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Aging Well with Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine

Oriental medicine has a long history of healing and rejuvenation that teaches us a great deal about aging well. Two thousand years ago, ancient Chinese scholars described the stages of aging in the Huang Di Neijing (The Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic). They remind us that we cannot change our genetics, but we can change how we live to extend and improve the quality of our lives.

Acupuncture and Oriental medicine emphasize prevention over treatment. This makes a great deal of sense because treating an illness that has already damaged the body is much more difficult than preventing the illness from occurring in the first place. It is never too late. You can begin today.

Whatever your starting point, you can make positive changes to enhance the quality of your life. Supporting the different ways of improving your health and preventing illness, Oriental medicine promotes living a balanced life. A healthy diet, active lifestyle and emotional well-being are the basic components of Oriental medicine that help point you on the path toward a long and quality life.

Call today to see how acupuncture and Oriental medicine can help you live a longer and healthier life!



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Health Boosting Foods



Fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins are part of any healthy diet. Here are six nutrients that can enhance your health and vitality.

Garlic - Garlic boosts your immunity, increasing your ability to fight off infection. It also helps regulate blood sugar levels. One or two cloves of garlic a day is recommended for optimum health, so include it in your cooking!

Six Easy Tips for Greater Health and Longevity

Aging may be inevitable, but your later years can be vibrant and healthy if attention is given to supporting your physical, mental and emotional well-being. These tips are just a few of the ways that you can bring balance into your life. You don't need to try doing all of them at once. Focus on one or two of them at a time.

Practice Gratitude

Grateful people report higher levels of positive emotions, life satisfaction, vitality, optimism and lower levels of depression and stress according to Robert A. Emmons, a researcher and professor at University of California-Davis, who has authored four books on the subject of the psychology of gratitude. Dr. Emmons states that the disposition toward gratitude appears to enhance pleasant feeling states more than it diminishes unpleasant emotions. Grateful people do not deny or ignore the negative aspects of life, but they have a healthy attitude towards them.

Choose friends who are joyous people. See these people frequently and you will find your spirits rise. The older you get, the more important it is to make it a priority to spend time with people who give you joy. If you have people in your life who are constantly unhappy, limit the amount of time you spend with them. Try it, and you may find that you perk up!

Make Exercise a Priority

People who exercise more are less likely to be stressed and more likely to be satisfied with life, according to Danish researchers. Compared with sedentary people, joggers are 70 percent less likely to have high stress levels and life dissatisfaction.

We hear it all the time and it's true – if you don't use it you will lose it! Exercise keeps our bodies and minds in good shape. Couch potatoes who start moderate exercise (the equivalent of 17 to 34 minutes a day) experience the greatest happiness lift.

If jogging is not the best exercise for you, go for a long walk or try a traditional exercise like Tai Chi or Qi Gong. Qi Gong and Tai Chi are non-impact exercises that focus on repetitive movements with attention to breathing. Tai Chi and Qi Gong use gentle movements and low physical impact, which are ideal for aging bodies.

The benefits of these exercises include a slower heart rate, lowered blood pressure, and drops in adrenaline and cortisol levels. Making these exercises a regular practice can lead to better health and vitality. The Mayo Clinic reported results from two studies on these ancient practices that concluded they can also alleviate chronic pain.

Take a Day of Rest

Take a day of rest per week from your regular schedule to recharge. Rejuvenation for the body and mind is worth its weight in gold and you will be more productive with the rest of your time!

Get Good Sleep Regularly

Your body repairs itself best at night so allow plenty of time for it to do so. Good sleep patterns follow nature. Morning is bright and the most Yang time of day, indicating activity. Night is the dark period, a time to slow down and enter the Yin phase of the day.

Poor sleep has been linked to high blood pressure, atherosclerosis, heart failure, heart attacks, stroke, diabetes and obesity. Research has shown that getting at least eight hours of sleep is needed for good heart health.

Acupuncture has been proven successful in treating a wide array of sleep problems by focusing on the root of any disharmony in the body. It gives those who take advantage of it a better night's sleep and an overall improvement in physical and mental health.

Ginger - Ginger has been taken as a medicine by numerous cultures for thousands of years. This amazing spice is anti-inflammatory, reduces pain, and is excellent for many types of digestive distress (especially nausea.) More than one study has found that ginger may also be a potent cancer fighter.

Goji Berries - Small fruits that grow on evergreen shrubs in the Himalayas, Gou Qi Zi are slightly chewy and have a mild flavor. High in fiber and containing the highest antioxidant powers of any berry or fruit, they are used in Chinese medicine to increase longevity, strengthen the immune system, improve vision, protect the liver and improve circulation. The goji or wolf berry is widely available dried, and easily found as whole fruit or juice in natural-food stores.

Green Tea - There has been much research on the anti-carcinogenic properties of green tea. Studies of people in Asia who drink copious amounts of green tea daily have shown a correlation between green tea consumption and lower rates of a variety of cancers. Green tea is easy to find and can be purchased in most grocery stores and health food stores. It is refreshing iced or hot.

Alleviate and Manage Stress Levels

Stress is a normal part of life, but if left unmanaged, stress can lead to emotional, psychological, and even physical problems, including heart disease, high blood pressure, chest pains or an irregular heartbeat.

Humans were designed to handle short periods of intensely high stress followed by periods of relaxation. We were not designed to live with a constant low level stress that keeps us feeling overwhelmed. If you feel you have been under too many pressures for too long, stress reduction acupuncture can help you enjoy a more peaceful life.

Numerous studies have demonstrated the substantial benefits of acupuncture in the treatment of stress, anxiety and mental health. In addition to acupuncture, Oriental medicine offers a whole gamut of tools and techniques that can be integrated into your life to keep stress in check. These tools include Tui Na, Qi Gong exercises, herbal medicine, dietary therapy, meditations and acupressure that you can administer at home.

Address Health Concerns Quickly: Don't Wait!

Many diseases can be cured easily if they are caught early, but people often put off seeking treatment. They ignore important signals that something is wrong with their body. We all get warnings about our health and well-being, but these warnings are like traffic lights. They tell us what we ought to do, but they cannot make us do it.

Want to learn more about how acupuncture and Oriental medicine can enrich and improve your life? Call for an appointment today!

Good Fats, Bad Fats: Know The Difference

Any discussion about dietary fats today is likely to be a negative commentary on the evils of eating foods like butter, milk, cheese, meat and eggs. This is the result of 40 years of propaganda that is based on a faulty premise. The faulty premise is that saturated fats and cholesterol are the causes of heart disease, cancer, and the myriad of other health maladies that afflict the modern world. This premise was essentially fabricated in the late 1950s, in part by the margarine and shortening industry to protect their market share. This premise holds sway today despite any real scientific verification. In fact, many studies have concluded just the opposite; that people who eat the most saturated fats and cholesterol have the least amount of heart and other chronic disease and they also live longer.

Fats are essential nutrients. The brain and central nervous system are made of more than 50% fat. Every one of our cell membranes needs fat and cholesterol to make healthy cell walls. The misinformation about dietary fats has removed many of the important natural and traditional fats from the typical Western diet, and replaced those fats with largely polyunsaturated oils and trans fats, both of which cause problems. We are starting to see the health consequences of eating bad fats, with rising rates of obesity, diabetes, heart attacks and cancer.

Historically, Americans have gotten most of their fat from meat, fish, dairy, eggs, and lard, with a small percentage coming in the form of vegetable, olive, coconut, and palm oils. That has gradually changed over the last century with the increased production and use of polyunsaturated vegetable oils, which have been touted as more healthy and heart friendly, despite evidence to the contrary.

Honey - Known as Feng Mi in Oriental medicine, honey has many health benefits, and is often used in combination with other herbs. It contains anti-oxidants and the darker the honey, the higher the anti-oxidant content and deeper the flavor. Honey can be eaten or applied topically. It is anti-bacterial, anti-viral and anti-fungal.

Throughout history, honey has been used to soothe and clear the skin, and encourage the growth of healthy tissue. You might enjoy trying raw honey as a facial mask. Organic raw honey that has not been pasteurized, clarified or filtered is your best choice.

Omega 3 Fatty Acids - Anti-inflammatory essential fatty acids help keep joints healthy, reduce pain and swelling and can also help with depression, stress, arthritis and menopause. Omega-3, Omega-6 and Omega-9 oils are fats that directly affect cognitive, cellular and kidney function. Foods rich in Omega-3 fatty acids include: salmon, sardines, tuna and other cold water fish; nuts and seeds, notably flaxseeds, hemp seeds and walnuts; and soybeans and winter squash.

Today, most vegetable, nut, and seed oils are extracted by a combination of heat and extraction chemicals such as hexane, which is an industrial solvent and is toxic. The oils are heated during extraction, which causes the oil to become rancid. Then it's de-gummed, neutralized, de-waxed, bleached, filtered, and deodorized to hide the rancidity! This processing allows the oils to remain 'stable', i.e., they have a longer shelf life. Longer shelf life equals more profits for the food industry.

Because polyunsaturated oils are highly subject to rancidity, they increase our need for Vitamin E and other antioxidants. This is true for all processed foods. When eaten, processed foods increase our need for other nutrients because they start out so nutrient deficient. Excess consumption of oil is especially harmful to the reproductive organs and lungs; both of which are sites for a huge increase in cancer rates in the US. Excess commercial oil consumption interferes with prostaglandin production which leads to a host of complaints ranging from PMS to autoimmune disorders. Disruption in prostaglandin production leads to an increase tendency to form blood clots and therefore heart attacks and strokes.

Trans fats are created when oils are hydrogenated. This means that a hydrogen atom has been added to the oil. Again, this benefits the food processing industry by increasing shelf life. However, research clearly shows that these products are also decreasing your shelf life! Trans fat consumption is linked to heart disease, cancer, strokes, diabetes, obesity, mental illness and immune diseases. You find trans fats in virtually every processed food available. Fast food and junk foods have high amounts of these deadly fats. Individual meals in fast food restaurants now provide several times more trans fats than they did just a decade ago for the same meal.

Healthy fats and oils are the ones that don't oxidize or get rancid quickly. Naturally occurring fats and oils that have been dietary staples for millennia are the saturated ones found in animal and plant foods - foods like meat, eggs, full fat dairy products (preferably raw!), coconut oil, palm oil, olive oil, cod liver oil. Make sure the meat and eggs and dairy are from organic and pastured animals (meaning animals that are grass fed, and are free to move around outside). Grass fed dairy and meat have more conjugated linoleic acid, which has been shown to be protective against cancer and perhaps heart disease, too! Butterfat has a beneficial impact on your heart and circulatory system, amongst its many benefits.

As much as possible avoid all vegetable oils, hydrogenated and partially hydrogenated oils, and trans fats. Even organic vegetable oils are suspect because they've been heated and some are chemically extracted. Read labels. Most processed and packaged foods contain hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils. Make sure your food is as close to natural as nature intended it.

To your good health,

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