

Meet the Patient: Case Study on Chronic Inflammatory Response Syndrome

Meet the Patient is a new series we are launching on the BioDesign Wellness Center blog to present case studies of actual patients we have treated over the years or are currently treating. Our hope is these stories resonate with anyone who is or knows of someone struggling with a similar health condition and has not received an accurate diagnosis or effective medical treatment – especially those who may be close to giving up hope of ever feeling healthy, energetic, and happy again.

Our objective with these case studies is to restore a belief that happiness – a major step toward optimizing health and fitness – is attainable, even by those who are chronically ill.



Please note that in some cases (not all) names and certain other details may be changed or omitted to ensure patient-doctor confidentiality, but specifics about conditions, diagnoses, and treatments are accurate. Our case studies are based on information provided by actual [functional medicine patients](#) and their BioDesign doctors, and patients have agreed to share their stories.

Introducing Christine M.

Our first case study focuses on Christine, who asked that we not use her last name but said it was okay to reveal that she moved from Northern Virginia to the Tampa Bay Area just a few years ago. Christine is in her mid-60s, and while living in Va., she consulted with her primary care physician and with cardiologists and a pulmonologist – along with two ‘wellness doctors’ – to find out why she was feeling so exhausted and physically weak

all the time:

“I woke up tired and never refreshed, no matter how much sleep I had. For decades, I pulled myself through every task/activity/event because I was told that everyone is living a stressful life with too much to do. I was told that my blood work was good and there was nothing wrong with me. On occasions, when I had energy, it was usually followed by several days of exhaustion.”

Christine was told that her exhaustion, weakness, and lack of stamina were due to her stressful lifestyle and poor physical condition – her weight and lack of exercise.

After moving to Florida, Christine attended a presentation delivered by our Dr. Lewis, and she spoke with him at great length about her condition. Afterward, she came away feeling that BioDesign Wellness Center, “might be a new beginning” for her, so she scheduled an evaluation.

After extensive testing, we discovered that Christine was suffering from Chronic Inflammatory Response Syndrome (CIRS) – an environmentally acquired illness that results from exposure to mold and mold toxins in water damaged buildings. (See [our previous post, “Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Fibromyalgia, and Other Waste-Basket Diagnoses”](#) for additional information.)

Christine’s treatment protocol

We started Christine on our 60-day liver cleanse protocol and worked with her to not only modify her diet but to really figure out what foods were contributing most to her inflammatory condition. By doing so, once the 60-day protocol was complete, she was able to make good decisions about what foods to eat moving forward to keep inflammation and symptoms down.

Our liver cleanse protocol is not just about resting the liver; it also involves taking supplements that, in essence, are similar to performing an “oil change.” Just as a car needs fresh oil, so does each cell in our bodies. By providing fresh and specific oils to the machinery in Christine’s cells, we were able to have her whole body feeling more refreshed. The 60-day liver cleanse protocol includes several steps:

1. Support the organs that detox the body (*liver, kidneys, and intestines*) with specific nutraceutical grade supplements.
2. Evaluate diet, provide nutritional counseling, identify food sensitivities, and create a long-term solution for maintenance and continued results following the 60 days.
3. Change the oil in the cells while cleansing toxins from the organs. This provides the long-term benefit people are searching for.
4. Bind toxins in the digestive tract for proper elimination.

The fourth step is crucial in the successful treatment of CIRS, because many people have a genetic inability to eliminate mold toxins from their bodies. In these individuals, the mold toxins must be bound to other molecules to enable the body to remove them. One option that works well is a prescription cholesterol medicine that is typically used to support healthy bile flow – Cholestyramine (CSM). CSM happens to have a molecular structure that is attracted to mold toxins and therefore binds the mold toxins which can then be eliminated through the process of bowel movements. This stops the toxins from recirculating back through the intestinal blood stream into the liver again. Stopping this vicious cycle improves symptoms and enables the body to start healing after years of chronic inflammation.

We also ordered an Environmental Relative Moldiness Index test (ERMI) to identify or rule out the presence of mold in

Christine's home. Fortunately, the results of the test were negative, so no mold remediation was necessary, but we wanted to ensure that the current environment in which she was living was safe. Christine suspects she may have been exposed to mold over the course of several years at her workplace in Northern Virginia.

Christine's Treatment Experience

As of this printing, Christine is approximately halfway through her treatment plan, and admits that it has been somewhat challenging to comply with our doctor's orders:

"I have been as dedicated as I can be. Considering my many distractions with traveling and hosting many out-of-town guests, I have been fairly consistent with the treatment plan. I have had difficulty adhering to the daily schedule and taking some supplements two hours away from medications or an hour before or after meals or on an empty stomach. Sometimes, I haven't done well at all, but I always manage to get myself back on track. At times, I create a flow chart to help me manage the medications and supplements."

Treatment outcome

Even though Christine is only halfway through her treatment plan, she is already feeling amazing:

"OH MY! I am blown away by how much better I feel. I'm not jumping out of bed, but I can talk to my husband upon awakening. I have strength in my body and am able to exercise most days, although not consistently. I can walk up steps without being out of breath. I walked with strength on a recent trip to New York City without needing to stop or feeling like I might have a heart attack. I have a good problem now – making

myself go to bed! Once I'm up and running there's no stopping me. So, my sleep is suffering, but I will get back on track."

We can all learn a valuable lesson from Christine: If you are not feeling as healthy and energetic as you think you should feel, and you're not getting the results desired from your healthcare providers, don't give up your right to being happy. Keep searching for a doctor until you find one who can diagnose and treat the root cause of whatever is ailing you. With the proper diagnosis and treatment, health, energy, and happiness can be restored!

Disclaimer: *The information in this blog post about the diagnosis and treatment of Chronic Inflammatory Response Syndrome is provided for general informational purposes only and may not reflect current medical thinking or practices. No information contained in this post should be construed as medical advice from the medical staff at BioDesign Wellness Center, Inc., nor is this post intended to be a substitute for medical counsel on any subject matter. No reader of this post should act or refrain from acting on the basis of any information included in, or accessible through, this post without seeking the appropriate medical advice on the particular facts and circumstances at issue from a licensed medical professional in the recipient's state, country or other appropriate licensing jurisdiction.*