

To the Fullest Possibilities of Life.



Spring

~ **Mary Oliver** ~

Somewhere

a black bear

has just risen from sleep
and is starting

down the mountain.

All night

in the brisk and shallow restlessness
of early spring

I think of her,

her four black fists

flicking the gravel,
her tongue

like a red fire

touching the grass,
the cold water.

There is only one question:

how to love this world.

I think of her

rising

like a black and leafy ledge

to sharpen her claws against

the silence

of the trees.

Whatever else

my life is

with its poems

and its music

and its glass cities,

it is also the dazzling darkness

coming

down the mountain,

breathing and tasting;

all day I think of her-

her white teeth,

her wordlessness,

her perfect love.

**Spring and The Wood Element in
Chinese Medicine**

What are the correspondences associated with the spring and Summer in Chinese medicine?

Spring is the surge of vitality, the irrepressible rising. It is birth and rapid growth. Crocuses and daffodils push through the still firm ground, drawn toward the heat and light of the sun. We are reminded that we can always start fresh; find a new way, re-establish hope. This is a time of rapid change, reminding us to be bold and decisive.

Color: Green

Sense: To see

Emotion: Anger

Officials: Liver and Gallbladder

The gifts of spring are: flexibility, adaptability, vision, decision-making, planning, decisiveness, forgiveness, creativity, new possibilities, purpose, strategizing, hope, and benevolence.

The three months of spring are called springing up and unfolding. Heaven and earth together produce life and the 10,000 beings are invigorated.

At night, one goes to bed, at dawn, one gets up.

One paces in the courtyard with great strides, hair loose, body at ease, exerting the will for life. Letting live, not killing; giving, not taking away; rewarding, not punishing.

~ Neijing Suwen Ch.2, The Way Of Heaven by Claude Larre SJ

**Summer & The Fire Element in
Chinese Medicine**

What are the correspondences associated with the Summer in Chinese medicine?

Summer is the time of warmth and light. The sun moves high in the sky and the temperature rises. The warmth provides fullness in the blossoms of the flowers. Life comes to maturation. Partnership is often enjoyed in outdoor activities. This is the most expansive time of year

Color: Red

Sense Organ: Tongue

Emotion: Joy

Officials: Heart and Small Intestine; Pericardium and Triple Heater

The gifts of Summer are: Warmth, compassion, partnership, joy, enthusiasm, love, excitement, fun, beauty, passion, maturation, laughter, playfulness and happiness.

The 3 months of summer are called prospering and developing the flower. The qi of Heaven and Earth intertwine the 10,000 beings flower and bring forth fruit.

At night, one goes to bed, at dawn one gets up. One does not let oneself be overcome by the sun, exerting the will, but without violence, assisting the brilliance of beauty and strength which thus fulfill their promise. One must assist the flow of qi which likes to go to the exterior.

This corresponds with the Summer qi. It is the way that maintains the growth of life.

~ Neijing Suwen Ch.2, The Way Of Heaven by Claude Larre SJ

Practices For The Spring/Summer

Get in touch with your calling.

During this time of year the sun is up early and stays up late. We are active and feeling good. Making vacation plans, having parties, and spending afternoons at the pool. As we enjoy these long warm days take an afternoon to yourself and get in touch with your heart. What is your calling? What is it you really want to do with your life? Is there dream that you have put on the back burner and say to your self, "this will never happen"? It is the time of year to dare to dream. Pour yourself some fresh lemonade get out some paper and draw a picture of what you see as a possibility for yourself. Maybe even break out the kids crayons! Make it fun and light hearted. Tap into your childlike side. Remember when asked as a child what you wanted to do when you grew up, there were no parameters. Any thing was possible, and it still is!

Do not race your heart like a horse, or you will exhaust its energy. Do not fly your heart like a bird, or you will injure its wings. Never frantically move things around just for the sake of seeing what will happen. If you move things around you dislocate them from their proper place. If you will be calm and patient, everything will come to you by itself."

~ Guanzi (Writings of Master Guan) circa 26 BCE

Yoga For the Season Upavistha Konasana



Sit on the edge of a folded blanket with your legs stretched out in front of you. Bring your hands behind you, lift and open your legs to an angle of about 90 degrees.

Allow the top of your thighs to rotate outward, let the bottom of the thigh press into the floor. Engage the thigh muscles and keep the knee caps point straight up toward the ceiling. Notice if you have a tendency to roll forward or backwards on the heel, keep the toes pointed up towards the ceiling.

With your thigh bones pressed heavily into the floor and your knee caps pointing up at the ceiling, take your hands out to reach your toes, calf's, or knees. Keep your arms long. As with all forward bends, the emphasis is on moving from the hip joints and maintaining the length of the front torso. As soon as you find yourself bending from the waist, stop, re-establish the length from the pubis to the navel, and continue to fold forward.

Every inhalation lengthen the spine and every exhalation fold forward. Stay in the pose 1 minute or longer. Then come up on an inhalation with a long front torso.

Great food for the season From: Recipes for Self-Healing By Daverick Leggett

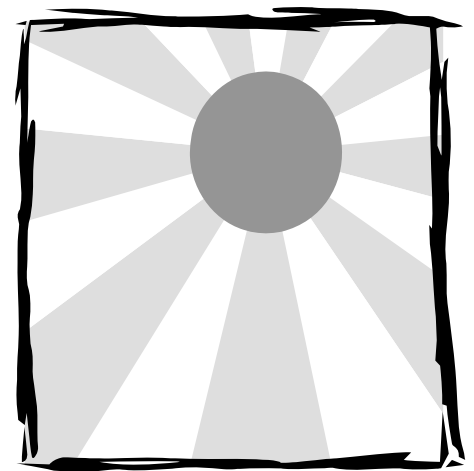
Summer Cooler

This cooler is great for a hot summers day. It is also helpful in bringing down a fever.

1 tsp. Peppermint
2 tsp rosehips
1TBS concentrated apple juice
1 pint of water
Lemon Juice to taste

Pour boiling water over the herbs and brew for 5 minutes. Add to apple juice and lemon to taste just before serving.

This cooling drink energetically is used for hot conditions. It will cool an overheated stomach or liver and is ideal for conditions of Summer Heat.



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Referrals are the greatest complement.

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Motherhood- how acupuncture can support you.

This article was recently published in Family Magazine and Focus on Women Magazine.

We can look at pregnancy and fertility as an expression of the energetic of the season of Winter, what the Chinese call the element of Water. Just as a bulb in the ground needs to have darkness and incubation before blossoming into a flower, a baby needs the same. In Chinese medical theory, the Kidneys, one of the organs that correspond to the element of Water, are in part responsible for the growth and development of the fetus and for allowing the mother to be fertile. The Kidneys store our DNA, our “Jing”, our Essence, the blueprint of who we are, which is passed on to the next generations.

As a woman prepares for pregnancy and conception, stillness and relaxation are essential to the health of mother and baby. How is a woman to conceive, hold and deliver a health baby if she is in a fight or flight state? When our adrenals are pumping, cortisol is flowing and everything is telling us to be in survival mode. In order to protect the mother, the body will not allow conception or the holding of a pregnancy when a woman is in survival mode. This is why relaxation, working fewer hours, creating a time of stillness and contemplation is so important to the process of conception and maintaining a healthy pregnancy. Diet is another important component. The food you take in is the fuel that will enhance the chances of becoming pregnant and will support both mother and fetus. Eating warming nourishing foods, such as soups and

stews, organic fruits and vegetables, good fats and oils, free range meats and eggs will support the Spleen’s function of building blood to support the uterus, fetus and nourish the baby. Caffeine, alcohol, fast food, sugars, diet sodas, and cold, raw foods should be avoided as this will impair the function of the Spleen. {Chinese herbal medicine can also support the Spleen’s function in preparation for conception.}

How can acupuncture help? One of the main effects of acupuncture is a state of relaxation. In order for the body to heal and to thrive, the ability to be relaxed is crucial. Acupuncture promotes this. For women seeking to conceive and to maintain a healthy pregnancy, acupuncture can bring more blood flow and circulation to the uterus and help to boost the Kidney energy (Qi) and support the functioning of the Spleen. Once a woman has conceived, acupuncture can also support her if she is experiencing some common side effects of pregnancy including; morning sickness, abdominal pain, edema, preclampsia, mood swings, back pain, insomnia, and help promote health throughout the pregnancy.

Acupuncture also offers support through the birthing process. There are specific acupuncture points that can help to bring on labor or assist in the process of birthing. Acupuncture points can be massaged during labor to help aid in pain relief. If a baby is breach, acupuncture can also provide ways of inviting the baby to turn into the correct position.

Acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine are also extremely supportive modalities after giving birth. During the process of birthing

the mother loses Blood, Qi, Yin, and Essence, which are the main building blocks of life, according to Chinese medical theory. This can make a new mother very depleted and weak leading to symptoms associated with postpartum depression. There are many ways of supporting the mother after birthing to rebuild Blood, Qi and Yin. “Mother roasting” is an application of heat to the lower abdomen and lower back to bring Qi and blood back to the uterus and is nourishing and replenishing for women who have just given birth vaginally or by cesarean. Soups prepared with specific Chinese herbs can be taken immediately after birth to help rebuild the mother’s Qi and Blood, and may even aid in the production of breast milk.

I have found in my own clinic that using acupuncture is most effective as a support through the entire process of motherhood. Creating balance within the body before conception, keeping a mother healthy and well throughout pregnancy, assisting with birthing as needed, and supporting a mother with herbs and acupuncture postpartum helps to create a healthy baby and a healthy mother.

Chinese medicine and a healthy lifestyle support the journey towards motherhood. In addition to these tools, acupuncture can help women become their own best source of inspiration and learning. As you begin the process of conception I invite you to ask yourself this question. What vision do I see for the future generation? What wisdom will I pass on to my children of the sake of the future?

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