

Public Health Alert

Special Report

Investigating Lyme Disease & Chronic Illness in the USA

2008

Expanded Treatment Focus Markedly Improves Lyme Disease Patient Outcomes

by *Scott Forsgren*

Many people think of Lyme disease as an illness caused by the bite of an infected tick. Though the bite may be a triggering event, this perspective is simplistic and does not take into consideration the numerous issues that both the patient and doctor must evaluate and treat in order to attain the best possible outcome.

For those patients that become chronically ill after having been infected with Lyme-related organisms, there is often much more to the puzzle than simply controlling the numerous infections which may have been introduced. In fact, there is a subset of the population that may carry the same infections, having even been bitten by the same tick, and yet not present with a chronic illness.

Once a diagnosis of chronic Lyme disease has been made, the highest likelihood of recovery comes from a treatment program that considers the multi-factorial nature of the disease

process. In order to support the patient's road back to wellness, treatment must address each of these many factors as part of a well-planned strategy.

W. Lee Cowden, MD is an accomplished doctor who has been treating Lyme disease for nearly a decade using a number of alternative and integrative therapies. I have been fortunate to have attended conferences taught by Dr. Cowden in the past where he shared information on detoxification, testing, and treatment protocols. More recently, I had the opportunity to sit down with Dr. Cowden and ask him a number of questions about how he approaches treatment of chronic Lyme disease and what factors he feels are critical for promoting optimal patient outcomes.

Dr. Cowden is also a consultant to NutraMedix, a company that produces quality natural products that he often uses in the treatment of Lyme disease and in support of a well-planned detoxification protocol. NutraMedix launched their

signature product, Samento, in 2003 and has since introduced over 20 products which Dr. Cowden incorporates into his practice.

A key component of Dr. Cowden's approach is the belief that if a patient does not deal with the numerous toxins stored within the body, it will not only take longer to get rid of the disease, but the patient will generally not remain symptom free and is more likely to relapse at a later time. Toxins create an environment that supports the growth of microorganisms.

Beyond the fact that toxins create a welcoming home for infection, if one focuses solely on eradication of the Lyme organisms via antibiotic or other antimicrobial therapies, resistant strains often develop which makes it more



W. Lee Cowden, MD

difficult to ultimately control the infections. Thus, it is the body's terrain which becomes the more important aspect of treatment than a sole focus on antimicrobial therapies.

After years of advancing the germ theory of medicine, Louis Pasteur's own deathbed confession was "The microbe is nothing. The terrain is everything." It is with this focus on the terrain and addressing the root causes of why the body became ill in the first place that true recovery emerges.

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Thus, the ideal treatment program is one that incorporates both detoxification and antimicrobial therapies in a highly coordinated fashion. Dr. Cowden has created such a program and patient responses have been quite positive.

Beyond his vast clinical expertise and traditional lab testing, Dr. Cowden utilizes an advanced electrodermal biofeedback device called the Asyra, or similar bioenergetic testing procedures, to assess the priority items that may be impacting a patient's health. As a general rule, Dr. Cowden finds that those suffering from chronic illness have both a high total body burden of pathogens and a high total body burden of toxins. As previously noted, the two are not unrelated. In order to effectively remove pathenogenic organisms, one must first unwind the numerous toxic insults that have taken place within us.

A key component of Dr. Cowden's detoxification approach is the use of laser energetic detoxification (LED). During an LED session, the light of a laser is passed through a clear glass vial of a homeopathic substance which was previously identified as being a stressor for the patient.

When laser light shines through a vial of clear liquid, the light coming out the other side of the vial is transformed from a point into a line. This light is "swept" onto the body and immediately signals the release of the "substances" being treated. LED can be used to treat toxins, allergens, infections, as well as

ation pollution, toxic relationships, toxic emotions, polluted air, heavy metals, antibiotics, and pesticides. He then suggests that we need to increase those items that he terms the "clean-water faucets" such as healthy food and nutrients, purpose and will to live, sunshine and exercise, good relationships, peace, joy,

enhancing the body's ability to detoxify. First, pesticides, herbicides, and solvents can often be removed effectively with the use of homeopathic detoxification formulas. Far-Infrared (FIR) sauna can promote effective detoxification through the surface of the skin. Detox foot pads worn on the soles of the feet


while sleeping a few nights a week can support elimination of toxins through the feet. A technique referred to as "oil swish and spit" or "oil pulling", where one continuously moves a healthy oil (such as sesame, walnut, almond, or olive oil) around in the mouth for at least 10 minutes before expelling the oil into the trash, can support the removal of fat-soluble toxins.

For toxins bearing a chemical charge, such as pesticides and heavy metals, an ionic foot bath such as the GTech Body Cleanse™ can be a powerful intervention. For substances without a chemical charge, such as solvents, better detoxification options may include homeopathy, "oil pulling", FIR sauna, or foot pads. Other therapies that can be beneficial for

“Dirty-water” faucets =
Nutrient depleted foods,
Electromagnetic fields,
Radiation pollution,
Toxic relationships,
Toxic emotions,
Polluted air,
Heavy metals,
Antibiotics,
Pesticides.

“Clean-water” faucets =
Healthy foods & nutrients,
Purpose & will to live,
Sunshine & exercise,
Good relationships,
Peace, joy & love,
Purified water,
Fresh air.

Health is like a Bathtub



“Drains”
Bowel
Liver
Kidneys
Lymphatics

Dr. Cowden explains health as a bathtub

auto-immunity to one's own glands and organs. Though LED treatments can dramatically accelerate the detoxification process, a patient can be successfully detoxified without the use of LED, if necessary.

Dr. Cowden often analogizes health as a bathtub. He suggests that one needs to limit or reduce those items that he terms the "dirty-water faucets" such as nutrient-depleted foods, electromagnetic fields, radi-

ation and love, purified water, and fresh air. While simultaneously reducing the flow of dirty water and increasing the flow of clean water into the bathtub, one must ensure that the "drains" or channels of elimination are open. These channels include the bowel, liver, kidneys, and lymphatics. These organs are at the core of the body's ability to detoxify.

Dr. Cowden supports a number of options for

toxin removal are colonics, clay baths, other detox baths, liver/gallbladder flushes, exercise, dry skin brushing, rebounding, neural therapy, herbs and, of course, Laser Energetic Detoxification (LED).

For movement of the lymphatics, which is key in supporting excretion of toxins, a Chi machine or a photomagnetic lymph treatment device such as the Light Beam Generator™, the Lymph Drainage XP™, or the Lymphstar Pro® have been found to be useful options.

NutraMedix Burbur Detox and Parsley Detox are key components of Dr. Cowden's approach to treatment. Folate, Methyl B12, B6, TMG (trimethylglycine), and certain other nutrients can help bypass specific genetic problems in those patients that have methylation defects identified by genetic testing. Glutathione, chlorella, and spirulina may be quite useful in supporting the body's ability to detoxify as well.

In general, Dr. Cowden suggests a combination of detoxification approaches be implemented, such as homeopathy with detox foot pads or an ionic foot bath with "oil pulling". One approach might be to take a homeopathic detoxification remedy and some heavy metal chelating agents followed by a FIR sauna session and then "oil pulling" during the last 5-10 minutes of the FIR sauna session.

On average, FIR sauna

should be used 2-3 times a week or as often as daily, if tolerated. As with any therapy that promotes sweating, Dr. Cowden cautions that it is important to replenish minerals which may be lost as a result of any sauna therapy. Ideal mineral replacement options include NutraMedix Trace Minerals Relax, Morningstar Minerals Energy Boost 70®, Omica Health Active Ionic™, or other fulvic-acid mineral complexes.

In Lyme disease, mercury is seen as the most important toxin affecting recovery.

Unfortunately, the presence of mercury amalgams in the teeth makes it much more difficult to implement a successful detoxification strategy.

Thus, Dr. Cowden generally recommends that amalgams be removed by a biological dentist early in treatment. Both chlorella and zeolite can be used to lower the body burden of toxic metals safely with amalgams present. However, these agents alone are not strong enough to fully address advanced heavy metal toxicity. Dr. Cowden notes that the use of stronger heavy metal chelating agents such as DMPS or DMSA while amalgams are still present in the teeth can be dangerous. Often, this results in

pulling toxic metals from the teeth and shuttling them directly into the brain which may significantly increase neurological symptoms.

Many people make the incorrect assumption that the simple fact that they do not have mercury-containing amalgams means that they do not have an issue with mercury. This is often a dangerous belief. Sources of mercury other than dental amalgams include coal

burning for heat and energy (even coal burning in China and other countries affects people in the US), fish consumption, the preservative thimerosal in vaccinations, playing with

mercury as children, and industrial exposures.

Beyond these sources, a significant amount of the heavy metal burden of the mother is passed directly to her child while pregnant.

Dr. Cowden's experience is that everyone is metal poisoned to some degree. If one is lucky enough to be one of the rare cases where mercury is not an issue, other metals likely are.

Arsenic and lead are common. Exposure to cadmium occurs through inhalation of second-hand smoke. Steel dental crowns contain high

levels of nickel. Bottom line is that we are exposed to numerous types of metals from a number of sources on a regular basis. Heavy metals poison more enzyme systems in the body than any other known substances. These metals have deleterious impacts to our overall health and specifically to our ability to recover from chronic illnesses such as Lyme disease.

Two exciting new products supporting detoxification have recently been launched by NutraMedix. These are Zeolite and Zeolite HP. Zeolite is a mineral formed from molten lava that binds to various toxins, including heavy metals, and helps to remove them from the body. The NutraMedix Zeolite product is enhanced with the use of frequencies to give it an affinity for lead and nickel. In a heavy metal detoxification program, these metals are generally addressed first before moving on to others.

Once lead and nickel have been addressed, Zeolite HP is utilized to detoxify the body of aluminum, arsenic, barium, cadmium, mercury, radium, silver, tin, and titanium in addition to continuing to support the removal of lead and nickel. Dr. Cowden is currently using these zeolite products as a replacement for NutraMedix Algas and chlorella in his treatment protocols for most patients. He is also finding that zeolites from NutraMedix work

Dr. Cowden's experience is that everyone is metal poisoned to some degree.

well in conjunction with DMSA and oral DMPS.

According to Dr. Cowden, one of the added benefits of the frequency-enhanced zeolites from NutraMedix is that they are believed to energetically mobilize heavy metals from inside the cell into the space just outside the cell, where they can be bound by DMSA or oral DMPS. DMSA or DMPS then either carry the heavy metals through the kidneys and urinary bladder into the toilet or through the liver and gallbladder into the bowel. Once the metals have moved into the bowel, it is important to have a binder present to ensure that the metals are not reabsorbed. This is where the chemical aspects of the zeolite product come into play.

A good detoxification program is the framework upon which other aspects of therapy can be built. Attempts to implement other treatment strategies without first ensuring that the body's channels of elimination are working efficiently lead to a less than ideal outcome. In fact, Dr. Cowden made special note of the fact that the original studies where the use of Samento showed significant patient benefits were done in conjunction with a detoxification program. Dr. Cowden does not believe that the results with Samento alone would have been as compelling. Now that the importance of detoxification is under-

stood, we will turn our attention to how Dr. Cowden approaches the multitude of infections present in those patients with chronic illness.

The "Cowden Protocol", as it is often termed, is a protocol that was put together by Dr. Cowden to address Lyme disease through the use of a number of products created by NutraMedix. In actuality, Dr. Cowden modifies the protocol to each of his patient's needs using the Asyra electrodermal biofeedback device, or similar bioenergetic testing. However, for practitioners that do not incorporate these tools into their practices, the protocol was designed to ensure the broadest applicability to a chronic Lyme patient. The protocol addresses infection, detoxification, heavy metals, hormonal imbalances, sleep and mood disorders, and pain.

At the 2007 ILADS conference in Boston, Richard Horowitz, MD was optimistic as he shared the results of his own patient study using the protocol. Dr. Horowitz reported that the full herbal protocol showed a moderate improvement in symptoms in 70% of patients. The conclusion drawn was that the Cowden herbal protocol with hormonal support and heavy metal detoxification may result in an improvement in a significant number of chronic Lyme disease patients. He further sug-

gested that if patients have had a significant improvement with antibiotic therapy, the herbal protocol may be appropriate to incorporate when antibiotics are stopped in order to help promote continued wellness of the patient.

Dr. Cowden's experience with the use of pharmaceutical antibiotics for the treatment of chronic Lyme disease has been disappointing. He has found that most of the patients that he sees that have been ill with Lyme disease for long periods of time have attempted antibiotic therapy, but that the antibiotic therapy did not bring about resolution of the condition or that the patient later relapsed when treatment was ended.

In general, Dr. Cowden recommends that patients with suspected or known Lyme disease should seek out a practitioner who can customize a protocol for them. If for some reason that is not possible, many individuals have improved simply by using the published "Cowden Lyme protocol" available on the internet. He has found that the NutraMedix Microbial Defense herbs Samento, Cumanda, Banderol, and Quina are powerful options for addressing the common infections found in Lyme disease patients and can be very effective when used with the rest of the protocol.

Dr. Cowden has found that, in some patients,

Babesia can be more difficult to treat than Borrelia itself. In such cases where the currently published protocol has been used and Babesia infection persists, Dr. Cowden recommends to his patients that they consider adding a new product from NutraMedix called "Enula" to treat Babesia, while continuing the other NutraMedix Microbial Defense herbs such as those previously mentioned in order to address Borrelia, Bartonella, Ehrlichia, Coxiella, Mycoplasma and other infections.

Dr. Cowden prefers to alternate the anti-microbial herbs in order to ensure that the organisms do not build up a resistance to any one treatment option. He also finds that taking 36 hours off between rotations allows the organisms to come out of hiding and transform into their more vulnerable forms which are then more easily attacked by the herbs.

NutraMedix is planning to introduce a series of new Microbial Defense products in 2008. The first of these will be available around the time that this article is published. It is called "Enula" which is one of the common names for the primary herb in the formula (Elecampane). Enula also incorporates Blood WISS (Vitis tiliaefolia) and Jalapa (Ipomoea jalapa). According to Dr. Cowden, Enula has shown to have powerful effects against a number of parasites includ-

ing worms, protozoa, microfilaria, and Babesia. In Dr. Cowden's experience, he believes that Enula may be able to eradicate Babesia from those with chronic infection.

In general, Dr. Cowden has found that patients who stay on his protocols for about a year can generally stop treatment and remain in good health. He does, however, caution that physical or emotional trauma or significant toxic exposures can result in triggering the body back into a disease process. As many of the organisms involved in Lyme disease have an ability to hide in the body, one can never be sure that the organisms are entirely eradicated. Instead, the goal of treatment is to tip the balance back into the body's favor such that the body can ensure itself a continued state of wellness.

Another important aspect of treatment includes ensuring that hypercoagulated or thickened blood is addressed. In many cases, the micro-organisms signal the body to create layers of a protein called "fibrin". This fibrin layer can impair oxygen transport from the blood cells into the tissues and also protects microbes so that they cannot be easily penetrated by anti-microbial herbs or identified as foreign and attacked by white blood cells.

NutraMedix recently introduced Serrapeptase to help address this hypercoagulable state.

Serrapeptase is a hypoallergenic extract from silkworms which has anti-inflammatory, fibrinolytic (fibrin-digesting), and thrombolytic (clot-dissolving) effects in the body. It is far less likely that a patient would react negatively to Serrapeptase than to other proteolytic (protein-digesting) enzymes made from aspergillus. Dr. Cowden generally recommends that his patients take 1-3 capsules twice daily 30 minutes before food with water only.

Dr. Cowden has found that addressing energetic disturbances, such as scars, can improve patient outcomes significantly. Unimpeded energy flow is needed to ensure optimal healing potential. Scars are often found to have energetic blockages or dysregulations associated with them. The treatment used for scars is a mixture of Calcium Bentonite clay powder and the NatuRx product Cicatrix. Once the two are mixed, the paste is applied to the scar, allowed to dry for ten minutes, and then washed off. The

process is then repeated twice more the same day.

Dr. Cowden suggests that not more than one scar be treated per day as the treatment can release toxins into the body and make the patient feel worse. He suggests starting with the most problematic scars on the hands and feet and then

working towards the core of the body in the midline. Of midline scars, circumcision or episiotomy scars are the first that should be addressed. Then, work up the front of the body over the top of the head and down the back of the body to the tailbone area, where there are often invisible bruise scars, until

all scars have been treated. Other important aspects of treatment include drinking sufficient water, supporting the lymphatics, addressing structural issues, and investigating and resolving geopathic and electro-smog exposures.

Dr. Cowden suggests drinking an average of three liters per day of uncarbonated water to improve kid-

ney, liver and lymphatic function. Almost everyone has less than optimal function in their lymphatic systems. The Chi machine can be supportive, building up to 15 minutes once or twice per day. A common cause of clogged lymphatics is the presence of filarial worms. Fortunately, the new NutraMedix herbal formula Enula looks promising in this regard.

Dr. Cowden has found that many patients have fallen on their tailbone at one time or another and they have a contusive bruise scar which they may be unaware of. As mentioned earlier, three or four clay applications can be helpful. Forceps births, car accidents, and falling out of a high-chair are other common findings which impede optimal structure and function. Cranio-sacral therapy and osteopathic or chiropractic manipulations can help address such structural contributors to illness.

Geopathic exposure is another important factor in illness. A geopathic field is a disease-causing influence that emanates from the earth above an underground water stream, metal ore vein, fault in the earth, or similar phenomenon. Geopathic stress is best evaluated by a German-made geomagnetometer or by an old-time plumber using dowsing rods, a method used in the past to find pipes buried in the ground. The Asyra can be used to identify energetic



influencers which may result in actions such as moving the bed in an attempt to remove one's sleeping location from a geopathically disturbed area. Spending several hours per night sleeping on a geopathically stressed location often is the single issue preventing a patient from recovering. Geopathic exposure at night also impairs sleep, as can electro-smog.

Electro-smog, or electromagnetic pollution, is a stressor that can be evaluated with a number of relatively inexpensive instruments. If instrument readings on one's sleeping location are abnormally elevated, the first step is to sequentially turn off circuit breakers until repeat readings are reduced. In this case, the responsible breaker should be turned off every night at bedtime. If turning off all circuit breakers makes no difference, then the electro-smog effect is coming from high-power lines or other influences. When this occurs, moving to a new home or painting the interior walls with a special electro-smog blocking paint may help.

Cordless phones are an "unnecessary poison". Reducing the amount of time spent on mobile phones is important. Special headsets with air-tubes can minimize exposure, though the best option is to use the speakerphone when possible.

Dr. Cowden finds that

emotional issues are significant in almost everyone with chronic illness. He suggests thinking about who causes you anger, frustration, bitterness, resentment, or rage and then going to a quiet place with no disturbances. Close your eyes, visualize the face of the angering individual, and do a "shouting out loud" about all the things that person may have done to you and how it made you feel. Emotions are often released which leads to healing. Fear may be released through trembling. Sadness may be released through crying. Choose to forgive.

Holding anger does not hurt anyone except the person holding it. Once emotional issues are released, organ systems function better and detoxification pathways open. For those that are not ready to participate in this "raging" process, NutraMedix EZOV can support the body's ability to release emotions, often during a dream state.

As for diet, Dr. Cowden promotes a diet that is at least 50% raw. This increases the chances of getting well. The transition to such a diet must be gradual. Nutritional deficiencies should be determined either with energetic testing

or through a lab such as Spectracell (www.spectracell.com). Once identified, the deficiencies should be supplemented.

It doesn't take long to recognize that there are many factors that contribute to illness. The more of these factors that can be addressed, the better the patient outcome will generally be. If treatment focus is too narrow, patient outcomes are generally disappointing.

Dr. Cowden encourages patients to recognize that it does not have to be done 100% right but rather followed closely enough to make a difference. He finds that

patients that are 70-90% compliant have notable improvement. He also reminds patients that even if they fail, don't stop.

Chronic Lyme disease is a difficult and trying illness. Antibiotics as a sole treatment strategy often disappoint. Through the creation of a well-planned treatment strategy that attempts to lower both the total body burden of toxins and the total body burden of infection, patients can find their way back to lasting wellness.

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Toxins
create an
environment
that supports
the growth of
micro-
organisms.

Disclaimer: Nothing in this article is intended to serve as individual medical advice. All statements made are general in nature and should be discussed with your health-care practitioner.

Dr. Cowden has a private practice in Chandler, Arizona. His office can be reached at 480-926-1336. A number of the products Dr. Cowden utilizes with his patients can be found at <http://www.naturx.net>.

To find practitioners in your area that are trained in Dr. Cowden's work including Laser Energetic Detoxification (LED), contact Susan Averill at susanaverill@naturx.net.

Note: Mercury amalgam removal should be done by a biological dentist skilled in safe removal of toxic metals. Amalgam removal at the hands of an unskilled practitioner can result in exposing the patient to a higher burden of mercury and ultimately make the patient's condition worse. The International Academy of Biological Dentistry and Medicine at <http://www.iabdm.org/> may be able to provide a knowledgeable practitioner in your area.

NutraMedix is currently offering their complete six month protocol free to one patient per healthcare practitioner. If you are interested, please have your healthcare practitioner contact NutraMedix directly for further information. NutraMedix can be reached via their web site at <http://www.NutraMedix.com> or by phone at 561-745-2917.



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About the Author

Scott Forsgren:

Scott Forsgren has been successfully journeying through the world of Lyme disease for almost 11 years and shares his experiences through his web site at www.BetterHealthGuy.com.

Scott is an avid fan of wakeboarding, snowboarding, and kickboxing. Scott has incorporated a number of

Dr. Cowden's approaches into his own personal treatment program.

Scott has been a staff writer with *The Public Health Alert* (PHA) newspaper since it's premier issue in July 2006.

Scott has written numerous articles and interviewed many people such as Dr. Ritchie Shoemaker, in regards to his work on biotoxins, and Bryan Rosner, author of *The Top Ten Lyme Disease*

Treatments: Defeating Lyme with the Best of Conventional and Alternative Medicine.

Scott is one of the most respected voices in the Lyme disease community. *The Public Health Alert* is proud to have him on our staff and can highly recommend him to any organization or special event who may need a highly qualified speaker or writer.

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