

## Infection/Auto Immune Disease.....my story

On 20.10.2008 I lifted a few too many kilos when moving a plant and developed a hernia. Having had four hernias I was quite relaxed about it and went to see my GP on 24.10.08. I was diagnosed with a strangulated hernia and after finding a surgeon who could operate, had surgery at North Shore Private to correct the problem that evening as it was becoming infected. The next day I went home, but by 28.10.2008 the wound area was clearly very infected and I was readmitted to hospital where I stayed till just before Christmas. Eventually the wound in my abdomen ruptured from the infection and I went back to surgery to drain the area. During the period in hospital the wound was reopened and drained numerous times. To compound the problem the cocktail of intravenous antibiotics that were being tried caused me to have multiple allergic reactions including rashes and blisters throughout my leg, groin and abdomen area. I was then operated on to remove the mesh from the hernia repair in case the infection was hiding there.

Essentially by Christmas know body at the hospital knew what else to try, so I was discharged on antibiotics and a wound that was discharging and required dressing changes four times a day.

After Christmas I returned to the surgeon who advised I should be operated on again to remove large areas of mesh from old hernia repairs which would require leaving the wound open to attempt a conservative healing process called vac therapy. I would also possibly lose one or both testicles. As a result I decided to try a radical medical fast at a private clinic in Dural. I started a water only fast on 07.01.2009 to 14.02.2009. By the end of the fast I had dropped from 92kg to 70kg in weight but the infection had dried up. Shortly after going back on food, but still very weak we had bushfires at our home and I spent a day hosing the house and breathing thick smoke. This event, plus the fast, plus the infection was too much for my immune system and by the next day my immune system had collapsed and although I did not know it at the an auto immune disease had been switched on and much of my body was in such paid that I could not move and stayed in bed for the next week and the infection in my wound returned to discharge.

I then decided to consult a new surgeon who sent me to a Rheumatologist who admitted me to Concord hospital for a week of tests to try and work out what was going on in by body. They wanted to rule out a spreading infection so the surgeon could operate again and attempt to remove the old hernia repair mesh in an attempt to arrest the infection. The diagnosis was I had an auto immune disease initiated arthritis that was attacking my joints.

The following week I went Strathfield Private and was operated on and the surgeon discovered that the infection had spread to my appendix which he removed. The wound was left open and a pump sucked infection from the wound for the next 6 weeks while it healed. During this period community nurses tended the wound each day at home and the infection was finally beaten, but I was left with the auto immune disease and on an auto immune drug to manage the problem.

In mid 2009 a friend referred me to Dr Chen to see if he could assist in rebuilding my immune system and improve my arthritis. He explained I needed to retrain my

immune system which was clearly confused. I commenced a program of acupuncture and Chinese medicine over 9 to 12 months and gradually over this time my symptoms reduced. During this period I was able to reduce and eventually stop the auto immune drug and eventually I was able to also stop the Chinese medicine.

Now in late 2011 I am still without all arthritis symptoms and the disease seems to have permanently gone into remission.

Brian