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Healthy Aging and Living Life with Vitality

Oriental medicine has a long history of healing and rejuvenation that teaches us a great deal about aging well. Two thousand years ago, ancient Chinese scholars described the stages of aging in the *Huang Di Neijing* (The Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic). They remind us that we cannot change our genetics, but we can change how we live to extend and improve the quality of our lives.

Acupuncture and Oriental medicine emphasize prevention over treatment. This makes a great deal of sense because treating an illness that has already damaged the body is much more difficult than preventing the illness from occurring in the first place. It is never too late. You can begin today.



One of the basic tenets of acupuncture and Oriental medicine theory is the belief that all disease results from the imbalance of yin and yang forces. Yin qualities include darkness, quiet, moisture and formlessness. Yang qualities are represented by light, noise, dryness and form. Running is a yang activity, whereas the rest that comes afterwards is a function of yin. Resting allows for the renewal of depleted energy reserves, which, in turn, makes activity possible. This is one way to describe how the dynamic relationship between yin and yang powers our life force.

The challenges of aging also result from this lack of balance between yin and yang energies. This means that some conditions and symptoms of disease associated with advanced aging may be mitigated by bringing these two energies into harmony again. For example, dry eyes and poor vision can be addressed by acupuncture treatments that focus on nurturing yin and increasing yang. Yin fluids will provide lubrication to the eyes, while an increase in yang helps ensure more energy can reach the top of the head to help improve vision.

A healthy mind and body need not decline with age. Oriental medicine promotes living a balanced life and the basic components help point you on the path toward a long and quality life. Prevention of age-related cognitive and physical issues involves safeguarding the yin, yang, and *jing* (adrenals, hormone balance, and genetic endowments) throughout your life span by maintaining a healthy diet and active lifestyle, avoiding toxins, keeping harmony in your environment and relationships, and maintaining balanced activity and rest. Whatever your starting point, you can make positive changes to enhance the quality of your life.

Call today to learn how acupuncture and Oriental medicine can help maintain your health and improve your vitality as you age!

Preserve Your Youth and Extend Your Life

Leaving behind the bright years of youth and entering a quieter, more mature phase in life often prompts the question: How can I preserve my youth and extend my life? For answers to this question we might consult the teachings of Li Qing Yun.

According to the 1933 obituary for Li Qing Yun in Time Magazine, he lived from 1736 until 1933. While this improbably long life span has become the stuff of legend, for arguments' sake, let us acknowledge that this man managed to live to a ripe old age.

How did he live so long? Acupuncture and Oriental medicine provide guidance to understand what Li Qing Yun found essential to leading a long and healthy life. Let us examine the meaning behind his response when asked about his longevity: "Keep a quiet heart, sit like a tortoise, walk sprightly like a pigeon, and sleep like a dog."

Nurture Your Emotional Health by Keeping a Quiet Heart

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Managing Osteoporosis



Osteoporosis is a condition that causes brittle or porous bones due to a reduction in the bone mineral density. Bone is comprised of living tissue, which is constantly dying and renewing itself. Normally, old bone is cleared away as new growth occurs. However, when new bone cannot be generated, bones become soft and weak. Should a fall or coughing fit occur, a fracture may arise. In more severe cases, a break can occur without a noticeable event. Usually the early stages of osteoporosis do not include noticeable signs or symptoms. In later stages, back pain, loss of height, poor posture, or easily occurring bone fractures may happen.

Although anyone can develop osteoporosis, it occurs most frequently among post-menopausal white and Asian women. Other contributors include low calcium intake, prolonged use of

What does it mean to "keep a quiet heart" from the perspective of acupuncture and Oriental medicine?

The energy of the heart organ system is related to the element of fire. Fires can burn out of control, just as emotions can. Unchecked emotions and stress directly affect the heart. Common signs relating to disharmony of the heart include palpitations, insomnia and general anxiety.

How can acupuncture and Oriental medicine help you achieve a "quiet heart" for improved health and longer life? The point Pericardium 6, known as Neiguan or Inner Pass, can provide relief from anxiety, sea sickness, nausea and light-headedness. You can use acupressure by pressing on this point to calm anxiety and reduce nausea. Turn your wrist palm-side up and starting at the wrist crease, find the two tendons in the center of your arm. Once you find them, place three fingers down starting from the wrist crease. At the other end of your three fingers lies the point. Press firmly with the thumb until you feel relief.

Reduce Stress and Improve Mental Awareness by Sitting Like a Tortoise

Meditation is of primary importance to health and longevity. Sitting and meditating as a daily practice is, effectively, sitting like a tortoise. A quiet, yet active practice, meditation requires mental stamina and strong will power and cultivates self-awareness. By sitting for daily meditation practice, you can better let go of fears and accept the inevitable changes that occur internally as you age, and also in the outside world.

The kidney organ system is associated with will power and the emotion of fear. Through meditation you can cultivate the will power required to sit still, and also develop the personal strength of will necessary to confront the ceaseless thoughts and emotions of the mind.

Increase Vitality by Walking Spritely like a Pigeon

What does it mean to "walk spritely like a pigeon"? The spirited gait of a pigeon gives the impression of vitality. The pigeon is very aware of its environment and ready to move or fly at a moment's notice. The spritely quality of the pigeon's mobility represents the energy of the liver organ system.

In order for an aging person to remain healthy and creative, the body and mind must stay active. From an acupuncture and Oriental medicine perspective, for greater vitality you need a healthy liver system.

Release Worries and Restore Energy by Sleeping like a Dog

What does it mean to "sleep like a dog"? A dog falls asleep easily and sleeps very deeply, awaking fully restored. Regular, restorative sleep is a key to feeling young, healthy and vital. In order to sleep deeply and easily like a dog, the body and mind must willingly power down.

It can be very challenging in today's busy world to let go of your daily worries and thoughts in order to sink into deep, restorative sleep. Therapies are available to help address sleep issues you may be experiencing so you can get better rest. If your sleep is peaceful and you wake feeling refreshed, this indicates your heart is balanced, your kidneys are strong and your liver energy flows freely. The more nights you have during which you sleep like a dog, the younger you will look and feel.

A healthy mind and body need not decline with age. Prevention of age-related cognitive and physical issues involves safeguarding the yin, yang, and jing (adrenals, hormone balance, and genetic endowments) throughout your life span by maintaining a healthy diet and lifestyle, avoiding toxins, keeping harmony in your environment and relationships, and maintaining balanced activity and rest.

Six Easy Tips for Longevity

Aging may be inevitable, but your later years can be vibrant and healthy if attention is given to supporting your physical, mental and emotional well-being. These tips are just a few of the ways that you can bring balance into your life. You don't need to try doing all of them at once. Focus on one or two of them.

Practice Gratitude

Grateful people report higher levels of positive emotions, life satisfaction, vitality, and optimism, and lower levels of depression and stress, according to Robert A. Emmons, a researcher and professor at University of California-Davis who has written four books on the subject of the psychology of gratitude.

Dr. Emmons states that the disposition toward gratitude appears to enhance pleasant feeling states more than it diminishes unpleasant emotions. Grateful people do not deny or ignore the negative aspects of life, but they have a healthy attitude towards them.

Make Exercise a Priority

People who exercise more are less likely to be stressed and more likely to be satisfied with life, according to Danish researchers. Qi Gong and Tai Chi are non-impact exercises that focus on repetitive movements with attention to breathing. Tai Chi and Qi Gong use gentle movements and low physical impact, which are ideal for aging bodies.

The benefits of these exercises include a slower heart rate, lowered blood pressure, and drops in adrenaline

corticosteroid drugs, heavy alcohol consumption, smoking, and an inactive lifestyle.

A patient suffering from the consequences of brittle and porous bones may be diagnosed by a practitioner of acupuncture and Oriental medicine with a deficiency of yin. Healthy bone depends on a system of blood vessels to deliver nourishment. Considered a thickened form of body fluids, blood falls under the domain of yin. When yin is in short supply, dryness is the natural result. A disruption or deficiency in the blood supply to the skeletal system may interfere with its ability to properly lubricate and nourish bone.

In addition to receiving acupuncture treatments to help nourish yin, there are some things you can do at home to address your symptoms of osteoporosis, including increasing physical activity and consuming foods high in calcium that support the skeletal system.

An increase in physical activity that includes resistance, flexibility, and weight-bearing exercises will strengthen muscles, improve stability and balance, help slow mineral loss, and improve cardiovascular health.

If you have osteoporosis, work with a therapist to select appropriate exercises for your health. Choosing exercises with slower controlled movements such as Tai Chi or Qi Gong and avoiding high-impact exercises with jerky movements will reduce the risk of fractures.

Bladder Health and Incontinence

Incontinence and urinary tract disorders commonly arise as one gets older, especially for women over 50. One reason the risk for incontinence increases as we age is because the bladder lining starts losing elasticity which, in turn, reduces its ability to store urine. This can result in frequent and urgent bouts of urination. (If this occurs at night it is called nocturia.)

In some cases, coughing, sneezing, or pressure on the abdomen may cause an involuntary voiding of urine, known as leakage. Those suffering from incontinence also endure a greater risk for repeated urinary tract infections (UTI).

and cortisol levels. Making these exercises a regular practice can lead to better health and vitality.

Take a Day of Rest

Take a day of rest per week from your regular schedule to recharge. Rejuvenation for the body and mind is worth its weight in gold and you will be more productive with the rest of your time!

Get Good Sleep Regularly

Your body repairs itself best at night, so allow plenty of time for it to do so. Poor sleep has been linked to high blood pressure, atherosclerosis, heart failure, heart attacks, stroke, diabetes and obesity.

Alleviate and Manage Stress Levels

Stress is a normal part of life, but if left unmanaged, stress can lead to emotional, psychological, and even physical problems, including heart disease, high blood pressure, chest pains or an irregular heartbeat. Numerous studies have demonstrated the substantial benefits of acupuncture in the treatment of stress, anxiety and mental health.

In addition to acupuncture, Oriental medicine offers a whole gamut of tools and techniques that can be integrated into your life to keep stress in check. These tools include Tui Na, Qi Gong exercises, herbal medicine, dietary therapy, meditations, and acupressure that you can administer at home.

Address Health Concerns Quickly: Don't Wait!

Many diseases can be cured easily if they are caught early, but people often put off seeking treatment. They ignore important signals that something is wrong with their body. We all get warnings about our health and well-being, but these warnings are like traffic lights. They tell us what we ought to do, but they cannot make us do it.

Health Boosting Foods

Fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins are part of any healthy diet. Here are six nutrients that can enhance your health and vitality.

Garlic - Garlic boosts your immunity, increasing your ability to fight off infection. It also helps regulate blood sugar levels. One or two cloves of garlic a day is recommended for optimum health, so include it in your cooking!



Ginger - Ginger has been taken as a medicine by numerous cultures for thousands of years. This amazing spice is anti-inflammatory, reduces pain, and is excellent for many types of digestive distress (especially nausea). More than one study has found that ginger may also be a potent cancer fighter.

Goji Berries - Small fruits that grow on evergreen shrubs in the Himalayas, Gou Qi Zi are slightly chewy and have a mild flavor. High in fiber and containing the highest antioxidant powers of any berry or fruit, they are used in Chinese medicine to increase longevity, strengthen the immune system, improve vision, protect the liver, and improve circulation. The goji or wolf berry is widely available dried, and easily found as a whole fruit or juice in natural-food stores.

Green Tea - There has been much research on the anti-carcinogenic properties of green tea. Studies of people in Asia who drink copious amounts of green tea daily have shown a correlation between green tea consumption and lower rates of a variety of cancers. Green tea is easy to find and can be purchased in most grocery stores and health food stores. It is refreshing iced or hot.

Honey - Known as Feng Mi in Oriental medicine, honey has many health benefits, and is often used in combination with other herbs. It contains anti-oxidants, and the darker the honey, the higher the anti-oxidant content and deeper the flavor. Honey can be eaten or applied topically. It is anti-bacterial, anti-viral, and anti-fungal. Throughout history, honey has been used to soothe and clear the skin, and encourage the growth of healthy tissue. You might enjoy trying raw honey as a facial mask. Organic raw honey that has not been pasteurized, clarified, or filtered is your best choice.

Omega 3 Fatty Acids - Anti-inflammatory essential fatty acids help keep joints healthy, reduce pain and swelling, and can also help with depression, stress, arthritis, and menopause. Omega-3, Omega-6 and Omega-9 oils are fats that directly affect cognitive, cellular, and kidney function. Foods rich in Omega-3 fatty acids include: salmon, sardines, tuna and other cold water fish; nuts and seeds, notably flaxseeds, hemp seeds and walnuts; and soybeans and winter squash.

A UTI occurs when bacteria enters the urinary system through the kidneys, urethra, ureters, and/or the bladder. Although signs and symptoms vary according to the location of the bacteria, some common signs include the urgent, persistent urge to urinate, burning on urination, and cloudy urine. These conditions not only signal a malfunction of the urinary tract system, but may lead to social isolation and/or loss of self esteem.

Fortunately, acupuncture and Oriental medicine can address bladder health and reduce the symptoms of incontinence. The July 2005 edition of *Obstetrics and Gynecology* detailed a study called "Acupuncture for overactive bladder: a randomized controlled trial." The study aimed to compare acupuncture treatments versus placebo acupuncture for an overactive bladder.

Out of the 85 women initially enrolled, 74 completed the four weekly sessions. The researchers concluded that women who received four weekly bladder-specific acupuncture treatments had significant improvements in bladder capacity, urinary urgency and frequency, and quality of life as compared with women who received the placebo acupuncture treatments.

To maintain bladder health, increase water consumption and avoid irritants such as coffee, tea, citrus juices, and carbonated beverages (most soft drinks), which can stimulate the bladder. Kegel, or pelvic floor exercises, can tonify the muscles used in urination.

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