

LYME DISEASE

Staying Healthy with Dr. Aieta, N.D.

BODY, MIND and YOU

I consider antibiotics the first treatment for Lyme disease, especially in the acute phases. The literature shows that the effectiveness rates for antibiotics run from 70 to 95 percent, depending upon the study. Rarely included in these statistics is the fact that there is often as much as a 35 percent relapse rate.

Research has also shown that live Lyme bacteria are regularly found in people who have been on antibiotic therapy for years. The Lyme organism is highly adaptable and is able to evade antibiotic regimens, even those of long duration. Continual antibiotic dosing can keep the organisms at lower levels, but studies regularly show that it does not eradicate them in 40 percent of the cases.

I routinely refer patients to Lyme specialists for antibiotic therapy, and many make full recoveries (usually if it's caught early enough). Still, a handful of cases, especially those with chronic Lyme, require

more support.

That's where naturopathic medicine comes into play.

My naturopathic treatment, just like conventional antibiotic therapy, focuses on the eradication of the Lyme bacteria, but through the use of specific antimicrobial herbs. The big difference is that my approach also focuses on things like immune modulation and support, tissue support (specifically the joints) and symptomatic relief. Many times, Lyme specialists refer patients to me for this additional support when antibiotic treatment is unsuccessful or not yielding optimal results.

In fact, the combination of the naturopathic and conventional treatments typically yields excellent results. For patients who can't tolerate the antibiotic treatment, or when long-term antibiotic treatment was unsuccessful, the naturopathic treatment can be used on its own.

Then, of course, is the topic of "co-infections," which can accompany Lyme disease. The two most common

co-infections that I see are Ehrlichia and Babesia. I have successfully eradicated both of these with specific herbal and nutritional treatments.

Lyme disease, unfortunately, is one of those afflictions that is commonly misdiagnosed. The problem here is due to the fact that most physicians will only treat if the patient remembers getting bit by a tick and the classic bulls'-eye rash is apparent. Meanwhile, up to two thirds of the people infected have no rash at all, and many may never see the offending tick.

In addition, the standard laboratory tests for Lyme have been shown to miss more than 40 percent of infected patients. Many times, if I suspect a patient has Lyme disease, I'll implement a treatment plan based solely on the patient's clinical symptoms. Since my treatments are 100 percent natural, there is very low risk in a therapeutic trial to see if symptoms improve.

Diet and lifestyle also play a significant role in overcoming Lyme disease – or any other disease for that matter. Every patient I see gets coun-



seled on diet and lifestyle changes, and they are consistently reviewed at subsequent visits.

I consider diet and lifestyle modification the core of any healing protocol.

Dr. Frank Aieta is a board-certified and licensed Naturopathic Physician with a private practice in West Hartford, Conn. He specializes in the treatment of disease, using natural therapies such as acupuncture, homeopathy, spinal manipulation, clinical nutrition, and herbal medicine. If there is a specific topic you would like to see addressed in an upcoming column, you can e-mail him at DrAieta@aol.com, or visit www.DrAieta.com for additional information.

10 MINUTES TO BURN

Women's Fitness with Lisa Thomas

The key to burning calories during short workouts is to crank up the intensity and work harder than usual. This doesn't mean you have to sprint, just run a bit faster than normal. If you speed walk, just walk as fast as you can without breaking into a run, or walk a challenging incline. Even better, find the stairs at work and, on your 10-minute breaks, walk a flight, then run a flight, then walk a flight, and keep alternating.

Personally, I enjoy interval workouts. Below, I've put together a variety of moves for an intense workout that'll get your heart rate up in a short period of time.

Do all of these in succession, and watch as your everyday 10-minute break becomes 10 minutes of heart-pumping, healthy living.

- Jumping jacks

- Jogging in place: Lift your knees and pump your arms to get

your heart rate up.

- Plyometric lunges: Begin in a basic lunge position. In an explosive movement, jump, switch legs in the air and land with bent knees into lunge.

- Ski hops: With feet together, jump from side to side, landing with knees bent. The wider you jump and the lower you squat into the jump, the harder you'll work.

- Jump rope: If you don't have a rope, move your arms and pretend.

- Skipping: Let yourself be a kid again.

- Step jumps: Stand in front of step or platform and jump onto it, landing with both feet together. Step down and repeat.

- Squat hops: Stand with feet wide, lower into a squat and hop forward four times, keeping feet wide, legs bent into squat. Walk backwards and repeat.

Make sure you warm up with some

light walking or marching in place, do a quick cool-down, and stretch when you finish.

If time is limited and you only have 10 minutes for lifting weights, hit your large muscle groups to get the most out of your workout. Slow your reps down, try four-counts up and four-counts down to really challenge your muscles – squeeze and contract. Even if you can't get to the gym, do them while you watch TV at home, after work, or whenever you find time.

Try these moves: wall ball squats, lunges, dead lifts, pushups, and tricep dips. (If you don't know these moves, look them up or e-mail me, and I can give you more details.) All of these exercises use more than one muscle group, which means you get more bang for your buck. Add weight to make them more difficult, and perform between eight and 16 reps. Try to repeat these exercise two or three



more times each.

Don't forget the same warm up and cool down with your stretches.

Believe me, no matter how busy you are you can find time to exercise. Remember that it's always better to do something than nothing at all.

Lisa Thomas is a personal trainer/fitness coach in the Greater Springfield area, as well as owner of Thomas Fitness Center and Fit Kidz of Massachusetts. Contact her at (413) 426-5543 or t.fitness@hotmail.com, or visit www.thomasfitnesscenter.com.