

NURTURE YOURSELF NEWSLETTER

FROM THE OFFICE OF JACKIE YURKO, DOCTOR OF
NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE

AUTUMN 2003

ENSURING SUPPLEMENT QUALITY

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When working with Naturopathic Medicine, there are a number of different therapeutics that can form the basis of our healing plans. Introducing dietary changes and effective stress release techniques into our routines may be part of the work that we undertake. Another integral part of supporting our overall health is often the utilization of different herbal and/or nutritional supplements to support, tonify, and balance our bodies. Ensuring that we are utilizing good quality supplements is essential when working with Naturopathic Medicine.

With the huge variety of supplements that we have access to, there comes a number of different concerns regarding their quality. **One concern is that many supplements do not actually contain what is stated on the label.** Consumerlab.com, a company that evaluates both herbal and nutritional supplements, has conducted a number of studies on supplement content quality. One study tested 16 different supplements that were used to help lower cholesterol levels and found that greater than 50% of the products did not contain the expected amount of ingredients listed on the label (the amounts contained ranged from 4-78% of the expected ingredients). Consumerlab.com also tested 9



different Gingko biloba products and found that 7 out of 9 contained a type of Gingko that was lower in quality and less effective than the Gingko listed on the label.

Another concern is that some supplements may be contaminated with harmful or unnecessary ingredients. Consumerlab.com tested a variety of Ginseng products and found some of the products contained unacceptable levels of pesticides currently banned in North America. Some natural supplements are also found to contain prescription medication ingredients as was the case with a libido enhancing product that was contaminated with an ingredient found in the prescription drug Viagra.

To avoid the above concerns, it is important to use supplements produced by reputable companies. **Some things to look for in a good quality supplement include:** products should be free of common allergens such as artificial preservatives/

colorings/flavorings/additives, gluten, wheat, corn, starch, yeast, dairy, sugar, and salt. A supplement should also be free of unnecessary lubricants, binders, and fillers (an acceptable ingredient is vegetable cellulose). In addition, good quality supplements should have decreased pesticide levels due to the use of capsules that are free of pesticides and the use of certified organic plant ingredients. A good quality capsule should be guaranteed to dissolve 20 minutes after ingestion and a good quality tablet 30 minutes after ingestion. A good quality supplement manufacturer should analyze raw ingredients for quality, potency, and contamination (often through an independent lab). Supplements should be manufactured according to the Good Manufacturing Processes of Dietary Supplements. After the manufacturing process is complete, additional tests should then be done to ensure the product contains the listed ingredients and is free of impurities. Companies that produce good quality supplements include Genestra, St. Francis Herb Farm, Naturpharm, and Metagenics.

The importance of using good quality supplements can not be overstated as they play a key part in the overall effectiveness of our work with Naturopathic Medicine.

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FABULOUS FALL FOODS COOKING DEMO

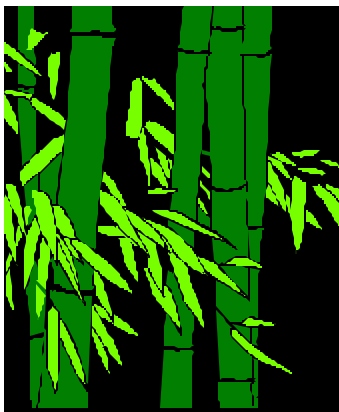
Looking for some new vegetarian thanksgiving recipes? If so, please attend the upcoming cooking demo! The next cooking demo will be held on **Monday, October 6**. The topic will be **'Fabulous Fall Foods Cooking Demo'**. The cooking demo will focus on integrating some of the wonderful fall vegetables, specifically different types of squash, into our repertoires. These recipes will offer warming, hearty foods to help us transition

into fall. They can also enrich the taste and nutritional quality of our thanksgiving dinners. The cooking demo will focus entirely on vegetarian, organic, whole foods ingredients. There will be five dishes prepared during the cooking demo and then everyone will have a chance to sample the delicious results! In order to cover the cost of the food, there will be a \$4.00 charge to attend the cooking demo. If you are interested in

attending, please call 430 4553 or email jjurko@telusplanet.net by Friday, October 3 to register. The cooking demo will be held at the Parkallen Community Hall (11104 65 Avenue, Edmonton) and will begin at 7 PM. There will be no further cooking demos or information sessions until February 2004. If there are any specific topics that you are interested in having presented, please feel free to contact me.

NURTURE YOUR BODY

STRENGTHENING OUR IMMUNE SYSTEM



GOOD QUALITY ACUTE COLD/ INFECTION SUPPORT PRODUCTS

GENESTRA'S EC+
IMMUNE COMPLEX
CAPSULES (A
COMBINATION OF
VITAMINS, MINERALS, AND
HERBS)

GENESTRA'S ALLISYN
CAPSULES (A BLEND OF
GARLIC AND CINNAMON)

ST. FRANCIS HERB
FARM'S ECHINASEAL
TINCTURE (A
COMBINATION OF
VARIOUS IMMUNE
SUPPORTIVE HERBS)



With the cold season getting closer, the importance of immune support begins to increase for many of us. There are a number of different steps that we can take now to strengthen the health of our immune system and decrease our risk of developing colds in the upcoming months.

The most essential part of supporting our immune health is building our diet around **whole foods** that fortify our nutritional foundation. Whole foods include whole grains (brown rice, millet, barley, spelt, kamut etc.), healthy protein (legumes, raw and unsalted nuts and seeds, chicken, turkey, fish), fresh fruits, and fresh vegetables. Ensuring that we are eating whole grains and healthy protein at every meal and aiming for 8-10 servings of fruits and vegetables throughout our day (with 1 fruit or 1/2 cup vegetables equaling 1 serving) provides our immune system with an abundance of nutrients to draw from.

Part of the important nutrients that a whole foods diet provides are numerous vitamins and minerals that play integral roles in immune function. **Vitamin A/Beta Carotene** is necessary for the optimal functioning of both T and B lymphocytes (the primary defense components of our immune system) and for the health of our mucous membranes (which are our first line of defense against infectious agents). Foods that are rich in Vitamin A/Beta Carotene include carrots, sweet potatoes, all varieties of squash, leafy greens (kale, collard greens, dandelion greens), and mangoes. **Vitamin C** is also required for the healthy functioning of both T and B lymphocytes and is important in limiting inflammation and mucous production during infections. Vitamin C has also been shown to have both antibacterial and antiviral activity. Foods that

are rich in Vitamin C include broccoli, cauliflower, brussel sprouts, red and green peppers, and lemons. **Vitamin E** has been shown to increase our immune response to infectious agents. Foods that are rich in Vitamin E include brown rice, oats, sunflower seeds, almonds, and flax seed oil. **Selenium** is important to immune health because it supports the action of Vitamin E and further increases our resistance to infection. Similar to Vitamin E, foods that are rich in Selenium include brown rice, oats and sunflower seeds. Additional Selenium rich foods include garlic and blackstrap molasses. **Zinc** has been shown to enhance our immune response and it supports the action of Vitamin A. Zinc also has antiviral activity. Foods that are rich in Zinc include tofu, miso, cashews, pumpkin seeds, and kidney beans. A whole foods diet will supply us with an abundance of each of these vitamins and minerals. However, to further support our immune strength, most of us will benefit from a good quality multivitamin (either a liquid or powder to increase absorbability) on a daily basis.

Additional immune supportive components of a whole foods diet are **Essential Fatty Acids (EFA's)**. EFA's support the strength of our immune system and help limit inflammation during infections. EFA's also support the stability and strength of our mucous membranes. EFA's are found in raw and unsalted nuts and seeds, cold water fish (salmon, sardines, haddock, herring, rainbow trout), and EFA rich oils such as flax seed/hemp/essential balance/udo's oil. To ensure that we are getting our daily requirement of EFA's, it is important for most of us to integrate 2 tablespoons of EFA rich oils into our daily routine.

There are also foods that detract from

our overall immune strength. As we work towards supporting our immune health, it is important to decrease our intake of these foods. The primary food that is important to reduce in our diet is **refined sugar**. Refined sugar, which includes both white and brown sugar, is a nutritionally void substance that causes vitamin and mineral depletion when eaten. This directly detracts from the overall strength of our immune system. Not surprisingly, refined sugar has been shown to decrease the functional components of our immune system by up to 50% for at least 5 hours after consumption. Decreasing or eliminating our consumption of refined sugar and instead integrating fruit or non refined sweeteners (brown rice syrup, maple syrup etc.) is an important step to take in supporting our immune system.

While working towards improved immune health, it is also important to decrease our consumption of **saturated fat and cholesterol rich foods**. High blood cholesterol levels, which are linked to an excess intake of saturated fats and cholesterol, cause a reduction in the functioning of our immune system. Saturated fats and cholesterol are found in animal foods (meat, dairy, eggs). We can decrease our saturated fat intake somewhat by replacing red meat (beef, pork) with chicken, turkey or fish. However, we can most effectively decrease our cholesterol and saturated fat intake by integrating vegetable based protein (legumes, soy, nuts, seeds) into our diet at least a few times each week.

By building a healthy whole foods diet into our routine and by avoiding immune depleting foods, we have an opportunity to fortify our immune strength and remain healthy throughout the upcoming cold season.

DELICIOUS IMMUNE SUPPORTIVE SAUCE

This sauce is simple to make, yet it packs a lot of immune power! It helps us to integrate essential fatty acids into our routine and contains various vitamins and minerals (Vitamin C, Vitamin E, Selenium, Zinc) that support immune function. The garlic and ginger

also contain valuable components that increase immune strength.

Ingredients

1 garlic clove, minced, 1/2 tsp ginger, freshly grated, 1/2 lemon, freshly squeezed, 2 tbsp flax/hemp/udo's/essential balance oil, 2 tbsp wheat free

tamari (natural soy sauce)/bragg's

Directions

Place all ingredients in a bowl and mix together thoroughly. This sauce is very versatile and is delicious over grains, pasta and vegetables. Enjoy!

NURTURE YOUR MIND

NURTURING OUR INTUITION

Each of us has an innate intuitive ability. Unfortunately, for the great majority of us, we have become disconnected from our intuition. In her book, [Developing Intuition](#), author Shakti Gawain states the primary reason for this disconnection is the emphasis our society places on rational thought (25). We are largely encouraged to act only for logical reasons, leading to our intuition becoming devalued and buried. Gawain feels that rediscovering our intuition is not a difficult task (57-89). The most important step to take is beginning to consciously focus on listening to our internal selves. For most of us, we receive our intuitive guidance not through our thoughts or our brains, but through our bodies or our gut feelings. To develop our connection with our intuition then, it is essential that we begin to learn to trust not only our minds, but our bodies as well. Gawain states "the more you feel your body and listen to the signals that your body is giving you, the more it helps you get connected to your intuition" (116). For most of us, this is facilitated by grounding our selves and quieting our minds. We can do this by setting aside time each day in which we sit in a comfortable position, slow our selves down through deep breathing, and drop our consciousness from our heads down into our bodies. Once we have done this, we can pose questions to our selves and observe what we reactions we feel. The questions can be general such as 'What do I need to be most aware of in my life right now?' or they

can be specific to individual situations such as 'Should I take this new job?'. As we take such time regularly to develop our intuition, our ability to listen to and trust our inner guidance will increase. It will also become easier for us to contact our intuition in daily situations. As we begin to trust our intuition in our daily lives, Gawain encourages us to note how these situations turn out. If we intuitively decide to take a different route in the hopes of saving time, does it work out? Or do we happen upon someone we had not seen in awhile? If we intuitively decide to stay home instead of attending an event we were expecting/expected to, do we receive a call from someone we needed to talk to? Or do we read a book that offers clarity on a present difficult situation? As we check in with the results of our intuitive choices, we can begin to further build our trust in our intuition. By nurturing our intuition, we can also have many important effects on our overall health. Our intuition is our source of deep internal wisdom. It is connected to the core of who we are. By consciously nourishing and listening to our intuition, **we are able to get in closer contact with our selves and are more easily able to discover what is true for each of us**. This can allow us to work more fully towards making choices that create the life that we are meant to live, which greatly enriches our overall health. In addition to connecting us to our inner truth, listening to our intuition

also **encourages us to develop a stronger relationship with our bodies**. This can allow us to more easily recognize patterns in our health concerns or specific triggers that affect our health concerns. This can be extremely helpful when working with Naturopathic Medicine as it can give us a stronger sense of how our Naturopathic healing plan should be directed. By increasing our connection with our intuition, **we also inevitably begin to slow down**. As has been stated, checking in with our intuition requires that we direct time towards listening to our bodies. This will result in a slowing of our pace of life, taking us out of the state of being constantly rushed. This can greatly decrease the overall stress on our bodies and strongly support the foundation of our health. As we begin to slow down and listen to our intuition, **we are also encouraged to live more in the present moment** (70). Many of us spend a great deal of our time thinking of the past or worrying about the future. Listening to our intuition requires that we check in with our bodies throughout the day, grounding us in the present. This helps us to find joy and learning from each moment of our present day, enriching the overall quality of our health. Nourishing our intuitive abilities has the potential to support our health from a number of different perspectives. Listening to our intuition is a continual learning process that we can all benefit from integrating into our daily lives.



The more we are able to move with the life force through following our inner guidance, the healthier and more vital our bodies become, the clearer and more relaxed our minds can be, and the more emotional and spiritually fulfilled we feel

Shakti Gawain

[Developing Intuition](#)

TAKING TIME TO FEEL GRATEFUL

For many of us, the time we spend feeling grateful is in limited supply. With busy and/or stress filled days, it is much more likely that we find our selves focusing on the negative or difficult parts of our day. This can especially be the case when we are living with longstanding health concerns like chronic pain, emotional fluctuations, or fatigue. Unfortunately, by ruminating over the parts of our lives that we feel unhappy with, we risk placing a further burden on our overall health. One way that we can begin to shift our

thought patterns is to consciously think, on a daily basis, of what we are grateful for. This does not have to be a difficult or time consuming process. It only requires us setting aside a few minutes each day to reflect on what has happened during our day. It can be especially helpful to integrate this time shortly before we go to bed, as it may facilitate a more restful sleep. The reflection on our day can be in the form of a meditation, prayer, conversation, journal entry. The things we are grateful for can change each day and can focus on anything that

enters our mind—such as 'I am grateful for the delicious food I ate today' or 'I am grateful for the love that I shared today'. By taking the time to focus on the goodness in our lives, we recognize that our health and happiness is supported by various things throughout our day. This can help to strengthen the foundation of our emotional and physical health. Over the next while, I encourage us all to build this simple and effective health supporting technique into our routine and observe the way it affects our overall health.





NURTURE YOUR SPIRIT

THE THERAPEUTIC BENEFITS OF YOGA POSES

Today more than ever, it's crucial that we include practices in our daily lives that promote health and spiritual growth

Judith Hanson Lasater

Foreword

The Woman's Book of Yoga & Health

IF YOU WOULD PREFER TO RECEIVE YOUR NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL, PLEASE CONTACT ME AT 780 430 4553 OR jjurko@telusplanet.net

ALL PREVIOUS ISSUES OF THE NURTURE YOUR SELF NEWSLETTER ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE AT www.nurture-your-self.com

OCTOBER IS VEGETARIAN AWARENESS MONTH IN THE CITY OF EDMONTON. TO FIND OUT INFORMATION ON EVENTS HAPPENING IN EDMONTON, CHECK OUT THE VEGETARIANS OF ALBERTA'S WEBSITE www.planet.eon.net/~voa

ALL INFORMATION IN THIS NEWSLETTER IS INTENDED FOR GENERAL INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT THESE TOPICS, PLEASE DROP BY THE MONTHLY INFORMATION SESSIONS.

The recent popularity of yoga has introduced many of its health enhancing benefits into the public consciousness. Whether through our own personal practice of yoga or through information we have read or heard, many of us are familiar with the ideas that yoga can support our bodies' overall strength and flexibility and can also be an excellent form of stress release.

Beyond these general benefits, yoga can offer support for a number of specific health concerns, especially in the realm of women's health. In her book, The Woman's Book of Yoga & Health, author Linda Sparrowe explores the therapeutic nature of various yoga poses or asanas (although some of the following information is specific to women, much of it is also equally applicable to supporting men's health).

There are a number of different poses that can help to balance and strengthen the health of our menstrual cycle. **Bound Angle Pose** (Baddha Konasana) can strengthen our uterus and can be helpful in addressing heavy or painful periods, emotional or physical concerns that occur premenstrually, and health concerns associated with perimenopause/menopause (4). **Half Moon Pose** (Ardha Chandrasana) can help to slow down heavy menstrual flow

and balance out premenstrual concerns (8). **Standing Forward Bend** (Uttanasana) can help to tonify our uterus by improving overall circulation to our pelvic organs (8). **Seated Forward Bend** (Paschimottanasana) can help to address anxiety associated with both perimenopause/menopause and the premenstrual part of our cycle. It can also help to relieve menstrual cramps (15).

There are also a number of poses that can support our musculoskeletal health. **Upward Dog Pose** (Urdha Mukha Svanasana) can be helpful in relieving sciatic pain, stiffness in our shoulders and upper backs, and lower back tension (36). **Triangle Pose** (Trikonasana) can help to increase the flexibility of our back muscles (6). **Child's Pose** (Ardha Mukha Virasana) can help to release tension in our backs and necks (18).

In addition to supporting musculoskeletal health, both Triangle Pose and Child's Pose support our emotional health and balance. **Triangle Pose** can help to slow down our thoughts and decrease anxiety and nervousness (6). **Child's Pose** can help to calm our central nervous systems, encouraging our minds to relax (18). Additional poses that support emotional balancing include **Downward Dog Pose** (Ardha

Mukha Svanasana) which can help to increase blood flow to our brains and help relieve depression (15). **Plough Pose** (Halasana) can help to lift our spirits and diffuse irritability (20).

Many poses can also support the foundation of our overall health. **Warrior II Pose** (Virabhadrasana II) can help to encourage overall body strength, stability, and balance (6). **Mountain Pose** (Tadasana) can help to tonify our entire body, affecting balance and awareness (5). **Triangle Pose** can help to fortify our determination (70). **Corpse Pose** (Savasana) can help to restore balance to our health by taking us into a deeply regenerative state (23).

Expanding our understanding of these yoga poses can further deepen the connection our yoga practice has with our underlying health. If we have already integrated yoga into our routines, I encourage each of us to observe how regular practice of the abovementioned poses affects our hormonal, emotional, and overall health. If yoga is something new that we are wanting to further explore, contacting the Yoga Association of Alberta (780 427 8776) can give us a sense of the availability of yoga classes offered throughout Alberta.

RESOURCES USED IN DEVELOPING THIS NEWSLETTER

THE WOMAN'S BOOK OF

YOGA & HEALTH SPAROWE

TEXTBOOK OF NATURAL MEDICINE PIZZORNO & MURRAY

DEVELOPING INTUITION GAWAIN

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