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Dr. Zoltan P. Rona, MD, MSc

Dr. Zoltan Rona is a leading proponent of natural, harmless, health-building alternatives to conventional medical care. He has a general practice where he has provided preventive medical counselling for over 20 years and is a past president of the Canadian Holistic Medical Association. His books, "The Joy of Health", "Return to the Joy of Health", and "Childhood Illness and the Allergy Connection" are Canadian bestsellers. He writes regular columns for Alive Magazine and The Toronto Star. Dr. Rona is also the medical editor of the Benjamin Franklin Award winning "Encyclopedia of Natural Healing" and is known for his many public lectures and media appearances.

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ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS TO CHRONIC FATIGUE

Chronic fatigue or tiredness is a symptom that brings at least one in five individuals to a doctor. Only 20% of these people have a diagnosable or treatable medical condition while the remainder have no obvious physical source of their chronic weariness or exhaustion. An indeterminate percentage of these cases are related to a virus as in Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (a.k.a. Myalgic Encephalomyelitis or M.E.) and fibromyalgia. In the majority, however, no specific cause is established. What can one do when conventional doctors have ruled out cancer, diabetes, heart disease, hypothyroidism and other metabolic disorders to explain chronic fatigue? Are there any alternatives to learning to live with it?

SELF-HELP MEASURES

Although all the following measures are best taken with the guidance of a natural health care practitioner, their safety is high enough for most people to attempt without supervision:

- Revise your diet. There is an adverse relationship between chronic fatigue and the health of the immune system. Since sugar suppresses immunity, eliminate it in all its forms, including the milk sugar lactose. Avoid foods and beverage such as beer, wine, other spirits, cheese, grain-fed animal products (red meats, especially beef and pork, animal fats, milk and other high fat dairy products), caffeine containing products and refined foods. Avoid leftovers and tobacco.

"Pure vegetable oil" used by most restaurants usually refers to shortening or corn oil. The fried foods made from it would most certainly be high in peroxides and other toxins, leading to damage to the cardiovascular system, including and elevated cholesterol. Shortening, lard, margarine and beef tallow are all probably good as car engine lubricants but are unfit for human consumption.

Eat more fish and fish oils, garlic, onions, olives, olive oil, green vegetables, herbs, spices, soy products like tofu, yogurt, psyllium, pectin and milled (ground) flax seed provided you can tolerate them without symptoms. An increased intake of fiber significantly reduces the impact of toxins found in many commercial foods.

- Supplement the diet with high energy producing herbs and other concentrated nutrients:

Whole food concentrates are like bee pollen, beet root powder, royal jelly, kelp, dulse,

spirulina, chlorella, barley green, aloe vera juice and others have a naturally occurring high vitamin and mineral content with highly bioavailable antioxidants. They are also low in calories, fats, salts and sugar and high in live active enzymes and soluble fiber. They are a rapid and convenient way of supplying the vital 5+ daily servings of fruits and vegetables.

Herbal teas, capsules or tinctures which are well documented to boost energy and enhance a general sense of well being include ma huang (ephedra), ginkgo biloba, Siberian ginseng, ginger, yerba mate, kola nut, fo-ti and licorice root.

Vitamin and mineral supplements which are helpful in combating fatigue include B complex vitamins, especially vitamins, B1, B5, B6 and B12, vitamin C, zinc, copper, manganese, chromium and magnesium.

Other nutrient supplements have energy enhancing properties, especially coenzyme Q10, pycnogenols, amino acids like carnitine, taurine, tyrosine and phenylalanine, lactobacillus acidophilus and bifido bacteria.

HEALING BLOOD VESSEL DISEASES NATURALLY

Varicose veins, stasis dermatitis, leg ulcers, vasculitis, diabetic retinopathy, and cherry spots (hemangiomas) are some of the many blood vessel diseases thought to be the result of heredity or free radical damage. Evidence suggests that they can be improved or prevented with use of complementary medicine.

With respect to diet, eat a low sugar, low fat, high complex carbohydrate, high fiber diet. Avoid alcohol, caffeine and a high sugar or fat intake. High fiber foods ensure that the large bowel remains relatively clear of excessive waste material thereby reducing pressure on large pelvic veins thought to worsen varicose veins.

Psyllium seed, milled flax seed, fruit pectin, guar gum and oat bran all reduce the potential toxins in the gastrointestinal tract. Carrots, celery, spinach, parsley, beets and cucumbers are good sources of natural antioxidants that protect arteries, veins and capillaries. Other green foods, whole grains, legumes and fruits are high in powerful free radical scavenging bioflavonoids, vitamin C and vitamin E.

Pycnogenols are a family of antioxidant bioflavonoids derived from pine tree bark, berries, grape seed and other colorful plants. They have 50 times stronger antioxidant activity than vitamin E and 20 times stronger than vitamin C. They are effective against all blood vessel problems as well as water retention, inflammatory conditions, allergies and arthritis.

Other effective nutritional supplements for blood vessel damage are aloe vera juice, B complex vitamins, calcium, magnesium, copper, zinc and silica gel.

Some herbalists and homeopaths have claimed both preventive and therapeutic successes with varberry, chamomile, curcumin, hawthorn berries, white oak bark, witch hazel and calendula.

Witch hazel and calendula in particular are effective when applied topically to soothe inflammation in any blood vessel. These herbs can improve circulation and prevent the build-up of toxins responsible for tissue damage.

For a personalized program of diet and supplements, see your natural health care practitioner.

HIATUS HERNIA

A hiatus hernia occurs when a portion of the stomach moves into the thoracic cavity through an enlarged esophageal hiatus (opening) in the diaphragm. Hiatus hernias are common and may be seen in up to 60% of the population over 50 year old. Although often asymptomatic, sufferers complain of chest pain or heartburn with esophageal reflux, aggravated by alcohol, smoking, coffee and highly acidic foods. Discomfort is worse laying down after eating and the diagnosis is often made by special E-Rays (barium swallow).

Although most conventional doctors still treat hiatus hernia with a variety of drugs, there are quite a few effective natural alternatives for those willing to change their diets and lifestyles. Many hiatus hernia victims are surprised by the relief they experience from chiropractic treatments, osteopathy, shiatsu or massage therapy. A good chiropractor, osteopath or massage therapist can sometimes work wonders with a series of hands on treatments. They can also recommend certain exercises to improve your posture and muscle function in general.

Hiatus hernia symptoms can be prevented by eating frequent small meals through-out the day and avoiding any meals before bedtime. Use two or more pillows when sleeping or, better still, elevate the head of the bed such that stomach acidity, with the help of gravity, stays in the stomach.

Therapeutic vegetable juices include carrot, spinach, beet, cucumber, parsley, celery, cabbage and potato. These should be used liberal-ly throughout the day (2 quarts daily). Raw potato juice just before breakfast can help with aid regurgitation. Avoid meat, alcohol, hot sauces, spicy and fried foods, added salt, caffeine products, sugar and refined carbohydrate products. If you use aspirin, replace it with white willow bark capsules. At least this will not aggravate the discomfort.

Supplements that have a healing effect include essential fatty acids (flax seed oil, cod liver oil, salmon oil, evening primrose oil, borage oil, black currant oil), licorice root tincture or herbal tea, choline, lecithin, PABA, bismuth, bentonite, golden-seal, slippery elm, burdock, aloe vera, Kombucha tea and lactobacillus acidophilus. Plant based digestive enzymes taken with meals, charcoal capsules and pancreatin (pancreatic digestive enzymes) are also helpful because they improve digestion enough to prevent a sluggish transit of food through the gastrointestinal tract.

CANAID contains burdock, slippery elm, Turkish rhubarb, and sorrel. This combination of herbs has been success-fully used for a wide range of gut problems

including hiatus hernia, duodenal ulcers, colitis, Crohn's disease, non-specific indigestion, irritable bowel syndrome, hemorrhoids and bowel infections.

All these remedies are available from your health food store and are best used under supervision of a natural health care practitioner.

NATURAL INTERFERON BOOSTERS

Interferon is a substance produced by the body's white cells to fight infections, cancer, allergies, and toxic chemical poisoning. Interferon can be made artificially and injected for some cancers and viral infections like hepatitis C. Studies indicate that many natural substances can activate the body's own production of interferon. Some better known natural interferon boosters are:

Astragalus: a Chinese herb that enhances the antibody reaction to foreign invaders of all types including cancer.

Boneset: a native American Indian herb with antiseptic, anti-viral properties used for the treatment of colds and flus, coughs, fevers, indigestion and pain.

Chlorophyll: a plant pigment which can be found in a long list of green leafy vegetables and algae like spirulina, chlorella and barley green.

Coenzyme Q10: an antioxidant involved in the electron transport chain needed for all energy-dependent processes in the body. CoQ10 increases helper T-cells and reduces infection risk.

Echinacea: the most popular herb in North America used as a treatment for toothaches, bites or stings and all types of infections.

Ginkgo: a potent central nervous system antioxidant for the treatment of circulation disorders, memory problems, high blood pressure, depression, tinnitus and immune system disorders.

Licorice: an anti-inflammatory and anti-allergic herb use to boost energy, treat respiratory tract infections, as well as female disorders, ulcers, adrenal insufficiency and congestion.

Melatonin: a hormone produced by the pineal gland with strong antioxidant and immune system boosting properties.

Milk Thistle (Silymarin): a herb most commonly recommended as a liver cleanser and complementary medical treatment for hepatitis.

Medicinal Mushrooms: Reishi, Maitake, Shitake, Kombucha and others stimulate many aspects of the immune system including the production of interferon.

Siberian Ginseng: stimulates T-cell and B-cell activity, energy, libido, body fat burning and many stress-related conditions.

Vitamin C and bioflavonoids, especially proanthocyanidins (pycnogenols) like grape seed extract, pine bark extract and bilberry, quercetin, hesperidin and catechin, are powerful antioxidants.

There are over a dozen more natural interferon boosters available at most health food stores and pharmacies alone or in combination. For more information about safe and effective natural ways to boost immunity, see your health care practitioner.

NATURAL TREATMENT FOR FIBROCYSTIC BREAST DISEASE

Fibrocystic breast disease is a benign but sometimes painful condition, occurring in about 20% of pre-menopausal women and associated with a three times greater risk for the development of breast cancer. It can be caused by estrogen dominance, a high animal fat dietary intake and caffeine consumption. Pain and swelling from the breast cysts usually occurs in the second half of a woman's menstrual cycles and typically affects both breasts.

Fibrocystic breast disease can be reversed by cutting down on high fat foods, especially hormone-containing foods like beef, pork, eggs, chicken and all dairy products. Avoid alcohol, sugar and white flour products, all of which encourage the development of breast cysts in sensitive individuals. Products containing caffeine and methylxantines like coffee, black tea, chocolate, cola drinks and some analgesics should be avoided. Eat more citrus fruits, beets, celery, carrots, artichokes, parsnips, spinach, cucumbers and antioxidant rich green foods like spirulina, chlorella, green kamut and barley green.

Supplements that may help shrink some of the swelling from breast cysts are Vitamin A, selenium, silicon, vitamin B6, vitamin E, alpha lipoic acid, coenzyme Q10, pycnogenol from grape seed extract, flax seed oil, evening primrose oil and the pineal gland hormone melatonin. Melatonin works by blocking estrogen receptors and shows promise against both fibrocystic breast disease and breast cancer. Some doctors have reported successful elimination of breast cysts using concentrated forms of iodine. Other B complex vitamins and lipotropic factors such as choline, methionine and cysteine are also beneficial.

Natural progesterone cream directly applied on a daily basis to the affected breasts is another treatment option. Aside from its role in reversing osteoporosis, progesterone cream protects prevent breast cancer and reduces the incidence of ovarian cysts, endometriosis and uterine fibroids. It prevents fluid retention, fat deposits, vaginal dryness and urinary bladder infections. Women who suffer from both stress and a loss of libido will also benefit from the use of natural progesterone cream. Herbs that can be used effectively in treating fibrocystic breast disease include dong quai, burdock, alfalfa and pokeweed. Discuss these and other treatments for fibrocystic breast disease with your health care practitioner.

NEW ALBERTA LAW

DEFENDS FREEDOM OF CHOICE IN HEALTH CARE

"Great spirits have always found violent opposition from mediocre minds." . . .Albert Einstein

Bill 209, a private member's bill promoted by Alberta MLA, Roy Brassard, to provide citizens with a greater degree of choice in health care, passed third reading in the Alberta legislature on April 24, 1996. This bill allows Alberta doctors to perform any alternative therapy, provided that it cannot be proven to do more harm than conventional drugs and surgical treatments.

No conventional medical studies have ever have been able to prove that the commonly used treatments offered by the alternative health care community cause any harm to the public. Although Victor Herbert and the NCAHF (National Council Against Health Fraud) have been on a world wide crusade against complementary medicine for the past two decades, he and his group have never been able to prove any of the allegations against medical alternatives. On the other hand, the side effects, complications and deaths resulting from supposedly "safe and effective" conventional medical and surgical treatments have been very well documented in books like *Racketeering in Medicine* by Dr. James Carter.

Under Bill 209, chelation therapy, ozone therapy, homeopathy, environmental medical therapies, vitamin, mineral and herb treatments provided by doctors would all be freely accessible to the public. Bill 209 frees doctors from the totalitarian control of the Alberta College of Physicians and Surgeons (A-COPS). The A-COPS have actively opposed alternative medical services for many decades, prosecuting doctors that dared to offer natural alternatives irrespective of beneficial therapeutic results.

Unlike in Ontario and the majority of provinces across Canada where a doctor can be prosecuted by the COPS for recommending that patients drink filtered, clean water and use air purification devices, doctors in Alberta will not be dealing with such brainless forms of persecution. Much like in Nova Scotia, doctors wishing to practise homeopathy or environmental medicine will not be charged with incompetence just for using natural remedies. There will be no need now for doctors to justify or ask permission from anyone except their patients about using alternative therapies.

Prior to the tabling of Bill 209, public pressure had already forced the A-COPS to draft their own bylaws allowing doctors to practise alternative medicine. With the

passage of Bill 209, the A-COPS can be eliminated as obstacles to freedom of choice in health care. Bill 209 effectively bypasses the A-COPS and makes any attempts to control alternative medical practitioners impotent.

According to The Canada Act, any medical service legally available in one province cannot be prohibited in other provinces. This basically means that it's only a matter of time before someone challenges the oppressive state of affairs in provinces without an Alaska Clause (legislation in states such as New York and Alaska have allowed alternative health care to flourish). With Nova Scotia and Alberta leading the way, laws will surely be passed in other provinces prohibiting the various COPS from attacking alternative doctors, confiscating patient records and sabotaging the medical care of patients who simply choose to walk away from conventional medicine. The COPS were established to protect the public and not to destroy clinics freely chosen by the public. Without evidence of harm, the COPS should abide by the wishes of the public they have been sworn to protect. They are clearly not doing so and politicians like those in Alberta recognize the fact. COPS are increasingly being seen by the public and doctors for what they really are - protectors of the financial interests of the medical monopoly and puppets of the multi-national pharmaceutical firms.

Authority figures in conventional medicine should not be allowed to go against the wishes of the public. It is clearly the case that a large segment of the Canadian population wants complementary medicine. Without easy access to complementary medical services, freedom of choice in health care can never be a reality in Canada or anywhere conventional medical bureaucratic groups have full control over the type of medical care the public receives.

RETHINKING CHLORINATED TAP WATER

Most people never give it a thought. After all, our elected public officials keep assuring us that chlorinated city tap water is completely safe for human consumption. Numerous scientific studies, however, report that chlorinated tap water is a skin irritant and can be associated with rashes like eczema. Chlorinated water can destroy polyunsaturated fatty acids and vitamin E in the body while generating toxins capable of free radical damage (oxidation). This might explain why supplementation of the diet with essential fatty acids like flax seed oil, evening primrose oil, borage oil and antioxidants like vitamin E, selenium and others helps so many cases of eczema and dry skin.

Chlorinated water destroys much of the intestinal flora, the friendly bacteria that help in the digestion of food and which protect the body from harmful pathogens. These bacteria are also responsible for the manufacture of several important vitamins like vitamin B12 and vitamin K. It is not uncommon for chronic digestive disorders as well as chronic skin conditions like acne, psoriasis, seborrhea and eczema to clear up or be significantly improved by switching to unchlorinated drinking water and supplementing the diet with lactobacillus acidophilus and bifidus.

Chlorinated water contains chemical compounds called trihalomethanes which are carcinogens resulting from the combination of chlorine with organic compounds in water. These chemicals, also known as organochlorides, do not degrade very well and are generally stored in the fatty tissues of the body (breast, other fatty areas, mother's milk, blood and semen). Organochlorides can cause mutations by altering DNA, suppress immune system function and interfere with the natural controls of cell growth.

Chlorine has been documented to aggravate asthma, especially in those children who make frequent use of chlorinated swimming pools. Several studies also link chlorine and chlorinated by-products to a greater incidence of bladder, breast and bowel cancer as well as malignant melanoma. One study even links the use of chlorinated tap water to congenital cardiac anomalies.

Anything you can do to filter tap and shower water that eliminates or even minimizes chlorine would certainly be helpful and possibly curative for some immune system problems. The use of at source water filtration devices is increasingly popular and affordable. Discuss their use with your health care practitioner.

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STEROID ALTERNATIVES

Prednisone, prednisolone, dexamethasone and betamethasone are commonly prescribed anti-inflammatory corticosteroid drugs used to block pro-inflammatory mediators in the body such as histamine, some prostaglandins and leukotrienes. These mediators are thought by scientists to be responsible for pain, swelling, redness and eventual scarring reactions like fibrosis in the body. Since autoimmune diseases like lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, multiple sclerosis, thyroiditis and vasculitis involve these pro-inflammatory chemicals, prednisone is used to offset some of their more serious effects. Allergic conditions like asthma, psoriasis and eczema also involve these chemical mediators. Corticosteroid pills or creams are often prescribed for these conditions as well.

Although prednisone and other steroid drugs are effective at reducing inflammation, this comes at a huge price. These drugs primarily cripple the immune system if taken for long periods of time. Some of the more common side effects include fluid retention, increased appetite, increased risk of infection, depression, high blood pressure, diabetes, ulcers, acne, weak muscles, osteoporosis, insomnia and an increased risk of blood clots.

Alternatives to prednisone and other corticosteroids include the following:

1. Detection of food and chemical allergies. This is ideally done by a combination of elimination-provocation (exclusion diet) techniques and blood tests which measure antibodies in the blood directed at specific food and chemical invaders. Usually, the person must be off prednisone or aspirin for several weeks before blood tests for food allergies can be determined. The elimination diet is probably the best way to go for such cases.

2. The use of natural fatty acid anti-inflammatory supplements. The type of fat found exclusively in meats and dairy products is known as arachidonic acid. Saturated animal fats and arachidonic acid increase the inflammatory response by stimulating the production of inflammatory prostaglandins and leukotrienes.

Vegetarian diets that avoid dairy and eggs, use flax seed, evening primrose oil, borage oil and canola oil are higher in the essential fatty acids, linoleic and linolenic acids which stimulate the synthesis of anti-inflammatory prostaglandins that block the pain and inflammatory effects of chemical mediators like leukotrienes.

An alternative way of obtaining anti-inflammatory essential fatty acids from the diet

is to consume more cold water fish such as salmon, trout, mackerel, sardines, swordfish, shark, cod and halibut. These fish contain high concentrations of omega-3 fatty acids which have also been documented to blunt the inflammatory or allergic response. If fish is either unpalatable for the individual or not readily available in certain inland areas, supplementation on the order of 9 to 12 grams daily from oil capsules is a better alternative.

3. Supplementation with antioxidants. Since the inflammatory response creates oxidative damage to tissues, the use of antioxidants helps prevent tissue damage that leads to permanent dysfunction. Antioxidant supplements include vitamins like natural carotenoids (carotenes, lycopenes, and others), bioflavonoids like rutin, hesperidin, quercetin, catechin and the proanthocyanidins (grape seed extract, pine bark extract, bilberry and others loosely also called pycnogenols), vitamins C and E, sulfur containing amino acids like cysteine, N-acetyl-cysteine, methionine and glutathione.

Other important antioxidants are coenzyme Q10, B complex vitamins, selenium, zinc and hormones like DHEA (dehydroepiandrosterone) and melatonin.

Plant enzymes and other phytochemicals found in superfoods like spirulina, chlorella, barley green, green kamut, bee pollen, royal jelly and herbs of many different kinds are all potent antioxidants. Wholeleaf aloe vera juice with high MPS (mucopolysaccharide) content also contains high levels of dozens of natural antioxidants. Kombucha tea contains many powerful antioxidants and anti-inflammatory agents. Drinking on a regular basis has been reported to reverse hundreds of chronic immune system ailments.

4. Supplementation with natural anti-inflammatory enzymes and herbs. Pancreatin (animal based pancreatic digestive enzymes), plant enzymes and bromelain (from pineapples) not only help with protein digestion in the gastrointestinal tract but have been demonstrated to work as pro-inflammatory substances. They help reduce the number of leukotrienes. The yellow pigment of tumeric is called curcumin. In some studies it has been reported to be equally effective as cortisone without any of the associated side effects.

Other natural anti-inflammatory herbs are licorice root, yucca (e.g. YU-CCAN Herbal Drink) and alfalfa. The latter have been reported to be particularly effective in the treatment of most cases of arthritis. Doses of all these supplemental nutrients have to

be carefully individualized. Supervision by a nutritional medical doctor or naturopath is highly desirable.

WHAT TO ASK YOUR HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONER TO DO FOR YOU

The following diagnostic and treatment possibilities are frequently worth investigating, especially for those who have been suffering from chronic fatigue which has failed to respond to medical intervention or the simple self-help measures discussed earlier:

- Low grade depression, often accompanied by anxiety, is a real diagnostic possibility and one of the major reasons for unexplained chronic fatigue. It should not be forgotten that insomnia, fatigue, eating disorders, memory loss and multiple intractable somatic complaints are common symptoms of a clinical depression. This diagnosis is usually the most resisted by chronically fatigued victims but long term psychotherapy may well be worth a try. Other treatment options include aerobic exercise, visualization, yoga, breathing exercises, massage therapy, acupressure or Shiatsu and other relaxation techniques.

Alcohol, tobacco or other drug/substance abuse is often seen in depressed individuals and requires long term addiction therapy either in a hospital or detox clinic setting. As an initial act, look into various 12-step support groups for guidance.

Whether or not you believe that stress or relationship conflicts can affect you physically, look into some ways to make positive changes to your lifestyle by reading some of the reference listed at the end of this article.

- Subclinical hypothyroidism or Wilson's disease which can be discovered in cases where body temperatures are consistently below 98.6 degrees F or 37 degrees C. Fatigue usually responds to natural thyroid hormone precursors like iodine, tyrosine, zinc, copper and selenium or to thyroid hormone itself (i.e. desiccated thyroid or liothyronine).

- Toxic heavy metal excess or hypersensitivity, especially to mercury in dental amalgams but also to lead, cadmium, aluminum, copper, arsenic and nickel. Ridding the body of these toxins through a variety of natural supplements like garlic, N-acetyl-cysteine, vitamin C, vitamin E and selenium often eliminates fatigue. In more severe cases, intravenous chelation therapy is effective.

- Vitamin deficiencies, especially to B complex vitamins, notably folic acid and vitamin B12 which may be poorly absorbed by the intestines of chronically ill individuals are common fatigue generators. Injections of vitamin B12 and folic acid may be necessary until gut healing can take place.

- Mineral deficiencies or imbalances involving iron, zinc, copper, selenium, calcium, magnesium, chromium, manganese, silicon, boron, iodine and lithium. Iron deficiency is not the only mineral capable of causing fatigue. Testing for other mineral deficiencies may be vary important.

- Essential fatty acid and amino deficiencies can come about due to malabsorption caused by digestive enzyme deficiencies. Amino acids are precursors to all the neurotransmitters responsible for optimal brain and nervous system function. Essential fatty acids are important components of all body cells and particularly vital for the health of the nervous system.

- Masked or delayed food allergies or chemical hypersensitivities which can only be determined by elimination - provocation testing or blood tests like RAST or ELISA.

- Hypoglycemia or hyperglycemia due to endocrine gland dysfunction other than the thyroid (pancreas, adrenal, gonadal disease) is often overlooked as a cause of chronic fatigue. Blood levels of hormones like DHEA, cortisol and progesterone might all be at suboptimal levels.

- Chronic candida/fungal infection or hypersensitivity syndrome which is best diagnosed and treated by a trial therapy with a sugar-free, yeast-free diet and natural antifungal supplements like garlic, taheebo, tea tree oil, colloidal silver, olive oil, acidophilus and others.

- Chronic parasitic infestations usually due to poor or inappropriate medical testing procedures are not only associated with digestive problems like chronic constipation or diarrhea but with chronic fatigue and immune system malfunctions of nearly every type.

- Low stomach acidity or low pancreatic enzyme production in response to food intake leads to subclinical malabsorption syndromes and numerous nutrient deficiencies, which, when corrected alleviate some cases of chronic fatigue.

Discuss these possibly overlooked diagnoses and treatment options with your natural health care practitioner. For more information, see the references below.

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WINTER HEALTH TUNE UP

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Natural immune system builders can help prevent flu, colds and other common infections. A multivitamin and mineral supplement will provide basic protection. For better protection, consider these immune boosters.

Vitamin C

High doses of vitamin C stimulate white blood cells to produce more virus-fighting interferon and natural immune-boosting hydrogen peroxide. The recommended daily dose in Canada is 60 mg. For antibiotic properties, take 200-1,000 mg.

Echinacea

Improves ability of body's macrophages to destroy germs by increasing T-cell production. Take for 14 days every month for best protection.

Garlic, Onions, Parsley, Cayenne

Active ingredients allicin, bioflavonoids and phytosterols repel a variety of disease-producing bacteria, fungi and parasites. Useful for bronchitis, sinusitis, bladder and yeast infections.

OTHER BOOSTERS

Siberian ginseng

Protects body against stress, radiation and chemical toxins. Improves production of antibodies and interferon.

Pau d'arco

Herb, also known as taheebo. Potent immune enhancer for people susceptible to yeast or fungal infections.

Reishi, shitake and maitake mushrooms

Increase resistance to viruses and bacteria by increasing production of T-cells and interferon.

Co-enzyme Q10 and Chinese herb Astragalus also increase interferon.

NOTE: Stock up on the YU-CCAN premium line of immune-boosting products for the winter season.