



Ashland Acupuncture

Autumn 2009 Newsletter

Immune Health 2009

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Just Say “No” to the H1N1 Virus

This year we are confronted with a unique strain of the flu: a subtype of influenza A, known as H1N1 virus. The H1N1 strain is a combination of swine, avian and human genes. On June 11, 2009 the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a global pandemic due to widespread activity of this virus. Travelers can expect to be screened and possibly detained if they have been exposed to the virus, say by a fellow traveler, or if they have the virus themselves. If you are ill, it is best to stay home and ride it out.

The web is full of reports and information and for months my e-mail box has been full of e-mail digests from the professional herbalist discussion group I belong to. From this group especially I continue to hear a lot of information about H1N1, symptoms, vaccinations, natural herbal remedies and reports from around the country as to the outbreak and severity of the flu in different states. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) maintains an informational site and “flu watch.” In all areas of the world, including America, the H1N1 viral flu is largely underreported, for a variety of reasons. As of the end of September, when this is being written, about 26 states report widespread influenza activity and most of these viruses are identified as the H1N1 virus. In general, from reports that I have seen, many people experience a mild to moderate version, much like the typical flu; certainly not a fun experience, but good recovery without medical treatment. Some people have had to be hospitalized and there have been some deaths, but in most areas not exceeding what is called “a typical flu year”. All the same, extra caution is being advised this year because of the rapid, worldwide spread, potential for serious illness, and possible progression to fatal pneumonia. This flu can attack the deep lung tissue and seems to vary fairly widely according to population and location (climate). Children and pregnant women are considered to be most at risk. It seems to be a quite unpredictable flu virus and is being closely watched.

**For information on the web:
Center for Disease Control site
cdc.gov/H1N1FLU/
loads of information**

**On Facebook:
Swine Flu & Herbalism
group - moderated by 2 very
knowledgeable herbalists.
Features information and links.**

Also: medscape.com

Symptoms

Fever

Cough

Sore throat

Headache

Body aches

Chills

Fatigue

Sweating

Nausea

*Possibly vomiting
and/or diarrhea*

Infectious spread

The primary infectious period is from 1 day before getting sick through 5 to 7 days after. This time period can be longer in some people.

Common sense protection measures (from the CDC site):

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash immediately after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.

What is the Chinese Medicine Perspective on Colds and Flus? - Focus on Prevention

In Chinese medicine, there are specific acupuncture treatments and herbal formulations designed to protect the Wei (Protective) Qi and internal energetic systems to help keep a person healthy and prevent illness. We don't have the same concept of "the immune system" as they do in Western medicine, but the concept of protection from disease is the same. Internally, Chinese medicine focuses on establishing harmony; assessing and balancing various levels of our energetic being which influence, determine, and interact with our body, mind, and spirit well-being. Some of the factors that are evaluated include:

Yin and Yang As relative terms, Yin refers to the shady side of a hill and Yang to the sunny side of the hill. Yin energy is more inward, nourishing, moist; Yang energy is more outwards and active. They are in dynamic, rather than static relationship. Their constant interaction could be similar to the Western concepts of homeostasis and allostasis. When Yin and Yang are in harmony we experience well-being. The simplest example of this is that we balance our periods of activity and work (Yang) with times of rest and relaxation (Yin).

Qi, Shen and Jing These are the "Three Treasures" of Chinese medicine. My clinic in California was the 3 Treasures Clinic because through nourishing and harmonizing the Qi, Shen, and Jing we nourish health and longevity. **Qi** is the Vital Life Force that flows through us, making us alive and providing Qi to each cell, tissue, organ and system of the body. **Shen** is our spirit (which stands in relation to the Great Spirit) and shows up as the sparkle in our eyes (or lack of it) and zest for life. **Jing**, or Essence, is connected with the deepest energy in the body, that of the Kidneys. We are all born with a finite amount of Essence. We can support our Jing through nourishing our deepest being, through meditation and quiet times, through herbal medicine, and Qi Gong.

The Five Elements: Fire, Earth, Metal, Water, Wood. This is an elaborate system of organizing information and a multitude of levels: physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. It is also used to clearly explain the interrelationship and interaction between the various systems of the body. Just like a family, when all the elements and systems are in harmony, there is peace, health, happiness and fun! When out of harmony, all kinds of discomforts and projects arise.

Causes of Disease

The Chinese categorize causes of disease. The two main causes are either endogenous (from within), which are our emotions, or exogenous (from without). There are **Six Pernicious Influences** which can attack us from without: **Wind, Damp, Heat, Cold, Dry and Summer Heat**. If one or more are successful in penetrating through our natural defense system, they will cause illness.

Chinese medical diagnosis is focused around identifying Patterns of harmony or disharmony. The parameters we use to identify the various patterns include thorough intake, examination of the tongue and of six to nine positions of the pulse (and 38 or so qualities of the pulse) which reflects a person's internal condition. One of the parameters is called the **Eight Principal Patterns**, and these are:

Yin	Interior	Deficient	Cold
Yang	Exterior	Excess	Hot

As this is not a linear system, a person may manifest any combination of these; such as Yang, Deficient with Cold. Our systems are particularly vulnerable during times of change, such as the change of season when the weather and temperature are so variable. As the temperature fluctuates between hot, warm, cool, and cold and the weather ranges from sunny to windy or rainy, our Wei (Protective) Qi adjusts factors in the body to compensate and keep the body healthy. For example, the pores of our skin open and close to help modulate our temperature. The Wind acupuncture points around our head and neck are vulnerable to the Pernicious Influences of Wind, Heat and Cold.

In Chinese medicine, colds and flus are discussed in terms of Wind Cold or Wind Heat Invasions. In this example, Wind, Cold and Heat as elements are considered to be Pathogenic factors that invade and enter the body and penetrate to deeper energetic layers if allowed to. A person's constitution and overall health, as discussed above, influences this process.

The primary goal is to avoid invasion altogether or to clear the Pathogenic factors out quickly while they are still in superficial layers of the system. Thus, there are herbs and acupuncture treatments for each stage of disease conditions. First, to strengthen the system and avoid any illness. Then, in case of illness, herbs to clear out the pathogens depending upon the progression of the disease and in which energetic layer it has lodged and to prevent it from entering deeper into the system. This is determined by signs and symptoms the person is experiencing.

Natural Medicine Preventive Measures

Nutritional Therapy

Vitamin D The optimal range of serum Vitamin D levels is 50 – 80. Make sure that you are taking appropriate amounts of Vitamin D, which is closely related to improved immune function and response as well as to many other health parameters. I carry a liquid form of Vitamin D by Biotics Research (1 drop equals 2000 IU), made from lanolin in a base of sesame oil. For more information on Vitamin D, read this link at the OSU Linus Pauling Institute site:

<http://lpi.oregonstate.edu/infocenter/vitamins/vitaminD/>

And, refer to the enclosed chart, from: www.grassrootshealth.org/_.../disease_incidence_prev_chart_101608.pdf

Cod Liver Oil 1,000 IU per day Contains Omega-3 oils along with Vitamins A and D. You can supplement with Natura Beyond Essential Fatty acids for further Omega-3 support. **Vegetarians can use High Lignan Flax Oil.**

Chinese Herbal Formulas

For those who know they are vulnerable during seasonal changes or the back-to-school season, or for those who would just like to enhance their immune system during the flu season, Chinese herbal medicine offers wonderful support. The best ones for prevention that I have found include: **Jade Screen, Herbal Sentinal Yin, and Herbal Sentinal Yang.** These are way more effective than Yin Qiao. There's a couple of others I use occasionally. I choose the formula best suited for the individual and sometimes prefer to custom blend a powdered herbal formula to be more precise. **Please consult with Suzanne to determine which formulation would be most appropriate for you.**

Western Herbs

This year, **herbalists recommend to NOT use Echinacea for the H1N1 flu;** because it does not interface well with the immune response to this strain of flu and can aggravate the inflammatory response in some people. **The best herbs to use include: Elderberry and Boneset** to fight the virus and clear heat.

Other Herbal Support Formulas at Ashland Acupuncture

Elderberry and Eleuthero Tonic

Flew Away by Natura contains Boneset and other Western herbs.

Cold Away will be best for initial signs of the flu. Stock some at home.

Throat & Gland Spray – herbs to coat and protect your throat and promote healing.

Chinese Soup Herbs for Immune Support - Each fall and spring we offer bags of Chinese soup herbs that you can cook into your chicken or beef soups to nourish and support your immune system. Suzanne combines high-quality special herbs that come along with directions and a soup recipe you can use or modify.

Custom Blended Chinese Herbal Powder - both for prevention and onset of symptoms. Combines powerful herbs to combat the flu and to strengthen your appropriate immune response. Configured for your individual constitution.

Acupuncture/Jin Shin Jyutsu

Acupuncture and Jin Shin Jyutsu work with the meridians and energetic/organ systems of the body to balance Yin and Yang, harmonize the Five Elements to support well-being.

Dietary Therapy

- Soups and stews chock-full of nourishing vegetables. Include green leafy veggies and celery for minerals along with others that you enjoy.
- Enjoy all the orange, yellow and red foods, which are high in carotenoids so important for immune function.
- Daily, drink a few cups of green tea, black tea, and/or rooibus tea to support your health and immune system.
- Cook with liberal amounts of aromatic herbs like rosemary, thyme, basil, oregano.
- Use warming, circulation-stimulating herbs like ginger, cardamom, garam masala, turmeric in your cooking.

Lifestyle

Exercise Regular exercise is one of the best overall health and immune enhancers.

Relaxation and Rest Take time to enjoy life. Give yourself the gift of engaging your creativity or doing something that is just for you alone and gives you joy. Allow yourself to simply Be. Our energy turns more inward in the fall and winter. Take this time to replenish reserves. Give thanks for all the gifts in life.



Natural Medicine Flu Care Tips

We hope you stay healthy this season, but if you get the flu:

- At the very first sign take the remedy **Cold Away** – 3 tabs, 3 to 4x day
- **Most importantly, at first signs of symptoms and if you become ill, stay at home! Be considerate and help prevent spread of infection and unnecessary suffering! Remember, the primary infectious period is from 1 day before getting sick through 5 to 7 days after. This time period can be longer in some people.**
- If you would like herbs, please have a friend or partner pick them up for you. Call the clinic to let us know your specific symptoms and Suzanne will either custom blend some specific strong herbs or give you tableted formulations. Be sure to let us know your preference.
- Drink plenty of fluids – stay hydrated.
- Drink chicken soup! (See our Fall 2006 Newsletter online for a great recipe! www.ashlandacu.com)

CDC recommendations:

- **If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone, except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) Keep away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick.**
- Be prepared in case you get sick and need to stay home for a week or so; a supply of over-the-counter medicines, alcohol-based hand rubs (for when soap and water are not available), tissues and other related items could help you to avoid the need to make trips out in public while you are sick and contagious

Immune Revitalizing Autumn Tea

We have this custom-blended tea for sale in the clinic and change the ingredients for each season. This tea is great for mineralizing and renewing your system. The herbs and berries are packed with vitamins and nutrients to support immune function and overall well-being. Eleuthero gives strength and endurance.

Tea Ingredients

OATSTRAW, NETTLES These herbs supply loads of quality minerals to support a healthy immune and skeletal system and promote overall well-being and health.

GOTU KOLA, Gives clarity.

ELEUTHERO Tonifies Qi, supports stamina, and overall strength and healing.

BERRY AND SEED BLEND (Shizandra, Bilberries, Elderberries and Gou Ji berries)– Berries and seeds contain many wonderful compounds to support overall health and well-being, nourish the immune system and the whole body. Ligustrum seeds are a tonic for the Kidneys.

ROOIBUS High in flavonoids, with many antioxidant properties, it also tonifies the Spleen Qi.

Plus Gui Zhi (Cinnamon twig), Hong Hua (Safflower) and Rosebuds.



METAL ELEMENT: Lungs & Large Intestine

Season: AUTUMN

Chinese medicine teaches us that living in harmony with the seasons promotes well-being. Autumn is the season of the Lungs. It is important to remain calm, peaceful and centered in the transition months of autumn to gather our spirit, energy and focus as we move into winter, when the energy goes deep inside the earth and our bodies for a quiet, restorative and contemplative phase. We are advised to practice breathing exercises in autumn to enhance Lung Qi and to keep the Lung energy full, clean and quiet.

When we breath naturally, we breathe with the whole body. As we become aware of the vertical nature of our being from head to foot, we align with the natural flow of energy connecting heaven and earth. This energy flows through us like a river or like an electrical current. Chinese medicine states the Lungs receive Pure Qi from the heavens. The air we breathe is an essential ingredient that sparks the formation of Qi, the life force that flows through our body. Qi flows throughout specific pathways in our bodies to nourish and vitalize all our organs, tissues, and systems and to energize biochemical and electrical activity in our body. Thus, the Lungs are the root of the body's Qi and are said to dominate the Qi. The Lungs rule physical strength and stamina and are also called the Master of Breaths.

As we naturally breathe deeply and effortlessly we are in harmony – grounded in the parasympathetic nervous system, which imparts a restorative and healing effect. Full, deep breathing helps us release old holding and energy patterns and switches us to this relaxing parasympathetic mode. We allow ourselves to simply be, to receive grace and experience peace.

Researchers who study psychosomatic healing understand that stress and our attitudes effect our health primarily via the limbic-hypothalamic modulation of the nervous, endocrine and immune systems. While we cannot usually alter stress in our lives, we can always change our attitudes. When we are peaceful, centered, calm and relaxed inwardly, we are able to deal with stress more graciously, make decisions from a place of clarity and strength and to positively influence our well-being.

Autumn is a time of ripening and harvesting. We separate the wheat from the chaff. The chaff blows away in the wind and we take the wheat in for storage and nourishment over the coming months. Fallen leaves return nutrients to the soil for next years planting. Inhale down to your toes and receive peace and calm to nourish you throughout all seasons. Exhale from your toes up through your whole body and let life flow through you freely.

Fall Foods to Enhance Immune Function and Nourish the Lungs

Wild Rice
Winter Squash
Turnips, Beets, Parsnips
Celeriac
Brocoli, Cabbage, Cauliflower
Kale, Collards
Soups - chock-full of vegetables
Hearty Stews
Black Beans
*Apples**
*Pears**
Celery
Red Miso Soup
Shiitake Mushrooms
Garlic, Onions, Leeks
Basil, Rosemary, Thyme
Ginger, Garam Masala

**Baked apples and pears nourish the Lungs.*

Breathing exercises

1) Relax and Recharge

Hold the center of your palm, with the thumb or fingers of the other hand. Exhale. Feel your shoulders drop, your tensions and worries release, as you exhale down to your toes. Inhale down to your toes, receiving the vital spark of life, giving thanks. Exhale. Repeat this cycle 36 times or for a few minutes each day. If you don't have a special time to sit quietly, you can just hold the center of your palm and bring your awareness to your breath.

2) Relaxation

You can do this anytime but often this is an especially helpful relaxation for sleep. As you're laying comfortably in bed, with your eyes closed, place your right thumb over your umbilicus so your hand rests gently on your lower abdomen. Feel your tensions melt away. Thank God for your day and for this time of rest. Gently bring your awareness to the rising and falling of your lower abdomen under your hand with each breath. There is no need to force your breath. Simply observe. If your mind wanders, simply bring your awareness to your breath again.

3) Awareness

Throughout the day, at work or play, whether sitting quietly or in the midst of interaction with others, simply bring your awareness to your breath. Whenever you remember, gently bring your awareness to your breath.



Immune Tonic herbs for fall & winter

✕ Elderberry Tincture ✕

✕ Elderberry, Eleuthero Tonic ✕

✕ Vital Adapt ✕

✕ Elderberry ✕

Elderberries are one the richest source of anthocyanins, which stimulate the body's immune system by increasing the production of disease-fighting lymphocytes. Throughout the world, elderberries have been used for centuries as a remedy for colds, flu and fever. Many studies have found it to be helpful to shorten the duration of flus and colds. Elderberry tincture can easily be added to herbal teas or taken alone.



✕ Eleuthero ✕



One of the best adaptogenic herbs, eleuthero helps support overall energy and deep adrenal energy and renewal. Combined with echinacea and elderberry, eleuthero helps support the body's healing ability.

✕ Vital Adapt ✕

A simple, yet powerful, adaptogenic formula. Adaptagens are herbs that help nourish, harmonize and support the various systems of our bodies, helping them to work in unison for deep healing and health maintenance. Formulated by Donald Yance, this tonic is suitable for all constitutional types and for both children and adults.

*We also offer Chinese herbal immune tonics
as tablets or custom-blended powders!*

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