What kinda sides you got with that?

April 3, 2015 By Grace Campbell

Side effects.

Do you rail against them, muttering and grumbling, hoping they'll pass soon?

Or do you tolerate them, knowing that often you have to pay the piper and side effects are generally the only currency you have to deal in, hoping they'll pass soon?

Are you one of those most zen of people who embraces them, holds them close and figures this means the treatment is working? And you really don't care if they pass soon or not, because this is your reality at present?

I tend to cover all those bases, sometimes in as short a time frame as five minutes or so. I'm fickle like that. Or I lack a short term working memory, take your pick.

My side effects have been tolerable so far. And by so far I mean 12 days.

Fatigue: yes. I have to say yes. Not all the time, not every day, but enough that towards the end of the week I felt I was walking through cement. I'm revising my priorities and my work commitments to make my life a little easier. When doctors have asked me in the past if I get fatigued, I've said "I'm a 55 year old woman with a demanding job. I work hard. I have things outside my work that are important: committees, meetings, travel. Of course I'm tired. But I don't know if that's normal tired or fatigue tired." Now I know the difference. This is fatigue.

Nausea: some, but quite tolerable and it very much depends on what I eat. I'm busy trying to work out what makes me feel good and what doesn't.

Headaches: so far I've dodged the bullet on this one, but I've been drinking enough water to hydrate a small Indian elephant. I think that's helped.

Skin conditions: I thought this one would hammer me, having sensitive skin as I do. It's been so minimal it barely rates a mention on the effect-o-meter

Increased bilirubin: this one got me good and proper. I went into this treatment with slightly elevated bilirubin and I have to be honest, I'm prepared for a big spike in my blood tests next week.

Irritability: not yet, although my children would probably say "how could you tell?". Evidently they think it's my default setting.

Insomnia: I’m up and down to the toilet so often at night I can’t tell if it’s weird sleep patterns or the incessant need to pee. I think it’s the latter.

So, what kinda sides YOU got? How do you cope with them?

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