

PREFACE

by Connie Strasheim



Lyme disease is one of the fastest-growing infectious diseases in the world, with well over 300,000 *new* cases every year in the United States alone. Many researchers estimate the numbers to be even much higher than that, due to the fact that many people are infected and either do not know it or do not report it. It is a pandemic, and yet, current diagnostic methods are inadequate and miss many cases.

What's more, most doctors are not trained to recognize and properly treat chronic Lyme disease, which occurs when Lyme is either not treated or inappropriately treated in the early stages and becomes a systemic, disabling illness. The ignorance among doctors occurs because the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) refuse to acknowledge, despite much evidence, that Lyme disease can become chronic and disabling if not treated early. Their contention is that Lyme can be cured with just two weeks of antibiotic therapy and that any symptoms that remain are caused by "post-treatment Lyme disease syndrome" (PTLDS), an inflammatory condition created by Lyme infections that isn't due to infection in the body.

Nonetheless, doctors and researchers who work in the trenches of Lyme disease know that Lyme infections can persist in the body for years, even after months or years of treatment, and plenty of studies and patient lab reports prove this. These infections, along with other factors, cause systemic inflammation and damage to the body. Lyme disease has likely disabled millions of people worldwide.

The Lyme symptom presentation varies from person to person and can mimic many dozens of diseases or conditions, including chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS), fibromyalgia, Parkinson's, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), lupus, Alzheimer's, depression and arthritis—among others—which further complicates diagnosis. In addition, most people with chronic Lyme disease do not ever remember getting a tick bite, the principal means through which Lyme is thought to be transmitted, although more recent research shows that Lyme infections are also transmitted through other insects, from person to person (through bodily fluids) and possibly other means, as well.

For these reasons and others, Lyme disease remains a largely unrecognized, under-diagnosed, misdiagnosed and untreated pandemic disease in the United States, Canada and worldwide, which means that people with Lyme disease are faced with immense diagnostic and treatment challenges. Their challenges are compounded by the fact that they are often misunderstood and receive little support from loved ones because they often do not act or look sick. But researchers have estimated that the average person with chronic Lyme disease has a level of disability equivalent to that of a person with advanced congestive heart failure. In addition, some integrative doctors who treat both cancer and Lyme have shared with me that chronic Lyme disease is often more complicated to treat than cancer and can be much more disabling (depending, of course, on many factors). Yet people with cancer often receive more support and understanding from friends and family members because cancer is more widely understood.

This means that people with Lyme disease are often left to navigate the difficulties of the illness on their own. Some have jokingly called Lyme

the “do-it-yourself” disease because most doctors don’t know how to treat it, and treatment regimens can be incredibly complicated. I published my first successful Lyme doctor interview book, *Insights into Lyme Disease Treatment*, in 2009 to try to provide an answer to these challenges and to offer support to Lyme sufferers who were not getting the help that they needed from the resources that were available to them.

While I believe that *Insights into Lyme Disease Treatment* was successful in accomplishing this, seven years have passed since its publication and better solutions for Lyme have since emerged. What’s more, savvy health care practitioners who treat Lyme are realizing that high-dose antibiotics by themselves aren’t the only, or necessarily always the best, way to treat chronic Lyme disease. Many of the best doctors are approaching treatment in innovative, new ways, hence, the title of this book, *New Paradigms in Lyme Disease Treatment*, which features ten expert Lyme-literate doctors and their cutting-edge approaches to Lyme disease treatment.

Since I wrote *Insights into Lyme Disease Treatment*, I have also become more well-educated about Lyme; I am a more experienced researcher and writer, and have a better, stronger sense about what treatments work and which don’t, and which doctors are doing great work in this area.

As such, I believe that *New Paradigms in Lyme Disease Treatment* represents the work of some of the best Lyme-literate doctors out there. I chose the doctors for this book based upon their experience, wisdom and reputation, as well as upon the opinions of other experts in the field of Lyme treatment and those of Lyme patients. Last but not least, I chose them because of their kindness, compassion and passionate concern for the wellbeing of others.

I’ve come to believe over the years that intelligence alone doesn’t make a doctor successful; rather, wisdom, intuition, compassion and a desire to help others, along with knowledge, do. Medicine is an art as much

as it is a science. Not every doctor can skillfully merge science with an understanding of what the individual patient needs, and not all are willing to put themselves on the line and sacrifice their comfort, time and (sometimes) their very careers to help others, with wisdom and compassion. Indeed, those who do seem to be few and far between, but this is exactly what the doctors in this book do.

I've often said that chronic Lyme disease is a quagmire for even the most brilliant of minds and that there is no such thing as a one-size-fits-all protocol that works for everyone. For this reason, *New Paradigms in Lyme Disease Treatment* aims to share a variety of strategies and tools that have proven to work for many. As you read, you can compare and contrast these strategies and tools to find the ones that resonate with you.

While every doctor represented here has a unique way of treating Lyme, they all aim to heal the body, not just treat infections. They understand that Lyme disease isn't just about treating a handful of infections called *Borrelia*, *Babesia*, *Bartonella* and *Ehrlichia*, but that it is instead about repairing and restoring the body from the "ground up." They understand that it is about correcting the multiple systemic dysfunctions and damage that have occurred in the body as a result of microbes, environmental toxins, mold, trauma and other co-conditions that are either the cause or the result of a weakened immune system.

In fact, many doctors now believe that the term "Lyme disease," a label used to define chronic illness involving Lyme-related pathogens, is really a misnomer. This is because people get sick due to a weakened immune system, which doesn't just occur because of infections, but because of many other environmental factors. On some level, it doesn't really matter what you call the cocktail of stressors, as long as you correctly identify and treat the root cause of each one.

Thus, healing isn't just about eliminating a defined set of pathogens collectively called "Lyme disease," but it's about restoring and rebuilding the "terrain" of the body so that Lyme pathogens can't flourish there.

Lyme microbes are a cause of disease, but they are also the result of an immune system that has been weakened by other factors. Those factors must be addressed if people are to fully recover.

One thing that sets *New Paradigms in Lyme Disease Treatment* apart from other resources on Lyme disease is that it reveals new and unique tools that haven't been discussed at length elsewhere. These include tools such as intravenous ozone, silver and phospholipid therapy, bio-magnetism, low-dose immunotherapy, hyperthermia, peptides and essential oils; and hands-on treatments and devices that literally "re-boot" and "re-program" the body. The doctors also discuss how to use traditional tools such as antibiotics and herbal remedies in smarter, gentler ways. Whereas the motto within the Lyme community once seemed to be that strong Herxheimer (or microbial detoxification) reactions were indicative of successful treatment, many Lyme-literate doctors now believe that more is not better and that too much "Herxing" can cause toxins to be redistributed throughout the body.

Indeed, many doctors are finding that their patients can get well without having to endure heavy-handed Herxheimer reactions and that they don't have to feel horribly sick for several years before getting better. I don't know about you, but that gives me hope. Speaking of hope, all of the doctors here will tell you that healing is possible and that you can recover using the tools in this book!

There is something for everyone in *New Paradigms in Lyme Disease Treatment*. Whether you are just starting out your healing journey and are looking for a doctor to help you recover, or are a health care practitioner or seasoned Lyme veteran and just want to know more about what you can do to improve your health or that of your clients, or want to find a new approach because those of the past haven't worked, you will find information in here that will help you. There is a wealth of information here that will help you to navigate the challenges of chronic illness.

I personally don't recommend self-treating Lyme disease though; it is simply too complicated and complex to self-navigate. At the same time,

I understand the reality that some of you who are reading this may not be able to afford to see a Lyme-literate doctor on a regular basis, or have already spent many years and thousands of dollars on your health and have tapped out most of your resources. Insurance doesn't cover most treatments that actually work, which means that people with Lyme must rely upon savings, charity, the help of others and their own ability to bring in an income, to get well.

Recognizing that reality (and empathizing with those of you with financial challenges, because I, too, have been in that position at times), as part of the interview process for this book, I have asked some of the doctors to share inexpensive ways that you can improve your health from home. By themselves, these tools aren't likely to be sufficient to fully heal you, but they *can* help you to feel better until you can afford to see a Lyme-literate doctor. I especially recommend the chapters by Drs.' Jernigan, Klinghardt, Matheson and Minkoff for good go-to information on this topic. (Note: These chapters also contain excellent information on healing tools that these doctors use at their clinics.)

If you can afford to see a doctor who is an expert in Lyme disease treatment—and I highly encourage you to do so—and are looking for general information on new, innovative ways to treat Lyme disease using conventional tools, such as antibiotics and herbal remedies (among other cutting-edge treatments), I recommend the chapters by Drs.' Anderson, Nathan, McFadzean, Patel and Klinghardt. Dr. Anderson's chapter, which is the first one in this book, also provides a good, detailed synopsis of the symptoms of the most important Lyme-related infections so that patients and practitioners can readily identify them.

For novel, outside-the-box treatments that haven't yet been as widely used within the Lyme disease community, I recommend the chapters by Drs.' Smith, Douwes, Jernigan and Minkoff. It is difficult to summarize the rich and varied content of each chapter, so please just use these recommendations as a starting point for your research. I also recommend reading the book with a highlighter, pen and notepad at your side

so that you can make notes and highlight any treatments that you may want to go back to do further research on or pursue.

Finally, as a fellow Lyme disease survivor, I intimately understand the battles that many of you may be facing. Like thousands who have battled Lyme disease, within a couple of years after I got sick in 2004, I lost my home, job and savings, as well as a few friends. Most importantly, I lost the ability to function for many years. I sometimes tell people that my 30s seemed to evaporate into thin air because I never had the opportunity to do many of the things that healthier people in their 30s get to do, such as get married, buy a home, have a family or get established in a career. Instead, I spent most of those years curled up on the floor of my cheap apartments, crying, researching, doing treatments and begging God for a way out.

While Lyme infections have been a part of my battle, I believe that other challenges weakened my immune system and allowed the infections to gain a foothold in my body. Those challenges began at birth when I was born dead from my umbilical cord choking me. I arrived into the world two months premature (although, fortunately, I was miraculously resuscitated or resurrected—only God knows which). But it was mostly “downhill” from there as a series of traumas in my childhood and early adult years set me up for disease. For this reason, my healing efforts have not only been aimed at restoring my body, but also my emotions and spirit. This is why I say that Lyme disease isn’t just about the bugs for some people, because I know that it hasn’t been for me.

Traveling to over 50 countries in my 20s and getting bug bites in every country from Zimbabwe to Yemen, Thailand, Bolivia and Venezuela probably didn’t help my immune system either. A doctor once told me that I had more *Babesia* infections than he’d ever seen in a Lyme patient, and another practitioner told me that I was more severely brain damaged than most people she’d treated. Fortunately, I have managed to live a relatively functional life in recent years, even though I have had my setbacks at times. I only share this because, despite all this, I have made great strides in my healing, and I believe that if I can, then you can, too.

I have been blessed with the gift of always being able to write, even while battling severe brain fog, fatigue, pain and depression—although it hasn't always been easy. So I am thankful that despite my challenges, I have been able to find purpose through my struggle by writing about Lyme and other health-related topics, even though for years, it was all that I had time and energy for. Recreation, rest and “having a life” fell to the wayside in the name of survival and finding better answers for myself as well as for others.

Today, I am much better than I was 12 years ago when I was first diagnosed; I can work and travel, although I can no longer get up at 6 a.m., climb mountains, stand in lines for hours or work long days, as I used to. My journey has been difficult and complex, as many people's and my life fraught with extraordinary challenges, so I'm thankful for the great gains that I've made in my healing. No one treatment by itself has been a miracle for me, but bio-identical hormone therapy, neurotransmitter and nutritional support, detoxification therapies, changing my diet, and emotional healing have been at least as important as eliminating microbial infections (if not more).

In any case, I believe that I now know deep in my spirit what it takes to be well in body, mind and spirit, even if I still haven't fully “arrived.” (Then again, do any of us ever fully get there?) I am not as strong physically or as energetic as I was pre-Lyme, but my mind and spirit are far healthier. I am thankful because what I've learned over the years has enabled me to help others, not only through my writing, but also through the one-on-one inner healing prayer ministry and health coaching that I do. I also host a monthly prayer conference call meeting for people with Lyme and chronic illness. Most importantly, I can empathize with the suffering of others and support them in ways that others who have not experienced the crucible of chronic illness perhaps could not.

Of late, I have also been learning and teaching about the amazing benefits of essential oils in recovery. Essential oils not only support the body in innumerable ways, but also release trauma from the cells, especially when combined with prayer. Some studies even show that they have antimicrobial properties. I believe these are revolutionary tools that I've been given to use to bless and help others, as I have been helped myself.

Finally, many of the doctors in this book have also been personally touched and affected by chronic Lyme disease. Either they have had it themselves or have helped a loved one through the illness. In any case, all share a deep compassion and empathy for those who battle it. Their wisdom and knowledge could fill many books; for that reason, this book is only intended to give you a broad, bird's-eye view about each of their approaches. This is not a beginner's book on Lyme disease; neither is it intended to provide in-depth information about every aspect of Lyme disease, including Lyme prevention, politics, support, diagnosis and treatment. There are other books out there that do that. Rather, it is intended to give you powerful insights into the recovery process and what it takes to heal from Lyme, along with the hope and motivation that you may need to get well.

Take these insights as a compass that will lead you in the right direction in your healing process and trust that you will be led to the tools and/or practitioners that are right for you. You may even want to pray beforehand about those that you are meant to pursue.

Now, I invite you to sit down, grab yourself a cup of herbal tea, a highlighter and pen, and be prepared to be encouraged by the wisdom and solutions presented by the brilliant doctors throughout this book. I believe you will find new hope and solutions for your healing here. In the meantime, I wish you all the best in your healing journey!

Connie Strasheim, Writer



ABOUT CONNIE STRASHEIM

Connie Strasheim is the author, co-author or ghostwriter of ten wellness books, including the 3-book *Journey to Wellness* series, which she co-authored with William Lee Cowden, MD, in 2014, and includes *Foods that Fit a Unique You*, *Create a Toxin-Free Body and Home...Starting Today* and *BioEnergetic Tools for Wellness*. She is a medical copywriter and editor for the Alternative Cancer Research Institute and Pro Health's Lyme disease site, as well as a healing prayer minister and health coach.

Connie's passion is to help people with complex chronic illnesses find freedom from disease and soul-spirit sickness using whole body medicine and prayer, and she collaborates with some of the world's best integrative doctors to do this. In addition to Lyme disease, Connie's books focus on cancer, nutrition, detoxification and spiritual healing.

In her free time, Connie enjoys traveling the world and doing missions work overseas, and sharing the love of God with others. You can learn more about her prayer conference call group and healing ministry at: www.ConnieStrasheim.org (.com pending). She can also be contacted at: Connie9824@aol.com.