



# NURTURE YOUR SELF NEWSLETTER

FROM THE OFFICE OF JACKIE YURKO, DOCTOR OF  
NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE

WINTER 2003

## A NATUROPATHIC NEW YEAR GOAL: TREATING OURSELVES WITH KINDNESS

NURTURE YOUR  
BODY

PAGE 2

NURTURE YOUR  
MIND

PAGE 3

NURTURE YOUR  
SPIRIT

PAGE 4

The start of a new year causes many of us to focus on how we would like to see our health evolve over the next twelve months. We may take time to assess how we are feeling and form new goals to address any concerns we may have. Often these new goals focus on more fully integrating physical exercise into our routines and making healthier food choices. Both of these goals are an integral part of Naturopathic healthcare and are supportive of our health on a physical, emotional, and mental level.

The importance of nourishing our selves with healthy food and physical exercise can not be overstated; however, I feel the new year also provides us with an excellent opportunity to focus on treating our selves with more kindness.

For me, treating our selves with more kindness can mean many different things. It can mean **being less hard on our selves**—not placing unreal expectations on our selves, not beating our selves up if we do not accomplish or finish things in the way we initially envisioned, not comparing our selves to others. It can mean **listening**



**more closely to what our bodies are telling us**—trusting our intuition about people or situations, not feeling pressured into doing things we do not feel comfortable with, listening when our bodies are telling us something about the way we feel. It can mean **appreciating our selves**—celebrating our talents, focusing on all that we have accomplished, recognizing the beauty we hold within. It can mean **taking more time for our selves**—setting aside time each day, even as little as five minutes, in which we focus only on our selves, relaxing and releasing stress.

For me the new year is the perfect

time to focus on treating our selves with kindness. For many of us, the recently past holiday season is a time in which we have numerous obligations and expectations placed on us that can ultimately detract from our health. The new year, on the other hand, is generally a time when things slow down. This provides a perfect time for regeneration of our health and our selves and I believe treating our selves with kindness leads to such new growth.

This regeneration is extremely important when working with Naturopathic Medicine. The effectiveness of Naturopathic Medicine is partially dependent on whether our self healing mechanisms are engaged as we work towards our health goals. When we treat our selves with kindness, our self healing mechanisms are nurtured and our ability to heal flourishes. In the next while, when we are focusing on integrating new health measures into our routines, I encourage all of us to focus each day on treating our selves with kindness. It is my sense that this step will have a positive impact on the way we are feeling as we continue on our path of improved health.

### Inside this issue:

CANCER PREVENTION THROUGH NUTRITION	2
-------------------------------------	---

WARMING CHICK PEA STEW	2
------------------------	---

AYURVEDIC DOSHAS: VATA, PITTA, KAPHA	3
--------------------------------------	---

BALANCING THE DOSHAS	3
----------------------	---

THE SIXTH CHAKRA	4
------------------	---

COUPONS	4
---------	---

RESOURCES	4
-----------	---

### MONTHLY NATUROPATHIC INFO SESSIONS AND COOKING DEMOS

The monthly info sessions and cooking demos will not be starting up again until March because I will be away on the third Monday in February. The first session of the new year will be a cooking demo taking place on **Monday, March 17**. The topic will be **'Fortifying and Strengthening Whole Foods Cooking Demo'**. The cooking demo will focus on organic vegetarian whole foods that can support and build our system as the seasons change into spring. There will be five dishes prepared during the demo and everyone will have a chance

to sample the delicious results! In order to cover the cost of the food, there will be a \$3.00 charge to attend the cooking demo. If you are interested in attending the cooking demo, please call 430 4553 by Friday, March 14 to register. On **Monday, April 21**, there will be a free info session focusing on **'Supporting Healthy Digestion'**. The talk will address how Naturopathic Medicine, with a specific emphasis on nutrition, can strengthen and support healthy digestion. If you are interested in attending the info session, please call by Friday, April 18

to register. All cooking demos and info sessions are held on the third Monday of the month and start at 7:00 PM. They are held at the Parkallen Community Hall, located at 11104 65 Avenue, Edmonton.



# NURTURE YOUR BODY

## CANCER PREVENTION THROUGH NUTRITION



Research has shown that a daily intake of 5 servings of vegetables and fruits would eliminate at least 1 in 5 cases of cancer, even if the rest of the diet was not changed at all

Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine

Healthy Eating For Life  
to Prevent and Treat  
Cancer

Currently in North America, the second leading cause of death is cancer. At times, it seems as though we may be powerless to protect our selves from developing cancer and that for most of us, this will eventually become an inevitable reality. However, over the past several years, numerous studies have revealed that different foods and nutrients can prevent cancer from developing. The conclusions from these studies provide empowering information that can encourage us to make dietary choices that can have important impacts on our long term health.

Numerous studies have established links between a diet high in animal products and various types of cancer, including gastric, esophageal, colon, prostate, and breast cancer. All animal products, which includes meat, dairy and eggs, are devoid of fiber. Fiber has been shown to be an important component in protecting against colon, breast, and prostate cancer. Fiber rich foods include whole grains, legumes (beans, peas, lentils, split peas), fruits and vegetables. These are the foods that form the basis of a healthy vegetarian diet. Not surprisingly, many studies have found that vegetarians have 40 to 50 percent lower cancer rates than non vegetarians (15). Integrating fiber rich foods into our daily diet is an important step we can take to decrease our risk of developing various forms of cancer.

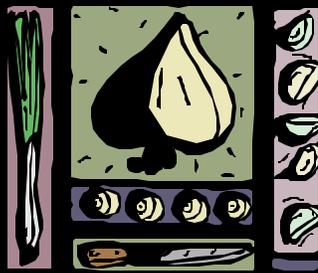
All animal products are also high in saturated fats. Saturated fats impair the functioning of our immune system, resulting in a decreased ability to neutralize cancer causing cells. Focusing on vegetable based protein sources, such as legumes and raw, unsalted nuts and seeds, greatly decreases our saturated fat intake and can be an impor-

tant measure in supporting our bodies overall strength against cancer.

A diet high in saturated fats also causes increased levels of estrogen in our bodies. Estrogen can encourage cell division and is linked to reproductive cancers, such as breast, uterine, ovarian, and prostate cancer. Phytoestrogens, plant based compounds with a structure similar to estrogen, can bind to estrogen receptors in our bodies and prevent estrogen from exerting it's cancer stimulating effects. Phytoestrogens are found in flaxseeds, sprouts, legumes, and soy. A study of over 13,000 men found that daily soy milk consumption was associated with up to a 70 percent decrease in the risk of developing prostate cancer compared to men who never consumed soy milk (94). Phytoestrogens have also been shown to be supportive in decreasing the risk of developing breast and uterine cancer. In addition, they have been shown to be effective in slowing the growth of cancerous cells and preventing metastasis (58). By regularly integrating phytoestrogens into our diet, we can further decrease our risk of developing cancer.

An additional concern with animal products is the creation of cancer causing compounds during the cooking process. By cooking meat at high temperatures for long periods of time, heterocyclic amines and aromatic hydrocarbons are produced. Both of these compounds are carcinogenic and are linked to the development of breast, prostate, and colon cancer. Cooking vegetables or vegetable based protein at higher temperatures does not create either of these compounds. For this additional reason, choosing vegetable based protein can help decrease our overall risk of developing cancer.

Although alcohol, when consumed in moderate amounts, is believed to be supportive of cardiovascular health, it is also linked with increased cancer risk. One alcoholic drink (of any type) each day increases estrogen levels and is believed to increase breast cancer risk by approximately 25 percent. It is also linked to an increased risk of colon cancer. Decreasing/eliminating alcohol consumption is another important step we can take to decrease our likelihood of developing cancer. Many additional foods have specific components that decrease cancer risk. Garlic has been shown to block the effects of carcinogens and to suppress tumor growth. It has been shown to be especially effective with stomach and colon cancer. All orange and green fruits and vegetables are rich in carotenoids, nutrients that have been shown to decrease lung cancer risk in both smokers and non smokers. Lycopene, a nutrient found in tomatoes, has been shown to be effective in protecting against the development of prostate cancer. One study found that men who ate at least 10 servings of tomatoes each week had a 35 percent lower risk of prostate cancer (91). Green tea is rich in polyphenols, which are natural anti-cancer compounds. A study found that consuming at least 4 cups of green tea per day may lower breast cancer risk by 25 percent (100). By integrating healthy beverages, fruits, vegetables, whole grains and legumes into our daily routine and by decreasing our dependency on animal products and alcohol, we can create an environment in which cancer is not encouraged to grow. Making these different choices can have an amazing impact on our health and can greatly decrease our risk of developing cancer.



## WARMING CHICK PEAS STEW

This recipe is delicious and is high in fiber, phytoestrogens, and numerous other nutrients that support our overall strength against cancer.

**Ingredients:** 4 cups vegetable stock, 1 onion, chopped, 2 garlic cloves, minced, 2 cups yams, diced, 2 cups additional vegetables (zucchini, broccoli, carrots etc.), chopped, 2 cups

leafy greens (kale, collards, parsley etc.), chopped, 1 cup chick peas, cooked, 1/2 cup brown rice, cooked, 1/4 cup almond/cashew butter, 1/4 tsp sea salt, 2 tbsp lemon juice, freshly squeezed, 1/2 tsp chili powder.

**Directions:** In a large pot, sauté onion and garlic in 2 tbsp of vegetable stock until onions are translucent.

Add remaining vegetable stock, yams, additional vegetables, chick peas, rice, chili powder, and sea salt. Simmer, covered for 45—60 minutes. In a small bowl, combine almond/cashew butter and 1/2 cup of liquid from stew. Stir into stew. Stir in lemon juice and greens. Simmer for 5—10 minutes. Remove from heat and serve hot.

# NURTURE YOUR MIND

## AYURVEDIC DOSHAS: VATA, PITTA, KAPHA

Ayurvedic Medicine is a holistic form of healing that originated over 5000 years ago in India. At its core, Ayurvedic Medicine is based on restoring wholeness and reestablishing balance to all levels of our health—physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual. From an Ayurvedic perspective, the key to improving our overall health is understanding and balancing the doshas. Doshas are similar to constitutions—physical and emotional traits that form the foundation of our health and our personality. There are 3 doshas: vata, pitta, and kapha. The 3 doshas are considered integral parts of our bodies. Our central nervous system is considered primarily vata. Our digestive system is considered primarily pitta. Our body tissues are considered primarily kapha. Each of the 3 doshas are also associated with a basic element which further deepens their connection to our different body systems. Vata is associated with air and is believed to infuse us with life, motion, and expression, all of which our central nervous system has a part in governing. Pitta is associated with fire and is believed to infuse us with the heat to digest and transform, further deepening the connection with our digestive system. Kapha is associated with water and is believed to infuse us with the ability to contain, nourish and support, all of which are reflective of the functions of our body tissues.

The doshas are not only associated with physiological tissues or systems, they also have close ties to our emotional health. Vata maintains balance on the level of our emotional and our mental health. It also affects our ability to adapt, respond, and comprehend on an emotional and mental level. Vata endows us with creativity, enthusiasm, and the vision to achieve our goals. Pitta is responsible not only for physical digestion, but also for our ability to digest and transform ideas, emotions, impressions. It governs our ability to discover what is true for our selves and what we believe. Pitta endows us with intelligence, decisiveness, and individual spirit. Kapha, on an emotional level, nourishes us by providing us with our emotions and our feelings. It endows us with our capacity to care, love, and unite our selves with others. Although each of us has elements of vata, pitta, and kapha within us, generally one of the doshas will become primary and our overall health and constitution will be most strongly affected by this dosha. For instance, if we are primarily vata, it is likely we may find that we are sensitive to wind and cold, that we have a high activity level that has the potential to exhaust us, that our sleep may be disturbed, that we have a quick memory but can also be absent minded, that we speak quickly, that our moods fluctuate, that we can adapt, and that we have various

fears. If we are primarily pitta, it is likely we may find that we are sensitive to sun and heat, that we have a moderate activity level that remains steady and focused, that our sleep quality can vary, that we have a sharp, clear memory, that we can be sarcastic and cutting in our speech, that we are motivated, that we are courageous, and that we can have difficulty with anger. If we are primarily kapha, it is likely we may find that we are sensitive to damp and cold, that we move slowly but can maintain this pace for an extended period, that we require excess sleep, that our memory is slow but reliable, that our speech is slow, that we are loving, and that we can become overly attached. If our primary dosha becomes imbalanced or excessive, different health concerns will manifest. With imbalanced vata, emotional concerns such as anxiety and worry can arise. We can also see a reduction in our vitality. With imbalanced pitta, feelings of anger and aggression can arise. We can also see digestive disturbances and widespread inflammation develop. With imbalanced kapha, we can see mental stagnation and a tendency towards developing unhealthy emotional attachments. Stagnation also manifests as lymphatic swelling, mucous, and edema. Having an understanding of the doshas can offer us new and additional insights into our own health and constitution.



Although attempting  
to bring about world  
peace through  
internal  
transformation of  
individuals is difficult;  
it is the only way  
H. H. the Dalai  
Lama  
foreword of  
Peace is E very Step  
T hich Nhat Hanh

## BALANCING THE DOSHAS

If we have imbalances in our health due to an excess of vata, pitta, or kapha, there are a number of Ayurvedic therapeutics we can integrate into our routines to restore balance. One of these therapeutics is pranayama, the practice of focused breathing. To help restore balance with excess vata, we can practice solar breathing—closing our left nostril with our ring finger while inhaling through our right nostril, then closing our right nostril with our thumb while exhaling through our left nostril and then repeat—for 10—15 minutes each morning to stimulate our energy. We can also practice lunar breathing—closing our right nostril with our ring finger

while inhaling through our left nostril, then closing our left nostril with our thumb while exhaling through our right nostril and then repeat—for 10—15 minutes each evening to calm our mind and prepare us for a restful sleep. To help restore balance with excess pitta, we can practice lunar breathing for 10—15 minutes in the evening or whenever we are feeling irritated or angry to help calm and cool our selves. To help restore balance with excess kapha, we can practice solar breathing for 10—15 minutes each morning or whenever we are feeling sluggish to raise our vitality. An additional Ayurvedic therapeutic that can balance the doshas is visualiza-

tion. With disturbed vata, we can encourage balancing by visualizing water or fire and the colors gold or saffron while focusing on peace, fearlessness, and releasing worry and anxiety. With disturbed pitta, we can encourage balancing by visualizing earth or water and the colors white or emerald green while focusing on forgiveness, compassion, and surrendering anger. With disturbed kapha, we can encourage balancing by visualizing fire or air and the colors blue and orange while focusing on independence and freedom. Both visualization and pranayama are excellent Ayurvedic techniques to help balance excess in the doshas.





# NURTURE YOUR SPIRIT

## THE SIXTH CHAKRA

No matter what happens in someone's life, it is always a necessary change for the good of that person's entire well-being

Caroline Myss

The Creation of Health

Chakras are energetic centers from which energy flows in and out of our bodies. There are seven major chakras associated with our bodies. Each of our individual chakras are associated with different aspects of our physical and emotional health. Our sixth chakra is located in the center of our forehead. This chakra is also known as our third eye. Our sixth chakra is associated with the color indigo. In addition to being known as our third eye, our sixth chakra is also known as our eye of wisdom. It is a portal of knowledge that provides us with guidance in many areas of our lives. Our sixth chakra also has an integral part in forming many parts of our core foundation—how we think, what we believe, how we react to life. It affects our ability to learn and to have confidence in what we know. Our sixth chakra is involved in the development of both our ability to reason and to think in less structured ways. It also plays a part in our ability to remain flexible and adaptable. Our sixth chakra is associated with the development of and our belief in our intuition. It also forms the basis of our ability to

appreciate all situations, to take wisdom from all our experiences, to see the greater purpose of our life path. Our sixth chakra also nourishes our spirit. Our sixth chakra becomes imbalanced if we doubt what we know. If we believe we know everything and close our selves off to new knowledge, our sixth chakra is affected. It is also compromised if we are fearful of self examination and introspection. Our sixth chakra suffers if we are rigid and inflexible in our thought patterns and our beliefs. It is also harmed if we block our intuitive knowledge and nature. Our sixth chakra is compromised if we use our reasoning abilities to deny the effect of our impact on situations. It is undernourished if we are unable to value other's opinions, ideas, beliefs. Our sixth chakra is affected if we are unable to gain wisdom from all of our experiences. If the health and openness of our sixth chakra is compromised, the organs associated with this chakra can also become compromised. The organs associated with our sixth chakra are our brain, eyes, ears, and central nervous system. Health

concerns that can be reflective of an undernourished sixth chakra include brain tumors, brain hemorrhage, stroke, neurological disorders (Bell's Palsy), diminished sight or hearing, tinnitus, dizziness, headaches, anxiety, nervousness, depression, and learning difficulties. If any of these concerns are a part of our health picture, it is important to explore whether the health of our sixth chakra may be having any impact. Even if we do not recognize any health concerns that signal our sixth chakra is imbalanced, focusing on our sixth chakra can still be beneficial for all of us. By supporting this chakra, we develop a greater ability to access our intuition, an important guide in our daily lives. Ways to support our sixth chakra include taking time each day to work on developing a deeper connection with our intuition and our internal wisdom through journaling, meditation, visualization. We can also draw our energy to the area of our sixth chakra and focus on opening and nurturing it. Over the next while, I encourage us all to spend some time bringing intent to the health of our sixth chakra.

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE FOR ALL OF YOUR SUPPORT IN THE PAST YEAR AND BEST WISHES FOR HEALTH AND HAPPINESS IN THE YEAR TO COME

SUPPLEMENT PRICE INCREASE  
DUE TO A RECENT PRICE INCREASE FROM VARIOUS SUPPLEMENT COMPANIES, THE PRICE OF MANY OF THE SUPPLEMENTS THAT I CARRY WILL UNFORTUNATELY BE INCREASING. THE AVERAGE PRICE INCREASE IS \$2.00.

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.

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RESOURCES USED IN DEVELOPING THIS NEWSLETTER

YOGA AND AYURVEDA FRAWLEY

HEALTHY EATING FOR LIFE TO PREVENT AND TREAT CANCER  
PHYSICIANS COMMITTEE FOR RESPONSIBLE MEDICINE

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