

PE1651/NNNNNN

Laura Bell submission of 11 February 2018

I have had anxiety from a young age but always tried my best to carry on with things. I completed school and was working. But as I got older my anxiety got worse. My problem was and what caused my anxiety was bowel issues. I was scared of needing the toilet when I went out. This led me to avoiding places and would go out at certain times when traffic wasn't bad so I could get to my destination at a quicker pace. I went to the doctor about it as I was starting to have panic attacks and now I needed some kind of talk therapy. This was never offered to me and the medication 20mg citalopram was given, I was told to take it everyday. No warnings about side effects or withdrawals were given. About a year I spent on 20mg and my anxiety didn't change it was still there but I kept taking it in hope that it would work eventually.

After a year had passed I went to see my doctor again and was told to increase to 40mg over that year on the 40mg my anxiety increased and got worse. I also developed a slight tremor and the panic attacks were more frequent and longer lasting. This then started to interfere with my job. I was a care worker for adults with autism and challenging behaviour. I loved my job but part of it was taking them out to do activities. I struggled continuously with panic attacks one after the other. I then could not cope and went on to night shifts so I didn't have to go out anymore. Went back to the doctors and was swapped straight onto Sertraline/Zoloft 100mg. Nothing got better it just kept getting worse, I was dizzy all the time my migraines were constant life was a mess. I went back to the doctors and was then put on to the highest dose of 200mg. I stuck this out for another year with nothing getting better, just getting worse but I listened to the doctors that it was just my anxiety.

By March 2016 I had had enough I had to quit my job I had been in for the last 8 years and my life was a mess, my body was a mess. I had constant tremor and migraines and I had now gained another illness on top agoraphobia. I was petrified of going out of the house because I was so scared of my panic attacks by this point. I went from a girl who would have anxiety when having to go on long journeys to a girl who had panic attacks over and over again in my own home.

March 2016 I spoke to the doctor again and was swapped onto 15mg of mirtazapine. Taper schedule was only a month from 200mg of Sertraline. I began to take the Mirtazapine after about two days I started to feel very restless in my body but I kept taking them as I knew it takes a while to get into my system. After 9 days my eye sight went and my whole left side of my body went numb like I had been given anaesthetic. I thought I was having a stroke or a heart attack. After half an hour it got no better so I rang the paramedics. They came out and did a ECG and told me everything was ok but they would like me to go into hospital. I couldn't as my agoraphobia was that bad I could not leave. After a while my eye sight came back but I was still completely numb down my left side. The following morning my face was still numb but I continued to take the Mirtazapine for 5 more days. As the days continued I became more restless internally and felt very dizzy and numb. I phoned the doctor again and they told me to stop them and go on to 20mg of fluoxetine. After the very first dose I could not keep still I was pacing the house day and night in a constant panic attack, what felt like adrenaline coursing through my whole body. As

the days went on it got worse and worse I was convulsing and twitching I didn't sleep for two weeks straight as every time I tried to go to sleep I would be jolted awake and would have this compulsion to pace. 14 days I lasted on the fluoxetine and I was petrified to put anymore in my body. I stopped and did not take anything after that. It has now been 10 months since this point and It has been absolute hell my body is a complete mess. I have had these symptoms constant for the whole 10 months and it doesn't seem to be getting any better :

- Constant tingling all over my body especially worst when i first wake up and when im trying to sleep. Feels like im plugged in the electric.
- Akathisia, can not sit still an electrical current running through my body 24 hours a day everyday. I pace back and four around the house as i can not keep still.
- Burning skin, like somebody is holding a match under my skin at all times. But yet my hands and feet are numb and cold.
- Bloated beyond belief
- Dizzy ness i don't no what it feels like to not feel like im on a rocking boat in the middle of the ocean.
- Itching like there are millions of bugs on my body. Sometimes it feels like they are trying to get in, sometimes it feels like they are trying to get out.
- Body jolts. Most annoying at night when im trying to sleep. Its like some annoying farmer is prodding me with a cattle prod.
- As soon as i eat it feels like my body goes into more dark places. Anxiety levels increase.
- Small amounts of food send my blood sugars up from 5.5 to anywhere between 8 and 10. Absolutely petrified to eat anything to sugary.
- Urination approximately 4 times in an hour every hour. Bladder always feels full and heavy.
- Body temperature always low..34.9 •c even though i dont feel cold.
- Clenched jaw all the time that then gives me headache. Acid/firework feeling in my head with heavy pain.
- Stabbing pains all over me
- Anxiety is on another level that i never had before.
- Crying about 20 times a day.
- Heart palpitations
- Pressure in my head like my nerves are rubbing together.
- Blood pooling in my legs and feet, when I stand up my heart rate goes to 150bpm.
- Jump out of my skin by the slightest noise.
- Ear pain heavy buzzing feeling constantly
- Akathisia, pacing, shaking, twitching, cramping just pure hell and torture.

I have had no support from the medical community and just told over and over again that it is anxiety and I need medication. The medication never helped me and just made my life a complete mess. I am very ill and I'm 29 years of age I should be out there enjoying life but I'm stuck bed ridden in pain.