

Cultivate Qi for Body, Mind & Spirit

Yang-Sheng

Nurturing Life

養生

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Food as Medicine:
Seasonal Harmony
- Overcoming Disease
Through Nutrition
- Pain Killing Properties
of Culinary Herbs
- Bigu for Yang Sheng
- Women's Empowerment
- Mind-Body Research
- Trynaural Meditation,
Brainwave Entrainment
- Measuring Bio-Energy
- Tales from the Dao ...and more!

Volume 1, No. 8
October, 2011

www.Yang-Sheng.com



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Table of Contents

Featured Articles

Seasonal Harmony with Whole Foods by Ellasara Kling [5](#)

Digestion Weakness & Chinese Rice Ginger Zhou (Congee)
by Michael Rinaldini (Li Chang Dao) [11](#)

Ancient Wisdom, Modern Kitchen [13](#)

Some Like It Hot, Others Do Not
by Mika Ono, Yuan Wang, and Warren Sheir

Ask Dr. Ken [16](#)

Overcoming Disease Through Nutrition by Ken Andes, L.Ac.

From Dr. Love *Pain Killing Properties of Culinary Herbs*
by George Xavier Love, OMD [20](#)

Featured Article *The Natural Color of Whole Food and Its Healing Power*
by Marty Eisen, Ph.D. [25](#)

Scientific Qi Exploration [28](#)

Chinese Bigu (避谷) for Yang Sheng by Marty Eisen, Ph.D.

Featured Article *A Qigong Teacher Explains How to Cook via the PCTP Method* by Raven Cohen [37](#)

Tales from the Dao [39](#)

On Eating by Solala Towler

Mind-Body Research Update collected by Kevin Chen, Ph.D. [40](#)

Proverbs of Yang Sheng [46](#)

Qigong Sayings collected by Kevin Chen, Ph.D.

TCM Food Therapy [48](#)

TCM Food Therapy for Diabetes by Helen H. Hu, L.Ac. OMD

Breathe in this Life [51](#)

Women's Empowerment (part 2) by Ginger Garner, MPT, ATC

Healing through Pleasure [54](#)

The Sexual Dynamic: Healing Through Gender Awareness
by Felice Dunas, Ph.D. L.Ac.

Energy Healing Through Science & Spirit [56](#)

How Can Bio-Energy be Measured? by Cindy Cicero

Stress Less [58](#)

Trynaural Meditation and Brainwave Entrainment
by Niraj Naik, M.Pharm.

Meditation in Motion [62](#)

Taiji - Stage of Development by Eric Borreson

Book Review [67](#)

Embrace Tiger, Return to Mountain reviewed by Sal Casano, R.N. Ph.D.

Yang-Sheng (Nurturing Life) is an E-magazine for all Qigong, Tai Chi, Yoga, Reiki, mindfulness and meditation practitioners, spiritual cultivators and health seekers. It promotes the philosophy and methods of self healing and positive mind power, and shares knowledge and experience about daily healthy practice. Yang Sheng merges ancient wisdom and knowledge with scientific research evidence and clinic applications. It also combines traditional mind-body practices with modern living experiences. Your participation, contribution, sharing and feedback are truly appreciated.



“Return to nature,” and “humans and nature are one,” represents the core philosophies of the law of nature.

TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine) teaches “food and herbs come from the same source.” By using natural foods and herbs to balance the body, the body’s energy is restored which is crucial for wellness and longevity.

Both wellness and longevity are part of the process of nature. In order to maximize physical and mental well-being, we need to change the way we treat ourselves, the way we think, and the way we treat the environment that we live in. At the same time, we have to recognize that no one lives forever; there is no “magic elixir” that enables us to become immortal. But we can age gracefully in a natural and spiritual way. We must follow nature’s law - all life on the planet has its own life cycle. Mother Nature (the earth) provides nutritional energy (Qi) packed in “food” with healing powers. We need to learn how to utilize it according to our unique needs and capacities.

In our modern society, food and medicine are totally different entities. And nutritional values all point to supplements from vitamin A-Z, protein and fiber contents. Unfortunately, we use the same modern jargon to classify natural plants and food. However, we have left out something that doesn’t fit commercial jargon – the real healing power of food.

In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) the three most vital components for life are Jing (physical body), Qi (energy), and Shen (spirit). They are the so-called “Three Treasures.” A good diet not only nourishes our physical body and our organs, giving us vital energy, but it also nourishes our spirit. When Chinese medicine speaks of organs, it refers more to the energetic function of each organ than to anatomy only, as in Western medicine. If a person has a weakness in a certain organ and an imbalance between organs, as part of the treatment protocol, the diet can be modified to reestablish the balance and strength.

Natural food can be categorized as bitter, sweet, pungent, salty, and/or bland. Each taste corresponds to the promotion and nourishment of a particular organ function. As with different tastes, food also has different colors, each with corresponding tendencies to nourish different organs. For example, black-colored foods tends to nourish the kidneys, yellow foods tend to nourish the spleen, red foods correspond to the heart, green foods to the liver, and white foods to the lungs. Natural foods have different temperatures that balance the coldness and warmth of the imbalanced body as part of healing property. *(continued on page 4)*

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(continued from page 3)

In ancient times, people lived closer to nature in more integrated communities. Over thousands of years, through observation and by surviving many diseases and natural disasters, they discovered how various foods promoted longevity and well-being. Many of these longevity-promoting foods and herbs have been recorded in the history of Chinese medicine, including sesame seeds (especially black sesame seeds), mulberries, walnuts, wild yams, wolfberries (goji berries), and yogurt, to name a few.

All living creatures (including humans) are on the same energy wave line with the earth and universe. We are all sensitive to environmental changes, seasonal changes, cosmos changes and life stages.

Our energetic body reflects other energetic living things in the same environment with the same adaptability and resistance to local environmental changes.

We need to eat locally organically grown food that will provide the body with better resistance and strength for healing. This concept has been utilized in TCM for centuries. A simple example: imagining a human body as a natural plant with a flower on the top as a human face; plant's stem and branches as a human's four limbs; plants leaves as our hands and feet; and plant's roots as our internal organs. Based on this understanding, TCM herbalists using herbs to treat problems on the face use ingredients from flowers (the top of plant); stem from plants usually treat the blockage on the meridian of the limbs and joints, and the roots and seeds for the disorders in internal organs.

Our goal is to educate and guide our readers to choose the right foods for a nourishing life and for healing. It requires a life time practice to reach our maximum life span (heavenly age). It is called *Yang Sheng* (Nourishing life).

Yang Sheng, an online magazine, is on the cutting edge in bringing the most natural methods, thousands of years of wisdom and life style practices back to our modern society. Indeed, we are fortunate to have a range of talented practitioners, coaches, energy healers and teachers to further this mission.

As the author of *Body Without Mystique*, and practitioner of Traditional Chinese Medicine, I am on the same mission.

Helen H. Hu, OMD. PC.

Yang Sheng Associate Editor and Guest-Editor for October

www.bodywithoutmystique.com

www.OMDweb.net

Seasonal Harmony with Natural Whole Foods

by Ellasara Kling

The natural healing force within each one of us is the greatest force in getting well.

Our food should be our medicine. Our medicine should be our food.

Hippocrates: Greek physician (circa -- 460 BC - 377 BC)

Creating and maintaining health occurs primarily as a result of our daily activities (mental/emotional/physical) and very primary among these is something that we are fortunate enough to do regularly: **eat**. But what do we eat for good health and what information do we follow to guide us through the roller coaster of daily living? Certainly magazines, news reports, newspaper articles, internet sources (excellent to suspicious) do their best to give us information that we can use. But can we actually use it? Apply it? Understand what it really means to ourselves, our families and friends? And does one-size really fit all?

When we read articles about the health giving benefits of a particular food, rarely does the article help us determine: how much of the food to eat, when to eat it, the interrelationship between the person, their current health; it and how that would affect the quantity eaten, how to cook it, is the food affected by the time of year, fresh, frozen; country of origin; use of certain pesticides in growing; ripeness when picked, and so on. How does the person's digestive system come into play for digesting, assimilating, and dispersing the food? It sounds so complicated -- determining what foods are beneficial and how to use them and combine them? Are foods just a conglomeration of "nutrients" as defined by bio-medicine or is there something more?

According to the principles of *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, (TCM) the food we eat gives us energy, or not. It gives us the energy we need at that time, or not. We choose foods that support and harmonize with our bodies, or not. Applying the principles of TCM, we can pretty easily discern what we need and choose foods that are health giving and enlivening.

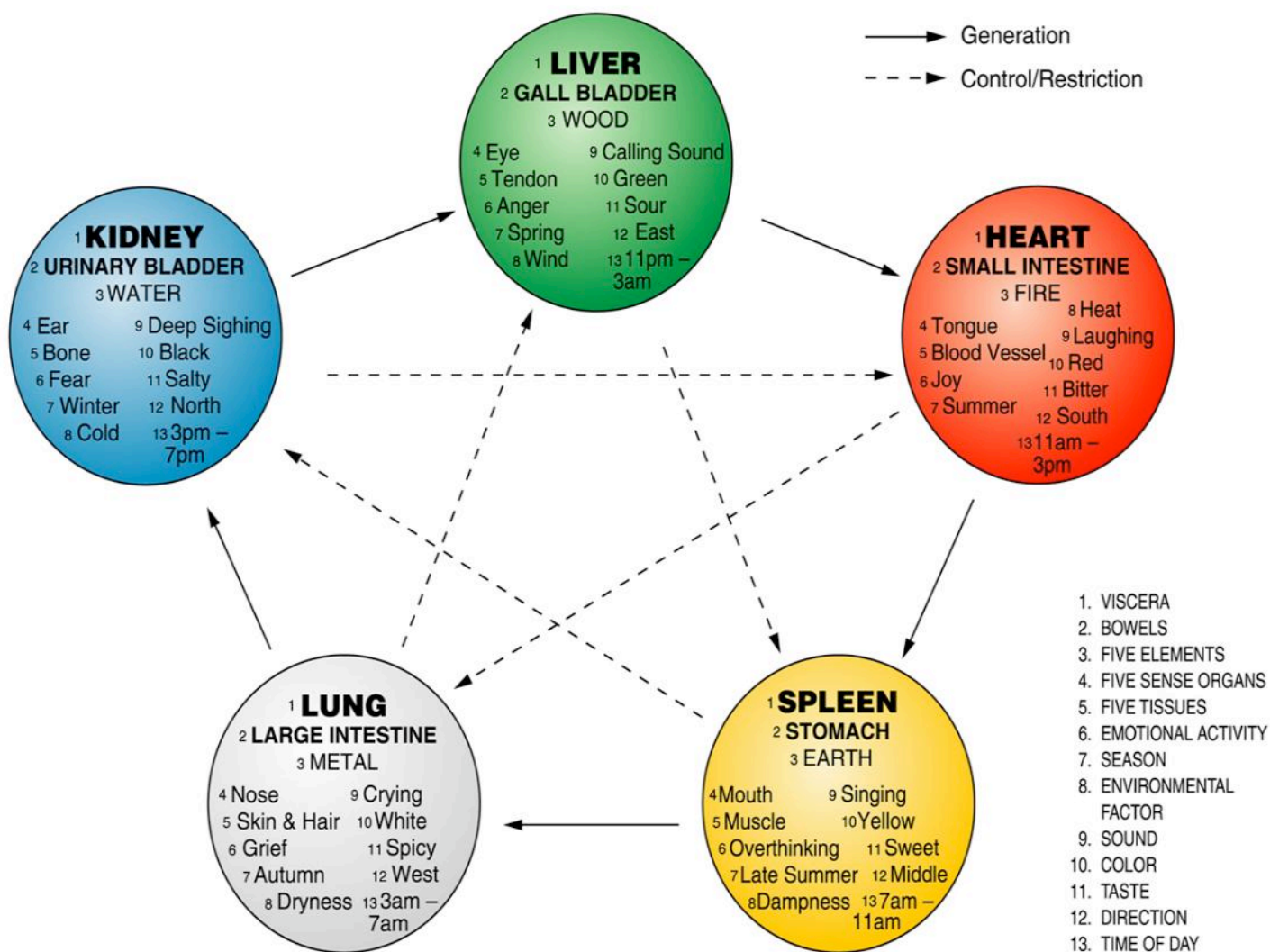
Traditional Chinese Medicine takes the person into account especially body constitution (gender, age, occupation, current balance of health, temperament, stress factors, climate, season, weather conditions at the time, along with other circumstances) before prescribing a healing diet for an individual. It is not a one-size fits all program of eating. There are, however, general guidelines and lots of information about food and applying it to oneself and family. Eating seasonally, although becoming "fashionable", is a TCM guideline that has stood the test of time (thousands of years) as it takes into account where you are, what you need to live in harmony with where you are, and the prevailing conditions of your environment. A simple example would be that we probably would agree that in the cold of winter, eating internally chilling foods would not be beneficial. Indigenous peoples in extremely cold climates, such as the Inuits of North America, eat whale fat for internal heat and insulation. And, that just makes sense to us. We don't read that statement and think, "Oh no, they should have ice cream." That just doesn't make sense to us.

(continued on page 6)

A foundation of *Traditional Chinese Medicine* is Five Element Theory. This very beautiful and elegant theory can assist us in choosing foods for ourselves and family that enhance our health. Five Element Theory is, as the name states, the relationships of the Universe viewed from five points of view. There are thousands of relationships, but for general purposes and choosing foods, there are about 13 relationships that are generally useful on a daily basis.

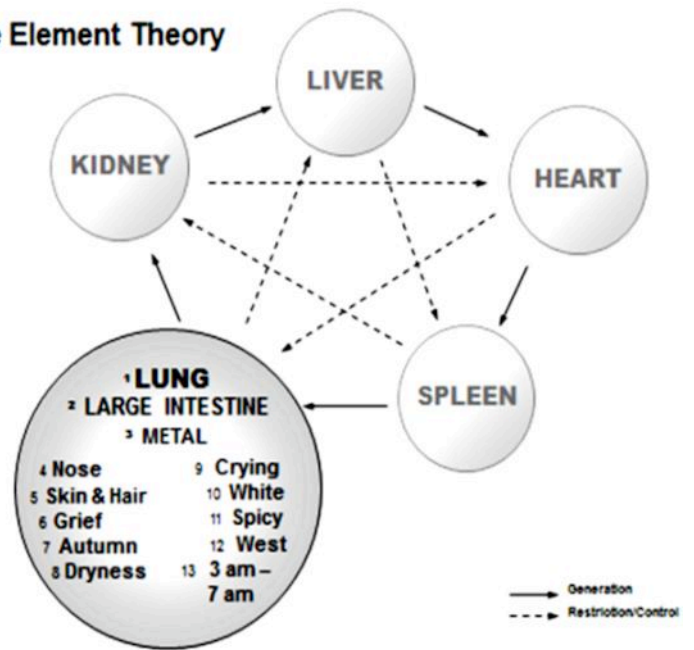
Viewing the chart below, there are five circles, each containing information about an Organ System, its element, and if you look at #7, the Season followed by #8, the environmental factor of that season. In order to work with Five Element Theory, especially at first, it is not necessary to memorize all the relationships. Many of these relationships you already know without stating it to yourself that way. For example, the Liver Season, Spring, has green as its color. This makes intuitive sense as Spring is time for new plants of all sorts which are generally green in color. It is windy in Spring and we see that #8, the Environmental Factor is Wind. Notice #10, color. This is often a key to foods of the season. Sprouts in Spring, Corn in Late Summer, Watermelon in Summer; Cauliflower for Autumn, and black beans in Winter. *Each of these foods have specific properties that are health enhancing for the season they are categorized in.*

CLASSIFICATION OF THINGS ACCORDING TO THE THEORY OF THE FIVE ELEMENTS



Does this mean that you only eat the foods that are identified for the Season? No. It is best to always have a “balanced plate” that represents all of the seasons. That can be in a particular dish or as the meal overall. If you are working on healing a particular set of symptomatology, it is always recommended that you visit your local TCM practitioner so that you can understand the underlying root cause. Then you can gear some or all of your meals to bringing balance to that Organ System and obtain specific recommendations for your unique self. If you are generally healthy, then learning how to harmonize your eating with the seasons will enhance your health even more. Also, by following this column, you will learn recipes for foods that prevent illness from encroaching or minimize its effects should one, such as a cold, force its way in!

Five Element Theory



That being said, there are foods that are specific to each season and below you will see some of those that harmonize most with Autumn, the season we are in now. There are also a few recipes for Autumn and a discussion of how the season affects us and what we can do to harmonize with it more.

HARMONIUS FOOD THERAPY
IN THE AUTUMN SEASON

Viewing the above chart, we can see how Fall (Lung) has emerged from the Late Summer (Spleen) and will be changing into Kidney season (Winter). The Late Summer’s heat which balanced the dampness of Early Summer now brings dryness to the environment. Too much dryness may adversely affect the Lung/ Large Intestine which requires some moisture to function well. Therefore, highly spiced foods are not recommended as spiciness increases dryness. When we refer to the foods that harmonize with the season, we notice that many of them add moisture or help to retain moisture, such as Snow Fungus, Pears, Spinach, and so on.

(continued on page 8)

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Because the movement of the Autumn season is to begin the process of contraction towards oncoming Winter, foods that are part of that movement are beneficial to eat and would include tart apples, red grapes, and plums. The tartness inherent in these foods has the effect of contraction and therefore harmonizes with the season.

As the Autumn progresses, and we move closer to Winter, adding winter-flavors and foods assists that transition. As you can see, there is always this brilliant movement of one pattern emerging so that another pattern can unfold from it as it reaches its zenith. This glorious mandala can inform our lives at any time about a myriad of items.

Natural Foods that Harmonize With Autumn

Apples, Apricot, Bamboo Shoots, Barley, Basil, Bai Mu Er – aka White Fungus or Snow Fungus, Cauliflower, Chicken Egg, Chickweed, Cilantro, Coriander, Cow's Milk, Eggplant, Fennel bulb, Garlic, Ginger, Honey, Job's Tears (Chinese Barley), Kohlrabi, Kumquat, Lily Bulb, Lotus Root, Lotus seeds, Mustard – leaf and seeds, Onions – Green, Yellow, Red, Shallots, Parsnip, Peanuts, Pears, Peppermint, Persimmon, Pine Nut, Radish, Sauerkraut, Spinach, Strawberry, Walnut, Water Chestnut.

Yang Sheng Issues in the Autumn Season

The organ system for this season is the Lung/Large Intestine. Among its many other functions, we are most familiar with the idea that the Lungs are in charge of the flow of air in and out of our bodies. They connect our “insides” with our “outside” through the nose, its sense organ. The Lung is literally the highest organ in the torso and directs the qi it receives downward to the other organs. It is the administrator. The Lung is known as a “delicate” organ and is, indeed, very sensitive to changes in hot, cold, dryness, dampness, and wind. The Lung is responsible for providing proper moisture to the skin and similarly through its paired partner, the Large Intestine, dry hair and/or skin are signs of a tired Lung. Grief and sadness are the emotions associated with the Lung and crying is its “sound”.

A situation many of us who work in office buildings face is the lack of fresh air. We breathe “recycled air” and with the cooler weather the heating systems are cranking up and drying the air even more. It is very important at this time to eat foods that moisten the Lungs/Large Intestine such as pears, honey, snow fungus (a personal favorite and available at your local Asian markets – a little goes a long way), persimmons to name just a few. See, the recipes below for easy to make dishes and soups that have this effect.

Learning a bit more about the Fall season: Autumn's emotion is Grief/sadness and its balancing action can be deep understanding with acceptance which brings neutrality. There is often the desire to “set things right” in Autumn and this desire for rectitude is another balancing action for feelings of sadness and grief. It's important in Autumn to create as much balance as possible as the oncoming Winter season has fear as its emotion, which is contracting. Kindness and benevolence, which are expanding energies, can balance the contraction and anxieties of Winter – kindness to oneself as well as others. By observing Five Element Theory we can find ways to cultivate emotional healing in any season, at any time.

***On these crisp, clear Fall days, be sure to get lots of fresh air
and fill and empty the Lungs completely.
Breathe in Life and keep a smile in your heart!***

AUTUMN YANG SHENG RECIPES

Lung Chuan Vegetables from Mrs. Wang.*

Ingredients:

2 large carrots cut in half lengthwise
2 large white Russet potatoes cut in half lengthwise
1 small pumpkin, **kabocha**, hubbard, acorn, butternut, or other dense gourd-like squash cut lengthwise in 3" wide pieces with the skin.
½ red bell pepper, ½ tsp. garlic, 2 TB ginger, whites of 6 green onions – all minced
dried small, red, hot peppers, 2-3 not too many, only to warm the food not to make it hot/spicy (use less if you are sensitive)
¾ cup fresh cranberries (optional)
1 TB salt or to taste
½ cup Walnut or Grapeseed oil
½ -1 cup water

Directions

Cut the vegetables into chunky, triangular wedge shapes leaving the skin on the potatoes and the squash. Heat a large, heavy skillet or wok, add some oil - heat the oil.

Add the carrots, potatoes and squash and cook until the vegetables sweat. At this point, add the other ingredients and stir-fry for a few minutes. Add some water and cover. When the water is absorbed the vegetables should be cooked, but not mushy. If the vegetables are not yet cooked, add a v. little more water and cover again. When they are fully cooked – but not mushy - remove the lid and stir fry for a couple more minutes.

**I added the cranberries to add a little tart flavor and red color.*

Pear and Watercress Soup

Adapted from
ZEN: The Art of Modern Eastern Cooking
By Deng Ming-Dao

Ingredients:

¼ cup walnut oil
2 TB minced garlic
1 medium yellow onion – chopped finely
¾ cup celery hearts – tender light colored stalks only – no leaves – chopped finely
3-4 cups of peeled chopped pears – try to choose fragrant pears such as Barlett, Williams, Asian.
4 packed cups finely chopped watercress leaves only
1 bunch flat leaf (Italian) parsley - finely chopped - leaves only
1-1/2 cups spinach leaves – baby preferably
1 qt vegetable stock
salt and white pepper, sugar or honey to taste
Garnish with sliced scallion whites, or a small scallion white cut into a “brush”.

Directions

Heat the oil in a large pot and add the garlic, onion, and celery. Sweat for about 15 to 20 minutes stirring constantly to prevent any browning.

Add pears and cook for another 10 minutes

Add all the greens and when they wilt add the vegetable stock

Bring to a boil and then reduce the heat

Remove from heat and puree soup in small batches in a blender

When blended, pass through a sieve into a clean pan

Reheat and adjust seasoning if too thick, add more stock or a little water. Garnish each serving separately

(Recipes continued on page 10)





Ginger Pear Soup – Dessert

Ginger disperses qi, increases circulation and pear is cooling and moistens the Lungs/Large Intestine as does honey.

Ingredients

3 medium to large pears cut into matchsticks
 2 quarts of water
 ½ tsp salt
 1/8 tsp ground white pepper
 ¼ cup rice wine or dry sherry
 2 TB chopped fresh ginger (or 6 thin 1” diameter slices)
 Honey to taste

Directions

Peel the pears and cut into matchsticks.
 Place with all the other ingredients in a soup pot and simmer until the pears are soft but not mushy.
 Yield: serves 6-8 people



Following the threads of her personal tapestry, Ellasara, a long-time student of Master Nan Lu, weaves her life around the exploration and sharing of self-healing through a variety of modalities, primarily focusing on food, common herbal plants, Qigong Meridian Therapy and Qigong for Women’s Health.

For comments, questions, consultations, ellasara00@gmail.com

Chicken Pumpkin

This recipe can promote Lung strength.

Ingredients

2-3 lb Kabocha Pumpkin
 1 chicken breast – boned
 2 cloves garlic

A: 2 tsp soy sauce
 2 tsp. Cornstarch
 1 tsp dry sherry
 ½ tsp sesame oil

B: ¾ cup chicken stock
 ¾ tsp salt

Directions

Cut the chicken breast into even dices and marinate in A for about 10 minutes. Meanwhile. . . Carefully wash the pumpkin and then cut the top off below the stem area so that you can scoop out the seeds and separately some of the pumpkin pulp and make a bowl. Let the walls of the pumpkin remain thick. Scrape off some of the pulp from the “lid” and cut all of the removed pulp into cubes or some sort of pretty even pieces.

Add 2 Tb. [f oil to a wok and heat. Stir fry the sliced garlic and add the chicken breast, stir fry until it is just lightly cooked. Add the pumpkin pulp and B and cook until lightly tender.

Then fill the pumpkin with the cooked ingredients and cover with “lid” and steam until tender. . about 30-45 minutes.



Chicken Pumpkin Soup

Digestion Weakness and Chinese Rice Ginger Zhou (Congee)

by Michael Rinaldini (Li Chang Dao)



This past summer was a digestive nightmare for me. [I have a history of Spleen Qi deficiency or the clinical manifest as Irritable Bowel Syndrome by Western medicine] Usually my digestion problems become a major complaint during the cooler fall or winter months. This summer was an exception. It seems like I started having digestion problems early in July and they became progressively worse as the weeks rolled by. In the past, if I ate the wrong foods, I would have a problem for a couple of days, and then I would recover and move on. But not this past summer. By the end of July, I realized that I needed to take stronger action to get my digestion system strengthened and back in balance. I couldn't be casual about eating any summer fruits, cold smoothie drinks or an occasional trip to the local ice cream parlor. The slightest food offense, like a large salad sent me to the bathroom numerous times the next day.

"According to TCM food therapy, we need to chose the right temperature of food to balance the body's condition. If one already has a weak digestive system (there may be Spleen and stomach deficiency), cold and greasy food will further compromise the energy flow to the organ and further weaken spleen and stomach that perform the transformation and transportation of food. We tend to consume cold food such as cold drink, smoothie, icy water, cold salad and fruits during the summer for cooling down, but the already weak digestion system takes a further blow. That is why digestive disorders tend to happen during the summer and early fall season.

How can we prevent it? There is an old Chinese Folk saying: summer's ginger. That means, in order to prevent and protect our digestive system during the summer, consume more ginger it is warm, and will bring harmony and balance to the digestive system if you indulge in cool food during the summer." (Editor's comment)

Before I go on, maybe I should mention some of the symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome, and Spleen Qi deficiency according to Traditional Chinese Medicine. I don't need any references to do this, since I have been living with these symptoms on and off for many years. Here goes: Diarrhea, alternating with constipation. If not diarrhea, then at least loose stools and frequent bowel movements. Accompanying this pleasantry is abdominal bloating, whether I ate a small meal or larger one. The bloating makes me feel like I can't do anything; I am in a mental and emotional cloud. Sometimes, going for a walk helps, but never too far from a bathroom. A real bummer.

And there are more symptoms, like tenderness around my abdominal area, around the navel. There may be frequent belching and there is always the increased aroma of flatulence, another pleasantry. At least the flatulence disappears with the increased bowel movements. Another significant effect is a loss of energy. As a qigong practitioner, I feel this energy drain throughout my entire body. I especially have to be careful of my lower back, as this energy drain seems to temporarily weaken the lower back and make it more vulnerable to bending injuries.

Irritable bowel syndrome is also characterized by feelings of anxiety or depression. *"TCM believes that the Spleen is responsible for transferring food's energy to a specific energy "clear Yang energy". This energy only goes up to uplift our spirit. Once there is a Spleen deficiency, the body will lack of this energy, that is why depression always goes hand in hand with people who have a weak digestive system". (Editor's comment)* Luckily, I am free of any depression, but do have some anxiety signs. These anxiety signs come and go for me and are usually associated with increased family obligations, and increased requirements to travel outside of my local geographical area where I live, like trips to L.A. Talking to my acupuncturist recently, he pointed out that even though there may be ways to directly treat the anxiety, like talking therapy, it is important to go back and treat the root organ deficiency, in my case, the weak spleen qi, or Earth Element.

Enter Food Cure.

As a qigong and Daoist practitioner, I try to bring all my skills and knowledge to the treatment of my digestion problems. I increase and direct my qigong practices to strengthening my spleen and kidney energies. And I increase my meditation practice to focus more on relaxation and letting go of damaging emotions to the spleen. In addition to these practices, I have been studying and applying the principles of Chinese food therapy for a long time. Chinese food therapy is a fascinating way of understanding food as medicine, especially when you have a weak digestion constitution. For now, I only want to write about one particular aspect of using food as a nutritional medicine.

This summer was particularly challenging for me because whenever I made progress in bringing myself back into balance, another incident occurred and I had a relapse. And, as I've already said, by the end of July I realized I needed to be more aggressive in strengthening my spleen qi. Enter my food cure-Rice Congee with ginger!

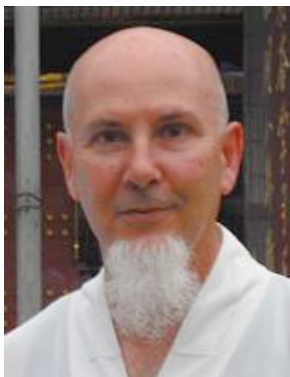
I was first introduced to rice congees in the late 1980's when I started going to acupuncturists for my digestion ailments. My first acupuncturist put me on a diet I still refer to as the "No Diet." No sweets of any kind, no raw foods, no cold drinks, no ice cream or other damp foods like watermelon. I could eat nothing that was not warming or could be cooked. The core of what I could eat was the rice congee soup. One part brown rice and nine parts water, slowly cooked for a couple of hours. Afterwards, eaten in small amounts. Over time I learned how to modify this basic formula with simple ingredients. One essential ingredient is fresh ginger root. Good thing I like the flavor of ginger. I have been eating and drinking ginger tea for years now. Ginger is a remarkable food. It is one of the most anti-inflammatory foods, good for many health problems. I cannot make a rice congee without any ginger. Use at least one inch of sliced fresh ginger root. Other ingredients I frequently add to my soups are carrots, white onions and skinless chickens. My acupuncturist told me I should add organic chicken bones to the congee for extra "qi and blood" benefits. That's my basic congee formula.

You can add other ingredients as well. Millet is another grain good for the spleen. In my last soup I added a handful of millet to the rice during the last hour of cooking. Another cooking tip is that if the soup is getting too thick, add more water. This applies to when you are heating up leftover congee as well-add extra water and maybe another fresh slice of ginger. In my last soup, I threw in some goji berries, which have the five flavors beneficial for the five yin organs: liver, heart, spleen, lungs and kidneys.



If you have access to raw Chinese herbs, perhaps through your acupuncturist or local herbal pharmacy, you can find Chinese herbs that you can put in your congees and eat them for your spleen tonification.

It is now late September. My digestion has settled down and the worst of this summer's digestive flare-up has passed. I do have to be mindful of my eating habits as we move further into the fall and early winter. I'll keep some ginger and rice in my kitchen at all times, ready to make a quick congee, as prevention, and as a food cure when needed.



Michael Rinaldini (Li Chang Dao)– is a Qigong teacher, and a 22nd generation Longmen (Dragon Gate) Daoist priest. Shifu Michael founded the American Dragon Gate Lineage with the support of Master Wan Su Jian from Beijing, China. The Lineage is a non-monastic community of members devoted to the spreading of Daoism and the cultivation of the Dao. Shifu Michael is also a practitioner and teacher of medical qigong, certified at the highest level (Level IV) Certified Qigong Teacher by the National Qigong Association, and a certified Bagua Xundao Gong Qigong Teacher by Master Wan Su Jian (Beijing, China). He offers Qigong Certification Program for Advanced Trainings.

See more information at www.dragongateqigong.com

Some Like It Hot, Others Do Not

by Mika Ono, Yuan Wang, and Warren Sheir

If there's too much heat, cool it.

If there's too much cold, heat it.

If there's too much fullness, empty it.

If there's too much emptiness, fill it.

The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine



In the West, we tend to view food mechanistically through the lens of protein, fat, carbohydrate, and vitamin content. In the Eastern tradition, however, people tend to focus on more holistic properties.

Among these, a food's "temperature" is one of the most important. As we describe in our book, *Ancient Wisdom, Modern Kitchen: Recipes from the East for Health, Healing, and Long Life* by Yuan Wang, L.Ac., Warren Sheir, L.Ac., and Mika Ono (Da Capo Lifelong Books, 2010), temperature can help guide the selection of the best foods to eat (and to avoid) for each individual according to his/her unique constitution, condition, and environment.

As in the West, the Eastern concept of temperature includes the physical temperature of the food—piping hot or ice cold. In the East, however, temperature also refers to a food's thermal effects on the body, say increasing metabolism until you break a sweat or cooling until you feel the tingle of chills.

Even for those unaccustomed to thinking in these terms, whether a food is classified as hot, warm, neutral, cool, or cold can be surprisingly intuitive. Warming foods include ginger, chili peppers, cinnamon, turmeric, nutmeg, green onions, and walnuts. Cooling foods and herbs encompass peppermint, citrus, tofu, milk, lettuce, celery, cucumber, and tomato. Neutral foods include rice and many types of grains.

Cooking methods can also affect the dish. In Asia, blanching, steaming, pickling, and boiling are understood to have a cooling influence, while grilling, frying, roasting, smoking, searing, simmering, and cooking with alcohol are thought to make a dish more warming.

With this in mind, you can ask yourself how best to restore balance between yourself and your environment. Do you run hot, rarely needing a sweater and generally feeling energetic and active? Then cooling foods, like a chilled cucumber salad, would often be a good choice for you. Or do you run cold, with a propensity toward fatigue? If so, warming foods, such as a steaming bowl of ginger soup, could be called for. Is it winter on a freezing cold day? Perhaps a warming dish such as a spicy stir-fry with lamb would maximize your wellbeing. Is it a hot, sweaty day in the middle of summer? Perhaps a nice slice of watermelon would provide some welcome relief.

Here are two simple dishes that highlight the potential of warming and cooling foods. *(continued on page 14)*

Warming Pumpkin Curry Soup

(Makes 2 servings)

Curry is a blend of spices, usually containing turmeric, coriander, cumin, and fenugreek, and sometimes also containing ingredients such as ginger, garlic, fennel seed, cinnamon, clove, mustard seed, cardamom, mace, nutmeg, and various types of pepper. Many of the ingredients in curries are considered warming in the East Asian and South Asian traditions, making them a good match for anyone who tends to run cold or for eating when the weather starts to turn chilly. Here, these warming spices are enhanced in a bowl of steaming soup.

Ingredients

- 10 to 12 ounces pumpkin or winter squash, such as the Japanese kabocha (about 2 cups when cubed)
- 2 1/2 cups chicken or vegetable stock
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil, such as canola or olive oil
- 1 small onion, diced
- 1 to 2 teaspoons curry powder
- A pinch salt
- A pinch pepper



Directions

1. Chop the pumpkin pieces into 1-inch cubes, seeded and peeled. (Some pumpkins are quite tough, and are most easily handled by chopping the pumpkin into two, seeding it, then cutting it into wedges before peeling. A large, sharp cleaver can be helpful with this task. The seeds can be reserved for roasting.)
2. Place the pumpkin cubes and stock in a pot. Bring to a boil, then turn down the heat to low and simmer for about 20 minutes.
3. Heat the oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion and curry powder. Cook until the onions are translucent and soft (about 5 minutes).
4. When both the onions and pumpkin are done, combine them in a blender or food processor. Whir into a smooth puree. You can also use a hand blender or immersion blender for this task.
5. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve hot.

Cool-as-a-Cucumber Salad

(Makes 2 servings)

This salad is good for eating in hot weather or serving to anyone who tends to run warm. In the language of traditional Chinese medicine, this dish helps to counteract Summer Heat. In Korea, a similar dish takes the form of a refreshing chilled soup for the summer months.

(continued on next page)



Ingredients

1 medium-size cucumber (or equivalent), peeled if desired

Salt

1 clove garlic, crushed and then minced

1/4 cup white or rice vinegar

2 tablespoons dark sesame oil

Directions

1. Using a blunt instrument, such as the handle of a knife, pound the cucumber's surface to soften it slightly and increase its ability to absorb the salt and dressing. Cut the cucumber in half lengthwise. Scoop out the seeds with a spoon, if desired (less necessary for smaller cucumbers). Then cut the cucumber widthwise into thin slices or slivers.
2. Sprinkle and toss with salt, to taste.
3. Combine the cucumber, garlic, vinegar, and sesame oil in a bowl and mix well. Serve.

For more recipes see:

Ancient Wisdom, Modern Kitchen: Recipes from the East for Health, Healing, and Long Life.

by Mika Ono, Yuan Wang, OMD and Warren Sheir



Mika Ono, is a writer and editor who is fascinated by issues in health, science, and society. Mika, a graduate of Reed College and The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, is an author of the book, *Ancient Wisdom, Modern Kitchen: Recipes from the East for Health Healing and Long Life* (Da Capo Lifelong Books, 2010). Currently director of communications for The Scripps Research Institute, her work has won awards from organizations including the International Book Awards, International Association of Business Communicators, the Communicator Awards, the Mercury Awards, and HOW Design. For more information, see www.mikaono.com.



Yuan Wang, OMD – grew up in Sichuan Province, China, where she learned to cook by helping her mother and grandmother prepare meals for the extended family. Following her interest in traditional Chinese medicine and nutrition, Dr. Wang pursued a rigorous course of study and eventually became a lecturer, researcher, and physician-in-charge of several departments at the Chengdu Traditional Chinese Medicine Hospital. Now a member of the faculty at the Pacific College of Oriental Medicine in San Diego and practitioner at The Source Chinese Medical Clinic in Poway, California, Dr. Wang finds that food tends to be a neglected area in Western medicine. Both in the clinic and in the classroom, Dr. Wang hopes to raise awareness about the importance of food for health and healing.

Overcoming Disease Through Nutrition

by Ken Andes, L.Ac.

“If a person is diseased, he should be treated with food first.

If food treatment fails to work, then use herbs.”

Bian Que, Famous TCM Physician , Warring States Period

I cannot address and emphasize it enough how important TCM food therapy is as an acupuncturist. Since acupuncture is only part of the whole Traditional Chinese Medicine, in my opinion, to understand and learn TCM nutrition and food therapy is the most important component of health care in our profession. All of the fancy fitness machine, retreats, expensive vitamins and anti-aging hormones, and surgical procedures that money can buy will not make up for a poor diet or life style.

A simple way to lead a healthy and happy life is to make a life style change step by step starting with a healthy diet.

When people come to my office with a long list of complicated health problems, the first thing that we do is correct their diet. When people come with a history of chronic disorders such as irritable bowel, diabetes, heart disease, and even emotional disorders, more often than not their diet is not suitable for their body type and current medical condition. If they are able to make certain changes in their diet and eating habits synergistically with exercise, natural herbs and acupuncture treatment, it is not only overcome disorders of the body but support and strengthen body for better health and prevent from disease recurrent.

If they continue to eat poorly, not only are the chances of recovery slim but a quick recurrence of

the disorder is almost guaranteed even if a temporary recovery is seen.

The following nutritional guidelines come from over 15 years of study as both a health professional and competitive athlete. They combine both western nutritional sciences with ritualistic nutritional theories from Chinese Medicine. These are the guidelines that I give to my patients and I have yet to meet a single person who has not responded favorably to them. Enjoy!

Ultimately the healthiest way to eat is to choose foods based upon what your bodily instincts tell you to eat. When to eat, how much, and what particular foods to eat can be determined if you are sensitive enough to the messages your body gives you. The problem with this is that most of us have lost our natural instincts in a society where we are force fed unnatural food several times per day. TCM teaches that we are born with different body constitution; the choice of diet should fit in different body constitution in order to maximize our body resistant, promote well being and longevity.

Until this instinct is restored through natural living, follow these guidelines in addition to regular Qigong practice, holistic exercise, and plenty of sleep. This method of nutrition will not only improve your physical health, it will help you to reform a

connection with Universal Spirit (Tao), in a word, Yang Sheng (nourishing life)

Start with the premise that life as we know it comes from the yang energy of sunlight and the yin energy of water. Sunlight and water are the principle sources of life energy (qi), and it follows that the healthiest foods will contain the largest concentration of sunlight and water. Water is yin, and sunlight is yang, human life is supported by the heaven (sunlight, the yang energy) and earth (water, the yin energy).

The foundation of nutrition first starts with proper hydration. It is imperative that you drink enough water throughout the day. Room temperature water is more easily assimilated than cold water and absorption will be further enhanced if you slowly sip the water rather than gulp it. You can easily determine whether or not you're drinking enough water by observing the color of your urine. Anything darker than light yellow means that you're not drinking enough.

After water, fruits and vegetables contain not only the highest water content, but are also directly infused with the yang energy of the sun. Because they are the most direct embodiment of the yin/yang energies of water and sunlight, at least 50% to 70% of your diet should be in the form of fruits and vegetables. Additionally, fresh fruits and vegetables contain the vitamins, minerals, phytonutrients, and fiber that western nutritional literature has already spoken about in depth.

I'm a big believer in using the glycemic index to choose foods. The glycemic index is a rating of various foods based on how drastic of an effect they have on your blood sugar. Foods with a high rating are to be avoided and foods with a low rating are

preferred. I've always found it interesting that the only vegetables with a high (non-desirable) rating were potatoes and carrots, two vegetables that grow in the ground and receive very little exposure to the sun.

Next to fruits and vegetables, animal products contain the next highest infusion of water and sunlight. Lean meats such as pork, chicken, fish, and beef contain the qi energy of the animal, the yang energy of the sunlight it was exposed to, and the yin energy of the water content in its flesh. At least 25% to 50% of your diet should be in the form of quality protein sources.

Remember that the word "protein" comes from the Latin word "protos" which means "of first importance". Protein is necessary for every metabolic process in the body.

In the past five years of my clinical practice, I have not met one single patient who has not experienced greater health, higher energy levels, and improved moods from the addition of more protein to their diet. Almost every single patient I have seen has also greatly benefited from the reduction or even elimination of starches and sugar.

As TCM teaches, that high starch content food tends to generate phlegm (fat) in the body according to Pi Wei Lun by Dr. Li Dong Yuan about 800 years ago in Chinese Medicine history. High starch food will overload Spleen organ, and compromise the transformation function of spleen that will lead to low energy production, low defensive energy and more phlegm accumulation in the body. People will manifest both physical and emotional disorders related to Spleen organ. (Editor's comment)

If your budget allows, it is better to eat organic produce and meats. This is especially important

when buying meats. Most commercially raised animals receive little exposure to sunlight, clean water, and often endure morbidly depressing lives. The qi energy from the flesh of such an animal is not going to be nearly as healthy or nourishing as that of a farm raised animal that was given lots of sunlight (yang), water (yin), and care (love). My feelings are that the extra money you spend on organic food will lead to decreased medical expenses, more productivity at work, and a closer affinity to the living energy of plants and animals.

If you are a vegetarian, the best source of protein for you will be a quality whey protein supplement such as *Designer Whey*. Other good sources of protein are cottage cheese and eggs.

I am not a fan of soy and tofu products. Not only are they incomplete protein sources that lack essential amino acids, there is still much debate about whether or not soy products can have damaging effects on one's hormonal system. It is controversial subjects to discuss the benefits of Soy and Tofu since there are many confused information from both diary company supported research data and bio medicine research for the claim of hormone contents in the soy, even thought in Asia, most of people has been living with soy and its related food products for thousands of year.

Eggs are considered in both western and eastern nutrition to be one of the most perfect foods. From a western perspective, eggs are a complete protein and contain every necessary nutrient except vitamin C. From an eastern perspective, eggs contain a tremendous amount of qi energy as they are the "seeds" of chicken, which brings me to my next point.

After water, fruits, vegetables, and lean meats, nuts and seeds contain a very high concentration of qi and should be included in your daily diet. Seeds contain

an enormous amount of life energy in that they are able to germinate into a large plant if given proper exposure to sunlight, water, and soil. Nuts and seeds also provide the body with essential fatty acids that are necessary for cell health and metabolic functions. About 10% to 25% of your diet should be from nuts and seeds. The best choices are almonds, walnuts, and sunflower seeds.

Remember that there are essential amino acids (found in protein) and essential fatty acids (found in nuts, seeds, and meats). However, there is no such thing as an essential carbohydrate. This should tell you something. The body does not need carbohydrates to live, although a certain amount of carbs will provide for optimum health. Your carbohydrate needs will be more than adequately met by eating plenty of fruits and vegetables.

So far you have learned that holistic nutrition is based upon receiving energy (qi) from foods that have a high exposure to and concentration of sunlight and water. Foods that are as close as possible to the living state will give you the highest levels of health and vitality. I now ask you, "Where do starches fit in to this?"

Starches such as breads (all kinds including whole wheat), rice, pasta, cereals, potatoes, and grains are essentially dead foods that contain almost no nutritional value. Because they are devoid of living properties, starches not only offer minimal qi, they sap you of energy by making you feel run down, tired, and dull.

Whole wheat and whole grain products are a nutritional industry scam and are just as damaging as white flour products. Don't believe the hype.

From a western nutritional standpoint, most starches rate high on the glycemic index and can cause drastic fluctuations in blood sugar. Consumption of

starches has been linked to a higher incidence of diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and obesity.

Water, plant food, lean meats, eggs, nuts and seeds. These are the foods that Universal Spirit has provided in nature for human beings to eat. This also represents the healthiest diet that will allow you to quickly regain your health while living with vigor and vitality. Eating this way will help you reconnect with your natural instincts by infusing you not only with nutrients but the life giving forces of yin, yang, and qi.

This last guideline is especially important: *how* you eat is just as important as *what* you eat. You must remember that when you eat you are consuming something that was once alive. We are all part of the same energy within the Universal, and the act of eating represents the nature of one spirit flowing into another. Show respect for the spirit of the food by paying attention as you eat. Chew your food well and allow yourself to feel the immediate effects of the food on your body. This is an important exercise for relearning how to listen to your body and natural instincts. Many Americans eat while reading or watching TV, and I think this is a major cause for obesity in this country. Many people will eat an entire meal without having tasted the food because they were watching TV or engaging in some other distraction while eating. This causes them to overeat until they feel so full that more food will not fit in their stomachs!



Dr. Ken Andes, L.Ac, D.Ac (RI) is a licensed acupuncturist; board certified herbalist, and medical qigong instructor. Dr. Andes has practiced various qigong for over 14 years, and he serves as vice-president of WISH and runs a private medical practice in Suffern, NY.

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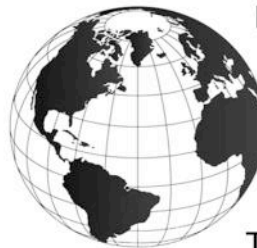


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Pain Killing Properties of Culinary Herbs

by George Xavier Love, OMD

Cure a toothache with cloves

Got a toothache and can't get to the dentist? Gently chewing on a clove can ease tooth pain and gum inflammation for two hours straight, say UCLA researchers. Experts point to a natural compound in cloves called eugenol, a powerful, natural anesthetic.

Bonus: Sprinkling a ¼ teaspoon of ground cloves on meals daily may also protect your ticker. Scientists say this simple action helps stabilize blood sugar, plus dampen production of artery-clogging cholesterol in as little as three weeks.



Heal heartburn with cider vinegar

Sip 1 tablespoon of apple cider vinegar mixed with 8 ounces of water before every meal, and experts say you could shut down painful bouts of heartburn in as little as 24 hours. Cider vinegar is rich in malic and tartaric acids, powerful digestive aids that speed the breakdown of fats and proteins so your stomach can empty quickly, before food washes up into the esophagus, triggering heartburn pain, explains Joseph Brasco M.D., a gastroenterologist at the Center for Colon and Digestive Diseases in Huntsville, AL.

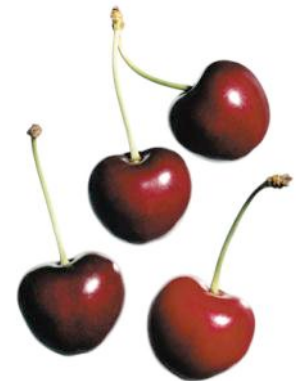
Erase earaches with garlic

Painful ear infections drive millions of Americans to doctors offices every year. To cure one fast, just place two drops of warm garlic oil into your aching ear twice daily for five days. This simple treatment can clear up ear infections faster than prescription meds, say experts at the University of New Mexico School of Medicine. Scientists say garlic's active ingredients (germanium, selenium, and sulfur compounds) are naturally toxic to dozens of different pain-causing bacteria. To whip up your own garlic oil gently simmer three cloves of crushed garlic in a half a cup of extra virgin olive oil for two minutes, strain, then refrigerate for up to two weeks, suggests Teresa Graedon, Ph.D., co-author of the book, *Best Choices From The Peoples Pharmacy*. For an optimal experience, warm this mix slightly before using so the liquid will feel soothing in your ear canal.



Chase away joint and headache pain with cherries

Latest studies show that at least one in four women is struggling with arthritis, gout or chronic headaches. If you're one of them, a daily bowl of cherries could ease your ache, without the stomach upset so often triggered by today's painkillers, say researchers at East Lansing's Michigan State University. Their research reveals that anthocyanins, the compounds that give cherries their brilliant red color, are anti-inflammatory 10 times stronger than ibuprofen and



aspirin. Anthocyanins help shut down the powerful enzymes that kick-start tissue inflammation, so they can prevent, as well as treat, many different kinds of pain, explains Muraleedharan Nair, Ph.D., professor of food science at Michigan State University. His advice: Enjoy 20 cherries (fresh, frozen or dried) daily, then continue until your pain disappears.

Fight tummy troubles with fish

Indigestion, irritable bowel syndrome, inflammatory bowel diseases...if your belly always seems to be in an uproar, try munching 18 ounces of fish weekly to ease your misery. Repeated studies show that the fatty acids in fish, called EPA and DHA, can significantly reduce intestinal inflammation, cramping and belly pain and, in some cases, provide as much relief as corticosteroids and other prescription meds. "EPA and DHA are powerful, natural, side effect-free anti-inflammatory, that can dramatically improve the function of the entire gastrointestinal tract," explains biological chemist Barry Sears, Ph.D., president of the Inflammation Research Foundation in Marblehead, MA. For best results, look for oily fish like salmon, sardines, tuna, mackerel, trout and herring.



In TCM food nutrition, some seafood have cooling properties, that can counteract with heat in digestion system such as inflammatory condition.

Prevent PMS with yogurt

Up to 80 percent of women will struggle with premenstrual syndrome and its uncomfortable symptoms, report Yale researchers. The reason: Their nervous systems are sensitive to the ups and downs in estrogen and progesterone that occur naturally every month. But snacking on 2 cups of yogurt a day can slash these symptoms by 48 percent, say researchers at New York's Columbia University. "Yogurt is rich in calcium, a mineral that naturally calms the nervous system, preventing painful symptoms even when hormones are in flux," explains Mary Jane Minkin, M.D., a professor of gynecology at Yale University.

Tame chronic pain with turmeric

Studies show turmeric, a popular East Indian spice, is actually three times more effective at easing pain than aspirin, ibuprofen or naproxen, plus it can help relieve chronic pain for 50 percent of people struggling with arthritis and even fibromyalgia, according to Cornell researchers. That's because turmeric's active ingredient, curcumin, naturally shuts down cyclooxygenase 2, an enzyme that churns out a stream of pain-producing hormones, explains nutrition researcher Julian Whitaker, M.D. and author of the book, *Reversing Diabetes*. The study-recommended dose: Sprinkle 1/4 teaspoon of this spice daily onto any rice, poultry, meat or vegetable dish.



TCM teaches that if there is blockage, there is pain. Turmeric is a strong herb that can open the blockage and increase blood circulation, in result for pain management caused by blockage

End endometrial pain with oats

The ticket to soothing endometriosis pain could be a daily bowl of oatmeal. Endometriosis occurs when little bits of the uterine lining detach and grow outside of the uterus. Experts say these migrating cells can turn menstruation into a misery, causing so much inflammation that they trigger severe cramping during your period, plus a heavy ache that drags on all month long. Fortunately, scientists say opting for a diet rich in oats can help reduce endometrial pain for up to 60 percent of women within six months. That's because oats don't contain gluten, a trouble-making protein that triggers inflammation in many women, making endometriosis difficult to bear, explains Peter Green, M.D., professor of medicine at Colombia University.

Soothe foot pain with salt

Experts say at least six million Americans develop painful ingrown toenails each year. But regularly soaking ingrown nails in warm salt water baths can cure these painful infections within four days, say scientists at California's Stanford University. The salt in the mix naturally nixes inflammation, plus it's anti-bacterial, so it quickly destroys the germs that cause swelling and pain. Just mix 1 teaspoon of salt into each cup of water, heat to the warmest temperature that you can comfortably stand, and then soak the affected foot area for 20 minutes twice daily, until your infection subsides.

According to TCM food therapy and nutrition theory , salty food has the property to soften nodule, so that Chinese herbalist use kelp as herb (salty taste) to treat tumor on neck, the same principle for using salt to soften ingrown nails.

Prevent digestive upsets with pineapple

Got gas? One cup of fresh pineapple daily can cut painful bloating within 72 hours, say researchers at California's Stanford University. That's because pineapple is naturally packed with proteolytic enzymes, digestive aids that help speed the breakdown of pain-causing proteins in the stomach and small intestine, say USDA researchers.

Relax painful muscles with peppermint

His advice: Three times each week, soak in a warm tub scented with 10 drops of peppermint oil. The warm water will relax your muscles, while the peppermint oil will naturally soothe your nerves -- a combo that can ease muscle cramping 25 percent more effectively than over-the-counter painkillers, and cut the frequency of future flare-ups in half, says Stengler. Suffering from tight, sore muscles? Stubborn knots can hang around for months if they aren't properly treated, says naturopath Mark Stengler, N.D.



Give your back some TLC with grapes

Got an achy back? Grapes could be the ticket to a speedy recovery. Recent studies at Ohio State University suggest eating a heaping cup of grapes daily can relax tight blood vessels, significantly improving blood flow to damaged back tissues (and often within three hours of enjoying the first bowl). That's great news because your back's vertebrae and shock-absorbing discs are completely dependent on nearby blood vessels to bring them healing nutrients and oxygen, so improving blood flow is essential for healing damaged back tissue, says Stengler.

Wash away pain injuries with water

"And when these tissues are well-hydrated, they can move and glide over each other without causing pain." One caveat: Be sure to measure your drinking glasses to find out how large they really are before you start sipping, she says. Today's juice glasses often hold more than 12 ounces, which means five servings could be enough to meet your daily goal. Whether it's your feet, your knees or your shoulders that are throbbing, experts at New York's Manhattan College, say you could kick-start your recovery in one week just by drinking eight 8-ounce glasses of water daily. Why? Experts say water dilutes, and then helps flush out, histamine, a pain-triggering compound produced by injured tissues. "Plus water is a key building block of the cartilage that cushions the ends of your bones, your joints' lubricating fluid, and the soft discs in your spine," adds Susan M. Kleiner, Ph.D., author of the book,

Heal sinus problems with horseradish

Through thousands of years of medical history, TCM teaches, pungent food go to lung organ, and lung organ master nose and smell, that is why horseradish can open sinus.

Latest studies show sinusitis is the nation's number one chronic health problem. And this condition doesn't just spur congestion and facial pain, it also makes sufferers six times more likely to feel achy all-over. Horseradish to the rescue!

According to German researchers, this eye-watering condiment naturally revs up blood flow to the sinus cavities, helping to open and drain clogged sinuses and heal sinus infections more quickly than decongestant sprays do. The study-recommended dose: One teaspoon twice daily (either on its own, or used as a sandwich or meat topping) until symptoms clear.



Beat bladder infections with blueberries

Eating 1 cup of blueberries daily, whether you opt for them fresh, frozen or in juice form, can cut your risk of a urinary tract infection (UTIs) by 60 percent, according to researchers at New Jersey's Rutgers University. That's because blueberries are loaded with tannins, plant compounds that wrap around problem-causing bacteria in the bladder, so they can't get a toehold and create an infection, explains Amy Howell, Ph.D. a scientist at Rutgers University. TCM teaches, that black color food nourish kidney, and health kidney maintain and control bladder.

Besides, kidney energy is related to bone structure, marrow (include brain) and longevity. Add more black color food in one's diet, bring more healthy and promote longevity



Heal mouth sores with honey

Dab painful canker and cold sores with unpasteurized honey four times daily until these skin woes disappear, and they'll heal 43 percent faster than if you use a prescription cream, say researchers at the Dubai Specialized Medical Center in the United Arab Emirates. Raw honey's natural enzymes zap inflammation, destroy invading viruses and speed the healing of damaged tissues, say the study authors.

Fight breast pain with flax

In one recent study, adding 3 tablespoons of ground flax to their daily diet eased breast soreness for one in three women within 12 weeks. Scientists credit flax's phytoestrogens, natural plant compounds that prevent the estrogen spikes that can trigger breast pain. More good news: You don't have to be a master baker to sneak this healthy seed into your diet. Just sprinkle ground flax on oatmeal, yogurt, applesauce or add it to smoothies and veggie dips.



Cure migraines with coffee

Prone to migraines? Try muscling-up your painkiller with a coffee chaser. Whatever over-the-counter pain med you prefer, researchers at the National Headache Foundation say washing it down with a strong 12-ounce cup of coffee will boost the effectiveness of your medication by 40 percent or more. Experts say caffeine stimulates the stomach lining to absorb painkillers more quickly and more effectively.

Tame leg cramps with tomato juice

At least one in five people regularly struggle with leg cramps. The culprit? Potassium deficiencies, which occur when this mineral is flushed out by diuretics, caffeinated beverages or heavy perspiration during exercise. But sip 10 ounces of potassium-rich tomato juice daily and you'll not only speed your recovery, you'll reduce your risk of painful cramp flare-ups in as little as 10 days, say UCLA researchers.



Make muscle pain a memory with ginger

When Danish researchers asked achy people to jazz up their diets with ginger, it eased muscle and joint pain, swelling and stiffness for up to 63 percent of them within two months. Experts credit gingers potent compounds called gingerols, which prevent the production of pain-triggering hormones. The study-recommended dose: Add at least 1 teaspoon of dried ginger or 2 teaspoons of chopped ginger to meals daily.



George Love Jr. is a primary care physician licensed in the state of Florida since 1986. As a Doctor of Oriental Medicine DOM and licensed Acupuncture Physician, he is qualified to prescribe herbs (herbalist) and therapeutic diets (food therapist). He is the former Dean of Acupuncture Studies at Barna College of Health Science in Ft. Lauderdale, and the author of six health books including S.H.I.E.L.D. Your Immune System in Just 12 Weeks, Meridian Chi Gong, You Won't find Love in the Refrigerator and Ear Reflexology Massage Your Ears to Health. He has been involved in the Alternative Health industry for 30 years both as an educator and health care provider. He teaches Self Healing workshops across the country on Ear Reflexology, Meridian Chi Gong, 4 Doors to Healthy Happiness and 21 Days to Wellness.

The Natural Color of Whole Food and Its Healing Power

Black Color Prunes Strengthen Bones!

Red Color Cayenne Pepper Can Stop A Heart Attack!

by Marty Eisen, Ph.D.

Dr. Bahram Arjmandi is a nutrition researcher at Florida State University (FSU) and also the Director of the Center for Advancing Exercise and Nutrition Research on Aging. He and his team have performed five studies of nutrition on bone mineral density (BMD). The first was conducted on lab mice.

The latest study appears in the British Journal of Nutrition. The research team set up a year-long study looking at women who were in post-menopause for 1 to 10 years. They divided the women up into two groups. Both groups were given daily calcium and vitamin D supplements. But one group was supplemented with 100 mg of prunes.



At the start of the study they took bone mineral density (BMD) measurements and blood samples to assess bone biomarkers. They did this again at three, six and 12 months intervals. Women who ate the fruit had significantly higher BMD in the ulna and the spine.

Dr. Arjmandi has tested numerous fruits and states that none of them come anywhere close to having the effect on bone density of prunes. It not only prevents bone loss, but reverses it.

Dr. Bernard Halloran, a researcher at the University of California, San Francisco, has reviewed these findings and conducted his own studies into the same fruit obtaining similar results.

"Don't wait until you get a fracture or you are diagnosed with osteoporosis," says Dr. Arjmandi, "start eating two to three dried plums every day." Once your body is used to regularly eating plums increase your consumption to six or more.

The effect of prunes may be partly due to the fact that they contain boron, which is necessary for calcium uptake by the bones.

In Chinese food therapy black colored fruit affects the Kidneys. Bones are produced from Kidney Jing.

(continued on page 26)

(continued from page 25)

Dr. Christopher claimed that in 35 years of practice, he had never, on house calls, lost one heart attack patient. He used 1 teaspoon of cayenne pepper in a cup of hot water, or one teaspoon of cayenne tincture, every 15 minutes until the crisis passed.

If you currently have heart problems or know someone who does, take a few minutes and put some cayenne in a capsule or put a teaspoon or two in a small baggy and keep it in your purse or wallet. You may save a life.

Cayenne pepper is red. According to Chinese food therapy red foods affect the heart and its vessels.

In the September 2009 edition of the journal *Circulation*, Keith Jones, Ph.D. and a group of researchers from the Department of Pharmacology and Cell Biophysics at the University of Cincinnati announced findings which shed new light on capsaicin's relationship to heart function. This information gives credence to Dr. Christopher's anecdotal report, since capsaicin is a major ingredient in cayenne pepper.

The above researchers found that an over-the-counter pain salve containing capsaicin, rubbed on the skin during a heart attack can prevent or reduce heart damage while other interventions are administered. Dr. Jones' team found that applying capsaicin to the stomachs of mice caused sensory nerves in the skin to trigger signals in the nervous system which activate cellular "pro-survival" pathways in the heart, reducing cardiac cell death by 85%. Apparently skin has evolved to protect animals, including humans, in a variety of ways.

(continued on page 27)



(continued from page 26)

The researchers also found that a small incision made on the abdomen triggered an 81% reduction in cell death. This effect might be explained by the stimulation of Ren 14, the Mu heart acupoint. Similar results might have been obtained by needling this point.

Topical capsaicin has no known serious adverse effects and could be easily applied in an ambulance or emergency room setting [or by anyone present including the victim] well in advance of coronary tissue death. If proven effective in humans, this therapy has the potential to reduce injury and/or death in the event of a coronary blockage.

Both this and the capsaicin effect are shown to work through similar neurological mechanisms. This is a form of remote cardio-protection, using a skin stimulus that activates cardio-protection long before the blocked coronary artery is opened. All of the current interventions require the vessel to be opened before doctors can act. Since it takes time to perform this conventional treatment, tissue dies.

By activating these sensors in the nervous system, via skin, the researchers think that a protective signal to preserve and protect the heart is triggered. This may be similar to the way certain acupuncture treatments work by stimulating the nervous system.

There are also other studies, on the cardio-protective effects of capsicum / capsaicin.

See: <http://tinyurl.com/5tmww69>

However, there are some papers suggesting that heavy use of capsicum / capsaicin can result in heart-attacks.

See:

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18280595>

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20098047>

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/9733366>

Thanks to Dr. Phil Rogers for the additional references on capsicum.



Dr. Eisen is a retired scientist, who constructed mathematical models in medicine. He has studied and taught Judo, Shotokan Karate, Aikido, Qigong, Praying Mantis Kung Fu, and Tai Chi in different places. He took correspondence courses in Chinese herbology and studied other branches of Chinese medicine with a traditional Chinese medical doctor. He was the Director of Education of the Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture Institute in Upper Darby, P.A.

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Chinese Bigu (避谷) for Yang Sheng

by Martin Eisen, Ph.D.

In Chinese “Bi” means to stop or avoid, and “Gu” means grain, including rice, corn or wheat. Therefore, Bigu means to avoid grain or stop eating. One of the earliest descriptions of Bigu was found in silk scrolls, from the Western Han Dynasty (206 BC – 24 AD), discovered in tombs in Changsha, China at Mangwnagdui. The first scroll had over forty diagrams and descriptions of Dao Yin exercises. Dao Yin was an early form of Qigong, which induced, promoted and conducted Qi for health and to cure diseases. The second scroll described Bigu as “Abandoning Gu and Taking Qi”. Thus, Bigu is refraining from eating food and eating Qi instead.



In terms of degree of involvement there are two kinds of Bigu – full and partial Bigu. In Full Bigu a person drinks a small amount of water without any food. In Half Bigu there is a small intake of food like fruit, nuts, and honey – traditionally called “Fu Er Bi Gu” – fasting with a pill.

Moses, Elijah and Jesus fasted for forty days. Theresa Neumann lived on one consecrated wafer a day. There are records in China and India of people who have gone without food for long periods of time.

Western fasting is different than Bigu. It cannot be continued for a long time. Eventually, the body begins to break down. In China, some people have been in a Bigu state for years. An important characteristic of the Bigu-fasting is that practitioner's overall condition improves rather than weakens (1).

2. Can Bigu be explained?

Recently, western scientists have become interested in Bigu, as evidenced by over 500 participants and about 100 papers at a Bigu conference at Penn State University in 2000. However, western science cannot explain Bigu, since the body requires fat, carbohydrates, proteins, minerals, vitamins, etc. found in food.

Traditional Chinese Medical theory can explain Bigu. There are different forms of Qi in the body, which have a different name depending on their function and location. Food (Gu) Qi is combined with Air (Kong) Qi to form Gathering (Zong) Qi. Under the catalytic action of Original (Yuan) Qi, Zong Qi is trans-

formed into True (Zhen) Qi, which circulates to the internal organs and nourishes them (2). Thus, it is theoretically possible to produce Zhen Qi without or very little Gu Qi, by absorbing Qi from the universe.

More credence is given to the above theory by the experiment in (3). Results indicate that mouse hybridoma cells can survive in Dulbecco's modified Eagles medium, without serum, or in phosphate-buffered saline buffer, without other nutrient ingredients, after Qigong master projected Qi into the cells. These results are the first evidence that a cellular equivalent of the human Bigu phenomenon can occur.

3. Types of Bigu

Chinese history indicates that there are many ways to achieve Bigu. Most styles of Qigong have their own method of entering a Bigu state. Many different techniques originated from the Taoist in different temples. In Taoism, the goal was to become an immortal or "Shen Xian". Since immortals do not need to eat, the Taoist practiced Qigong to enter Bigu. Thus, another name for Bigu is Xian Tao. The Taoists believed in following nature and so ate when hungry and drank when thirsty. Thus, they did not force a Bigu state to occur.

During the Song Dynasty, some Taoists tried to use chemicals, such as mercury and lead, to become immortal. This was called "Lien Dan" "Lien" means melting or exercise. "Dan" in ancient Chinese could be interpreted as medicine for longevity. Many people died from an overdose of these chemicals. People realized that Dan is produced in the Dan Tian by Qigong practice, and not by taking chemicals and the alchemical approach ceased.

There are ancient Chinese records of herbal formulas for Bigu. Food intake was gradually curtailed and instead, herbs were taken. People achieved Bigu in ten days to a month.

Some masters recommend reducing food intake gradually. This method does not use herbs, but the person does Qigong and will be discussed in greater detail in Section 7.

The Buddhists' ambition was to become a Buddha and they had their own form of Qigong to achieve this. The Buddhists were more forceful in using their minds. If they felt hungry in a Bigu state, they endured it until their hunger disappeared and they entered into Bigu.

Others forms of Bigu arose from Confucian, martial arts and Traditional Chinese Medicine Qigong.

To aid their students achieve a Bigu state, some masters project their own Qi to their students' Dan Tian and stomach area to relieve and prevent hunger. However, this is usually a temporary measure and the students must still practice Qigong daily.

Another temporary aid is that the master charges water by projecting his Qi into it. The student relieves hunger by drinking the charged water.

(continued on page 30)

4. Problems in Bigu Process

Unpleasant reactions, which can be dangerous, can result from Bigu. Not everyone has these reactions and other problems can arise. How to deal with hunger will be discussed in section

(a) Lack of Confidence

If you are afraid to fast don't do it or find a person whom you can absolutely trust to guide you. If during the fast, you become afraid that you will injure yourself, stop Bigu. You could also try Emotional Qigong to rid yourself of fear.

(b) Dizziness and Fainting

Dizziness and fainting are frequently experienced symptoms, especially from the first to the fifth week of fasting, due to the drop in blood pressure or blood sugar. Diabetics and people with low blood sugar or blood pressure are more likely to experience these effects. Diabetics may have to decrease their medication and should check their blood sugar. Later, blood sugar and pressure stabilize at optimal levels for the fasting person. However, fluctuations can occur.

These symptoms are usually not dangerous by themselves, but can result in damaging falls. Avoid sudden position changes from lying or sitting to standing. When rising, lean against something or support yourself and arise slowly. If you feel dizzy sit or lie down again. A good position is to lie down with your feet raised. Usually, you can sense that something is wrong before you pass out. Support yourself and put your head lower than your trunk. This maneuver can stop you from blacking out, which is caused by sudden outflow of blood from the brain.

If these symptoms persist you might to stop fasting. Consult a doctor and check your blood pressure and blood sugar level.

(c) Pain

Pain can occur in any part of the body. It may last from a few seconds to a few days. Infrequently, the pain may last longer. Pain during Bigu can indicate that a body part is being repaired and restored to normal function. The longer the Bigu state the fewer pains should occur. However, after a few months in Bigu a headache can occur. This is often due to energetic changes, felt because of higher perceptual awareness and not physical changes.

After long periods of Bigu, organs and fat deposits may shrink, producing changes in muscle tone and the positions of organs. This can be felt and interpreted as pain, especially in the abdomen.

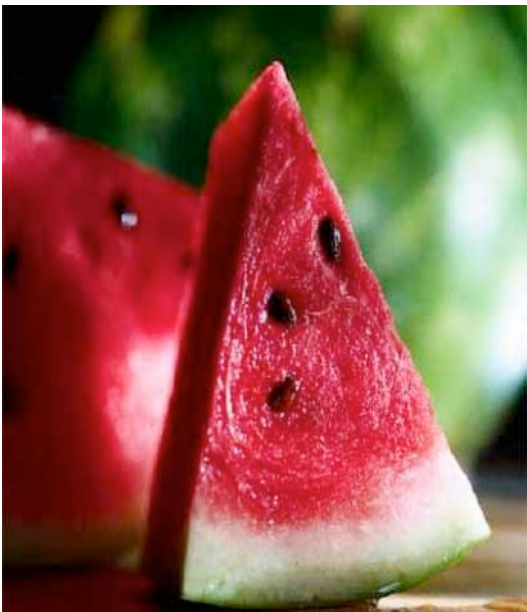
If sudden, excruciating pain appears, consult a doctor.

(d) Physical Weakness

If you feel weak you must judge whether it is due to discharge of toxins, inactivity or too much exercise. While toxins are being discharged, more rest and sleep may be required. Inactivity breeds tiredness and doing energizing types of exercise, like Yoga and Tai Chi, can be beneficial. However, weakness may be a sign of illness and medical advice is necessary. If weakness persists after three weeks of fasting, Bigu should be stopped.

(e) Dehydration

If you drink too little liquids dehydration can occur. Symptoms of early or mild dehydration include: flushed face; extreme thirst, more than normal or unable to drink; dry, warm skin; cannot pass urine or



reduced amounts, dark, yellow; dizziness made worse when you are standing; weakness; cramping in the arms and legs; few or no tears when crying; sleepy or irritable; unwell; headaches, and dry mouth, dry tongue with thick saliva.

Symptoms of moderate to severe dehydration include: low blood pressure; fainting; severe muscle contractions in the arms legs, stomach, and back; convulsions,; bloated stomach; heart failure; sunken, dry eyes, with few or no tears; skin loses its firmness and looks wrinkled; lack of elasticity of the skin (when a bit of skin lifted up stays folded and takes a long time to go back to its normal position; rapid and deep breathing, and a fast, weak pulse. In severe dehydration, these effects become more pronounced and the patient may develop evidence of hypovolemic shock, including: diminished consciousness, lack of urine output, cool moist extremities, a rapid and feeble pulse (the radial

pulse may be undetectable), low or undetectable blood pressure, and peripheral cyanosis. Death follows soon if rehydration is not started quickly. After 15% - 20 % of the total body water is lost, you cannot be rehydrated.

(f) Nausea and Vomiting

These are signs that the body is ridding itself of toxins. This may indicate that you were not completely cured of some condition in the past or that you have an undiagnosed illness. Usually, don't be concerned about these symptoms, since they stop after a few hours or less frequently, after a few days. However, if vomiting persists or contains bile or blood, consult a doctor.

(g) Weight Loss and Emaciation

Obese people usually lose more weight than thin people. However, your weight should stabilize, sometimes after a few days. The amount and rate of weight loss varies individually. Well nourished people have fasted up to seven weeks without harming their bodies. After that time, the body cannot rebuild itself and you become emaciated. Thus, if after a month, you have little energy, end Bigu, since you have no succeeded in using Qi for nutrition and try again later.

Anorexic people think they are too fat even though they are thin and should not practice Bigu until they are cured of their disease.

(h) Swelling Joints

Joints may swell, without any pain, during the first two months of Bigu. This can indicates that the joint is being repaired. The swelling usually goes down after 3 to 12 days by itself.

Another cause of swelling is drinking too much water or liquids with salt during Bigu.

(i) Emotional Instability

During Bigu pleasant and unpleasant emotions, which can be accompanied by inappropriate reactions, can appear. One reason is that Bigu not only repairs the body, but also repairs and cleanses the mind. Another reason is that the mind becomes more sensitive to stimuli. For example, a previously pleasant sound becomes annoyingly loud.

The person may feel that they have discovered the true meaning of life or that life is meaningless. These feelings may last for a long time after stopping Bigu. Emotional Qigong exercises may help.

(j) Paranormal Occurrences

Some people, especially after long periods of Bigu, receive information from higher dimensions. If they are unprepared, they can think they are mentally ill. Depending on their behavior, others can think these fasting people are mentally ill, especially if they are unfamiliar with Bigu. These abilities can persist for a long time. Affected people should familiarize themselves with the Qigong interpretation and handling of these phenomena, instead of seeking drugs and psychiatric help.

Some religions or philosophies believe in the existence of gods, spirits, ghosts, etc. People from such cultures are more prone to being possessed by, seeing, or talking to non-material beings during Bigu. These may be hallucinations resulting from toxins being eliminated from the body and will stop by themselves. However, if they are too intense, stop Bigu and try a shorter period of fasting. Sometimes the increase in paranormal abilities allows some people to see non-material beings, higher dimensions, and past and future times. Such visions may not be able to be cured. Consult an expert, who can distinguish between these two types of occurrences.

(k) Skin Changes

Skin problems are common during Bigu. These can result from past or current skin diseases or from or a new disease coinciding with Bigu, since many toxins are eliminated from the skin. Generally, these problems disappear with continued Bigu. However, if Bigu is continued when emaciation is pronounced, skin problems can indicate a disease that the immune system is too weak to handle and Bigu should be stopped.

(l) Feeling Cold

Many people feel cold even if it is warm and they are wearing warm clothes or covered by blankets. Drinking hot drinks creates a warm feeling only while you are drinking and shortly afterwards. Too many hot drinks can be a strain on your elimination system. Better approaches are energizing exercises and alternating hot and cold showers.

Feeling cold is caused by poor energy flow. Imagine breathing in white energy through every pore in your body. When you exhale the white energy cloud goes to your lower Dan Tian., where a small fire is burning, which gets brighter and warmer. Imagine the heat spreading to your body and limbs. Practicing this visualization can make you warmer.

(Bigu for Yang-Sheng - continued on page 33)

(m) Fever

Fever occurs when the body is fighting bacteria, viruses, etc. Drink only warm water, rest and sleep. The fever should abate after a few hours or days. For sudden, high fever consult a doctor.

(n) Hair Loss

If a thin person begins to lose hair, after a month and a half, the body might be emaciated and so Bigu should be stopped. An obese person need not worry about moderate hair loss. It usually grows back. Women are more likely to lose hair than men.

(o) Loose Teeth

During days 3 to 12 of Bigu your teeth may feel loose and the gums may ooze. This results of the body detoxifying itself. After the detoxification period, the teeth usually become tight again and even stronger than before. However, if you had gum problems, caries, or a broken filling, consult a dentist.

(p) Different World View

After a few weeks of Bigu, you may see the world differently. Things which were important before seem unimportant and vice versa. Tasks which you could do automatically before seem difficult, as if you were first learning – for example driving. Other tasks, previously difficult, seem easy. You may think that you are mentally disturbed and your friends may comment on your strange behavior. This state may last for some time, depending on the individual. Don't worry unless you are emaciated. Use your altered view to learn.

5. Uses of Bigu

In ancient China, Bigu was used mainly for religious purposes and by martial artists, who went into seclusion to perfect their art and discover new methods. Food was scarce and they did not want to waste time foraging. Hence, they probably practiced Bigu. Perhaps the most famous was Bodhidharma, the patriarch of Zen Buddhism in China and the founder of Shaolin Kung Fu. He meditated for 9 years facing a wall in a cave near the Shaolin Temple in He Nan Province.

Bigu was also used by Taoism practitioners (what we called Qigong today) to preserve life energy for longevity, and to reach higher level of cultivation rapidly.

There is no record of Bigu being used to combat starvation. Teaching Bigu in third world countries, where famine exists, could save many lives.

Bigu could also be used to survive temporary food shortages. For example, land or space explorers could become lost. Soldiers could be trapped behind enemy lines or in a desert. Sailors or airmen could be lost at sea.

There is no history of Bigu being used for weight loss in ancient China. The reason might be that there were not as large a percentage obese people as in modern times. People did more physical work and ate less fattening food. Further, being overweight was considered a sign of wealth. Recently, Bigu has

become popular for weight loss (4), (5); (6). You don't have to worry about counting calories, choosing and preparing food or do strenuous exercise.

Next I will discuss some medical applications of Bigu. There are differences of opinion on its application. Some practitioners believe that Bigu should not be used for children, because they are in a period of intense growth and any shortage of nutrients may be detrimental. Adults with a weak constitution are also excluded (1) and other methods of Chinese medicine are used. Others apply Bigu for treating cancer even though such patients usually have a weakened constitution, since some improvements in their physiological state occurs during Bigu. However, Qigong and other methods are used to improve their health before Bigu.



Bigu should be investigated as a possible treatment for diabetes. One participant, described in (6), was in Bigu for forty days. She was able to decrease the amount of insulin as well as the number of injections per day. Some days she was down to one injection while teaching, performing ballet, coaching gymnastics and swimming.

Dean Ornish's program for reversing heart disease consists of diet, stress reduction, and exercise. The diet for reversing coronary artery disease is a vegetarian diet high in complex carbohydrates, low in simple carbohydrates (e.g. sugar, concentrated sweeteners, alcohol, white flour), and very low in fat (approximately 10% of calories). Yoga (meditation, breathing and stretching) is done for stress reduction. Participants exercised aerobically a minimum of 30 minutes a day or for an hour every other day for a total of three to five hours of aerobic exercise per week. Clinical trials have shown that this program is successful (7). Although there have not been large scale, clinical trials, it seems logical that Bigu and Qigong would work, since the dietary guidelines would obviously be followed.

Preliminary results indicate that Dean Ornish's program is also effective for treating prostate cancer (8). Hence, Bigu should also be effective. This hypothesis is reinforced by the result cited in (9). A male, aged 58, had a PSA of 11. It went up to 12 after his mother died. His urologist suspected cancer and suggested a biopsy. After practicing Bigu, his PSA was 4, which is within normal limits, and the biopsy was negative. His doctor had no western medical explanation of this result.

During the intensive qigong seminar (9), which included Bigu, the patient also lost 35 pounds and his blood pressure dropped from 220/110 with medication to 120/75 without medication (this occurred within 2 weeks). His resting pulse rate dropped from 88 beats per minute (bpm) to 68 bpm in the mornings and

55 bpm in the evening after his regular work (seeing patients) continuing throughout the evening. The edema in his legs went away. His allergy and asthma remitted even though the workshop was in the Spring—the worst time of the year for an allergy patient. These results suggest that Bigu should be tried for hypertension, cardiovascular problems, allergy and asthma especially, since simultaneous recovery from multiple “incurable” conditions cannot be explained by any known medical theories.

Taoists thought that not having to eat was one of the steps to immortality. Some people after Bigu appear younger – their hair darkens, scars are less noticeable and their skin is softer and smoother. This is not just their imagination, but Qigong and Bigu enhance the free flow of Qi or bioelectricity which improves their metabolism.

Researchers have verified many times on many different animals that calorie-restriction produces youthfulness. In 1935, Professor Clive McCay, a nutritionist at Cornell, fed laboratory rats about two-thirds of the food they would have freely chosen to eat. He discovered their life spans increased by 40 percent to 50 percent. A Russian biologist stopped feeding 1000 old hens for one week and then resumed feeding them. After a month, they began to grow new feathers and some began laying eggs again. The calorie-restricted hens lived three times longer than the fed, control group of hens (6). A diabetes researcher at the University of Maryland, Barbara Hansen, has spent 20 years investigating the effects of calorie restriction on rhesus monkeys. The old calorie-restricted monkeys did not have heart disease, diabetes, or hypertension, and their cholesterol was lower. They were healthier than the old monkeys that ate what they wanted. Researchers think that semi-starvation may make metabolic processes more efficient, producing fewer free radicals and also perhaps boosting cells' DNA repair systems.

Besides research, Okinawans are living proof of the benefits of a calorie restricted diet. They eat 40% fewer calories than Americans and 17% fewer calories than the Japanese average, but they still maintain adequate nutrition. Okinawans also have the longest average lifespan in the world and the highest percentage of centenarians. Compared to American elders, Okinawan elders are: 75% more likely to retain cognitive ability, 80% less likely to develop breast and prostate cancer, 50% less likely to develop ovarian and colon cancers, 50% less likely to experience a hip fracture, and 80% less likely to suffer from a heart attack.

Thus, it seems plausible that Bigu will also produce youthfulness in clinical trials.

It is also reported that Bigu could be used as a supplementary therapy in restraining cancer growth and build up immune system (10). However, there is generally a lack of study and evidence in this area for a clinical application. I would not recommend anyone to do Bigu on his/her own without the guidance of a professional and experienced instructor.

A Bigu conference was held in Sept. 2000. The conference report can be found in (11) and the program and papers in (12). More research on the mechanisms and the reliable medical applications of Bigu technique are warranted.

A westernized form of Bigu is practiced by Breatharians. This is described in (13) which also contains a detailed, downloadable e-book

(continued on page 36)

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A Qigong Teacher Explains How to Cook via the P.C.T.P. Method

by Raven Cohan

You all know things from deep within and have had the Power, Commitment, Trust and ability to Project your inborn knowledge into your activities. If you don't know you have Power, it's because it has been SCARED out of you because your culture is built on taking everything in steps. The left brained way of starting with A. and then moving through each successively lettered step, in my opinion is limiting you. That's how most recipes in cook books are written.

To be a creative being, you must act like one! Let the art of life awaken. Use this acronym: P. C. T. P. These are the best initials in the alphabet that guide me and yes, I need to start and end with 'P'! Just don't pee your pants doing it! The method itself will instill confidence.

Improvising dinner, I realize is a skill that I have sort of been born with, but it got more developed by being a trained improvisational actor-singer-dancer and eventually a teacher of Chinese alchemy. Alchemy is a science of formulas for living well. The P.C.T.P. formula is behind all three skills I mention here which include cooking. Notice, they are all Arts. Science and math are important but most people who depend fully upon exact sciences in their life-skill building times, often wind up pretty up-tight. Can you become a person who improvises anything in your life with practice? Do you measure everything to the letter? I Trust in you. Think about trusting yourself! Put aside that exactness and laugh!

The cooking example is really a simple idea: The finished dinner is waiting behind the curtain. While in the wings I have no worries whirring about. Planning what the heck is going to wind up on the dinner table is not my modus-operandi. I have bought my veggies and staples which await me in the fridge and pantry. My hand reaches in and a bit of considering which veggies are less fresh and need to be cooked first comes into play! The veggies tell me how I will cook them and what sauces and spices I will add and what pasta or grains will set them

off. (It's the same with the salad and dressings!) A hologram of creation is whirling into reality. (This analogy centers around my vegetarian lifestyle, but apply it to your own food choices and life interests in general.)

Do you know what is TRULY needed to be cooking well in ALL areas of your life? A Power source, Commitment enough to Trust and to finally Project out the finished product. (An improvisational actor must go onstage without a script. If the other actors have each their own


(continued on page 38)



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(continued from page 37)

different script, the result will be a disaster.)

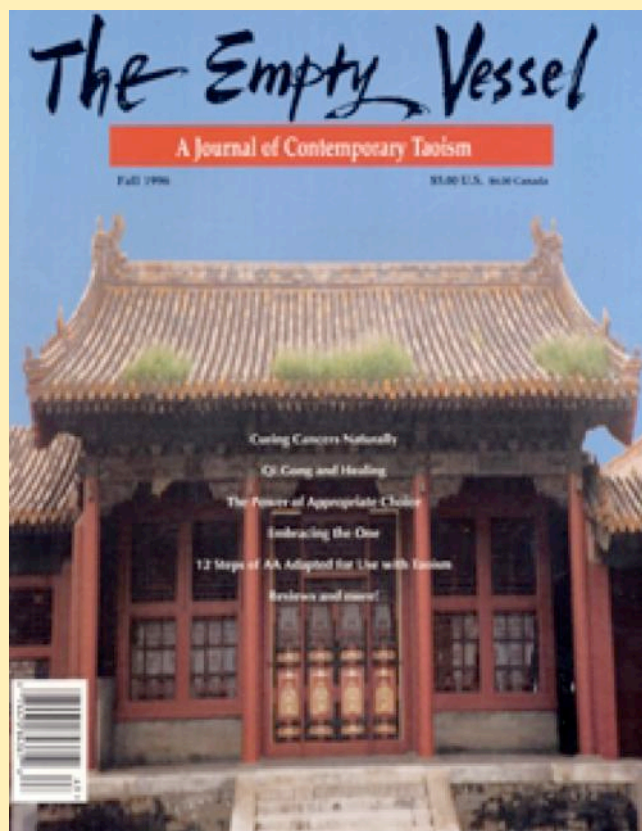
A student of developing your life force energy via cooking healthy meals, or thinking and speaking healthy thoughts, must absolutely trust and commit to using the ONE power and then projecting it into the result which you commit to and trust. This approach will be helping you to heal every area that needs improvement. All arts require much practice.

Do I ever have flops? Sure! What part of life is there that doesn't wind up with less success than others, at times? My job as a human is to eat up some of those less delicious meals and not rub my face in the sour, spilled milk of 'failure.' (My husband has to buck up and eat it, too. We might at times have to throw some disasters away. C'est la vie! It means eating more taco chips that night for a snack... but it is quite better than crying over the spilled rice milk.)

After years of teaching my students of Tai Chi and Qigong that with every step, you must call on the Power of gravity that plays on you and not the other way around. It took me a while to realize I had learned to Trust the vegetables to communicate clearly like the actors on stage. Stop over-thinking and start drinking in the formula! Don't be trite and follow others. Be original. Do things for yourself. Study many different arts. Get out of a rat race that you allowed to pressure you! Whether you are cooking, balancing, writing your novel, communicating with your boss... Get out of your own head. Be with nature. Once again! P.C.T.P!



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On Eating

by Solala Towler

The Master was traveling with some of her students. At one of their stops they were served the meat of a pig. The students were horrified to see the Master calmly eating this forbidden food. “Master,” they cried, “is not the flesh of an animal forbidden by our order?”

The Master went on chewing slowly, clearly savoring the taste of the pig. When she had finished she said, “Can you not see that this was a great and honored gift from these poor people to be given this delicacy? No doubt it

was given at great cost to them and with an attitude of humbleness and generosity. Who am I to spurn their gift?

“Besides,” she said, taking another bite, “it is not what goes into your mouth that defiles you, but what comes out.”



Excerpt from Tales from the Tao: Inspirational Teaching from the Great Taoist Masters by Solala Towler



*Solala Towler - has been involved with Daoist practices such as Taiji, Qigong and meditation over 20 years. He has published *The Empty Vessel: the Journal of Daoist Thought and Practice* for 18 years. Mr. Towler has written a number of books on Daoist thought and practice, including *Cha Dao: the Way of Tea and the Inner Chapters of Chuang Tzu*, and has been leading tours to China to study Qigong and other Daoist practices in the sacred mountains of China since 1997. In addition, he has recorded four CDs of meditation, relaxation, and movement music, using Tibetan singing bowls, both Chinese and Native flute with harmonic overtone singing.*

You can find more information about Solala. Towler on his website, <http://www.abodetao.com>

Mind-Body Medicine Research Update

collected by Kevin Chen, Ph.D.

The effect of supervised Tai Chi intervention compared to a physiotherapy program on fall-related clinical outcomes: a randomized clinical trial. *Disabil Rehabil.* 2011 Sep 29. By Tousignant M, Corriveau H, Roy PM, Desrosiers J, Dubuc N, Hébert R, Tremblay-Boudreault V, Beaudoin AJ. From Research Centre on Aging, Sherbrooke Geriatric University Institute, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, University of Sherbrooke, Sherbrooke, Canada.

Purpose: To assess some fall-related clinical variables (balance, gait, fear of falling, functional autonomy, self-actualization and self-efficacy) that might explain the fact that supervised Tai Chi has a better impact on preventing falls compared to a conventional physiotherapy program. Method: The participants (152 older adults over 65 who were admitted to a geriatric day hospital program) were randomly assigned to either a supervised Tai Chi group or the usual physiotherapy. The presence of the clinical variables related to falls was evaluated before the intervention (T1), immediately after (T2), and 12 months after the end of the intervention (T3). Results: Both exercise programs significantly improved fall-related outcomes but only the Tai Chi intervention group decreased the incidence of falls. For both groups, most variables followed the same pattern, i.e. showed significant improvement with the intervention between T1 and T2, and followed by a statistically significant decrease at the T3 evaluation. However, self-efficacy was the only variable that improved solely with the Tai Chi intervention ($p = 0.001$). Conclusion: The impact of supervised Tai Chi on fall prevention can not be explained by a differential effect on balance, gait and fear of falling. It appeared to be related to an increase of general self-efficacy, a phenomenon which is not seen in the conventional physiotherapy program.

<http://informahealthcare.com/>

doiabs/10.3109/09638288.2011.591891



Effects of 12-week Tai Chi training on soleus H-reflex and muscle strength in older adults: a pilot study. *Eur J Appl Physiol.* 2011 Sep 27. By Chen YS, Crowley Z, Zhou S, Cartwright C. from School of Health and Human Sciences, Southern Cross University, P.O. Box 157, Lismore, NSW, 2480, Australia.

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of 12-week Tai Chi (TC) training on the soleus (SOL) H-reflex modulation and plantarflexion muscle strength in older adults. Twenty volunteers were assigned into training ($N = 14$; 72.2 ± 3.7 years of age) and control ($N = 6$; 74.2 ± 6.1 years of age) groups. The participants in the TC group practiced Yang style TC 1 h per session, 3 sessions per week, for 12 weeks, guided by a qualified TC instructor. The ratio of the maximal peak-to-peak amplitude of SOL H-reflex (H (max)) to M-wave (M (max)) was determined during bipedal standing under four sensory conditions: stable surface and eyes open (SO), stable surface and eyes closed (SC), unstable surface and eyes open (UO), and unstable surface and eyes closed (UC). The maximal isometric plantarflexion muscle strength was also assessed by using a dynamometer. The results showed that the SOL H (max)/M (max) ratio increased significantly after the 12 weeks of TC training under the SC (37.0%), UO (33.3%) and UC (36.0%) conditions ($P < 0.05$). The maximal plantarflexion strength also improved significantly after training (19.8%; $P < 0.05$). In contrast, the control group showed no significant changes in all measurements after the 12 weeks.

<http://www.springerlink.com/content/116445h2812hk815/>



Complementary Use of Tai Chi Chih Augments Escitalopram Treatment of Geriatric Depression: A Randomized Controlled Trial. *Am J Geriatr Psychiatry*. 2011 Oct;19(10):839-850. By [Lavretsky H](#), [Alstein LL](#), [Olmstead RE](#), [Ercoli LM](#), [Riparetti-Brown M](#), [Cyr NS](#), [Irwin MR](#). From the Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences and the Cousins Center for Psychoneuroimmunology, Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior, University of California, Los Angeles, California.

BACKGROUND: Nearly two-thirds of elderly patients treated for depression fail to achieve symptomatic remission and functional recovery with first-line pharmacotherapy. In this study, we ask whether a mind-body exercise, Tai Chi Chih (TCC), added to escitalopram will augment the treatment of geriatric depression designed to achieve symptomatic remission and improvements in health functioning and cognitive performance. **METHODS:** One hundred twelve older adults with major depression age 60 years and older were recruited and treated with escitalopram for approximately 4 weeks. Seventy-three partial responders to escitalopram continued to receive escitalopram daily and were randomly assigned to 10 weeks of adjunct use of either 1) TCC for 2 hours per week or 2) health education (HE) for 2 hours per week. All participants underwent evaluations of depression, anxiety, resilience, health-related quality of life, cognition, and inflammation at baseline and during 14-week follow-up. **RESULTS:** Subjects in the escitalopram and TCC condition were more likely to show greater reduction of depressive symptoms and to achieve a depression remission as compared with those receiving escitalopram and HE. Subjects in the escitalopram and TCC condition also showed significantly greater improvements in 36-Item Short Form Health Survey physical functioning and cognitive tests and a decline in the inflammatory marker, C-reactive protein, compared with the control group. **CONCLUSION:** Complementary use of a mind-body exercise, such as TCC, may provide additional improvements of clinical outcomes in the pharmacologic treatment of geriatric depression.



Community-based Yang-Style Tai Chi is safe and feasible in chronic stroke: a pilot study. *Clin Rehabil*. 2011 Sep 21. By [Taylor-Piliae RE](#), [Coull BM](#). From College of Nursing, University of Arizona, USA.

OBJECTIVE: Examine the safety and feasibility of a 12-week Tai Chi intervention among stroke survivors. **DESIGN:** Two-group, prospective pilot study with random allocation. **SETTING:** Outpatient rehabilitation facility. **SUBJECTS:** Stroke survivors ≥ 50 years and at \geq three months post-stroke. **INTERVENTIONS:** Tai Chi subjects attended group-based Yang Style classes three times/week for 12-weeks, while Usual Care subjects received weekly phone calls along with written materials/resources for participating in community-based physical activity. **OUTCOME MEASURES:** Indicators of study safety and feasibility included recruitment rates, intervention adherence, falls or adverse events, study satisfaction, drop-outs, and adequacy of the outcomes measures. **RESULTS:** Interested persons pre-screened by phone ($n = 69$) were on average 68 years old, ($SD = 13$) years old, 48% ($n = 33$) women, 94% ($n = 65$) were at least three months post-stroke. A total of 28 subjects aged 69 ($SD = 11$) years enrolled in this pilot study. Intervention adherence rates were very high ($\geq 92\%$). There were no falls or other adverse events. The dose of Tai Chi exercise (≥ 150 minutes/week) was well tolerated. Overall study satisfaction was high (8.3 ($SD = 1.9$); 1 = not satisfied, 10 = most satisfied), while drop-outs ($n = 3$, 11%) were unrelated to study intervention. Score distributions for the outcome measures were approximately normal, sensitive to change, and seemed to favor the Tai Chi intervention. **CONCLUSIONS:** Tai Chi is a safe, community-based exercise program for stroke survivors. Our data suggest that recruitment and retention of an adequate sample is feasible, and that in a full-scale study 52 subjects/group are needed to detect statistically significant between group differences ($\alpha = 0.05$, power = 0.80).



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Effect of green tea and Tai Chi on bone health in postmenopausal osteopenic women: a 6-month randomized placebo-controlled trial. Osteoporos Int. 2011 Jul 16. By Shen CL, Chyu MC, Yeh JK, Zhang Y, Pence BC, Felton CK, Brismée JM, Arjmandi BH, Doctolero S, Wang JS. From Department of Pathology, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, BB 198, 3601 4th street, Lubbock, TX, 79430-9097, USA, Leslie.Shen@ttuhsc.edu.

Postmenopausal women with osteopenia received green tea polyphenols (GTP) supplement and/or Tai Chi exercise for 6 months. Bone turnover biomarkers, calcium metabolism, and muscle strength were measured. This study showed that GTP supplementation and Tai Chi exercise increased bone formation biomarkers and improved bone turnover rate. Tai Chi exercise increased serum parathyroid hormone. GTP supplementation, Tai Chi exercise, and the combination of the two all improved muscle strength in postmenopausal women with osteopenia. INTRODUCTION: This study evaluated the effect of GTP supplementation and Tai Chi (TC) exercise on serum markers of bone turnover (bone-specific alkaline phosphatase, BAP, and tartrate-resistant acid phosphatase, TRAP), calcium metabolism, and muscle strength in postmenopausal osteopenic women.

METHODS: One hundred and seventy-one postmenopausal osteopenic women were randomly assigned to four groups: (1) placebo (500 mg starch/day), (2) GTP (500 mg GTP/day), (3) placebo + TC (placebo plus TC training at 60 min/session, three sessions/week), and (4) GTP + TC (GTP plus TC training). Overnight fasting blood and urine samples were collected at baseline, 1, 3, and 6 months for biomarker analyses. Muscle strength was evaluated at baseline, 3, and 6 months. One hundred and fifty subjects completed the 6-month study. RESULTS: Significant increases in BAP level due to GTP intake (at 1 month) and TC (at 3 months) were observed. Significant increases in the change of BAP/TRAP ratio due to GTP (at 3 months) and TC (at 6 months) were also observed. Significant main effect of TC on the elevation in serum parathyroid hormone level was observed at 1 and 3 months. At 6 months, muscle strength significantly improved due to GTP, TC, and GTP + TC interventions.

Neither GTP nor TC affected serum TRAP, serum and urinary calcium, and inorganic phosphate. CONCLUSION: In summary, GTP supplementation and TC exercise increased BAP and improved BAP/TRAP ratio. TC exercise increased serum parathyroid hormone. GTP supplementation, TC exercise, and the combination of the two all improved muscle strength in postmenopausal women with osteopenia.

<http://www.springerlink.com/content/60268434q8181102>



On the Relationship Between the Practice of Mindfulness Meditation and Personality-an Exploratory Analysis of the Mediating Role of Mindfulness Skills. Mindfulness (N Y). 2011 Sep;2 (3):194-200. By van den Hurk PA, Wingens T, Giommi F, Barendregt HP, Speckens AE, van Schie HT.

Mindfulness meditation (MM) has often been suggested to induce fundamental changes in the way events in life are experienced and dealt with, presumably leading to alterations in personality. However, the relationship between the practice of MM and personality has not been systematically studied. The aim of this study was to explore this relationship and to investigate the mediating role of mindfulness skills. Thirty-five experienced mindfulness meditators (age range, 31-75 years; meditation experience range, 0.25-35 years; mean, ~13 years) and 35 age-, gender-, and ethnicity-matched controls (age range, 27-63 years) without any meditation experience completed a personality (NEO-FFI) and mindfulness (KIMS) questionnaire. The practice of MM was positively related to openness and extraversion and negatively related to neuroticism and conscientiousness. Thus, the results of the current study associate the practice of MM with higher levels of curiosity and receptivity to new experiences and experience of positive affect and with less proneness toward negative emotions and worrying and a reduced focus on achievements. Furthermore, the mediating role of specific mindfulness skills in the relationship between the practice of MM and personality traits was shown.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3146707/>

A review focused on the psychological effectiveness of tai chi on different populations. Evid Based Complement Alternat Med. 2012;2012:678107. Epub 2011 Jul 18. By Zhang L, Layne C, Lowder T, Liu J. from Department Of Physical Education, Shenzhen Polytechnic, Shenzhen 518055, China.

As a popular exercise form, Tai Chi (TC) has been investigated to determine its contributions to an active and healthy lifestyle. There are an increasing number of researchers who focus on exploring the potential physiological and psychological benefits of TC but only a few systematic reviews of these benefits to a variety of populations. The purpose of this paper is to comprehensively evaluate the reported psychological benefits associated with practicing TC. Although many investigators have reported possible psychological benefits of TC for children, young adults, older healthy adults, and for a variety of patient populations, many of the reports suffer one or more methodological flaws. These flaws include inadequate study design, including lack of control groups, small sample sizes, unsophisticated statistical techniques, or publication without rigorous peer review. After reviewing the results of the existing literature regarding the potential psychological benefits of TC, we recommend that future investigations be conducted with additional adherence to the traditional scientific process. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3140024>



Effect of 3-Month Yoga on Oxidative Stress in Type 2 Diabetes With or Without Complications: A controlled clinical trial. Diabetes Care. 2011 Oct;34(10):2208-10. Epub 2011 Aug 11. By Hegde SV, Adhikari P, Kotian S, Pinto VJ, D'Souza S, D'Souza V. from Corresponding author: shreelaxmi.hegde@gmail.com.

OBJECTIVE To assess the effect of yoga on anthropometry, blood pressure, glycemic control, and oxidative stress in type 2 diabetic patients on standard care in comparison with standard care alone. **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS** The study involved 123 patients stratified according to groups with microvascular complications, macrovascular complications, and peripheral neuropathy and without complications and assigned to receive either standard care or standard care along with additional yoga for 3 months. **RESULTS** In comparison with standard care alone, yoga resulted in significant reduction in BMI, glycemic control, and malondialdehyde and increase in glutathione and vitamin C. There were no differences in waist circumference, waist-to-hip ratio, blood pressure, vitamin E, or superoxide dismutase in the yoga group at follow-up. **CONCLUSIONS** Yoga can be used as an effective therapy in reducing oxidative stress in type 2 diabetes. Yoga in addition to standard care helps reduce BMI and improve glycemic control in type 2 diabetic patients.



Is yoga effective for pain? A systematic review of randomized clinical trials. Complement Ther Med. 2011 Oct;19(5):281-7. By Posadzki P, Ernst E, Terry R, Lee MS. From Complementary Medicine, Peninsula Medical School, University of Exeter, Exeter, United Kingdom.

OBJECTIVE: The objective of this systematic review was to assess the effectiveness of yoga as a treatment option for any type of pain. **METHOD:** Seven databases were searched from their inception to February 2011. Randomized clinical trials were considered if they investigated yoga in patients with any type of pain and if they assessed pain as a primary outcome measure. The 5-point Jadad scale was used to assess methodological quality of studies. The selection of studies, data extraction and quality assessment were performed independently by two reviewers. **RESULTS:** Ten randomized clinical trials (RCTs) met the inclusion criteria. Their methodological quality ranged between 1 and 4 on the Jadad scale. Nine RCTs suggested that yoga leads to a significantly greater reduction in pain than various control interventions such as standard care, self care, therapeutic exercises, relaxing yoga, touch and manipulation, or no intervention. One RCT failed to provide between group differences in pain scores. **CONCLUSIONS:** It is concluded that yoga has the potential for alleviating pain. However, definitive judgments are not possible



Effect of yoga on menopausal symptoms. Menopause Int. 2011 Sep;17(3):78-81 By Joshi S, Khandwe R, Bapat D, Deshmukh U. Correspondence: Dr Sulabha Joshi. Email: sulabhaajoshi@gmail.com

OBJECTIVES: To observe the effect of yoga on menopausal symptoms using a prospective, randomized, controlled and interventional study. Main outcome measures Total Menopause Rating Scale (MRS) score and three subscale scores (somatovegetative, psychological and urogenital) were measured on day 1 and day 90 in the study group which performed yoga (asana, pranayam and meditation) under supervision for three months, and were compared with the control group that did not

perform yoga. MRS has been designed to measure health-related quality of life of ageing women. It consists of 11 symptoms and three subscales. **RESULTS:** It was observed that on day 1 the scores in both the groups were comparable. On day 90, the scores in the yoga group showed a reduction in score on all the subscales, which was statistically significant. No significant difference was noted in the control group. **CONCLUSION:** Yoga is effective in reducing menopausal symptoms and should be considered as alternative therapy for the management of menopausal symptoms.



Yoga therapy for developing emotional intelligence in mid-life managers. J Midlife Health. 2011 Jan;2(1):28-30. By Ganpat TS, Nagendra HR. from Department of Yoga and Management, Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana (S-VYASA) University (Prashanti Kutiram), Bangalore, India.

BACKGROUND: Business executives' lives have become a never-ending race against time, technology, and targets. This race creates tension, which leads to dissatisfaction and frustration and eventually manifests itself as psychological and physiological stress with mental and emotional drain. This modern lifestyle intensifies the stress leading to "excessive tension" and consequent deterioration in "executive efficiency".

OBJECTIVE: To assess emotional intelligent quotient (EQ) in managers undergoing yoga-based Self Management of Excessive Tension (SMET) program. **MATERIALS AND METHODS:** 72 managers participated in this study which is of "single group pre-post design." The EQ test developed by Prof N. K. Chadha from University of Delhi was administered as pre and post the 5 days of SMET program. **STATISTICAL ANALYSIS:**

Means, standard deviations, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, and Wilcoxon signed rank test were used to analyze the data. **RESULTS:** The data analysis showed 72.02% significant increase ($P < 0.001$) in EQ. **CONCLUSION:** The results suggest that participation in a SMET program was associated with improvement in EQ and may have implications for "executive efficiency." <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3156497/>

Impact of yoga on haemodynamic function in healthy medical students. *West Indian Med J*. 2011 Mar;60(2):148-52. By Parshad O, Richards A, Asnani M. from Department of Basic Medical Sciences, Tropical Medicine Research Institute, The University of the West Indies, Kingston 7, Jamaica, West Indies.

OBJECTIVES: Yoga improves cardiovascular health in both healthy individuals and those with diagnosed heart disease. This study compares changes in some cardiovascular parameters before and after the practice of Yoga in healthy medical students. **METHODS:** Sixty-four healthy medical students (57 females and 7 males), mean age 21.3 +/- 2.6 years, attending a Special Study Module 'Role of Dhyana Yoga in Stress Management', participated in this study. Systolic (SYS) and Diastolic (DIA) blood pressure, Heart Rate (HR), Stroke Volume (SV), Cardiac output (CO), Total Peripheral Resistance (TPR), Interbeat Interval (IBI), Left Ventricular Ejection Time (LVET), Arterial Compliance (Cwk) and Ascending Aorta Impedance (Zao) were measured before and after six weeks of yogic exercises. Various exercises included asanas (Postures), pranayama (Breathing), and dhyana (Meditation). Data were analyzed using Stata for Windows. **RESULTS:** Two-tailed paired t-test revealed that practice of yoga caused significant increases in HR ($p < 0.05$), SV ($p < 0.01$), CO ($p < 0.001$) and Cwk ($p < 0.01$) and decreases in TPR ($p < 0.001$), IBI ($p < 0.05$) and Zao ($p < 0.001$) after practicing yoga for 6 weeks as compared to before yoga practice. No significant differences were, however observed in SYS, DIA, Mean arterial blood pressure (MAP) and LVET. **CONCLUSIONS:** Practice of yoga even for a short period showed ability to improve most of the cardiovascular functions. Regular practice of yoga for a longer period may further improve these functions and possibly result in improved management of their daily stress.



Immediate Effects of Reiki on Heart Rate Variability, Cortisol Levels, and Body Temperature in Health Care Professionals With Burnout. *Biol Res Nurs*. 2011 Aug 5. By Díaz-Rodríguez L, Arroyo-Morales M, Fernández-de-Las-Peñas C, García-Lafuente F, García-Royo C, Tomás-Rojas I.

Burnout is a work-related mental health impairment comprising three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. Reiki aims to help replenish and rebalance the body's energetic system, thus stimulating the healing process. The objective of this placebo-controlled, repeated measures, crossover, single-blind, randomized trial was to analyze the immediate effects of Reiki on heart rate variability (HRV), body temperature, and salivary flow rate and cortisol level in health care professionals with burnout syndrome (BS). Participants included 21 health care professionals with BS, who were asked to complete two visits to the laboratory with a 1-week interval between sessions. They were randomly assigned the order in which they would receive a Reiki session applied by an experienced therapist and a placebo treatment applied by a therapist with no knowledge of Reiki, who mimicked the Reiki treatment. Temperature, Holter ECG recordings (standard deviation of the normal-to-normal interval [SDNN], square root of mean squared differences of successive NN intervals [RMSSD], HRV index, low frequency component [LF], and high frequency component [HF]), salivary flow rate and cortisol levels were measured at baseline and postintervention by an assessor blinded to allocation group. SDNN and body temperature were significantly higher after the Reiki treatment than after the placebo. LF was significantly lower after the Reiki treatment. The decrease in the LF domain was associated with the increase in body temperature. These results suggest that Reiki has an effect on the parasympathetic nervous system when applied to health care professionals with BS.



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QIGONG SAYINGS

"When genuine energy is stored within, diseases cannot invade the body".

Li Dongyuan (1180 – 1251)

"The energy is the basis of life. Everything in the Universe changes and develops thanks to qi."

Zhang Zhongjing, ("Jing Yue's Anthology"), Ming Dynasty

"The person does not train the energy, but the energy trains the person."

qigong saying

"Life exists because qi is amassed, when qi is dispersed, one dies."

Zhuang Zi, ancient Chinese philosopher, Taoist and qigongist.

"Energy is matter."

"The Book of Changes" ("Zhou Yi Yi Jing")

*"Man is created by the energy of Heaven and Earth,
and is led by the principles of the four seasons."*

"Huang Di Nei Jing" (Su Wen)"

*"In its disintegrated state, qi is scattered and diffuse.
Through integration, it forms matter,
thereby giving rise to the manifold diversity of humans and things."*

Luo Qinshun, a neo-Confucian from Ming Dynasty

"I will follow Wang Qiao to find pleasurable entertainment.

*Consume the Six Energies
and drink the Drifting Flow, ah!
Rinse the mouth with True Yang
And swallow Down Aurora".*

from "Traveling Afar" ("Yuan You"), a chuci poem written by Qu Yuan (about 340 - 278 BC),
great poet and qigongist from the Warring States period in China.

"Hold the breath so that even a goose feather cannot stir before the nostrils.

*Breathe slowly and gently 300 times without hearing anything,
seeing anything, or thinking anything..."*

Sun Simiao, ancient Chinese doctor and qigongist

"Health preservation means to look at the original energy qi and the jing essence as wealth".

Tao Xuanjing

*"Not permitting one thing to interfere with another is called "concentration".
When the mind is asleep, it dreams. When it is relaxed, it moves of its own accord.
When it is employed, it schemes. Therefore, the mind is never without movement.
Nonetheless, there is still the capacity for quiescence. Not permitting dreams
and petty annoyances to disrupt this capacity to know is called "quiescence"."*

Xun Zi, ancient Chinese philosopher

*"That which penetrates Heaven and Earth and connects past and present
is nothing other than the material substance [qi], which is unitary."*

Luo Qinshun, a neo-Confucian from Ming Dynasty

*"My heart is as calm as still water
without the least wind stirring*

I sit undisturbed

taking a thousand breaths.

Suddenly in the midnight

I enter a wonder land,

With rolling waves and rising sun in sight".

Lu You (1125 - 1210), prominent Chinese literature and qigongist from South Song dynasty.

"Being stable, one is able to be still;

being still, one is able to be at peace;

being at peace, one is able to contemplate;

being able to contemplate, one is able to get it [the energy]."

the Opening statement of the Confucian book "Da Xue" ("The Highest Learning")

Qigong Sayings collected by Kevin Chen, Ph.D.

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TCM Food Therapy for Diabetes

by Helen H. Hu, OMD, L.Ac.

Diabetes Mellitus is a syndrome characterized by hyperglycemia resulting from impaired insulin secretion and/or effectiveness. There are many complications of diabetes such as retinopathy, nephropathy, atherosclerotic coronary and peripheral arterial disease and peripheral and autonomic neuropathies. There are two types of diabetes IDDM (type: insulin Dependent) and NIDDM (type II: Non insulin dependent DM).

Diabetes is called **Xiao Ke** in Chinese Medicine. It is believed there are three major organs involved in the disease. They are the lungs, stomach and kidney organs. There are three types (patterns) Xiao Ke (diabetes) classified by Chinese Medicine according to the patient's clinical symptoms, pulse and tongue and which organs are mainly involved.

What causes Xiao Ke (diabetes) in the Chinese Medicine point of view? It is believed that people who indulged in alcohol and sweet and/or greasy foods and have an irregular, unhealthy and sedentary lifestyle are prone to develop Xiao Ke diseases. This lifestyle easily consumes and blocks the body's energy. Once the body's energy is blocked, there is stagnation and eventually, toxic heat will be generated. The toxic heat will further consume the vital organ's fluid and cause organ malfunction and disharmony. The lung organ, spleen and kidney have not been in harmony for a long time before Xiao Ke (diabetes) develops.

The first step to treating and /or preventing diabetes is to start with exercising regularly and food therapy such as the Chinese diet therapy (Chinese Yao Shan.) Recently research indicates that our muscles transport blood glucose into the muscle cells to lower blood sugar level without the need of insulin during muscle exercise. That is the reason exercise is important in preventing diabetes and helping to control blood sugar. The increased circulation prevents and helps in delaying any degenerating complication such as neuropathy.

There are several categories for Chinese food therapy in preventing and in the treatment of diabetes.

If you are diagnosed with diabetes:

1. In general, diabetes patients should eat more bland food rather than hot spicy food that further damage body yin fluid, avoid sweet and greasy foods and alcohol consumption. Smoking can further damage lung yin fluid that can worsen Xiao Ke (diabetes) in Chinese Medicine theory.
2. Try to avoid processed carbohydrates, eat more multi-whole grains such as corn, barley, buckwheat, brown or black rice.
3. Eat more green leafy vegetables.
4. Limited the amount of fresh fruits, due to the high content of sugar.
5. Drink green tea regularly to help prevent diabetes. Just make sure that you do not drink too strong or highly concentrated green tea, otherwise, it will compromise calcium absorption.

Certain foods have the property to assist in lowering blood sugar such as: bitter melon, onion, shitake mushroom, kelp, black and white fungus (mushroom), bean sprout, seaweed, bamboo, and seafood.

Even though TCM classified diabetes into three types based upon clinically manifest only, but there are three main organ patterns according to what is the imbalanced organ involved, so that, food therapy should be directly stress the involved organ.

I. Lung heat pattern that damages body fluid

Patient in this pattern the main complaint is being thirsty and may drink a lot of water, but still have a dry throat and mouth with sensitivity or even painful in the throat. Patient will have yellow color of urination, dry stool. If you look at your tongue, it appears red tongue and light yellow color coating due to too much heat in the organ and water cannot save the heat.

Mung Bean Rice Soup:

Mung bean: 20g

Rice: 50g

Lotus leaf: one (fresh or dried)

Cooking instruction: Cook two ingredients in water to make rice soup, and cover the soup with the lotus leaf as a lid. Cover the soup while cooking.

Intake: Along with meal



Lotus Leaf

Soy Bean Milk Soup:

Soy bean milk (150ml)

Spring rice (20g)

Cooking instruction: Cook rice in water (150 ml) until soft, and then add soy bean milk (500 ml – no sugar added). Cook for another 2 minutes until starchy and serve

Intake: Can take it as breakfast or along with meal.

Bitter Melon with Mussel Soup:

Bitter melon (250g – take out seeds and cut into pieces)

Fresh mussel (100g). Soak fresh mussels in fresh water for two days to get rid of the muddy taste.

Cooking instruction: Cook the ingredients together in water to make soup.

Then add pinch of salt, few drop sesame seed oil before serving

Intake: Along with meal



Bitter Melon

II. Stomach heat pattern of diabetes

Clinically this type of diabetes, the person is always very hungry with a vicious appetite as main symptom. They will have a feeling of constant thirst, weight loss, frequent urination and constipation, dizziness, blurred vision and tinnitus.

(continued on page 50)

(continued from page 49)

Food therapy is mainly to clear the heat in the stomach organ.

Fish, Tomato and Tofu Soup:

Fish meat (250g – cut into pieces and coat with wet starch),

Tomatoes (250g – cut into pieces),

Tofu (250 g – cut into pieces)

Green onions (1 stalk – cut into small pieces).

Cooking instruction: Cook tofu in water first. After 2 minutes add tomato into boiling soup and cook with tofu until boil. Then add starch-coated fish into soup until fish is cooked. Then add green onion and spices at the last and spices of your preference.

Intake: Along with meal.

III. Liver and kidney yin deficiency pattern

This type of diabetes with longer illness with main complaint of frequent urination with copious amount of urination, some of the urination smell sweet or look turbidity or even milky color. Most patients will have some weakness of both knees and sore at the lower back. People also have other signs and symptom such as dry and itchy skin and dry lips and dizziness and tinnitus.

Carrot, water chestnut soup:

Lean pork: 500g cut into small cubes

Carrot: 250g cut into square

Water chest nut: 250g cut to half

Cooking instruction: put all above ingredients together with water in a ceramic pot. Cook at low temperature for hours after initial bring to boil. Add species desired before serve

Intake: take it warm, once a day as soup



Water Chestnut



Dr. Helen Hu, originally from Beijing China, has studied Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) since the age of 12. A Cardiologist and practitioner of integrated medicine for nine years before immigrating to the United States, Dr. Hu passed the "U.S. Licensing Medical Exam" (USLME) in 1997 while simultaneously obtaining her Oriental Medical Degree (OMD) in the US. Dr. Hu currently directs and manages a successful TCM practice in San Diego. She lectures locally on Acupuncture and the benefits of combining Eastern / Western styles of Medicine. Dr. Hu has been practicing Tai Ji and Qi Gong over 25 years, and she teaches these ancient Chinese arts Saturday mornings on Shelter Island in San Diego as a gift to the community and to help promote well being and longevity.

www.bodywithoutmystique.com or www.OMDweb.net

Women's Empowerment in an Age of Illness, Part 2

What Yoga Can Do for You

by Ginger Garner MPT, ACT

Last month, I wrote about the health related reasons that cause women to be put at a remarkable disadvantage in the US. Now, it is time to discuss one of the best (and most inexpensive) solutions to give women a sense of empowerment and control over their well being.

Yoga's Healing Power

One of the ways that women can be empowered to take control of their health (and life) is through the ancient holistic practice of yoga. It prevents and treats injury and illness, looking at health through a preventive and not just pathophysiological lens.



I have been teaching medical yoga (a blending of east and west medicine and therapies) for almost 20 years and have experienced first hand, as a clinician and as a woman, the amazing results that yoga's power yields.

Medical yoga can:

- Reduce risk of CVD, cancers, stroke, and diabetes through introducing safe physical activity into your daily routine.
- Improve your diet, which also reduces the risk of CVD, certain cancers, obesity, and stroke when following an [anti-inflammatory regimen](#).
- Reduce high blood pressure
- Reduce inflammatory processes in the body
- Reduce and manage stress.
- Reduce self-destructive behaviors.
- Help you lose and manage your weight.
- Manage orthopedic conditions such as low back and neck pain or tendonitis/sprains/strains.
- Reduce stress-related risk factors for disease.
- Stabilize your mood by calming the nervous system (through decreased sympathetic nervous system activity).
- Build body confidence, intelligence, and overall fitness.
- Improve your respiratory/lung health.
- Reduce risk of depression and anxiety disorders and their symptoms.
- In maternal health, reduce labor pains and risk of post-partum depression.
- In women's health, reduce post-surgical complications such as scar adhesions, pelvic pain, and other chronic pain.
- Manage current chronic pain syndromes and ones related to it such as fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

(continued on page 52)

(Women's Empowerment in an Age of Illness, Part 2 continued from page 51)

Finding A Qualified Yoga Practitioner

When yoga is used as medicine, it is practiced by someone with extensive training in medical therapeutic yoga and a license in medicine or other medical therapy. Currently in the US, there is no license or certification that allows you to access yoga and have it covered by insurance, unless the yoga is delivered therapeutically in a medical setting by a licensed medical professional.

While there are no standards or licensing for yoga therapists or teachers in the US, there are voluntary standards set by Yoga Alliance. However, they do not provide certification or guarantee of a teacher's proficiency in yoga. They prepare a person to teach basic yoga to people with no existing health issues.

If you have a medical condition or illness, search for a licensed health care professional with dual training in medicine and therapeutic or medical yoga – [here](#).

If you are a healthy individual with no pre-existing health conditions, search for a teacher on the voluntary YA registry [here](#).

Why choose a licensed therapist for teaching yoga?

- The yoga used is evidence based. It is medically and scientifically grounded making it effective and safer for people with all kinds of medical conditions, including the natural state of pregnancy and post-partum.
- They are qualified to evaluate, treat, and refer to other medical specialists while looking at the entire person from both a western medical and holistic standpoint.
- They can use yoga combined with medical technology and methods to treat and prevent injury and illness.
- They are legally qualified and trained to work with people who have everything from minor sports injuries to serious illness and complex medical histories.
- They are trained to differentially diagnose. This means that they are trained to recognize precursors, signs, and symptoms of more serious illnesses that would require more complex medical attention.
- They are bound by law and their medical license – to first do no harm. They live and work by a medical code of ethics and have at least 4-6 years and in most cases 6-10 years of formal medical and medical yoga education

If you do not have medical insurance, I encourage you to still contact these therapists. Many of them will work on a sliding scale and have programs in place that work with women (and men) who cannot afford treatment.

(continued on page 53)



(Women's Empowerment in an Age of Illness, Part 2 continued from page 52)

The best news of all is – your yoga treatment, when administered through a licensed medical professional, is usually covered by your insurance. You can find a therapist that is also a licensed medical practitioner [here](#).

Low Cost & Free Yoga Resources

The base philosophy of yoga is that it should be accessible to all – just like health care. Here are a few free and low cost resources for yoga.

Medical Yoga

- [Mayo Clinic Wellness Series](#) – a series of yoga DVD's for different ailments.
- [Breathing In This Life](#) – a medical blog for women and mothers - download free breathing and yoga practices
- [Yoga As Medicine](#) – a text written by Timothy McCall, MD, which outlines postures and how they can improve your health and help treat specific health conditions.
- [Ancient Yoga, New You](#) – a medical yoga DVD by physical therapist, Ginger Garner, MPT, ATC for anyone suffering from physical or emotional pain. It is based on a three year research study conducted with a very pleasant middle aged woman suffering from multiple chronic diseases, including diabetes, heart disease, arthritis, and weight problems.

General Yoga

- [Holistic Online](#) - Yoga – general yoga and Ayurvedic advice
- [Yoga Journal](#) – a popular magazine offered online giving general yoga advice

Sources

1. [American Heart Association](#).
 2. US Dept. of Health and Human Services 2006. [Women's Health USA 2007 report](#).
 3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Overweight and obesity. June 2004. www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/obesity. Viewed 4/16/07.
 4. Over my years of research, teaching, and writing in medical therapeutic yoga, I have compiled hundreds of scientific references which support the plethora of benefits yoga provides. For systemic benefits of yoga, there are 77 preliminary studies published in peer-reviewed medical journals I source.
- [More research on yoga and CVD](#)



Ginger Garner MPT, ATC — is an educator and subject matter expert in medical therapeutic yoga and women's health. As a published author and sought after speaker, Ginger pens the popular blog for mothers — Breathing In This Life (BITL —which is one of the columns in Yang-Sheng magazine and network). Ginger is founder of Professional Yoga Therapy (PYT), the first education program for Complementary and Alternative Medicine practice in medical therapeutic yoga in the US. Ginger's focus is on education and activism for maternal and child health – through BITL, her school, PYT, through the organization she founded for Haiti relief in 2009, Musicians 4 Missions, and her work with the Initiative to Educate Afghan Women. Ginger has spoken and performed across the US to educate people about medical yoga and to raise awareness and funds for improving women's health. As a working mother of three she has learned a thing or two about finding work/life balance through the healing arts, which she shares through BITL, at www.gingergarner.blogspot.com. See Ginger's work at www.gingergarner.com.

The Sexual Dynamic

Healing Through Gender Awareness

by Felice Dunas, Ph.D.

Those who understand the nature of sex will nurture their vigor and prolong their life. Those who treat its principle with contempt will injure their spirit and shorten their life.

Tung Hsuan Tsu, c. fifth-seventh centuries AD

Ignorance of the necessity for sexual intercourse to the health and virtue of both man and woman is the most fundamental error in medical and moral philosophy.

George Drysdale, The Elements of Social Science (1854)

Like all powerful forces, the energy that drives sexuality can be used for good or ill. Many cultures, including our own, have emphasized the potential danger of unleashing the sex drive: disease, exploitation, unwanted pregnancy, broken families, crimes such as rape, incest and pedophilia. To protect ourselves from the dark side of sex, we have evolved safeguards, just as we have for nuclear power and other energy sources with the potential to either help or harm. These precautions have taken the form of laws and customs geared to suppress sexual expression.

Our professional ancestors also recognized the dual nature of sexuality. In their view, unhappy bedrooms resulted in poor health, marriage and family problems and even a breakdown of social order. But the sexual sages whose ideas form the basis of my book, *Passion Play*, recognized an important truth: Sexuality can bring joy and blessing to the same extent that it can cause suffering. They held that by maximizing one's potential as a sexual artisan one could strengthen health and personality while at the same time creating greater harmony in the family and society as a whole.

Look at your own experience. Isn't life easier when you're having great sex? Don't mountains turn into molehills? Aren't your step lighter and your mind

clearer? Aren't you more at peace with yourself, more optimistic, more content with your lot in life? You no doubt feel healthier, too-more vital and vigorous, with greater physical stamina and emotional strength.

In the west we have assumed that sexuality wanes with age and hormone levels. We know that when men reach their twenties, production of testosterone begins

(continued on page 55)



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a long, steady decline, and when women reach menopause, estrogen production plummets. For the most part, we accept declining sexual interest and performance as a normal result of biological changes. Attempts at countering the tendency center on hormone replacement therapy, in which synthetic or animal-based substances are used to replenish the body's supply. By contrast, acupuncturists of centuries past developed natural ways to maintain youthfulness and sexual vigor. These include exercises and lifestyle suggestion, herbs and lovemaking techniques.

Many patients sabotage your work with their sexual habits. Unknowingly they dissipate valuable kidney essence during the act or maintain unhealthy relationships in which they do not deeply desire to give to and receive from their partners. This reticence may create a stagnant condition in the genital system with its many ramifications. A myriad of other syndromes can also occur. It is a complex subject and one that deserves to be seriously examined for the benefit of your patients.

Healing the body with pleasure is an important concept in TCM. Making love and eating are understood to be two of the most pleasurable activities in life. This is why they are art forms with long and evolved medical histories. We spend time instructing our patients in the dietary realm but generally overlook the importance of correct sexual practice. In fact, the power of gender, so basic to the nature of yin and yang, and thus energetic imbalance as a whole, is under-valued.

We must look to the body's definition of gender if we are to support its healing. The conception and birth of children is the core ability requiring and thus defining the subject. The behavior patterns that are used in this process can be mirrored for success in other areas of life including the recovery from disease.

The yin pattern would be: receive, transform and contribute. Her body receives sperm and is hormonally, anatomically and physiologically receptive. She transforms what she has received into something else (a fetus) and then contributes this new life into the world. Yin creates life through this pattern.

The yang pattern is: contribute, wait, and receive. His

body gives his erection for the purpose of giving sperm. He must give sperm that are able to grant life by being the strongest, fastest and healthiest. Once he contributes, he waits for feedback. Is she pregnant? The results of his contribution determine future giving. He gets feedback either in the form of a child or the news that she isn't pregnant. The information he receives determines his next step. Yang creates life through this pattern.

When you evaluate your patients' behaviors, are they gender appropriate? As the male body is primarily yang, men must be skilled in altruism (contributing that which is appropriate to create new life) to be functioning in accordance with their gender. If a man is overly yin resulting in pathological behavior, he becomes very self focused. A woman can become a give-aholic if she is not allowing yin to substantially determine her actions. The pressures of success in a male-modeled work environment lead many women away from their inherent nature and into a more masculine mode of functioning. And we wonder why infertility is on the rise. How can conception occur when both sexes are behaving like the other?

As you support your patients in the healing process, consider that their daily behavior, in and out of the bedroom, has a substantial effect on your success. How well they accept compliments or lend a helping hand may have long term health ramifications.



Born in Los Angeles and raised in a medical family, Felice Dunas, Ph.D., is an acupuncture industry founder, international lecturer, published author and executive coach. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Sociology/International Health Care from UCLA, and her Doctorate degree in Clinical Chinese Medicine and Pharmacology from Samra University. She uses ancient principles of the body and human behavior to enhance the lives of individuals, couples and corporate executives. Having lectured in over 60 countries, she addresses health, vitality, interpersonal intimacy and sexuality. Dr. Dunas is the author of the best-selling book from Penguin-Putnam, "PASSION PLAY: Ancient Secrets for a Lifetime of Health and Happiness Through Sensational Sex". For more info, go to: <http://www.felicedunas.com>



How Can Bio-Energy be Measured?

by Cindy Cicero

This article is about my visit to the Rhine Center's Bio-Emissions Lab in Durham, NC. The recent invitation to the Center was extended by Executive Director John Kruth and Bill Joines who is the primary researcher and designer of this 30 year bio-energy research experiment. The experiment will measure bio-emissions or bio-photons that come from the human body. There are electromagnetic fields in and around the body that communicate through a light source of bio-energy called bio-photons.

During the last thirty years the Rhine Center's Bio-Emissions experiment *measures* for charge accumulation and electromagnetic bio-emissions. These measurements are being used to study bio-energy healers, meditators and people who claim unusual effects on electrical equipment.

The equipment used to measure bio-emissions are several special devices. The thermoelectric cooler is used to cool the photomultiplier tube to negative 26 degrees centigrade. This is done to reduce interference from the electrical devices. The baseline is taken for each individual before they begin their healing, meditation, or energy work. The photomultiplier tube actually measures the increase in photon emissions from the baseline for the individual being tested.

The School of Chi Energy Heals Bio-Emissions Video:

<http://www.chienergyheals.com/the-bio-energy-experiment/>

Sifu Cindy Cicero is the Director and Instructor for the School of Chi Energy who participated in this Rhine Center experiment. There are four individuals that have measured high amounts of biophotons in the ultraviolet range.

The video results show that she is now the "fifth" unique individual with an unusual amount of bio-photon emission that they've been able to measure in the last 30 years.

(continued on page 57)

(continued from page 56)

Then it is the photomultiplier tube that measures biophotons. When one photon of light strikes this sensitive surface it dislodges several other electrons. The dislodged electrons accelerate striking many more electrons that cause a chain reaction event.

According to Wikipedia: “A bio photon (from the Greek βιο meaning "life" and φωτο meaning "light"), synonymous with ultra weak photon emission, low-level biological chemiluminescence, ultra weak bioluminescence, dark luminescence and other similar terms, is a photon of light emitted from a biological system and detected by biological probes as part of the general weak electromagnetic radiation of living biological cells.”

The reason I feel I did so well on the test is that I built up my body's nerve fibers using specially designed energy exercises. In the The School of Chi Energy a chi student is trained to build up the nerve fibers allowing for a stronger projection of bio-energy. When information contained in biophotons are built up in high levels, your ability to control the hormonal flow of your body and other extreme psi abilities will be possible.

Bio-Photonics has been around awhile according to Mind Science News article: “Biophotons: DNA Radiance of Health or Disease <http://youtu.be/2STCpAJtSRw>

Professor Fritz-Albert Popp of International Institute of Biophysics (Biophotonics) in Germany has conducted research that confirms the existence of biophotons. Biophotons are weak light emitted by photons within the cells of our bodies. All cells emit light. Professor Popp says, “we are swimming in an ocean of light...” His research shows that DNA from living cells hold and release photons producing “biophotonic emissions” that radiate throughout the cellular network.

These biophotonic emissions of light have no mass, and they seem to be responsible for transmitting information inside of individual cells as well as radiating that information to other cells. These emissions may hold a key to our understanding of disease and wellness.”

It is the significant value of these types of bio-photon experiments that demonstrate those with unusually high emissions have a great influence (degree of change) over the physical reality of body and mind.

For more information on bio-energy, visit www.chienergyheals.com where we base our training on the latest scientific and medical research.

Next month: Biophotonics & Bioenergy: the results from the Rhine Center experiment that may shock energy field workers with its implications.



Cindy Cicero is a teacher and instructor skilled in the art of Chi Energy Heals bio-energy training. She is the Director of Operations for the Online School of Chi Energy Heals and in business since 1998. Certified Chi Energy Heals Instructor & Bio-Energy Healer for Sifu Jones' Online Alternative Bio-Energy Health and Healing School. A Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Meditation teacher who has studied under doctors Jon Kabat-Zinn and Saki Santorelli from the University of Massachusetts Medical School, and Dr. Jeff Brantley of Duke University's Center for Integrative Medicine. Nationally Certified in Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork by the International Oriental Bodywork Association and licensed in the state of North Carolina; Certified as a Spring Forest Qigong Healer and Teacher; Certified as a Yoga Teacher & Yoga Therapist in the Kripalu Yogic Healing Tradition; Certified in the Eastern Institute of Transpersonal Hypnotherapy; Member of the Rhine Center Parapsychology Center; Member & volunteer on the Board of Directors for the Qigong Institute.

Introduction to Trynaural Meditation and Brainwave Entrainment

by Niraj Naik, M.Pharm.

I am a pharmacist and natural health consultant to several large blue chip companies, and dare I say it, including Walmart, where I have seen all kinds of clients suffering from stress, insomnia, phobias and depression.

Working in a cubicle environment myself for many years, I know the stress and negative health impact involved with such a lifestyle.

I also know that what would really help my clients including myself is a healthy dose of yoga, meditation and a good nights sleep. In the past I would have to direct them to methods of meditation that would take hours to do and was just not practical to fit into their busy corporate lives, and what happened?

Very few people could actually keep it up. Those who did obviously had enjoyed fantastic benefits to their health.

But I wanted to make it easier for people to meditate and basically just chill out for once in their crazy hectic lives!

I was one of those people too, suffering from stress of working long hours and often doing the kind of work I really hated. But then I discovered brainwave entrainment technology.

In our busy modern day world, most people tend to neglect the importance of unwinding and letting go of stress every now and then. But relaxing the mind and body can bring you many benefits, which you can discover yourself once you learn about how music, meditation and brainwave entrainment can be very powerful techniques for reducing stress.

It is much easier to understand their true benefits when you first understand what happens during stress in your mind and body.



What Happens During Stress?

First it is important to understand the difference between the two different types of stress:

Healthy Stress also known as Eustress:

This is beneficial stress inside the body that leads to positive outcomes when done in moderation.

- Enjoyable exercise
- Massage
- Sauna
- Roller coaster rides

Unhealthy Stress:

- Job dissatisfaction
- Financial Worries
- Lack of sleep
- Steroid use
- Diseases such as Diabetes
- Smoking
- Bullying
- Social dislocation/separation from normal communities such as in Emigrant Asians, Native Americans and Aborigines in Australia who together have the highest rates of heart disease in the world.

What Happens During Unhealthy Stress?

Your body produces special hormones that serve important functions during a response. The release of stress hormones is controlled by the hypothalamus and your pituitary gland together in unison.

Under stress:

The hypothalamus signals your pituitary gland to release hormonal messengers to your adrenal glands to release adrenaline and cortisol.

This is known as the HPA axis.

You have two different divisions to your nervous system – sympathetic and parasympathetic neither of which is under your conscious control.

Sympathetic deals with “Flight or Fight”

- Speeds up your heart rate
- Redirects blood flow away from your gut and to your muscles
- Stimulates your liver to release glucose so higher blood glucose levels
- Triggers the release of various blood clotting factors

Parasympathetic however does the opposite and relaxes you. Helps you to get ready to eat, digest and store energy.

These two nervous pathways govern homeostasis – your bodies natural balance mechanism. When you are under prolonged stress this function goes out of sync resulting on all the major problems caused by long term stress and a dysfunctional HPA axis.

Consequences of a dysfunctional HPA axis:

Cushing syndrome is one extreme example of a body under extreme stress causing the HPA axis to go completely out of sync and produces excess cortisol.

Result is:

- Increased visceral fat
- Diabetes
- Heart disease

This is a common character trait of people under stress these days with the visible potbelly, type 2 diabetes and other chronic diseases.

Depression is another example of an initiator of HPA axis dysfunction:

“There is compelling evidence for the involvement of the HPA axis abnormalities in depression.”

Kunugi H et al *Neuropsychopharmacology* January 2006

Smoking is also proven to disrupt the HPA axis, although not as chronic in its effect as depression.

My Professional Experiences of Dealing With Stress

I would like to go back to my own experiences as a pharmacist when performing medicine use reviews.

What was interesting is that with the patients who had one or more risk factors such as high blood pressure or existing disease, nearly every single one of these patients complained of feeling under stress, either from an emotional trauma previously in their life such as divorce, or working long hours, not sleeping properly and eating the wrong foods

Now what I did that I believe was different from what they were normally used to, was that I actually took a little bit of time to listen to their problems. Then I

offered solutions, usually in the form of a little shopping list of things to buy that would help them that they could easily find from their local supermarket, such as healthier food and drinks. Many consumed large quantities of fizzy drinks so I suggested a few healthier swaps they could make. I would also direct them to website with more information that could help them fit exercise into their lives more easily, be able to cook healthier meals and this is the biggy, I would recommend they take up Yoga, Meditation and listen to music that would help them to relax more.

Those who followed through on my advice reported feeling much better and some even came off their medications completely as a result.

Here is some more evidence of the power of yoga at reducing harmful effects of stress.

A study, published in Journal of The Association of Physicians of India (JAPI), establishes the reversibility of heart disease through yoga. Study was on angiographic ally proven CAD patients, of whom 71 formed the study group and 42 the control group. And the results proved that the serum total cholesterol levels had reduced by 23.3%, disease had regressed in 43.7% and progression was arrested in another 46.5% of the patients. Some marked improvements were noticed in anxiety levels of patients. Controlled yoga combining calming and stimulating measures resulted in reduced serum cholesterol, LDL and triglyceride levels.

Other ways to reduce stress and relax:

Music and sound therapy

Listening to music may benefit patients who suffer severe stress and anxiety associated with having and undergoing treatment for coronary heart disease. A Cochrane Systematic Review found that listening to music could decrease blood pressure, heart rate, and levels of anxiety in heart patients.

The researchers reviewed data from 23 studies, which together included 1,461 patients. Two studies focused

on patients treated by trained music therapists, but most did not, using instead interventions where patients listened to pre-recorded music on CDs offered by healthcare professionals.

So in my opinion a more holistic approach is required when treating and preventing chronic diseases such as heart disease. Medication merely acts like applying ice on the bruise. It never treats the cause or source of the problem. If you keep banging your head on the wall, it doesn't matter how much ice you apply, your bruise will just get bigger and bigger.

How Brainwave Entrainment Meditation Reduces Stress and Improves Well Being

Around 80% of all illnesses are due to prolonged stress and a dysfunctional HPA axis. When we are in beta or gamma state for too long a period, we experience stress and brainwave entrainment meditation can help to bring you into states where your bodies balance is restored.

Just like exercise the beneficial effects of restoring your balance through meditation and using brainwave entrainment lasts even when you have stopped doing it. With continuous use of the therapy you actually become better able to cope with stress when it is thrown at you in your daily life. Your stress "threshold" raises as your body become more in control of its HPA axis.

Recent studies have looked at the neurochemistry of meditation. Meditation has been shown to increase serotonin production. Serotonin is an important neurotransmitter and neuropeptide that influences mood and behaviour in many ways. Drugs such as Prozac chemically increase levels of serotonin in your brain to treat depression. Low levels of serotonin have been linked to a variety of disorders. For example, conditions associated with low serotonin levels include: depression, obesity, insomnia, narcolepsy, sleep apnea, migraine headaches, premenstrual syndrome, and fibromyalgia.

Meditation has also been associated with increased melatonin availability. Melatonin is also an important neurotransmitter and neuropeptide that influences mood and behaviour. It is derived from serotonin. Melatonin has been linked to regulation of sleep, and early research indicates it may have anti-carcinogen and immune system enhancing effects.

Clinical Evidence for The Benefits Of Meditation

Research by Dr Vincent Giampapa, MD, Former President of American Board of Anti-Aging Medicine, New England Journal of Medicine suggested that brainwave entrainment “dramatically” affects the production of three hormones directly related to longevity of life and overall well-being; cortisol, DHEA and melatonin:

1)Cortisol is found in the adrenal glands and impacts learning and memory, as too much of it is bad for us and causes stress. This is reduced by binaural beats

2) DHEA is used as a “source ingredient” for virtually every “good hormone” the body needs, and helps our immune system. This is increased by meditation and brainwave entrainment sessions

3) Melatonin is the chemical produced during deep, natural sleep. Having lots of DHEA and melatonin is good for us. This is increased by brainwave entrainment using binaural beats.

Research by Dr Margaret Patterson & Dr Ifor Capel, Marie Curie Cancer Foundation Research Department: “Brainwave Entrainment which take the user into the Alpha brainwave state aids production of serotonin, a hormone which increases relaxation and eases pain.”

Over the past year I have been using a new style of brainwave entrainment meditation technology called Trypnaural Meditation that I produced with Dr. Mrigank Mishra.

This combines music and brainwave entrainment into a single session.

Trypnaural brainwave entrainment meditation is designed to take you into the stress relieving brainwave states of alpha, theta and delta. It is also designed to stimulate your natural production of the tryptamines, serotonin, melatonin and DMT (dimethyltryptamine).

Trypnaural meditation is widely enjoyed by users all around the world, from yoga teachers, reiki masters, corporate executives, actors, musicians and even by USA Army officers as a way for them to combat stress.

To find out more and to download a free sample please visit

<http://www.TrypnauralMeditation.com>

You will also be able to read the many testimonials from my users of their experience of its benefits.



Niraj Naik, M.Pharm., is a pharmacist and health and wellness consultant to several businesses based in the UK. Having a musical background he has focused his attention on using sound and music as a "side effect" free tool

for relieving stress, depression and tension, that he believes are the main culprits for chronic disease. Niraj Naik also runs two successful websites and produces music and sounds with consultant psychiatrist Dr. Mrigank Mishra, under the alias amAya, some of which is infused with their novel Trypnaural Brainwave Entrainment Technology designed to increase the natural production of tryptamines, DMT, serotonin and melatonin that can lead to deeper sleep, relaxation and better health.

Taiji - Stage of Development

by Eric Borreson

There is an old saying in tai chi that says, "The first 10,000 times don't count". You should expect that you need to practice your forms that many times to move through these stages. There are no shortcuts. You can read about it. You can think about it. But in the end, tai chi is an experiential exercise. You have to do it.

In general terms, there are three stages of development of your taiji practice.

Stage 1 – practice your external movements so that they are done with correct posture, pacing, and direction of vision.

Stage 2 – practice how energy is stored and delivered in each form.

Stage 3 – practice moving your qi to where you are delivering energy.



Stage 1 – practice your external movements so that they are done with correct posture, pacing, and direction of vision.

It is important to practice your form at this stage until the movements and postures are automatic. This is the easiest stage to learn, but it can be very frustrating for beginners. Everyone else seems so fluid and graceful. It takes time to get past the negative self image and learn to enjoy the movement.

Most teachers and videos do a pretty good job of explaining the movements of a taiji form or set. However, there are many subtleties that can only be learned from a teacher. If you have access to a good teacher, great. Enjoy it and learn lots.

If you do not, do the best you can with videos, books, and other resources. Choose a common form so that you can find an occasional workshop. I recommend either the Yang 24 (Beijing) forms or the Taiji for Arthritis from Dr. Paul Lam Taiji for Health Community. There are many good weekend workshops available.

There are a few simple things that you should know as you begin your practice.

Take your time and learn methodically. Learning faster is not necessarily better. Work through learning the forms at a steady pace and take your time in understanding the details. It's better to learn a few forms or sets well than lots of them carelessly. Plan on learning only 1 or 2 new forms each week.

Remember the 70% Rule. Estimate your greatest ability to perform an exercise. Practice at only 70% of that level. This is not a competition. If it hurts, stop immediately. Apply this rule to everything in taiji, from how far you stretch, to how many repetitions, and to how long you practice. As you become more familiar with the forms and with your own body, you can gradually increase this number.

Control Your Movements. A good first principle at this stage is to learn to control your movements so they are slow, smooth, and continuous. You should move as though there is a gentle resistance. Think of your qi flow as a river. As it flows downhill, it gathers strength. Keep your movements slow, smooth, and continuous to smooth the progress of the qi flow.

Body Alignment. Another way to think about controlling your movements is to work on body alignment. Being upright is very important, but it is not as simple as it seems. A way to approach it is to think of your spine as a string. Imagine gently stretching the string from both ends. Being upright provides the internal organs with more space. An upright body also strengthens the internal deep stabilizer muscles. Try to keep your body upright and supple throughout all the movements. Be especially aware of this when you start bending your knees because your alignment can change. When you bend your knees, imagine that you are sitting down in a straight chair (not the recliner!) and keep your back fairly straight. Use a mirror or video camera to check yourself while practicing.

Practice a little each day. Ten minutes of practice each day will bring you better results than practicing for an hour at a time once a week. You will find that taiji is more challenging than it looks. If you need a break, take one. Frequently, take time to review what you have learned. As you learn the basics of your forms, you will want to practice quite a bit more than ten minutes.

Start to learn the essential principles of taiji. Read Yang Chen Fu's Ten Essential Principles and start to incorporate them into your practice. Most of them won't make much sense yet, but that's OK. Keep returning to them and it will become more clear in time.

(continued on page 64)

As you continue to practice your taiji, you will find that you gradually develop these skills. As you start to get a better understanding of what each form is intended to do, you will eventually start to move into Stage 2 without even being conscious of it.



Stage 2 – practice how energy is stored and delivered in each form.

In Stage 2, study each form in detail and understand the intentions. Most of my experience in is Yang style, so this explanation will follow that experience.

Even the simplest forms have several (many) parts to learn and master. It is a big oversimplification, but we can say that the seven things to focus on at this point are 1) what your feet are doing, 2) what your hands are doing, 3) what your waist (body) is doing, 4) what your eyes are doing, 5, yin and yang, 6) opening, and 7) closing.

According to the classics of taiji, “Internal force is rooted in the feet, developed by the legs, governed by the waist, and expressed in the hands.” This internal force is a spiral force generated at the feet that causes the waist to rotate, which leads the hands in the various taiji forms. Spiral force is beyond the scope of this article, but the comments about the feet, waist, and hands are important at this point in your learning.

1) What is your stance? What are your feet doing? There are many stationary stances, from horse stance with equal weighting on each foot; to bow stance, with the 70/30 weight ratio (brush knee); to empty stance, where essentially all your weight is on one leg (playing lute); and T stance during transitions (fair lady works shuttles). In addition, you should become familiar with dropping stance (snake creeps down) and centering stance (golden rooster stands on one leg). The stance is important in delivering energy (power) during each form.

2) Your hands should be in certain places during the movements of the form. Your hands deliver energy during each form. Understand this and be aware of it during each form. There are many specific hand positions and shapes for different forms.

3) The waist is the part of the body above the hip bones and below the diaphragm. The waist can be moved independently of the hips in some forms. In general, most forms have turning movements. The waist should lead the movement of the arms and the rest of the body. This increases/improves the delivery of energy.

4) During most forms, your eyes should follow your hand(s) during movement. When your hands are moving separately, your eyes should follow the dominant hand. The dominant hand is the one that is delivering energy. This is usually the higher hand or the one that is the most forward. For example, during brush knee, the hand that pushes forward is dominant and should be followed with your eyes. The hand that brushes the knee is not dominant. However, this statement is a little misleading. Your eyes really should be looking “through” your hand at a point beyond the hands to where you want your energy to be delivered.

5) Learn the yin and yang of each hand and foot during each movement. As we begin to move, wu ji separates into yin and yang, the opposite poles of the universe. In other words, our body manifests yin and yang throughout the forms. Yin corresponds to empty/insubstantial and storing energy. Yang corresponds to weighted/substantial and delivering energy. Throughout a form, our hands and feet continuously transition between yin and yang.

6) Every form has an open. This is the part of the form where power is developed and stored. Think of it as a bow and arrow. Pulling on the bowstring is opening and storing energy. For example, during brush knee, one hand goes back while the other one is placed somewhere near your elbow. This is the opening where you are storing energy. In general, you should inhale sometime during opening movements. Chen Jin, a Chen-style taiji master, wrote that when you are opening, you are solid outside and soft inside. You can feel your body soften as you inhale and expand your abdomen.

7) Every form has a close. This is the part of the form where power is delivered. Again, think of it as a bow and arrow. Releasing the bow string is closing and delivering energy. For example, during brush knee, one hand goes forward while the other one brushes past your knee. This is the closing where you are delivering energy.

In general, you should exhale sometime during closing movements. Chen Jin, a Chen-style taiji master, wrote that when you are closing, you are soft outside and solid inside. You can feel your inside harden, or become more solid, when you are delivering energy as you contract your abdomen.

In summary, continue to learn the essential principles of taiji. Read Yang Chen Fu’s Ten Essential Principles and start to incorporate them into your practice. They should be starting to make more sense now. Keep returning to them and it will become more clear in time.

Stage 3 – practice moving your qi to where you are delivering energy.

In Stage 3, you begin to learn to use your intent to direct the flow of qi through your body. Mental focus is essential to this step.



(continued on page 66)

Circulating Your Qi

The next phase of understanding open and close, as described in Stage 2, is to start moving your qi as you open and close. When you open (inhale), move your qi from your dan tian, through your perineum, and up your yang meridian (along your spine) toward the bai hui point at the crown of your head. When you close (exhale), move your qi down your yin meridian (the front center of your body) to the lower dan tian.

Keep your mouth gently closed with your tongue touching your upper palate. It may take a long time (years) to become comfortable with this. It is important that you do not force your breathing here. If you are not sure where to be inhaling and exhaling or you get tired, just allow your body to breathe naturally.

Intent

There is a statement in the taiji classics that says something like, “The mind (intent) moves the internal energy and the internal energy moves the body.” This is an important principle, but it is difficult to learn. It is important to practice your way through the three stages of development before you can really understand intent.

Intent is discussed in Yang Cheng Fu's Ten Essential Principles of Taijiquan, where he says, "use intent, not muscular strength.". Intent has 3 common meanings in taiji practice. First, intent means thoughts or expectations. Second, intent means qi or internal energy. Third, intent means to be aware of and pay attention to your own internal strength.

The emphasis on intent is important in taiji because the use of strength is very different than other martial arts. Taiji uses slow, soft force to deflect or divert an opponent's energy instead of meeting force with force. This allows time for your mind to contemplate the movement and imagine the movement in your mind before your muscles actually move.

Intent also involves the use of your eyes. In the taiji classics, it says something like, “The eyes and the hands must follow each other.” However, this does not mean that your eyes must exactly follow the movement of your hands. It means that your eyes and hands must arrive at the same point at the same time.

When you are practicing taiji, move slowly and continuously and use intent to move beyond the physical part of the form. This helps to develop a strong mind-body connection. Qi gets stronger as it continues to flow, just like the force of water gets stronger as it flows downhill. If you stop moving during the forms, your qi also stops moving.

Don't forget that taiji is an internal art. This means that the movements begin in your mind. Your intention leads the movements of your energy. And from that energy, you create an internal energy. As you move, think about applying a soft, gentle energy to your movements. Use that to lead your movements. Eventually, you will begin to feel the internal energy move within you. The key is to practice regularly.



Eric Borreson - a student and teacher, finds teaching tai chi, qigong, and meditation to be a path to a more meaningful life. Eric is the founder and director of Meditation in Motion, specializing in teaching about living healthier and happier lives. He is a Master Instructor in the Therapeutic Tai Chi system. He teaches tai chi and qigong at the prestigious Heartland Spa, a top 10 destination spa, in Gilman, IL. In addition, he teaches tai chi (Therapeutic Tai Chi, Yang 24, Dr. Lam's Tai Chi for Arthritis, and Dr. Lam's Tai Chi for Diabetes) at other venues. He teaches private lessons on request. He writes a weekly wellness column at <http://eric-taichi.blogspot.com>.

Embrace Tiger , Return to Mountain - The Essence of Tai Ji

by Chungliang Al Huang

Paperback 224 pp. \$19.95

Singing Dragon, Philadelphia PA(2011)

ISBN: 978-1-84819-052-8

This book will bring a smile to your face, a feeling of peace to your spirit, and sense of warmth as you are taken on an experiential journey of the true essence of taiji with a master teacher. The author suggests that the book may be started at any chapter since there are no starting and ending numbers on the circle. Our living experiences are ever expanding circles of dynamic interactions on many levels. The author advocates to be accepting of both the constant and the change. “ Learn how to be resilient and responsive to your surroundings, to time and to yourself.”(p.19)

The reader is taken along a week long set of workshops with Master Huang and you feel as if you were truly in a beautiful resort community complete with ambiance and the sights and sounds of nature. One feels encouraged , guided and given permission to feel, to explore each nuance of movement in doing a taiji practice.

If the reader is looking for a detailed step by step approach to doing a taiji form , this book will not provide that. Instead, the ideas, and crafted visualizations immerse the reader in the essence of movement - a movement meditation since you are constantly in motion, yet retain the quietness, centeredness and stillness deep within. Being aware of your surroundings and allowing your body, mind and spirit to flow are important aspects of taiji training.

With the many photos of the author spread throughout the book taken in nature, in the classroom and with others, Master Huang always has a smile and a sense of balanced serenity in movement. Master Huang teaches that one has to work through the feeling of your body gradually and slowly thus allowing your taiji form to emerge and become you. “ Taiji is an art; not to be taught, but to be experienced”(p.30) “If you limit yourself to the structure of any one form, you will lose the essence.”(p.30)

This book will appeal to the many people who are currently or have been studying tai ji for years while at the same time presents the raw beginner with valuable insights and visualizations to bring this art form to life. It is a book that will bring a smile and warmth to your very being as you are brought through the many lessons taught in the book. Master Huang defines the concept “tai chi only means a way of learning how to regain balance again.



(Book Review continued on next page)

It is a way to come back to yourself from all the conflicts and confusions that we feel every day in our lives. Taiji does not mean Oriental wisdom or something exotic. It is the wisdom of your own senses, your own body and mind together as one process.” (p.62) Taiji is a practice discipline that will help you get acquainted with your own sense of potential growth, your own creative growth and to experience the constant joy of changing happening in yourself, as well as how you interact with others in your life.

Basic principles govern all of taiji practice. Relaxed open joints, proper structural alignment, being centered and rooted, awareness of internal and external energies flowing, avoiding unnecessary tensions from the face to the feet, and constantly making adjustments to all of the above as needed. In addition , there is mindful mediation practice, studying the classics e.g. Tao Te Ching, partner training (push hands) for sensitivity and connectivity of energy flow, sword forms to enhance grace , balance and strength movement make learning taiji a constant learning process to improve the mind , body and spirit connection.

Master Huang also takes great pride and spends quite a few pages discussing and teaching calligraphy as part of taiji training. In calligraphy, the brush becomes an extension of oneself and the taiji movement. The reader is guided by Master Huang in his workshop on calligraphy and one is encouraged to join in the practices he teaches. No experience is necessary to follow writing the pictographs and ideograms discussed. Just go with the flow and have some fun while learning. I highly recommend this book to all who are interested in taiji . You will be taken for an enjoyable experience in the essence of this art form. Master Huang has a website if you wish to explore his works further (www.livingtao.org)



Salvatore Casano R.N., PhD – a registered nurse with a PhD in Holistic Health, and is an ATCQZ certified Tai Chi and Qigong instructor. His Tai Chi and Qigong journey began over 20 years ago while working as a chemistry instructor, when he felt the need for a more holistic approach to health care. Participating in many programs and projects relating to health, Dr. Casano educates the community on living a healthier lifestyle to avoid obesity and diabetes, and as a way to reduce stress. Over the years, he has learned from many masters including Bill Philips, Marc Issacs, Richard Chu, as well as two ATCQA advisors, Dr. Roger Jahnke, and Bill Douglas. Dr. Casano, along with his wife Veronica, often sojourn together on his healing path, as they use their skills in helping others connect the mind, body, and spirit. They have four adult children, seven grandchildren, and a cat, “Tiger.”

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Why advertise with us or become a sponsor of Yang-Sheng?

Although we are new in the field (initiated in February 2011), the precursor of Yang-Sheng, the *Qi Dao e-journal*, was founded in 2006, and has brought about 3,000 subscribers to the Yang-Sheng network. By the end of September, 2011 the Yang-Sheng website reached over 15,000 unique visitors per month. Our Facebook page has 2,100+ fans and 12,000+ users per month. In addition, around 2,500 subscribers download the PDF version of Yang-Sheng magazine each month to share with their friends and students. Approximately 70% of our visitors are from the USA, with the remainder primarily from Canada, Europe, East Asia, and Australia. Our audience consists predominately of practitioners of mind-body exercises (such as Qigong, Taiji, Yoga, reiki, mindfulness meditation, and other meditations) and people who are interested in taking care of themselves for health and happiness. **Yang-Sheng** offers a unique platform to reach a special health-consciousness population. We offer a variety of advertising options to fit most budgets.

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- To create a network and platform for those who are seeking health, happiness, longevity and harmony in life through their own effort, sharing and exploration.
- To promote self-healing, self-empowerment and positive mind power through feasible daily practice and effective clinical applications.