

NATURE'S RHYTHM

TRADITIONAL ACUPUNCTURE
ANNE SMUCKER, LICENSED ACUPUNCTURIST

Summer Edition

Dear Friends

Thank you for your support over the past three months. Several developments have taken place in my work which I'd like to share with you.

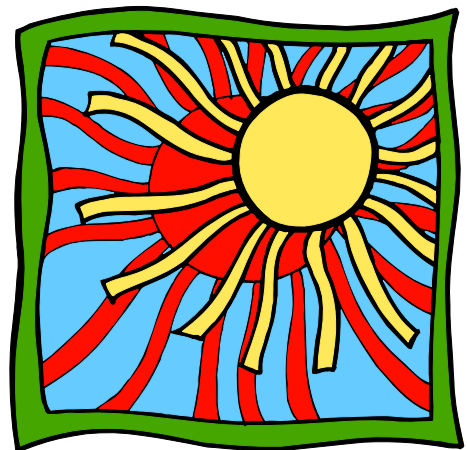
I've added a Five Element style moxa treatment to my practice. This therapy stimulates the acupuncture points with heat only and is particularly helpful for people with chronic diseases. The first Asian medical treatment I experienced, in the early 80's, involved heat stimulation of the acupuncture points and I wanted to offer a similar technique in my practice. This new offering has given me the chance to set up a second office in my home for moxa treatment. (It can be a smoky experience!)

I attended a seminar in Boston last month to learn more about the treatment of mood and anxiety disorders with acupuncture. The 3 days were presented by Rosa Schyner who, to my delight, told us that she had been the first acupuncturist in Charlottesville. Rosa conducts research through the National Institutes of Health and has written a book entitled: *Acupuncture in the Treatment of Depression: A Manual for Practice and Research*.

I've just finished a series of Master Gardener classes offered through the Albemarle Extension Agency. This title will be conferred after I complete 50 hours of voluntary service in the community. The reality is, it's just a title and many of you know buckets more than I do about gardening. But I've noticed that each time I put on my work gloves and go outside to garden I lose myself in a rhythm of work and natural things -- physical pains and mental worries go away for awhile. Gardening is good for my health. And it keeps me in touch with the world of nature and the seasonal changes which inform the theory behind Five Element Acupuncture.

Turn Down The Heat! Hot Weather, Hot Bodies and Food Choices

We all feel warm when the temperature rises on hot, muggy days in Virginia. And some of us feel really warm. So warm and sweaty and overheated that we may consider moving to another climate. Some of us are naturally hotter and some naturally cooler -- at all times of the year. Our bodies' natural tendencies can point toward food choices which will support us and help maintain balance in our lives.



If you tend toward overheating, foods with a cooling nature are good for you. If your tendency is toward being cool, even in the summertime, foods with a warming nature are best. Food can help build energy (Qi and Blood) if you are depleted and can reduce congestion if you tend toward excess conditions.

Continued inside

Study Confirms Acupuncture's Efficacy in the Treatment of Chronic Headache

A study published in the British Medical Journal on March 15th 2004 concluded that "Acupuncture leads to persisting, clinically relevant benefits for primary care patients with chronic headache, particularly migraine."

The study was conducted through the practices of primary care physicians in England and Wales and included 401 patients with chronic headache, predominantly migraine headache. Patients were randomly allocated to receive up to 12 acupuncture treatments over three months or to a control group receiving usual care.

A headache score, general health status and use of medication were assessed prior to treatment, after 3 months and after 12 months. The headache score at 12 months was lower in the acupuncture group, a 34% reduction from baseline, than in the control group, which showed a 16% reduction. Patients who received acupuncture used 15% less medication, made 25% fewer visits to general practitioners and took 15% fewer days off sick.

For further reading on Western medical studies and acupuncture see the National Institutes of Health Consensus Development Conference Statement on Acupuncture, available at the website:
http://odp.od.nih.gov/concensus/cons/107/107_statement.htm.



Patient's Ask: What is Qi?

Above is a drawing of the Chinese character for Qi (sometimes spelled Chi). Qi is the life force that courses through our bodies.

The lower part of the character is the symbol for rice, the staple food of traditional Chinese culture. The upper part is the symbol for breath or spirit. Together, these two parts represent the steam rising off a bubbling pot of rice. The top of the pot is in constant motion – up and down – the rice is bubbling.

This Chinese character emphasizes the importance of food and breath in the creation of the life force or energy called Qi. Qi is made up of matter (rice) and energy (breath or spirit.) The character represents Qi not as a static entity, but in constant motion. Qi is constantly changing and moving.

The stimulation of the acupuncture points through needles, heat or massage moves and regulates Qi. We also have the ability to affect our Qi through the choices we make every day. Food choices, physical exercise, meditative/prayerful practices and breathing exercises all have a profound impact on our Qi.

WHAT'S YOUR NATURE?

HOT

- usually thirsty
- prefer cool/cold weather
- quick and impulsive
- crave cold food and liquid

COLD

- little thirst
- prefer warm/hot weather
- slow and passive
- crave spicy, hot food and liquid

CONGESTED

- feel better after fasting or skipping a meal
- crave stimulants
- pressure in the head, chest or abdomen
- constipation, gas
- little urination
- restless, active
- seek stimulating activity

DEPLETED

- prefer small, frequent meals
- crave rich food
- empty, fuzzy feeling in head or abdomen
- prone to diarrhea
- frequent, abundant urination
- sensitive, weak, tire easily
- seek quiet and contemplation

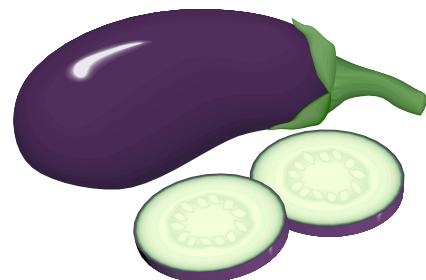
Refer to the chart on the left for your general tendencies. Be aware that you can have mixed symptoms -- you can be hot and depleted or hot and congested or even "hot above and cold below."

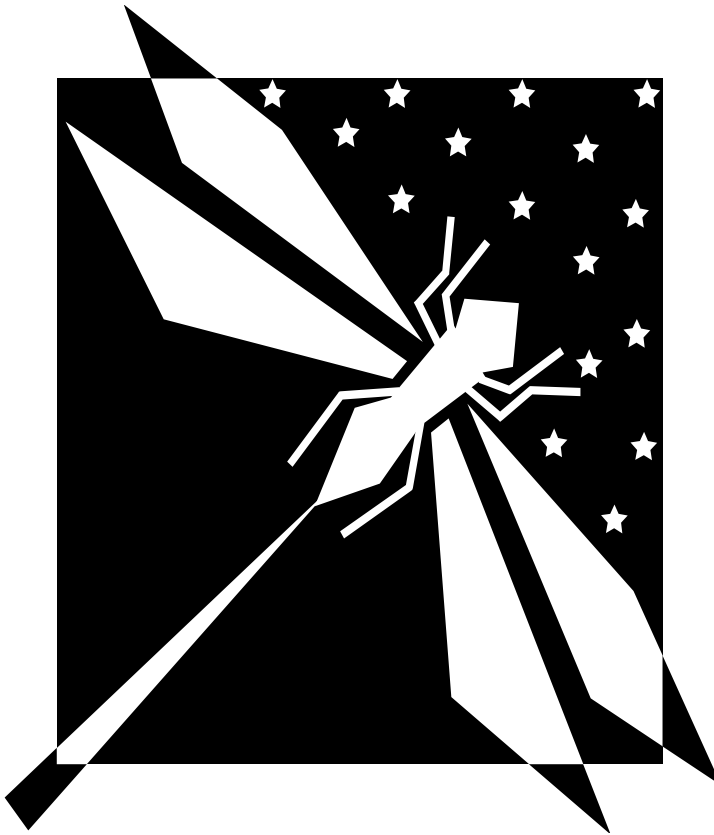
FOR A HOTTER NATURE: Choose foods and cooking styles which are cooling. Fruits and vegetables which have a cooling nature include: apple, pear, cantaloupe, cucumber, chard, broccoli, and zucchini. Use more raw foods or cook lightly by steaming or stir-frying. Other cooling products include: seaweeds, yogurt, crab, clam, peppermint, and cilantro.

FOR A COOLER NATURE: Choose warming foods and methods of preparation such as baking, broiling and roasting. Vegetable and fruit examples include: winter squash, parsley, cabbage, kale, onion, garlic, cherry and dates. Warming grains and seeds include: oats, sunflower seeds, walnuts, and sweet brown rice. Other warming products are: ginger root, black beans, cinnamon, cloves, basil, rosemary, butter, anchovy, trout, chicken, beef and lamb. (Coffee, alcohol, and cigarettes are also heat producing but not preferred choices for cooler natures and can aggravate hot natures!)

FOR A MORE CONGESTED NATURE: Choose more low-fat, whole vegetal foods, for example: sprouts, fruits, leafy greens, mushrooms, carrots, radishes, grains, and legumes. Avoid rich, sweetened, refined and intoxicating foods and drinks. The bitter flavor is beneficial for you as found in celery, lettuce, asparagus, rye, rhubarb, and chamomile. Eat most foods lightly cooked or raw.

FOR A MORE DEPLETED NATURE: Slowly add foods which build strength, energy and vitality. Foods with the "full sweet" flavor are your best choice and include: rice, oats, soy products, black beans, winter squash, nuts and seeds. Limit raw food and chew grains and vegetables well. Most fruit, although sweet, is too cooling and cleansing. Animal products such as eggs, fish, and fowl and good quality dairy products may be helpful.





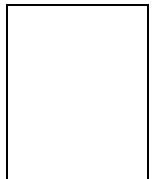
The Three Months of Summer

The three months of Summer
Are called prospering and developing the flower.

The qi of Heaven and Earth
Intertwine,
The 10,000 beings flower and bring forth fruit.

From
The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED
