

A Naturopathic approach to chronic illness:

Naturopaths look at health and disease in a completely different way to most conventional doctors. Hopefully this article will explain our approach and help you to know how naturopathic treatment could help you. It's all about balance...

Imagine yourself as an old fashioned set of kitchen scales. To your right is the bucket that holds negative things that weigh your body down and to your left is the bucket that holds positive things that sustain you and help you stay healthy.

Everyone has a different balance point – because of inherited strengths and weaknesses- so some people can remain healthy even though their “bad” bucket is holding loads more stuff than their “good” bucket. It's also easier to stay in balance when you are younger, as what's known as our adaptive range (the amount of leeway we've got before we go out of balance) reduces as we age, because our bodies get less efficient at repair and recovery.

Your good bucket holds things like nutritious foods, water, sleep, herbal and homeopathic medicines, plus positive mental and emotional factors like feeling loved, having a purpose in life and laughing.

Your bad bucket holds anything that has an overall negative effect on the body. Many foods use up more energy and nutrients in their digestion than they give us, for example. Then there are the multiple toxins we are exposed to every day, like chemicals in our food, water, medicines and cleaning products, heavy metal toxins and the effects of radiation. We are also seriously affected by negative mental and emotional factors. Unmanaged stress has a huge impact on every system of the body and the adrenal fatigue which can result from this is a factor in every chronic illness.

Your bad bucket also holds pathogens, that is to say infectious agents like bacteria, viruses and fungi.

Unfortunately, the more you become burdened by the weight in your bad bucket, the more likely you are to develop chronic disease, as your body no longer has the energy or raw materials it needs to resist infections as you come across them. The bugs move in and are able to set up home. You also become more sensitive to anything toxic to you once you have become overloaded and it can take time for treatment to bring those responses back to normal.

Naturopathic treatment is a process of:

1. Reducing your intake of things that affect you negatively.
2. Increasing your intake of things that affect you positively.
3. Encouraging your body to eliminate the negative things being stored.
4. Stimulate the immune system with herbs and homeopathy to deal with pathogens.
5. Finally, supporting the body while everything heals and repairs.

If you can achieve the above then anything can heal and repair. Think of your body as a collection of cells: Every one of those cells is in a constant process of breaking down and being replaced with a new one. On that level you grow yourself a whole new eyeball every 5 days!

All you have to do is get your good and bad buckets back into balance and your cells will start to repair faster and your level of health and function will start to improve, rather than carry on declining. We are all individuals and will all have completely different combinations of negative factors to clear and positive factors to top up. Some form of testing, alongside analysis of symptoms, helps us to tailor treatments that will be effective and help us to reduce any negative effects (herxing). Bio-resonance testing is used by many naturopaths and is a fast means of identifying priorities in individual cases. When it comes to watching for changes in symptoms and understanding their significance, there is no substitute for experience and patience.

Chronic illness is difficult to treat. Conditions like autism, chronic Lyme disease and ME / CFS / fibromyalgia are caused by multiple factors and need a recovery programme that combines multiple treatments. There is no one treatment or cure for any condition because we are all individuals and have been affected by a different combination of negative factors. Good diagnosis of many conditions is not possible via the NHS with its limited capacity and without clear diagnosis how can we research what treatments are most effective?

The only thing that I am sure about personally, is that the better balanced and more functional your body is, the more chance a treatment to kill or control bugs or remove toxins, has of being successful.

Everything in nature has the ability to heal itself, if we can just move any obstacles out of the way.

Sonia O'Donnell LCPH MARH
NTA Clinics – www.ntaclinics.co.uk

