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MYSTERY ILLNESS A MYSTERY NO MORE

Fibromyalgia diagnosis brings long-awaited relief to Portland area woman

PORTLAND, Oregon (Aug. 25, 2008) – As Alene Showers prepared to spend another long and lonely pain-filled day on her couch, she wondered how and when it would all end. The former teacher, forced to retire at age 58 due to the debilitating pain she was experiencing, now had no energy or strength and signs of depression were beginning to creep in; and worse yet, after nearly eight years of undergoing countless tests from doctors and specialists, there was still no diagnosis. Nobody seemed to know what she had or what to do to help.

“It just seemed hopeless for me,” said Showers. “Test after test after test would show nothing was really wrong. Most agreed I had some tissue swelling but it wasn’t arthritis; I was borderline diabetic but was simply told to ‘watch it.’ It’s as if they couldn’t diagnose me, so there must be nothing really wrong with me. Yet I knew the pain I was feeling was *real*. Even the slightest touch to my body was agonizing. I had gone from being a productive member of society to someone I didn’t even recognize and nobody could explain what was happening to me.”

Desperate for answers, Showers combed the internet for medical information that might shed some light on her condition. One day, she came across the condition known as fibromyalgia; it was as if someone had suddenly unlocked a door. Armed with her new knowledge she headed back to the medical community where she found her encounters with doctors to be even more exasperating.

“I tried to talk to the doctors about fibromyalgia,” said Showers. “What amazed me is that the doctors wouldn’t even talk about it; they weren’t familiar with it and didn’t even seem interested in learning about the disease. I would come in with pages and pages of information but they weren’t interested in learning. The best they could do was to prescribe something for the pain without wanting to find out what was causing the pain.”

Now more determined than ever to find help, this wife and mother of three grown children went back to the internet where she found the Fibromyalgia and Fatigue Center in Dallas who referred her to their center in Beaverton. She immediately made a call and in November 2006, became the Beaverton clinic’s first patient.

“I was somewhat skeptical thinking if it works, it works; if not, no loss. I’ve tried everything else. Within the first hour of my appointment, Dr. Elzinga did blood work to run a number of tests and asked all sorts of questions. He was quickly able to diagnose the fibromyalgia as well as the likely underlying causes. For one thing, I had yeast infections throughout my body -- nobody had ever even *tested* for

something like that. The infection, combined with my borderline diabetes and thyroid issues was the cause of fibromyalgia in my body.”

She initially received some antibiotics and pain medication, but the primary treatment was once-a-week intravenous “cocktails,” made up largely of vitamins and minerals, for six weeks. She was also given an exercise and specific diet regimen which she has faithfully followed.

“By the time that bag had emptied the first time, I felt fabulous,” said Showers. “I just wanted to run out of there and tell someone how good I felt. To me, it was a true miracle. Since the initial round of treatments I’ve stayed on the diet, lost 55 pounds in the process, and have only needed to go back twice for treatment. It is such a relief to finally be treating the actual *cause* of my problems, not just the symptoms.”

Fibromyalgia and Fatigue Centers (FFC) are currently open in Atlanta, Cleveland, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Fort Worth, Las Vegas, Norwalk, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Portland, and Seattle with plans for future expansion.

“We are the only treatment center of our kind,” said Lawrence Elzinga, M.D., director of the Portland-area clinic. “For many years, we have successfully treated patients suffering from fibromyalgia who were told there was nothing wrong with them; their condition didn’t exist. Fortunately, the medical community has slowly changed its opinion over the years about the existence of the disease, but most doctors are still unable to truly diagnose and treat these patients. We remain the experts in this field.”

Showers knows there are some who will still be skeptical not only of her condition, but the success of the treatments as well. “As the child of migrant workers who spent many years working the fields, I know how it feels to have a sore back and aching muscles. But make no mistake; there is a world of difference between work-related fatigue and soreness and the pain and fatigue I was experiencing a few years ago. I am absolutely certain the doctors at FFC are the only ones who really understand this disease and know how to diagnose and treat it.”

Knowing that the condition can be inherited, Showers said she is concerned about her own children and believes her two daughters may be developing symptoms. She encourages them as she does others, to be aware of changes in their health and to seek help if warranted.

“I have talked with friends and people at my church, I have handed out cards to the clinic, I share my recipes – and I encourage anyone suffering symptoms similar to mine to seek help. After spending so many years looking for answers; I just want to save everyone else the time and energy it took me and give them the shortcut. It has been incredible, just a miracle. I have my life back.”

The Portland area center is located at 1920 Amberglen Parkway, Suite 150, in Beaverton, (503) 203-1600. The center holds a free monthly informational seminar on the second Tuesday of the month from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

About the Fibromyalgia & Fatigue Centers

Fibromyalgia & Fatigue Centers are dedicated to treating patients suffering from conditions known as fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue syndrome. It is through a holistic, integrated and comprehensive approach to the treatment of underlying physiological factors that differentiates the FFC's approach and ultimate patient success. It is the FFC's goal to develop individualized and sustaining regimens that lead to a significant change for positive patient outcomes.

Founded and based on the outcomes of Dr. Kent Holtorf, a chronic fatigue patient and practitioner specializing in fibromyalgia (FM) and chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) patients, the FFC brings these medically proven protocols to patients nationwide. Founder and CEO, Bob Baurys, established the FFC after he found relief from his five year struggle with FM symptoms with Dr. Holtorf's treatments. Using a six step approach, physicians work with patients to create a treatment protocol that is unique to each patient.

Centers are currently open in Atlanta, Cleveland, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Ft. Worth, Las Vegas, Norwalk, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Portland and Seattle. Out of town packages are available for all FFC locations to accommodate the special needs of patients not living near one of the locations. For more information please visit www.fibroandfatigue.com or call (866) 443-4276.

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