

July to  
Sept  
2010

# Holistica

... the Newsletter of Holistica Natural Therapies

There only two ways  
to live:  
Do not dwell in the past,  
Do not dream of the future,  
Concentrate the mind on the  
moment.  
~ Buddha ~

## Welcome to Winter !

Well, Hello ! I confess this Newsletter was going to be for June to August but now it seems to be July to September ... I lost a month – oops ! Anyway, I hope this finds you well and happy and keeping warm and snuggly somewhere!

Well, the winter 'nasties' abound! Don't they just creep up on you when you are not expecting them ?!! If you do fall prey to a bug or two, try not to mask the symptoms with too many pharmaceutical cold and flu remedies, cough syrups or pain killers as these inevitably 'prolong the agony' !



I have a few helpful remedies for this time of year, based on reducing the presenting symptoms and rebuilding / strengthening the immune system

Obviously, **NOT succumbing to bugs is our optimal solution ... and there is a lot in this Newsletter on how to boost your immune system, but basically if we can achieve a healthy balance in life ... by enjoying life – by balancing the work – family time - and also including time to look after your personal / health needs, this will work wonders for our immunity!** Warning signs that all this is getting out of balance are that you may find concentration is difficult, you may have little motivation to do things that you enjoy and you may possibly be showing signs of lowered immunity by being susceptible to coughs / colds etc. – and this state of being really does creep up on you, doesn't it?!!

Stress plays a huge part in battering the immune system ! We all need a certain amount of stress in our lives but where negative stressors are ongoing, biochemical changes in the body will – for sure - lower the immune system. **So – keeping healthy, happy and in balance is invaluable in keeping the bugs at bay !**

### Chakras and the immune system

On a bit of a 'woo woo' level, the chakra areas which can help to boost our immune systems are the root / base chakra and heart chakra. As mentioned, in previous Newsletters the chakras are energy centres in the body, of which there are 7 main ones ..

as in the picture here ...

The **HEART CHAKRA** is located in the middle of the chest and is the 4<sup>th</sup> chakra and (amongst other things) if this chakra is in good balance it can benefit the chest, heart, lungs, thymus gland and their associated conditions, eg, colds ! The heart chakra is the key energy centre in the body and is the connection between the lower and higher 3 chakras. Crystals which can help to balance the heart chakra are generally coloured green and pink, eg, rose quartz, emerald, jade.



The **BASE CHAKRA** (the 1<sup>st</sup> chakra) is located at the base of the spine and, - amongst many many other things - if this is out of balance the immune system can be 'dis-ordered'. The crystals which can help balance the base chakra are generally a deep red or black, eg, red jasper or hematite.

Well, that's just great I hear you say, so how can I use that information ... ?!  
Well, here are a few ways ...

- you can place the appropriate coloured crystals over the above-mentioned areas while resting or meditating;
- if meditating on a chakra, you can imagine breathing in the relevant colour (red for base chakra and pink / green for heart chakra) and imagining this colour spinning in a clockwise direction over the related area;
- there are also associated mantras for each chakra – these are LAM (la-a-am) for the base chakra and YAM (ya-a-am) for the heart chakra .. so, while meditating on breathing in the colours, you can also repeat the above mantras (sounds which resonate with the chakras)
- you can carry the relevant coloured crystal with you and place it under your pillow at night

There you are .. of course, it would be optimal to completely rebalance your chakras ... the best way to do this would be to come along for a chakra balancing treatment, using crystals and Reiki healing energy , which is not only good for you but sublimely relaxing too !

*(This treatment is just \$30 for 30 mins, \$45 for 45 mins or \$60 for 60 mins etc.)*

OK – back from 'woo woo' land now ... .

If you do feel symptoms of a cough / cold / flu – there are a variety of natural solutions you can adopt to help reduce the symptoms and rebuild your immune system at the same time – with no side effects.

I have a number of natural remedies which can be blended for you, depending on your requirements, eg, whether you have a sore throat / cough / cold / sinusitis / ear ache etc ...

The following herbal remedies will also help to address a weakened immune system which may include fatigue, recurrent illnesses, compromised immune system, recurrent upper respiratory infections, slow injury recovery as well as viral and bacterial infections.

The herbal mix may include such herbs as **Pine Bark** (a powerful antioxidant), **Echinacea**, **Astragalus** or **Andrographis** for immune boosting properties; **Liquorice** for adrenal exhaustion and inflammatory conditions, (but not for those with high BP), Rosehips to strengthen circulation; **St Mary's Thistle** to boost the efficiency and health of the liver; **Blue Flag** to maintain a healthy glandular function; **Alfalfa** to assist digestive issues and rebalance an acidic build up; **Thyme** as a powerful antiseptic and **Marshmallow**, **Mullein** or **Wild Cherry Bark** to help stop irritating coughs.

So – you see there are herbs to help most eventualities .. just let me know what is happening with you (and / or your family) and I can whisk up a blend in no-time .. to get you back on track! **A 50 mL bottle of herbs is just \$18 and will last about 3 weeks and a 100 mL bottle is \$35 and will last about 6 weeks.**

**Essential oils** are also of great benefit. At the first sign of infection, you could take a moderately hot bath with a few drops of anti-viral essential oil added – which will provoke sweating, followed by a deep restful sleep. Two good anti-viral oils are **Tea-Tree** and **Ravensara**; you will probably only need 3 – 4 drops – and so that you don't

/ contd ...

### **Essential oils contd ...**

irritate your skin with it, it is best to first dilute this in some full cream milk or some vegetable oil before adding to the bath.

Tea-Tree and Ravensara essential oils work on the virus itself and also assist the immune response. Ravensara also has a muscle relaxant and analgesic effect and is generally non-irritating to the skin, so this is especially useful.



If you don't have Ravensara or Tea-Tree, you could use a combination of Lavender and Eucalyptus, using 3 drops of each.

If bathing is not 'your thing' or you don't have a bath, you could do a **STEAM INHALATION**. So many people forget about this simple treatment when they are suffering from colds / flus / respiratory problems / sinusitis – and it is so effective in reducing the length and severity of symptoms ! To make up a steam inhalation, just add 3 – 4 drops of your chosen oil to a bowl of steaming water, pop a towel over your head and the bowl and inhale the steam and oils; do this at least 3 times a day when you have an infection / symptoms.

If you suffer from asthma, hayfever or other allergy only use the steam inhalation method for 30 seconds on the first occasion. If this causes no reaction, then increase to 1 minute for the next inhalation a few hours later and gradually increased to 3 – 5 minutes. Also – of course – make sure you monitor children very, very closely !

If you can't bathe and don't like steam inhalations, you could burn essential oils in an oil burner. Tea-Tree, Ravensara, and Eucalyptus are good choices, maybe adding a little Bergamot or Lemon. Another anti-infectious oil is Clove – just make sure you never use this for bathing or neat on your skin ... or you will know about it !

When recovering from colds / flus etc. you may feel weak and lacking in vitality. Bergamot and Rosemary essential oils are helpful here as they are tonic / stimulant oils and will help you get back on your feet; don't use these in a bath either – but they may be used in a massage oil.

So – there are a few suggestions for you to help to fend off the winter woes ! **If you would like any essential oil blends/ spritzes/ oils made up for you ... just let me know !**

But, wait – there's more ... !

### **The Gut, the Immune System and Probiotics ...**

When most people think of their immune system the last thing that comes to mind is the gut !

### **The Gut (contd)**

**HOWEVER, ABOUT 70% OF THE BODY'S IMMUNE SYSTEM IS FOUND IN THE DIGESTIVE TRACT!**

Our large intestines are inhabited by bacteria often referred to as probiotics (pro=encouraging, biotic=life). These bacteria composed primarily of acidophilus and bifidobacterium species, which are introduced to our system during the birth process and play a crucial role in our health.

**Without probiotics, humans would be extremely vulnerable to food borne illnesses, be deficient in key nutrients and vitamins, and have a much weaker immune system in general.**

When healthy populations of probiotics are present in the large intestine, other bacteria that can potentially make us ill are crowded out, preventing them from causing a major infection.

Lifestyle factors play a significant role in determining how friendly our large intestines are to hosting these important bacteria. Eating a diet high in sugar, fat and processed foods prevents them from growing and thriving. Consumption of fibre from fruits, vegetables and whole grains along with lean proteins like fish, chicken and turkey helps to create an environment that promotes the growth of probiotics.

In addition, the frequent use of antibiotics can greatly disturb the probiotic flora in the gut. **Although antibiotics are intended to kill only the bad bacteria, they also affect the good ones.** This is why many people experience diarrhoea and yeast infections when they take antibiotics. As the good probiotic bacteria are killed, bad (pathogenic) organisms like yeast are able to get a foot hold in the system.

Frequent or long term antibiotic use can dramatically alter the gut flora and can be a significant contributing factor to other long term health problems related to immune dysfunction and intestinal conditions.

**GALT** stands for Gut Associated Lymphatic Tissue. The GALT is a vast network of several types of lymphoid tissue in the gut that store immune cells, that carry out attacks and defend against pathogens.



Probiotics in our gut are constantly interfacing with the GALT and essentially priming the immune system for contact with other bacteria. They serve as a way for the body to learn how to respond to bacteria without actually having to suffer an infection.

This becomes particularly important in young children whose immune system is in constant state of development until about age 7.

Foods like yoghurt are made by using these probiotics (acidophilus and bifidobacterium species) to culture the dairy product. Some residual live organisms are left in the final product and these can help to support healthy bacterial levels in the gut. However, most shop bought dairy products do not contain any live organisms by the time the product hits the shelves. For this reason, taking a high quality probiotic supplement is the best way to guarantee maximum health benefits. *(These are usually found in the fridge in the health food shop / chemist – or the Metagenics brand can be ordered through me).*

### **Castor oil packs and the immune system**

The GALT plays a vast role in our immune response; one area in particular are named 'Peyer's patches', which are lymphoid follicles that are usually found in the lowest portion of the small intestine. Peyer's patches are similar to the tonsils, in that they (1) destroy bacteria, preventing them from breaching the wall of the small intestine and entering the bloodstream. (2) they generate memory lymphocytes for long term immunity. **So – if we can keep this area healthy, we can help our immune systems. How we can do that is with the help of CASTOR OIL PACKS ...**

Castor oil ? Isn't that what they used to give us for constipation? Well, yes – they did – but these days it is not given internally but it can help us, our gut, our immune systems – and more via topical application!

Castor oil contains a substance called ricinoleic acid and it is said to be this that is responsible for castor oil's remarkable healing abilities.

**Ricinoleic acid has been shown to be effective in preventing the growth of numerous species of viruses, bacteria, yeasts and moulds.**

I was first introduced to the concept of castor oil packs about 15 years ago, when I was seeking help for constipation and I have found these (and the use of Castor Oil) fascinating and useful ever since then ! ☺

The theory behind the castor oil packs (and I will explain how to do them down the track .. ) is that the castor oil is absorbed into the body and helps to improve the function of the thymus

## **Castor oil packs and the immune system contd ...**

gland and other areas of the immune system – in particular the Peyer's patches.

The packs are also said to increase circulation and promote elimination and healing of the tissues and organs underneath the skin.

**In studies it has been found that patients using abdominal castor oil packs had significant increases in the production of lymphocytes\* compared to increases among those using placebo packs.**

*\*Lymphocytes are the disease-fighting cells of your immune system. They are produced and housed mainly in your lymphatic tissue. This includes the thymus gland, the spleen, the lymph nodes and the lymphatic tissue that lines the small intestine.*

## **CASTOR OIL PACKS – HOW TO !**

These are one of the most useful methods of using castor oil. Packs are an economical and efficient method of absorbing the ricinoleic acid and other healing components of castor oil directly into body tissues.

To make a castor oil pack you will need the following items: cold pressed castor oil, a heating pack of some description, some plastic or some cling wrap, a flannel and a big towel.

Start by placing your flannel (wash cloth) on top of the piece of plastic or cling wrap (this should be big enough to cover the abdomen) or area being treated.

Apply a good layer of castor oil onto the flannel (about half a cup should do).



This pack can now be placed against the body with the oil-soaked flannel on the skin. Then apply the heating pack on top of the pack and cover with a big towel to hold it all in place and prevent any spillage onto furnishings !

For general conditions the pack should be placed on the abdomen. (For treating lower back problems, or other areas the pack can be placed there.)

The pack should remain in place for at least one hour and the temperature of the heating pack should be kept high.

When you remove the pack, the remaining oil can either be massaged into the skin or cleaned off using a little soda water made from 4 cups of warm water and 2 tablespoons of baking soda.



The flannel can be reused if stored properly after removing the pack. Put the flannel in either a plastic bag or air tight container and place it in the refrigerator. Before using it next time let it warm up and always add another 1 or 2 tablespoons of fresh cold pressed castor oil. (After a month of use I would recommend using new flannel.)

Apart from assisting the immune system, castor oil packs may also ...

- be applied to an area of inflammation or pain, such as in swollen joints, arthritis, bursitis and muscle strains;
- be applied to the right side of the abdomen to stimulate the liver or used as part of a detox programme;
- be applied abdomen to relieve constipation and other digestive disorders;
- be applied to the lower abdomen in cases of menstrual irregularities and uterine and ovarian cysts;
- be applied over areas of adhesions or scarring after surgery. (This treatment has been shown to loosen the adhesions and reduce scarring).
- Castor oil packs can also be used to help bring on labour when the due date has been reached. They can also be used to increase milk production in breast feeding and also to reduce milk production when weaning. For information on these applications, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Castor oil application has also been used to successfully treat such things as ringworm, keratoses, skin inflammation, abrasions, fungal-infected finger- and toenails, acne and chronic pruritus (itching).

Generally, for these conditions the area involved is simply wrapped in cloth soaked with castor oil each night, or if the area is small enough, a castor oil soaked Band-Aid can be used.

*(For persistent infections and those finger- and toenails that have discoloured and hardened, a good 10 to 20 minute soak in Epsom salts, prior to applying the castor oil, usually speeds up the healing process.)*

## **BUYING CASTOR OIL**

Any oil that enters your body either orally or through the skin should be of the highest quality. Always ensure that you buy cold-pressed castor oil for these purposes.

**To be totally effective, a castor oil pack must be used at least 3 times a week, although 5 times a week is better. In cases of long-term chronic pain, it works**

**best to commit to a 6 week treatment period using a castor oil pack 5 times per week, then as needed for episodes of pain.**

**If you can't be bothered doing a castor oil pack yourself .. let me do it for you !** While the pack is on you can experience a foot massage, facial massage, scalp massage, or Reiki / Crystal healing – or even a Guided Meditation – or just relax and listen to soothing music – the choice is yours !

As this treatment time requires 60 mins, I would normally charge \$75 for this amount of time – but if you would like to come along and try it, you can for only \$55 !

Which brings me nicely to my Specials for this Newsletter !



## **Special Offers for July to September (incl):**

**Castor Oil Pack, plus abdominal massage and your choice of other treatment for 60 mins (while lying face-up – or down!) – only \$55 for 60 mins !**

**Back by popular demand ... your choice of treatment or combination of treatments for 90 mins – only \$95 – including footbath and footscrub !**

## **Quorn !**

No recipe this time but I am so happy to let you know that you can now buy Quorn in Aus! 'Quorn' is the brand name for a range of MEAT FREE, SOY FREE foods – they are versatile, quick to cook and yummy as anything ! You can check out the website at

<http://www.quorn.com.au/>

I used to eat Quorn in the UK and have missed it so much since I've been here .. it's like having an old friend back ! Try it out .. you will love it – I guarantee it ! (Meat eaters will have trouble telling it's not !)

## **How bizarre ...**

In Russia, in May, six people locked themselves into a steel container to pretend they're on a spaceship travelling to Mars. For 18 months, they'll use only the water and food that has been packed in with them. They'll even fix the intercom so that when they speak to people 'back on Earth' there's a 20-minute delay, just as there would be in space. If nothing else, the participants in this experiment will be performing a social service. Any time the rest of us suspect our lives are going nowhere, we can think of them... and feel better!

from [cainer.com](http://cainer.com)

## YOGABABES

"Birth, baby and beyond..."



### PRESS RELEASE

Friday, June 25 2010

## Baby, now that's YOGA!

Babies are natural Yogis and mum-of-three, Katie Brown is celebrating this with the launch of her new DVD – Yoga for mums 'n' bubs at Warringah Mall's Lululemon store next month.

Katie, who runs Yoga Babes, is the NSW State rep for Infant Massage Australia and a pre and post-natal yoga specialist. She has spent the past eight years developing baby yoga techniques which are part of her new DVD.

She says: 'Babies love interaction with their mothers and family. They also love to have fun, to move and to learn. Baby yoga is a natural progression from infant massage and is basically about having some special time with your baby.'

The routines involve guiding your baby in a series of moves which help them learn about movement, spatial awareness and coordination. The exercises also aid your baby's digestion, circulation and muscle tone as well as promoting restful sleep.

But baby yoga is just as important for mum as it is for bub.

Katie says: 'With regular practice, mums learn how to read their baby's cues and needs. Simply by touching and interacting with their baby they are helping to promote a deep bond and a strong flow of feel-good hormones, boosting their emotional health.'

The DVD includes a baby chakra relaxation, Mum's Magic Massage – which is a self-massage routine to ease neck and shoulder tension and an essential routine for new mums – to help regain tone and boost energy levels.

**Mums and mums-to-be on the Northern Beaches are invited to a free launch party of the DVD at Lululemon, Warringah Mall on Tuesday, July 27 from 6.30pm – 8.30pm.**

**The evening will include demonstrations and talks about baby yoga, infant massage and exercise for new mums. Plus light refreshments, competitions and much more!**

**To register for this free event please contact Lululemon, Warringah Mall on 02 9907 4128 or Katie on 0415 503 119 or at : [www.yogababes.com.au](http://www.yogababes.com.au)**

Katie has also released a best-selling DVD – Yoga for Pregnancy and Birth, two relaxation CDs – Relaxations for mums-to-be and Relaxations for New Mums and written a book – Mother Me – a mum's guide to balance, wellbeing and harmony.

For more information about this DVD – which retails for \$29.95, or photos or media interviews, please visit [www.yogababes.com.au](http://www.yogababes.com.au) or call Katie on: 0415 503 119 or email: [katie@yogababes.com.au](mailto:katie@yogababes.com.au)

I hope you enjoyed this Newsletter .. if you have any suggestions, questions or would like to stop receiving it at any time, please email me on [elaine@holistica.com.au](mailto:elaine@holistica.com.au) or Mob: 0411 261 758 Thank you ... see you soon ! Elaine ☺