10 Tools to Help Reduce Hep C Treatment Brain Fog

November 15, 2013 By Connie M. Welch

A normal side effect of treatment for Hepatitis C is concentration issues and short term memory lapse, better know as, Brain Fog. There are times when you feel like a fog has rolled in your brain making concentration difficult. It's temporary. It comes and goes, fades in and out.

My family noticed it more than I did but I do remember we shared frustration over this issue. My husband would tell me to talk to my doctor about it but I would always forget, which compounded the frustration. We came up with the idea of placing a notebook in the kitchen to become our central communication tool. Our message board. It came down to writing notes so that I would remember what was said, done or needed to do. It was placed next to our calendar. The notebook and I became one.

I can't remember if I brought this to my doctor's attention during my first treatment or second. Today's its funny, back then it wasn't.

My next doctor's visit I had written myself a reminder note and said, "Doctor, I keep forgetting to tell you that I'm having problems with my memory." I was absolutely serious about this but I will never forget the doctor's face when I read him the note. He completely lost it and broke out in laughter. This in itself was funny because my specialist has a very serious nature. But this frustration was turned upside down and we had to laugh it off. Remember that for this go round! Or at least make a note of it--

I wish someone would have warned me about brain fog before treatment. For a short time I thought I was losing my mind. I am happy to report however for my third and hopefully final treatment, I did not experience the degree of brain fog I did before. I contribute a large part to keeping my brain as active as possible with using these 10 tools to reduce brain fog.

A very helpful tool I found was writing one verse from the Bible each week on a 3Ã?5 card and reviewed it each day. I would repeat the verse 5 times or more until I could say it without looking at the card. I would also take some time to read each day. Some days I could only read small portions but that was OK, I was keeping my brain active regardless if I had to re-read the paragraph over. Journaling also kept my brain active.

Feeding my brain with nourishing scriptures and encouragement was like taking a mental and spiritual vitamin. It fed me when I felt depleted and protected my thoughts from concentrating on how rotten I physically felt. The brain fog periods I did experience were less severe and I was very grateful. I did find it helpful to chart my meds on a notebook we kept in the kitchen close by my meds.

10 Tools I recommend to help with brain fog:

1. Write down a scripture verse from the Bible on 3Ã?5 card. Memorize it and meditate on it daily. Keep it out where you see it often. Get someone else to join in and help spot check you to see if you say it back correctly. Make it fun.
2. Read something daily even if it's a small portion.
3. Journal. Examples; Treatment Journal, Thankfulness/Gratitude Journal.
4. Chart your meds. Use either the computer or notebook. Keep by your meds.
5. Central Communication Notebook for Messages.
6. Calendar. Keep it out by your Chart and Notebook to note doctor appointments, blood work, etc...
7. Drink your water. Your body and brain needs hydration all the time but especially during treatment. It helps clear your head and flush your body of toxins.
8. B-12 tablets. I personally found taking one B-12 tablet daily helped. B vitamins help with energy. Check with your doctor before taking any supplement. B-12 comes in tablet, sublingual (dissolves under the tongue), or shots.
9. Work on a small puzzle or game.
10. Get out in the fresh air, take a small walk, enjoy talking with a friend when you can. This engages your brain in activity.

You can do more than you think you can. It all starts with a Can Do Attitude! Above all, keep a light hearted spirit about the situation. Laugh, don't take yourself too seriously or allow brain fog to rob you of working through the moment. It's not permanent. It will pass and you will be normal again.

Encouragement from the Bible:

When I said, "My foot is slipping, " your love, O Lord, supported me. When anxiety was great within me, your consolation brought joy to my soul. Psalm 94:18-19 NIV

He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. Isaiah 40:29-31 NIV

For I am the Lord, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you. Isaiah 41:13 NIV

"The Lord upholds all those who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down." Psalm 145:14 NIV

Lord, I may have forgotten where I put my car keys. I may not remember that my husband said he was working late. But help me to pause, take a deep breath and remember this too shall pass and normal will return. Help me to turn frustration inside out. To laugh instead of cry. To be thankful instead of complain. Thank you for watching over me and caring for every detail in my life.

Can you relate to brain fog?

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