

Feature Article:

Treating the Untreatable #2 Prescription Addiction

by Dr. Deborah Ardolf, NMD

When 53-year old Steve (name changed) presented to my clinic, he had been suffering with interstitial cystitis (IC) for twenty years. IC is a chronic condition with recurring pain in the bladder and the surrounding pelvic region. It is rarely diagnosed in the male population.

Steve's symptoms were no different. He exhibited urinary frequency (up to 60 times a day), urgency, and unrelenting bladder spasms 24/7. As a result, he also suffered from severely disturbed sleep. Over the years, he had undergone four bladder hydrodistentions and a sacral wire transplant without any success. He was prescribed fentanyl, morphine, diazepam, oxycodone, gabapentin, topamax, and valium for pain relief. He topped off his cocktail with a daily toke of marijuana. He was no longer able to hold down a job and his behavior was extremely inconsistent, with even the most basic of household chores. His relationship with his wife had become more and more distant as he spent the majority of his days in a severely altered state, falling asleep mid-sentence only to awake in the middle of the night to disturb her sleep, unintentionally of course.

As a naturopathic physician, it is my sworn duty to uncover the root cause of an illness. In this case like too many others, his condition was clouded with the long list of heavily sedating narcotics. These had to be cleared from his system first before we could find out what was really happening. I believed the underlying cause of his IC was buried beneath the sedation.

I prescribed a 15-day IV treatment lasting from 5 to 10 hours per day designed to stop his dependency on heavy narcotics. As the abused drugs or non-therapeutic drugs begin to dissipate, the brain, the most highly metabolic organ in the body, begins its sorely needed repair work for the first time in several decades! By so doing, the withdrawal symptoms are minor. The individual emerges before your eyes a new person with improved clarity, sharpness of mind, and if that's not enough, complete abstinence of cravings for narcotics and a significant reduction in pain!

It is puzzling why this highly effective treatment is not more widely known. One of the main ingredients used was discovered in 1939, extensively researched, and initially used to treat alcoholism. Clinicians in South Africa have administered the IV treatment successfully with no reported side effects since 1975. Dr. William Hitt, my mentor, has used the treatment for several decades to individuals initially suffering from alcoholism. He then altered the treatment program to successfully treat those inflicted with illicit drug abuse, before the major crisis of prescription drug addictions became the majority of his patient base.

How amazing to watch someone so trapped and encased in drugs to emerge into the same person they once were. An added bonus of the treatment and naturopathic philosophy, is the patient often becomes healthier than before as the subsequent naturopathic treatment addresses the whole person's mind and health. After the fifth day, he reported 80% relief of bladder spasms. This was an unexpected but welcome outcome, as it provided encouragement and support to the patient spending everyday with us in the office. After 15 days, he flew back home.

One week later, he called asking for more treatment as his bladder spasms and pain after eating had returned. He did not want to go back on the narcotics he had stashed around his house, but clearly needed non-narcotic relief of pain. Upon further questioning and work up, he was diagnosed with food allergies.

He was placed on a hypoallergenic diet and began weekly Autologous Urinary Immune Tolerization (AUIT) treatments. AUIT is a historic naturopathic treatment first reported in the literature in 1914 by Dr. Duncan, later reported by Dr. Hitt, in the Physician Handbook printed in 1982. Thanks to modern technology, the system used to filter the antigen receptors out the urine is as simple as applying the specialized filter to the syringe. Overtime, Steve, like all my patients who once suffered from unrelenting allergies, became more and more tolerant of foods that once caused him unrelenting pain.

Today, one and a half years later, Stan continues to be drug and pain free! Most importantly, he has his life back. Underneath the heavy, dark cloud of sedatives was a simple food allergy and an incredibly brilliant, funny, compassionate man. I can't think of a greater service to mankind than to give the gift of life or in this case a return to life.

BIO:

Dr. Deborah Ardolf (www.drardolf.com) is a naturopathic physician practicing in Kailua-Kona, HI. She is a rare and unique physician, which is why patients are willing to fly to her office to receive her care. She is passionate about uncovering the root cause of illness using naturopathic principles. Dr. Ardolf is a graduate of the Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine.

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