

The **Herbal Collective**

Better living with herbs and natural health

May 2017



**2 Red Herbs for Women
Stinging Nettle Superfood
Beat the Heat for Menopause
Health Supplements Threatened
The ABZzz of a Good Night's Sleep**

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How to Be a Healthier Woman

Publisher's Note

Welcome to a new month and more exciting information on how herbal and natural health strategies can help you live a better, healthier life.

In this issue we cover women's health in honor of Mother's Day with a focus on fertility and herbs that can help women in various stages of their life.

The older I get the more I realize that biological issues and issues going on in a women's life can make a huge difference in how she feels.

The issues in her life relate to her relationships, her work, her health and these all relate to how she feels about herself.

When a woman is stressed in any of these main areas of her life, it can affect her biological health stressing hormone levels and causing uncomfortable symptoms. These symptoms vary depending on where she is at in her life.

If she is trying to get pregnant, being stressed and affect that and make it more difficult.

Younger women will experience PMS symptoms when stressed and these can affect her emotions

causing irritability, anger, depression and more.

Women going through peri-menopause and menopause will experience some similar symptoms to women experiencing PMS, however they will experience it in different degrees.

Herbs and natural remedies such as homeopathy, essential oils and other strategies can make a big difference in how a woman responds to these symptoms or even experiences them.

Now, all her interactions with people flow so much better, she has better energy levels, is happier and performs better at work.

What a difference in her life!

As someone who has had success with using herbal remedies as well as essential oils I encourage women not to give up on improving their health.

It can make a huge difference in your life! That's what you will discover in this issue - learn about what can help you but more importantly use the herbs or natural remedies that most strongly resonate with you.

Oh, and Happy Mother's Day to all you moms.

Sincerely
Marilyn Zink

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Natural Health Show

The Herbal Collective is holding a Natural Health Show on June 3 at the Nanaimo District Secondary School (NDSS) on Wakesiah Rd.

So far more than 15 vendors have taken booths and more are on the way!

The event will feature vendors and speakers with possible door prizes and much more!

It's a one stop location to learn more about how herbs and natural health supplements and strategies can benefit you to a healthier, happier life!

Interested in participating as a vendor? Please email info@herbalcollective.ca for more information or follow us on facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/herbal.collective>



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Beat the Heat

Non Drug Choices for Menopausal Support

By Olena Gill

What is Menopause? Strictly put, it is the time in a woman's life where their natural menstrual cycles cease permanently and hormone levels once necessary for reproduction, gradually diminish.

It is a normal physiological process that can occur typically between the ages of 45 – 55, the average age being 51. In order to be diagnosed, cycles have to have ceased for over a 12 month period. The symptoms of menopause and post-menopause however, can last well over 10 years after a woman's last menstrual period. And it is these symptoms that usually bring people to seek medical solutions to either temper or eliminate them completely.

One of the conventional approaches to managing common menopausal signs and symptoms such as hot flashes, night sweats, irritability, memory loss, weight gain, sleep disturbances, and low libido is prescription hormone or bioidentical hormone therapy. Natural treatments for menopause work in a completely different manner than prescription drugs. Here are a few non-pharmaceutical options to deal with the stresses of menopause:

Herbal Medicine: A handful of herbs typically used for menopausal prescriptions are phytoestrogenic, - that is, substances that mimic estrogens. These herbs contain isoflavones – isoflavones being weak estrogen-like compounds that respond to the body's hormonal needs.

Botanical phytoestrogens include herbs such as Black Cohosh (*Cimicifuga racemosa*), Wild Yam, Ashwaganda, Alfalfa (*Medicago sativa*), and Dong Quai (*Angelica sinensis*). Black Cohosh in particular is considered a menopause tonic for a number of reasons. It can improve mood and soothe anxiety. Also, herbal medical practitioners recommend it for taming hot flashes, night sweats, and vaginal dryness. It's commonly prescribed for women who - for medical reasons - don't take conventional hormone replacement therapy. Tinctures, capsules and standardized extract are available for medicinal use. The specific dose of any herb for that matter will depend on your individual needs and health concerns. Always check with your Naturopathic Physician before



Black cohosh, above left, and Wild Yam, right



using any herbal remedy however, as many may interfere with medications and other supplements.

Nutrition: In addition to hormonal changes that are occurring in the body as we age, there are certainly additional conditions that are important to be aware of that can come on the heels of menopause – Type II Diabetes, Cardiovascular disease and rising cholesterol, and Osteoporosis to name a few. Improving dietary choices is crucial to managing menopausal symptoms as some foods enhance inflammation. What you eat and drink, makes an impact on your menopausal journey.

Herbal teas can provide a cooling effect especially in the case of hot flashes, whereas consuming foods such as coffee, chocolate, hot and spicy foods can be

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aggravating and overstimulating. Flax seed, cruciferous vegetables, eating good healthy fats and protein can assist in metabolizing excess estrogens. Supportive nutrients such Magnesium, Vitamin B6, C, E, and Tyrosine can also support energy function and adrenal glands which are often equally under stress during the peri- and menopausal years.

Gemmotherapy: Plant Medicines which utilize only the extracts of fresh buds and young shoots from developing plants is actually an emerging medicine which is finding promise especially in the treatment of conditions such as menopause. I've often prescribed these wonderful phytotherapeutics such as *Rubus idaeus*, which can help women regulate hormone levels, temper menopausal symptoms, and age more gracefully.

Traditional Chinese Medicine: From the TCM perspective, menopause is seen as a natural decline in Kidney Essence or Jing and an imbalance of Yin and Yang – the cooling and heating mechanisms respectively.

When Yin declines, as it does during this process, cooling ability decreases as well, leaving too much Yang or heat, hence symptoms such as hot flashes, insomnia, anxiety, and mood instability. Treatments such as Acupuncture, and Chinese herbal medicines can assist the body to return to a balanced state by regulating and influencing hormones and neurotransmitters such as cortisol, dopamine, and serotonin, which have a profound effect on sleep, mood, and stress.

Stress Management: It is vital that one's stressors be identified in order to be able to take appropriate steps to manage them effectively. Supporting patients in minimizing stress is paramount in my practice.

Often, I will talk with my patients about tools to self-care such as yoga, meditation, forest bathing, deep breathing and even bodywork such as massage. Menopause is a time to essentially "pause", put more attention on yourself and on top of the self-care list. In essence, this period of time in a woman's life, can also become a focus of inner re-evaluation and deeper exploration of oneself.

Dr. Olena Gill is a Naturopathic Physician and Acupuncturist practicing in Parksville, B.C. She can be reached at 778-762-3099 or www.indigomedicine.com

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When you practice Rapid Transformational Therapy and Therapeutic Hypnosis, you know that to integrate positive changes in a client's life, repetition is the key.

The subconscious mind anchors our habits and habitual reactions based on the emotional depth of any given experience and its possible repetition in our life.

A new event creates new neural connections where all data linked to the said event connects together and creates a family of brain cells. All the information (location, people involved, date, season...), the emotions and the stimulated senses (sounds, taste, sensation on the skin, colors, textures...) are wired together and will fire jointly as a new reference in the brain.

Therefore, let's imagine that you are learning to swim for the first time at your family lake house. If the actual experience is pleasant, your brain will create a folder called "swimming" and it will contain the following files: fun, excitement, joy, adventure, summer, family together, pride, accomplishment and so on.

As you repeat the experience, those imprints become stronger. Because every time you swim you feel good, your brain will even remind you that swimming is a possible way to alleviate sadness, lethargy or maybe boredom.

The subconscious mind always wants to protect you. Consequently, when you feel you need some good vibrations, it simply searches your brain and looks for all the recorded memories associates to happiness. It will show you a variety of options based on your own life experi-

ence and swimming will be one of them.

However, if suddenly an incident at the family lake house occurs where you nearly drowned, because of the depth and the intensity of the situation, your subconscious mind overwrites the previous neural association. It does not always delete the old files but it transfers them into an "unused files" folder.

From now on, under the swimming folder, you will find the "danger", "avoid water", "fear of lake", "asphyxiation" files. The mind will even expand the protective and security measures to other fields and may include files such as beware of "sea", "river", "swimming pool", "boats" into the swimming folder.

Having the knowledge of how our mind generates our reactions, we can use the same process to record desired goals as well. The mind does not differentiate reality from imagined visions, so by taking yourself into a deep state of relaxation (hypnotic trance) and visualizing the accomplishment of your goals (including the feelings, the sensations, the sounds, the tastes...), it will believe it is your reality and will record this information as a reference.

We actually need between 20 to 60 days to fully rewire our brain with the new data. This is why it is crucial for you to visualize on a daily basis the changes you wish for yourself. One of the best alternatives is to listen to a personalized recording that will guide you into the inner-vision of the objectives you wish to attain.

Eventually, your brain will delete the old beliefs simply because the positive ones will have been repeated so frequently that they become now the permanent files in the folder of success.

Nathalie Ristord CH RTT, is a Therapeutic Hypnotist & Rapid Transformational Therapist and the creator of the Better-Being Project and the No More Anxiety program.

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Natural Health Show on June 4

Last Chance for Vendors

It's getting down to the wire for the Natural Health Show in Nanaimo on June 2.

Yet there are still spots for exhibitors to showcase their wares – whether it's products, services or a combination of both. There is also a lineup of interesting speakers.

The event at Nanaimo District Senior Secondary, NDSS, is the place to be whether you are a consumer looking for more information or a business person looking for more exposure.

Speakers/Lectures

Ramona Horsfield, RN, will speak on NRF2 Science – the new medical breakthrough and what it means to your health at noon.

Nathalie Ristord of Nanaimo Hypnosis and Rapid Transformational Therapy will speak on No More Anxiety at 1 p.m.

The show is a blend of natural health practitioners, herbal products and health supplements, essential oils and much more. It's a great one stop place to get all your questions answered about natural health and alternative therapies.

It's also a great opportunity to try out different products and services to get an idea of what is offered before a larger investment is made.

There will be prizes as well so make sure to show up and get your chance to win!

Here is a list of vendors signed up to date –more are on the way.

Sign up for updates on the Facebook page.

Lana Schuler, Arbonne International
 Melanie Haug/LeeAnne Cutmore, Healing Touch
 Joan Ross, Eye Bright Wellness iridology,
 Michael Bruce, Pathways of Light
 Andree Boisvert, Achieve Balance bower therapy
 Mary Catherine Whittall – Wrenspell Psychic Studio
 Anna Christine Doehring, Energy All Around Therapy
 Gypsy Hart, Island Healing, Zero G Yoga
 Arrow Gonsalves, Heart Drum Beat
 Carol Lefevre -
 Carolyn Bouma, Nerium skin care
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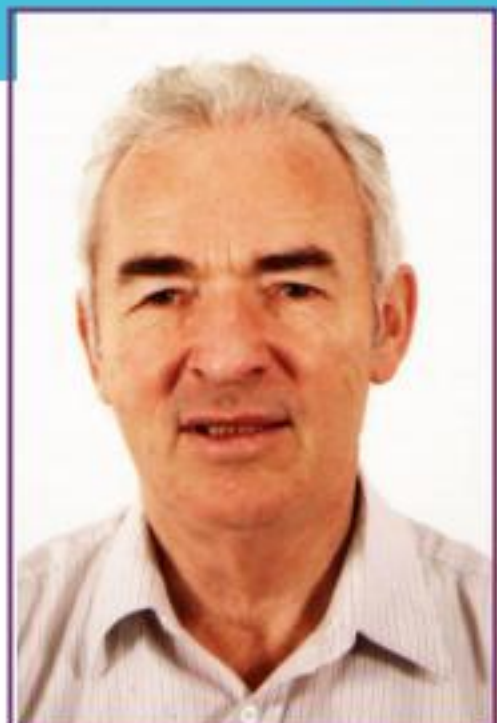
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The Miraculous Neem Tree



By Klaus Ferlow

Here is the story how the Neem tree from India was rediscovered and most people don't know anything about it!

The Neem tree, *Azadirachta indica* has been part of the oldest botanical medical system in the

world, AYURVEDA from Indian with a history of over 5000 years, but it seems that the benefits of this miraculous versatile medicinal tree were almost forgotten till Professor Dr. Heinrich Schmutterer from Germany working as an agricultural research officer in Sudan in 1959 noticed an outbreak of locusts.

He saw a swarm settling on the Neem trees, but soon they flew away. In spite of their voracious behavior, the locusts did not feed on Neem. After they departed, he noticed that while every other plant was completely defoliated, the Neem trees were still green and unharmed. And, as an expert on tropical pests, he became curious.

In an interview with the *Times of India* newspaper December 2, 2002 which was also published in the Global News Update newsletter of the Neem Foundation, Mumbai, India it came to them as a surprise that not an Indian doctor but a hearty German turns to be "the most knowledgeable person about Neem in the world" and Prof. Dr. Schmutterer has been called "The father of modern Neem."

Professor Dr. Schmutterer attended as keynote speaker the second World Neem Conference in 2002 in Mumbai and talked about the Neem tree as "perhaps the most useful tree in the world!"

He worked with the Institute of Phytopathology & Applied Zoology at the Justus Liebig University of Giessen, Germany and set-up a Neem research lab. As a result he published in 1995 his first book '**THE NEEM TREE**' and worked as editor with 50 academics from around the world on his second revised

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book of 893 pages for the commercial agriculture industry which was published in 2002 by the Neem Foundation, Mumbai.

He was also a contributor to the book "*Neem A Tree For Solving Global Problems*," published by the Academy Press, Washington, DC in 1992 and was interviewed for the video "What's in a Neem?" from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Toronto, Ontario for the program "The Nature of Things" by Dr. David Suzuki shown in January 1994.

This is when my journey started viewing the video from Dr. David Suzuki and I have been doing Neem research for the last 23 years and became fascinated what this tree offers to mankind.

For thousands of years humans have sought to fortify their health and cure various illness with herbal remedies.

The search for a true panacea or cure-all has been undertaken by virtually every civilization. While hundred or thousands of substances have been tried and tested, few have withstood modern scientific scrutiny.

Perhaps no other botanical better meets the true definition of a panacea than the Neem tree, a tropical evergreen native to India and Myanmar (formerly Burma). From ancient to modern times, every part of this fascinating tree has been used to treat hundreds of different maladies.

This miraculous healing herb is truly an "ancient medicine for a modern world, no wonder that the United Nations declared it as "The tree of the 21st Century" and in India it is called "The Village Pharmacy."

Proof in the Research

By using our Neem shampoo, Neem oil and Neem soap with no harmful ingredients we developed beginning of 1994 and introduced it as the first company to the Canadian market, I was able to alleviate my severe psoriasis that I had suffered for over 40 years!!

For me it was really a miracle and I started in 2011 writing a manuscript for the book “Neem – *Nature’s Healing Gift to Humanity*” which became a labor of love and passion since I wanted to share my own personal experience. My book was published in 2016 and if you want to learn more about it, please check these websites:

www.neemresearch.ca and http://wholife.com/issues/22_5/07_article.html

Please check also this link: <https://youtu.be/7rGVbceaN2U> – second interview Nov. 17, 2016 with host Harpreet Singh, Joy TV studio 10, Surrey, B.C. about the miraculous versatile Neem tree from India.

Special Note: in my book on page 131 is a black-white poster “The Life of Neem” but the text is so small and you are unable to read it. Anybody who purchases my book is entitled to receive a 8X11 inch color poster if you send me proof of purchase of the book and your mailing address. Thanks!

I collaborated with the two world renowned scientists, entomologists, Neem experts and researchers Dr. Ramesh C. Saxena, Chairman of the Neem Foundation, Mumbai whom I met as speaker at their 6th World Neem Conference in Nagpur, India Nov. 21 – 24, 2012 and Professor Dr. Heinrich Schmutterer, now retired whom I met in August 2015 in his home town Wittenberg in Germany and also received 48 positive powerful testimonials from Neem experts, mostly academics, from around the globe.

In our quest for technological advancement, we have forgotten to learn from the practice of our forefathers. As a result, we have not been making good use of the centuries of knowledge and wisdom accumulated in the minds of people, based on the trials

and errors of the generations gone by.

Thus the new awakening in the people the world over, especially among scientists, to try to understand traditional customs, values, and practices, is a welcome change. We have made a good beginning with Neem, and have learned how good an example it provides of science learning from culture. A whole world of traditional knowledge awaits our objective scrutiny.

In 2013 I founded NEEM RESEARCH, Mission, B.C., Canada to protect and promote this precious gift to humanity that offers better plant, human, animal, and environmental health – long live the Neem tree!

Words of Wisdom

It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver. Mahatma Gandhi.

May you grow like a Neem tree. W. Siddiqui

Klaus Ferlow, author, innovator, lecturer, researchers, writer, founder of Ferlow Botanicals, Vancouver, B.C. and NEEM RESEARCH, Mission, B.C., member of Health Action Network Society, Canadian Herbalist’s Association of BC, National Health Federation, United Plant Savers, International Herb Association., co-author book “7stepstodentalhealth”, author book “Neem – Nature’s Healing Gift to Humanity”, copyright©2017, all rights reserved. www.neemresearch.ca, neemresearch1@gmail.com, www.ferlowbotanicals.com

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Stinging Nettle

Superfood Extraordinaire

By Debbie Bowman RHN

Stinging nettle - you've probably brushed by this aptly named, weed-like plant a few times while walking around the trails of the Comox Valley. And if your bare skin came in contact with the leaves you may have even received a stinging sensation that left small welts and a lingering rash. But despite its name, stinging nettle is about more than just its sting. In reality, stinging nettle is a superfood that is only masquerading as a belligerent weed.

Otherwise known as devil's claw, devil's plaything, and burn weed, stinging nettle is among the first edible greens to sprout from the frozen ground in late February or early March and are abundant in areas with significant annual rainfall, such as the Comox Valley.

Stinging nettle, like many wild foods, is extraordinarily rich in nourishment. Specifically, stinging nettle contains high levels of protein (25.8 %), calcium, boron, potassium, manganese, zinc, copper, phosphorus, iron, magnesium, beta carotene and high amounts of vitamins A, C, D, K and B complex. In addition, stinging nettle is one of the richest sources of chlorophyll in the vegetable kingdom. Simply put, stinging nettle is so incredibly nourishing it puts spinach and kale to shame.

Stinging nettle has a rich herbal legacy, with its medicinal use dating as far back as ancient Greece. According to the University of Maryland Medical Centre, nettles have been used most commonly throughout history as a diuretic and for treating painful muscles and joints, eczema, arthritis, gout, and anemia. Here's an interesting aside: urtication, the ancient act of flogging oneself with nettles to relieve arthritis pain and even sciatica, dates back at least 2000 years... but I don't recommend it.

For the purpose of this article, we will focus on the above-ground (aerial) parts of the nettle plant and its anti-histamine, anti-oxidant, analgesic, blood building and bone building capabilities.

Stinging nettle as an anti-histamine: Allergy season is almost upon us, so it's good to start using nettles now. Stinging nettle can help to relieve bothersome allergic symptoms such as itching, allergic rhinitis and sneezing by reducing the amount of histamine the body produces in response to the allergen. In one study, 57% of patients rated nettles as effective in relieving allergies, and 48% said that nettles were more effective than allergy medications they had used previously.

Stinging nettle as an anti-oxidant: The natural polyphenols in nettle leaves are thought to be responsible for the powerful antioxidant abilities of this plant. It is important to consume anti-oxidants, especially as we age, as oxidative stress is implicated in accelerated aging as well as many chronic diseases.

Stinging nettle as a pain reliever: Stinging nettle can relieve pain as the aerial parts of the stinging nettle plant may interfere with the body's production of prostaglandins and other inflammation-causing chemicals. Consequently, nettle may have an anti-inflammatory and pain relieving effect.

Stinging nettle as a blood builder: The combination of high vitamin C and iron content in stinging nettle makes it ideal for stimulating red blood cell production. Vitamin C optimizes iron uptake in the gut, while iron is a crucial component of hemoglobin. By increasing the red blood cell count in the body, circulation increases, wound healing speeds up, and the body's extremities receive essential oxygenation to boost energy levels. As a result, stinging nettle is often recommended to relieve fatigue or anemia.

Stinging nettle as a bone builder: Although we don't hear much about boron, it is still an important mineral element in our bodies that can be found in stinging nettle. Boron has been scientifically linked to maintaining calcium content in our bones, which means that stinging nettle can help slow the onset of osteoporosis. Stinging nettle is also rich in calcium. In fact, according to some sources, one cup of infused nettles can contain as much as 300 - 500 mg. of calcium. In addition to boron and calcium, nettle also contains other bone building vitamins and minerals such as silica, magnesium, manganese, vitamin A, and vitamin K.

Stinging nettle, like most herbs, can affect a profound physical response in the body. Therefore, before adding such a potent and comprehensive herbal remedy to your normal diet, be sure to consult a physician and ensure that you won't be complicating any ongoing treatments or pre-existing conditions. Stinging nettle should not be consumed during pregnancy.

Although fresh nettle leaves can sting, don't be afraid to cook with stinging nettle. Just use gloves while handling the fresh leaves. A brief blanching neutralizes the stinging component, making nettles as docile as grocery-store greens.

See next page for a delicious recipe for nettle soup that is sure to warm you on a blustery Spring day. (recipe from The Spruce)

Debbie Bowman is a nutritionist on staff for Edible Island Whole Foods Market



MENU

Nettle Soup

1/2 pound stinging nettles
 1 onion
 2 Tablespoons butter, divided
 1 teaspoon fine sea salt, plus more to taste
 1 pound potatoes
 6 cups chicken broth, vegetable broth (or water)*
 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
 1/4 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
 1/2 cup heavy cream (optional)
 Sour cream, yogurt, or Horseradish Cream (optional)

Wear gloves if you're going to handle the nettles (if you don't have gloves, putting plastic bags over your hands will look nuts, but work). Rinse in cold running water if they seem at all gritty, and set aside.

Peel and chop the onion. Everything will get puréed later, so don't worry too much how it looks.

In a large pot, melt 1 tablespoon of the butter over medium-high heat. Add the chopped onion and salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onions are soft, about 3 minutes.

While the onions cook, peel the potatoes and chop them up. Add the potatoes and the broth to the onions and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to maintain a steady simmer and cook until the potatoes are mostly tender, about 15 minutes.



Add the nettles and cook until they're very tender, about 10 minutes. Stir in the remaining 1 tablespoon of butter, plus the pepper and nutmeg.

Purée the soup with an immersion blender or in a blender or food processor in batches. For a silken, less fibrous texture, run mixture through a food mill or sieve.

Stir in the cream, if you're using it. Season the soup to taste with additional salt and pepper, if you like.

Serve the soup hot, garnished with sour cream, yogurt, or Horseradish Cream, if you like.

* Like all soups, this one tastes best when made with homemade stock (but works just fine with store-bought broth or even plain water).

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Health Supplements Threatened

Do you know about the potential changes coming to your supplements?

In fall 2016, Health Canada launched the Consulting Canadians on the Regulation of Self-Care Products in Canada, which proposed changes that could significantly alter the way natural health products (NHPs), including vitamins and supplements, are regulated.

How could these changes impact you?

Many don't realize that before an NHP can be sold in Canada, it must be reviewed by Health Canada. Once reviewed, it receives an eight-digit Natural Product Number (NPN). This is your assurance that the product has been authorized for sale by Health Canada. This gives the government a level of oversight on all NHPs, as well as the ability to ensure the product has a suitable amount of evidence to support the claims on the label, that the ingredients are safe and that the product meets a certain level of quality.

The level of evidence (type and amount) provided to support the safety and efficacy of an NHP varies depending on the proposed health claim(s) and the overall risk profile of the product or its ingredients.

The proposal from this past fall suggests that Health

Canada will regulate self-care products, which includes NHPs, differently. It may no longer review some products, and claims based on previously accepted evidence may no longer be allowed and would be removed from the label.

When Health Canada proposed these changes, it also started a consultation process that began online, asking Canadians for feedback. The Canadian Health Food Association (CHFA) rallied its members and Canadians to participate in the consultation, and to contact the Minister of Health and Members of Parliament (MPs) to express our concerns.

Ongoing letters and meetings with MPs across Canada, as well as numerous communications and meetings with the Natural and Non-prescription Health Products Directorate (NNHPD) of Health Canada, took place starting last October. On March 31, 2017, Health Canada released their What We Heard report, summarizing the feedback received from 3,500 respondents, with 70 per cent of the comments coming from consumers.

Following the release of the report, NNHPD continued engaging consumers and industry on a refined version of the self-care products proposal through in-person and online sessions across the country during April and May.

After the first two sessions in Saskatoon and Vancouver, NNHPD released a preliminary summary report including feedback heard at these sessions. Participants at the public consultation said the policy proposal should:

- *Include consumer awareness and education activities;
- *Consider that NHPs should not be classified with non-prescription drugs or cosmetics (some participants);
- *Provide Health Canada the ability to enforce the rules and conduct inspections, which are important to the regulatory framework;
- *Include unique identifiers to assist industry exporting products to other jurisdictions;
- *Provide more clarity on many of the terms used and offer more information on the proposal to better inform policy discussions; and,
- *Consider that some participants said a two-class product system could oversimplify the current market for self-care products, while others expressed support for a two-class system.

*CHFA and our members have been actively involved at every step and will actively continue to be throughout the consultation process. We remain guarded but optimistic that our concerns are being heard, and that an appropriate framework for regulating NHPs and all self-care products can be achieved. There is a third round of consultations scheduled for the summer, although details have not yet been released. We are encouraging all Canadians who rely on NHPs to get involved. Find out how at chfa.ca.

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Red Raspberry and Red Clover

The focus is on two herbs this month – one is best used for younger women for pregnancy while the other is used for older women going through menopause.

Red Raspberry

Red Raspberry is one of the herbs that has the longest historical reference for pregnant women.

Traditional herbalists long believed that drinking raspberry leaf tea regularly during pregnancy would prevent complications and make delivery easier.

One study suggests that red raspberry is useful for inhibiting uterine contractions while a woman is pregnant but it does not do the same during delivery.

This could make one wonder that raspberry leaf intuitively knows how to stabilize a woman's body during pregnancy and then change course and relax the uterus to allow for an easier delivery.

The tea has been used for centuries to support respiratory, digestive and uterine health but it's not just for pregnant women.

Best known as the women's herb, red raspberry leaf tea can also ease menstrual discomfort, improve reproductive health, balance hormones to increase fertility, improve chances of implantation and may prevent miscarriage by strengthening and toning the uterine wall.

Red raspberry leaf is high in Vitamins C, E, A, B and has significant amounts of major minerals like magnesium, potassium, calcium and phosphorous. It also has trace minerals like zinc, iron, chromium and manganese.

Dosage: Pour 1 cup of boiling water over 1 or 2 tsp. of dried leaf, steep for 10 minutes and then sweeten to taste. Drink 2 to 3 cups daily during pregnancy. The herb has a pleasant taste.

Red Clover

Another 'red' herb, red clover has been cultivated since ancient times as a grazing food for animals but also has a valued medicine.

It has been known by herbalists as an 'alterative' or 'blood purifier.'

Red clover was considered as one of the best herbs



to purify the blood and was included in many treatments for cancer.

Nowadays red clover is used as a treatment for menopausal symptoms. That's because it contains high concentrations of four major estrogen-like substances known as isoflavones.

Safety Issues

Red clover extracts contain estrogen-like and blood thinning constituents that should not be used by pregnant or nursing women or women who have had breast cancer or uterine cancer.

These constituents may also interfere with hormone treatments such as oral contraceptives and anti-coagulant drugs such as Coumadin or heparin. In these cases red clover should only be used under a physician's supervision or a clinical herbalist.

Red clover, right



Cowichan Gets Food Fit



Participants in a cooking class at Cowichan Green Communities, CGC. Photos courtesy CGC.



Cowichan Green Community (CGC) will launch a new program that brings low-income community members together to set goals, learn skills, and make measurable changes in overall health and fitness.

The goal of the FoodFit program is to support community members to become better nourished, more active, and less socially isolated.

Many preventable diseases are linked to unhealthy eating and low physical activity.

Low-income families face barriers to healthy eating, contributing to higher rates of diet-related illness. Basic exercise, like walking, is excellent and easy to adopt. Beyond food and fitness skills and knowledge, what the FoodFit program also provides is the support, encouragement, and motivation for participants to make lasting changes towards living a healthier lifestyle.

“We are very excited to have the opportunity to share FoodFit with our community members!” states CGC staff and FoodFit facilitator Alyssa Loucks. “Through FoodFit, we aim to connect with over 100 participants to learn and share food knowledge, while making healthy lifestyle changes”.

Funding for the new FoodFit program comes from Community Food Centres Canada (CFCC) and the Public Health Agency of Canada through a new grants stream. Cowichan Green Community has received funding to staff, implement, and evaluate the FoodFit program over two years.

The funding is part of a broader move from CFCC to implement programs that bridge the divide between low-income and healthy living. Through CFCC’s multi-year pilots to date, impacts from the

program have been very positive: most FoodFit participants consumed more fruits and vegetables, cooked more healthy meals at home, moved more, and increased their social support networks.

“FoodFit really focuses on promoting fun, hands-on, realistic changes to diet and activity. People cook and walk together, set realistic goals, and are encouraged to notice and track the changes to how they feel.

We’re seeing that small, consistent changes not only make people feel better, but can add up to measurable results in things like blood pressure and resting heart rate, all of which offers a great feedback loop” says Kathryn Scharf, Chief Operating Officer at Community Food Centres Canada. “Even as we continue to work toward a time when everyone can afford the food they need, FoodFit empowers people to make immediate changes in their lives, while also connecting them to broader community and social supports.”

Cowichan Green Community is joined by three other grantees selected from across Canada including Ateliers Je Suis Capable (Sorel-Tracy, Quebec), Sherbourne Health Centre (Toronto, Ontario), and Six Nations Health Services (Ohsweken, Ontario). These four grant recipients join the 13 organizations across Canada already running FoodFit in their community.

For more information or to register for FoodFit, contact CGC staff member and facilitator, Alyssa Loucks, at 250-748-8506 or alyssa@cowichangreencommunity.org

Health Food Trade Show Features Kombucha, Quinoa and More



Mother Nature, above left, interacts with a young lady and right, poses at their booth during the CHFA trade show in Vancouver recently. Photos by Marilyn Zink

Every year the biggest trade show for the health food industry comes to Western Canada where the latest and greatest is displayed.

It's a private event by the Canadian Health Food Association, CHFA, where sellers meet buyers who determine what goes on their store shelves.

It's also a way to get the pulse of what people are interested in and which products are popular.

This event featured a large number of Kombucha products – teas and tea blends with fruit or other ingredients.

The variety of Kombucha products is reflected in the current popularity of Kombucha – which is a fermented drink made from a colony of bacteria and yeast.

Kombucha is reputed to have a wide variety of health benefits – proponents claim it stimulates the immune system, prevents cancer, improves digestion and liver function among other benefits.

The Kombucha products provided a variety of tea blends – some were more sweet with a fruit base

while others were more tart. These are the products.

Besides the Kombucha products, there was a significant amount of gluten free products at the show, such as delicious pastas. There was also a variety of crackers and other snacks made from ingredients such as lentils and quinoa. Quinoa was often featured in bars, crackers and other food items.

One of the most interesting exhibits featured a cold brewed coffee – it's a cold coffee with a crema similar to cappuccino yet with its own flavor. Next to cold brew coffee, Nitro cold brew is coffee infused with nitrogen and looks a little like a Guinness. It creates a creamy, Stout-like effect and a silky mouth feel when it is drunk.

Besides the coffee, there were smoothie drinks to try and drinks that were like a tea and soda combined.

The trade show featured the usual herbal products and supplements along with new blends of granola bars and other snacks to enjoy.

The CHFA also holds an annual trade show in Eastern Canada.. Visit www.chfa.ca for more info.

The ABZzzz's of a Good Night's Sleep - Part 2

By Arrow Gonsalves

During my article in the March issue of the Herbal Collective, I introduced the energetics, principles and some solid techniques to help folks get a good night's sleep.

The topic has surfaced as an important issue for so many people these days, and is an early warning sign to so many other stress related disorders.

Desiring to give you as many tools as I can to get the sleep you need, I've decided to continue with a few sequels, supported by a **FREE Online Masterclass** for those who really want to take the issue head on.

The Problem

The primary reason people don't get the deep, rejuvenating, relaxing sleep they need is because their muscles and their brain are tense. What makes our muscles and our brain tense? Usually stress.

Experiencing a lot of stress, whether financial, in the workplace, relationships or even information we see in the news can make our brains and body tighten and store this tension.

Stress is held primarily in the chest, constricting the lungs. When we are carrying a lot of stress in our body and mind we don't breathe properly. This is why, when we see people who are very sad, stressed or angry, we often see them sigh, groan, or even huff and puff in exasperation. This is the body's natural reaction,
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as it tries to release pressure from the chest - from the lungs, in an effort to draw a deeper breath.

We tend to carry a lot of emotion, thoughts and energy in the chest area. In these cases we want to open the chest to release the tension that has built up there. This is because if the lungs are not able to breathe properly, it directly affects your sleep.

This is a lesser known fact, that people who have difficulty sleeping properly, it is not just the muscular tension in their body and brain, but there is a lot of tension in the chest area so the breath is not being drawn deeply enough down into the body, which is ultimately what relaxes you

Drawing deep breaths down from your chest into your lower abdomen is what relaxes you to get a deep and relaxing sleep. With this in mind, it's easy to image a sleeping baby, their belly rises and fills with each breath as their immune system works to fortify their constitution and help them grow.

This is why doing holistically

integrated practices such as yoga, qigong, tai chi meditation are so very good at restoring overall health. By combining the breath with smooth, mindful movement they deeply and effectively release stress where less mindful exercises have limited effect and can even create muscle tension.

Tapping & Acupressure

One of the best ways we relax

tight muscles is by stretching in all its variations i.e.: pulling, pushing, twisting, squeezing etc. Another important and timeless technique for releasing stress is by tapping.

Rhythmic, repeated tapping can become a powerful method for releasing stress especially when combined with the mind and breath into a form of dynamic meditation.

Tapping in this meditative way, essentially integrating the external vibration while awakening your own internal rhythm creates a unique blueprint of release and rejuvenation especially designed for you. During my classes we regularly use all these techniques. They can seem odd at first, but my students quickly grow to love them as tensions melt away within the first few breaths of class warm ups.

When muscles are sufficiently relaxed, acupressure is another effective way to release stress. Acupressure acts to stimulate the movement of trapped or blocked energy through the meridians and their correspond-

ing organs. This provides deep relaxation and has the added benefit of restoring the immune system and balancing body, mind and spirit.

This article/sequel will focus on using Tapping and Acupressure techniques to release tension, open related energy channels and strengthen the immune system, letting you relax into the sleep your body, mind and spirit require to embrace each new day with joy and enthusiasm.

Three Steps to Release Stress & Get Your Zzzz's

Once your autonomic system is back on track and you are sleeping well, you can do these exercises first thing in the morning to start your day fresh, or at any time to release stress and recalibrate through the day. For sleeping well, I recommend taking 15 minutes before bedtime to do them.

Step 1: Opening Your Chest to Release Anxiety

This step starts by tapping to stimulate acupressure points that activate the heart and lung meridians while releasing tension from the neck and shoulders. As the shoulders relax the tapping moves toward the center of the chest and down the torso, releasing tension and anxiety that has accumulated and shortened the breath.

Yawning is a common sign as the chest cavity works to release, expand and refresh with an ever-deepening breath.

Step 2: Opening the Conception and Governing Meridian Channels.

This exercise restores the Water up /Fire down energy condition as described briefly below and in more detail in the first article (March issue).

Water Up/ Fire Down Energy Condition:

The Conception Meridian runs

down through your chest. In healthy condition fire energy travels downward from the heart to the small intestine through the Conception Meridian, optimizing digestion and activating the immune system.

The Governing Meridian runs up along the back of your spine. Its role is to transport water energy up from the kidneys to cool the brain. Tapping and releasing these major meridians results in a clear, cool brain that is peaceful, productive and creative – free of clutter and ceaseless chatter.

Step 3: Acupressure and Intestine Exercise to Heal Your Gut and Reboot Your Immune System

After tapping and releasing stress from the chest, it is important to relax the abdominal muscles so you can draw the breath down to your lower abdomen.

This step is achieved through Acupressure of the navel and progressively deepening Intestine Exercises that warm and tone the intestines while breaking up and releasing stag-

nant energy and plaque in the blood veins of your abdominal area.

This allows you to relax and sleep deeply though the night, while activating your immune system.

I hope you found this article helpful and informative.

If you are ready to put these principles into action and would like a program to follow along with a community of progressively-minded sleep-seekers, I invite you to sign up for my **FREE Online Masterclass: "Five Days to A Better Night's Sleep"**. You can register on my website: www.heartdrumbeat.com

Stay tuned for next month's article on the principles of Brain Management: **"Five Steps to Release Stress & Balance Your Brain, Your Body & Your Life"**

Arrow Gonsalves is the Founder of "Heart Drum Beat – Brain & Body Training Academy" and "The House of Now Wellness Center" in Courtenay, Vancouver Island. She is a Master Trainer & Healer of the Tao Healing Arts, offering live and online - classes, workshops and retreats. Call 250-650-9905.

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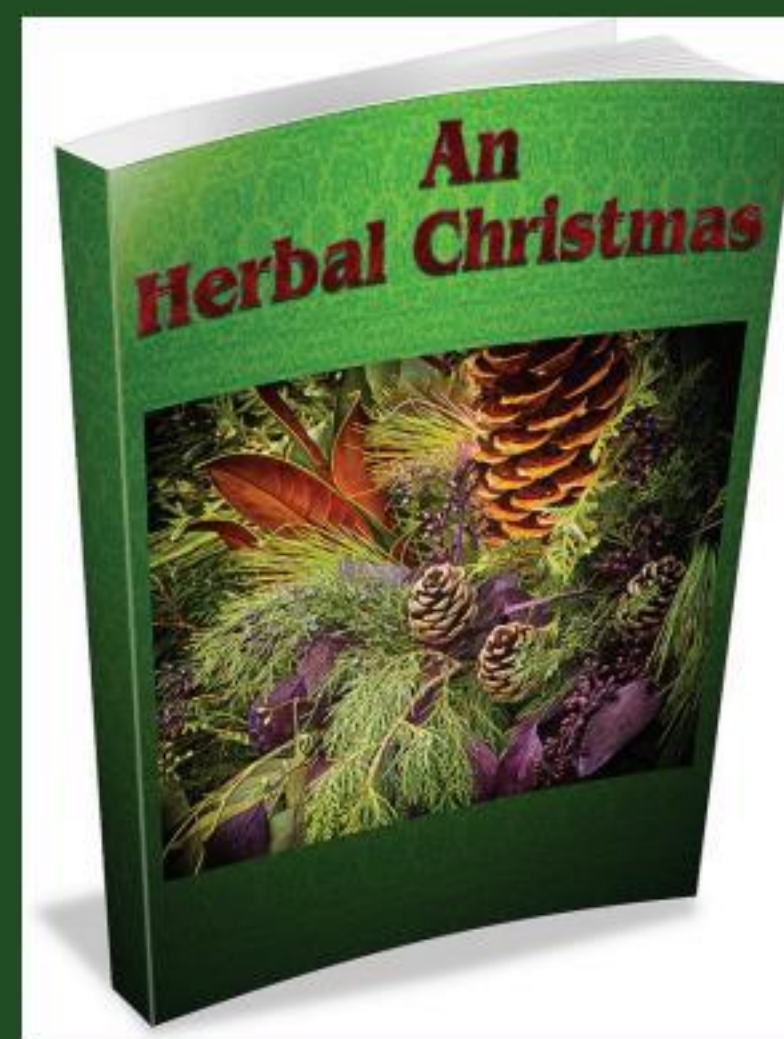
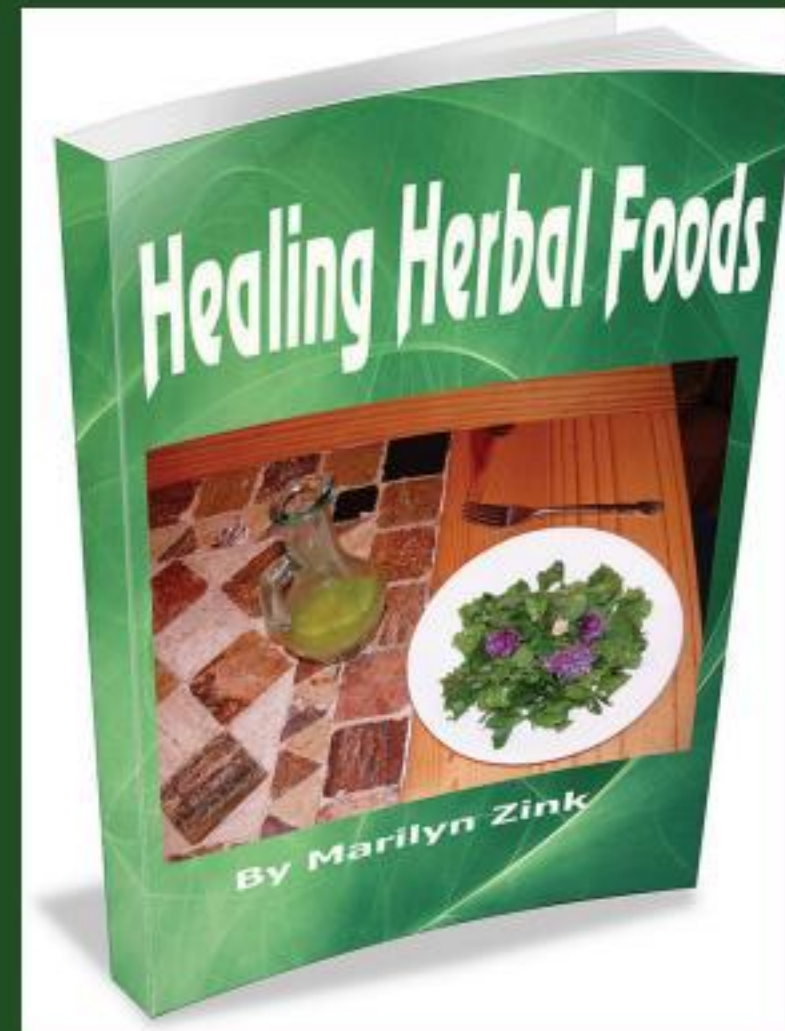
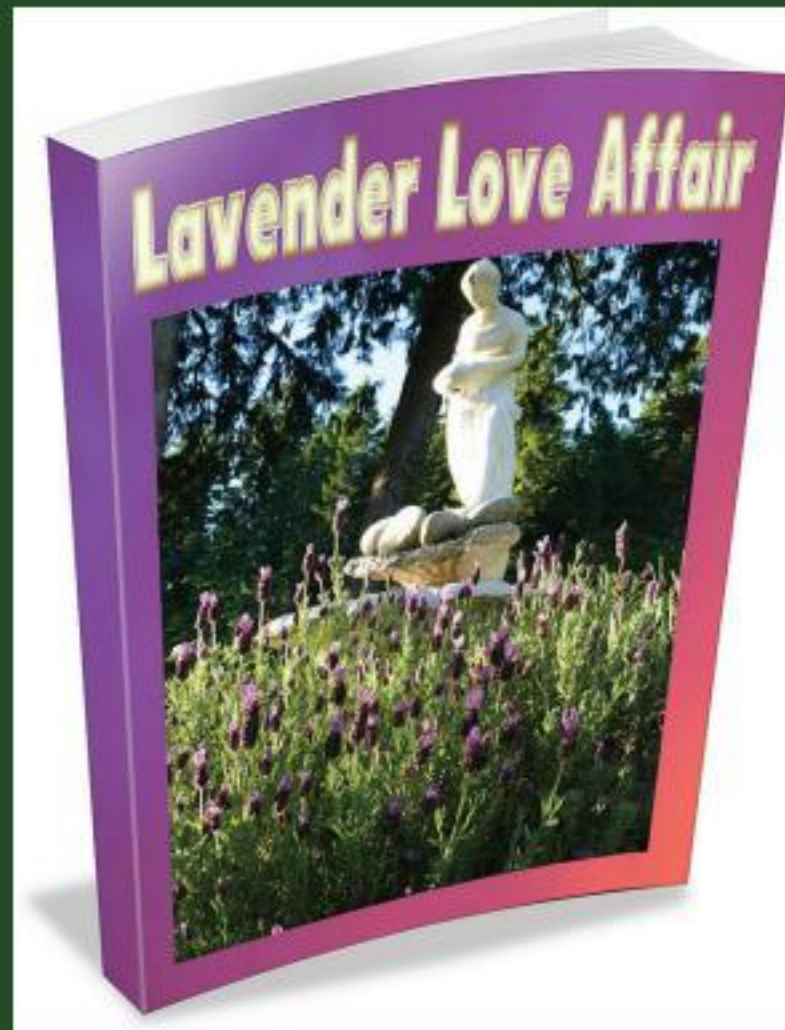
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