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The Year of the Yin Earth Pig

The start of the 4717th New Year begins the evening of February 4th with the appearance of the first new moon of the year. The event is the most important holiday of the Chinese calendar and begins a period of festivities that lasts about two weeks.

The home is thoroughly cleaned, auspicious decorations placed at the front door, and all the food for the first two days prepared in advance of the New Year's Eve festivities. Refer to the side bar of this column for instructions to ready your home and family for this new year.

TRENDS FOR THE YEAR OF THE PIG

Each year of the Chinese calendar is made up of an animal sign, an element, and a color. As a result, when combining these three aspects each specific combination occurs only every 60 years. This year those aspects are pig, earth, and yellow.

The Year of the Pig, 2019 is symbolized in the Chinese calendar by two Chinese characters, with Yin (earth) sitting on top of Pig (water). The nature of Yin (earth) is soft, gentle and moderate. This year may show a bit more compromise and accommodation of others. There may be improvement in harmony and peace in the international setting.

However, Yin (earth) is sitting atop Water and quite unstable without a stable foundation and support from below. Therefore, the peaceful atmosphere is fragile and there is underlying unrest in various parts of the world. In the physical world there is little support for earth and this water year may bring increased land and water disasters as occurred 60 and 120 years ago.

In Traditional Chinese medicine, Yin (earth) represents stomach and pancreas. In such a year as this, with water dominating earth, good care must be taken to keep the digestion regulated and strong. Additionally, as there is no Fire in the year's aspect, heart and circulation are not supported. Foods and supplements must be used to support digestion and heart health. Regular acupuncture treatments will help to keep the systems balanced.

The Pig 2019 year will begin a bearish stock market and economy, with the latter part of the year being particularly difficult. The industries that will perform well include fashion, media, paper, books, education and environmental industries. Just behind these industries, those of property, mining, insurance computer software are secondarily favorable and third are energy, finance, and entertainment. Banking, machinery, and cars are not supported this year.

Spleen, Stomach, and Pancreas

In one of the primary schools of Traditional Chinese Medicine these three organs are thought to be foundation of all health and their imbalance the source of nearly all disease processes. The thought is that the Digestion is the mother of all of the other organs and systems and, as we know, when Mother is unhappy everyone is unhappy! So, how to keep Mother happy? Read on...

I can get into the weeds on this, but to give simple guidelines I can advise against cold raw food, iced drinks, too much sugar and starchy foods. It also helps to know which diet your DNA/Blood Type is best nourished by and that can be determined by simple, non-invasive testing in our office. As the Digestive System is balanced, so are all of the organs and systems, Heart and the circulatory system included.

There are particular foods and supplements that strengthen Heart and the circulatory system. I advise this year



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Celebrating the Chinese New Year

BEFORE FEBRUARY 5TH:

- 1. Clean your house top to bottom.**

Also means settle all your unfinished business, such as debts, quarrels, etc.

- 2. Decorate the entrance of your home.** Use red & gold. Include messages of good luck, & maybe even add a pig! Red symbolizes happiness and vitality of life. Gold represents wealth and prosperity.

- 3. Prepare enough food for a few days & put away the knives!** Using knives during the first few days of the New Year cuts off the good luck for the coming year.

ON FEBRUARY 5TH:

- 1. Red envelopes** Write down your aspirations for the year, put them in a red envelope, and place the envelope in an auspicious location in your house.

- 2. Clothes** Wear new clothes and red underwear.

DURING THE 15-DAY CELEBRATION PERIOD:

- 1. Lucky plants & foods:**

Lucky Bamboo
 Cherry blossom branches
 Pussy willow stalks
 Mandarin oranges
 Dumplings
 Rice cakes

- 2. Taboos**

that a CO Q10 be incorporated into everyone's supplementation regimen. Hawthorn Berry, cooked beets, red fruits and vegetables and some red meat for those who indulge. Hydration is important even through a Yin (water) year such as this year. As you know, each of us is unique and knowing precisely what best suits our constitution is key to keeping our health. As the old saying goes, "The practice of waiting to treat a disease until the symptoms are full-blown is like digging a well after one has become thirsty".

Avoid the following, at least for the first few days:
Breaking objects
Taking medicine
Washing hair
Sweeping (sweeps all the luck out of your house)
Crying
Lending or borrowing
Eating porridge

Strengthen Your Digestive Health

More than 95 million Americans suffer from digestive disorders ranging from constipation, diarrhea and irritable bowel syndrome to more serious conditions such as acid reflux (GERD), ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease. In fact, more than 35 million physician office visits a year are due to gastrointestinal complaints. Reports confirm that acupuncture and Oriental medicine can offer relief from even the most complex digestive problems.

Diagnosis and Treatment of Digestive Disorders

Evidence that Oriental medicine has been used for digestive disorders can be found in early medical literature dating back to 3 AD, where specific acupuncture points and herbal formulas for borborygmus (rumbling or gurgling in the intestines), abdominal pain and diarrhea with pain are discussed.

According to Oriental medical theory, most digestive disorders are due to disharmony in the spleen and stomach. The spleen plays a central part in the health and vitality of the body, taking a lead role in the assimilation of nutrients and maintenance of physical strength. It turns digested food from the stomach into usable nutrients and Qi (energy). Many schools of thought have been formed around this organ--the premise being that the proper functioning of the "middle" is the key to all aspects of vitality.

In the western perspective, a balance of digestive acids, enzymes and micro-flora is needed in order to digest the food we eat. Without this balance the food cannot be broken down efficiently, allowing its nutrients to be absorbed and the waste to be eliminated properly. By taking into account a person's constitution and varied symptoms, a treatment plan is designed specifically for the individual to bring their "middle" back into harmony and optimize the proper functioning of the digestive system. A variety of techniques can be used during treatment including acupuncture, lifestyle/dietary recommendations and energetic exercises to restore digestive health.

An interesting theory/practice, and one I have used with great success in my practice, is a diet based on the patient's blood type. Determining your blood type and the best diet for your perfect health can be easily, painlessly and quickly tested for in our office.

Let us know when you are ready to feel great again!

To read more about digestive health, read Jean's earlier newsletter on this topic at the Harmony Integrative Medicine web site: <http://www.harmonyintegrativemedicine.com>.

Qi Mail - News You Can Use To Feel Better Now!

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