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Acupuncture for Facial Rejuvenation

Acupuncture has been used to treat skin complaints and reduce signs of aging for centuries. In fact, facial rejuvenation acupuncture, also known as cosmetic acupuncture, has a recorded history going as far back as China's Sung Dynasty (960AD – 1270AD), when the Empress and the Emperor's concubines used it to engender beauty and good health.



Facial rejuvenation acupuncture can improve muscle tone, increase collagen production, tighten pores and boost circulation and moisture in the skin. Moreover, when acupuncture is used to create overall balance within the body, the physical, mental and emotional patterns that contribute to aging are addressed, helping you look and feel younger.

The theory behind facial acupuncture is that hair-thin needles inserted along wrinkles and frown lines stimulate energy and relax the muscles. This leads to a tightening of the facial muscles, which decreases sagging of the facial skin, and an increase in the production of collagen, filling in fine lines and wrinkles.

Benefits of Facial Rejuvenation Acupuncture

- Increases the production of collagen and elastin
- Improves muscle tone (preventing further aging and wrinkles)
- Improves local lymph and blood circulation
- Softens or erases fine lines and wrinkles
- Reduces the depth of deeper lines
- Decreases bags (puffiness) under the eyes
- Reduces or eliminates acne and rosacea
- Provides a consistently smoother and brighter face

To look and feel years younger, facial rejuvenation acupuncture offers less risk, expense and recovery time than medical alternatives. While this procedure cannot reshape facial features, it is a more subtle rejuvenation that can take years off one's face safely and naturally while improving overall health.

Treatments are personalized for each patient. If you would like to learn more about facial rejuvenation acupuncture, please call for a consultation today!

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Recipe for Nourishing Beauty - Sweet Rice Congee



Sweet black rice, when cooked with longan berries (euphoria longana) and Chinese dates, becomes a congee that nourishes blood and Qi.

In the Oriental medicine system of food cures, these three foods work together to enhance beauty and longevity.

- The sweet rice promotes the flow of liver Qi, which helps keep angry feelings at bay and leads to calmness.
- The Chinese dates (different from the Mediterranean variety) nourish

The 5-Minute Acupressure Face Lift

Here is a 5-Minute Acupressure Face Lift to smooth wrinkles and firm up the face.

To draining the lymph system and smooth the skin

- Begin at the center of the forehead using the thumbs, and stroke across the eyebrows. Repeat 3 times.
- With the pads of the thumb, move from the outside edge of the eyebrows to the hollow in front of the ear (Fig 1).
- Using 3 inner fingers of both hands to massage the back of the neck from middle towards outside for 30 seconds with circular motion.

To lift and tone the face, chin and neck

- Stroke upward in lines from the eyebrows into the hairline. Repeat 3 to 5 times (Fig 2).
- Press on DU20 (the point on the very top of the head) to bring energy upward. Repeat 3 to 5 times.
- Using the pads of the thumbs, stroke in a circular motion from the eyebrow to temple to jawline and to the points below the eye. Repeat 9 to 12 times (See Fig 3).
- For neck wrinkles: Stroke upward from the collar bone to the jawline. Repeat 3–5 times (See Fig 4).



blood and spleen, promoting restful sleep and mental clarity.

- Longan fruit, a blood enhancer, was used by the ancients to add luster to the skin. From a Western perspective, we know that longans contain large amounts of Vitamin C and phenolic compounds, which may help to detoxify and protect the liver.

Sweet Rice Congee

(Taken from Ancient Healing for Modern Women, by Dr. Xiolan Zhao, C.M.D.)

Ingredients:

- 6 cups water
- 1 cup black sweet rice (wash before using)
- ½ cup dried longan fruit
- 10 Chinese dates
- 2 tablespoons raw sugar
- ½ inch piece of fresh ginger, peeled and thinly sliced

Instructions:

In a large heavy saucepan, add 6 cups of water, black sweet rice, longan fruit, dates, and raw sugar. Bring to a boil over medium heat. Reduce heat and simmer for two hours, stirring occasionally. Garnish with ginger. Makes four servings.

Note: All ingredients are available at most Asian grocery stores.

Author: Elizabeth G. Lynch

Heart Health and Cholesterol

Hello Everyone,

In this issue we will explore the relationship between blood cholesterol levels and heart health. Just about everyone I meet can tell me their cholesterol numbers. Cholesterol is a complex topic and given the small amount of room in this space, I will only give a thumbnail sketch of what it is and what it does in your body. Please refer to the links I include for a more in-depth rendering of cholesterol.

In America we are told that cholesterol is something bad, something to be avoided. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Cholesterol is absolutely essential for life. So essential that nearly every cell in our body makes it. Every cell in our body needs cholesterol to maintain the integrity of its cell wall. Our nerves and brain require cholesterol for normal nerve function. And cholesterol is a precursor and building block for many hormones, especially sex hormones. It helps convert sunlight to Vitamin D. The list of good things cholesterol does goes on and on. We would quite literally die without it.

So why has cholesterol been demonized? Why are we so concerned with monitoring every morsel we put in our mouths? The answer is complex, but, mainly it seems to be bad science! I have been continuously stunned, through all the reading and research I've done, to realize how little hard science underlies the lipid hypothesis which says that the more fat and cholesterol you eat, the higher your risk for heart disease. In fact, the longest running and largest diet-heart research study done in the U.S., the Framingham Heart Study (www.framinghamheartstudy.org), concluded that "the more saturated fat and cholesterol a person ate, the lower their cholesterol numbers were (both total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol), and these same people had more normal body weight and were more physically active." What gives?

About 93% of all cholesterol is contained within our cells while the remaining 7% circulates in the blood. About 20% of blood cholesterol comes from our diet. The other 80% is made by the liver. The more cholesterol we consume in our food, the less our bodies make. The less cholesterol we eat, the more our bodies make, so there's a homeostatic balance that naturally occurs in most people.

Cholesterol is a waxy substance that's only slightly soluble in your bloodstream, so it is transported through the circulatory system within lipoproteins. There are several kinds of lipoproteins of varying densities. The more cholesterol a lipoprotein carries, the denser it becomes. There are high-density lipoproteins (HDL), intermediate-density (IDL), low-density (LDL), and very low-density (VLDL). Typically when you have a cholesterol screening, your physician checks the LDL and HDL, as well as total cholesterol and triglycerides.

The HDL is called "good" cholesterol because higher levels of it (greater than 50 in men; greater than 40 in women) seem to have a heart protective effect. HDL cleans up excess LDL cholesterol and transports it back to the liver. The higher your HDL levels, the better. You can increase HDL through exercise, and by eating moderate amounts of saturated fats like butter, full-fat dairy products, and meat. HDL levels are lowered by consumption of refined sugars and starches, such as high-fructose corn syrup, white flour, artificial sweeteners, etc.

The LDL cholesterol is considered 'bad' because it can cause inflammation in the arteries, especially if it is oxidized or damaged by free radicals (more on oxidized cholesterol and free radicals later!). In general, eating refined foods and trans fats raises LDL levels. Most people have one of two kinds of LDL and the distinction is crucial! The majority of people who have heart attacks and other heart disease

have a very small, dense kind of LDL. The other type of LDL is larger and fluffier, and this kind is associated with a healthier heart picture. The good news is, even if you now have the smaller, denser LDL, you can change it to the fluffier kind through diet. Guess what makes the dietary difference? Saturated fat! I know it seems so contrary to what we've heard all these years, but eating a moderate amount of saturated fat reduces heart disease risk! Next time you have a cholesterol screening done, ask your doctor to distinguish what kind of LDL you have.

Surprisingly, total blood cholesterol numbers do not seem to be as much of a risk factor after the age of 50. Again, this conclusion was furnished by the Framingham Heart Study which showed as you age, cholesterol may actually play a heart protective and antioxidant role in your arteries. Before age 50, total cholesterol above 240 is a significant risk factor for having a heart attack. Recent American studies indicate that on average people with an acute heart attack had lower than normal cholesterol and the risk of them being dead in 3 years after the heart attack was highest among those with the lowest cholesterol. Overall 50% of all heart attack victims had normal or low total cholesterol numbers before their heart attack. Many studies indicate that having too low a total cholesterol level (below 150) can actually be a risk factor for developing serious illnesses like cancer and infectious diseases.

Triglycerides are a true blood fat which are created by the liver as a way to store fat temporarily. Triglycerides are made from glucose. They are transported by VLDL. Healthy blood triglyceride levels should be below 150. If triglyceride levels are high, LDL cholesterol is usually high. A diet rich in refined foods and trans fats can elevate triglyceride levels and increase heart disease risk greatly. Conversely, eating a lower carbohydrate diet, specifically a lower refined carbohydrate diet, lowers triglyceride levels. There is an inverse relationship between HDL cholesterol and triglycerides. If HDL is high (> 50 in men and >40 in women), triglycerides will be low (<150). If HDL is low, triglycerides will be high, as will heart risk.

Interestingly, the standard low-fat (and high refined carbohydrate) diet approach to lowering cholesterol does often lower LDL cholesterol somewhat initially, but it also lowers HDL cholesterol and raises triglycerides, thereby increasing your overall heart disease risk. In a future installment, I will discuss how to use diet, exercise, and other lifestyle changes to reduce heart risk and help prevent heart disease.

I hope this information is helpful. Next month's newsletter installment will discuss the role of insulin in heart health. Insulin is a master hormone that controls human metabolism, and an insulin imbalance has been linked to poor heart health, obesity, diabetes, and many other serious illnesses. Thank you for your patronage! I invite all of you to give me feedback about this newsletter and any other health-related issues you want to discuss.

Yours in good health,

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