

PRAISE FOR
From Fatigued to Fantastic!

“*From Fatigued to Fantastic!* is not just a title, it’s a promise. And this is one promise backed by an empathetic, innovative practitioner whose focus is always on getting his patients well. Jacob Teitelbaum has single-handedly revolutionized the way fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, and thyroid disease are diagnosed and treated.”

—MARY SHOMON

Author of *The Thyroid Diet* and *Living Well with Hypothyroidism*

“First published in 1995, *From Fatigued to Fantastic!* has continued to be at the top of the fibromyalgia patient’s ‘favorite books’ list. The newest edition of Dr. Teitelbaum’s book will provide you with practical information and new and easy-to-understand insights on how to better manage and improve how you feel despite fibromyalgia.”

—LYNNE MATAALLANA

Founder of the National Fibromyalgia Association

“Jacob Teitelbaum’s newest edition of *From Fatigued to Fantastic!* is a must-read for all those suffering from chronic illness, as well as those treating patients with chronic illness. I use the information presented in this book every day in my practice with great success. I highly recommend this book for all to read and learn.”

—DAVID BROWNSTEIN, M. D.

Author of *The Miracle of Natural Hormones*, 3rd edition

“An absolute classic in the field.... As a practicing doctor-nurse team, we encourage *all* people with fatigue to read this book thoroughly. It is a timeless contribution and provides crucial information for everyone.”

—RICHARD L. SHAMES, M. D., AND KARILEE H. SHAMES, PH. D., R. N.

Creators of the health education Web site www.feelingfff.com and authors of *Feeling Fat, Fuzzy, or Frazzled?*

“Jacob Teitelbaum is an outstanding and compassionate patient advocate. If you read just one book on CFS and fibromyalgia, this is absolutely the one I’d recommend!”

—HYLA CASS, M. D.

Author of *8 Weeks to Vibrant Health*

“This book is five stars! The protocol is indispensable for any physician treating CFIDS. The text is a godsend for patients—giving them hope and a means for educating themselves and, hopefully, their doctors.”

—BILL DEAN

Author of *The Immune System*

“I provide all my patients with *From Fatigued to Fantastic!* and find it a wonderful tool to open dialogue between the patient and myself. It is critical that the patient play a major role in his or her own healing. This book provides that bridge. I could not practice as effectively without this book.”

—TERENCE COLLINS, M. D., MPH, MPS

Chairman, program director of the Department of Preventive Medicine and Environmental Health, University of Kentucky

“Practical, evidence-based, and easy to read, *From Fatigued to Fantastic!* offers hope and guidance for millions of CFIDS and fibromyalgia sufferers.”

—MARK W. MCCLURE, M. D., FACS

Author of *Smart Medicine for a Healthy Prostate*

“Dr. Teitelbaum’s book is a must-read for all health-care professionals who want to understand a truly holistic method to help patients with CFS. No longer do we have to be frustrated with inadequate treatments and unscientific evidence. He gives real answers to what before were unsolvable issues.”

—E. J. (LEV) LINKNER, M. D.

Clinical Instructor, University of Michigan Medical School, and Founding Diplomat, American Board of Holistic Medicine

“The first edition has already helped so many who have been unable to find help elsewhere. This edition brings us up to date with exciting new information, including new clinical research. Reading this book is a must!”

—JAMES H. BRODSKY, M. D.

Former Instructor, Georgetown University Medical School

“Dr. Teitelbaum’s *From Fatigued to Fantastic!* is a must-read for CFS patients and health-care providers alike. There are few physicians in this country who have the scope of research and clinical experience in chronic fatigue as Dr. Teitelbaum and who have such extraordinary ability to communicate what he knows so well. He takes the reader on a friendly yet extremely comprehensive journey into the whys and hows of this disease and its treatment, weaving in and out of the alternative, conventional, and psychological/emotional approaches, which are part of his successful program.”

—RALPH GOLAN, M. D.

Author of *Optimal Wellness*

“I am grateful for Dr. Jacob Teitelbaum’s great work on FMS and CFS. His well-done, published research validates what many of us working in the trenches know: this works!”

—MARK HOCH, M. D.

Past President, American Holistic Medical Association

“[This] research and carefully designed program for patients suffering from CFS and fibromyalgia has given my patients relief from symptoms, improved sense of well-being, hope, and in many cases has facilitated a path to optimal health and full recovery.”

—NANCY RUSSELL, M. D.

Medical Director, Combined Health Care Professionals, and Founding Diplomat, American Board of Holistic Medicine

“As a psychiatrist and acupuncturist, I frequently see patients with chronic fatigue and soft-tissue pain. Dr. Teitelbaum’s book *From Fatigued to Fantastic!* has been a fantastic resource for these individuals. They uniformly report to me that they found it helpful to them on many different levels. This book has clear benefit for anyone dealing with chronic fatigue or fibromyalgia.”

—SCOTT SHANNON, M. D.

Past President, American Holistic Medical Association

“Dr. Teitelbaum’s work and studies show us the way forward in treating this group of illnesses. They are a major advance on what we have here at present.”

—ANDREW WRIGHT, M. D.

Editor, *Chronobiology* (UK)

“In the management of chronic fatigue syndrome, Dr. Teitelbaum’s comprehensive approach is the most successful program available today. Practitioners and patients alike will find within the pages of *From Fatigued to Fantastic!* the rudiments of recovery, which offer hope to those afflicted with this disease.”

—ROBERT A. ANDERSON, M. D.

Former President, American Board of Holistic Medicine

From Fatigued to Fantastic!

From Fatigued to Fantastic!

A Clinically Proven Program to Regain Vibrant Health and Overcome Chronic Fatigue and Fibromyalgia

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*To Laurie, my beautiful lady, my wife, and the love of my life;
my children, David, Amy, Shannon, Brittany, and Kelly, who already seem to know so much of what
I'm trying to learn; my beautiful grandchildren, Payton and Bryce; my mother, Sabina, and father,
David, whose unconditional love made this book possible;
The memories of Drs. Janet Travell, Hugh Riordan, and Billie Crook, who were the pioneers in this
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The many chronic fatigue syndrome and fibromyalgia support groups. These are easily the best patient support groups I have ever seen.

And finally, God and the universe, for the guidance and infinite blessings I have been given and for using me as an instrument for healing.

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Introduction

I remember 1975. I was in my third year of medical school, doing my pediatrics rotation. I had always excelled, having finished college in three years. Now I was the second-youngest in a class of more than two hundred students, and I was continuing to perform well. My approach to life was to move quickly—“full speed ahead.” But then, a nasty viral illness hit me and made it hard for me to even get out of bed for my morning pediatrics lecture. I cannot forget walking into an auditorium full of medical students, the professor saying, “Teitelbaum, why are you...” As he said “late?” I just about collapsed on the steps.

Although I was barely able to function, I spent the next four weeks working in the electron microscopy and research labs. The work I performed there was considered low-key—good tasks for a medical student trying to recuperate. But my brain fog made even these duties impossible, and by the end of the month, I was finding it impossible to even get out of bed before noon. I wanted to push forward and try harder. Though it was not what I wanted to hear, one wise professor advised me that this was not a time to push forward but rather a time to take a leave of absence and “regroup.” I am still thankful for this teacher’s guidance.

My illness seemed to close a door to one chapter of my life and open other doors to whole new possibilities of self-exploration. As I had to drop out of medical school and had no more scholarship or work-study, and was too ill to work, I was also homeless. Taking off in my '65 Dodge Dart, I had the novel experience of having no agenda, no plans. I was to meet many teachers on my journey. Most important, I was taking time to get to know myself.

With my family’s and friends’ help and support and my own inner work, as well as what I learned from people I met while I was homeless, I recovered my energy and strength and went on to finish medical school and residency. Though I did well, I continued to intermittently suffer the many diverse symptoms seen in fibromyalgia. My experiences with chronic fatigue syndrome and fibromyalgia left me with an appreciation of the impact of these illnesses. The symptoms that persisted—such as fatigue, achiness, poor sleep, and bowel problems—acted as the arena in which I learned how to help other people overcome these illnesses. It also taught me that it helps to have a sense of humor to survive this illness.

If you have chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS), fibromyalgia syndrome (FMS), myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME), or another disabling chronic fatigue state, you have been through a difficult journey. I remember being told that I was depressed. I *was* depressed. I was unable to function. Most people with chronic fatigue syndrome have to struggle just to get compassion and understanding.

Building on what I have learned since 1975, my research partner, Barbara Bird, and I initially completed an open study (in 1993) of sixty-four patients with disabling chronic fatigue.¹ In 1999, we completed a randomized, double-blind follow-up study, and appreciate the assistance given by National Institutes of Health researchers in developing the study protocol. This study showed that 91

percent of you can improve with proper treatment, and half of those with fibromyalgia were pain free at ninety-nine days.² Our recently published study showed an average 45 percent increase in energy in CFS/FMS by simply taking ribose (see Chapter 2).³ My staff and I have treated more than three thousand CFS/FMS patients, and tens of thousands more have been treated by doctors at the Fibromyalgia & Fatigue Centers (www.fibroandfatigue.com) and by many other physicians worldwide. More than 50 percent of our patients are much better—that is, their symptoms are no longer a major problem—with our treatment, while most of the remainder have shown significant, albeit incomplete, improvement. Only 10 to 15 percent have had no significant improvement.

We have found that, on average, patients begin to feel better in two to three months.^{1, 2}

If you suffer from CFS, FMS, or ME, this book will provide you with the tools and information you need to move beyond fatigue and into wellness. If you are a physician, it will teach you how to help—often dramatically—your patients who experience chronic exhaustion, including those frustrating cases in which no treatment has thus far been successful.

If you have researched chronic fatigue and immune dysfunction syndrome (CFIDS—also called chronic fatigue syndrome, or CFS, and I use CFS and CFIDS interchangeably), you will find some information here that is familiar, but you will also discover much that is new. For instance, to restore energy production and recover, it is usually necessary to treat many different problems simultaneously. Most sufferers of chronic exhaustion have a mix of at least five or six underlying problems (out of more than a hundred possible problems), which vary from person to person. This occurs because each problem can cause several others. You may have found some relief in the past by treating one, or a few, of these problems; I think you will be pleasantly surprised at what happens when you treat all your underlying problems simultaneously.

Certainly, we still have much more to learn in this area. However, we have now crossed a threshold and can effectively treat the illness. As the *Journal of the American Academy of Pain Management* noted in an editorial, “This study by Dr. Teitelbaum et al confirms what years of clinical success have shown—that the treatment approach described in Chapter 4 of *The Trigger Point Manual* (by Dr. Janet Travell) is effective, that subclinical abnormalities are important, and that the comprehensive and aggressive metabolic approach to treatment in Teitelbaum’s study is highly successful and makes fibromyalgia a very treatable disorder. The study by Dr. Teitelbaum et al and years of clinical experience makes this approach an excellent and powerfully effective part of the standard of practice for treatment of people who suffer from FMS and MPS [myofascial pain syndrome]—both of which are common and devastating syndromes. It is very exciting that this research helps to usher in a new, more effective era in medical care by treating the patient and not only the laboratory tests!”⁴

It’s time for you to get well! Ready?

Your Body's Energy Crisis

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