

Treatment Plan

For: Esther Barndon

Date: 03/02/2024

Current issues/symptoms:

14 months postpartum, 4 months post breastfeeding.

Generally feeling fatigued, unmotivated, overwhelmed. With low tolerance to stress, and with some anxiety, and low libido.

Experiencing low mood/mood swings, irritability, irrationality, brain fog, sleep disturbances, sometimes headaches (all worse 1-3 days prior to period).

Menstrual cycles have become shorter.

Sluggish and/or irregular bowel movements (2-3 x week) with various stool types (#1, 2, 3) with occasional diarrhoea and bloating.

Summary of key issues suspected or identified: (at this stage)

Energy 3/10, Sleep 6/10, Mood 4/10, Stress 9/10, Libido 3/10

No blood tests (since an iron infusion after birth 14mths ago). No supplementation through breastfeeding.

Symptoms of lowering progesterone (eg. shortening of cycles/short luteal phase, worsening of premenstrual symptoms etc) with transient, relative 'high' oestrogen, plus poor clearance of oestrogen via bowel

Some degree of postpartum depletion: nutrient levels? thyroid function?

Some degrees of nervous system dysregulation and heightened stress response.

Constipation (optimal bowel clearance is essential for daily detoxification, hormone health and overall wellbeing)

Query adequate fluid intake, protein & essential fats in daily diet. More diet focus to come.

Initial steps:

1. BLOOD TESTS - I'd like to assess your nutritional levels and some metabolic markers to give us more in depth information about what may be behind your symptoms. Once we have these, we can streamline your treatment plan specifically for you:

- Iron studies
- Vitamin B12 + Folate
- Vitamin D
- Serum Zinc

- Full thyroid panel: TSH, T4, T3, Thyroid antibodies, Reverse T3
- C-Reactive Protein
- Oestrogen/Progesterone

As mentioned, the GP may be reluctant to request all of these (particular full thyroid panel) but what they don't request, I can instead. This will be an out of pocket expense, ie. not covered by Medicare.

They'll likely order other basics like Full Blood Count, Liver & Kidney Function, Lipid Studies (hopefully) etc which are all useful too.

***Keywords to mention to GP to help get these tests requested:**

"Exhausted all the time, especially over last 6 mths, even after weaning (it hasn't improved) and getting more sleep. Concerned my thyroid may be involved with these symptoms especially at my age. Have a history of low iron and Vitamin D, and think it may be an issue again, affecting my energy and mood. Also don't feel I get a lot of sun (for Vit D). Haven't had any thorough blood tests for years. Feel it may be nutritional. Feel I may be in early perimenopause phase with changes to my cycle and new symptoms/worsening since last baby."

Once you have the pathology request form - please do not have the blood test.

Instead, upload your request form to your My Appointments account for me, so I can cross check and request those tests that have been left off. I'll email this request form to you, along with instructions and my Blood Test Rules.

I'll be able to view all the blood results results (those requested by GP and myself) so once they're all through usually in 1-2 weeks.

2. COMPREHENSIVE, DIGESTIVE STOOL TEST

As discussed, the function of the gut and the gut microbiome are at the core of our health. Our gut microbiome is involved in a myriad of roles in our health eg. it produces our neurotransmitters (e.g serotonin), supports our energy production, programs our immune system and is critical in our detox processes.

It's also involved in breaking down and digesting our food, producing vitamins and making short chain fatty acids (SCFA). These SCFA have many health benefits; anti-inflammatory, immuno-regulatory, anti-obesity, anti-diabetes, anticancer, cardiovascular protective, hepatoprotective (liver) and neuroprotective activities!

With this in mind, and your long-standing history of constipation, I suggest we run a Comprehensive Digestive Stool Analysis (CDSA) test. This assesses digestive, absorption, metabolic, inflammation and tumour markers.

It will tell us if you're producing enough digestive enzymes to optimally break down your food, so you can absorb the nutrients. It looks for undigested food in your stool; fats, vegetables fibres, meat fibres which reflects your digestive function. It also looks for fermentation of food in the gut, the markers for colonic function and your liver detoxification processes.

It reports on the bacteria involved in keeping our immune system regulated, and any overgrowths of opportunistic bacteria or yeasts (Candida), and parasites. All this information allows for specific and personalised treatment.

As the practitioner, I order the test at my end then the lab then contacts you via email to arrange payment. The collection kit is then sent to you. Results are typically back within 2 weeks.

3. CYCLE TRACKING

As discussed, consider getting a period tracker App to record your symptoms and build patterns and/or changes to your cycle.

Some Apps that are free (to the best of my knowledge) are Flo, Clue, Period Tracker and Cycles.

Next time

Once your test results are through, we'll have a follow up consultation to go through the results. I can then create your customised treatment plan for your specific needs.

If you have any questions, please let me know.
