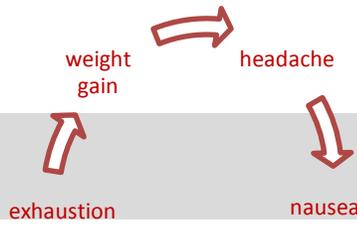


LAURI: The Hashi cycle

By Lauri Martin



I am 56 years old and cannot remember a time that I felt well. I can remember at the age of about 17 having minor and passing symptoms of exhaustion, dizziness, being so itchy, having aches and pains.

Looking back on the birth of my older children, I am not sure if I had thyroid issues or if anyone mentioned it. In 1987, after the birth of my last baby I was told I felt sick because I had postpartum thyroid issues. I was informed by my doctor that this was common and not to worry about it. At the time I had severe ear and neck pain, all over body pain, totally exhausted, dizzy, tremors and so very cold. I remember having a head x-ray to check something, which was maybe looking for a pituitary growth. There was no follow up. The cycle never ended: symptoms of exhaustion, headaches, joint pain, nausea, aches and pains, weight issues, then back to normal for a while. This plagued me for decades.

I moved to a different city in 1990 to go to college. Once a straight-A student, I could barely finish college. I had a different doctor who suggested that maybe I suffered from depression which I disagreed with. Unfortunately, I had heard the words “Nothing wrong with you” so many times that I just stopped making doctor appointments. I had become very leery of the medical field. It was so hurtful and embarrassing to have a few doctors roll their eyes when I insisted that something wasn’t right. At that time, it was different, none of us had heard about autoimmune disease or thyroid disease or at least I had not. I even had one of my bosses insisting that there was something wrong and that maybe I had undiagnosed MS because my balance was noticeably off.

I moved back to my home town in 1994. Over the years I had mentioned to my doctor having no periods for months to long/heavy periods, migraines, anxiety, maybe/maybe not depression and all the other hypo/hyper symptoms. About 1998, my original family doctor took me aside and asked if my husband and I could afford to live on one income so that I could get some rest for a while. I was just going through the motions with my children, being there for them was so hard. It is a kind of tired that you cannot describe to people. My husband has always had to be the sole support of our family.

In 2002, we moved to a small rural area. In about 2004 or 2005, my sister who also has thyroid disease urged me to get my thyroid tested as I was really having a problem with exhaustion, dizziness, tremors etc. The blood tests came up fine. In March 2010, I thought I’d had a heart attack. My body stopped moving, my hands and head were shaking, I was frozen, nauseous, and the right side of my body wasn’t working right. Finally, I was formally diagnosed with overt hypothyroidism and Hashimoto’s thyroiditis. I started the process of adjusting to Synthroid. It was helping to a degree, but I find I feel best with a high free t4. My sisters are the same. Three different doctors have told me that I should have been on medication years ago. I now take a handful of other medications for neuropathy in my hands and feet. I have had a handful of other blood tests and an MRI to exclude any other autoimmune diseases. I am not diabetic, although it has been mentioned that long term untreated hypothyroidism can cause neuropathy.

Having Hashimoto’s has certainly been a struggle for me. I know that my hyper/hypo symptoms will start every January. I feel like I have the worst flu, neuropathic pain is worse, then in March and April I will flip to hypo with symptoms of sleeping all day, joint pain etc. then the rest of the year over to euthyroid with minor thyroid symptoms. Extreme heat and stress can cause me to flip to hyper. My husband and friends have told me that they always knew something was not right but didn’t know what to do about it.

Another struggle for me has been the medical field. There has never been a conversation with me about thyroid disease, so I stay on reputable websites to educate myself. For the most part I have learned not to bring up any lingering symptoms such as being so cold all the time. Being told your TSH is in range so your symptoms are dealt with is very distressing to me. I believe I deserve to have some reassurance that when working with my doctor I will be kept as symptom free as possible. In my life time I hope to see changes in how thyroid disease is viewed and treated.



Lauri and husband Dan

