

# Lisa's LEAP Story

## Life Before LEAP

I'm Lisa, and excited to share my story that started as pain and frustration turned to victory, resolution, and freedom. In 2011, I began experiencing chronic pain in my left shoulder, shoulder blade, ribs and hip. In spite of countless appointments with doctors, orthopedic physicians, physiatrists, pain management doctors, chiropractors, physical therapists, and massage therapists, I could not get the pain to resolve. It not only affected the quality of my days, but it compromised the quality of my sleep 1-2 hours every night.

My doctors all agreed I had inflammation and nerve pain, but the source was unknown. I had nerves cauterized in my neck, injections along nerve branches, steroid injections, and a couple low dose prescription medications that reduced muscle tightness, but nothing was providing lasting or material relief.

It wasn't until late 2016 that my thyroid TSH and T4 went out of the range of normal, and my internist prescribed levothyroxine (thyroid hormone supplement) for my hypothyroidism. The pain dropped back for a month, so I drew a correlation between the thyroid and my pain. But that didn't resolve everything.

I had also suffered from problems that resembled Irritable Bowel Syndrome for many decades. While I had gotten it largely under control through dietary changes (eating gluten free, dairy light) and stress management, I would annually have 1-2 dramatic stories of racing to rest rooms and being sick to the point of fainting.

Early in 2017, one such episode got me committed to figuring out my food triggers before my daughter's wedding in the fall. This is when I began my search for a food sensitivity specialist and found Kari Collett, a local Registered Dietitian and Certified LEAP Therapist.

Prior to starting the LEAP protocol, I asked my internist to order the lab for TPO (Thyroid peroxidase), which measures the level of antibodies in your blood from an autoimmune thyroid condition. I had read that autoimmune thyroid often contributed to inflammation, pain, and dietary problems from food sensitivities.

My physician was reluctant, but I told her I was making dietary changes and I wanted a baseline of how much autoimmune thyroid activity (aka Hashimoto's Disease) I had in my body. The normal test result is <25 IU/mL, and my Thyroid antibodies were 713! I clearly had a lot of autoimmune activity in my body. I started the LEAP protocol.

*I had lost 10 pounds from eating better, but I also can see less inflammation, more color in my complexion, healthier hair, and that the damage of chronic pain and digestive issues are behind me.*



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Kari Collett

## Starting LEAP

Kari was so good at explaining the program, helping me get my labs done and kit submitted, and then eventually developing a customized plan for me to do an elimination diet while still having many food options. She helped me with meal and snack ideas that involved the proteins, vegetables, fruits, nuts, etc. that I could eat in Phase 1. She also encouraged me every step of the way to stay true to the plan.

*Before...*



After 8 days on Phase 1, I not only found my digestive system was calmer, but my inflammation and pain dropped **39%**! I had a base diet of foods I could eat, and I was able to add a fruit, vegetable or protein every day to start pinpointing which foods produced reactions. I successfully added foods day after day. When I ate a food I had a sensitivity to, however, my body gave me clear digestive symptoms and I would often awake with a chronic pain flare-up in the night. While I have always focused on the 100s of foods I can eat, I was able to identify the 20-30 foods that produce a reaction. By the end of phase 5, my symptoms were 58% resolved.

After 3 months of following the LEAP protocol, my thyroid antibodies had dropped nearly 50%. I was clearly having less autoimmune activity, and I was feeling great. Aside from having more stable digestive health, I had finally gotten my chronic pain condition under control. I was also able to see the change the LEAP protocol was making in my health when I compared the photos of when I bought my Mother-of-the-Bride dress in March 2017 and when I tried it on a month before the wedding in August 2017. I had lost 10 pounds from eating better at this point, but I also can see less inflammation, more color in my complexion, healthier hair, and that the damage of chronic pain and digestive issues are behind me.

*After...*

## Why the LEAP program?

While I had read many articles about food sensitivities and the problems caused by autoimmune thyroid, LEAP helped me identify my specific food triggers. Rather than eliminating entire food groups, I was able to keep the foods that are not a problem for me. I created a food list which helps me focus on what I CAN eat and feel GREAT.



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