

Emma Green D.O.B 14/09/87

Hello to anyone reading this.

I wanted to tell my story up to date, of having had a major operation and then the sequence of things that happened to me afterwards. I do not apologise for the length of this letter because I want to list things in the hope that it may help other people identify with me who may be in a similar situation? What I want you to focus on is that with the right help and advice, massive changes can take place.

Firstly, I am so grateful that I was able to have an operation in February 2003 at the age of 15 to correct a double scoliosis of the spine. It was very successful and the surgery involved inserting two titanium rods with associated screws. I know without it my curvature would have become worse and I would most likely have become disabled with probable on-going problems. Following my operation however, I did not seem to recover from the surgery at a similar pace as others who had had the same procedure. I felt so tired and had to lie down at regular intervals and in truth, just felt exhausted all the time.

I went back to school with support from family and friends and completed my GCSE'S and A levels. I also managed to go to University but it was a massive struggle. Since having my operation and over the following 8 years my health deteriorated. I think it's best to make a list of my problems as follows:-

- Developed Coeliac disease and lactose intolerance
- Severe chronic fatigue symptoms
- Fibromyalgia and muscle spasms
- Chemical sensitivity
- Recurrent urine infections
- Kidney infections/ requiring hospital in patient treatment
- Heart palpitations
- Headaches
- Nausea
- Low immune system (I seemed to catch everything)
- Disturbed sleep

All of these things didn't happen at once, they just gradually developed. My GP was so supportive throughout, sending me for every test possible, but no one could diagnose my problem or come up with a specific diagnosis. During this period I was on constant antibiotics and high levels of sleeping tablets.

Then approximately three years ago, I became very ill with gastric problems being unable to go to the toilet properly. I was admitted to hospital for 10 days under the gastroenterologist team and underwent exhaustive tests to try and find the cause of my problems. It was at that very low point that someone in my family said could my problems be linked to intolerance with metals? We were put in contact with a private clinic called The Melisa foundation.

I do know at this point my mother in particular was at rock bottom in trying to find answers to help me but also afraid and worried about going down a 'private' route which may be expensive and incorrect? At this point the Melisa foundation gave us the name of a fellow board member called Rebecca Dutton, who also had a daughter with scoliosis and they thought she may be able to provide some support and practical help.

On the day of my discharge, my mother phoned Becky and without a shadow of a doubt, from that day onwards my quality of life improved. She encouraged us to go down the private Melisa route and recommended the Melisa blood test which was sent abroad, to detect the sensitivity/allergy type response to a host of different metals. She also put us in contact with Dr Pouria, a consultant in London specializing in allergy, environmental and nutritional health.

Following two trips to see Dr Pouria at her clinic, she put me on a strict detoxification diet (which I hated) and recommended things to include and leave out of my diet (homemade stock, variety of ground nuts to add to food groups). We also over the following two years had a succession of blood tests done, to see any improvements – each one came back better and we could hardly believe the results. We also had and still have (although to a far lesser degree now) telephone consultations. Throughout these two years she carefully fine-tuned my supplements in accordance with my blood results.

The improvements to my physical being and mental state are immeasurable, I cannot tell you how much better I feel. I now no longer suffer from constant urine infections as Dr Pouria has been able to rebalance my body through diet and supplements which are carefully altered to suit me. My energy levels are now at their highest since having had my operation nearly all the previous symptoms listed no longer exist. I can sleep now and sleep so much better. It is still by no means perfect as it is still disrupted, but in essence I get more restorative sleep. My bowel condition and sleep problems are managed but I have recently also been diagnosed with Hypermobility and this contributes to those things. I have learnt to not over stretch my body at night time. With considerable help from Becky who also recommended taking natural bowel cleansers (such as Lopicol and Acidophilus). I am now able to manage these problems.

Once I realised that what had been recommended to me was helping I would have and will do anything that continues to improve my quality of life. As I had an allergic response to some of the metals in my instrumentation, I will have to remain on this regime but it's a small price to pay for good health!

I can now continue to manage my part time job (I would struggle with a full time job), I do my own washing, cooking and house work which before would have been too tiring. I can drive better now with greater concentration. I enjoy my art work again as my hands no longer shake and eye sight is clearer. I also sing in two bands! And most importantly I am on no medication from my GP just natural supplements.

Yes I have to pace myself with what I can and cannot do but I LOVE life again.