

You Say Tomato, I Say Health!

Tomatoes have so many uses. Made into soups, sandwiches, stews, and sauces, the tomato is more than just a fruit, it can be an essential ingredient to good health. Tomatoes are very rich in antioxidants, beta carotene, vitamin C, vitamin E, flavonoids and carotenoids, especially lycopene. Lycopene is a substance which is naturally found in tomatoes. Not only does it give the tomato its bright red coloring, but it also protects the fruit from the effects of the sun's harmful UV rays.

Considering how it protects the tomato, scientists conducted research which proved their theory that it can also protect the human body. Lycopene is concentrated in the prostate gland, and is used as a preventative against prostate cancer. It has also been shown to protect the body against mouth, lung, stomach, pancreas, bladder, colon, and rectal cancers.

Lycopene is a powerful antioxidant, in fact is it 100% more effective than the well-known free radical scavenger, Vitamin E. It is also 56% more powerful than beta-carotene, one of the ingredients which make carrots healthy. Antioxidants are known for their power to neutralize oxygen free radical molecules, which are the highly reactive and toxic by-products of biochemical reactions which occur during cell metabolism.

Exposure to smoking, pollutions, and other damaging influences of the environment can further aggravate this condition. We will have to contend with these free radicals for as long as we live. The impact that they have can be greatly reduced by antioxidants, which help minimize the damage that that is done when the number of free radicals in the body overwhelm its capacity to deal with them.

The bio-availability of this beneficial, fat-soluble carotenoid can be greatly improved when the tomato is cooked into a sauce. The levels of lycopene in both the blood cells and immune cells are raised when tomatoes are cooked. With that in mind, it is reasonable to say that even eating small amounts of the cooked tomato can help to protect the immune system. Oriental nutrition suggests that the tomato can do even more. The fruit is said to moisten the body by building the Yin fluids, which will relieve skin dryness and thirst. Tomatoes also strengthen the stomach, cleanse the liver, purify the blood, and remove toxins in the body according to this ancient nutritional knowledge.

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Points Toward Health

This exercise is for the activation of the body's own energy systems. This particular one has the greatest impact upon the healthy functioning of the lung & large intestine.

Flying Twist Pose

- 1) With your knees gently bent, stand with your legs hip-width apart. Bring your hands up behind your head and interlace your fingers.
- 2) Draw back your elbows to open your chest.
- 3) Twist your torso to the left as far as feels comfortable.
- 4) Gently press the back of your head into the palms of your hands, and inhale, expanding your chest and lungs.
- 5) As you exhale, raise the heel of the right foot so you can twist more deeply into the left side. Hold this position for a few breaths. Remember to keep your elbows back.
- 6) Return to the center and repeat steps 1-5 for the opposite side.





Autumn

Bounce Your Way to Health

It is no secret that most of us loved jumping on the bed as a kid. Although our parents did not like it so much, we were thrilled to bounce up and down on the springy mattress. What our parents did not know is that bouncing is actually good for your health, although the bed may not be the best place to do it.

A trampolinist by the name of Albert Carter invented the bouncing exerciser, the “Rebounder” in 1979. He also wrote a book entitled, ‘The Miracles of Rebound Exercise’, which explained his design. Although the exerciser was originally created to be used by police departments in Hong Kong, Carter’s design soon became the model for all other rebounders.

The rebounder is a terrific piece of exercise equipment for several reasons. This unique gadget is great for both light and heavy cardiovascular exercises. While most exercise equipment varies greatly between the benefits from light and those from heavy exercise, they are exactly the same with this piece of equipment. So how do rebounders help the body?

Rebounding exercise strengthens not only the muscle mass, but also enhances the immune system. The white blood cell count actually rises temporarily when using a rebounder. This exercise also circulates oxygen to the tissues, increases the production of red blood cells, and promotes cellular repair. The functioning of the nervous system is supported and improved by rebounding, and the aging process is slowed...but that is not all. Rebounding also increases mental performance and provides relief from headaches, neck pain, and backaches. When performed on a regular basis, rebounding can help to move and recycle lymph and blood through the circulatory system, and stimulates the cells in all organs, veins, arteries, bones, muscles, eyes, and the brain.

This exercise phenomenon is made even more special by the fact that it produces “positive stress” on the body. The body moves up and down, or vertically, when bouncing. That means that during half of the exercise process, gravity has no effect on the body. In most other exercises, the body moves horizontally, using gravity to stimulate the cells. This causes more negative stress on the joints, muscles, and other parts of the body.

Although it may not carry the thrill of jumping up and down on Mom and Dad’s bed, rebounding for just five or ten minutes a day is all you need to keep the body in great shape! When searching for a rebounder, make sure to research well, and test the equipment out before purchasing. Happy bouncing!



Foods for a Healthy Fall

Throughout the year, nature provides us with the appropriate foods to protect us from the climate, support our health, and keep us in balance. Becoming aware of seasonal foods and seasonal eating habits can attune us to the natural cycles of nature, and our bodies.

Autumn offers an abundance of vegetables and herbs as well as a variety of tastes which support and fuel the body, providing additional heat to protect us from the cooler, damper climate. Preparing food in harmony with the season means cooking with more astringent, sour and pungent foods, adding food rich in protein and fats to your diet, and eating more whole grains.

Eating sour foods such as sourdough bread, sauerkraut, aduki beans, yogurt and rosehip tea, and pungent foods such as garlic, turnip, ginger, horseradish, daikon, and white peppercorn have a warming and cleansing affect on the body and also add ‘zing’ to your meals. Cooking with dark green and golden orange vegetables such as carrots, winter squash, pumpkin, broccoli, parsley, kale, turnip, and mustard greens provide large amounts of beta-carotene, which helps to boost your Wei Qi and protect your lungs and large intestine against illness.

Drinking hot herbal tea is another way of warming the body and benefiting from the season’s abundance. Herbs such as ginseng, yerba santa, nettles, mullein, and astragalus can also keep the immune system strong and healthy. Remember, herbs can be used as medicine, so it’s wise to consult with someone who is knowledgeable to make sure you’re taking the right herbs.

Whether sipping a steaming cup of herbal tea with a good rainy day novel, or spicing up the house with fragrant and aromatic smells from your kitchen, don’t forget to take advantage of this year’s harvest!

Acupuncture and Headaches

Headaches, even serious ones, are a part of the daily lives of millions of people. In fact, over 50 million people have experienced some form of severe headache at some point in their lives. Whether a headache is considered minor, or it is a severe migraine, it can take up valuable time during your day and leave you searching frantically for some sort of relief. Some turn to drugs. While this is good for quickly relieving pain for a while, these medications do not get to the root of the problem and address the cause(s) of the headache. They can also cause unwanted side effects, especially if taken over long periods of time.

A safe alternative is Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). These offer a natural and effective approach to relieving headache pain without the harmful side effects that medications cause. Using Traditional Chinese Medicine, an acupuncturist can incorporate a comprehensive diagnostic tool which will help him or her to understand and address the root cause(s) of your pain.

One very important part of getting to the root of the issue is understanding the different headache types. There are many factors in the TCM practice which could play a key role in the root cause or causes of your headaches. Some of these include body constitution, emotional health, excessive work, social and exercise activities, improper diet, physical trauma, and pregnancy. Factors such as specific times when a headache starts, how frequently they occur, where in the head they are located, what type of pain they feature, their triggers, and which remedies provide relief can also be very helpful.

With Acupuncture and TCM, you can take a natural, holistic, and whole-body approach to your health. Your acupuncturist will start by taking a detailed health history and performing a physical exam to determine how and why your body's vital energy, known as "Qi," is out of balance. With that information, they can help you discover what root causes are contributing to the overall problem. This information will help them to learn the type of headache that you are having, and address the underlying cause(s)...not just cover the symptoms.

It is very important to realize that acupuncture is not a "quick fix." The changes in your body will occur over time, maybe quickly, or maybe more slowly, depending on your overall constitution and health. You may come for one visit to address an acute issue, or several visits to address a chronic problem, the frequency of your visits will be designed to maximize your healing potential.



The Old Man and Worms

There are some tales which can change the listeners life. This could be one of them.

On a misty morning following an all night storm, a little girl walked down her road to catch the school bus. As she drew closer to her stop, she noticed an old man picking small items up off of the sidewalk and tossing them into the woods. As the little girl walked closer to where the man was, she realized that the items which he was tossing were actually worms. The morning sunlight glistened on the wiggling worms which had made their way out of the ground, and onto the road sometime during the night. There were thousands of them.

As the little girl watched, the old man picked up the worms one at a time, and tossed them back into the woods. She approached the man and introduced herself. "Excuse me, but there are thousands of worms stranded on this road. You cannot possibly make a difference with such a huge task." The old man simply smiled and looked up at the little girl as he picked up another worm and tossed it into the woods. "Made a difference to that one, didn't I?"

The old man did make a difference. Although the problems of the world may seem overwhelming, we can each make a difference. How can you change a small part of the world today?

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