



Cathedral Village Wellness News

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Resistance

By Dr Julie Zepp Rutledge ND

“What we resist persists” is something that I have been quoting often, not only in clinical practice with my patients, but also as a personal reminder to myself as I go through my own growth work and physical and emotional healing.

I offer this mantra for you, too, to use as you start the New Year. As you create resolutions, set goals or intentions for the new year, and look forward at this next chapter, 2014, perhaps it will come in handy. Let me explain.

Often times when we are looking to make a change or work on something, we are doing so because we want to rid ourselves from a physical symptom causing us discomfort (eg. Pain, headaches, blood sugar imbalances, etc.) or because we want to rid ourselves from the habit that is causing a discomfort that we know to be unhealthy for us (eg. Over-eating, not exercising, poor posture, smoking, etc.). So we focus on what is present within our body or life (pain, habit of over-eating), we label it as “bad” and we work hard to eliminate it, often trying to use sheer willpower to overcome it.

Recent research, supporting what meditation and mindfulness practitioners have long known, shows however that “what we resists persist”, meaning when we create a resistance to something we are experiencing: “I don’t like this pain in my shoulder: it is bad” our energy actually goes to enhancing or increasing the pain level. Or if we are resistant to some weight we might

have put on “I am so gross, I can’t believe I keep eating junk food, I have to stop” we can actually wire in the unhealthy habits that prevent us from achieving our goal of a healthy weight. We may be able to achieve short term success if we have “strong will power” however this is not usually lasting as the feeling associated with how we achieved our goal is typically one of anxiety that we might slip backwards if we don’t “stay strong” or failure if we don’t succeed.

In any case, long lasting change isn’t created. To create long lasting change we need to be on the same team as ourselves. We need to cultivate compassion for ourselves and see anything that we are experiencing as a message to us and to sit with it as such. Our body’s signals are simply trying to tell us something and our daily habits are simply those things we have adopted to get by in life. It is important we take a gentler approach and soften into the message or appreciate the habit for what it was, understanding it no longer serves us, in order to change it.

This approach takes less energy and creates less suffering as we stop fighting ourselves and instead work with ourselves towards optimal health and wellbeing. So as you go forth into the holiday season, practice noticing resistance and rather than fight against what it is aimed at, try welcoming and softening to it—and see what happens!♥



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Ever Our Faithful Servant—the Liver: Where would we be without you?

By Dr Marika Geis ND

The natural medicine of today is a far different animal than it was a generation ago. In a society hungry for alternatives to conventional medical practices, 'natural medicine' has come to include any method that avoids the use of pharmacotherapy. With Dr. Oz touting the latest and greatest natural health phenomenon, detox foot baths, oil pulling, and so on, it can be easy to lose sight of the conceptual model that make natural medicine so effective. It's not unusual for people to come to their appointments with their entire arsenal of supplements hoping for some clarity as to what they need to be taking. When asked why they are taking supplement 'x' I often hear "That's a good question! I'm not actually sure. I think I read it somewhere in a magazine". As naturopaths, a big piece of the education we offer to our patients is providing the framework with which to interpret their symptoms and decide on an appropriate course of action. This framework, regardless of how your naturopath formulates their assessment or the modality used, ultimately works on a 'systems based' approach in that our symptoms are the result of an issue 'upstream'. Support the weakened system and the 'downstream' issues get resolved. It's this 'systems based' approach that provides the direction necessary to focus on the remedies needed and hold off on others even though they might be 'good for you'.

One such 'upstream' system is your

liver. To those of you who have been receiving this newsletter for a while, this may seem like old news. So old in fact that it is often forgotten when attempting to figure out, as a for instance, why at the age of fifty, you're all of a sudden constipated, bloated, fatigued and having the worst hot flushes of your life. It can be easy to think of all the herbs and vitamins that are involved in balancing out hormones like estrogen and progesterone or to make dietary changes that avoid the inflammation associated with troublesome hot flushes. But what's to be done when these interventions don't quite deal with the problem as you had hoped? Have we forgotten that a well-functioning liver is essential for optimal hormone balance? As another 'for instance', what if all of a sudden you are beset by a rash so itchy that you can't sleep at night and you're wearing socks on your hands to protect yourself for scratching yourself to infection? Have we forgotten that toxic compounds not eliminated by the liver and kidneys will look to the skin as a way to be eliminated?

"But I detoxify twice a year" you



say. Detoxifying semi-annually and annually is certainly helpful in mitigating the toll of modern life on your liver but it is not a guarantee that your liver will never be impacted and in need of support outside those times. Excessive stress, pharmaceutical drugs, alcohol and sugar consumption, nutritional deficiencies, processed food, environmental chemicals, plastics in the home, the list goes on, can all potentially compromise liver function. Signs of dysfunction go beyond jaundice, pain in the upper right hand side and abnormal liver function tests. They can also include: lowered immunity, headaches, trouble balancing blood sugar, poor metabolism of fats (LDL will go up and HDL will go down), digestive issues (bloating, constipation, IBS, heartburn), rashes, bad breath, difficulties absorbing nutrients from our food (liver has a role in making the nutrition from our food bioavailable) which impacts mood, memory and concentration, keeping anger in check, and premenstrual symptoms such as breast tenderness, cramping and a heavy flow with clotting. The Chinese take it further implicating the liver in such things as sleep patterns (anyone out there consistently get up between 1 and 3 am?), the quality of your sight and health of your nails.

As naturopathic doctors, we often see the chronic issues that the conventional model is at a loss to deal with. At times pharmacotherapy is needed to help manage symptoms that are intolerable. Life may become more manageable but the underlying cause

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Ever Our Faithful Servant—the Liver—Continued

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goes unaddressed. Using a 'systems based' approach provides a broader framework with which to interpret symptoms and offers a direction in terms of treatment. Treating the liver is not the answer to all chronic health issues but it is certainly a key player in maintaining our overall health. It's a little like a rain barrel: try never to let it get too full by keeping the spigot open at the bottom. Our humble liver is the spigot

and our bodies, the rain barrel. Provided we have a little room at the top to collect rainwater, we'll never spill over.

For more information on how liver health might relate to your specific health concerns, your naturopath is a wealth of knowledge. In the meantime (especially over the holiday season) you may want to incorporate the following:

~ A little lemon juice first thing in the morning (helps stimulate the

flow of bile)

- ~ 1-2 tablespoons of non-GM soy or sunflower lecithin (helps the flow of bile)
- ~ Turmeric daily
- ~ Castor oil packs nightly
- ~ A good quality greens powder daily
- ~ A diet full of dark, leafy and bitter greens
- ~ Keep caffeine, alcohol and sugar to a minimum. ♥

What You Need to Know about Going Gluten-Free

By Dr Julie Zepp Rutledge ND

About 10-15 years ago research was being done on the health benefits of soy. We heard about the women on traditional soy-based Asian diets having lower rates of breast, ovarian and uterine cancers, osteoporosis and heart disease. Rather than examine the research closely and look at what exactly made up these "soy-based diets"; supplement and food manufacturers, seeing the big dollar signs, began to add soy to packaged foods, formulate supplements containing soy isolates. Soy milk, cheese, yogurt and ice cream appeared on the shelves. "Soy added!" became a label main-stay and something we as consumers were led to believe made this packaged processed food a "health food".

As the demand for soy products increased, so did the global soy agricultural trade and quickly soy became one of the most highly genetically modified foods we have in su-

permarkets today.

In recent years, soy has seen its spotlight fade and has become known as a potentially dangerous food and we were warned to stop eating it for fear it potentiates the female cancers it was once thought to prevent.

Those of us in the field of naturopathic medicine that adopt a larger picture of things recognize that industry took a food, that in its natural, whole, unprocessed and non-genetically modified form has many health benefits and turned it into a potentially hazardous substance that our bodies no longer recognize.

Currently it appears that a similar situation is occurring in the world of gluten. Gluten is a prolamine: a protein found in highest concentration in wheat and but is also in other grains (barley, kamut, spelt).



For decades we have been seeing a dramatic rise in people diagnosed with celiac disease, which is an auto-immune reaction to the protein gluten. We are also seeing more and more people with intolerances to gluten. These are people who may not be *allergic* (ie. have positive IgE skin prick allergy test to gluten) nor *true celiac* but that react to the gluten with symptoms such as skin problems (eczema or psoriasis), joint/muscle ache, digestive disturbances (IBS, IBD, diarrhea/ constipation, bloating/ gas, heartburn), fatigue, headaches, chronic sinus, respiratory or allergy problems. Often times these delayed-type of reactions go uncorrelated with

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the food, as they can occur up to 24 hours after ingesting the offending food.

This rise is attributed to both an actual increase in the number of people reacting to the gluten containing foods and in the awareness surrounding gluten sensitivity making people more likely to be diagnosed by their health care provider, or even self-diagnosed. Our exposure to gluten is becoming greater with the increased consumption of processed, packaged and prepared foods that have gluten added. Even foods like a roasted chicken or bag of rice chips may contain gluten – it acts as an agent to help seasonings stick to the food. The gluten we are exposed to is also more toxic. Similar to soy, the high demand by the food industry for gluten-grains worldwide creates a situation in which these crops are genetically modified to produce higher, pest-resistant grains.

Our society is becoming more and more stressed. Life seems to be speeding up and stress-related illnesses are on the rise. Stress creates a condition in the digestive tract that leads to greater intestinal permeability (often called “Leaky Gut Syndrome”), lower levels of good gut flora (the probiotics/ acidophilus) and lower levels of the antibody on the surface of our gut membranes (IgA), leaving us more susceptible to conditions such as yeast overgrowth and small intestinal bacterial overgrowth. Poor integrity of our digestive tract means a higher

number of food sensitivities. Stress and hurry often results in consuming more easy to prepare foods containing offending ingredients, on the run, adding to the vicious cycle.

The solution? That is where the spotlight has been on *Going Gluten-Free*. It has become a \$12 billion industry. Celebrities are doing it, restaurants are offering gluten-free options, even many fast food chains are making the shift and most grocery stores have a gluten-free section. This might seem like a great thing, right?

Wrong. Much like my earlier example around soy, it seems we have created a bit of a beast. As consumers we are being duped into thinking because a food bears the disclaimer *gluten-free*, we don't have to read the rest of the ingredients. We can put it in our cart, and in our body, because (we are led to believe) if it is gluten-free it must be healthy! Unfortunately this can't be further from the truth. Most gluten-free foods on the market have a number of drawbacks: 1) they contain other grains, usually corn and rice; 2) the soy foods; 3) they contain industrial seed oils (such as canola – often GMO, safflower and sunflower) and 4) they contain sweeteners such as sugar (from cane sugar to high fructose corn syrup).

1 – Other grains: unfortunately in conditions like Irritable Bowel Syndrome, Leaky Gut, Crohns'/ Colitis, Celiac disease and auto-immune diseases (allergies, RA, SLE, etc.) we of-

ten see cross-reactivity with other grains, like rice and corn, especially if they are genetically modified. All cereal grains contain prolamines (gluten in wheat, orzenin in rice, zein in corn and avenin in oats) that can be toxic to the cells of the intestinal wall, especially when we have a genetic predisposition to auto-immune conditions or a compromised digestive system.

2 – Soy: as discussed earlier, processed, GMO-soy (non-organic tofu, soy milk, soy protein, soy capsules) contains toxic forms of phytoestrogens that can cause hormone disruption (thyroid and reproductive) and increase inflammation (leading to other chronic diseases).

3 – Industrial seed oils: again, often GMO, these are very high in omega 6 fatty acids, can often be rancid when used in baked goods and promote inflammation in the body by disrupting the balance of omega 3:omega 6 fats.

4 – Added sweeteners: these create blood sugar issues, insulin resistance, increase risk for diabetes and from a gut perspective feed “dysbiosis” (the balance between good and bad flora: low levels of acidophilus/ bifidus and high yeast/ Candida and small intestinal bacteria overgrowth - SIBO), making it difficult to heal our digestive systems.

The real solution? JERF. This is a term used in the digestive health

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community that stands for **Just Eat Real Food**. Rather than packaged, prepared foods (including sauces and boxed cereals) we need to go back to eating good quality organic meats (chicken, fish, bison, beef), many different colored fruits and veggies and good healthy fats (avocado, raw nuts and seeds), fermented foods (kimchi, kombucha, sauerkraut), limited eggs, very limited organic dairy products (hard, white cheese and yogurt), with a little bit of natural sweeteners (like honey or stevia) when needed. Avoiding gluten is definitely important, however be wary of packaged “gluten-free” items.

Reduce or avoid these packaged foods and eliminate GMO foods.

When it comes to other cereal grains some people are best to avoid these altogether: people with leaky gut, IBS, Crohn’s, colitis and celiac disease will fare much better on a diet that minimizes or removes these other grains (rice, oats, corn). Quinoa buckwheat and millet seem to be somewhat less reactive and can be experi-



mented with more freely.

Whether or not you have digestive issues, I recommend experimenting with the grain-free diet for a few weeks, especially if you suffer from joint or muscle pain and inflammation, diabetes, difficulties losing weight, headaches, allergies/ asthma and even memory issues.

In his latest book, *Grain Brain*, neurologist David Perlmutter MD describes the link between grain consumption and brain health, providing compelling evidence that our heavy reliance on cereal grains can be increasing our risk for dementia and Alzheimer’s disease.

Ideally baked goods are avoided altogether, in favor of the whole foods provided by nature (veggies, fruits, meats, nuts and seeds) however if you find it hard to avoid baking, the use of coconut and almond flour is recommended.

I also recommend supplementation with good quality digestive enzymes to improve digestion; and vitamin D and quality fish oils to reduce inflammation in the gut and the body. Increased consumption of fermented foods and/ or regularly taking a probiotic supplement (my two favorites are *Lactobacillus sporogenes* and *Sacro boulardii* however any good quality full spectrum blend works) are also important to ensure the health of the gut immune system (healthy IgA levels and robust GALT—the “gut associated lymphatic tissue” we have in our bellies) and to outcompete any foreign invaders

(“bad” bacteria, yeast, fungi, parasites, viruses)

Because good health begins in the gut, please, take the time to slow down, prepare your own foods, sit down to slowly eat and enjoy your meals.

Avoid eating on the run, and generally learn to remove the urgency and stress from your lives. Stress hormones and a nervous system continually responding to stress signals—be they actual logistical stressors or the ones we create in our own heads due to perfectionism, worry, etc—are all problematic for the health of the digestive system.

Perhaps it all sounds overwhelming—but start slowly. Start by slowing down to eat. Just doing this simple task and bringing more mindfulness to the table with you will often positively impact your food choices. You might be more grounded and therefore make it easier for you to have an awareness of how the food you are about to eat might affect your body and therefore will choose a healthier choice for you.

Small steps can have a huge impact, start today.

Resources: www.pecanbread.com, www.scdlifestyle.com, www.realfoodcon.com, *Breaking the Vicious Cycle* by Elaine Gotshall and *Grain Brain* by David Perlmutter ♥

Yoga: First Line Treatment for Fibromyalgia

By Dr Laura Stark ND

I recently had the wonderful opportunity to attend a Yoga for Pain workshop with Neil Pearson, a Physiotherapist, Yoga Therapist and Pain Specialist from BC. Neil immersed the group of us yoga teacher trainees in all the latest research in pain physiology and the evidence for using yoga as a pain management therapy. I was excited to learn that the research is so supportive that yoga is actually recommended in the treatment of fibromyalgia in the national guidelines in both Canada and the US. Way to go, yoga!

But how does yoga help relieve pain? In a yoga class, typically there is stretching to relax tight muscles, strengthening of weaker muscles and hopefully a focus on bringing the body into better alignment. It seems reasonable that helping the body in those ways could help ease pain, but the real pain-relieving magic comes from yoga being a body-centred awareness practice. Yoga provides an excellent framework to approach pain and train the nervous system to turn down those pain signals.



First, it is im-

portant to understand what pain really is. It is an experience. We tend to think that pain is somehow attached to the area where we experience it in our bodies, but pain actually originates in the brain. Pain does not actually equal injury. Neil had a great example to illustrate this: think of a papercut – how much pain you experience versus how much tissue damage has been done. Pain's purpose is to provide a warning preceding real or potential danger to motivate a change in your behaviour in order to prevent that potential injury. This system works wonderfully in acute situations like rolling an ankle. The trouble comes when pain becomes chronic. Typically, tissues may seem perfectly healthy in a chronic pain situation, yet seem to be the cause of potentially debilitating pain. The nervous system is the true culprit here.

In chronic pain, the threshold for sending a pain warning signal has been lowered. So, a touch that a normal nervous system may experience as pressure would be felt as painful. Pain interferes with the normal perception of our bodies and using the body awareness practices of yoga with the functional movement work of yoga postures can effectively train the nervous system back to a normal pain threshold. Take note that having a 'high pain threshold' is a different idea. A high pain tolerance is probably a better way to describe those people who can be experiencing a lot of pain before they ever show signs of what they are feeling. The aim is



not to trick the brain, 'mind-over-matter' that the pain is not really there. Instead, we want a nervous system that appropriately warns us of danger, the awareness to act appropriately according to those warnings, and a nervous system that will turn the pain signal off when the danger is past.

Tips for your yoga practice: We need to approach pain's edge if we want to change it. Knowing that the very start of pain is always a warning and not injury, the yoga practice involves coming to the edge where pain just starts and hang out there. Practice dropping into that savasana (corpse pose) feeling of safety, relaxation, peace, quiet, and stillness and see if the experience of pain changes. With practice, you will find that the nervous system does reset that pain response threshold when it is reassured that the danger has passed.

There are numerous yoga techniques that can work toward this relaxed, body-aware and pain-free state. Neil Pearson's patient resource book is available at the clinic and provides a wonderfully simple yet thorough education in pain physiology and what to do about it. Also available for borrow are a Gentle Yoga for Pain DVD and a Breathing Techniques CD. ♥

A Nutrient Cocktail: Intravenous Therapy

By Dr Allison Ziegler ND

Growing in popularity among integrative health practitioners is the use of intravenous (IV) vitamin and mineral therapy. Intravenous administration of vitamins and minerals is a therapy that has potential benefit for a wide range of clinical conditions including acute asthma attacks, migraines, fatigue (including chronic fatigue syndrome), fibromyalgia, acute muscle spasms, upper respiratory tract infections, chronic sinusitis, seasonal allergic rhinitis, cardiovascular disease, depression, athletic performance and adjunctive cancer treatment¹.

Intravenous therapy is the administration of vitamins and minerals directly into the blood stream using a small needle. IV nutrient therapy is a way of getting the vitamins and minerals into the blood stream quickly and at a higher amount. When taken orally, vitamins and minerals are absorbed via the digestive tract. If the digestive tract is compromised, the nutrients from the vitamin and mineral supplement may not be effectively absorbed and most may be excreted from the body. For example, when given through IV, vitamin C can reach concentrations 10 times higher than through oral supplementation². As a result, IV therapy can have great benefit for those who have digestive issues or who cannot tolerate oral supplementation or in conditions when a higher blood concentration is required to have the de-

sired therapeutic action.

Dr. John Myers, MD, a physician from Baltimore, Maryland was the first doctor to use IV therapy in 1970's. It was from him the term "Myers' Cocktail" was coined. Nutrients in a Myers' Cocktail consist of magnesium, calcium, vitamin B12, vitamin B6, vitamin B5, B complex and vitamin C¹. After Dr. Myers death in 1984, Dr. Alan Gaby, MD continued to develop the field of IV nutrient therapy. A Myers' Cocktail is aimed at correcting common nutrient deficiencies, improving energy and boosting the immune system.

In the treatment of cancer, high dose ascorbic acid (vitamin C) is shown to have anti-tumor effects. Since there are mechanisms in the digestive tract that tightly regulate intestinal absorption of vitamin C, a desirable concentration of ascorbic acid to have the anti-tumor action can only be achieved through intravenous injection, as opposed to oral supplementation². Studies show that used in conjunction with chemotherapy, intravenous vitamin C can decrease the side effects of chemotherapy, improve quality of life, and decrease tumor size².

IV therapy poses little safety concerns, with no reported severe adverse effects. In my experience, the most common mild adverse effects are discomfort at the injection site and lightheadedness. These can easily be corrected by adjusting the administration speed and/or solution concentration.



Intravenous therapy is an exciting integrative medical approach that is aimed at correcting deficiencies, improving energy and re-establishing health.

References

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Christmas Gift Ideas!



Come by the clinic and pick up a unique (and healthy) Christmas gift for a loved one. We sell cookbooks, a wide variety of supplements, tear cups (visit my Auntie's website at www.tearcups.com for more information on these healing little vessels), room sprays and **gift certificates** for your Naturopathic Health Care needs.

Our lovely receptionist, Michelle Moeller of [Plenty And Grace Gifts](#) makes 100% natural skin and lip care products. I swear by her skin conditioner and TuLips lip balm and lip shimmer, especially in the cold dry Regina winters.

Stop by the clinic today to pick up a stocking stuffer today!

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