

**HAPPY NEW YEAR OF THE BOAR!**

Chinese New Year 4705 begins February 18, 2007 --- I wish you *Gung hei fat choi*, which translates to *congratulations and be prosperous*. We also have another opportunity to review our lifestyles and refine or resume prior New Year's resolutions. Successful resolutions are usually simple, a couple of small changes can make significant differences.

Please take some time to stop by the office to say hello during the next month. We have a small New Year's gift for you.

We want to hear from you ... our email address is: [acupuncture.clinic@yahoo.com](mailto:acupuncture.clinic@yahoo.com) and we welcome your questions and comments. What questions would you like to see answered in the next newsletter? If you want to be removed from our mailing list, you can email your request.

**SAFE HERBAL PATENT REMEDIES**

Many herbal remedies from China are available in local stores. Some have been found to contain contaminants like heavy metals and pharmaceuticals. These contaminated products are sometimes made in temporary, "mountain bandit" factories. How can you avoid contaminated products? Make sure they contain certification of "GMP" (Good Manufacturing Process), those factories are inspected and products are tested for purity. I buy remedies from Mayway, see their website information: [www.mayway.com/general/qa\\_chinese\\_medicine\\_control.htm](http://www.mayway.com/general/qa_chinese_medicine_control.htm).

Many inferior factories make packaging that is nearly identical to GMP certified factory packaging. Ask to see a sample in my office and see how difficult it can be to detect the difference. The products I stock also contain a "California Prop 56 Statement," warning of harmful chemicals. Ironically, these very products are generally safer than their non-labeled "knock-offs" sold through unreliable distribution networks. The large, established companies that do business with GMP certified factories are the only ones that are stable enough for the government to require labeling on all their products. This label is the same as the one seen at entrances to grocery stores and other establishments.

**WEIGHT LOSS TIP**

Begin your meal with a salad. A study showed that women who ate salads consumed 12% fewer calories during a meal, without trying to limit their intake. It's important that you use a variety of colorful vegetables (giving you a wide-variety of nutrients) with extra virgin olive oil and vinegar. The olive oil helps the body use the fat-soluble nutrients in the salad, and slows stomach emptying, giving you a sense of fullness. The vinegar can help regulate blood sugar and insulin. The salad also provides fiber that may help lower rates of degenerative disease.

*(Journal of the American Dietetic Association)*

**RECENT RESEARCH**

Heart Disease... Hypertension... Stroke... Cancer... Diabetes... Obesity... Macular Degeneration

There have been major advances in the diagnosis and treatment of these conditions, but the best news is that many of them can be PREVENTED. Research found that exercise can reduce your chances of getting these diseases, and the many complications associated with them. Physical exercise can also help rehabilitate cancer patients, improving energy, self-confidence, and overall wellbeing. (Harvard Men's Health Watch, November 2006)

Those who exercised 3 or more times a week were 70 percent less likely to develop age-related macular degeneration than those who got little exercise. *70 percent!* This disease is the leading cause of blindness in our elderly population. Other studies have found that good nutrition is important... eat foods that contain lutein, vitamins C and E, beta carotene, copper and zinc. (British Journal of Ophthalmology)

Osteoarthritis

Research continues on the effects of acupuncture on osteoarthritis (OA) pain. Research concluded that "in patients with chronic pain due to OA of the knee or hip who were receiving routine primary care, the addition of acupuncture to the treatment regimen resulted in a clinically relevant and persistent benefit." This group saw a decrease in the severity of osteoarthritis, and an increase in health-related quality of life. These improvements were maintained when researchers re-evaluated the patients 6 months later. (Arthritis & Rheumatism, November 2006)

43% Reduction in Risk of Diabetes

Once again, research about the risk of diabetes in overweight middle-aged men and women with high blood sugar gives extremely good news! They were much less likely to develop diabetes when they:

- Lost at least 5% of body weight
- Exercised at least 30 minutes a day
- Increased fiber to 15 grams per 1,000 calories

- Reduced saturated fat to less than 10% of calories

These specific guidelines were followed for 7 years, and the participants were ***43% less likely*** to get diabetes than similar people who got general advice. ([The Lancet, 2006](#))

**CHINESE CUPPING TREATMENT**

The winter season is a time when we use cupping treatment more frequently. Cupping can be used to help “break up phlegm” in the lungs that causes congestion in the chest. Cupping can also “break up stagnation” that causes muscle ache and pain. This is not just a Chinese treatment, patients have told me that they remember their grandmothers in Europe using a similar treatment for colds.

The treatment involves briefly inserting a flame into a cup to exhaust the oxygen, before placing it on the back. Suction is thus created, and the patient feels a pulling sensation. The cups may be left in one place, or moved by sliding over the muscles. This draws blood to the external capillaries of the body and usually leaves round bruise marks that some refer to as “octopus kisses!”

**INSURANCE UPDATE!**

At your request, we will send bills to your insurance company *at the end of each month*. Since they do not often send reimbursement information to us, please call if you do not receive reimbursement.

Patients with Medicare insurance may have acupuncture coverage through *Secondary (not supplemental)* insurance plans. We bill Medicare to request a denial before we bill the insurance company, a process that often takes 3 months. Medicare does not yet cover acupuncture --- write your Legislator to request coverage.

**ANGEL OF HOPE**

A special healing place has been created at the Santa Maria Cemetery. The Angel of Hope Children’s Memorial is a peaceful place for grieving parents, and families whose children have died before and after birth, to mourn, heal, and remember their beloved children. Brick pavers to memorialize individual children are available. For more information, contact Lori Macagni (805) 937-9501.

**INFORMATIVE WEBSITE:**

[www.nccam.nih.gov/health/herbsataglance.htm](http://www.nccam.nih.gov/health/herbsataglance.htm): provides information for some common herbs, including herb-drug interactions and potential side effects, with links for more information. This is a short list now, but new herb entries are added often.

**Try Acupuncture First!**

**MEDITATION**

Meditation has proven to have many health benefits including: lowering blood pressure, improving sleep, reducing anxiety, and improving focus. One type of meditation uses images coordinated with your breathing. Try the following:

- Breathe in and see the face of a loved one smiling at you. Breathe out your happiness that they are in your life.
- Breathe in and smell a favorite cooking aroma (cookies, apple cider, coffee, etc.). Breathe out and allow the taste to fill your mouth.
- Breathe in and feel the sun warm you. Breathe out and feel the warmth extend to your fingers and toes.

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Address Correction Requested

OFFICE HOURS: 9:30 - 5:00 Monday - Friday

Additional hours by appointment.