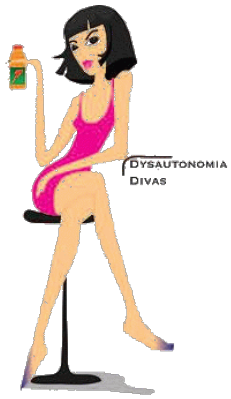

These Are A Few Of My Favorite Diva Things

I have compiled a list of products and services that have helped me manage my bizarre symptoms related to Dysautonomia, Ehlers Danlos Syndrome, Chiari Malformation, Sjogren's Syndrome, Tethered Spinal Cord, Asthma, Craniocervical Instability, Barretts Esophagus, GERD, Hiatal Hernia, IBS, Anemia, Vit D Deficiency, Vit B12 Deficiency, Magnesium Deficiency, Migraines, Fibromyalgia, POTS, OH, Cardiomyopathy, Venous Insufficiency, Small Fiber Neuropathy, Raynaud's, Adrenal Fatigue, SI Joint Dysfunction, Insomnia, MOTHERHOOD and more.

I am learning how to reclaim my life, be functional while managing the chronic pain, constant fatigue and brain fog along the way. Everyone's medical needs, financial situations, personal journey and preferences are different but this is what has worked for me over the last couple years after much trial and error. As always please discuss any changes in your plan of care with your medical team before making changes, this is not intended to be medical advice.

Blood pooling Interventions

1. Zero Gravity Chair, don't leave home without it!
2. Compression Stockings and Sleeves, I tend to switch brands and styles frequently
3. Afternoon leg drain, legs up above the heart for an hour once or twice a per day

Hydration and electrolyte balance solutions

1. Bullion Cubes and Unjury protein chicken broth one or two servings per day
2. NUUN tablets, add a splash of fruit juice for variety
3. Reva Coconut Water Natural Drink Mix Singles
4. Fresh Squeezed Lemonade made with stevia and a pinch of sea salt add fresh lime slices, orange slices or frozen berries for variety
5. Arizona Sugar Free Green Tea Mix, regular flavor and Pomegranate
6. Powerade Zero or SOBE Lifewater coconut water when I am out and need to buy something

7. Coconut water, pineapple juice and frozen strawberries or frozen mangos in a blender make quick yummy mocktails

Nutritional Deficiency Solutions when regular supplements don't work and IV and Injectable doses are unaffordable or inaccessible

1. WELLESSE Liquid B Complex Complete
2. now Liquid Vit D-3
3. WELLESSE Liquid Iron
4. Life-Flo Magnesium Oil Spray
5. Life-Flo Magnesium Flakes or Epsom Salt for bathing

Nausea and Dietary Challenges

1. Ginger ale made with real ginger and saltines for nausea or motion sickness as needed. Check the ingredient label.
2. Sea Bands for nausea and motion sickness as needed,
3. A daily probiotic, I do well with Culturelle or the CVS generic equivalent.
4. Unjury Protein Shakes with almond milk and some frozen fruit as a snack when eating is an issue or I am not feeling up to making something.
5. Morning smoothies with a banana, almond milk and assorted fruits and veggies in my Nutri Bullet.
6. Small frequent meals, avoid large amounts of carbs in one meal.
7. Snack with meds to avoid nausea.
8. Oatmeal, Eggs, Potatoes, Rice, Pasta, Quinoa, Grits, Noodles and Polenta all can hold a lot of salt without tasting too bad. Add a bullion cube for flavor and salt when cooking your rice, polenta, quinoa or noodles.
9. Keep a couple cans of chicken noodle soup in your cabinet for nausea days.
10. A low lactose, low gluten, low carb, low sugar diet as a general rule of thumb works for me. Totally eliminating gluten didn’t help much more, caused weight gain and was too difficult and expensive for me to realistically stay on indefinitely.. The South Beach or Mediterranean Style eating plans give me similar results combined with a daily probiotic.

Delicious, Nutritious & Salty Snacking

1. Frozen Chocolate Dipped Bananas rolled in nuts are just as good as ice cream and have some great nutrients. You can buy them in the grocery store or make them at home for half the price.
2. Roasted or Grilled Plantains salted and served with your favorite sundae toppings and whipped cream is a Diva friendly new twist on a banana split.
3. Salted Roasted Sunflower Seeds, Pumpkin Seeds and Nuts are great snacks and are packed with nutrients. I carry single serving packs with me in the car and at work.

4. I also love snacking on olives, feta and pickles when at home.
5. Pretzels with Peanut Butter, Almond Butter or hummus are quick and get some salt and protein in without much fuss.
6. Freshly popped popcorn with lots of sea salt is also a delicious way to salt up your diet.
7. Kind Bars and Kind Plus Bars, the sea salt nuts and dark chocolate one is EVERYTHING!

Pain from Fibro, EDS, Neuropathy and Muscle Spasms

1. Physical Therapy twice weekly
2. Massage therapy or trigger point therapy biweekly
3. Following A Customized Exercise Plan including recumbent exercise supervised by my PT, water walking and cardiac rehab when deconditioned
4. Heat and Cold packs as needed
5. TENs unit as needed
6. Magnesium oil spray to my neck back and shoulders after showers daily
7. Epsom Salt and Whirlpool Baths 3-5 times per week
8. Biofreeze as needed
9. Acupuncture, Community Acupuncture Facilities are affordable and effective

Stress Management and Sleep

1. Aromatherapy, lavender oil
2. Bedside Humidifier as needed
3. Yoga Stretches and Meditation or Prayer at bedtime
4. Reading
5. Melatonin as needed
6. Soothing Music or Sleep Sounds Machine
7. A Zebra Striped Sleep Mask
8. Adjustable Tempurpedic Bed
9. Body Pillow & Neck Pillow
10. Temp 65-68 degrees
11. A regular bedtime 10pm, I am trying to get that to 9pm eventually
12. Wake up and get up between 5:30 and 6am each day
13. I keep my morning pills and a bottle of water on my bedside table

Shopping Strategies

1. Amazon Prime, its a God send for me! Free shipping and saves me multiple trips to the store per week. I order all my heavy items that I cannot manage physically.
2. The Honest Company for non-toxic personal products, cleaning and household items

3. Ava Anderson Non-Toxic for organic, non-irritating skin care, personal products and makeup
4. Walmart.com or Target.com for everday family and household essentials
5. Caremark mail order pharmacy for routine meds
6. Pea Pod when I am in a flare up and can't grocery shop at all
7. Avoid Malls, Big Box Stores and Warehouse stores. Order from them online as needed.
8. Shop local smaller stores, meat markets, fish markets, veggie stands and deli's

Random Helpful Stuff

1. A proper fitting BP cuff
2. Polar Waterproof HR Monitor for exercise
3. A pulse oximeter and HR monitor
4. Crizal Anti-glare coating and Transitions Lenses on my glasses
5. Biotene products for dry mouth
6. Prescription Fluoride Toothpaste due to dry mouth and tooth decay
7. ACT Fluoride Mouthwash due to dry mouth and tooth decay
8. Refresh Eye Drops for dry eyes
9. My handicap placard, I use it as needed and sometimes I REALLY need it

Free Cell Phone Apps

1. ICE-In Case Of Emergency
2. MediSafe, keeps an up to date med list and reminds you to take your pills on schedule

Helpful Books

1. How To Be Sick
2. When Bad Things Happen To Good People
3. Eat, Pray, Love
4. Women, Food and God
5. The Five Love Languages

Socialization Strategies

1. Potluck luncheon
2. Bunco party or game night
3. Movie Outings with friends or family
4. Host an appetizer or dessert competition
5. Brunch with friends
6. Local Divas Meetings and Outings

Temperature Control Issues

1. Fingerless gloves
2. Hand and Foot warmers
3. Microwavable Plush Booties
4. Good Aloe Infused Socks
5. Cooling Towels, store moist in a gallon zip lock bag and carry in your purse
6. Cooling wrist bands
7. Space Heaters

What's in my purse?

1. My small travel medication case
2. A tube of NUUN tablets
3. A tube of glucose tablets
4. A Kind Bar
5. One or two single serve packs of salted almonds
6. A moist cooling towel in the summer
7. A pack of hand and foot warmers in the winter
8. Inhalers
9. A few bullion cubes
10. My glasses
11. An up to date med list and emergency contact info in my cell phone
12. Sea Bands
13. Wallet with insurance cards
14. Natural non-toxic lipstick, gloss, essential oil perfume and hand cream
15. A bottle or two of spring water

It all fits in a small crossbody bag and I am ready for whatever the day brings!

As you can imagine I have spent countless dollars and hours finding the products that made this list. I hope this can be useful to some of you as well. I will try to update this and add brands and links as often as possible. Please share your favorite products with me in the comments section or by private message. I love to try new products that work!

Best wishes,
Amanda Aikulola LPN
Founder Dysautonomia Divas, Zebras & Dudes