



HEAVENLY HERBS and ACUPUNCTURE

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TREATING INFLUENZA and VIRAL INFECTIONS using NATURAL MEDICINE®

1) PREVENTION

Prevention is based on improving your immune system to handle exposure to a strong virus.

a) Basic Lifestyle Recommendations

- i) Maintain psychological well-being with a balanced state of mind - anxiety over getting the flu will cause disharmony and make you more likely to become ill (of course, this is the case for your overall health, i.e., a positive attitude will help keep you healthy)!
- ii) Get adequate rest and sleep - current research proves that sleep deprivation reduces your immune function.
- iii) Exercise - besides all the well-known benefits, it also boosts immunity!
- iv) Diet - reduction of simple carbohydrates (sugars) and fat will reduce oxidative stress, and therefore immunity. Optimize your immunity by eating vegetables (especially greens) and fruit (especially red and blue ones; berries).

b) Astragalus

This herb is an 'adaptogenic' - an herb to increase the body's resistance. All adaptogenic herbs are high in antioxidants, even though this is not their primary mode of action. This herb is found in traditional Chinese herbal formulas to prevent the common cold, flu and allergies. There are several formulas available in my office for this purpose: 'Evergreen Herbs Immune +', 'Zand Astragalus formula', and 'Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang' (a Traditional Chinese Medicine formula).

c) Medicinal Mushrooms

There are many different types of medicinal mushrooms that are widely available now. The most commonly known to the lay-person are Reishi, Shiitake and Maitake. These mushrooms are easily available in the dried form in the supermarket nowadays, and can be used in a variety of ways in different recipes. However, since adding these mushrooms to your diet on a daily basis is difficult, supplements may be the best way to boost your defense. I carry products such as 'Metagenics ImmunoCore' which contain several types of mushrooms, along with other ingredients. I also carry a few different tinctures of various medicinal mushrooms in addition to those above, both individually and in combination formulas. Both 'Zand Astragalus formula' and 'Evergreen Herbs Immune +' include medicinal mushrooms also.

d) Grapefruit Seed Extract

This extract is available in both capsule and liquid form. It is an excellent remedy for all types of infections (viral, bacterial and fungal/yeast) and is commonly used to boost the immune system to prevent infections also. However, don't take year round like adaptogenics or antioxidants since it will lose its effectiveness when you really need to combat an infection. Nutribiotic is the most common brand, and one product, 'Defense Plus' includes both Astragalus and Medicinal Mushrooms!

e) Antioxidants

Most of us know about the benefits of antioxidants (they prevent free radical damage or oxidative stress), but many of us still do not supplement with these. It is virtually impossible to get high dosages of these even in a very healthy diet to prevent major illness and disease.

i) Vitamin C (Ascorbic Acid)

This vitamin still cannot be surpassed as to its benefits to our health. Research on Vitamin C still continues today showing the benefits of using it as disease prevention: from the common cold to cardiovascular disease to cancer to cataracts (not to mention mental illness and diabetes and more!)

A recommended dosage during chronic stress and/or chronic illness, or exposure to a strong virus is 3,000 to 6,000 mg (or 3-6 grams) a day. Taking this dosage long-term is absolutely safe (Dr. Linus Pauling, the 'father of Vitamin C' would recommend dosages as high as 18,000 mg/day)! Take it to 'bowel tolerance' which means that if the dosage is too high for you, loose stool or diarrhea will result (which is not desired!) - just taper back on the dosage a bit to determine what works for you.

If you have an ulcer, heartburn or GERD, or stomach digestion issues, use the variety termed 'Ester-C' which is non-acidic and gentle on the stomach.

ii) Vitamin D

This vitamin is now the panacea of today (if there is such a thing)!! It has been proven now to be anti-viral, anti-bacterial and anti-cancer, amongst helping many health conditions! The best form is D3 (or cholecalciferol). It is in Cod Liver Oil, the old folk remedy, which is now becoming popular again. However, vegetarians need to use D2 (or ergocalciferol). Dosages of 2,000-5,000 IU/day are now recommended.

iii) Vitamin E

Another fantastic antioxidant with numerous benefits (supports estrogen production in women, helps with cardiovascular disease, immune-enhancing benefits, anti-inflammatory, anti-cancer, etc.) The best form is considered to be d-alpha-tocopherol, but research has also shown that a combination form may be the best. I carry the Metagenics brand. I recommend 1,200 IU/day, especially for women.

2) FLU SYMPTOMS

a) Initial symptoms

There are many anti-viral herbal remedies that may completely rid the body of symptoms if taken early enough and your immune system is not compromised. So as soon as any symptoms arise (such as chills/fever, bodyaches, sore throat, fatigue, coughing, headache), consider these medicinals:

i) Oscillococcinum

This homeopathic (single) remedy has been used commonly for years in Western Europe for both flu prevention and treatment.

ii) BHI-Heel FluPlus

This formula has several ingredients that help with the initial symptoms noted above (including nausea/vomiting). It also contains 'Influenza' homeopathically which is why it can work so well (the theory of how homeopathy works based on the 'law of similars' is beyond the scope of this document).

iii) Yin Qiao San

This formula is very commonly used for first symptoms of a common cold or flu, and especially works on sore throats, fever and headaches. It is available in both pill or tea form.

b) Obvious Flu Symptoms

i) Ban Lan Gen Chong Ji

This is a Chinese medicinal herbal tea that is both anti-viral and anti-bacterial. It is excellent for sore throats, and both tastes good and feels good 'going down!' (This is one of my 'best-sellers' all year round!)

ii) Chuan Xin Lian Pian

This traditional Chinese herbal formula is specifically an anti-viral remedy. It was used in Asia during the SARS and Avian Flu outbreaks a few years ago, with great success.

iii) Evergreen Herbs Herbal ABX

This remedy is for any infectious disease (viral or bacterial), and is full of strong anti-infection Chinese Medicinals (most are from Taiwan, and because of their geographic isolation, they maintain potent effect without micro-organism resistance). This formula was created by a third-generation Chinese herbalist and pharmacologist. It is often combined with other formulas depending on the type of infection (i.e., upper vs. lower respiratory, intestinal, urinary, etc.)

iv) Best: Formula based on Diagnosis

The most efficient way to rid the body of a strong virus using natural remedies is to take a medicinal herbal tea customized to the patient based on a diagnosis by a qualified holistic practitioner (of course, this is the case for any acute or chronic illness or disease). See my other handout 'What is Chinese Herbal Medicine?' (on the website at: http://heavenly-herbs.com/?p=what_is_herbal_medicine) for details, but basically it is a combination of herbs that one makes into a 'decoction' and the typical dosage is one cup, 3x/day for a period of time. (A customized herbal tincture could also be used). This is also more readily absorbed, and therefore stronger than taking a standard formula in pill form.

3) PREVENTION and TREATMENT both: ACUPUNCTURE

Acupuncture boosts immunity by stimulating white blood cell production and treats infections (both viral and bacterial) by stimulating phagocytosis (a cellular process that eliminates pathogens). (Consider giving it a try - it treats any health condition plus also calms your mind!)