



Healthy Times!

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Volume 1, Issue 1

GENERAL HEALTH TOPIC: Immune Health

It's Winter Time and Tommy Needs His Antibiotics & A Flu Shot?!?!?!?

Excessive susceptibility to infections among children, and even adults, is one of the most common problems seen in general medical practice. Countless number of office visits are from rightfully concerned parents. A child suffering more than 4 times a year from fever, painful inflammatory conditions and allergy symptoms, many believe need to be treated with antibiotics. Although, this approach can work wonders in the acute infective stages and on occasion may be the only option, the ailment is never fully cured. In fact, it could be made worse! It is not the naughty bacteria creating the illness, but rather the organisms colonizing every being find a way to become more fruitful and multiply, causing a massive shift in the internal ecology. This abnormal internal ecology or terrain is the root cause of the disturbed immunity!



This disturbance can manifest as food allergies or sensitivities, intolerance to foodstuff ingredients or chronic low grade infections.

Digestion and assimilation of substances starts at birth, and is taken up by the intestinal tract. Humans have an enormous intestinal surface area, which absorbs and processes various substances. In order to do this the body needs some added help. This is where gut friendly bacteria come into play. These friendly guys not only break down, digest food and synthesize nutrients but they prevent the colonization of

disease causing bacteria, creating a fine film over the body's entire mucous membrane. This is where the foreign substances and bacteria are detected and killed off! A diet high in vegetables is essential to keeping the friendlies around as they feed on the cellulose from uncooked vegetables. Friendlies are found in high concentrations in yogurt (home made, if you can), sauerkraut and fermented foods, like miso or tempeh.

Though extremely effective, antibiotics will not only kill disease causing bacteria but the healthy intestinal flora, as well. This act drastically disrupts the internal gut ecology, thereby, negatively affecting long term immunity. Now, future foreign substances and invading bacteria are able to make their way beyond the gut and rest of the body and lymphatic system. End result, a further stress immune system. Combine this with poor dietary habits, other low grade infections, stress and other lifestyle choices, over time, the lymphatic and immune systems become overburdened. Then, another infection most likely develops and the vicious cycle continues. Infection, antibiotics, rest, infection, antibiotics, rest and repeat.

The goal is simple, here. Address food intolerance, underlying infections or any other impedances to true cure. The simplest and easiest way is to start with a healthy, whole foods diet that is primarily vegetables and fruits — rich in vitamins, minerals and antioxidants! This is best assured by eating a variety of colored veggies and fruits, especially the bright red and orange ones! Examples of such include: carrots, squash, oranges, melons, pumpkins, apricots. Flavoring with lemon, herbs, nuts, seeds or any dressing will help make them more palatable for your little ones!

Additionally, the benefits of Vitamin A & C, zinc, Echinacea, ginseng, are well known to support the immunity throughout the cold and flu season.

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BODY PARTS—Prolotherapy for Ligament and Tendon Laxity or Relaxation

Is Your Pain Getting the Best of You? How About a Long Lasting, Effective Treatment Not Involving Surgery, Drugs or Cortisone Shots?

I would like to take this opportunity to tell you about a very unique therapy offered at my clinic, unique to the city of Victoria, even! It's a well documented and researched treatment, known as **Prolotherapy** (*prolo = proliferant; therapy*).

This therapy is extremely valuable in gaining strength back into ligaments and tendons. It is a non-surgical ligament and tendon reconstruction therapy for weakened or damaged ligaments and tendons. Ligaments are 'hinges' or binding material, holding the bones of the body together. It is a rope-like material which allows flexible

movement and springiness without excessive joint movement. They are particularly important for structural stability within the joints of the spine, shoulder, knees, pelvis and hips.

Ligament or tendon laxity results from repetitive over use, sprain / strain, trauma, sporting injuries or poor posture. When ligaments fail, nerves become overstimulated and the body's natural way of stabilizing a weak joint is to activate muscles to 'shore up' support, producing abnormal tension and contraction.

Typically, the cumulative, end result is **chronic, recurring pain** with multi-

ple referral sites.

By many who have not heard of such therapy will settle either for surgery or cortisone injections. Prolotherapy is a much safer and less invasive treatment! It is an injection technique that stimulates the growth of healthy, strong ligament or tendon tissue. A stronger and more stable joint!

If you feel you may benefit with this unique and effective therapy, come on in for an evaluation and see if you can

Prolo Your Pain Away!



NUTRITIONAL NUGGETS: The Importance of Drinking Water!

Oxygen + Hydrogen = Water

Who knew that such a simple equation could be the key to life, a healthful life! It is the universal solvent, where various minerals and other substances are dissolved and carried through. It accounts for 60-80% of body weight and is the single most abundant chemical substance in your body!

It is the main component of our bodily fluids — such as blood, lymph, digestive juice, tears, urine, saliva, sweat. Water is involved in almost every bodily function for circula-

tion, digestion, absorption and elimination of wastes. It carries electrolytes and mineral salts that help with the electrical current of your body. It provides a watery environment necessary for countless chemical reactions to occur. Could this be the reasoning behind feeling energized after a glass of H₂O? Much like flushing the engine in your vehicle, this is what water does to the human vehicle! It flushes toxins and wastes much more effectively than a dehydrated body would. Water plays a key preventative role in kidney and gallbladder stones, headaches and constipation.

It is imperative we keep our water supply healthy and clean. Without clean water it

is nearly impossible to gain optimal levels of health.

Water intake varies based on activity levels, climate and dietary. The general recommendation for water intake is 1.5-2 litres.

So, instead of reaching for that afternoon coffee or energy drink for your energy boost, how about a healthier way. A good ol' fashioned glass of clean, filtered water!

HERBAL SPOTLIGHT: *Echinacea sp.*

Echinacea is one of the most widely used herbal medicines in the English speaking world. There are 3 species,, commonly known as the purple cone flower, that are used medicinally: *Echinacea (E.) angustifolia*, *E. purpurea* and *E. pallida*. Flowering tops, aerial parts and whole plants are used. However, the root is the most active part of the plant.

E. purpurea is the cultivated species of its kind, while *E. pallida* is considered the least effective.

Traditional use of this herb originated from Native American tribes as it was viewed as a remedy for more ailments than any other plant. *Echinacea* was used for toothaches, sore throats, stomach cramps, septic conditions, rabies and a universal antidote for venomous bites or stings.

Despite its popularity, scientific understanding of how this herb works is incomplete. So far, evidence suggests that this plant stimulates phagocytosis, the cellular process of engulfing particles, cell debris and organisms. A randomised, double blind, placebo-controlled trial has shown *Echina-*

cea users had lower frequency of colds than placebo. Pharmacological studies indicate that a single constituent is not solely responsible for the activity. Like many herbal medications the actions involve a synergistic process. Therefore, using highly refined extracts of Echinacea will not necessarily be a good idea. Although, the aerial parts of the flower contain medicinal ingredients, the most active parts are found in the root.

Echinacea would best be used during cold and flu season as a preventive, allergies, skin conditions like psoriasis, weakened immune states, post viral situations and autoimmune conditions.

INSIDE LOOK: A Look at Flu Vaccinations

The flu vaccination was developed to decrease the risk of contracting the influenza virus. However, the best way of preventing any flu or its respective complications is by prevention. The main focus of prevention needs to be on daily health habits that ensures an optimal functioning immune system and overall health. A strong immune system is the most effective prevention strategy against the flu or any other virus. Here are some interesting facts about vaccinations:

- There are over 500 different strains of viruses that may cause flu-like symptoms. The vaccination is typically made up of only 3 of the most common strains from the previous year.
- The influenza virus is constantly changing, where the flu shot is developed to protect from the strain of virus only found in the vaccine... it cannot protect against these altered strains.
- According to Health Canada, the influenza vaccination is recommended for individuals at high risk for developing serious complications if they were to contract the influenza virus. This group includes: everyone over 65 years old, diabetics, cancer, kidney disease, immunosuppressive disorders, children on long-term treatment with acetylsalicylic acid (ASA); as well, health care workers, residents, workers, volunteers of nursing homes, chronic care facilities and retirement homes and women who will be more than 3 months pregnant during the flu season.
- The research from Health Canada suggests that the flu vaccine closely matching the current seasonal influenza strains **temporarily** prevents the flu in healthy persons less than 65 years old about 70% of the time. In individuals over 65 years of age the efficacy of the flu vaccine is reported to be less than 30%.
- There is a rare risk of allergic reaction in individuals with an allergy to eggs. Thimerosal, a mercury containing compound, is commonly used as a preservative in flu vaccines. The used to destroy the virus and create vaccines often uses formaldehyde, heavy metals (mercury) and other chemicals. There are concerns and a need for more extensive research about the effect of these substances on the human body and the lack of long term safety associated with their use, especially with the potential for increased risks that yearly vaccinations might entail.
- Vaccinations may prevent the body's natural response to external pathogens, like viruses and bacteria. Once the natural exposure to the virus occurs, permanent immunity becomes stronger, while decreasing the potential for developing unknown side effects from long term exposure to vaccinations.

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Some general tips for protection from the flu and maintaining a robust immune system:

- Eat fresh fruits and vegetables, including garlic, onion and thyme. Be sure to include a variety of colorful fruits and veggies, especially the yellow and orange!
- Avoid coffee, alcohol and sugar as they are known depressants of the immune system.
- Drink 32 to 64 ounces of clean, filtered water per day.
- Exercise 3-5 times per week as it improves long-term immunity. Get adequate rest and sleep 7-8 hours every night.
- If you develop flu symptoms, stay at home, relax and minimize exposure to others and allow your body time to recover!

EVENTS & SPECIALS:

Immune Boost Special

As concerns on the safety and efficacy of flu shots are being raised more and more each year — Dr. Sraw has offered a safe and effective method of enhancing immunity through the cold and flu season for years. For those wishing to opt out of the flu shots this year, con-

sider enhancing your immunity naturally and safely with Dr. Sraw. The injection is a combination of homeopathics and vitamins proven to minimize frequency and intensity of infections.

Naturally enhance your family's immunity this season!

Resolution, Resolution, REVOLUTION...

Looking to start the year off by treating yourself to health. Health is wealth! Allow Dr. Sraw to cater a program to achieve your health goals in 2009!

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**Call To Book Your Appointment,
Today.**

Dr. Sraw

Dr. Kulwinder (Kully) Sraw is a licensed naturopathic physician in Victoria, B.C. He is a member of the College of Naturopathic Physicians of British Columbia, British Columbia Naturopathic Association and the Canadian Association of Naturopathic Doctors.

Dr. Sraw practices family medicine using natural therapies to treat a wide variety of health conditions, health maintenance and prevention.

Dr. Sraw is an active member of the community taking part in a number of organizations. His passions in life are health, nature, his family and being. Dr. Sraw is a proud father of 10 month old twins, Ameerah and Arjan - his bundles of endless inspiration and joy.

LETTERS TO DR. SRAW

The following section is queries Dr. Sraw receives. Please feel free to ask Dr. Sraw anything regarding health and life! Please submitted via email to: wellness@victorianaturopathic.com

Limit 1 question per person.

Q: Dr. Sraw, is dark chocolate really as good as everyone says it is for health?

A: Chocolate, which originates from the cocoa plant, is very high in bioflavonoids. These are antioxidants that protect your health by preventing damage and stress to the body's tissues. Antioxidants are exactly that — anti or neutralizers of oxidants or substances that irritate and damage cells and tissues of the body. A 2007 study by the Yale Prevention Research Center found that

dark chocolate lowers the incidence of cardiovascular disease by improving endothelial function of blood vessels.

The study was broken down into 3 groups: Group 1 ate cocoa but no sugar, Group 2 ate cocoa and sugar and Group 3 was the placebo group.

Using high frequency ultrasound, the researchers measured how well the brachial artery relaxed or expanded. Group 1 showed 2.4% improvement, Group 2 showed 1.5% improvement, while Group 3 showed 0.8% worsening.

Does this mean you can eat pounds and pounds of chocolate till you turn into a chocolate bunny? Not quite. Like everything else in life, eat sensibly and with moderation. Chocolate, once thought of as a junk food, is now considered a health-ish type food.

Q: Should I consider Vitamin D supplementing, doc?

A: Vitamin D is made in our skin, liver and kidneys. The first step is when the sun hits your skin. Living the northern latitudes and lack of sunlight, particularly in winter, puts most of us at risk of lower vitamin D levels. Many of us in up here in Canada are more likely to have lower Vitamin D levels than our US counterparts. People with darker skin tend to produce less vitamin D than lighter skinned individuals, as well. The best way to know if you should consider supplementing with Vitamin D is to have your Naturopathic Doctor or Medical Doctor test your levels and see if and how much supplementation would be appropriate for you, based on the above. This will prevent overdosing or unnecessary supplementation.

I hope this helps you keep shining!

