

Holistica

... the Newsletter of Holistica Natural Therapies
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Do not be
afraid of
growing slowly;
be afraid only
of standing still.
Chinese Proverb

Hello ! I hope this Newsletter finds you well and enjoying these cool winter days !!



According to Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), human beings should live in harmony with the natural cycles of their environment and TCM believes that spring is for growing, summer for maturing, autumn for harvesting and winter for slowing down and storing. In TCM the cold and darkness of winter urges us to slow down, reflect on our health, replenish our energy, conserve our strength, and take stock - reflecting upon how our lives match what we envision for ourselves.

TCM also associates winter with the element of water and the kidneys - and considers the kidneys to be the source of all energy or "Qi" within the body. The kidneys store all of the reserve Qi in the body so that it can be used in times of stress and change, or to heal, prevent illness, and 'age gracefully'.

TCM recommends that during the winter months it is important to nurture and nourish our kidney 'Qi' as it is the time where this energy can be most easily depleted. Our bodies are instinctively expressing the fundamental principles of winter - rest, reflection, conservation and storage. Following are a few hints to stay healthy this winter (and help our Kidney Qi!) ...

- Dress for the cold ... make sure your neck, head, and trunk are well covered, do go outside and enjoy the fresh air ... but make sure you stay dry !
 - Avoid overheating your home and work environment.
 - Eating warm foods and drinking warm beverages is essential in winter. Eat fewer raw vegetables or cool foods such as sushi. Avoid foods that are overly spicy; they may seem warming but if they are too spicy they disperse the 'qi', compromise digestion and weaken the body. Seafood and fish are generally considered cold foods because they come from the sea and should be limited in winter.
- Perfect winter breakfast foods are ... Oatmeal / Hardboiled egg / Rice and beans / Miso soup with spinach and mushrooms
- Perfect winter lunch / dinner foods are ... Vegetables that are lightly steamed, sautéed, or roasted with warm chicken, meat, or other protein. Of course, soups and stews are great for any meal ... including breakfast!
- Get adequate sleep and if possible go to sleep early and rise late in the winter months !
 - Find a release valve for your stress. According to Chinese medicine, stress, frustration, and unresolved anger can play an important part in throwing the immune system off and allowing pathogens to affect the body. Find a way to relax and release stress on a daily basis. Such methods may include yoga, meditation, massage, or whatever method you use to release the stress and pressures of modern life.
 - Herbal Medicines and Aromatherapy oils - there are a variety of herbs and oils which can be used to tonify and support the immune system. If you would like any advice on herbs / oils to use for particular ailments, please do not hesitate to contact me - my email is elaine@holistica.com.au.
 - NB: I have also prepared a herbal 'family cold and flu' formula ... which contains herbs to help your body to fight off any infections and also to boost your immune system. This is just \$15 for 50mL and can be used by the whole family - please contact me if you would like to try this.



- Of course, it is always important to drink lots of pure water especially if you spend time in heated rooms or air-conditioned offices. Signs of dehydration include headache, tiredness, and lack of concentration, with dry flaky skin, cracked lips and lifeless hair.

In addition to the above, I would also recommend the following supplements (in order to build a strong nutritional foundation):

- A good multivitamin/mineral/antioxidant supplement - as a good 'insurance policy' against possible deficiency and to help fight any 'oxidative' / free radical damage. (Free radicals are known to be responsible for the initiation of many diseases, including heart disease and cancer). Studies have also shown that a combination of antioxidants will provide greater protection against free radicals than any single nutritional antioxidant.
- I can recommend the Metagenics range of Multivitamins / Antioxidants - with a wide range available, either for the whole family or specifically for men/women/children. You can view this range of Multivitamins at www.metagenics.com.au - or if you would like some more information on these, please do not hesitate to contact me.
 - The Metagenics range is a 'Practitioner-only' range, so you can be assured of the excellent quality of these products - an example of price is just \$35 for the Femmensentials - the multivitamin / mineral for women - which contains 60 tablets - or 2 months supply.
NB: It is best to choose a multi-vitamin versus a single vitamin source to ensure your body absorbs the nutrients properly as many vitamins rely on each other for proper absorption.
 - I also stock the Metagenics childrens range, which are specific herbal / nutritional formulations for children and include Flora care (probiotics), Immune care, Tummy care, Sleep Easy, Breathe Easy etc ... all these can also be viewed at www.metagenics.com.au.
 - As an example, if your child has succumbed to one of the 'nasties' doing the rounds, and had to have antibiotics, you might consider putting him/her on the 'Flora care for kids' - to replace the good gut bacteria ... and also the 'Immune Care for kids' - to help boost his/her immune system. Please contact me for any further information!
- Flaxseed oil / Fish oil. It is now widely known that in general our diets do lack a sufficient quantity of essential fatty acids (EFA's). In addition to providing the body with energy, EFAs function in our bodies as components of nerve cells, cell membranes and prostaglandins (hormone like substances). EFAs can actually be protective and therapeutic against heart disease, cancer, auto-immune diseases, skin diseases etc. Research indicates that over 60 health conditions benefit from EFA supplementation!
 - Of note here is that Flaxseed oil is unique because it contains both EFAs (linolenic and linoleic) in appreciable amounts. Flaxseed contains over two times the amount of Omega 3 fatty acids as fish oils.
 - Metagenics Children's range also includes 'Omega care for Kids' which is designed to provide a natural source of fish oil that children will find pleasant to take; this contains Omega-3 fatty acids that may assist with the normal, healthy neurological development of children.

More food for thought in the battle against the bugs!

- ... the consumption of simple sugars such as sucrose (common sugar), honey and fruit juice, significantly decreases the ability of white blood cells to destroy bacteria.
- ... consumption of alcohol depresses the function of white blood cells, as well as leading to elevated cholesterol levels and obesity.
- Additional supplements that may be useful at this time of year are Garlic & Horseradish for sinusitis or liquid Echinacea for the immune system ... of course, if you do find that you do 'come down' with any bugs, please do not hesitate to contact me and we can discuss a personally blended mix of herbs for you to help your condition. (50mL of herbs is only \$15 and will last you 2 - 3 weeks, to see you through most 'acute' conditions). ...

\$50 SPECIALS ... FOR JULY AND AUGUST 2008 ...

Pay only \$50 in July and August - for 60 mins of either ..

- Bowen Therapy / Reiki Combo
- Herbal Medicine Consultation, including Iridology analysis
- Aromatherapy Mini Facial, including Footbath, Foot polish and your choice of a hand / foot massage or Reiki while the face masque is on ... 60 mins of sheer bliss !!

"DON'T DELAY ... BOOK TODAY !!!"

NB: These specials cannot be combined with any other offer, eg, discount vouchers but may be used to purchase Gift Vouchers!



STRESS AND THE RELAXATION RESPONSE

Stress, and the way that we deal with stress also influences our development of illness. The stressors of the cave-man (struggle for food, shelter, comfort etc) are just different to the stressors we encounter today - but they have the very same effect on our physiology! You have probably heard of the 'fight or flight' response, which is our body's primitive, automatic, inborn response that prepares the body to "fight" or "flee" from perceived attack, harm or threat to our survival. In this day and age, the threats we encounter may be no more than traffic jams, meeting deadlines or having an argument with our boss or spouse. These stressors all provoke our bodies to release chemicals like adrenaline, noradrenaline and cortisol - which are released into our bloodstream, causing an increased respiratory rate, blood is shunted away from our digestive tract and directed into our muscles and limbs (which require extra energy and fuel for running and fighting!). Our pupils dilate. Our awareness intensifies. Our sight sharpens. Our impulses quicken. Our perception of pain diminishes. Our immune system mobilizes with increased activation. We become prepared—physically and psychologically—for fight or flight!

When we face very real dangers to our physical survival, the fight or flight response is invaluable, however, today most of the day to day 'dangers' we encounter are not a threat to our physical survival and, on a daily basis, toxic stress hormones flow into our bodies, unreleased!

In most cases today, once our fight or flight response is activated, we cannot flee. We cannot fight. When we are faced with modern day 'dangers' ... we have to sit in our office and 'control ourselves'. We have to sit in traffic and 'deal with it'. So, the long term effects of this continued response can be damaging to health as the body's strength is continually drained at a higher rate than normal. Long term depression and feelings of inability to cope can ensue, as well as a depressed immune system.

In order to deal with the effects of this response, Good quality relaxation techniques and sleep are important (as is regular exercise, which increases your ability to cope with stress...also improving the flow of our lymphatics (part of our immune system).

The term 'Relaxation Response' was coined by Dr Herbert Benson in 1975, and this is described as a 'physical state of deep rest that changes the physical and emotional responses to stress... and the opposite of the fight or flight response'. Meditation is one of the ways that this response can be activated and the following may be carried out on a daily basis ...



1. Sit quietly in a comfortable position and close your eyes.
2. Deeply relax all your muscles, beginning at your feet and progressing up to your face. Keep them relaxed.
3. Breathe through your nose. Become aware of your breathing. As you breathe out, say the word, "one", silently to yourself. For example, breathe in ... out, "one", - in .. out, "one", etc. Breathe easily and naturally.
5. Continue for 10 to 20 minutes. You may open your eyes to check the time, but do not use an alarm. When you finish, sit quietly for several minutes, at first with your eyes closed and later with your eyes opened. Do not stand up for a few minutes.
6. Do not worry about whether you are successful in achieving a deep level of relaxation. Maintain a passive attitude and permit relaxation to occur at its own pace. When distracting thoughts occur, try to ignore them by not dwelling upon them and return to repeating "one."

With practice, the response should come with little effort. Practice the technique once or twice daily, but not within two hours after any meal, since the digestive processes seem to interfere with the elicitation of the Relaxation Response.

Taken from 'The Relaxation Response' by Dr. Herbert Benson
PS: The Word stress comes from the latin 'Strictus';
- meaning to 'draw tight' !

If you would like to experience a 'Guided Meditation' ... to start to experience the 'Relaxation Response' I am offering this free for the months of July and August ... when booking a treatment of 45 mins or more. The Guided Meditation can take 15 - 20 mins - and can be experienced at the beginning or at the end of your chosen treatment, accompanied by Reiki healing (optional)! ☺

DID YOU KNOW THAT MISO SOUP WITH SPRING ONIONS IS ACTUALLY AN ANCIENT CHINESE REMEDY FOR COLDS?

In 300 AD famous herbalist, Ge Hong, writes about Miso Soup with Spring Onions in a book called, *Bei ji zhou hou fang* or 'Emergency Formulas to Keep Up One's Sleeve'. The soup is indicated for the onset of a cold when a person is just beginning to feel a headache, stuffy nose and a slight fever. So, the next time you feel a cold coming on, be sure to have miso on hand!

(NB: Organic Miso can be purchased from the Health food aisle of Coles ... just make sure you get a good quality Miso ...with no hidden MSG in it!). This recipe serves 4 ...

Ingredients: 6 cups water
3-4 tablespoons miso paste
3-5 spring onions stalks, chopped



Directions: Dissolve the miso in a little bit of just-off-boiling water (about 2 tsp.) Bring water almost to a boil in a saucepan and add the miso & spring onions and simmer gently for 5 mins. Remove from heat, top with green onions and serve.

Variations: you can add various other ingredients to make a more substantial soup, such as tofu, fresh mushrooms, cooked shrimp, snow pea sprouts, cooked rice noodles, or paper-thin slices of fresh ginger.

If you have any comments or questions about any of the articles in this Newsletter, please do not hesitate to contact me ... my email is: elaine@holistica.com.au. The article on 'COLOUR IN YOUR DIET' will be continued next time!!! Looking forward to seeing you soon - til then be good to yourself! Elaine ☺