

Thursday, 15 Dec 05

I woke up today feeling like something squishy that's been scooped out of a drain. It was early (for me) again—not long after 7am. I am not getting eight-hour sleeps. Not even close to seven hours.

Is it the lack of cigarettes or is it because the sun is rising earlier now as the days grow longer? Or could it be a neurotic reaction to having to deny myself?

Whatever, I got up, looked in the mirror, panicked at the horrid, gaunt creature that stared back at me, and then went on with my morning pre-work routine.

It's when I'm tired that my brain's inability to process normal amounts of dopamine really messes me up (the ADHD thing). So I had a full dex tablet on the train and, of course, a nicotine gum. I picked up my ritual wake-up cappuccino between Wynyard Station and work.

It was at this point that I realised that I'd been struggling for breath all morning.

Sydney is renowned as a highly "allergic city" with its unique blend of pollution and pollens. We have the highest rate of asthma in the world and I find that I always have to carry tissues with me. But today it was worse than usual. I suspect that my cilia, immobilised by smoke for so long, were starting to work again and sending up, er ... gunk to block my wind-pipe.



I-I-I've just g-given u-up s-s-s-smoking and I f-feel g-g-g-great

I hoped my breathing would improve once I got to work, away from the nasties in the air outside. At morning tea time my usual coffee shop was busy (I hate queues) so I bought a 2nd cappuccino elsewhere instead of my usual chai latte.

While I was out I bought some hayfever tablets at the chemist because I was still not breathing easily. The whole time I was chomping away on nicotine gums and lozenges.

It didn't take long for me to realise that the pseudoephedrine in the hayfever tablet, when added to the dex, caffeine and nicotine, make for a potent stimulant mix (party-goers take note). My heart started pounding and I was becoming increasingly jittery. I felt like jelly in a breeze.

So I've spent most of today in barely-controlled hyper drive. The good news is I haven't smoked and I can now breathe properly again.

The lesson learnt here is that if I'm going to have a hayfever tablet, I should go easy on the dex and coffee. Oh well, you can't try to overcome a 30+ year addiction and expect to get off scot-free, can you?

I fished a 1cm ciggie segment out of my bin when I got home. A tea bag had made it a bit damp so I had to dry it carefully under a lighter in order to smoke it. That was my sum total of smoking today. Not a perfect effort, but not a dreadful one either.

Work is having a swooshy Xmas party at the Incontinental [sic] tomorrow (complete with exorbitant prices) and my skin looks like the moon, with one especially impressive mountain on my right cheek.

I suppose this is just another symptom of my body starting to clear out some of the toxins. Given all the crap I have put in my system over the years I expect that my body could be busy clearing out all manner of bio-waste for some time yet.