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Treating Diabetes with Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine

It is estimated that 25.8 million men, women and children in the United States have diabetes. Diabetes is a disease in which the body does not produce or properly use insulin, a hormone that is needed to convert sugar, starches and other food into energy needed for daily life. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention the risk for death is approximately twice that of persons of similar age without diabetes.

The cause of diabetes continues to be a mystery, although both genetics and environmental factors such as obesity and lack of exercise appear to play roles. Complications of diabetes include heart disease, hypertension, eye problems, kidney disease, nervous system disease, periodontal disease, amputation, fatigue, depression, and complications during pregnancy.

In order to manage diabetes, it is essential for people to make healthy lifestyle choices in diet, exercise, and other health habits. Another important factor when treating diabetes is creating a support team of health care professionals. This support team may include your primary doctor, an eye doctor, nurses, a dietitian, and a licensed acupuncturist.

Diabetes according to Oriental Medicine

According to Traditional Oriental Medicine, diabetes is caused by an imbalance of the cyclical flow of Qi within the meridians and organ systems.

This particular imbalance produces heat that depletes the body's fluids and Qi causing symptoms such as:

- Fatigue
- Lethargy
- Unexplained Weight Loss
- Excessive Thirst (Polydipsia)
- Excessive Urination (Polyuria)
- Excessive Eating (Polyphagia)
- Poor Wound Healing
- Infections
- Irritability
- Blurry Vision



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There are a lot of complications caused by diabetes that require extra attention. If you have diabetes make sure you monitor these five areas on a regular basis.

Blood Sugar

Understand how diabetes changes how food affects your body. Know the signs of low blood sugar. Have a plan in place to correct your blood sugar levels when necessary.

Heart Health

Diabetics have a higher risk of heart attacks and stroke. Optimal cholesterol and blood pressure goals are lower for diabetics.

How Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine Treats Diabetes

In treating diabetes, Oriental medicine offers a way to address each patient individually to eliminate the symptoms associated with diabetes and reduce the need for insulin. A variety of techniques may be used during treatment including acupuncture, herbal medicine, bodywork, lifestyle/dietary recommendations and energetic exercises. The treatment for diabetes focuses on regulating the circulation of blood and Qi and balancing the organ systems to improve pancreatic function and address internal heat and the depletion of fluids. When treating diabetes, acupuncture and Oriental medicine can assist the body to regain its normal healthy functioning.

To add acupuncture and Oriental medicine to your arsenal when fighting diabetes and learn more about how acupuncture and Oriental medicine can improve your health and well being call for a consultation today!

Infections

Due to higher blood sugar levels bacteria grow and infections develop more quickly. Treating infections early on can prevent serious complications later.

Feet

Diabetics may suffer from neuropathy, or nerve death in their feet and can get an injury or serious infection without feeling it.

Exercise

Exercise has been shown to decrease blood sugars and improve insulin resistance, the main issue in those with type II diabetes.

Aspartame: The Sweet Poison - Part II

Aspartame has 3 components: phenylalanine, aspartic acid, and methanol (wood alcohol). Those who defend aspartame, state that phenylalanine and aspartic acid are harmless and natural components of our diet. This is only partially true. Phenylalanine and aspartic acid are amino acids that are normally found in foods we eat. However, they can only be considered natural and harmless when they are consumed in combination with other amino acids (proteins), fats, and carbohydrates in the form of whole foods. When you eat foods in their natural state, proteins, fats, and carbohydrates exist in an ideal relationship to each other and they promote health.

When phenylalanine and aspartic acid are consumed as free form amino acids, as they are in aspartame, they enter your central nervous system in unusually high concentrations causing neurotoxic effects. This effect is linked to headaches, mental confusion, balance problems, seizures, numbness, cardiac arrest, suicidal tendencies, and even death.

For most people, it's not the actual amino acids or methanol that causes the toxic side effects in your body, but the breakdown products they convert to on the grocery shelf or as they are metabolized in your body. Phenylalanine decomposes into DKP, a known carcinogen, when it is exposed to warm temperatures or prolonged storage. And even if aspartame products are kept at a cooler temperature, you are still at risk.

Even at cooler temperatures, methanol can spontaneously break down to a colorless toxin known as formaldehyde. Formaldehyde can accumulate in your cells and react with other cellular proteins such as enzymes and DNA. This cumulative reaction may result in severe consequences for those who consume aspartame products on a regular basis. Formaldehyde can cause methanol poisoning, which can result in fatal kidney damage, blindness, multiple organ system failure, and death.

Formaldehyde affects people in various ways. Some are very sensitive to it while others have no noticeable reaction to it. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, formaldehyde causes cancer in lab animals and likely causes cancer in humans. In 1999, the Western Journal of Medicine published a report suggesting that since formaldehyde is a known inducer of cancer, because it alters DNA, anyone with breast and prostate cancer who consumes aspartame should be concerned. I am not certain why they mentioned only those two cancers. I'd suggest that anyone with cancer of any kind should avoid aspartame. And if you don't want to develop cancer, aspartame, and other food additives, should be avoided.

It is important to understand that the source of funds for a research study strongly influences that study's findings. This becomes crystal clear when you examine the results of aspartame research. In an analysis of 166 articles published in medical journals from 1980-1985, it was found that 100% of the 74 studies financed by the food industry attested to the sweetener's safety. However, of the 92 independently funded articles, 91% identified adverse health effects.

One of the problems with the scientific studies conducted on artificial sweeteners, aspartame in particular, is that the clinical trials used the artificial sweetener in its pure powder form. There simply are no studies that evaluate aspartame in the form it's typically found in the consumer market. For example, there are no studies to evaluate the aspartame breakdown products in diet sodas that may have been sitting in the back of a hot truck, then on the grocery shelf for months. In the case of aspartame and many other food additives, the unstable conditions frequently encountered can and do increase breakdown products which then significantly increases their injurious effects.

Both the Air Force's magazine "Flying Safety" and the Navy's magazine "Navy Physiology" published articles warning about the many dangers of aspartame use. The articles note that ingestion of aspartame can make pilots more susceptible to seizures and vertigo. Over 600 pilots have reported symptoms, including some who have suffered grand mal seizures in the cockpit!

I can't think of a good reason to eat aspartame. To me it has a strange, chemical taste anyway. There are many alternatives to its use as a sweetener. Please read food labels carefully. Aspartame is in a lot of processed foods and is best avoided.

To your continued good health,

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