



# TRADITIONS

*presented by A Woman's Time*

Winter 2006

Volume 4, Issue 1

## **BLACK COHOSH HALT STUDY UPDATE**

**Tori Hudson, ND - Medical Director**

Ever since the publication of the first study out of the Women's Health Initiative in 2002 on hormone replacement therapy, women have increasingly sought herbal alternatives in search of safe and effective therapies for their menopause symptoms.

In the last 25 years, black cohosh has emerged as the most studied of the herbal alternatives to hormone replacement therapy for menopause symptoms. Since the 1980s and up through 2005, numerous studies, including several randomized controlled trials have studied a standardized extract of black cohosh with encouraging, but mixed results. Since 2003, there have been about 11 clinical studies on black cohosh, and all but one were positive. Although not all studies done in the last 25 years clearly show benefit, the majority of the evidence supports the efficacy of black cohosh for treating perimenopause and menopause symptoms.

The most recent study, called the Herbal Alternatives for Menopause Trial (HALT) study, was a one-year randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial with five different groups studied. The results showed no benefit of black cohosh, soy, or an herbal combination. The study was well designed, but half the women in this study were perimenopausal women who have fluctuating symptoms, fluctuating hormone levels, and present a particular challenge as a study group. This one negative study should be considered in the context of all the other studies on black cohosh, the majority with positive outcomes.

The collective findings on black cohosh studies teach us that it is most effective for menopause symptoms of day time or night time hot flashes, mood swings, sleep disorders and body aches.

Standardized extracts of black cohosh continue to be one of the most reliable herbal approaches to treating a wide array of peri-menopausal and menopausal symptoms. The most common dosage utilized is 40 mg daily but many achieve better results with 40 mg twice daily. One should expect results within 4 weeks.

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**Special Care Programs available at A Woman's Time**

- **Integrated Health Care Approach to Breast Cancer and Care**
- **Effective Weight Loss & Management**

In my experience, about 85 % of women will receive benefit and maybe 50% will achieve complete amelioration of their hot flashes and nightsweats. This is consistent with the largest, though un-controlled, study ever done on black cohosh in 1982. Treating menopausal women is rewarding, and black cohosh is our most well researched and important botanical therapy to date.

## **AWT WELCOMES FAMILY MEDICINE DOCTOR, LYNN MADSEN, MD**

### **Lynn Madsen, MD**

Greetings—I am an MD, board certified in family medicine, and I have the privilege of working with this wonderful group of naturopaths and healers. We are a great team, as I agree with the approach of fostering and acknowledging health as the goal rather than ruling out illness. I am available when my background in conventional medicine is needed, and do prescribe conventional medicines when appropriate. My philosophy is that there are many ways to heal, and combining or shifting approaches often provide a fresh perspective that can deepen and release healing.

I see all ages, and both women and men. I also make house calls in the West Portland area. My specialty and passion is anthroposophic medicine (difficult to pronounce at first— anthroposophy rhymes with anthropology).

#### **What is Anthroposophic Medicine (AM)?**

AM combines a conventional medical approach with a spiritual component. AM remedies are biodynamically prepared with mineral, plant, and animal substances, often potentised as in homeopathic remedies. This medicine originated from the work of Rudolf Steiner, a philosopher who founded biodynamic gardening, Waldorf education, and eurythmy therapies, as well as innovative approaches to architecture, bee keeping, and city planning.

What Steiner knew about medicine alone would fill three of my lifetimes; I am grateful to practice this medicine, as I have found it to be the most healing and effective way to be a physician.

If you want a straightforward treatment for an infection or problem, I can do so with conventional treatments. But we can usually go further, and I can then be a companion to my patient, discovering the meaning of illness in the context of not just the physical body, but including soul and spirit. Then we truly promote healing and health.

This medicine is widely practiced in Europe, can be found around the world, and about 200 physicians in the US use this medicine. Most practitioners have training beyond medical school and residency through the Physician's Association for Anthroposophic Medicine (PAAM) here in the US, or through the international association in Germany.

*“Anthroposophic  
Medicine remedies are  
biodynamically  
prepared with mineral,  
plant, and animal  
substances...”*

If you are interested in further reading, I recommend Victor Bott's book, *Introduction to Anthroposophical Medicine*.

Visit my website for handouts about flu treatment, acne, how to sleep better, and headache treatments.  
[www.bewellmed.com](http://www.bewellmed.com).

Be Well,

Lynn Madsen, MD

## AVERTING COMMON VIRUSES

Stephanie Kaplan, ND

There are two things to consider when preventing colds and flus.

- Am I being exposed to these critters?
- The answer is yes, unless you are purposely trying to induce cabin fever this winter by not leaving your house or having any visitors. Viruses live on everything from shopping carts to doorknobs. Fomites (these vectors for bugs) are anything we come in contact with, most commonly faucet handles, telephones. Wash your hands frequently. You are more likely to get sick from contact with a fomite than direct contact with a sick person.
- How likely am I to get sick?
- This depends on the state of your immune system. People with good immunity can be exposed to a number of things and never get sick. There are basic lifestyle choices that can optimize our immune response, like getting enough sleep, staying hydrated, regular moderate exercise, and eating enough fruits and vegetables. If you feel you are doing these things and you are still getting sick frequently, talk with your naturopathic doctor to find out what individual suggestions she has for you to stay healthy.

If you have been exposed to someone with the flu, or start to show signs of fever, headache, sore throat, dry cough, or stuffy nose, consider having **Oscilloccinum®** on hand to start taking right away. This is a homeopathic preparation that wards off the flu, and works best if started during the early stages to prevent progression of the illness.

*“Once a sore throat or congestion hits, try a warming socks treatment that night before bed.”*

The first sign of a cold is often a sore throat. In Chinese Medicine, this is a symptom of heat and is treated with a formula called Yin Chiao. At the first sign of sore throat, start taking 4 tablets of Yin Chiao every 3-4 hours until you improve. If your symptoms change, i.e. moving into your sinuses causing congestion, a different formula may be appropriate, available through your Chinese Medicine practitioner. While you're at it, have an acupuncture treatment to help move the heat out and help you bounce back more quickly.

Western herbs are also effective in treating viruses and enhancing your immune response. Your naturopathic doctor can prepare an herbal tincture for you based on your symptoms (congestion, sore throat, cough, etc), or may prescribe an encapsulated formula with immune-enhancing herbs as well as plants that are directly anti-microbial. At your next visit you may want to ask your naturopathic doctor which formula would be good to have on hand in case you start to show signs of a viral infection.

Another approach to immune support is through hydrotherapy. Once a sore throat or congestion hits, try a warming socks treatment that night before bed. This entails soaking the feet in a warm foot bath for a few minutes, until they feel warm and happy. Then apply a pair of thin cotton socks that have been wet with cold water and well rung out. Over the cotton socks put on a pair of dry wool socks. Then go to bed to have a restful sleep. The wet socks will be warm long before you wake up the next morning. This treatment is great for children and adults alike.

An in-office option for prevention and treatment of colds and flus is Intravenous Therapy of vitamins and minerals. Bypassing the gastrointestinal system, these nutrients are directly injected in the veins to increase their availability. An IV treatment can be prescribed by your naturopathic doctor.

Take care of yourselves this winter, and if you do start to get sick be sure to slow down. Taking time in the beginning of an illness to rest and take the above precautions can significantly reduce the course and severity of your illness. Staying home from work for one day in the beginning could save you from having to take multiple days off later. Besides, your coworkers don't want your viruses on their fomites. Be Well.

# LIFESTYLE CHANGES – A WAY TO LOWER BLOOD PRESSURE

Moira Fitzpatrick, PhD, ND

The New Year, like a new beginning, reminds us to take time and be mindful of our health and create a life in balance. A part of creating a balanced life is the annual reminder to check in with your physician and monitor your blood pressure. Screening for high blood pressure is an essential element of prevention.

Prehypertension is defined as blood pressure between 120/80 and 139/89. Stage I hypertension is defined as 140/90 to 159/99. As blood pressure creeps up and moves into the higher ranges, it can lead to stroke, heart attack, heart failure, kidney failure and blindness. High blood pressure is the most consistent and powerful predictor of stroke. Often referred to as the silent killer, hypertension typically has no symptoms. Now is the time to implement an effective strategy to increase awareness of high blood pressure and prevent and/or assess present damage to target organs.

The good news is that creating a healthy lifestyle can prevent and lessen hypertension and its consequences. Creating a healthy lifestyle is the foundation for all treatment and prevention of hypertension.

## What Lifestyle Changes Are Necessary to Lower Blood Pressure?

- **Decrease salt** to about 1.25 tsp/day (2000mg). Take the time to read labels and find low-sodium foods.
- **Change what you eat.** The recommended diet for reducing blood pressure is the DASH diet. This diet emphasizes whole grains, fruits, vegetables, fish and non-fat dairy.
- **Reduce your intake of alcohol.** A recommended guideline limits consumption to 2 drinks a day for men and 1 drink a day for women.
- **Maintain a Healthy weight.** Long-term reductions in blood pressure have been achieved with modest weight loss among individuals aged 30-54 who were overweight and had moderately high blood pressure.
- **Exercise.** A recommended goal is 20-30 minutes of exercise a day. Start slowly and work up gradually.
- **Decrease stress.** Biofeedback, deep breathing, meditation, bodywork, and hypnotherapy all provide benefit in activating relaxing response.

*“Certain supplements and pharmacologic treatments can lower blood pressure, but lifestyle changes are the foundation for all treatment and prevention of hypertension.”*

## Did you know...



Bananas get all the credit for being a super source of blood pressure-friendly minerals, but other fruits deliver them, too. High on the list are dried peaches and dried apricots. Ounce for ounce, they deliver nearly six times the potassium in bananas. And research shows this mighty mineral helps control blood pressure.

Getting 3,000 milligrams of potassium every day can lower your blood pressure significantly! Along with apricots and bananas, try these potassium-rich fruits and juices for variety: cantaloupe, honeydew melon, watermelon, orange juice, and grapefruit juice.

Effect of short-term supplementation of potassium chloride and potassium citrate on blood pressure in hypertensives. He, F. J., Markandu, N. D., Coltart, R., Barron, J., MacGregor, G. A., *Hypertension* 2005 Apr;45(4):571-574.



## A Healthier Heart, Ten Minutes at a Time

Start your day with a 10-minute walk. Then grab three more 10-minute walking breaks throughout the day. Research shows that grabbing 10 minutes here and there could provide you with even better control over your blood pressure than if you'd slogged your way through a single 40-minute treadmill session. Welcome news if you're struggling to fit exercise into an already jam-packed day. Just grab a quick walk around the block in the morning, in the office parking lot during lunch, at the grocery store on your way home, and around the block again when you get there. You're done. And your heart is healthier.

Accumulation of physical activity leads to a greater blood pressure reduction than a single continuous session, in prehypertension. Park, S., Rink, L. D., Wallace, J. P., *Journal of Hypertension* 2006 Sep;24(9):1761-1770.

*Supplements and/or treatments can bring blood pressure under control while lifestyle changes are being made."*

### How can lifestyle changes be incorporated into our busy, stressful lives?

Steps to creating change:

1. Create the intention to make a change. Identify what is important in your life.
2. Set realistic goals for weight loss, healthy eating, exercise, and stress reduction in the here-and-now. Small changes have significant blood pressure-reducing effects.
3. Identify beliefs that stand in the way of achieving goals set. Replace those beliefs with the energy of new thoughts, feelings and sensations.
4. Create a plan to achieve each goal. Make a commitment to the plan, which means engaging in an activity each day toward the fulfillment of that goal.
5. Visualize the completion of each goal and experience the effect on a sensory and emotional level. Typically what is willed with strong emotion is created.
6. Tell a friend, coach, therapist, or doctor your plan. This provides the glue or accountability that connects all the pieces together.
7. The fulfillment of each aspect of your plan develops strength of will and an opportunity to see the effect of your choices. It takes only 21 days to create a new habit.

### When lifestyle changes need a boost

Certain supplements and/or pharmacologic treatments can bring blood pressure under control while lifestyle changes are being made. There are many options with an individualized program to meet your specific needs. Vitamins such as Potassium, Calcium and Magnesium, CoQ10, Essential fatty acids and Vitamin C are helpful in reducing blood pressure. Some of my favorite herbs used to lower blood pressure include Tilia or linden flower, Craetagus, Hibiscus, Viscum album and Rauwolfia serpentina. Talk to your naturopathic physician to determine the right product for you as there are potential drug-nutrient interactions and certain herbs have potential side effects at higher dosing.

The power to gain control of how we live our lives provides us with strength of will, sense of purpose, and an ability to stay calm, centered, peaceful and joyful. May this year be a gift to yourself of optimal health.

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# HUMAN PAPILLOMA VIRUS

Leigh Kochan, ND, LAc

There has been a lot of information in the news lately about the human papilloma virus (HPV) which is responsible for over 99% of cervical cancers. HPV constitutes a large family of viruses, only a fraction of which can affect the genital area where certain strains can cause benign genital warts while others cause changes to the tissue (dysplasia) that can lead to cancer.

HPV is highly contagious and 50-75% of sexually active adults are infected at some point in their lifetime. Smoking appears to increase the risk of HPV infection and related precancerous changes as well as cervical cancer in general. Additionally, hormonal contraception appears to be linked to a small increased risk of cervical cancer.

Screening for HPV is currently available in conjunction with pap smears as these results may help to guide treatment decisions if the pap is abnormal. About 80% of HPV infections are transient, are not symptomatic, and resolve without treatment. Treatment, when offered, is focused at removing visible warts or dysplastic tissue.

While HPV is largely responsible for cervical cancer, there are things that can be done to reduce one's risk. Consistent pap smears and condom use, restricting the number of sex partners and not smoking are the best ways to prevent cervical cancer, even in the presence of HPV. While condom use decreases the risk of transmission, it does not eliminate it. However, condom use can speed the regression of cervical dysplasia and clearance of the virus. Pap smears, which screen for the early precancerous changes caused by HPV, are recommended as follows:

- Begin screening:
  - Three years after first intercourse or by age 21
- Annual screening:
  - Until age 30 or longer if risk factors like inconsistent condom use, change in sex partners, hormonal contraception, or smoking are present.
- Screening every three years:
  - Age 30-65
  - After 3 consecutive normal annual pap smears
  - Without additional risk factors
- Discontinue screening:
  - After age 65 or
  - After hysterectomy (including removal of cervix) for non-cancerous reasons

Although cervical screening (pap smears) may not be recommended annually, women should continue to have annual exams for evaluation of general health, especially, thyroid, breast, cardiovascular, and ovarian screenings.

A new vaccine has been approved by the FDA and is available for women between the ages of 9 and 26. It is given in a series of three over 6 months, costs about \$350 and may be covered by insurance or governmental patient assistance programs. This vaccine is nearly 100% effective against the four strains of HPV that are responsible for about 70% of cervical cancers so pap smears will still be required for women in accordance with the above recommendations.

There may be things you can do to help your body clear the virus or prevent the chance that it will lead to precancerous changes. First, all women should abide by the screening recommendations and avoid smoking. Second, a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and legumes provides antioxidants which, when deficient, have been associated with a higher incidence HPV and cervical dysplasia. Additionally, green tea vaginal suppositories have been found to speed the regression of mild cervical dysplasia. If you have had a low grade abnormal pap and are presently awaiting repeat screening, you may consider scheduling a visit with a naturopathic physician to discuss ways in which you could change your diet & lifestyle and incorporate supplements to help improve your chances of getting a normal pap the next time.

# INSOMNIA

## Wendy Vannoy, ND

Why is sleep so important? Daytime energy and stamina, a healthy immune system, memory and cognition, cellular rejuvenation and repair are all dependent on REM sleep.

Insomnia is defined as difficulty initiating or maintaining sleep at least three times a week for one month or more, causing fatigue and or impaired functioning during the day. The consequences of untreated insomnia include:

- Reduced quality of life
- Reduced productivity
- Depression (egg or chicken?)
- Anxiety
- Impaired cognition
- Safety issues
- Elevated blood pressure

Most people with insomnia feel trapped in a vicious cycle--the more stress they experience, the greater their sleep problem resulting in more stress and so on. There are many potential causes for insomnia (that can be addressed) that quickly become obscured by habits (that need to be unlearned).

If episodes of insomnia occur more frequently than 5 times in a given month, a medical evaluation is recommended. It is important to rule out medical/physical causes, psychiatric/mood disorders and specific sleep disorders as treatment for insomnia can mask these conditions.

A sleep diary kept by the patient for 1 month can be helpful in identifying personal triggers, habits, diet/exercise, and other sleep disruptors. Lifestyle factors that can contribute to insomnia are smoking, regular alcohol use, being overweight, hypertension, frequent night time urination, excessive caffeine consumption, inactivity and poor sleep habits—rising or retiring to bed at different times every day.

Treatment for insomnia should address dietary & lifestyle factors before resorting to any sedative—natural or pharmacological.

- Diet: eating a well rounded diet helps to avoid nutritional deficiencies which can contribute to insomnia. B1 deficiency decreases availability of serotonin and can result from eating a diet high in refined carbohydrates. Watch stimulant intake—coffee, tea, soft drinks, etc. Avoid the alcohol trap! While it is true that alcohol is a CNS depressant, it also releases adrenaline and impairs transport of tryptophan to the brain, thereby disrupting serotonin levels. Withdrawal in the middle of the night alters the normal sleep cycle, increases frequency of urination, and contributes to breathing difficulties.
- Exercise affects mood, alleviates stress and is a natural sedative.

Sleep Hygiene—just like regular dental care, it is important to develop sleep enhancing habits

- Practice stress management
- Get up at the same time in the morning regardless of how much you slept to establish a strong, regular sleep/wake schedule.
- Develop evening relaxation rituals—establish a set of regular bedtime routines to signal the approach of bedtime, do them in the same order every night.
- Go to bed only when you are sleepy.
- Reduce artificial lighting at night.
- Make your bedroom a place that promote a sense of calm restfulness.

If you need more support for sleep, schedule a visit with your naturopathic physician to discuss natural sedative options like L-tryptophan or 5-hydroxytryptophan (5-HTP), melatonin, herbs such as valerian, passionflower, hops, and chamomile. Other treatment options to consider include behavior modification techniques, homeopathy, acupuncture and massage.

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## **FACIAL REJUVENATION ACUPUNCTURE**

### **Mari Greenly, LAc**

Facial Rejuvenation Acupuncture, the "Acupuncture Facelift", is a virtually painless, non-surgical method of reducing the signs of aging. By employing the principles of Chinese Medicine, points are chosen on the ears, body, face, and scalp to address the underlying causes of why an individual is aging the way they are.

Everyone knows the stresses in life that wear on our skin, particularly on our face. Dehydration, sun damage and unhealthy lifestyle choices are evident in the face. Hormone imbalances can cause unwanted breakouts or dryness. Worry may create furrows, stress can deepen the wrinkles on the forehead, and eye strain may add crow's feet around the eyes. While we would never want to erase all of the expression from our face, it is desirable to care for ourselves in a way that will in turn help us to look and feel rejuvenated!

Facial Rejuvenation Acupuncture works on many different levels. Acupuncture has evolved over thousands of years to be able to assess and treat imbalances in the body. It helps to move qi, the body's vital energy, through pathways that relate to all of the physiological processes in the body. Many of these energetic pathways either begin or end on the face. Treatment to acupuncture points on the face improves the overall health of the skin by increasing local circulation of blood and lymph. Facial Rejuvenation Acupuncture helps to lift and tighten the skin, and to reduce wrinkles by stimulating collagen production and dispersal to these specific areas. Other acu-points are used to eliminate puffiness around the eyes, reduce jowls, and to lift sagging under the chin.

The benefits of the Facial Rejuvenation Acupuncture Program are not just limited to the face. In a 1996 report in the International Journal of Clinical Acupuncture, 90% of 300 participants showed marked effects with just one treatment. These effects included: improvement of the elasticity of facial muscles and leveling of wrinkles, a more vibrant complexion, and overall rejuvenation-not confined to the face. Chronic health issues are often simultaneously addressed through this process. Many patients feel increased energy and a heightened sense of self-confidence as a result of the treatments.

The Facial Rejuvenation Acupuncture Program was developed by Virginia Doran over a span of 25 years in practice as an acupuncturist. She trains and personally certifies licensed practitioners all over the world. The Facial Rejuvenation Program consists of a series of 12 consecutive weekly treatments and scheduled maintenance treatments at least once every two to three months. Each session takes an hour and a half to two hours. The effects of the series of treatments can last for several years. Specific and regular skin care regimens are strongly recommended to augment the benefits of the acupuncture to improve the condition of the skin. If you are looking for a whole body experience that will help you to look and feel more youthful, then Facial Rejuvenation Acupuncture is well worth the time and money spent in pampering yourself.