Our Unique Approach to Treatment of Complex Chronic Illness Transcript

(Transcripts are generated by AI and may contain errors)

Introduction to Complex Chronic Illness

– Welcome everybody today. Two of The Long Haul Chronic Fatigue Summit. We're just so happy that you're here today with us today, Dr. Gordon And I'm gonna speak briefly with you about our approach to treatment of complex chronic illnesses.

So there is a model for acute care medicine that just doesn't work very well when it comes to treating complex chronic illnesses, – Conventional medicine has done an amazing job, Especially over the last, you know, 50, 60 years and improving the treatment of acute and life threatening illnesses have also done a fairly good job at improving the day to day life of people with chronic illnesses, but they really haven't made much progress at healing chronic illness. The reason is that medicine has relied on suppressing the symptom and allowing time for the body to heal and that works wonderfully. If we stop the bleeding, maintain the blood pressure, you know, fix the broken bones.

These things tend to heal, but when we apply this model to chronic illness, we go down a much less effective pathway, you know, because the very essence of having a chronic illness means that the healing pathways, whether Dr.

Why Acute Care Models Fail

Navio calls the black box of healing, if you will, is not working well, you know, an acute illness to have an external event, whether it's an accident or an infection that comes in and disrupts the system.

And so if we can contain that long enough, the body can heal, but in chronic illness, what's happened is the body's healing mechanism has taken a what we say in computer languages, a do loop or basically a repeating process. That's not getting you to the end.

It just keeping you stuck in the middle and that's what chronic illnesses. The normal inflammatory pathways that get turned on in order to, you know, clean up dying cells, kill a bug are not getting turned off or at least not turned off completely. Some switches are left on and that is enough to dis regulate your your system and create the symptoms that have been the have been so hard on people, the brain fog the fatigue, the poor sleep, the poor gut function and all the other um symptoms that we see with long haul covid and chronic critique and these other illnesses, you know, so, you know, it's time to we begin to understand how to help restore the possibility of the body's healing mechanism going back to two more balance going back.

So where this black box is getting us out the other side and we have our health back. – So, the issue in complex chronic illnesses that the healing mechanism has now become disordered and that's what we have to address. It's not just about removing the trigger anymore. Yes, we do have to remove the trigger, of course. But even once the trigger is removed, it's very often that the patient's immune response is still stuck in a loop is dr Gordon was talking about. So the pathway back to healing from chronic illness is typically not the reverse pathway back that made you ill in the first place in the acute care model, everybody's body typically acts the same.

That's when the healing response is not yet disordered an acute event.

Disordered Healing in Chronic Illness

The body heals rather predictably. Almost all of our bodies heal quite similarly when it's an acute event. Because all the systems are working in harmony a goes to be you give the right medicine and the patient heals as predicted in complex illnesses. So this doesn't happen.

And so the complex illness model actually, there isn't one, there is no complex care model. I better say that there's

a model for acute care, but complex chronic illness cannot be supported by the acute model of care.

So there needs to be a model for complex chronic illness. I think that in this pandemic and through those of us who've been treating complex chronic illness for decades now, we were slowly beginning to find a model, but it is about the individual's response. So in complex chronic illness, once you've developed the complex chronic illness, the healing mechanism has become disordered as Dr. Gordon and I were talking about yesterday, this is an individualized response to healing our longstanding patients typically did not get long haul. Our main success is that any of our patients who are already our patients prior to the pandemic, post their acute covid infection.

They did not get long haul syndrome. We have not seen long haul covid in any of our chronic patients. The patients who are patients pre pandemic unless they had an ongoing other exposure, for example, an allergy to mold and mold growth in their homes while they had acute covid. – And we believe this is because, you know, we have already by treating their underlying infections and modulating their immune responses. Even if they haven't yet fully healed their immune response has been normalized enough that Covid didn't push them into a new place, a place of persistent inflammation.

Individualized Long COVID Treatment

So the only long covid patients we have are those who came to us specifically for treatment of long covid, you know, and we use basically all the same treatments and testing protocols that we that that you will be learning about this week.

And many of them are ones that we have used in the past for other chronic complex illnesses with a few new except new ones that will be highlighted. You know. Now, our patients typically don't respond to one treatment just because you didn't get here because of one event, you know, or one pre existing event, you know, and again, and a lot of the treatments that we do start off with for treating long Covid are very similar to what's used in conventional medicine for treating chronic illnesses, just trying to tone down and maybe even suppress the abnormal immune response, but at the same time, we are also working to engage the innate healing processes of the body and to encourage healing on all levels.

So it's this is the model that is needed, you know. So patients come to us either because they fail the simple approaches or when they look for therapies. They often saw physicians who are only using one approach and we see the same thing in our chronic, other chronic patients come to us over the years.

Is that very many often they've seen excellent doctors to treat their Lyme but they didn't realize that they also had to treat their mold or they had to deal with their structural issues or the microbiome and it's like that these each all of these issues usually are present in almost every patient in varying degrees. – The people who are experiencing recovery fast and long covid, they usually had less complicating factors in their history prior to getting covid. They had less underlying infections, for example, or less exposures to environmental toxins.

Or maybe they have less snips or mutations in their genes of detoxification or their genes of inflammation. They did not have underlying inflammation.

Maybe not as much as the people who took have been taking a long time to recover from long covid. And so we believe that this is what set people up for long covid underlying inflammation. It appears that most of the people we see who have developed long covid. When we do a deep exploration of their history, they have had a history of exposure to tick borne disease or persistent post viral malays or irritable bowel syndrome or history of allergies.

Risk Factors and Hidden Contributors

Maybe they're they're more type a in there in high sympathetic drive. All of these are observations as being risk factors. We want to make it clear there is no published research on this.

These are our observations. – And one of the things that I just really want to emphasize that I've have been made me upset for as long as I've been treating people who are clearly very ill but have quote unquote normal tests.

Is that, is this issue of type A is that so many of our patients have always been very successful, hardworking, athletes and then they get these illnesses and friends and families begin to think that they're lazy or you know, malingering on some level and that's always been just so upsetting.

But there's, I think it's interesting because that drive is often you know, along with that hard drive is often a little bit of hypervigilance and as the brain as the emotional system is that does tend to like color how your immune system works.

So a little bit of that can be very, very good. But if it's excessive and at the same time you get hit hard with an infection, it can set you up for real problems.

But what we do when we see a new patient anytime is we look for co infections, things, parasites, mold viruses, environmental toxins. And I said I just want to emphasize this is that if you're chronically ill these things are happening now you don't have to have all of them.

But you'd be surprised at how many are present and are just taking part in a conversation in your body. That is no longer one that you're in control of.

Okay because you know many times you'll you'll see that you know your partners may have the same parasites. Obviously they have the same mold exposures but it's you're the one who's ill and that's because there's something about this whole symphony that is thrown off your ability to keep everything in check. Okay Because we are made up of all these things were supposed to be exposed to a lot of this stuff.

Testing, Immune Modulation, and Detox

So don't you don't have to live in a perfect world you know so our job is to help you figure out which things need to be down regulated what needs to be treated and it has a lot to do with you because some people will have these things and have a tremendous amount of G. I. Issues. Other people just get headaches or neurological things. You know so it's your own physiology and that's why just because you get a positive test doesn't mean treating that positive tested bug or whatever is going to make you better now it's probably a good idea but you really better do it in the right order because if you're still fairly toxic or inflamed and have a tendency to mast cell you're gonna feel worse, not better. – So complete testing is useful because these symptoms, the complexes overlap. For example, if the person has an issue with maybe acute heavy metal exposure, it might look a lot like mass cell activation syndrome probably is because it's actually causing that secondary and issue that secondary illness, mast cell activation syndrome, all of these different contributors. Their symptoms overlap because they're causing secondary inflammatory issues and secondary immune system imbalances.

So one of the reason people fail is they might go to a doctor who is an expert in lime or mold or metal toxicity. Only the other issues might be missed because you can't always differentiate between the diagnosis just by symptoms as I think Dr. Gordon was saying earlier actually these all mimic each other and they all cause inflammation depending on your genetics. So then we also test for inflammatory markers and we test immune status when it comes to treatment of the complex chronic illnesses.

We typically begin with immune modulation. It could be with peptide therapies, could be with herbs if the patient can tolerate herbs and then detoxification therapies if appropriate. And how so that depends on the patient's labs and their history.

Then we begin to address persistent chronic infections, likely those that were stirred from the inflammatory cytokine flare of COVID-19 and that are active again post this flare.

Let me continue with immune modulation while we're addressing the infections and detoxification therapies as they pertain to each patient. Remember it's different for each patient's why we're doing a thorough history and doing all of this testing to really understand each patient and their unique needs – Always like to remind people that pay attention to structure as well. You know, all this biochemistry is great.

Structure, Recovery, and Hope

But when lymph is being impeded in its drainage and nerves are being irritated, you're not gonna get better when you get into this chronic illness model.

I mean, and that's again, is that you can have all kinds of imbalances in your system and be doing just fine. Then something once something pushes you over the edge, then you have to be paying more attention to get back to a state of balance.

So we have been treating people with long haul and many of them are able to return to normal health. And the good news is that there is a big subset of people with long haul who do tend to just get better over time.

And that's because that black box of healing is slowly getting itself back to normal. And I think, and that's where a lot of the work that people can do at home on, you know, relaxing their minds, relaxing their nervous systems. And simple movement.

And not over doing it's that balance. So we're gonna be having lots of time to talk about how important it is to not overdo, but make sure you do something.

So the message here is that this illness does not have to be your future. Okay? There is life after long haul Covid, and we hope that the information that you get from spending the next few days with us helps you in your journey towards back to your full health and vitality.