

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Sohère Roked, a general practitioner with a specialist interest in integrative medicine, is one of the UK's leading holistic doctors. Dr Roked has extensive knowledge of both conventional and holistic medicines and combines the two for the best possible improvement in her clients' health. A former student of the British College of Integrative Medicine, she has been taught by experts in the field from the UK, Australia and the USA. Her NHS experience made her realise what was lacking in conventional medicine, such as nutritional and lifestyle advice and how to empower people to take control of their own health, and she combines her training in both to offer her patients complete health care.

I would like to dedicate this book to my mum and dad. Without their love and support and sacrifices I wouldn't be where I am today. Dad, you were my inspiration to become a doctor, and if I can only be half the doctor and person you are I will have done well.

THE
TIREDNESS
CURE

HOW TO BEAT FATIGUE AND FEEL GREAT
FOR GOOD

DR SOHÈRE ROKED

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INTRODUCTION

Why is everyone so tired all the time? As a NHS GP this is a question I would ask myself continuously. Why are my patients so tired? Why are all my friends knackered? Hell, why was I so exhausted that I would cancel Friday-night drinks in order to lie on the sofa and fall asleep before 11 p.m.?

I remember having a conversation with a doctor I worked with in 2008 about how tired we were, while both swigging cups of coffee to keep us awake for the rest of our shift. I said quite matter-of-factly that I had come to terms with the fact that I would be tired every day for the rest of my life, and making peace with it was the best I could do. She looked at me with awe and said it was amazing I was so Zen about it. I stoically nodded, like a woman condemned to execution, accepting of my fate.

So what happened between 2008 and 2014 that made me do such a massive U-turn that I am now penning a book about how you can beat your own tiredness? As a GP, I see many patients saying they feel weak and fatigued but without any obvious medical reason. It's what I call a 'lifestyle problem', that is, it has a major impact on a person's life and well-being, but doesn't show up on conventional medical blood tests or investigations. The symptoms are certainly real, yet there's no conventional treatment for them. I've seen patients in tears as they were so physically exhausted they couldn't look after their children or get up for work in the mornings. Needless to say their quality of life was massively reduced.

It was terribly frustrating for me to see my patients in such distress without knowing how to do anything about it. So when I came across integrative medicine by chance I knew my calling

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was to train as an integrative medical doctor. Integrative medicine is a commonly used approach in the USA and Australia, and is even taught in the medical schools and available on the health insurance policies of those countries. Integrative medicine was not taught to me in medical school. I am sure most good doctors try to work in a holistic way by looking at a patient's lifestyle and social circumstances, but it is not specifically taught exactly how much this impacts on health and wellness. This could be to do with the way health services are funded in the UK, or perhaps to do with the current strain on the services, but it is something I hope will evolve in the future. In general, integrative medicine uses the best of Western and Eastern medicine with an evidence base and provides truly 'whole-istic' health care, looking at the whole person. I look at those niggly little symptoms that a person may be experiencing and find a way to restore the balance to the body before they accumulate and turn into an illness or disease.

As one of only ten such qualified expert doctors in the UK, I work with many private clients to help them achieve an optimum level of health. This involves a full and comprehensive consultation where I look at the individual as a 'whole', including all the factors contributing to their health and well-being. Unlike a regular GP, I'm not satisfied with the mere absence of ill health, particularly when my patients continue to feel unwell. My passion is to empower individuals to take control of their lives, to prevent illness and regenerate their health and well-being. Part of my role is to examine nutrition, fitness, stress, chemical imbalances, hormone imbalances, digestive health and toxicity in the body.

As both a NHS GP *and* a holistic doctor, I can show you how to achieve robust, enduring health through making small changes that will empower you to take control of your health and be the best *you* that you can be. I'm so confident in my programme that, if you follow it, I promise you will feel fantastic, look more youthful, get into great shape and have the energy to live your life to the full. Now who doesn't want that?

SMALL CHANGES MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE

Is it as simple as eating well, drinking more water, managing stress and exercising? Well, in the majority of cases, yes. But I see lots of patients who do those things but still feel fatigued. In those cases we need to address other imbalances to create total health. This book will show you how. We are all busy people with lots to do, so I am going to make suggestions that fit in with your daily life and routine as much as possible.

I suggest you read the book through from start to finish and then see which chapters resonate most with you, and start with those. Alternatively, you can do the energy health check quiz in chapter 1 (see pages 12–18) and see where you score highest and start with those sections first, as this is where you need the most help. Take time to digest the information and make changes when you feel ready and able to do so. You're in this for life, not just a quick fix, so take your time.

ASSESSING YOUR CURRENT HEALTH

I have written *The Tiredness Cure* to outline a very important concept that is often forgotten:

No one should care more about your health than you do. YOU have to become the expert on you and YOU are the person responsible for your health.

Yes, *YOU!* Your GP and other health-care professionals can guide you, but ultimately, the control lies with you and the choices you make. Isn't that empowering?

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The first step of the plan is to be really honest with yourself and assess where you are in your current state of energy, health and well-being. By assessing where you are now, without judgement or negativity, and stating your positive health goals, you will see more clearly where you want to go and what you want to achieve.

I would like you to answer the following questions in a notebook you can refer back to:

1. What three things would you like to change most about your health? What three things would you like to change most about your life? Are you aware of anything you currently do that could be having an impact on your health? (Think along the lines of diet, exercise, stress, smoking, alcohol, etc.)
2. What impact would changing the above have for you? How would it make you feel? How would it make things better?
3. What sort of changes could you make that would fit in with your current life?
4. How happy do you feel at the moment, and why?
5. What are your levels of stress, and why?
6. How much do you exercise? What stops you/motivates you?
7. What is your diet like? What influences this?
8. How do you think your current lifestyle will impact on your health when you are in old age?

To get the most out of this programme and become the expert on you, you have to be 100 per cent honest. Some of these questions may be hard to answer, so I'd like you to take a week to really get clear on where you are in your current state of health and well-being today, before we start to move forward. There are no right or wrong answers.

I suggest you write down the first answers you come up with and revisit them every day for 10–15 minutes and see if they need adjusting, or if you come up with new ones. At the end of the

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week, write down your revised answers and as the weeks go on, you will be able to see how much things are improving.

When you feel empowered you are able to take control of your health and your well-being. By taking this first step and taking responsibility, you are starting the journey to the health you've always wanted. I am committed to helping my clients achieve the best health and energy they can possibly have using new and innovative tools from integrative medicine, and I am now committed to supporting you in the same way through this book.

It's never too late to start the regeneration of your body, mind and spirit. Sometimes it seems like there's a big hill to climb that separates our current situation and the 'wellness' we want to reach. I want you to know I'm here for you and I encourage you to keep going. To be energetic and healthy is possible; just take one step at a time.

What many people don't realise is how well we are *directly* correlates with the lifestyle choices we make. For example, diet has a major impact on how we feel and our energy levels. The proportion of fruit and vegetables we eat provides energy for the body; conversely the amount of processed foods we eat zaps our energy levels. Smoking, alcohol and caffeine all zap energy too, as does stress, whereas relaxation, exercise and taking the right supplements boost our energy levels. It's also important to note that running on empty, although often commendable in our work-all-hours culture, causes a complete disruption of our natural rhythms.

HOW I CAN HELP YOU

I'm here to guide you on a new path to improve and maximise your health and this book will take you through the process step-by-step. I like takeaways, chocolate and having a good night out as much as anyone and so I am realistic and advise working by a 70/30 principle. This means implementing your new regime about five/six days a week and then you can have a few treats

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on the other day(s). If you're in reasonable health you will see changes within a few weeks. If you're not currently in the best shape then I would like you to try to be a bit stricter with yourself. I promise you it will be worth it.

I *know* this stuff works! Not just because I have studied it and have seen the effects on my patients, but because it is what I use to look after myself. I can honestly say I feel great at the moment. But that hasn't always been the case. I have felt overweight, stressed out, suffering with poor sleep, self-medicating every setback in life with excesses. A few years ago I had a horrible sense that life just wasn't fair and nothing was going to change. But then *I* changed. Not all at once, but slowly over time. I got involved with meditation and mindfulness first, which made the world of difference to how I felt on the inside. Mindfulness is about living in the moment and becoming more connected to how you feel in the present and your surroundings instead of constantly dwelling on the past or dreaming of the future. It also helped me to stop looking for outside forces to make me happy and I realised it all lies within me. This encouraged me to stop unhealthy 'fad diets' and focus on healthier lifestyle changes by increasing my fruit and vegetable intake, juicing and cutting down on sugar, which I do love! I now try and have my treats in moderation. I decided to party less, as I was just exhausted all the time and run-down. I used to feel I had to go out to prove how fun and funky I am, but I know now I don't have to prove anything to anyone and can just spend time doing things I enjoy.

I have stopped spending time with people who used me and sapped my energy and now prefer to have a few stronger supportive friendships. I can't always exercise as I often work up to 15 hours a day, but I try to go for walks at lunchtime and do my stretches in between patients. I am in a good place now, but it hasn't happened overnight. I made lots of little changes over a period of time to avoid being overwhelmed by it all and giving up, and I can honestly say it has made the world of difference. I know

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that the same can happen for you. My own experiences have led me to practise medicine in the way I do: by seeing an individual as a 'whole' and looking at all aspects of their life to gain optimum health. Of course I slip up from time to time because I get busy or eat too much chocolate for a few weeks and dodge going to the gym, but I realise that I am a work in progress and take time out to look after myself and try not to be too hard on myself. I remember why it is important to look after my health and simply start again.

Everything I recommend you try, I have already tried and tested on myself. I wouldn't expect you to do anything I wouldn't do. Trust me. Work with me and allow me to support you every step of the way. If there has been scientific research on recommendations mentioned in the book I will let you know. Together, we can achieve the very best energy, health and shape you could wish for. Let's get started!

CHAPTER 1

BECOME

EMPOWERED

The state of health in the developed world is in crisis. People are living longer but in poorer health. Obesity, diabetes, strokes and heart attacks have reached epidemic proportions. Health services are struggling to cope and are, in some areas, at breaking point.

A study published in March 2013 showed that while we may all live until we are 80, we will be in poorer health and spending more time in ill health or in hospital.¹ This doesn't sound like much fun to me. As a GP, I go to lots of nursing homes and see elderly people who are bedbound or chronically ill, and having little pleasure or enjoyment in life. That's not the future I want.

While the NHS does a great job for a lot of people in the UK, many have become dependent on it and have forgotten that ultimately *we* are responsible for our own health. As a GP I find my patients fall into two categories in general. Some feel that if a treatment isn't available on the NHS it probably isn't any good and isn't worth paying for, and then there are those who believe in 'non-traditional' therapies, such as acupuncture and osteopathy, and are frustrated that the NHS doesn't cover more of them. In the UK, alternative therapies are often viewed with suspicion and derision, while the Americans and Australians offer them as a matter of course. People need to realise that our health service is doing a great job to treat immediate and serious health problems,

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such as heart attacks and strokes and diseases that require medications or surgery, but that we also have to make some provisions for our own well-being by making lifestyle changes and sometimes self-funding treatments to promote our own well-being and lower the chances of us getting ill in the first place. In order for the health service to run effectively, we all have to work to reduce the strain on it by taking responsibility for our own health and looking after ourselves as well as possible, so the sickest people are able to get the treatment they need in a timely fashion. I believe that even if you are born with a chronic health condition, you still have the power to improve your situation by making the right choices. In my opinion, there is simply no excuse.

Let me give you some examples of how integrative medicine can make a difference to health conditions. One of the pioneers of integrative health in the USA is Dr Dean Ornish. He devised a programme that is available throughout the US on health insurance plans which has been proven to reverse heart disease and prostate cancer. After following this plan, scans of the arteries have shown that the ‘furring’ that causes angina and heart attacks is reduced and reversed. Scans of patients’ prostate glands show the cancer disappearing after they have followed this plan for several months. Would you like to know what this amazing plan is that can reverse heart disease and prostate cancer? It involves following a very low-fat vegetarian diet, doing yoga, meditation and being part of a support group. That’s it. No invasive surgeries or harsh chemotherapy drugs.²

Here in the UK, another example is a gentleman called Allan Taylor. A 76-year-old grandfather, Mr Taylor was diagnosed with bowel cancer and had to undergo surgery and chemotherapy. He then went for his follow-up appointment and discovered the cancer had sadly reoccurred in a different part of the bowel. His doctors told him it was futile to have any more treatment as the cancer would keep reoccurring elsewhere and he was to only receive palliative care. Mr Taylor didn’t settle for this grim prog-

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nosis. Following his own research on the Internet, he put himself on a programme that consisted of a vegetarian diet and having at least ten portions of fruit and vegetables a day, taking apricot kernels, selenium, powdered barley grass, turmeric capsules and high doses of vitamin C. Four months later Mr Taylor went for a scan and there was no trace of cancer in his body.³

Clearly the body can do wonderful things; we just need to give it the right fuel to do them.

IT'S IN MY GENES...

There is not a week that goes by that I don't hear this from a patient. But guess what? Amazing Nobel prize-winning research from 2009 showed that genes are not fixed as we once thought. The telomeres on the end of genes can be shortened or lengthened: the shorter your telomere, the more likely you are to age and shorten your lifespan; whereas the longer your telomere is, the longer your lifespan is. A lot of things that shorten your telomeres are self-explanatory, like smoking, drinking too much or having a poor diet. The most surprising finding for me was that stress shortens your telomeres *as much as smoking does*. Therefore, stress is as bad for your health as smoking.⁴

Dr Dean Ornish found that within three months of patients taking part in his health programmes, there were changes in over five hundred genes – ‘turning on’ disease-preventing genes and ‘turning off’ disease-promoting genes that are involved in chronic diseases and cancers. Dr Ornish says that genes are a pre-disposition, but not your fate.

We often think of medical advances as new drugs, procedures and technology, but the truth is that simple choices like what we eat, how we manage our stress, how much exercise we get and how happy we feel makes a huge difference to our health and well-being.

OUR OWN INTERNAL SOURCE OF ENERGY

Every cell of our body is made of pure energy. When we are physically, emotionally and spiritually well the energy flows evenly through our bodies and we feel well and full of vitality. Many traditions such as yoga, Buddhism and Taoism work to restore the balance and flow of energy in our bodies. Chinese medicine and acupuncture work to restore our energy flow. The energies that run through our body are sometimes known as Chi, Auras, Chakras or Meridians. Chi is thought to be our pure source of energy that flows through us and gives us energy from within. Our Aura is the energy that surrounds us; Chakras are the energy centres that are found in the body and correspond to different organs and emotions. Meridians are the energy streams that flow through the body. When our energy is out of balance, it can affect our hormonal system, affect our circulation, disrupt the chemical signals in the body and affect our nervous system. The methods and techniques you learn in this book, be it what you eat, how you move your body or how you de-stress, will work to help you restore your internal sources of energy. Every cell in our body vibrates at a certain frequency and by eating well and doing other good things for our health we can replenish our own internal source of energy.

THE ENERGY HEALTH CHECK

To help you in your quest to improve your energy, this questionnaire assesses the different areas of your health that could be being affected. It has been designed in conjunction with Dr Mark Atkinson, an integrative medical physician and mindfulness teacher.⁵ This will guide you to the chapters you need the most. Alternatively you could read the chapters and see which ones resonate with you. Fill out the questionnaire and see which areas you score most highly in – this will help guide you in your personalised health plan.

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1. FLUCTUATING BLOOD SUGAR LEVELS

In the last month have you: no = 0, occasionally = 1, yes = 2

1. Craved sweet foods or stimulants such as caffeine or nicotine? _____
2. Felt memory problems or mental confusion after eating? _____
3. Felt a drop in energy, mood or drowsiness after meals? _____
4. Experienced frequent mood swings in the course of a day? _____
5. Struggled with your weight despite watching what you eat? _____
6. Stored most of your body fat around your middle? _____
7. Felt weak? _____
8. Had a tendency to night sweats or excessive sweating during the day? _____
9. Experienced excessive thirst? _____

TOTAL SCORE: _____

2. ADRENAL FATIGUE

In the last month have you: no = 0, occasionally = 1, yes = 2

1. Felt stressed, restless, overwhelmed and/or exhausted? _____
2. Experienced anxiety, nervousness, irritability, phobias or panic attacks? _____
3. Kept yourself going on sugar, caffeine and/or snacks? _____
4. Experienced light-headedness on standing? _____
5. Felt more awake at night? _____
6. Craved salty food, sugar or liquorice? _____
7. Had dark circles under your eyes or feel your eyes sensitive to bright lights? _____
8. Spent the whole day rushing from one thing to another? _____
9. Suffered from interrupted sleep or insomnia? _____
10. Got absent-minded or felt that your short-term memory lets you down? _____

TOTAL SCORE: _____

**3. OESTROGEN/PROGESTERONE
IMBALANCE (WOMEN)**

Do you: no = 0, occasionally = 1, yes = 2

- 1. Experience premenstrual mood swings? ___
- 2. Use, or have you used, birth control pills or hormone medication? ___
- 3. Experience irregular, lengthy or uncomfortable periods? ___
- 4. Experience peri- or post-menopausal discomfort (such as hot flushes, weight gain, sweats or insomnia)? ___
- 5. Have acne, excessive facial hair and/or are known to have Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS)? ___
- 6. Have a history of miscarriage or infertility? ___
- 7. Have painful or lumpy breasts? ___
- 8. Experience cyclical headaches or migraines? ___
- 9. Gain weight easily or find it hard to lose weight? ___

TOTAL SCORE: ___

4. LOW TESTOSTERONE QUESTIONNAIRE (MEN)

Do you: no = 0, occasionally = 1, yes = 2

- 1. Have any memory lapses, foggy thinking or periods of forgetfulness? ___
- 2. Have a reduced sex drive? ___
- 3. Experience problems with getting a firm erection? ___
- 4. Find that you are losing muscle mass and/or getting increased amounts of abdominal fat? ___
- 5. Experience apathy and low energy levels? ___
- 6. Find that you are experiencing increasing fatigue and deteriorating stamina? ___
- 7. Have enlargement of your breasts? ___
- 8. Experience any prostate problems, such as difficulty urinating, or poor urine stream? ___
- 9. Have depression? ___
- 10. Have joint stiffness, aches or pains that aren't related to arthritis? ___

TOTAL SCORE: ___

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9. Eat canned food more than once a week? _____

TOTAL SCORE: _____

7. BODY ACIDIFICATION

Do you: no = 0, occasionally = 1, yes = 2

1. Have any chronic health problems? _____

2. Eat convenience, microwave and/or fast foods more than three times a week? _____

3. Rarely eat a minimum of five fruit and vegetables a day? _____

4. Have a tendency to be angry, get frustrated or hold resentment? _____

5. Have any problems with your liver or intestines? _____

6. Experience low energy levels? _____

7. Rarely exercise or make time to relax deeply? _____

8. Experience moderate to high levels of stress? _____

9. Find it hard to recover from infections, or suspect your immune system is under-functioning? _____

TOTAL SCORE: _____

8. DIGESTIVE HEALTH IMBALANCE

Do you: no = 0, occasionally = 1, yes = 2

1. Have irritable bowel syndrome or inflammatory bowel disease? _____

2. Get intermittent or continuous diarrhoea or constipation? _____

3. Have a yeast infection such as thrush? _____

4. Experience foggy-headedness? _____

5. Have abdominal bloating, burping, indigestion or abdominal distension? _____

6. Experience tiredness or chronic fatigue? _____

7. Suspect that you might have problems absorbing nutrients? _____

8. Have any allergies or food intolerances? _____

TOTAL SCORE: _____

9. CHRONIC INFLAMMATION

Do you: no = 0, occasionally = 1, yes = 2

- 1. Have any inflammatory health conditions?
(e.g., bowel problems/arthritis/infections) ___
- 2. Have presently or previously a history of diabetes,
cancer, heart disease or lupus? ___
- 3. Have a waist size greater than 86cm (34 inches) for
women or 102cm (40 inches) for men? ___
- 4. Eat convenience, microwave and/or fast foods more
than three times a week? ___
- 5. Have bleeding gums? ___
- 6. Have diabetes or syndrome X? ___
- 7. Experience morning stiffness? ___
- 8. Exercise vigorously and regularly? ___
- 9. Experience moderate to high levels of stress? ___

TOTAL SCORE: ___

10. PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS

Do you: no = 0, occasionally = 1, yes = 2

- 1. Feel stressed out most of the time? ___
- 2. Find it hard to cope with stressful situations? ___
- 3. Live a stressful life? ___
- 4. Find it hard not to worry about things? ___
- 5. Struggle to manage your stress? ___
- 6. Find it difficult to relax and enjoy your life? ___
- 7. Think/know that stress is negatively affecting your
health/life? ___
- 8. Manage stress through the use of food, drink, smoking,
gambling, drugs or sex? ___
- 9. Get easily irritated, depressed, upset and/or anxious? ___

TOTAL SCORE: ___

RESULTS

The following guides you to which chapters to look at first if you score highly in the categories above:

1. Fluctuating blood sugar levels: chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10
2. Adrenal fatigue: chapters 4 and 11
3. Oestrogen progesterone imbalance (women): chapter 14
4. Low testosterone questionnaire (men): chapter 14
5. Dysbiosis: chapters 5 and 6
6. Toxicity: chapters 5, 7, 10 and 12
7. Body acidification: chapter 8
8. Digestive health imbalance: chapter 5
9. Chronic inflammation: chapters 3, 4, 5 and 12
10. Psychological stress: chapters 11 and 13

Now that you have worked out what is making you tired, it's time to get started and learn what you can do to achieve a healthier, happier and fatigue-free existence!

Buy the Paperback or Kindle version from Amazon Here!