

Australian inquiry into Biotoxin-related illnesses

29 July 2018

Dear Sir/Madam,

I became very unwell in June 2017 and I have been on the journey of investigation ever since then. Following an increase in exercise load at that time, I suddenly became extremely weak and fatigued, I had nausea and diarrhoea along with a host of other symptoms including: - tingling and numbness in my hands and feet and buttocks, tinnitus, pains around my abdomen, severe brain fog and dizziness. The only test from a doctor that showed anything that needed action was Helicobacter Pylori. Even that was played down by some doctors, as they felt most people would have some in their body, and didn't think it would be an issue. I was offered antibiotics to treat the H. Pylori due to my family history, but I chose to treat it using herbal antimicrobials and other natural remedies to heal the gastro-intestinal tract, following the advice of a naturopath.

As this didn't do much for my symptoms, I then sought help from a Functional Medicine practitioner, and this involved a drastic change of diet to reduce inflammation by avoiding foods that were considered irritants. The change of diet involved eating more protein, less sugary foods and continued supplements. I felt I improved in various ways but some months into it, I noticed I was becoming very sensitive to outdoor light and uncoordinated with my limbs. I also noticed my tongue was not forming words properly, and I felt very out of sorts. When I stopped the anti-microbial treatment for H. Pylori as a preparatory requirement for re-testing, my symptoms initially became much worse. Many of the areas that had improved got worse again. This was the point that I realised there was more to the picture than an H. Pylori infection.

Orthodox GPs were getting sick of seeing me, and of me asking for more tests, as they felt they were not warranted. Most of them didn't know what category to put me in. I've had a gastroenterologist (wrongly) suggest I had Fibromyalgia by inventing symptoms that I didn't have in order to make his opinion sound more plausible. Other doctors suggested my problem could be psychological since their standard suite of tests didn't show anything that would explain my symptoms. I didn't pursue either of these directions as I felt they were a reflection of their ignorance and inadequacy of their tests. Consultations with an immunologist and neurologist later on did not shed any relevant light or diagnoses.

In January 2018, I chose to see a Bioresonance Practitioner who identified issues including mould exposure and heavy metal toxicity among other things. I underwent his bioresonance and homeopathic treatments for these issues and they improved many of my symptoms. I also removed my television and microwave ovens as they were suspected to be leaking arsenic, which had been detected at a high level in my brain.

The Bioresonance Practitioner suggested that heavy metal toxicity could prevent eradication of some bacterial, fungal and parasitic infections, which were detected in my body, and this led to homeopathic treatments and other supplements intended to remove these toxins. I also believe that my hypersensitivity to electromagnetic radiation could be related to these issues, as I didn't have this before this year.

In the last few months I have also seen a couple of Integrative Medical (IM) doctors who have been treating other problems that have shown up in medical tests (thyroid issues, gut infections, B12 deficiency). I am awaiting other new test results through one of these before an official diagnosis can be made, but I suspect one of them will be CIRS. I have also been taking detox supplements (such as Advanced TRS and Glutathione/NAC), which I believe are helping matters.

One of these IM doctors suggested I engage the services of a building biologist to identify environmental hazards around my home and this proved to be very enlightening as they found some high concentrations of mould on my bed slats and drawers, and high levels of electromagnetic radiation (EMR) around certain devices and appliances. This was very useful to know as I then realised how sensitive I was to EMR, and I continued the process of making my home healthier and safer. Some of the Building Biologist's recommendations pertained to the landlord, while others are my responsibility, as they did not relate to the building. We both have made some changes, but not all recommendations were followed by the landlord as he felt they were not necessary.

I live on Sydney's northern beaches. I think my mould exposure came from growths in my home garden area, and possibly some furniture and other belongings, but not necessarily from a "water-damaged building" per se although there are moss formations on some of the bricks. Some of this mould was visible, and some of it was not, and there was no musty smell around any of the mould/fungi- contaminated areas and items—in other words—easy to miss.

I have seen what looks like water-damaged ceilings around vent holes at a hairdressing salon that I attended recently and brought it to their attention and the reaction was not one of concern about it. Apart from some building occupants and owners not being very worried about water damage or mould markings, the problem is also that mould is not necessarily visible or odorous, so it can be hiding anywhere, particularly in areas where there is poor ventilation and high humidity.

I have spent over \$40,000 with all the tests, health treatments, supplements, consultations in investigating and treating my health problems etc. This includes having to make major dietary changes that involve eating more organic food, and having to replace household items to remove toxic sources. My health problems, and managing them, have taken up so much of my time and money that it has displaced other activities I would have been doing if I were in good health. It has also affected my productivity and therefore limits the type and amount of work I can do.

The broader issues and actions that need to be taken here are: -

1. Orthodox GPs have been under-educated when it comes to nutritional and environmental medicine. This matter is not limited to mould, water-damaged buildings and CIRS (about which they are very ignorant)! It is about their complete ignorance of broader causes of disease and of comprehensive testing methods. So when they order their approved tests (which are very basic and limited in their scope), and those test results look "normal", they often jump to the conclusion that the patient's symptoms must be psychological. GPs need to be encouraged to undertake ACNEM studies themselves (as a starting point) to address some of the

gaps in their education, with the understanding that continuing education never stops in this area. They need to be informed that their medical training (even though it was long) did not cover everything, **and that their testing methods are limited in their scope and do not address the areas that they haven't learnt about**, and that the pursuit of further knowledge and skills is something that they have to proactively pursue i.e. it's not going to be delivered to them on a silver platter.

2. At the moment, when the orthodox GP can't work out the patient's problems, they often offer the patient a mental health plan as if to suggest the symptoms are all psychosomatic. Or they may also refer the patient to an orthodox specialist that relates to their main symptoms. This often ends up with prescribing medications that are for depression, anxiety and others that cover the symptoms they are feeling, but without getting to the root of it. I believe that GPs' **mandatory referral protocol needs to include integrative medical doctors for cases that they don't understand well**, and not just to a psychologist or another orthodox specialist. By making it compulsory to do this, the patient at least becomes aware that there is another avenue they can pursue that is much more investigative and comprehensive than what their orthodox GP can offer.
3. The cost to see an Integrative Medical doctor and to access their specialised tests is so great, that it is not affordable by many members of the community. Very little of it is covered by Medicare and not at all by our health insurance funds. When you add to this medications and supplements which are not rebatable, the cost of getting to the root of your health issues and restoring your health suddenly becomes financially crippling if you have a complex illness that requires extensive testing and treatment approaches. Something needs to be done to make these services more affordable to the wider community, such as more coverage under Medicare and health funds. Right now, it is cheaper to take anti-depressant / anxiety medications and antibiotics than it is to investigate the root cause of the issue and treating that. This is not a good precedent at all, and discourages patients from being comprehensively assessed.
4. There are other toxins in our environment that can make us unwell, and they are not limited to what appears on or in the walls, ceilings and floors. These include: - high levels of arsenic, mercury and copper and electromagnetic fields. On the subject of mould however, you need to be aware that it can grow in gardens/plants, on furniture (both hard and soft furnishings), on clothes and shoes etc. and not just found in water-damaged buildings. Mould remediation is something that needs to be done carefully too as traditional mould killers can be toxic in themselves. Qualified building biologists are the best professionals to engage in this area as they cover more bases than just mould, and they recommend healthy and safe (low-toxin) methods to address the problems that generally won't create new ones.
5. Of course building codes and regulations need to comply with mould prevention strategies, and more attention needs to be paid to research that shows the effects of environmental toxins on the body etc. But I think that nutritional and environmental health and safety need to form a compulsory part of high school education and that way it will filter across to all related vocational training and

environmental health and safety policies. Physical and mental health is the most important and life-long resource that we depend upon, and it should take precedence over advanced calculus and Shakespeare studies. Toxins that accumulate cause many chronic health conditions, **not just CIRS!** This is not just about mould and water-damaged buildings, it is about all the toxins/contaminants we are exposed to in life: - those occurring in chemical sprays, foods and drinks, personal hygiene products, cleaning agents, tap water, pet waste, electrical devices and Wi-Fi frequencies and so on. Just as our kids are taught about nut allergies and anaphylaxis, we need to educate them about toxic exposure and problems with elimination that some people have. The sooner this is incorporated into basic compulsory education about life, the sooner we can work towards reducing the wider problem in society overall.