

When Michelle Kmiec was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS), she felt she had come to a healing crossroads: to either take charge of her own health or follow the path of modern medicine with drugs and slow physical decline.

For most people there's no choice at all. MS is considered a chronic, degenerative disease of the nervous system; although nobody is sure about its cause, most agree it is an autoimmune response. Drugs help the sufferer during its worst phases but, as Michelle put it, "all I had to look forward to was life in a wheelchair".

Michelle, who lives in Vermont, USA, had all the classic symptoms and was described by one doctor as "a textbook case". Looking back she realizes that she had plenty of early warning signs, but the first worrying symptom was a feeling of light-headedness that lasted for 20 minutes. Then, soon after, her entire right leg went completely numb while driving, and she had to use her left leg to control the pedals and prevent an accident. This set off a panic and anxiety attack.

She went to her local hospital's emergency unit and the doctors started a series of tests—but then stopped when they heard Michelle didn't have full health insurance coverage. At the time she was working as a martial arts instructor—she herself has a black belt in karate—and the job came without health insurance. "They were wheeling me in a bed with electrodes on my chest monitoring my heart while heading for the X-ray unit, then turned me around to be discharged," she said. The doctors instead told her to rest.

Several days later the light-headedness returned and persisted for seven months, accompanied by a sensation of 'electrical zingers' that ran up and down her right arm. Her blood pressure rocketed to 150/95 mmHg when it was normally 112/62, and her weight dropped alarmingly over just three weeks from 130 lbs to just 105 lbs. Her right lower leg often 'gave out' and she started to suffer tremors in her legs. She also began to suffer from double vision, and her energy levels fell to such an extent that she was unable to walk at her normal pace, but could

# I was heading for a life in a wheelchair



**Doctors diagnosed Michelle Kmiec as a textbook case of multiple sclerosis (MS) — but instead of drugs, she decided to take charge of her own health**

only shuffle along.

At first doctors thought she was having an allergic reaction and so gave her allergy medication, but later they assumed she was suffering from anxiety or depression and sent her home with a free sample bag of Prozac.

Eventually, Michelle came to believe that she was suffering from MS, as one doctor had identified early on, and she started to recognize "hundreds of symptoms" that are associated with the disease. Even then, she saw that MS was an umbrella term for an autoimmune response.

By this time she had a bathroom full of free samples of prescription drugs, including Prozac, Zoloft and Paxil. "I thought that the pessimistic medical world wasn't going anywhere. So I decided to first change everything in my life that could possibly be causing my symptoms in the first place, and then—and only then—would I consider the medical drug route," she recalled.

She did take Valium (diazepam) for her anxiety attacks, although she restricted herself to a 25-mg dose when the standard prescription is 200 mg. She never finished the bottle—and that was the last time she took a pharmaceutical.

Instead, she began to clean up her lifestyle by eliminating all foods, liquids, soaps and

deodorants that contained chemicals. She even changed her toilet paper to an organic brand.

She began a detox programme that included hot baths with mustard seeds and other herbs and quickly added saunas, nutrients and probiotics to the mix. Amino acids were important to her healing regime, as were nutrients such as magnesium, zinc and vitamins A, B, C, D and E.

Paradoxically her lifestyle changes initially made her symptoms worse, although this is a recognized early response known as the Herxheimer reaction. "For nearly three weeks I felt very ill. I had a fever, headaches and gastrointestinal issues along with all of my original symptoms. But I remember feeling different. It was hard to explain to those who were concerned about me, but I felt different on a deeper physical level. I knew without a shadow of a doubt that I was doing the right thing."

Emboldened, Michelle says she became her own guinea pig, researching different supplements and introducing more organic foods into her diet. She was also helped by chiropractic and eventually became a licensed chiropractor herself.

Today she is back to her full active self and even teaches Zumba dance fitness classes. "I am 100 per cent recovered," she says. She was inspired to write a book about the limitations of medicine—*Healthcare Freedom Revolution* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2012)—and has created a website to help others overcome chronic diseases.

She thinks doctors are too quick to diagnose and give a convenient label to a set of symptoms and then prescribe a one-size-fits-all pharmaceutical treatment. The conveyor-belt medicine she encountered doesn't allow for any thinking 'outside of the box' or any open-minded enquiry. At an early stage, for instance, Michelle was wondering whether her MS was in fact Lyme disease, which is caused by a tick bite. Despite asking on three occasions, the doctors dismissed her requests for a test—even though around 30 per cent of MS cases do turn out to be Lyme disease.

"I'm well today with no thanks to the medical profession... actually, in spite of them," she says.

**Michelle became her own guinea pig, researching different supplements and introducing more organic foods into her diet**

*Healthcare Freedom Revolution: Exposing the Lies, Deceit and Greed of the Medical Profession* is available on Kindle and as a paperback book from [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). Michelle's website is [www.onlineholistichealth.com](http://www.onlineholistichealth.com).