



Community Acupuncture

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Spring & Chinese Medicine

Living in harmony with nature and the cycles of the seasons can assist us in finding balance throughout the year.

Spring is the season for regeneration and renewal of spirit, mind and body. It's time for cleaning out winter's clutter, heavy foods, and inactivity.

The ancient Chinese looked at spring as the time of year to "rise early with the sun" and take brisk walks. The recommended diet of this season is light and fresh, with yang type foods that accentuate the ascending and expansive quality of spring.

- Element:** Wood
- Organs:** Liver, Gallbladder
- Nature:** Yang
- Color:** Green
- Emotion:** Anger
- Flavor:** Sour

This is a great time to schedule your acupuncture seasonal tune up! Call us for more information.

Staying Healthy this Spring

Spring corresponds to the "Wood" element, which in turn is conceptually related to the liver and gallbladder organs. According to the philosophy of Chinese medicine, the liver is responsible for the smooth flowing of Qi (energy) throughout the body. When the liver functions smoothly, physical and emotional activity throughout the body also runs smoothly. So, for optimum health this spring, move your Qi!

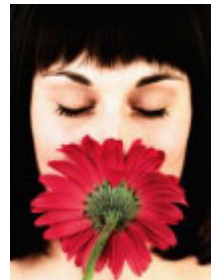
Stretch - The liver controls the tendons. According to Chinese medicine, the liver stores blood during periods of rest and then releases it to the tendons in times of activity, maintaining tendon health and flexibility. Incorporate a morning stretch into your routine. Try yoga or tai qi.

Eye Exercises - The liver opens into the eyes. Although all the organs have some connection to the health of the eyes, the liver is connected to proper eye function. Remember to take breaks when looking at a computer monitor for extended periods of time and do eye exercises.

Eat Green - Green is the color of the liver and of springtime. Eating young plants - fresh, leafy greens, sprouts, and immature cereal grasses - can improve the liver's overall functions and aid in the movement of qi.

Taste Sour - Foods and drinks with sour tastes are thought to stimulate the liver's qi. Put lemon slices in your drinking water, use vinegar and olive oil for your salad dressing and garnish your sandwich with a slice of dill pickle.

Spring and Chinese Medicine
Staying Healthy this Spring
New Study: Acupuncture
Relieves Menstrual Pain
New Study: IVF Success
Increased by 65%
Seasonal Allergies



Q: My allergies kick into high gear in the spring. Antihistamines and over-the-counter medications make me drowsy. What can I try that is more natural to stop my seasonal allergies?

A: It's springtime. Flowers are blooming, the sun is shining and the brisk spring breeze is scattering seeds ... and pollen, and dust. Allergy season begins.

While many over-the-counter medications offer temporary relief, an increasing number of allergy sufferers are exploring natural allergy remedies that have longer lasting results and none of the troubling side effects associated with Western drugs.

Do more outdoor activities - Outside air helps liver qi flow. If you have been feeling irritable, find an outdoor activity to smooth out that liver qi stagnation. Try hiking or take up golf.

Get Acupuncture treatments - Acupuncture and Oriental medicine can help improve the overall health of your liver as well as treat stress, anger and frustration, which are often associated with liver qi disharmony.

Seasonal acupuncture treatments just four times a year can serve to tonify the inner organ systems and can correct minor annoyances before they become serious problems. Call us to see how we can help you stay healthy this spring!

New Study: Acupuncture Relieves Menstrual Pain

A recent German study published in the February, 2008 issue of the *American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology* confirms that acupuncture can relieve a woman of her menstrual pain.

In the study, 201 women were randomly assigned to acupuncture or no treatment for menstrual pain, severe cramps and discomfort. The majority of patients receiving acupuncture reported at least a 33 percent improvement in their pain level.

"Patients with chronic dysmenorrhea [menstrual pain] treated with acupuncture as an adjunct to routine care showed significant improvements in pain intensity and quality of life compared to patients who received routine care alone" Dr. Claudia Witt of Charite University Medical Center in Berlin said.

This study is part of a large acupuncture research initiative of a group of social health insurance funds that provide coverage to approximately 10% of the German population.

"Our study showed that acupuncture was beneficial for women if offered as part of the health insurance system," the researchers write in the *American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology*.

Based on these findings, the researchers conclude that "acupuncture should be considered as a viable option in the management of these patients."

Acupuncture is extremely effective at treating menstrual disorders including: painful periods, irregular periods, amenorrhea and PMS. Please call us for more information.

Natural medicine, herbs, and diet can alleviate or prevent allergies and asthma in four ways:

- 1) Controlling inflammation of air passages
- 2) Dilating air passages
- 3) Thinning mucus in the lungs
- 4) Preventing food-allergy reactions that can trigger respiratory allergies and asthma

How can you incorporate these benefits into your life?

Try acupuncture! Acupuncture has been used to treat allergies for hundreds of years. Several studies have confirmed that acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine can be helpful for seasonal allergies.

In a study published in *Allergy*, 52 people with allergic rhinitis were randomly assigned acupuncture treatments and Chinese herbal tea or sham acupuncture and herbs for six weeks. Nearly 85 percent of the people receiving the real acupuncture and herbs had 100 percent or significant improvement of their symptoms, versus 40 percent of those getting the placebo treatment.

Spice it up: Spicy dishes can thin mucus secretions and clear nasal passages. Try adding cayenne pepper or ginger to your foods. Ginger is a natural antihistamine and decongestant. It may provide some relief from allergy symptoms by dilating constricted bronchial tubes.

Eat the right fat: Omega-3 essential fatty acids can counter the formation of chemicals that cause inflammation of the air passages. Good natural sources include flaxseed oil and salmon.

New Study: IVF Success Increased by 65%

Women undergoing IVF were 65 percent more likely to become pregnant when they combined the procedure with acupuncture, a recent study has shown.

The remarkable success rate occurred across seven acupuncture trials involving 1,366 women in a systematic review and meta-analysis published in a February, 2008 issue of the *British Medical Journal*.

Acupuncture was delivered either just before or just after embryo transfer – a step in the process of in vitro fertilization (IVF) whereby one or several embryos are placed into the uterus.

The research was carried out by scientists from the University of Maryland in the United States and the VU University of Amsterdam in Holland.

It is thought that acupuncture stimulates the neurotransmitters that trigger the production of gonadotrophin-releasing hormone, which controls the menstrual cycle and a woman's ovulation.

Acupuncture is also thought to stimulate blood flow to the uterus and boost the production of endogenous opioids, inducing the body to relax.

Acupuncture has been used for centuries to regulate fertility. Please call us for more information.



An apple a day: Some foods, including apples, contain the flavanoid, quercetin that can cross-react with tree pollen. Quercetin can reduce allergic reactions by having an antihistamine effect. It also decreases inflammation. Quercetin is found naturally in certain foods, such as apples (with the skin on), berries, red grapes, red onions, capers, and black tea.

Eat yogurt and increase fiber: Food intolerances seem to be connected with seasonal allergies. A healthy and active colon can decrease food sensitivity, which can, in turn, lighten the burden on your immune system and may reduce the impact of seasonal allergies. For maximum colon health, increase the fiber in your diet and eat yogurt. The active cultures in yogurt can restore the balance between good and bad bacteria in your gastrointestinal (GI) tract. In a study conducted at the University of California, patients who were fed 18 to 24 ounces of yogurt a day experienced a decline in their allergic symptoms by 90 percent.
