

June 22, 2006

RE: STRESS

Dear Patients:

I want to speak you to each of you from a personal perspective and experience. There is in the medical literature a controversy over whether stress is an associated precursor of cancer, however in the individual lives of cancer patients, most will tell you that they had a significant stress in their life prior to the diagnoses. Emotional stress may also be a significant contributor to heart disease, mental and mood disorders, physical aches and pains and fibromyalgia. When our body is under stress, it is under attack. Our adrenal glands have to work overtime. The thyroid and our entire neuro-endocrine system are put in overdrive without our conscious awareness of it, and frank inability to stop it. While this may be an ongoing controversy in the scientific literature, I am seeing it personally now. Following my own advice, I did a functional medicine women's comprehensive health panel on myself. This sophisticated panel tests on a cellular analysis level. My results looked like those of a cancer patient in end stage disease. I was very depleted, basically straight down the list including: depleted in fatty acids, minerals, amino acids, B nutrients and antioxidants. This depletion occurred despite my current increased supplementation regimen. Additionally, before resuming my supplementation regimen, I truly felt near death.

No matter how sad I am in life right now and the stress that I have, I seek each day to find something beautiful in it. It is vital to my well being that I find beauty; just the look of my daughters, their hug, their embrace, and the memories I have of my son. My loss, I have found, has taken an incredible toll physically on me. I personally believe that stress affects us in all ways. My findings helped me make a few decisions. Regardless of how I feel currently in each day (with my sorrow and loss) I do not want to die of cancer, heart disease, or any degenerative disease. I need to improve the health of my family and myself.

This analysis opened my eyes to the amount of work that has to be accomplished to overcome at least mental stress. The connection is profound between mental and physical stress. I would like to share that even though my routine blood count and blood chemistry look solidly normal, the analysis of my hormone values revealed me to be in an early menopausal state at 39 years old. This is significant as I have always, always been high normal in all my levels. I was able to see the complete depletion in my adrenal hormones, testosterone, and a significant decrease in my estrogen. The functional medicine analysis reveals to me that I am depleted in fatty acids and the precursors to these vital hormones. I report this to you, my patients, as a personal statement on the value of these tests and this analysis. Please know that these tests will allow you to have results, make decisions and have the ability to intervene in a holistic manner. It is true I have not been eating well these last three months and if it were not for the kind hearts and wonderful people that prepared meals for my family, and myself I would have not eaten at all.

I know what I have to do to improve the health of my family and myself. I will begin by taking some small steps. These include: making the commitment to the healthy meals which are so essential to all of us right now, improving the supplementation regimen that each of us are on, and doing mind, body and spirit work. We have begun meditating as a family and I am meditating personally and beginning yoga (almost) each morning. The day begins, despite how I feel emotionally that day.

I encourage each of you to nurture yourselves, physically and spiritually. The spirit within me, and the love and prayers and support of those around us encourages me to live each day. While life may devastate, it is not the approach or way I want to live it, and no matter what comes our way, I have always held the belief that God has a hand in my life. I have a commitment to God to fulfill my purpose. If part of this purpose is preventing others from getting sick and helping them to heal, then I have accomplished it. I wish all of you health and happiness in every moment of your day.

Sincerely,

Anna Cabeca, DO, FACOG
Mother, wife, friend, and physician