The times I was awake I had no energy or ambition to do anything. I wasn't functioning like a person and certainly not like a mother to my five year old son.

More blood tests, more doctors...When I went back to the surgeon for a follow-up and complained about the painful pins and needles in my neck and jaw, he told me that it couldn't be from his surgery and that I must have developed arthritis.

Funny, I'm 35 years old, never had arthritis before, and I was under the impression that arthritis is in joints and bones, NOT skin— but now I had arthritis.

More sleeping. I couldn't work anymore. More blood tests, more antibiotics, more of my husband doing housework, cooking meals, and taking care of me. But still no answers.

On March 10, 1998, I had Bone Marrow Testing done by the Hematologist because all my blood numbers were off kilter. Too many red blood cells, too many white blood cells, and too many platelets. I got my period twice that month (the doctor thought that might be my body's way of getting rid of the 'extra' blood). During the procedure (which is NOT fun), the doctor hit a nerve. My leg went numb and hurt for two days. I also had internal hemorrhaging, so the pain from the procedure lasted almost two weeks instead of a few days.

When all the tests and reports came back, the Hematologist told me that I had developed allergies. Funny, I never had an allergy in my life, but suddenly they developed now, after surgery! Nothing specific, mind you, he never said WHAT I was allergic to, only that I had allergies.

I'm very skeptical of doctors who believe that side effects from surgery include arthritis and allergies!

I DIDN'T have Leukemia, Lupus, Mononucleosis, Lyme Disease, Hepatitis B or C, Tuberculosis, Diabetes, or Sugar problems. Again, we still had no answers. No one could figure out what I DID have.

One morning I woke up with 103.2 degree fever. More blood tests, more antibiotics, more sleeping. I had big, white pus pockets on my throat but the culture came back normal! Again, nothing was diagnosed, and the fever went away in a few days.

My doctor did notice, however, that the bone marrow results showed absolutely NO iron in my system (the Hematologist didn't mention this, only allergies) so he put me on an iron supplement, and referred me to an Ear, Nose, and Throat doctor.

Thank God for Dr. Deems! In just one visit he found out that I had the Epstein-Barr Virus (also known as the Yuppie Flu), and more importantly, a systemic yeast infection called Candida Albicans. The Epstein-Barr had to run its course. Since it's viral, there's no medication. The Candida can be controlled, and sometimes eradicated, with medication and diet.

Within weeks of starting the anti-Candida program (mostly a change in diet and one medicine), I was

Sick And Tired Of Feeling Sick And Tired??

feeling better than the old me...no more tiredness, no more mystery illnesses, no more questions. The headaches were becoming fewer and farther between and I wasn't in a fog every morning when I woke up.

Dr. Deems also thought we should take out my tonsils (I hadn't had them removed as a child because of a blood disorder I was born with. Thirty years ago they didn't have the technology to operate on me—now they do.) I was told it would cause a set-back with the Candida, but he thought it would be worth the short-time reversal. On June 5, 1998, the tonsils came out.

The set-back was hardly noticeable. I went right back on the anti-Candida program, sans tonsils, and wound up more than 25 lbs. lighter (with no exercise!) than when I found the first lump. My triple chin disappeared, and I got to go shopping for short-shorts!

Best of all, though, is how GOOD I have felt ever since! If you or someone you know has some, or all, of the symptoms I did, a Candida infection could be the culprit.

Sick and Tired of Feeling Sick and Tired? by Patty Blair

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Patty Blair is a freelance writer who started writing 'books' in the fifth grade. When not dealing with her numerous medical 'mysteries' she loves writing, reading, beach combing, fossil hunting, and her incredible son, CJ. Originally from New York, she has lived in sunny Florida since 1981.

FILLING THE EMPTY PLACE

By Susie Cortright

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"If we worry too much about ourselves, we won't have time for others."
Mother Theresa

This is the time of year when winter seems to stretch on and on. It's the time of year when we're all feeling a little isolated, a little stir crazy, and—if your emails are any indication—a little desperate.

This is the time of year when those of us who feel relatively fulfilled during the rest of the year, suddenly come up empty. We find a bare place inside, like an open door that allows a whisper to come sneaking through. "Is this all there is?" it wants to know.

Sick And Tired Of Feeling Sick And Tired??

The question is haunting. But the answer is simple. The biggest trick is to remember it when we need it.

TURN IT OUT

I should put a sticky note on my forehead just for times when I start asking myself those tired questions:

Am I happy? How happy am I? Am I miserable? How miserable am I?

Am I tired? Am I sad?

That sticky note would have one simple directive: To think about someone other than myself.

The instant I start feeling tired and sad, it's my cue to do something completely new. To take all that energy that I've been turning in on myself and turn it out into the world.

IT CAN MAKE YOU SICK

"My needs. My wants. My suffering. It's enough to make you sick.

In fact, it does make you sick," Gregg Krech writes in his online article "When it comes to Attention: 'I Am the Enemy.'" Krech cites scientific studies that attribute depression, anxiety, and alcohol abuse on self-focused attention.

"We find our calling, our bliss, our purposes, by giving up on ourselves," Krech writes. "Our surrender becomes our salvation."

And he certainly wasn't the first to say it. Some of us base

our religious faith on that very concept.

It's something we all know, deep down. If you had to name the times when you've felt the most alive in this world, what would you say? For me, each of these times share only one thing in common. They have absolutely nothing to do with me. Late at night, wiping tears from someone else's face. Holding someone else's shaky hand. Head bowed, deep in prayer for someone else's town.

It's also something that's easy to forget. The more we agonize over own happiness or unhappiness, the more we turn inward. The more pre-occupied we become with our own me-ness. The more miserable we become.

Certainly, there is therapy in humility; solace in service. All at once we become enmeshed with something much greater

Sick And Tired Of Feeling Sick And Tired??

than ourselves. We renew our sense of purpose. We tap into a sense of connectedness that offers infinite healing and comfort.

TAP THE "THERAPY OF SERVICE"

It's terribly easy to tap into that kind of connectedness. There exists so much need in the world. It's everywhere.

And we can weave the "Therapy of Service" into every our every intention, our every goal.

If you've hit a plateau with one of your personal goals, make it bigger. Ask yourself: How will the achievement of this goal affect someone else? Widen your focus--and your mission.

Whenever your strength and energy starts to sag, change your perspective, from one of "I" to one of "us." By doing so, you create a subtle shift in intention: "I don't have the energy for a daily workout" becomes "I want to take care of myself so I can be more a more balanced and mindful parent."

It works to empower your professional life, too. "I don't want to go to work" becomes "I want to share my gifts with everyone I come in contact with." Simply start focusing on how your business helps other people. When service and love replaces money as your prime motivator, you may just find that things start falling into place.

Susie Michelle Cortright is the author of *More Energy for Moms* and the publisher of *Momscape.com*--a website devoted to helping moms enjoy motherhood. Visit her at

<http://www.momscape.com>. And click here to learn how you can join her exclusive community, devoted to personal growth for moms: <http://www.momscape.com/energy>

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