

Carol Isaacson Barash, Ph.D.: 7 years



### Pills & Ills

One pill makes you larger,  
and one pill makes you small.  
And the one that mother gives you,  
doesn't do anything at all....  
Go ask Alice,  
when she's 10 feet tall. (Jefferson Airplane)

Music to every boomers' ears.

But, which side of the great divide did you settle into? Alas, are your memories enshrined in those many outstanding recreational nights? Dare I add days? Or, were you a 'no chemical' gal, like me. Skip the drugs, *and* the rock n' roll, for that matter. Hello Motown.

But nowadays, is it still just music? Or has it become your unwelcome reality?

I confess, the no chemical gal has involuntarily taken pharma up on too many of its multitude of choices. Truth be told, my entire night table is filled with various pills. Of course, there's calcium. I want healthy bones. But the diagnoses I now harbor are many. They might as well have asexually reproduced multiple times following a mere potent viral assault resulting in the inability to quite literally produce energy. You see, I'm one of the #MissingMillions. That is, one of the at least 33 million people in the U.S. that I have MyalgicEncephalomyelitis (M.E). There are so many who suffer terribly, needing to spend the better part of each day resting in bed, and so very many who remain on their own diagnostic odysseys, as yet diagnosed. Though recognized for at least ½ a century, the disease is very complex and remains poorly understood. Doctors prescribe pills for our condition, as if pharma were going belly up and we'd better hoard for the next pandemic. Worse, we often don't truly know whether this pill or that really does

anything beneficial for M.E., particularly supplements people typically take to improve neuro-inflammation, remedy the disabled microbiome, or reduce overall inflammation.

But wait, there's more! Can I add sprays and drops? Like my anti-allergy nasal sprays and eye drops? What about those antibiotic ear drops I need to take whenever my ears are exposed to water. So, apparently it's true; Better Living Through Chemistry (thanks Dupont).