

The Armstrong Clinic for Integrative Medicine

Health Tips for Healthy Families

As we move into the fall season “change” is one of the key phrases that is common for many. Kids are heading back to school, vacations are drawing to a close, and leaves are changing just to name a few. As routines are reestablished it is important to think about prevention for the upcoming cold and flu season.

What is the immune system and what does it do?

The immune system isn't something that you can see, but it is doing a lot to defend your body from invasion of bacteria, microbes, viruses, and toxins. The immune system is made up of a variety of components all of which work together towards optimal health. The key components of the immune system include:

- **Thymus** – a gland in your central chest which is important in the production of T-cells
- **Spleen** – an organ in charge of filtering foreign material from blood and removing old red blood cells
- **Lymph system** – which is found throughout the body, much like the circulatory systems, it however does not have a pump to circulate the lymph, and instead relies on contraction of nearby muscles. Lymph carries proteins and waste products from the circulatory system, to lymph nodes where filtration occurs by immune cells.
- **Bone marrow** – is where both red and white blood cells are produced. Red blood cells leave the bone marrow fully formed, whereas white blood cells may mature elsewhere, depending on type of white blood cell they are programmed to mature into.

- **White blood cells** – are the most important cells in the immune system. There are many different types of WBC, each with a different function. The three key types are: Granulocytes which make up 50% to 60% of all WBC, and are further divided into three classes: neutrophils, eosinophils and basophils.

Granulocytes get their name because they contain granules, and these granules contain different chemicals depending on the type of cell. Lymphocytes make up 30% to 40% of all WBC. Lymphocytes come in two classes: B cells (those that mature in bone marrow) and T cells (those that mature in the thymus). The final types of cells are monocytes, which make up the remaining 7% and evolve into macrophages which attack and remove foreign material.

- **Antibodies** – are produced by the WBC. They respond to a specific antigen (bacteria, virus) by attaching itself to the foreign antigens to act as a flag to signal for removal by the immune system.

- **Complement system** – works with antibodies to lyse (burst) cells that have been flagged from removal by antibodies.

How can I promote optimal immune health?

Adapting a healthy lifestyle is the first step in prevention. These are a few of the key aspects to immune health.

Sleep – We all know how much better we feel after a good night of rest, and research has shown your immune system functions better with more rest as well. A study was performed on the immune system taking blood measurements of antibodies after a Hepatitis A vaccination, and a night of sleep deprivation.

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Results demonstrated that the immune system's ability to mount an immune was depressed. The sleep goal for children is 10 hours and adults 8-9; these amounts will increase when sick.

Exercise – Moderate, regular exercise has been shown not only to benefit cardiovascular and muscular systems but the immune system as well. Regular exercise, including 30 minutes of cardiovascular activity daily, will help to improve the body's ability to defend against intruders.

Stress reduction - The link between mental/emotional well being and physical illness is more accepted than it once was. Immune health is no different. Chronic stress is known to increase a hormone called cortisol, which inhibits cytokines and interleukins, which are the messengers responsible for coordinating the white blood cell's immune response. Taking time out each day to do an activity you enjoy is just one way to reduce stress.

Hygiene - The best way to avoid the spread of bacteria and viruses is by regular hand washing with warm water and soap. Coughing into a sleeve or washing hands immediately after using a tissue are ways to protect those around you when you are ill.

Nutrition – The foods you eat provide the nutrients needed for the cellular processes of the immune system to function. Aim to choose fresh brightly coloured vegetables, and lean meats or vegetarian sources of proteins. Avoid sugars as they will decrease the function of neutrophils, the white cells, to engulf and destroy bacteria. This effect can last as long as 5 hours after sugar consumption.

References

1. The truth about your immune system: A Harvard Medical School Special Report, Michael Starnbach, 2010
2. Bollinger, Thomas., Bolinger, Annalena., Oster, Henrik., Solbach., Sleep, Immunity, and Circadian Clocks: A Mechanistic Model, Gerontonloy, 2009 (1-6)
3. Nieman, David. Regular moderate exercise boosts immunity AgroFood

The Flu Virus and Naturopathic Immune Modulation

To define this, modulating the immune system is like tuning a car engine – you don't want to idle the engine too slow or fast, but at an optimal rate for that engine. If your immune system is overactive (engine idling too fast) or deficient (engine idling too slow) then it will be in poor function. The fine-tuning of your immune system requires more than completing vaccine and/or antibiotic and/or anti-autoimmune drug regimens. Flu viruses may take advantage of the opportunity to take up residence in the human body and cause severe illness if the immune system is not optimally functioning. Below are a few points of evidence in support of the Naturopathic flu shot as a safe and effective alternative to a Traditional Flu Shot.

How does the Naturopathic Alternative (the alternative) to the Flu Shot Work?

The alternative works by increasing production of cells to specific influenza virus strains, without overstimulation or suppression of the rest of the immune system. In a study done on high-risk patients, the use of our homeopathic

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flu shot during an influenza epidemic has been evaluated over a 6-month period, which reported increased anti-influenza (H1N1, H3N2, HB) haemagglutinin and neuraminidase antibody titres in treated patients compared with untreated controls¹. This is good news for people who are unable or unwilling to take the conventional preventative treatment vaccination for the flu. There **IS** another effective option to the traditional vaccine flu shot.

What are the side effects and its tolerability of the alternative?

The alternative was at least equivalent to conventional medications in providing symptomatic relief and shortening the time to improvement. Tolerability, both in terms of Adverse Effects and in terms of patient compliance, was generally good but appeared to be better in the group receiving the alternative¹. This alternative does not pose a risk to your health by creating adverse reactions, and is easy to take as it can be administered orally.

Is it good for children?

In a study of 100 patients under the age of 12, the alternative was administered to treat the main illness symptoms of fever, sore throat, cough, runny nose, headache and muscle pain. Symptomatic improvement occurred within 1 to 3 days after starting the dose in 66% of the children². The alternative was rated by pediatricians as successful in 98% of the cases, with only 2% of the cases rated the treatment by the alternative as unsuccessful².

References:

1. Brydak L, Denys A. The evaluation of humoral response and the clinical evaluation of a risk-group patients' state of health after administration of the homeopathic preparation Gripp-Heel during the influenza epidemic season 1993/94. *Int Rev Allergol Clin Immunol* 1999; 5: 223-7.
2. Wagner, H, Immunostimulation mit pflanzlichen Arzneimitteln ("Immunostimulation with phytotherapeutics"). *Schweiz, Apotheker-Zeitung* 1988; 22: 624-629.

Naturopathic Flu Clinic

Dates

Simcoe: 519.426.4275

October 4th, November 8th

12 noon - 8pm

Please call to register. This is available to the public.

Congratulations! Sheryl Crotta has completed the Master of Osteopathic Manipulative Sciences Diploma (M.OMSc.)

Osteopathic Manual Therapy (Classical Osteopathy) is now available at the Armstrong Clinic. Sheryl Crotta is a graduate of the Canadian Academy of Osteopathy and Holistic Health Sciences in Hamilton Ontario where she has earned the Master in Osteopathic Manipulative Sciences diploma.

Osteopathy is a safe, effective, efficient system of manual therapy founded by Dr. Andrew Taylor Still. Osteopathy focuses on finding the cause of a wide range of health problems. It is through

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thorough assessment and treatment of palpable asymmetries found in postural patterns, restrictions in motion, changes in tissue texture as well as tenderness.

The treatment uses a framework based on the Body Adjustment approach which integrates and appropriately applies techniques in accordance with Classical Osteopathic principles appropriate for patient needs. Please call 519-426-4275 to schedule a visit with Sheryl, or to answer any further questions.

For more information, please visit
www.simcoeosteopathy.com

The Armstrong Clinic would like to welcome Ashley Beeton N.D.(in study)

Ashley Beeton was born and raised in Norfolk County, she graduated from Simcoe Composite School before continuing her post secondary education. With the end goal of providing education and preventative health care to the community of Norfolk County, Ashley

achieved an Honours degree in Community Health Science from Brock University. After exploring public health, Ashley decided to take a primary care role approach to providing health care, and enrolled at the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine.

Ashley graduated from the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine in May 2011, after completing the four year Naturopathic Doctor program. The program involved study of basic medical sciences, naturopathic principles and therapeutics and included completion of 1100 hours of clinical internship.

Ashley is currently working under the supervision of Dr. Sean Armstrong N.D. until completion of her licensing exam in October 2011. She is accepting new patients on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 12:00pm to 8:00pm. Ashley will be continuing to see patients regularly upon completion of her Naturopathic Board and Licensing requirements.

Ashley has a special interest in woman's health, nutrition and wellness through a healthy and balanced lifestyle.

Please come out and meet us at the following health fairs in the Autumn of 2011:

Armstrong Clinic Hours
Monday-Thursday 9am-8pm
Friday 9am-5pm
Saturday, Sunday Closed

1) **Prenatal Health Fair** – Thursday October 13th, 2011 from 6:30-8PM at the Vittoria Community Centre, 35 Oaks Blvd, Vittoria, ON. **Free Admission**

2) **Port Dover Lions 1st Annual Health and Fitness Expo.** Saturday October 29th, 2011 from 10AM – 5PM at the Port Dover Lions Community Centre, St. George Street, Port Dover, ON. **Free Admission**