

The Lyme Log

Part 3: 2006

June 26, 2006:

Returned to Dr. Walker and told her the amount of pain I am in cannot be normal. She agreed what was “tendinitis” could not spread around the body. She said to try some anti-inflammatory medications – she did blood tests for Lyme's disease, Lupus, Rheumatoid Arthritis and Multiple Sclerosis and suggested Fibromyalgia.

I had two blood tests done which both indicated no problems.

July 17, 2006:

Per Dr. Walker, went to Dr. Armin of Havertown Family Chiropractic to make sure the pain wasn't my spine being out of line. He evaluated me and determined he believed he could help in a short period of time.

After three treatments, Dr. Armin determined it could not be my spine because I would be feeling better. He suggested seeing a rheumatologist since there was nothing wrong with my spine or bones. He had suggested I try a large dose of vitamins for a month to make sure the pain was not related to any form of malnutrition. I tried this, no change.

August 21, 2006:

Per Dr. Armin, I went to see Dr. Thomas Whalen of Whalen Rheumatology Group in Havertown. He ordered full X-rays and a DEXA bone scan. He was not forthcoming as to why he ordered these tests or interested in hearing anything about my struggles with pain. He said I could have a sleep disorder but the tests would tell him more.

September 7, 2006:

Dr. Whalen's tests came back normal.

He attributed all my problems to one leg being longer than the other. When I told him it sounded weird that my shoulder and arms hurt because one leg is longer than the other, he prescribed Prednisone for three weeks telling me that the only other alternative was exploratory surgery.

I saw no change in pain until after I was done the Prednisone. During the time I was taking it, I felt no different that I had before – occasionally having a “good day”, but, the pain would return. Once I was done the medication, I was feeling better for about two weeks – I was able to work both my full-time and part-time job, no unrealistic energy loss or a lot pain. (A two week period without any major pain is a long time for me). All symptoms returned about three weeks later and returned to full force about four weeks after I stopped the Prednisone.

Dr. Whalen point-blank asked me if I was pretending to be sick because I wanted attention.

December 2006:

My memory was noticeably suffering. I could not remember having conversations a few seconds after having them. I misplaced objects frequently and often found myself in the process of looking for something with no memory of what I was looking for. On one occasion, I repeatedly opened and closed the same drawer while trying to find the garbage bin.

Since I saw no reason to return to Dr. Whalen, I made an appointment with another rheumatologist Dr. Pierre Minerva of Bryn Mawr Hospital. Since I had no medical insurance, he wanted to hold off on any testing. In the meantime, he prescribed Tramadol and gave me samples of Lidoderm (Lidocaine patch) and Skelaxin (muscle relaxer). I found no use for the patch or Skelaxin - took the maximum dose of the Tramadol before I found slight relief and the pain. By the beginning of February, the effects of his medication had worn off and the pain returned.