

*Following is a summary of my illness with focus on the effects of antibiotics taken.
By Arlene Lazzarini as of September 23, 2013; prepared for Ed Alexander, IDTusa*

Onset was November 16, 2007 when I came home from work with a sore throat. Initially I consulted with my primary care physician (hereinafter referred to as PCP). He observed that my tonsils were red, swollen and covered with sores and pus. The rapid strep test done in the office was negative but he prescribed **Azithromycin Tab 500mg** to be taken 1 per day for 3 days. I felt a little better after a few days.

A week later I felt worse with a general feeling of malaise (aches, pains and fatigue). My throat was still painful and sores, which had gotten smaller after taking the antibiotics, came back. Since the throat swab came back negative for bacteria, my PCP felt I had a viral infection which he said was not treatable and prescribed Codeine with Promethazine HCL syrup for my sore throat and coughing; and Lunesta for my insomnia.

As I felt progressively worse with a painful throat and lower back pain, I consulted with another doctor in the ER on 12/17/2007. He looked in my throat, diagnosed strep and prescribed **Amoxicillin 500mg**, 3 per day for 10 days. He said that throat cultures are accurate only 40% of the time and advised me to see an ENT if my condition did not improve by the time I finished taking the antibiotics. I took the last of the antibiotics on 12/27/2007. The lower back pain was gone and throat was clear of sores and pus but still painful and very red.

On 12/30/2007 I detected red blisters on my tonsils. Other symptoms I experienced were: very painful sore throat, mild dry cough, tightness/pressure in my chest, dizziness, aches and pains especially in my back, incapacitating fatigue, loss of visual acuity, hissing in my ears, burning sensation in my mouth, metallic taste (perhaps attributed to meds), mild runny nose, sneezing, muscle weakness, chills, nausea, occasional mild fever, rashes, inability to regulate body temperature, dehydration, numbness in my hands and feet, ridges in my nails, foggy brain, and continued insomnia.

On 01/07/2008 I had an appointment with an Otolaryngologist. He requested a blood test and later informed me that the result of the test came back negative for the illnesses he screened me for including mononucleosis and leukemia. However he said my liver was stressed and my white blood cell count was elevated usually indicative of allergies. Still inconclusive as to whether I had a viral or bacterial infection, because I was not feeling well, he prescribed **Amox CRV TRK**, another stronger antibiotic, taken 2 per day for 10 days. This time, I felt no relief. However, I experienced no adverse effect from any of the three antibiotics mentioned above.

In the meantime we found mold underneath the living room of our home and explored the theory that I was suffering from long term exposure to mold.

Since I still didn't have a diagnosis I had appointments with my Ophthalmologist, an Allergist, an Integrative Medicine practitioner, a second Otolaryngologist and several times went back to my PCP. On 04/10/08 my PCP prescribed one dosage of **Diflucan**, an antibiotic which had no effect on me.

As I continued on my quest to find out what was ailing me, I saw my Gynecologist, a Sleep Disorder specialist, a Chiropractor, a physiatrist at St. Mary's Spine Center, an Acupuncturist, an Osteopath, a third Otolaryngologist, an Infectious Disease Specialist, a Rheumatologist and a second Infectious Disease Specialist. The IDS was at a loss as to what I had and prescribed

Valtrex to try, stating that the meds were “benign.” By then I had been on various medications, had X-rays, MRIs and over 100 blood tests.

On 04/21/10, I was referred to a Neurologist. By then, I had lost about 15 pounds. While in her care, she ordered over 40 blood tests. On 05/26/10 as she analyzed the results of the tests, she made the diagnosis that I was suffering from neuroborreliosis, chronic back pain just inferior to tick bite, depression, and insomnia. As we discussed the possibility of a tick bite, it became apparent I was bit during the first week of November 2007 as I remembered what felt like a scab in my head after spending time in a wooded area with many overgrown trees in Colorado Springs where ticks are prevalent. It would also explain the lack of a tell-tale sign of a bullet mark if a tick indeed fell into my hair and burrowed in my head. Her protocol for Lyme treatment began with a comprehensive assessment of my brain and body function. As she ordered more blood tests, an MRI and MRA she made an analysis that I had Lyme as well as its co-infections, namely *Borrelia burgdorferi*, *Babesia* and *Bartonella Henselae*. She put me on several antibiotics starting with **Omnicef 300mg**, 4 per day on 05/26/2010 to try and eradicate the spirochetes. [Evidently spirochetes can take on different forms such as cysts, which is what my first IDS found while reviewing the MRI he had ordered back in 04/22/2009. It is perhaps because of its ability to hide that Lyme tests, as I understand it, may result in false positive as well as false negative.] On 06/04/2010 I was to take the next antibiotic called **Tindamax 250mg** tablets 1 after breakfast and 1 after dinner, 5 days on 2 days off on top of the Omnicef. I lost more weight and had a difficult time keeping these antibiotics down. I often had cramps and vomited. My body felt like it was shutting down internally. As my back/throat pain became unbearable, I was given different pain meds to try. My Neurologist called these side effects Jarisch-Herxheimer (Herx for short). This condition is experienced as the bacteria are supposedly dying off. As my condition went from bad to worse, she added **Ursodiol 300mg** to be taken with Omnicef in order to keep them down. Since that did not help, she prescribed **Doxycycline 50mg** in lieu of the others to be taken 1 after breakfast and 1 after dinner starting on 08/20/2010. This antibiotic seemed a little milder than the other ones I had taken and may have helped my ailment. Aside from that she put me on **Valcyte 450mg** tablets to be taken twice daily starting on 09/03/2010 to combat any viral infection I may have. Finally on 02/09/2011 I was supposed to layer **Rifampin 150mg**, 1 after breakfast and 1 after dinner. Rifampin caused bloody stools and by then I weighed 79 pounds down from 113. All in all, I had taken antibiotics for over a year. Both my PCP as well as the second IDS told me to quit taking the antibiotics and urged me to stop seeing my Neurologist.

On 04/13/2011 my friend suggested I consult with a homeopathic doctor specializing in Lyme. He gave me herbal tincture formulas called A-Bab and A-Bart, neither of which had any effect on me. However, one interesting test he had ordered for me was to determine levels of IgG Allergens for 14 types of molds; of which all 14 came back classified as “Abnormal.” Unfortunately he was unable to decipher the meaning of the results.

I had since been hospitalized from 06/24/2011 and discharged on 06/28/2011; been seen by another Allergist in hopes of learning something about the mold tests to no avail; and saw a Pain Management Specialist. No notable results came from these visits.

I was and still am continuing to see my PCP as he is helping me deal with my symptoms. And so it was until Ed Alexander put me on the Japanese black gels (FCA) on 10/26/2012. I have since gotten back all of the weight I had lost and they have brought back a sense of normalcy in my life. The last remaining symptoms are insomnia, fatigue and back pain from the spirochete(s) coiled around the nerves in my lower back. As I often learn the efficacy of substances taken when I get off them, I believe these black gels have been very effective.