

Health WellNews

WINTER is here!

Why am I Sick Again?!

Why do some people always catch a cold, and others don't?

Viruses, germs and bacteria are everywhere. They are in the food we eat, the air we breathe, and the water we drink. According to Chinese medicine, they do not cause disease. When a certain organ system is already weak and unable to resist outside invasion, it is therefore prone to attack by germs, such as viruses and bacteria. Illness and disease can only result when our body provides a hospitable environment.

For example, let's say you inhaled influenza virus. Just because these germs are present, does not mean you will get the flu. There are several factors involved such as the health of your lungs, the vitality of your immune system, and your overall health.

Germs gather and thrive only in weakened parts of the body. When there is an imbalance of Qi, the normal functions of your body will ultimately be affected. This can change the normal immune system response and lead to illness.

A disease requires both a pathogen and a host. These nasty critters can only survive and flourish if circumstances are ripe. When the germs are strong, but the environment of the host (you) is stronger, the disease will be resisted. If the host is weak, however, then your environment can become a hospitable refuge for viruses, germs, bacteria and other microbes to set up shop.

Your Meridian channels control the flow of healing energy throughout your entire body, including your organs.

The function (health) of your lungs, and the strength of your immune system all depend upon the quality, quantity and balance of Qi which

flows within your meridian channels. The "true cure" of disease is simply NOT to kill germs, but to reestablish and build up the body's amount of healing Qi. This will ultimately provide the adequate amount of Qi in order to restore the integrity of your meridian and organ system.



KISS SICK GOODBYE

Along with frequent acupuncture treatments, here is another way to boost your immunity in order to stay well through spring.

You can begin by taking **astragalus throughout the winter.** This is an herb that is revered for its first-class immune support. It is also useful if you feel tired, weak, or apathetic.

Modern research suggests that astragalus is a "biological response modifier," increasing the function of the adrenal cortex, helping us adapt to stress easier, and increase the production of white blood cells.

If you have been around folks who are sneezing and coughing, **try using maitake.** This little mushroom can also help to stimulate the immune response. You can use this regularly, after being exposed to some nasty bug.

If you have already caught a cold, you can **try echinacea.** This herb can help to shorten the duration of a cold. Start using it as soon as you feel under the weather and then stop use as soon as you feel well again.

Herbs are a powerful medicine. It is helpful to consult with an herbalist to make sure you are getting the right type of herbs.

If you or someone you know are looking for immune-supportive remedies, schedule an appointment with me today. Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine have so much to offer.

Touch of the East Acupuncture
Fort Collins, Colorado
www.touchoftheeast.com
970-444-2284

© 2020 Copyright Acupuncture Media Works, All Rights Reserved. The information contained within the Health WellNews newsletter is only used to educate and inform. This newsletter is not a substitute for the advice of a licensed and registered health care provider. Seek prompt attention for emergencies. Consult a health care provider for specific health concerns, and before starting a diet, cleanse or exercise routine.

Photo Credits: ©iStock.com/Benjamin_Toht, ©iStock.com/sorbetto, ©iStock.com/Prostock-Studio

Health WellNews

WINTER is here!

How Weather Affects Pain



Almost everybody has heard one of their relatives complain about how painful their joints become when the weather changes, especially as it gets cold or rainy - but is there any validity to this claim? The short answer is both yes and no. There is some truth to this, but it might not be what you think.

Chinese Medicine understands that there is a deep connection and relationship between how our immediate environment affects the mind and body. For example you may have already realized that your pain is worse when it rains, your emotions shift during certain times of the year; both of which are important diagnostic clues.

As an acupuncturist it is my responsibility to take into consideration ALL aspects that can affect your emotional and physical health, with the understanding that sometimes the weather greatly affects your symptoms.

When pain becomes worse, or you become depressed, we look beyond your symptoms and conventional diagnosis to treat the root cause(s) of your problems. The nature of your symptoms as well as what is happening in your environment, give us key information about how best to help you.

For instance if you become more achy when the weather gets cold, your symptoms would be classified as "cold", and possibly "damp", too. Adversely, if your symptoms become worse in the heat, or if your joints feel "hot", that would be considered a condition that is affected by a hot environment.

ARTHRITIS AND ACHY JOINTS

Achy joints, arthritis flare ups and intense migraines are just some of the ways people can predict the weather is changing. And while it may seem far-fetched, there is something going on there. Scientists have studied this, but even they can't agree. There are however, several theories why weather affects pain. The most common theory is air pressure, or barometric pressure, is what is actually affecting pain levels.

From a Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) perspective, your body is made up of many different kinds of Qi (pronounced "chee"), or energy. These different types of Qi have specific physiological functions in the body. According to TCM theory, arthritis occurs when the flow of energy and fluids become blocked or stagnant. This type of holistic diagnostic reasoning is a powerful example of how TCM treatments become customized for each patient and their specific needs.

DEPRESSION

Another theory is more psychological. It is well documented weather can affect a person's mood. When a person feels gloomy or depressed, their perception of pain can be increased. This happens frequently in areas where winters are long and cold. It even has a name, SAD or Seasonal Affective Disorder.

An acupressure point to aid in depressive symptoms is GV 20. This point is located on the top of the head, midway between the apexes of your ears is known as governing vessel 20 (GV 20). GV 20 is one of the most powerful points in the acupuncturist's arsenal. It raises emotional energy, which in turn can help alleviate depression. Applying pressure or lightly tapping

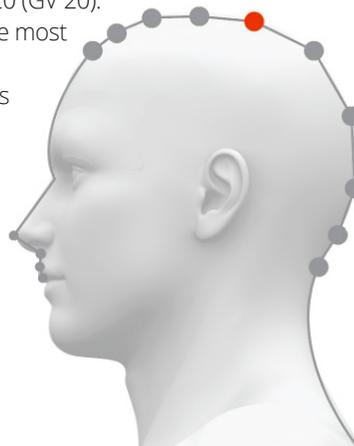
this point is a great way to counter depression on your own and can be done when you're feeling the first signs of depression.

One thing for certain is that our bodies adjust to our environment. A recent study looked at people in four cities, Nashville, San Diego and two cities in Massachusetts. The findings were conclusive no matter where the person lived, they experienced changes in their pain when the weather changed. They found that an individual's pain worsened when the barometric pressure fell, which occurs right before a storm or drastic weather changes.

The weather affects our bodies in other ways too. High levels of humidity can thicken the blood over time. This can increase the pressure in the blood vessels and the heart. This causes the heart to work harder to pump the blood throughout the body and may ultimately lead to a stroke or a heart attack. Those living in high humidity climates also have to worry about excessive sweating that can lead to dehydration. When the body is dehydrated, the joints ache more. This is why drinking water is so important, not just in high humidity areas, but everywhere.

Regardless of the cause, acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine can be very helpful in the treatment of aches and pains. No matter where you live, Traditional Chinese Medicine can help.

**Touch of the East Acupuncture
Fort Collins, Colorado
www.touchoftheeast.com
970-444-2284**



© 2020 Copyright Acupuncture Media Works, All Rights Reserved. The information contained within the Health WellNews newsletter is only used to educate and inform. This newsletter is not a substitute for the advice of a licensed and registered health care provider. Seek prompt attention for emergencies. Consult a health care provider for specific health concerns, and before starting a diet, cleanse or exercise routine.

Photo Credits: ©iStock.com/Benjamin_Toht, ©iStock.com/decade3d, ©iStock.com/Cecilie_Arcurs

Health WellNews

WINTER is here!

How to Fight the Common Cold with TCM

Cold and flu season usually occurs during the winter months, and the downside is that the common cold doesn't follow a schedule and can happen at any time of the year. Not many people are aware, but the common cold is actually a strain of coronavirus and is the cause of about 20% of colds each year and affects nearly three million people in the United States. Symptoms can include a runny nose, sneezing, congestion, coughing, sinus pressure, watery eyes, fatigue and muscle aches and unfortunately, Western Medicine has no real cure for this ailment, but Traditional Chinese Medicine has a few methods to help combat the symptoms of the common cold before it knocks you down.

Traditional Chinese Medicine is a medical system that approaches Western ailments from a very different angle.

In TCM, wind is one of the six external pathogens that can invade the body and produce symptoms. The external pathogens responsible for the cold are seen as invasions of wind. The body is protected by something known as the Wei Qi (defensive qi, pronounced "way chee"). The Wei Qi is comparable to the immune system in Western medicine and it acts as the first line of defense when the body is under attack from external pathogens. For example, if Wei Qi is strong, the body is capable of fighting off the cold virus. The Wei Qi keeps the pores of the skin closed and prevents wind from entering. Extreme stress, lack of sleep and a poor diet can all play into how strong the body's Wei Qi truly is and how well it performs.

Chinese botanical medications and certain TCM modalities like acupuncture, cupping and gua sha can all be utilized when the body breaks down and a wind pathogen invades.

Chinese herbs have antiviral and antibacterial properties that help ward off the pathogens. There are even some herbs that also have diaphoretic properties, which induce sweating that expels the pathogens from your system. Wind can also carry other pathogens with it that can exacerbate the infection, so the cold can present as either a wind-cold or a wind-heat invasion. Each type is treated differently based on the present symptoms.

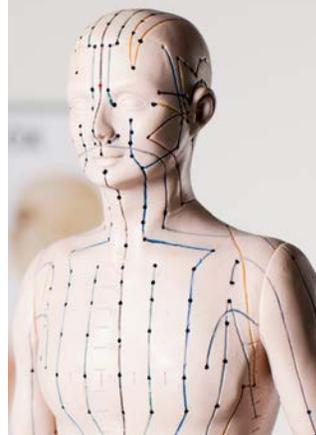


A **wind-cold invasion** tends to be the more mild of the two and can be treated with acupuncture, gua sha or cupping. This is considered the beginning stages of a cold as there are rarely any heat symptoms present. Because the pathogen is still mostly on the surface of the skin, gua sha or cupping may be the first line of defense. **Both gua sha and cupping pull out toxins from the muscles and the blood and bring oxygen-rich blood into those areas** decreasing the time that it takes for the body to heal. Acupuncture can also be a good tool to use when fighting a wind-cold attack. Acupuncture stimulates the immune system and helps to balance the hormones, which can shorten the length of time a person may feel ill.

The other type of cold is the **wind-heat invasion**. Wind-heat invasions attack quickly and manifest just like wind-cold invasions, but they also have fevers as one of their primary symptoms. Wind-heat invasions should be treated with acupuncture and herbs only, as gua sha and cupping can sometimes push the pathogen deeper into the tissues extending the length of the cold.

With both types of colds, plenty of rest and water are essential. Mint and chrysanthemum teas are also highly recommended. Spicy, greasy or fried foods should be avoided, as should sugar because these foods can create mucus or exacerbate the condition. And regardless of the type of cold, a licensed acupuncturist will be able to help you fight it in less time than normal.

Touch of the East Acupuncture
Fort Collins, Colorado
www.touchoftheeast.com
970-444-2284



© 2020 Copyright Acupuncture Media Works, All Rights Reserved. The information contained within the Health WellNews newsletter is only used to educate and inform. This newsletter is not a substitute for the advice of a licensed and registered health care provider. Seek prompt attention for emergencies. Consult a health care provider for specific health concerns, and before starting a diet, cleanse or exercise routine.

Photo Credits: ©iStock.com/Benjamin_Toht, ©iStock.com/marilyna, ©iStock.com/Cecilie_Arcurs, ©iStock.com/



Health WellNews

WINTER is here!

Family Exercise in the Winter



You're not imagining it. As the days grow shorter and the air cooler, the kids are getting restless and you may be too. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), kids need at least 1 hour of physical activity...every day. Adults should be partaking in either 2.5 hours of exercise at a moderate level OR 1.25 hours of vigorous exercise per week, minimum. Don't let this cold

season give you an excuse to skip the physical exercise and crawl back under your cozy covers. Here are some fun ways to incorporate movement and physical activity through the winter months for the whole family.

INDOOR EXERCISE

-Resistance Training- Bodyweight exercises are a great way to improve balance, flexibility, and strength without any bulky equipment. With a simple Google search, you can EASILY uncover a variety of exercises using the resistance of body weight alone.

-Boxing- Get your heart pumping with a simple boxing routine. Boxing provides a full-body workout, ducking, blocking, and throwing punches. Focus on your footwork for a cardio heavy conditioning workout that'll get you sweating.

-Play Games- Purchase your family some soft nerf balls and start a game of indoor dodgeball. Try setting up an indoor basketball hoop for fun way to start laundry day. Consider dance parties in the kitchen while putting away dishes. Use commercial breaks to challenge each other to dance contests or during study breaks from online schooling. Try making a hopscotch or obstacle course with painters tape. Get creative and have fun with it! Get creative and have fun with it!

-Family Mindfulness- Competitive activities teach children to master their bodies, and often this can lean hard into focusing on their weaknesses. And while activity and goal setting are imperative to growth, we need to remember to teach our children to be content with themselves in a noncompetitive and appreciative way as well. Activities like Tai Chi,

Yoga, or Meditation can help children feel at one with their bodies, teaching them to respect their physical and emotional selves.

SEEK OUT RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Ready to get out of the house but not into the cold? No worries, we have exercises for you too.

-Swimming- It's never the wrong time to go swimming. Swimming is a phenomenal physical activity for so many reasons. Firstly, swimming is an age-friendly activity. Being immersed in water provides low-impact therapy for injury rehabilitation or physically limiting conditions. Because swimming involves endurance it is also a great way to keep muscles toned, including those supporting the heart and lungs. Swimming is a full-body workout that is known to improve flexibility, coordination, balance, and posture all the while alleviating stress. Need we say more?

-Rock Climbing- The benefits of climbing are vast as well. Climbing combines mental stimulation and physical power beautifully to burn over 600 calories per hour. Not only does climbing involve the arm muscles used for gripping and pulling, but this sport will also activate legs, back, and shoulder muscles as well. The balance and finesse of this sport work the core to stabilize movements, leading to a stronger and less injury-prone body. Finding an indoor rock wall could be the winter workout you have been looking for.

-Bowling / Trampoline Park- Even with these quarantine guidelines in place and the pandemic following us into the winter, bowling alleys and trampoline parks are beginning to open back up with new safety guidelines in place. On top of the muscle-building motion of the arms and legs with these activities, they also require attention to detail for successful performance. Both of these activities are great for building hand-eye coordination.

OUTDOOR EXERCISE

Moving around outside can get your heart rate up and keep you warm, but if that isn't enough consider a warm-up exercise routine for inside before you brave the cold. Remember to dress in long layers, wear boots instead of gym shoes, wear a hat, gloves, and don't forget warm socks.

Try encouraging your kids to get outside.

Consider a **walk** with the dog, visiting a

new park, playing **basketball**, **soccer**, or even a good old game of **frisbee**. **Skiing**, **snowboarding**, and **snowshoeing** are great, but obviously only if you have the snow, equipment, and knowledge. Consider seeking out a local ice rink. **Ice skating** isn't just for kids. In fact at a moderate pace simply skating laps can burn up to 500 calories per hour while toning your legs, butt, and similar core stabilizing muscles as rock climbing for fine movements and balance. If ice skating sounds too cold for you, consider bundling up and going for a **bike ride**. Because of its cardio-heavy nature and use of the quadricep muscles biking will warm your body quickly.

Scheduling the proper time for these activities for you and your family is crucial. Often kids have a lot of energy just after they have just finished school for the day, this is an optimal time to introduce rousing new adventures. Also keep in mind that positive reinforcement is the best way to form new healthy habits, both for you and your kids. Keep the dialogue light and encouraging as you discover these exciting wintertime activities together. While picking up new activities can seem like a large undertaking, you are potentially investing in new lifelong passions. And who knows, you might even end up with a workout you'll want to do all year long.

Start small and remember to reach out to me if you need any advice.



Touch of the East Acupuncture
Fort Collins, Colorado
www.touchoftheeast.com
970-444-2284

© 2020 Copyright Acupuncture Media Works, All Rights Reserved. The information contained within the Health WellNews newsletter is only used to educate and inform. This newsletter is not a substitute for the advice of a licensed and registered health care provider. Seek prompt attention for emergencies. Consult a health care provider for specific health concerns, and before starting a diet, cleanse or exercise routine.

Photo Credits: ©iStock.com/Benjamin_Toht, ©iStock.com/SbytovaMN, ©iStock.com/skynesher, ©iStock.com/fizkes