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Rockwood Natural Medicine Clinic Newsletter

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Issue: 2

February 2013



Greetings!

Welcome to RNMC's February e-newsletter. We will be providing healthy tips, coupons and other important information in a monthly e-newsletter, so be sure to add us as a "safe sender" to your email provider. We look forward to hearing from you with requests for articles, thoughts and ideas.

Sincerely,

The Physicians at RNMC

Diet and Nutrition- Some Timely Suggestions

Now that the holidays are over, notice anything different? Say for instance a little more weight, perhaps some sluggishness of bowel function, stomach feeling a bit queezy, or just feeling a little more tired?

If you are like most of us, your diet that was serving you so well went out the window with the holiday festivities. Or perhaps if you have been thinking about changing your diet as part of that New Years resolution but are unsure which way to go. Now is the time to get back on it or start anew and we can help! We can provide some guidance.

Want to know how a naturopathic physician views diet and nutrition



issues? [Diet & Nutrition - A Naturopathic Perspective](#) discusses the importance of diet in the development and treatment of disease.

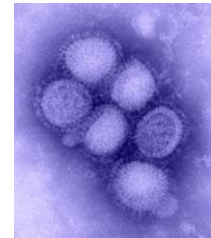
Do you sometimes wonder why the guy down the street seems to have an "iron" gut while you have problems eating the same things? [Serotyping and Diet](#) discusses the reasons why genetics play a part in how we utilize food and its role in the development of certain diseases.

If you have problems eating certain foods that cause heartburn, suggestions for optimizing your diet and combating gastrointestinal reflux disease without the use of over-the-counter acid blockers can be found in [GERD-Suggestions for Optimizing Your Diet](#).

[Enzymes- Not Just Food Anymore](#) discusses the role that food enzymes play in health and how they can be used to treat disease. Genetically we have evolved to consume raw foods that are rich in enzymes, but practically speaking this is not possible because of cooking to lower the risk of disease transmission. Enzyme supplementation helps to fill this void.

Flu Prevention By Katie Stage, ND

There has been a lot of press about influenza lately, and it does seem that the flu this year is more severe than in the last few years. If you do come down with the flu, please contact your physician at Rockwood Natural Medicine Clinic, as we offer many natural treatments that are extremely effective at shortening the duration and lessening the symptoms of viral or bacterial illness. However, you can also take these simple steps to help prevent getting the flu.



First, wash your hands frequently and well

Wash your hands before eating, before and during food preparation, after sneezing or contact with someone who is ill, after using the restroom or changing a baby's diaper, and after touching the garbage or other waste items. Ensure that you take at least 30 seconds (mentally sing the "ABC song" or "Happy birthday" and keep washing until the song is finished), scrub the top and bottoms of both hands, as well as in between each finger and over and under your fingernails.

Eat to support immune function

Foods rich in vitamins and minerals support proper immune system functioning.

Mushrooms have an immune modulating effect, particularly reishi, maitake, and shiitake. Making a mushroom broth or tea is an excellent way to deliver the key constituents of the mushrooms, and feels nourishing on a cold winter day.

Aromatic spices possess antimicrobial actions as well as many other health benefits. Include extra onions, garlic, and ginger into your diet for an immune boost. If you have fresh rosemary, thyme, and/or mint, these will also support your health during flu and cold season.

Vitamin C and zinc are particularly important to immune function, so consider incorporating more of the following foods into your diet. Foods rich in vitamin C: peppers, strawberries, papaya, broccoli, pineapple, Brussels sprouts, kiwi, oranges, cantaloupe, and kale. Foods rich in zinc: oysters, garlic, sesame seeds, chickpeas, organic beef, wild salmon, egg yolks, mushrooms, turkey, and lamb.

Foods can also diminish your immune response. Avoiding any foods to which you have a known sensitivity is a good start. If you are prone to congestion, avoiding dairy will support your body's own process of clearing the congestion. Finally, consume no sugar, which markedly decreases immune system response.

Do home hydrotherapy

Hydrotherapy is a system of manipulating hot and cold. At Rockwood Natural Medicine Clinic, we offer a variety of hydrotherapy treatments which increase immune function, decrease fatigue, and support the body's intrinsic healing powers. However, some simple home hydrotherapy can also support your immunity.

Ending your daily shower with a cold rinse is vitalizing and facilitates cleansing and the body's inherent healing process. Take your warm shower as usual, and when finished turn the water to cool or cold (as cold as you can handle). Aim to immerse your entire body in the cold water for 30 seconds to 1 minute. After the rinse, turn off the cold water and dry off as usual.

An Epsom salt bath is a fantastic way to ease the aches and pains of the flu (or just from a hard day!). Epsom salts are widely available in supermarkets and drug stores, and are very reasonably priced. Add 1-2 cups Epsom salts to a bath of warm or hot water and allow the salts to dissolve, then ease into the bath and relax. 1-2 drops of lavender essential oil will further assist in relieving pain and aching muscles and joints.

Warming socks are an excellent way to boost the body's immune function. These are best done at night just before bed. You will need a pair of thin cotton socks, a pair of wool socks (or heavy hiking type socks), and a tub of ice water. Take a warm bath or shower so you do not feel chilled before starting. Immerse the cotton socks in the cold water and wring well, so they are not dripping. Put on the cold cotton socks, and cover each foot and sock with a dry wool sock (on each foot you will be wearing 2 socks: a cold wet cotton sock covered by a dry, thick wool sock). Go to bed like this, and do not remove the socks until the wet socks have been completely dried by your body heat. You will wake feeling energized and better. Repeat for 3-4 nights or as needed.

Consider taking the following supplements for immune support

A good probiotic, containing a mix of beneficial bacterial species. Take 1-2 a day with food.

Elderberry syrup has been showed to shorten the duration of the flu and is strongly antiviral. It also tastes pleasant and is appropriate for kids as well as adults. Take 1 teaspoonful 3-4 times a day. You might also

consider sipping on elderberry tea throughout the day.

Colostrum was shown in one study to be more effective than the flu vaccine. Take one 400-500mg capsule once a day for several months (to last through the flu season).

Vitamins C, D, A, and zinc also support immune response. Please talk to your physician about appropriate levels of these nutrients.

We also offer nutrient IVs at Rockwood Natural Medicine Clinic, which provide excellent immune support and a boost of energy, as well as acupuncture, constitutional homeopathy, botanical medicines, and hydrotherapy treatments, all of which increase immune function and decrease the symptoms associated with cold and the flu. Be well!

Whats New at RNMC

Dr. Meghna Thacker gave birth to Kiaan Patel on 1.18.13. He weighed 7 lbs 11.3 oz and both Mom and Baby are both doing great. She will return to the clinic following maternity leave sometime in March.

Due to requests from a number of our patients, we are now offering **Doctor pHresh** greens and **Mountain Peak Nutritional's** energy drinks in packets and bulk canisters at the check out area. More information on them is available from the medical and office staff.

Dr Kruzel will be speaking at the Boucher Institute College of Naturopathic Medicines Environmental Medicine Conference February 2nd in Vancouver, BC, Canada. His topic is on natural therapies to remove and prevent heavy metal and xenobiotic toxicity.

As a reminder, we have changed our e-mail address to rnmc9755@gmail.com.

What's New in the Literature

Berry-Rich Diet Credited With One-Third Drop in MI Risk in NHS 2 Cohort - In this study published in the medical journal *Circulation*, a diet rich in anthocyanins was associated with a 32% drop in the risk of incident myocardial infarction (MI) in a cohort of over 93 000 women from the nurses health study. The study also reported that there was similar drop in MI risk during the 18-year follow-up among those with the highest as opposed to the lowest consumption level of blueberries and strawberries, a major source of anthocyanins in the US diet. The relationship between anthocyanin-rich foods and incident MI was also found to be independent of clinical conditions related to MI risk, standard dietary and nondietary cardiovascular risk factors, other plant-based nutrients like potassium and folate, and total fruit and vegetable intake. These findings suggest that there is an independent benefit for decreasing risk of heart attack by consuming anthocyanin rich foods.

Comment: Anthocyanins are a class of flavinoids which have been recognized

to have heart-friendly antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects. The authors also pointed out that many of the participants in the study that consumed anthocyanin-rich foods, also pursued healthy lifestyles such as exercise, generally good diets and not smoking but as well, those that did not also derived some benefit. While we generally advocate to inclusion of foods high in anthocyanins in the diet such as strawberries, blueberries, blackberries, currants, dark grapes and eggplant, there can be a problem for some people who may develop allergies to them. Therefore it is important to introduce them slowly, not consume just one type but rotate them in the diet, and watch for any signs of developing food allergy such as a disruption of bowel function or upset stomach.

Optimism Linked to Higher Antioxidant Levels - In this study published in *Psychosomatic Medicine*, it was found that middle-aged adults who are more optimistic about their future tend to have higher serum antioxidant levels than their less optimistic peers. Researchers at Harvard University found that for every standard deviation increase in optimism, there was an increase in carotenoid concentrations of 3% to 13% in age-adjusted models. "In other words, individuals with greater optimism tended to have greater levels of carotenoids such as beta-carotene," study investigator Julia K. Boehm, PhD, writes. The relationship between optimism and carotenoid levels was only partially explained by the fact that more optimistic people tended to engage in healthier behaviors such as eating fruits and vegetables and avoiding cigarette smoking and exercising. Including these healthy behaviors did not completely explain all of the variance in the relationship, the researchers point out.

Comment: I'm sure glad that mom made us eat our carrots, yams and red bell peppers when we were young, otherwise people might be referring to me as an old grouch! The link between psychological and physical health have long been recognized and now this study suggests that antioxidant levels also play a role. Certainly the role that antioxidants play in inhibiting free radical formation, which can lead to disruption of enzyme systems, and cellular damage that leads to disease, helps in the psychological arena as well. As we have all experienced, when we are experiencing optimal health, we naturally feel better.

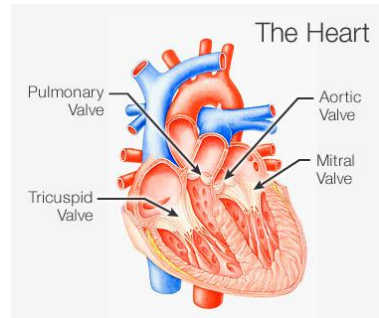
Novel Cancer Hypothesis Suggests Antioxidants Are Harmful - In this article published in *Open Biology*, the author proposes a new hypothesis that focuses on reactive oxygen species (ROS) that proposes that antioxidant levels within cancer cells are a problem and are responsible for resistance to treatment. According to Nobel laureate James Watson, PhD, antioxidant nutritional supplements will "more likely cause than prevent cancer".

Comment: This article, which is largely theoretical with little or no supportive evidence, is likely to open the debate as to whether nutritional and antioxidant therapy for cancer patients is useful. This is a debate that has gone on since I first began practice and used antioxidant therapy for my patients undergoing conventional chemotherapy and radiation. Several years ago a review article by Dr's Lamson and Brignall reviewed the available literature with regard to this topic and found that there was no evidence that antioxidant therapy made a patient's cancer worse let alone cause it, and in fact there was evidence of better clinical outcomes. Certainly this has been our experience. At the OncANP cancer conference last year a number of papers were presented showing the benefits of antioxidant therapy for those undergoing chemotherapy, and in fact, a number of oncologists are now offering this to their patients along with

chemotherapy because of the better patient outcomes. It will be interesting to see what comes of this debate now that a Nobel Prize laureate has thrown in his 2 cents.

February is Heart Health Month

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men and women in the U.S., which includes conditions such as coronary heart disease, heart attack, congestive heart failure, and congenital heart disease. Prevention of heart disease is key and includes quitting smoking, maintaining a low cholesterol, controlling high blood pressure, maintaining a healthy weight, exercising, and a good diet and nutrition.



Early heart disease often does not present with symptoms and therefore makes screening all the more important before a significant level of damage has been done. Laboratory screening tests and yearly evaluations can help detect early disease and/or prevent heart disease from starting. An important aspect of early detection is assessment of your risk factors for development of heart disease as some people are more susceptible than others. Genetics, lifestyle, environmental factors, diet and nutritional status all have a role in preventing heart disease and can be evaluated by your physician.

Types of Heart Disease

Coronary artery disease (CAD) affects more than 13 million Americans and is the leading cause of death in men and women. CAD is a result of plaque buildup in your coronary arteries that leads to blockages. The arteries, which start out smooth and elastic, become increasingly narrow and rigid, restricting blood flow to the heart. The heart becomes starved of oxygen and the nutrients it needs to pump properly.

Cardiomegaly, or an enlarged heart, can have various causes but is most often due to high blood pressure or coronary artery disease. An enlarged heart may not pump blood effectively, resulting in congestive heart failure. Cardiomegaly may improve over time with early recognition and proper treatment. However most people with an enlarged heart will need on-going treatment.

Heart attacks can range from silent ones with few or no symptoms, to the classic pattern of chest pains, pressure and shortness of breath. Because other conditions such as indigestion, pericarditis, pneumonia and inflammation of the chest wall can mimic a heart attack, any symptoms should be reported to your physician ASAP.

Irregular heart rhythm or an arrhythmia can be caused by many different factors such as existing coronary artery disease, heart muscle changes, heart attack, electrolyte imbalances, and toxic effects of medications or environmental toxins. An irregular rhythm can also occur in healthy individuals as well. A persistent arrhythmia needs to be

evaluated as there are a number of different types.

Atrial fibrillation is the most common kind of irregular heart beat whose presence increases the risk of stroke and heart disease. Signs include dizziness, weakness, and fatigue, and patients who experience this will report a fluttering sensation in their chest.

Heart valve disease is a commonly encountered form of heart disease that often goes undetected until an evaluation is done.

Valvular stenosis occurs when a heart valve doesn't fully open due to stiff or fused leaflets. The narrowed opening may make the heart work much harder which can lead to heart failure. All four valves, the tricuspid, pulmonic, aortic and mitral can develop stenosis.

Valvular insufficiency, also called regurgitation, incompetence, or leaky valve, occurs when a valve does not close tightly. When the valves do not seal, some blood leaks backwards across it. As the leak worsens, the heart has to work harder to make up for the leaky valve, and less blood may flow to the rest of the body. Regurgitation can also affect all of the valves.

There are a number of causes of heart valve disease . Heart valve disease can develop before birth (congenital) or can be acquired sometime during one's lifetime. Sometimes the cause of valve disease is unknown.

Congenital valve disease means that the person is born with it. Most often these defects are able to be corrected surgically.

Acquired valve disease is usually the result of an infection such as with Rheumatic fever or endocarditis from a viral or bacterial infection. Microorganisms that cause endocarditis can enter the blood during dental procedures, surgery, IV drug use, or with severe infections.

Mitral valve prolapse (MVP) is a very common condition, affecting 1% to 2% of the population. MVP causes the leaflets of the mitral valve to flop back into the left atrium during the heart's contraction. MVP also causes the tissues of the valve to become abnormal and stretchy, causing the valve to leak. However, the condition rarely causes symptoms and usually doesn't require treatment.

An **enlarged heart** or cardiomegaly can have a variety of causes but is usually caused by high blood pressure or coronary artery disease. An enlarged heart does not pump blood effectively, resulting in varying degrees of congestive heart failure. Cardiomegaly may improve over time. But most people with an enlarged heart need lifelong treatment with medications.

Cardiomyopathy, or heart muscle disease, is a type of progressive heart disease in which the heart is abnormally enlarged, thickened, and/or rigid. As a result, the heart muscle's ability to pump blood is weakened, often causing congestive heart failure and a backup of blood into the lungs or the rest of the body. There are several types of cardiomyopathy such as dilated, hypertrophic and restrictive.

Pericardial disease or pericarditis is inflammation of any of the layers

of the pericardium. The pericardium is a thin tissue sac that surrounds the heart protecting and lubricating it. A small amount of fluid is always present but can become larger due to an infection, heart attack, trauma, a tumor, cancer, radiation or an autoimmune disorder.

Pericardial effusion (fluid around the heart) can be caused by an infection or inflammation, cancer, kidney disease or heart surgery. This fluid can impair heart function if the volume becomes large enough. Viral infections are one of the main causes of pericarditis and pericardial effusions, which can be very painful. In a large number of people with pericardial effusion, no cause can be identified.

Thank you for being a patient with Rockwood Natural Medicine Clinic. We will continue to provide you with safe, effective and affordable healthcare.

Sincerely,

Thomas Kruzel, N.D.

Rockwood Natural Medicine Clinic (RNMC) is a naturopathic family practice facility. RNMC was founded in 1991 as a primary care/family practice clinic with a mission to provide safe, sensible and effective natural medicine for the entire family. The physicians at RNMC are dedicated to educating and training the next generation of healthcare providers. For more information about RNMC, please visit www.rockwoodnaturalmedicine.com.

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If you'd like more information about the topics in this newsletter, or to schedule an appointment with one of the clinic physicians, please call Kathleen or Joan at (480) 767-7119 or e-mail them at RNMC9755@gmail.com.

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