



Case Studies – September 2020 – October 2021

The naturopathic practice looks at the root cause of a situation and does not diagnose or treat with medications. Enjoy these brief case studies and perhaps share with others who may benefit. Used with permission.

J.R. is a 63-year-old woman who used to have lots of energy but in the last several months feels tired often and cannot participate in the activities that once were easy. She contributes it to age. She has noticed heart palpitations recently and she feels that her heart is pounding in her chest. She visited her provider and he indicated that it was simply due to menopause. Her provider indicated that she is many years past menopause, but she is still a candidate for hormone replacement therapy (HRT) that can decrease heart palpitations which are common in post-menopausal women. She can take HRT for five years or less to gain the benefits of bone and heart health but past five years, it won't assist. She also mentioned that she feels like her heart skips beats and feels a rapid pulse and requested to see a cardiologist. Her provider said that there was no indication that her heart or any of the symptoms were related to her cardiovascular health. He ran a CBC on her but did not look at homocysteine levels or perform a lipid profile.

She decided to participate in the case studies with naturopath (J.L.) because she intuitively felt that something was wrong and didn't want to take HRT. In her consult, she provided a holistic view and revealed that her father had a pacemaker inserted at 65. She indicated that with her insurance, she needed to have a referral to see a cardiologist. J.R. appeared to have lived a healthy life. She was active, ate healthy, slept well but indicated her sleep quality wasn't as rich as it used to be and she woke up tired. She was not a napper but had recently started taking naps. She was often dizzy upon waking and didn't drive in the morning any longer because she feared passing out and hurting others. She made all her appointments and ran errands in afternoon. There was no sign of stroke or heart conditions in her family except her father's pacemaker. Upon pulse checking by naturopath (traditional Chinese medicine modality), there appeared to be lack of heart rhythm in the lying down position versus seated versus standing. Using a fingertip pulse oximeter that can be used by anyone, it was revealed that J.R.'s oxygen levels were low. The naturopath indicated that J.R. seek a referral by informing physician of her father's pacemaker and visit to the naturopath showing heart rhythm instability. She finally received a referral and appointment with a cardiologist two months in the future.

Weeks after her visit to the naturopath, she got up one morning and felt dizzy and went in to eat breakfast. The dizziness continued. Luckily her husband was home and when she fainted, she was taken to the hospital. There they indicated that she had a stroke. Various tests were run to determine the nature of the stroke. No blood clots were indicated in her legs; however, it was revealed that there was blood pooling in the heart because of the inefficiency of the blood being pumped between chambers. This is what caused the stroke. Her oxygen saturation levels were

low due to the lack of oxygen in the blood. Upon further discovery, it was determined that she would need a pacemaker to regulate her heart rhythm. A pacemaker would allow her heart to beat rhythmically therefore allowing blood to flow and preventing a future stroke. After the pacemaker was inserted, her oxygen saturation levels were elevated to healthy levels and her heart rhythm was stable.

After six months, J.R. feels great. She has lots of energy and feels well-rested upon waking. Although a naturopath cannot diagnose and they don't chase symptoms, there are methods that can be utilized to assist with recognizing certain symptoms that warrant the client in pursuing traditional medical appointments which may lead to procedures.

Thanks to the volunteers who worked with NDs in training for a year. These cases will be published in the next NDNR journal.