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Your Health this Summer

In Oriental medicine, summer is symbolic of maximum activity or greatest yang, which means that it is a time of heat, outgoingness, and moving outward in nature and in our lives. This is the season to nourish and pacify our spirits while maximizing our potential as we find joy in the hot summer days and warm summer nights.



Summer is ruled by the fire element. The fire element corresponds to the heart and small intestine, the southerly direction, the climatic condition of heat, the color red, the emotion of happiness or joy, the sound of laughter, the taste of bitterness and the odor of burning. Fire controls the blood vessels and is reflected in the face and complexion.

Signs that the fire element is in balance include a strong and healthy heart, a calm mind and the ability to sleep soundly. When the fire element is imbalanced, we may either lack joy (depression) or have an excess of joy (mania). Indicators of an imbalance in the fire element also include agitation, nervousness, heartburn, and insomnia.

This is a great time to schedule your acupuncture summer tune up! Call for more information.

Mango and Peach Salsa

An easy and healthy peach and mango salsa recipe. The delicate flavors of mangos and peaches combine with onions and garlic in this sweet-and-savory salsa recipe. Try it with chips for a light snack on a hot summer night, or add to a vegetable burrito for an unusual twist.



INGREDIENTS:

- 2 mangos, peeled and chopped
- 2 fresh peaches, peeled and chopped
- 1 sweet onion, diced
- 1 medium tomato, diced (optional)
- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
- dash salt and pepper to taste

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Cancer Prevention in Every Aisle



Nearly everything in the produce aisle can help you prevent cancer, but there are items throughout the supermarket that can protect your health and the health of your family.

Produce Aisle Picks

Cantaloupe - a great source of carotenoids, plant chemicals that act as antioxidants shown to reduce the risk of lung cancer.

Kale and cabbage - cruciferous vegetables are widely considered to be one of the healthiest food choices you can make. Included in this family of vegetables are broccoli, cauliflower, radishes, brussels sprouts, kale, cabbage and bok choy. Cruciferous vegetables are high in vitamins, fiber, and potent anti-cancer phytochemicals.

DIRECTIONS:

Combine all ingredients in a bowl. If you have a food processor, you can process all the ingredients in chunks, rather than dicing and chopping.

Chill for at least one hour, to allow flavors to combine, and stir well before serving.

Serve chilled and enjoy!

Benefits of Acupuncture in Cancer Care

On Sunday June 6th, cancer survivors celebrated the 23rd annual National Cancer Survivors Day, sponsored by the National Cancer Survivors Day Foundation. The event, which includes hundreds of gatherings across the US, is a time to celebrate life. Here are some ways that acupuncture can help while being treated for and recovering from cancer.



Cancer treatments are aggressive and cause numerous unwanted side effects as well as a lowered immune system. Acupuncture is an excellent adjunctive therapy in cancer treatments because of its ability to relieve pain, reduce side effects, accelerate recovery and improve quality of life.

What Acupuncture is used for during Cancer Treatment

Acupuncture provides a total approach to health care for people with cancer. It can be used to address many of the concerns that come up during and after chemotherapy, radiation, biological therapy and surgery.

According to the National Cancer Institute, acupuncture may cause physical responses in nerve cells, the pituitary gland, and parts of the brain. These responses can cause the body to release proteins, hormones, and brain chemicals that control a number of body functions. It is proposed that, by these actions, acupuncture affects blood pressure and body temperature, boosts immune system activity, and causes the body's natural painkillers, such as endorphins, to be released.

Areas that acupuncture has shown the most promise include:

- Nausea and Vomiting
- Dry Mouth, Night Sweats and Hot Flashes
- Stress, Anxiety and Fatigue
- Pain Management
- Increasing White Blood Cell Count

To learn more about how acupuncture can safely and effectively be incorporated into care for people with cancer, please call for a consultation today.

Source: National Cancer Institute. www.cancer.org

According to the American Institute for Cancer, there is solid evidence that links cruciferous vegetables and protection against cancer. Studies have shown that this vegetable group has the ability to stop the growth of cancer cells for tumors in the breast, uterine lining, lung, colon, liver, and cervix. And studies that track the diets of people over time have found that diets high in cruciferous vegetables are linked to lower rates of prostate cancer.

It is recommended that we eat 3-5 servings of cruciferous vegetables per week. It's best to eat these veggies raw or only lightly steamed so they retain their cancer fighting phytochemicals.

Freezer Aisle Pick

Edamame (soybeans) - These cancer-fighting beans contain phytoestrogens, that may help prevent estrogen-driven cancers by binding to estrogen receptors. They are also good for the men of the household since evidence suggests the isoflavones found in soy products may help fight prostate cancer.

Cereal Aisle Pick

Whole Grain Oats - Oats have the highest proportion of soluble fiber of any grain. Fiber is rich in antioxidants, helps fight colon cancer and phenolic compounds in whole grains may help reduce the risk of certain GI cancers. Pick cereals high in folate, fiber and/or flaxseed.

Beverage Aisle Picks

Orange juice - this favorite breakfast beverage is a powerful source of folate which has been linked to lowered risk for GI and pancreatic cancer.

Green tea - green tea is lower in caffeine than coffee and can help prevent prostate cancer and possibly bladder cancer.

Chemo-Induced Nausea Study

Effect of Acupuncture on Chemotherapy-Induced Nausea and Vomiting

According to the National Cancer Institute, of all the investigated effects of acupuncture on cancer-related or chemotherapy-related symptoms and disorders, the positive effect of acupuncture on chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting is the most convincing.

Numerous studies have consistently shown acupuncture to be effective in the treatment of chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting as well as as postoperative and morning sickness nausea and vomiting.

A randomized placebo-controlled clinical trial investigated the effect of electro-acupuncture on chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting in 104 patients with breast cancer who were undergoing a highly emetogenic (causes vomiting) chemotherapy regimen. The patients were randomly assigned to receive low-frequency electro-acupuncture at classic acupuncture points for nausea and vomiting once daily for 5 days, minimal needling at control points with mock electro-acupuncture on the same schedule, or no adjunct needling. All patients received concurrent antiemetic drugs (prochlorperazine, lorazepam, and diphenhydramine) and high-dose chemotherapy (cyclophosphamide, cisplatin, and carmustine).

The main outcome measures were the total number of emesis (vomiting) episodes and the proportion of emesis-free days occurring during the 5-day study period. The data revealed significantly fewer emesis episodes in the electro-acupuncture treatment group compared with those in the minimal needling and drug-only control groups.

Source: Shen J, Wenger N, Glaspy J, et al.: Electroacupuncture for control of myeloablative chemotherapy-induced emesis: A randomized controlled trial. JAMA 284 (21): 2755-61, 2000.

Pomegranate juice - this juice is extremely antioxidant-rich and helps prevent colon and prostate cancer.

Soy milk - also made from soy beans, soy milk works the same way as edamame to fight cancer.

Household Aisle Picks

Sunscreen – summer is starting, so lather on the SPF each and every time you go out in the sun to block exposure to ultraviolet rays.

Mop or damp cloth - it's important to get rid of dust without spreading it around your home. Recent evidence has shown that dust can contain carcinogens that are known to cause cancer.

OK, So What Do I Eat?

Hello Everyone,

This installment will cover the basics of what I consider to be a heart healthy diet. Everyone's dietary and nutritional needs vary so you will need to tailor my recommendations to suit your tastes and needs. My recommendations are based on research and study I've done over the past 30 years. They are also a reflection of my clinical experience with my clients and of my own journey with my diet that has taken me through the experience of at different times being vegetarian, vegan, macrobiotic, and the finally back to my roots as an omnivore.

So far I've mostly focused on what not to eat. Now let's talk about what constitutes, in my opinion, a good heart healthy diet. Forget the USDA Food Pyramid. According to it we are supposed to eat 6-11 servings of bread, pasta, cereal, and other grains every day! The very foods that cause blood sugar and insulin levels to go nuts are what's supposed to be heart healthy? NO! Our diets should be nutrient rich and full of all the micro- and macro-nutrients we need to be really well and healthy. Plus it needs to be full of foods we actually enjoy eating. Otherwise what's the point?

Be sure to buy as much of your food as possible from local and organic sources. Not only is organic produce free from harmful pesticides and herbicides, but organic fruits and veggies contain up to 50% more nutritional value than non-organic produce. Eggs and chickens should be from free range and organic sources. Meat is best when the animals are grass fed and organic. Dairy products are most nutritious and healthy for you when they are raw, meaning unpasteurized and unhomogenized. Please avoid no-fat and low-fat dairy products as they contain skim milk powder, which is a known carcinogen and it also causes hardening and scarring of the arteries, a condition known as atherosclerosis.

1. **VEGETABLES:** Make sure you eat lots of fresh vegetables every day. Eat seasonally, locally, and organic as much as possible. The less pesticides your body is exposed to, the better. Include a variety of vegetables including the cruciferous family of broccoli, cauliflower, brussel sprouts, cabbage, kale, collards, mustard greens, bok choy, etc. Cruciferous vegetables have anti-cancer properties and they provide lots of critical vitamins and minerals. They are also high in antioxidants which protect your cardiovascular system against free radical damage. Onions, leeks, chives, and garlic all provide essential nutrients and the onion family in general, especially garlic, has a lot of heart healthy benefits by lowering cholesterol and blood pressure. Dark leafy greens are an important source of calcium. Strike a balance between cooked and raw vegetables. Eat more raw (salads, slaws, etc.) in the warmer months and more cooked vegetables in the colder months. It is important to cook most of the spinach you eat as cooking neutralizes much of the oxalic acid and other anti-nutrients in this wonderful dark green veggie. Eat a portion of your veggie intake as fermented ones like sauerkraut and kimchi. If you are dealing with weight or blood sugar issues, be sure to limit your consumption of potatoes and yams to once a week or so.

2. **FRUITS:** Eat a variety of fresh fruits. Fruits provide a bonanza of vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients that are vital to good health. They also provide us with that all important sweet taste. Fruit sugars act very differently in the body than refined sugars do. Whole, fresh fruits do not spike blood sugar levels. Avoid canned fruit and fruit juice (unless it's fresh squeezed!). Most canned fruit and commercial fruit juices have added sugars, and the juices are usually diluted as well. In general, eat fruits along with or after a meal as a dessert. Fresh fruits and vegetables should make up a major portion of your diet.

3. **MEAT, FISH, and EGGS:** Animal foods are a rich and irreplaceable source of essential nutrients. Certain nutrients, like Vitamin B-12, are easily available from meat. Fish is a good source of protein and essential fatty acids, especially if you eat deep sea fish like tuna, mackerel, swordfish, etc. Choose fish that is wild harvested, not farm raised. Meat should be organic. Beef is most nutritious and beneficial if it is grass fed. Grass fed cows contain more Omega 3 fatty acids in their meat. Omega 3 essential fatty acids act as anti-inflammatories, lowering your risk of heart disease, arthritis, and even cancer. The meat from grain fed cows has more Omega 6 and 9 fatty acids, which promotes inflammation in the body, thereby raising your risk of heart disease, arthritis, and cancer. Grass fed beef also contains alpha linolenic acid which has anti-cancer properties. Chicken is best if it's free range and hormone and antibiotic free. Eggs are nature's perfect food and they do not raise cholesterol levels; free range, organic ones are best!

4. **DAIRY PRODUCTS:** Avoid eating no-fat and low-fat dairy products. They all contain skim milk powder which is carcinogenic and as we've already seen, promotes heart disease. And there is virtually no hard evidence that supports the belief that eating good-quality saturated fats raises cholesterol or increases heart risk. In fact, just the opposite seems to be true. As I mentioned in an earlier issue, in the Framingham Diet Heart Study, the people who ate the most saturated fat

and cholesterol had the lowest risk of heart disease. Raw dairy foods are preferable to pasteurized and homogenized ones. Pasteurization destroys the very enzyme, lactase, which we need to digest the lactose in dairy foods. It's the main reason many people are "lactose intolerant". Pasteurization also denatures the protein available in milk, makes the calcium less absorbable, and destroys the Vitamin C, B-12, and B-6 and it kills beneficial bacteria. Many stores are now selling raw milk, cheese, cream, etc. And there are local, organic, and grass fed dairy farms that sell good quality raw dairy products(see Resources at the end of this article). Fermented dairy foods like yogurt and kefir are easier to digest and are usually well tolerated for those with a dairy sensitivity. Eat real butter, not that fake stuff. Good, yellow butter from raw milk contains lots of Vitamin A and D needed for the assimilation of calcium and protein. So eat butter on all your vegetables, and especially on the leafy green ones. Butterfat is also rich in fatty acids which protect against disease and strengthen the immune system.

5. GRAINS: Whole grains provide lots of Vitamins B and E, the very nutrients that are lost when whole grains are processed into refined grains and flours. Once a whole grain is ground into flour, for example, the oils in the grain become rancid very quickly. It's best to grind or crack whole grains just before using them. When you buy them, it's best to buy them packaged rather than from the loose bulk bins. Once grains are exposed to air they start to spoil. Many cultures soak their whole grains before cooking and eating them. (see Sally Fallon's book in the Resources section for more information about soaking grains). Soaking grains removes some of the phytic acid and other anti-nutrients that are present. Phytic acid inhibits mineral absorption in the intestines and also can cause GI distress. The grains that I think are most healthful include oats, quinoa, millet, buckwheat, basmati rice, and amaranth. Rice and millet have less phytic acid and are more easily digested. Many people are gluten intolerant so avoiding wheat, rye, and barley is recommended for those folks. Grains can also be sprouted, which increases the amount of vitamins B and C. Ezechiel bread, made from sprouted grain is widely available now. I do not recommend breakfast cereals, including granola. All cereals are produced via an 'extrusion' method. Extrusion uses high heat and pressure to make those cute little flakes and "O's". The process destroys many valuable nutrients in grains, causes fragile oils in the grain to become rancid and renders some of the protein toxic. Granola is largely indigestible.

6. OILS, NUTS, and SEEDS: Nuts and seeds, like grains, should be soaked or sprouted before they are eaten. Nuts and seeds should be bought raw and unsalted. Raw nuts and seeds can be soaked overnight in salt water and then roasted. The soaking removes some of the anti-nutrients. Modern diets contain as much as 30% of calories from polyunsaturated oils like canola, corn, safflower, and peanut oils. A much healthier amount would be around 4%. Polyunsaturated oils cause a lot of health problems (heart disease, cancer, autoimmune illnesses, learning disabilities, etc.) because they turn rancid when exposed to heat (cooking) and processing (chemical extraction). Rancid oils produce free radicals which damages tissue, including DNA and RNA. Use cold pressed, organic, extra virgin olive oil, coconut oil, ghee (clarified butter), expeller pressed sesame or sunflower oil for cooking and salad dressings. Please read Sally Fallon's article entitled "The Oiling of America" at wapf.org.

Above all, eating is meant to be a pleasurable experience. Take your time, chew your food well, and enjoy the company of friends and family while dining. Be grateful for your food and all the people and elements that have contributed to what you are eating, including the animals and plants, the farmers, the sun and rain and soil.

To your good health,
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RESOURCES:

1. Green Circle Farm: local, mostly organic meat, dairy, eggs, vegetables. Contact Erika Peterson (epeterson@comcast.net) for more information about local raw milk, and other dairy, sources. greencirclefarmpa.com
2. For information about the benefits of raw milk products go to realmilk.com
3. Weston A. Price Foundation at wapf.org. Great website for information about eating nutrient dense foods, based on the pioneering work of Dr. Weston Price.
4. "Nourishing Traditions" by Sally Fallon. Cookbook that's full of good recipes and great information on how to eat a more traditional, whole foods diet.
5. Whole Foods grocery store Pittsburgh 412 441 7960.
6. East End Food Co-op Pittsburgh 412 242 3598.