

# The Health Listener

by Margy Squires

**Y**ou've heard of a dog whisper and a horse whisperer; people who have a gift for communication with animals. **Wouldn't you like to have a health listener, one who can help you with "health speak" and getting your needs met?**

**L**et me illustrate by example. A couple of years ago, I sought the advice of my doctor as I had gained 17 pounds in 3 months, my hair was falling out and I was exhausted no matter how many hours I slept. I had this uneasy feeling that something was wrong and just did not feel "myself". I admit the symptoms were vague and non-diagnostic in themselves but they were quickly dismissed as being part of the "aging" process. Still, that nagging feeling would not go away. So I did what most people should do – got a second opinion.

You may not know I have a somewhat extended exposure to multiple medical fields, having worked with family practice, oncology, rheumatology, psychiatry, psychology and dermatology. I'm not a doctor or nurse although I have a degree in medical science, but I am armed with information

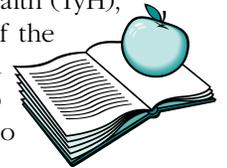
 when I walk into a doctor's office. Yet even I find that if I do not ask the *right question*, I'm not likely to get the *right answer*. So how do you ask a question that gets the answer you need? The Merriam definition of listen is to *bear something with thoughtful attention*. Unfortunately, unless someone is really listening, it can be a long road of trial and error and determination to get to your wellness goal.

My second opinion doctor listened intently as I explained that 33% of the people with Hashimoto's (an auto-immune thyroid disorder I have) also were at risk for celiac based on research I had read. I handed her the abstract. Could this be my problem? Sure enough, she tested me and the test came back highly positive for celiac. Did I diagnose myself? Or was I fortunate enough to find a health listener?

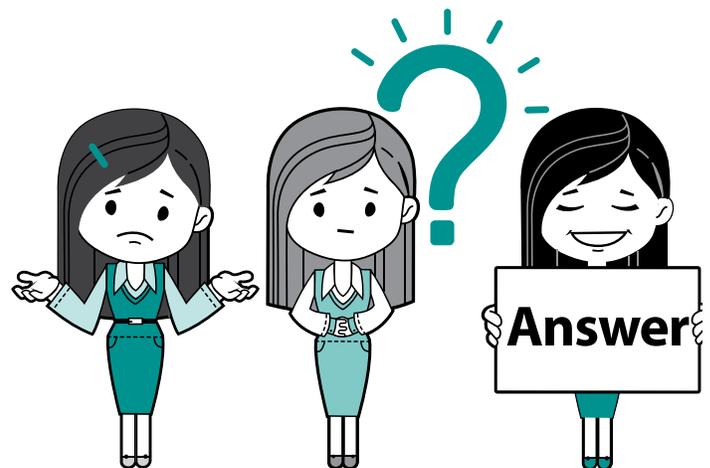
Getting diagnosed is only part of the answer, though. I still needed to know how to feel better after I was handed a celiac pamphlet and told not to eat gluten containing foods. Thus my education quest began. I joined forces with a naturopathic physician with a 20 year history of celiac to start and co-lead our town's first celiac group. For the next three years I not only educated others, I helped myself in the process. I was soon my "normal" self again with a full head of hair. Seems you cannot get hair or energy nutrients if your gastrointestinal system is aflame (or damaged) with a gluten allergy. The sad truth is, perhaps I would never have developed Hashimoto's

had celiac been diagnosed in childhood. Undiagnosed celiac can lead to stomach and GI cancers, osteoporosis and malnutrition, and may be a causative factor in multiple sclerosis and diabetes.

That's why there is an educational process that goes with any condition or disease. What you do not know can ultimately affect your health such that you cannot get well. My husband David, who has fibromyalgia, and I were "volunteered" to start the first fibro support group in Scottsdale, Arizona in the early 90s. In fact, I founded To Your Health (TyH), a supplement company, when I learned of the numerous nutritional deficiencies (based on scientific research) documented in fibro people. As I learned, I taught others and so on and so forth.



Another example. The primary deficiency in fibromyalgia is magnesium. Although early research suggested the problem was in the muscles and maybe the joints, later it was termed an "amplified pain condition" brought on by a dysfunction in the nervous system. Funny coincidence that serotonin, one of the chemicals your body uses to modify pain, is low and cannot be made without *magnesium!* Some experts even suggest that fibro could be caused by prolonged magnesium deficiency. Problem is that minerals are difficult to absorb so I looked for a "cell friendly" one and found an organic form (Albion). Matching the nutrient to the need is critical if you



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really want to help people feel better, especially when that person is my husband! Although replacing magnesium cannot claim to cure fibro, many people, like the ones exemplified in TyH customer stories, learn to quiet their pain and go on to find their “normal” again.



So I am happy when customers drop by or call the TyH store to talk and learn about their conditions. We listen. We offer educational literature and support. We do not always have the answers, but can suggest the “right” questions to ask their doctors. We sponsor free, in-store talks. Sharing experiences with others helps you shortcut your own healing journey as others have “been there, done that”. We also work with the healthcare community directly and have an advisory panel of professionals that are valuable resources for us.

Over the past 20 years, I have been a health listener and educator, first for fibromyalgia and more recently for celiac, mostly through articles in TyH’s publication *Health Points*, which is a free newsletter. TyH is available to our customers no matter what questions they have via e-mail, phone and in person. At TyH, we do not like to think of ourselves as being in the “supplement business” but rather being in the “health business”. TyH’s cornerstone is education in concert with the healing process of supportive nutrients to get our customers to their “normal”.

To Your Health. Twenty plus years and *we’re still listening*.

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# Health POINTS

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