

Glimpse into remedies for autoimmune symptoms PART ONE

I am always on the look out for new ideas, inspirations, plans, techniques and tricks to make a difference to my many and varied symptoms. I get lost reading articles about exciting and interesting topics; I love blogs, books and magazines about well being, food and health. I also am quite open to experimenting and playing trial and error with myself to find out what works best for me.

Today, I will concentrate on what I find helpful when I have symptoms stemming from having an autoimmune disease. Another day, I will write about what I do when I react to foods.

I am currently having regular acupuncture, moxibustion and massage. I guess you do wonder how much it is actually doing but one session a few weeks ago confirmed to me that yes, it is helping! I walked in feeling pretty gross. I was fairly sure I was developing hyperthyroidism again because I was feeling shaky, achy and stiff, light headed and woozy. As I lay on the table with the acupuncture needles, I could actually feel it all easing up. After a gentle massage too I felt so relaxed, and I walked out with only remnants of the feelings I had come in with. It was exciting, and definitely makes the weekly fork out of \$150+ seem worthy and justifiable. I have read that other people with thyroid issues get a lot of relief from this type of treatment too, so give a go; it could work for you! Massage is great as it not only eases the stiffness and aches, but it can help with your mind set too. And it doesn't always have to be a paid session with a trained therapist! It is even more soothing when it is a loved one that is massaging you; it provides a feeling of being loved, supported and understood too!

When I am aching and stiff, I do find that heat can help.

Sometimes I avoid it, because it can then also make me feel light headed and weak, but when I can manage it, it does ease things up and it takes my mind off the pain. Run a warm bath, use a hot pack or use a warming rub (I was given Zheng Gu Shui sports liniment from my natural therapist).

One of my most hindering symptoms currently is chronic fatigue. Having suffered from fatigue, it is amazing how you come to understand the difference between being tired and being fatigued. My acupuncturist asked me the other day if I had had a bad sleep the night before and I said yes I had, and that I felt quite tired. He then asked if my energy levels were improving any. I said that today I did feel more energised. He clarified with me, “So you feel sleepy because you did not sleep well, but you feel quite energised today?” It sounded funny and contradicting, but it was a revelation moment, when someone else understood that they are two separate components. Even having been very active all day and feeling exhausted, is a different feeling to that of fatigue. Chronic fatigue is a nasty, vicious circle. I wake feeling exhausted, so I lay in bed until hunger takes over. I get up and do a few things, and inevitably end up resting on the couch. If I try to live life and do something fun, or do some chores, I am knocked out for the next few days. I crawl into bed exhausted at the granny bedtime of 8 or 9pm. Sometimes, I have the added joy that is insomnia, and lie there, wide awake for up to six frustrating hours.

My fitness is beyond non existent. Which, for someone who used to go to the gym up to 5 times a week, is disheartening to say the least. I know that if I were able to improve my fitness, it would help my overall feeling of health, as I wouldn't be fighting with being out of shape on top of fatigue. The catch 22 problem there is, of course, trying to drag yourself off the couch, when everything feels heavy, and going for a walk (and then, not fainting when on said walk!). When I do manage to go for a walk, or do a yoga or tai chi session, I do feel the benefits. Even if I end up feeling exhausted, it does help

me feel a little more invigorated usually, and at the least, it blows a few of the cobwebs away that have gathered from the couch! I am trying to motivate myself to do some gentle form of activity as regularly as possible (or let others motivate me and drag me kicking and screaming off the couch!). I do encourage and recommend that you try to find something that your body will let you do, because every bit counts.

For more tips on relieving symptoms, read on in Part Two of this blog ☐

I wish there was a rollover plan for childhood naps I refused.



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