



Lyme Disease – A Personal Story
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It all started on July 29th with pain and inflammation in my right shoulder. The pain was intense, especially at night as I tried to sleep, but I got through it with ice and NSAIDS. The shoulder pain resolved after a few days but then showed up around a week or two later in my right wrist. I worked out regularly and I figured I had somehow injured myself. Once the wrist pain resolved I went another couple weeks before the pain and inflammation returned, this time in my left wrist. I knew something was wrong. It took another couple of weeks before everything came to a head. Trying to vigorously prep for a surprise birthday party I was throwing for my husband on September 26th, I was overcome with horrible pain and inflammation in multiple joints simultaneously, including my knee, wrist and shoulder. I pushed through the party with the help of ice and NSAIDS and went to Urgent Care the next morning. There they did a series of bloodwork, including testing for Lyme disease, and sent me home with a Medrol dose pack. I was referred by Urgent Care to see a rheumatologist due to the fact that my rheumatoid factor was positive and my inflammation markers were high. There another round of bloodwork was ordered, including the western blot for Lyme disease, for a second time. Once again, the results were negative.

Suspecting a potential acute autoimmune reaction to a virus the rheumatologist recommended that I stay on 4mg of Medrol and wait a month to retest. Although the pain and inflammation were somewhat controlled on the steroid I still couldn't shake the feeling of being "sick" and I was constantly tired throughout the day, despite getting around 10 hours of sleep per night. This continued through October and November when I began reading about potential viruses, including Epstein Barr, and how one would want to build up the immune system, rather than suppress it, to calm the effects of such a virus. I began taking immune boosting supplements, natural anti-inflammatories and following a strict gluten, dairy, grain, sugar, caffeine and alcohol free diet. Slowly I was able to lower the dose of Medrol and switch over to a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory.

In January, I decided to consult with a Naturopath. He immediately suspected Lyme disease and began treating me with natural antimicrobials and biofilm degraders. I tried to endure these treatments for a month, plus I added acupuncture, but the pain and inflammation were too severe for me to handle. I had to take a medical leave from work and I began seeing a LLMD (Lyme literate medical doctor). Finally, upon being started on antibiotic treatment, I am beginning to get some relief from the pain, inflammation and fatigue. I still have a ways to go, but I have improved on all fronts.

Notes to Healthcare Providers: Patients treated with appropriate antibiotics in the early stages of Lyme disease usually recover rapidly and completely. Antibiotics commonly used for oral treatment include doxycycline, amoxicillin, or cefuroxime axetil. Patients with certain neurological or cardiac forms of illness may require intravenous treatment with drugs such as ceftriaxone or penicillin. For detailed recommendations on treatment, consult the [2006 Guidelines for treatment developed by the Infectious Diseases Society of America](#). Due to limitations of Lyme disease diagnostic testing, healthcare providers should consider treatment for Lyme disease if signs and symptoms are present and tick exposure is possible. For more information, please visit: [Diagnosis, Treatment and Testing](#).