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I first started feeling unwell when I was 16 years old. At that time in a boy's life it's not unusual for them to feel tired all the time, become lethargic and seem lazy, which is why it took me years to get diagnosed.

I really enjoyed going to school, seeing my friends, and of course, playing ice hockey. But, I started to feel too tired to go to school and couldn't even find the energy to go to hockey training. I was suffering with headaches that seemed to start at midday, every day. I would then have to go home from school and rest. It got to the point where my friends and family had nicknamed me 'Zombie'. I found this very frustrating as I was a sporty boy in a sleepy boy's body).

I went to see my doctor several times but each time he said I probably had a cold or a viral infection. It even went as far as my doctor suggesting that I was looking for a reason to stay at home, but that wasn't the case; I loved school and playing ice hockey, neither of which I could find the energy to participate in, let alone enjoy.

By this point I had become quite depressed, but my Mum was incredibly supportive. As a sufferer of thyroid disease herself she knew that I was ill; we just needed to find a doctor who would believe us. Mum helped me find a doctor who took some blood samples. He made a diagnosis of hypothyroidism and told me that I could feel better by simply taking a tablet each day. I was incredibly grateful to him and Mum for giving me hope about getting back to a normal life!

The tablets I have to take contain levothyroxine which replaces the thyroid hormone which my body lacks. Taking a pill each day is no big deal for me, even though I have to take it for the rest of my life, as it means I can lead a normal life.

I have regular checks to ensure I'm still on the right dosage. In fact, just a few months ago my doctor had to increase my dosage slightly.

The best advice I can give to anyone who feels unwell or not like their normal self is don't find or accept excuses from your doctor - ask for a blood test as soon as you can.