

WELLNESS NEWS ~ SPRING 2020



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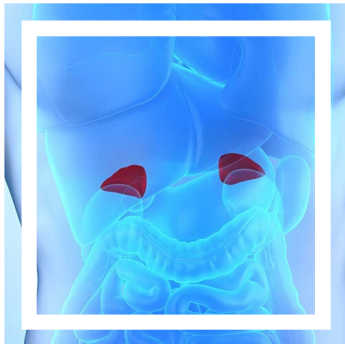
Emotion

- Seeking and accepting help and support
- Avoiding blame and criticism
- Finding a sense of humour
- Staying healthy, respecting limits: get sleep, exercise and good nutrition

Meaning

- Acceptance
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- Faith

5- Unshrouding Stress



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10 - Physical Activity

2 cloves garlic
1/4" slice ginger
handful parsley
4 carrots
1 apple in wedges

place ginger and garlic in center of parsley and push through with carrot

Immune Power Fruit

1 orange, peeled
1/2 pineapple with skin, sliced
1/2 cup strawberries or pitted cherries
1 banana peeled

place juiced orange, pineapple, strawberries in a blender with banana and liquefy

11 - Immune boosting recipes

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A New Kind of Contagion:



An Invitation to Mirth, Surrender and General Silliness

by Marika Geis N.D.

If there was ever a time to find levity in our circumstances, it's now. It is no secret that laughter is good medicine, but beyond improving mood and alleviating stress, it also happens to be good for our immune systems? Let's unpack this

In 1964, a political journalist named Norman Cousins, managed and eventually cured (according to his own perception) his Ankylosing Spondylitis (an autoimmune condition affecting the spine). He did this through good nutrition, massive doses of Vitamin C and scheduled bouts of hysterical belly laughter courtesy of "The Three Stooges". He reports: "I made the joyous discovery that ten minutes of genuine belly laughter had an anesthetic effect and would give me at least two hours of pain-free sleep". Further, "When the pain-killing effect of the laughter wore off, we would switch on the motion picture projector again and not infrequently, it would lead to another pain-free interval".

Really? Laughter? In the words of Bernie Siegel, an internationally recognized expert in the field of cancer treatment and complementary holistic medicine: "The simple truth is that happy people generally don't get sick."

Taking a dive into the medical literature we find that laughter exerts its effects primarily by engaging the diaphragm (you know, that massive muscle that allows you to breathe?). It just so happens that when the diaphragm is working, the rate of lymphatic circulation increases about 10-15x its normal rate.

"What's lymph?", you ask. Our lymphatic system is a series of vessels and nodes located throughout the entirety of your body. These are the guys that get swollen and tender under your jaw when you have a sore throat. They clear away metabolic waste, excess fluids, dead cells and even a few microorganisms. More crucially, they make the cells that protect your body from future infection: your ANTIBODIES.

Our blood circulates through a network of vessels with the heart as a pump. The lymphatic system, also a network of vessels, does not have a pump. Instead, lymph gets moved by physical manipulation (a little dry skin brushing anyone?), muscular contraction and.... wait for it: BREATHING!! The deeper we breathe, the more lymph we move and thus production of those precious antibodies is increased.

Turns out that laughing heartily is correlated with (among other things) the following:

- Increases baseline sIgA levels; this is the MOST ABUNDANT ANTIBODY in your immune system.
- Increases Natural Killer cell 'cytotoxicity'; particularly helpful in fighting viruses.
- Increases the number and activation of 'T-cells' destroying cells that are infected by a virus/bacteria
- Increased levels of B cells – the cells that make antibodies (they require activation by T-cells)
- And lastly, anything that engages the diaphragm also engages the parasympathetic response. This is the "rest and digest" portion of the autonomic nervous system. That makes it a great stress reliever. I'm not sure about you, but I could use a little more stress relief in my life!!

The take away message is NOT that a good hearty chuckle is all that's required to help bolster our body's immune system. Instead, the point is that laughter is a critical tool by which our body's defenses are enhanced making it harder for infection to take up residence.

So your Covid-19 tool bag might include: painstaking handwashing, using oil of oregano, Vitamin C, wearing a protective mask, physically distancing, zinc, echinacea and.....some time with Napoleon Dynamite (OMGoodness – can I just tell you how much that movie makes me laugh??).

Life Beyond COVID-19

by Julie Zepp N.D.



We are on the precipice of being able to start to come out of the current state of physical isolation that we have been living in for the last 6 weeks. In just one week's time we have been given a plan by the Saskatchewan Government for us to follow on how to move out of this time period of, essentially, hibernation.

This time period, while only 6 weeks, has felt like a lifetime for many. It has been a time filled with deep angst, lots of fear, anxiety, uncertainty, grief, loss, isolation, loneliness. It has also been a time for stillness, peace, simplicity, new ways of connection, rest, gratitude, grounding and joy. And everything and anything in between. And, often, all within the same day! At least for me.

And of course, despite the fact we have been given some guidance on how to move forward, we don't actually know what our future will bring and we do know that things will most definitely not be going back to normal, but that in fact we are in the process of cultivating our new normal.

I have personally been doing a ton of reflection around what this looks like, for me. Through this process I have allowed myself to be present for my range of feelings and emotions that have been a very real part of my experience. By not denying the difficult ones, I have been able to embrace the more welcome ones and find the gifts and the gratitude I have for this time. If you do find you are struggling with your own tough emotions, please reach out for help and support. Though it might feel more difficult to access the care of your professional support team given the current limitations, or more difficult to access the comfort of your circle of friends when meeting for in-person visits are prohibited, it is important to remember there are a host of creative ways of obtaining support. It may look different, but it is there!

These have been incredibly challenging times and it is so important that we acknowledge and honour the difficulty of them. Take pause to give yourself compassion, recognizing that you have made it through an exceptionally dark time. Though of course we know it is not over yet and the wake of the destruction will still need to be tended to, we know that change is on the horizon.

Once we can honour the full spectrum of our experience, we can, perhaps, begin to invite in the gifts of this time. It becomes more possible to turn towards those little rays of light that you might be also experiencing. These might include a little more time for self-care in the form of more sleep, more time spent outdoors, more time with your kids, the opportunity to clutter clear your home, a chance to pull out a project you have been putting off.

When we take pause and reflect, we can often find gratitude where it might have felt difficult to cultivate. Gratitude practice is a very powerful medicine and the positive benefits of a regular gratitude practice are well-documented. Finding even three small gifts in your day, each day, and allow yourself to feel the positive effects of this reflection in your mind, heart and body relaxes the nervous system, reduces stress hormones and increases positive brain chemicals. This can be as simple as the feel of the sun on your skin or the smell of your morning coffee. We build resiliency when we allow ourselves to bask in small gratitude.

I have a heart-filled with gratitude for how our global community - unable to come together for anything, any cause, any event, ever before - was able to come together (for the most part 😊) with a common agenda. It shows our planetary community can work together. I am grateful for the relief and healing that Mother Earth has experienced thanks. I am grateful for all those that have worked so hard during this time to keep us safe, healthy and able to access essential provisions. I am grateful for the little painted rock wall that is taking form near my home. A community craft of hope.

As we work to create our future it is a wonderful time for deep and honest reflection on what the possible gifts are that you have gained from this time? What have you enjoyed about this time? What value have you felt from this time?

What has been your medicine that has come from this time? What might you have discovered to be your “essentials” vs. your “non-essentials”?

I have certainly been doing this personal inventory, asking: what have I actually come to deem “essential” in my life? What do I miss? What have I enjoyed? What do I know I do not want to live without? And, what is “non-essential”? that I might have once deemed essential? What can I live without and what is my life richer for not having in it?

For me: stillness, quiet time, time in nature, simplicity, community, connection are all essentials. An over-stuffed calendar, errands, constant activities, busy for the sake of busy, saying ‘yes’ to what I want to say ‘no’ to are my non-essentials.

Now seems to me to be the ideal time not only to reflect on what we want to carry forth from this time and what we want to leave behind, but also a time for us to invoke the courage and commitment and discipline to take the actions necessary to do so.

Though your own personal post-coronavirus prescription is an individualized one, some of these committed choices might include:

1. Nourishing your immune system with healthy, fresh, unprocessed foods: fruits, vegetables, whole grains (rice, oats, quinoa), nuts and seeds and good quality proteins (chicken, fish, eggs,
2. legumes);
3. Reducing or avoiding those foods that deplete immunity and contribute to inflammation: sugar, excessive dairy, processed foods, gluten;
4. Increasing your levels of hydration through herbal teas, clean water, organic coffee, fresh pressed vegetable juices, broths in order to support detoxification and to thin mucous;
5. Getting outside, daily, to breathe fresh air, activate your vitamin D through responsible sun exposure, move your muscles, neutralize stress hormones and enhance your positive brain chemicals;
6. Committing to continued quality family time: board games, crafts, household projects and reducing “busy time” with an overly scheduled life;
7. Continuing mindful hygiene practices (this is a GREAT one for us... my 8-year-old son is finally washing his hands!) that help reduce disease spread, in general;
8. Keeping your vibration high! Find the balance between having your ear to the ground and being aware of what is going on in the world but also knowing when to shut down. Turn off the news and put on a funny movie instead. Indulge in a good book. Dance to some uplifting music.

Regardless of your own commitment list looks like for you, know you are not alone, and be super mindful that though we have no control over what the future holds, when we become responsible stewards of the single moment right in front of us, and make that ‘next right choice’, our lives have a way of unfolding in a pretty powerful way.



Unshrouding Stress

by Cristina Harabor N.D.

“We live in an ever-changing environment. We deal with constant exposure to toxins, microorganisms, and non-ideal temperatures alongside impactful physical and psychological events. Modernity has brought about unparalleled levels of pressure – from unrealistic societal demand and expectations under the guise of a pursuit of perfection, to monumental global changes, such as global warming and a rise in pandemics – which add to the disruption of our physical, mental and emotional well-being.

Stress is a term coined by the Canadian professor Hans Selye, in the 1930’s, to define “the nonspecific response of the body to any demand upon it” – referring to the adaptive responses to a variety of different kinds of stressors. We now know that stress affects each individual in unique ways, and that the self-regulated stress responses involve a combination of complex physiologic and behavioural processes.

Physiology in a nutshell

A stressful event is perceived in our brain within the limbic system, which informs the hypothalamus, the key brain site that exerts an interplay of nervous and hormonal controls aimed at returning critical systems to homeostasis, or the set point that makes survival possible.

Endocrine signals operate via the Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Adrenal axis. This important response pathway triggers increased production of stress hormones known as glucocorticoids, and primarily cortisol, by the adrenal glands.

Neural signals are transmitted to the sympathetic portion, better known as “fight or flight”, of the autonomous nervous system that controls the involuntary functions of the heart, smooth muscles, and glands. The counterpart of the sympathetic is the parasympathetic system (“rest and digest”). These two components have somewhat antagonistic actions.

When confronted to a stressor, the sympathetic system triggers a series of useful, protective reactions that prepare the body for “fight or flight”. This is achieved by increased arousal, blood pressure, heart and respiratory rate. When the stressful situation is alleviated, the parasympathetic activation brings the body functions back to a state of balance.

While the stress response is useful in its initial stage, uncontrolled or chronic stress can be harmful to one’s well-being and health.

The body’s exhausted resources can make the individual vulnerable to diseases such as anxiety, depression, insomnia as well as chronic inflammatory diseases.

“Recent research however has brought forth the idea that with successful coping strategies, stressful experiences can result in positive outcomes. For example, stress could serve as a way to motivate self-confidence, personal growth, and achievement. Reframing the effects of anticipated challenges in a positive way has been shown to reduce the stress response and the perception of its negative consequences.

Three steps for coping with anything.

Recently, Toronto Psychiatrist Drs. J. Hunter and R. Maunder hosted a short presentation on Youtube proposing a practical way of coping with stress based on the research of Folkman and Greer.

Their model involves three steps, or levels, and it allows the individual to choose how to cope based on their own circumstances, instead of automatically responding to a stressful situation.



This model suggests that the first step to creating a viable coping mechanism is to focus on the problem, with the eventual goal of finding a solution to the cause of stress. This approach is ideal for problems under one’s control.

Successful problem solving often requires breaking the process into smaller steps and gaining new knowledge to deal with it more effectively. Sometimes solving the problem calls for combining efforts, in which case clear communication is key. Making oneself understood, as well as being able to listen to others are important steps in establishing clear communication.

When the problem is not under one's control and dealing with it is not enough to solve it, the individual can move to step two. Emotion-focused coping mechanisms aim at trying to feel better about things that one cannot control. Some of the most helpful things one can do to feel and function better are things shared and done with other people. Offering and receiving support can be a significant first step towards normalizing stress responses. Self-blame and criticism of others are negative behaviours that get in the way of healing and forging healthy long-lasting connections, and they are to be avoided. Laughter brings people together and it is indeed the best medicine, as it triggers positive physical and emotional changes in the body. Catering to the foundation of health (sleep, exercise and good nutrition) gives one the best premises to face difficult times.

Finally, for circumstances where there is no realistic way to solve the problem or to feel better about it, one has to rely on personal values and sense of meaning to put things in perspective. That opens the way to reflection on how to make sense of one's experience and reflect on things that make one's life and work valuable even in the hardest times. Some people find their faith to be very helpful with this kind of coping.

A Naturopathic outlook.

Naturopathic interventions follow the hierarchy of natural healing processes summarized in the Therapeutic Order:

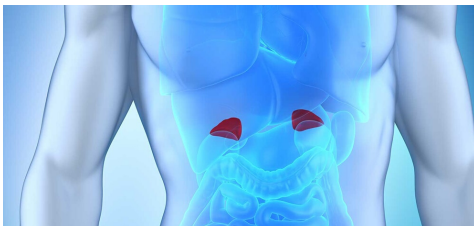
1. Establish the conditions for health
 - a. Identify and remove disturbing factors
 - b. Institute a more healthful regimen
2. Stimulate the healing power of nature (*vis medicatrix naturae*): the self-healing processes
3. Address weakened or damaged systems or organs
 - a. Strengthen the immune system
 - b. Decrease toxicity
 - c. Normalize inflammatory function
 - d. Optimize metabolic function
 - e. Balance regulatory systems
 - f. Enhance regeneration
 - g. Harmonize with your life force
4. Correct structural integrity
5. Address pathology: Use specific natural substances, modalities, or Interventions
6. Address pathology: Use specific pharmacologic or synthetic substances
7. Suppress or surgically remove pathology

Stress can be recognized at every stage in the therapeutic order. Rather than offering a "one size fits all" type of a solution, the naturopathic doctor strives to understand the root cause of stress and how it affects the patient's health and functioning, which can be further be addressed in an individualized treatment strategy.

Positive health outcomes and improved quality of life are in themselves significant factors that contribute to stress reduction. Sometimes however, stress coping strategies are specifically designed and discussed with the patient. These strategies may include naturopathic treatments aimed at supporting physiologic responses (nutraceutical supplementation, botanical medicine and diet modifications), or psychologic responses (acupuncture, homeopathy, mind-body interventions such as yoga, tai chi, meditation).

Adrenal Fatigue: Is your tired more than just “tired”?

by Allison Ziegler N.D.



Recent times have brought about disrupted schedules and times of uncertainty. You may find yourself trying to juggle the responsibility of home schooling your children while still trying to be productive in your job as you work from home, long parenting hours, and managing the emotions that come along with a world on lockdown and social distancing from family and friends.

This recipe for stress leads to feelings of overwhelm and exhaustion. So, how does an increased amount of stress affect the body and what can we do to feel better?

The two stress glands, which are located above each kidney, are called the adrenal glands. They are powerful endocrine glands that help your body respond and adapt to stress by influencing the function of all tissues, organs and glands in the body to maintain balance during stressful periods. Cortisol is produced by the adrenal glands in response to stressors, which initiates the fight or flight response in attempt to protect the body from danger. Typically, this stress response would be a short burst in cortisol, allowing us to respond to the danger appropriately and it would then return to normal. In primitive times that would mean being able to run away from a Saber-toothed tiger or endure periods of physical challenge and deprivation. Unfortunately, our modern world is met with near constant levels of stress, leaving our cortisol levels constantly elevated and perhaps eventually bottoming out, leading to burnout and adrenal fatigue.

Signs that indicate stress may be impacting adrenal function:

- Fatigue
- Sleep disturbances
- Anxiety, irritability, or low mood
- Brain fog
- Weight gain, especially around abdomen

- Hormonal imbalances such as menstrual cycle changes and low libido
- Sugar, carbohydrate and salt cravings
- Hot flashes
- Decreased immune function

If this sounds like you, the following are changes you can incorporate to begin feeling better.

Nutrition

During the stress response, the adrenal glands metabolizes nutrients at a higher rate. During adrenal fatigue, much of the body's stored nutrients is used up and nutrient deficiencies can result. The goal of eating for your adrenal glands is to eat good quality, nutrient dense and whole foods. Avoiding all processed foods is essential as the body will use up additional nutrients in attempt to digest the processed foods.

Nutrition Rules for Adrenal Function: [1]

1. Eat a wide variety of whole, natural foods.
2. Combine a healthy fat, protein and carbohydrate source with every meal.
3. Eat lots of vegetables, especially the brightly colored ones.
4. Salt your food to a pleasant taste using sea or Celtic salt.
5. Eat mainly whole grains as your source of carbohydrates.
6. Combine grains with legumes or legumes with seeds or nuts to form a complete protein.
7. Avoid fruit in the morning.
8. Mix 1-2 tablespoons of fresh essential oils (cold pressed olive, grape seed, safflower, flax etc.) into grains, vegetables and meats daily.
9. Eat high quality food; it becomes you.

Sleep

Good quality sleep is important for adrenal function. Sleep is the only time the body has to repair itself; therefore, following some sleep hygiene tips can help to restore sleep and ensure a healthy stress response.

Sleep Hygiene Tips for Adrenal Function: [2]

1. Keep a consistent sleep schedule. Ideal bedtime is between 10-10:30 pm.
2. Establish a relaxing bedtime routine.
3. Make your bedroom quiet and relaxing. Keep the room at a comfortable, cool temperature.
4. Limit exposure to bright light in the evenings.
5. Turn off all electronic devices at least 30 minutes before bedtime.

Self-Care

Taking time to feel rejuvenated and renewed is critical for adrenal repair. With busy schedules and long to-do-lists it is easy to neglect yourself. Finding time to do what inspires you is key to recharging and feeling better.

Although this seems like a simple task, it can be hard to find time. You can start by allowing yourself just 10 minutes of 'you-time' a day.

Supplementation

Certain minerals and vitamins such as vitamin B's, vitamin C, zinc, selenium and magnesium are important for adrenal function.

Adaptogens are a class of herbs that are wonderful at supporting adrenal function. Some of these herbs include ashwagandha, Schisandra, holy basil, Rhodiola and Licorice root.

It is important to work with a naturopath when determining which supplements are best for you.

Although it is easy to see this time of social isolation as a negative experience, it can be one that achieves a positive and life-changing outcome. Focus on renewing and recharging yourself.

“One day this will all be over, and you will have a choice to live as before or to live your life anew.”
Kenton De Jong

Resources

[1] <https://adrenalfatigue.org/>

[2] <http://sleepeducation.org/>

How and why we should continue to prioritize physical activity in a time where activity is limited.

by Michelle Sthamann N.D.



During these times when we are very restricted in our day to day plans, it is crucial for people of all ages and abilities to continue to be as active as possible.

Even the simplest of movements can benefit our health in more ways than one. Let's start with the benefits of standing versus sitting. A 2012 study found that when people reduced their sitting time to only two or three hours a day, their life expectancy increased.

Standing will decrease the risk of contracture of the abdominal and hamstring muscles. This creates an imbalance which affects the mechanics of the lower back. It will also support the appropriate S curve in our spine versus the C curve we can develop when we sit for prolonged periods.

Standing will also improve your blood flow to both your muscles and brain delivering increased levels of oxygen which our tissues require to function.

How does movement affect our immune health? The immune system is made up of two systems of complex proteins that protect us from foreign invaders. The innate or primary immune response contains our pac-man cells that blindly attack and remove unwanted guests, while the adaptive immune response strategically memorizes each specific intruder we have been exposed to, so in the future if we come across the same particular virus or bacterial strain our body will be prepared! Moderate physical exercise has been shown to affect all aspects of this intricate system. Research has demonstrated that physical activity has been linked to lower risk of upper respiratory infections. It has an anti-inflammatory effect on the brain as well. It also decreases cortisol production which is our primary stress hormone. A few studies have shown that running around for approximately six minutes increased circulating immune cells in the blood by 50% percent. White elderly sedentary women have a 50 percent chance of getting URTI during fall, and those with half hour a day walking program dropped risk down to 20 percent.

Here are a few other key aspects of our health that can be improved with physical activity:

- It can also lead to better sleep and give you more energy
- Physical movements can help ease tightness in your shoulders and neck, which often come with stress and anxiety
- It also makes you feel like you achieved something, and can create a daily routine
- Regular exercise can help reduce your risk of serious health issues, like type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke.
- Regular physical activity also improves mental health and can reduce the risk of depression, cognitive decline and delay the onset of dementia - and improve overall feelings of wellbeing. Exercise releases chemicals in your brain, like serotonin and endorphins, which are great for your mood.
- Helps with weight management (and you tend to feel like eating a healthier diet when you're exercising regularly, too)

Here are some ideas to get you moving:

Take your workout online: Whether you check out YouTube or online websites such as beachbody.com, there are endless free exercise videos to try, regardless of your fitness level or the size of your living room. From yoga and strength workouts to Pilates, high intensity interval training (HIIT) and more. There are also many local businesses offering free classes through facebook and Instagram live:

- Oxygen Yoga & Fitness
- Local Barre Fitness
- Trench Fitness
- Level 10
- Project Barre

- LG Fitness
- Fix Athletics
- Bodhi Tree
- Wheelhouse Cycle Club

Check out covid19regina.com for information about what services are being offered in our community.

Go freestyle:

- Build your own workout –use household items like filled water bottles and cans or jars of food (if you can find some!), walk or run on the spot for 30 second intervals, do some star jumps, planks, sit ups, push ups, or even burpees. Anything to get your heart rate up a little.
- Go solo outside if you can or spend time with a member from your household: Walking, cycling and running are great solo activities and safe if you're feeling well and haven't been asked to self-isolate. We suggest going early in the morning or late in the day, and avoiding streets and parks with high foot traffic, to minimise your risk. Remember to pack some hand sanitiser containing at least 60 per cent alcohol and stay at least 2 metres away from to other people.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds as soon as you return indoors.
- Take short active breaks during the day. Short bouts of physical activity add up to the weekly recommendations.
- Use these suggested exercises below as inspiration to be active every day. Dancing,
- playing with children, climbing the stairs, and performing domestic chores such as cleaning and gardening are other means to stay active at home.
- Utilize apps on your phone like 7 minute workout.
- Stand up. Reduce your sedentary time by standing up whenever possible. Ideally, aim to interrupt sitting and reclining time every 30 minutes. Consider setting up a standing desk by using a high table or stacking a pile of books or other materials, to continue working while standing. During sedentary leisure time prioritize cognitively stimulating activities, such as reading, board games, and puzzles.
- Relax. Meditation and deep breaths can help you remain calm. A few examples of relaxation techniques are available below for inspiration.
- DIY home projects - Not only will it cross a task off your to-do list, but the satisfaction of completing a project will brighten up your home which will do wonders for your mood.

<https://drsue.ca/2020/03/is-obesity-a-risk-factor-for-more-severe-covid-19-infection/>

<https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/be-active-during-covid-19>

<https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/be-healthy/exercise-covid-19>

Immune Boosting Recipes

Immune Power Vegetable



- 2 cloves garlic
- 1/4 " slice ginger
- handful parsley
- 4 carrots
- 1 apple in wedges

place ginger and garlic in center of parsley and push through with carrot

Immune Power Fruit

- 1 orange, peeled
- 1/2 pineapple with skin, sliced
- 1/2 cup strawberries or pitted cherries
- 1 banana peeled

place juiced orange, pineapple, strawberries in a blender with banana and liquefy

Dr. Julie Zepp
Inspired Health

Dr. Myer's Anti-inflammatory smoothie

- 1 1/2 c. unsweetened almond milk
- 1/2 frozen banana
- 1 Tbsp raw walnuts
- 1 Tbsp raw pecans
- 1/2 - 1/2 inch fresh peeled ginger root
- 1/4 - 1/2 inch fresh peeled turmeric root
- 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 Tbsp. maca powder
- 1 Tbsp. chia seeds
- 1 Tbsp. flax seeds

Blend and serve.

Dr. Julie Zepp
Inspired Health