

PROFILE



From Recovery to Prevention

Learning to live a full life...again

Scott Forsgren woke up one night in April 1997 with what seemed like a bad case of the flu. In addition to typical flu symptoms, he had a burning sensation, as though he'd had acid poured over most of his body. The next day and the days following, his symptoms intensified and grew—he developed uncontrollable twitches in his muscles, a low-grade fever, chronic congestion, joint pain, recurrent ear infections, severe fatigue, a sore throat, pain in his joints and muscles, blurred vision and digestive problems. His balance was so impaired that even walking was a challenge.

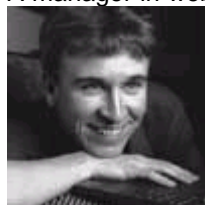
But Scott didn't have the flu. He didn't know what he had. He only knew that weeks, months—even years—later, he was still trying to get better.

"Imagine that you no longer have to imagine what it's like to feel sick day in and day out," says Scott, who is 30 now and was just 27 when the symptoms began. "Suddenly, the sickness becomes you. You become it. Nothing else matters except your quest to return to your previous life." At one point, Scott realized that he might never find out what was wrong with him.

Scott, who describes himself as a "slightly obsessive, Type A personality" immediately sought help. But it wasn't easy. In the three years that it took him to regain most of his health, he saw more than 25 doctors, many of whom told him that his symptoms were psychosomatic and referred him to psychiatrists. Almost every doctor started out by giving Scott an HIV test—until he had had a total of six tests, all of which confirmed what Scott knew—he wasn't HIV positive. He tried mystic healers and coffee enemas. Among the diagnoses suggested were Multiple Sclerosis, mononucleosis, Epstein-Barr virus, fibromyalgia, environmental illness, multiple chemical sensitivities and, finally, chronic fatigue immune deficiency syndrome (CFIDS). It took more than a year of relentless searching before one physician discovered that Scott had numerous parasitic infections, which had caused digestive damage, immune dysfunction and severe allergies. With this finding, Scott had reason to hope, though there was still a long road ahead.

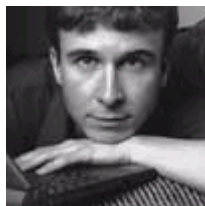


A manager in web development at a California-based software company, Scott is no stranger to the Internet.



After every new diagnosis, he would surf the Web to research whatever new disease he'd been told he might have. With so little concrete information or guidance coming from the medical community, Scott's forays into cyberspace at least gave him the sense that he could take some control of his condition. But usually the information he uncovered—especially about CFIDS—made him feel even more discouraged because there seemed to be so little hope for full recovery. He recognized that in addition to the problems caused by his parasitic infections, he also had the main symptoms of CFIDS—but what was he supposed

to do next?



"From the beginning of my research on CFIDS, I was pushed so far to the edge that I often wanted to take that jump off," he says now. "Everything I read was so hopeless." But one day he came across an article by a doctor who specializes in treating CFIDS and other immune disorders. Scott immediately picked up a book that the doctor had written about the disease, and soon afterwards went for a two-day evaluation that included drawing 21 vials of blood for testing. The tests showed that Scott still had several parasitic infections, as well as Candida overgrowth and malabsorption problems. The doctor Scott was seeing, who firmly believes in integrating alternative treatments with traditional medicine, immediately started Scott on an intensive program of dietary supplements. Fortunately, Scott was open to this type of treatment—he had started taking Life Extension Mix in 1992.



"I was 21 when I started on Life Extension Mix and it's been my cornerstone ever since," he says. "I remember thinking at the time I started that this is the only body I'd get and I needed to preserve it." Scott's

regimen was tailored to rebuild his immune system and correct the digestive damage. Today, Scott takes about 30 different

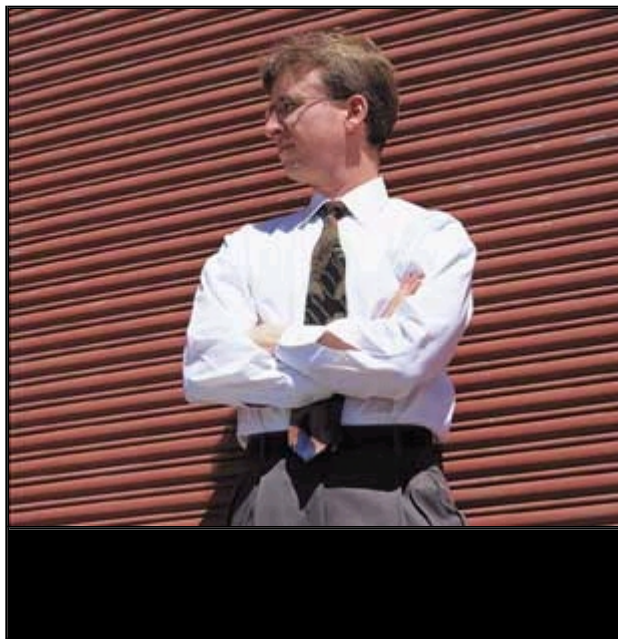
supplements a day, including a number of amino acids, topped by L-glutamine for both digestive support and to build muscle mass. Garlic, three times a day, also promotes healthy immune function and Scott likes the fact that it's effective in getting rid of the other pathogens that may be lurking. There are also plenty of digestive enzymes to go with each meal, as well as a number of antioxidants, his favorite of which is alpha lipoic acid, which he says helps all the other antioxidants-vitamins A, C and E-work better by giving them the "extra boost they need to go out and do their job." He uses bilberry to preserve good vision and caprylic acid to prevent further problems with Candida.

Scott takes an extract from whey and colostrum, as well as Astragalus, to help support and modulate proper immune function. He maintains good joint health-something he lacked during his lengthy battle with illness-with the help of glucosamine and chondroitin sulfate. "When I had the parasitic infection, there was maybe a year when I couldn't walk well because my muscles were so weak and my joints were so inflamed," he says. Today, Scott reports that when it comes to joint and muscle issues, he's completely better.

Melatonin is a critical element in Scott's health regimen, because sleep is such an important factor in fighting illness. It's also good for the immune system. "Even without an illness, if you aren't sleeping well, you're going to get sick," he says. Though Scott takes several supplements strictly to address the health problems he contracted during his three-year siege, he highly recommends creating a preventive regimen. "I'm a firm believer in taking things to help your body continue to work well," he says. "As opposed to starting on things only after you really need them."

The prolonged assault on Scott's immune system left him with considerable food allergies, some of which he continues to battle. He receives enzyme potentiated desensitization shots every eight weeks-a homeopathic allergy treatment used widely in Europe. It's working for Scott, though his allergies were so severe that his improvement has been slow. For quite awhile, he was allergic to wheat and gluten products, and couldn't eat bread for more than a year. Today, he must shun dairy products because of allergies, and avoids sugar and fruit, which exacerbate his body's ecological imbalance and provide an environment supportive of Candida overgrowth. (Scott admits to powerful cravings for orange juice, but recognizes that he feels much better when he sticks to his recommended diet.)

He strives for a less than 30 percent fat content in his daily caloric intake, which means he never eats red meat. What he does do is frequent a local super fresh, healthy Mexican restaurant where he can feast on fresh produce, beans and rice, with a bit of chicken now and then-all with plenty of salsa. Granola with soy milk is also a dietary mainstay. And Scott makes a point of drinking about two gallons of water a day.



As for exercise, Scott does a lot of walking, step aerobics, cycling and rollerblading, especially in the warm weather. "I get a little lazier in the winter," he says. "But exercise is important in managing stress and I don't want to put myself under any stress anymore."

Indeed, Scott handles stress much differently these days. "I realize that most of the things that used to bother me are nowhere near as dark as where I have already been," he says. "I'm not quite to where I want to be yet, but I have progressed spiritually and I know that life is a journey and my journey continues. I recognize that I can't control everything in my life-but, more importantly, I recognize that that's OK."

Scott also works on being happy, because a good mood is one of the best immune system boosters. He loves to see movies and

go to concerts and recently did something he never imagined doing-he overcame his fear of heights and went skydiving.

"If you have any desire to experience something new, you've got to go for it. Tomorrow isn't a given," he says.

Scott is already planning his next skydive. -Twig Mowatt

[Back to the Magazine Forum](#)

All Contents Copyright © 1995-2009 Life Extension Foundation All rights reserved.

LifeExtension®

These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA. These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. The information provided on this site is for informational purposes only and is not intended as a substitute for advice from your physician or other health care professional or any information contained on or in any product label or packaging. You should not use the information on this site for diagnosis or treatment of any health problem or for prescription of any medication or other treatment. You should consult with a healthcare professional before starting any diet, exercise or supplementation program, before taking any medication, or if you have or suspect you might have a health problem. You should not stop taking any medication without first consulting your physician.