



East-West Acupuncture

Better Health Newsletter

Welcome to my winter newsletter. I hope you enjoy these tips for optimizing your health. These are stressful times, so we need to take extra-special care of ourselves. A good diet, relaxation, positive thinking and regular exercise are the keys to good health.

Stay Healthy this Winter

Here are some tips for avoiding colds and flu this winter season:

Find ways to relax and release stress daily, such as meditation, yoga, walking, deep breathing or any other method that works for you. *Long-term stress and unresolved emotions can weaken the immune system.*

Get plenty of sleep to boost your immune system.

Wash your hands often and avoid touching your face.

Slow down. Winter is a time to 'hibernate' and get more rest as opposed to other seasons.

Eat regularly and relax during meals.

Try ginger tea to help warm you up when you feel cold. It's excellent for digestion, as well.

Use nasal saline daily to keep nasal passages moist. Mucous membranes are your first line of defense against bacteria, viruses and allergens

Acupuncture and Chinese herbs can help prevent colds and flu by boosting the immune system. And, if you do get a cold or flu, Chinese medicine can help you recover more quickly. It's also very helpful for asthma and sinus problems.

Winter 2010

Winter Foods

One of the four 'pillars' of Chinese medicine is dietary advice for optimum health, including eating the right foods for the season. These are guidelines for winter:

Avoid ice-cold drinks, cold foods and excessive amounts of raw foods such as raw vegetables and salads. When you do eat salad, have something warm along with it, such as soup or grilled chicken. Drink water at room temperature.

Eat mostly warming foods such as soups, stews and whole grains like brown rice. Cooked dark, green leafy vegetables and beans like kidney and black beans are good winter foods that boost energy and the immune system.

Add warming condiments and spices to your meals, such as onion, garlic, ginger and cinnamon.

Tip: If you feel bloated after eating, digestive enzymes might be helpful. When food digests better, bloating is decreased or eliminated. Digestive enzymes also help with absorption of more nutrients from your food.

Acupuncture Helps Crohn's Disease
In a study published in the journal *Digestion*, acupuncture was found effective for treating Crohn's disease.

Crohn's disease is an autoimmune disease which involves chronic inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract. The main symptoms of Crohn's disease are abdominal pain, fever, fatigue and persistent, watery diarrhea. Symptoms range from mild to severe, and can

come and go with periods of flare-ups.

In this German study, 51 patients with mild to moderately active Crohn's disease had a decrease in disease activity after receiving 10 sessions of acupuncture. Study members also showed an improvement in general well-being and reported an improvement in quality of life.

Source: Joos S, Brinkhaus B, Maluche C, Maupai N, Kohnen R, Kraehmer N, Hahn EG, Schuppan D. Acupuncture and moxibustion in the treatment of active Crohn's disease: a randomized controlled study. *Digestion*. 2004;69(3):131-9

(Courtesy Acufinder.com)

Fructose Linked to Fat, Diabetes and Heart Disease

Fructose, a sweetener usually derived from corn, can cause dangerous growths of fat cells around vital organs and is able to trigger the early states of diabetes and heart disease, according to a recent study conducted at the University of California.

Over 10 weeks, 16 volunteers on a controlled diet with high levels of fructose produced new fat cells around their heart, liver, and other digestive organs. They also showed signs of food-processing abnormalities linked to diabetes and heart disease. Another group of volunteers on the same diet, but with glucose sugar replacing fructose, did not have these outcomes.

Of itself, fructose isn't 'bad'. The problems begin when large quantities are consumed. Because the body metabolizes fructose differently than other simple sugars, about a third of calories from fructose get stored as fat. For example, 120 calories of fructose results in 40 calories stored as fat.

Fructose (including high-fructose corn syrup) is used in many processed and packaged foods and sodas, fruit juices and even some energy drinks.

In the typical American diet, probably the biggest culprit is soda, especially among adolescents.

To reduce fructose in your diet:

Stop drinking soda. Pure bottled water is a better choice, as is green tea (plus, green tea has been shown to burn fat). Diet soda isn't much better, as most of the artificial sweeteners are detrimental to your health.

Teach your children, from a young age, to drink water instead of fruit juice and sodas.

Start reading food and beverage labels closely and eliminate those with fructose. You'd be amazed at how many packaged foods are sweetened with fructose.

Try stevia, a natural sweetener from the leaves of the stevia plant. It doesn't act like sugar in the body, and is even safe for diabetics, as it does not affect blood sugar levels.

Ginger and Arthritis

Did you know that **ginger can help relieve arthritis pain?** Take 1 to 2 grams of powdered ginger per day. You can get capsules at health food stores. Be sure it's 100% pure ginger.

My best wishes for a happy, healthy new year!

Nancy L. Corsaro, L.Ac., Licensed Acupuncturist & Chinese Herbologist

I offer a complimentary 15-minute consultation. Call **214-793-5684** to schedule yours.

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