



Herbal Dispensary and Complementary Medicine Centre

DR MICHAEL MURRAY (ND) SEMINAR IN LONDON

During November we attended a seminar by one of the world's leading naturopathic doctors, Dr Michael Murray. This reviews some of the information, advice and suggestions that Dr Murray presented.

Obesity, Diabetes & Syndrome X

Obesity is now considered an epidemic in some parts of the world. In the US 38% of people are estimated to be obese, and in the UK it is over 20%. The key concern about obesity is that it is a risk factor for a huge range of diseases, including diabetes. Diabetes is a serious health problem: it reduces life expectancy by 10 to 20 years, and is the number 1 cause of new cases of blindness.

Dr Murray suggests there are things we can do to reduce the likelihood of diabetes. Also if we suffer from Type 2 (Late Onset) diabetes there are strategies to manage and even improve the condition. Some of the key areas Dr Murray focuses on are:-

- Achieving an ideal body weight
- Changing to an optimal diet (including managing blood sugar levels)
- Improving insulin sensitivity (through exercise, supplements and herbs)

The Role Of Supplements In Health

Dr Murray was of the opinion that supplementation was one of four of the main contributors to optimum health. The other three aspects are **diet**, **exercise** and a **positive mental attitude**. He normally recommends a "foundation" of three supplements:

- **A high quality multivitamin**, making sure it has all the vitamins and trace minerals that are needed. Soil depletion has lowered the quality of many food sources.
- **A high quality fish oil** containing the omega three essential fatty acids. These have been shown to significantly reduce the incidence of major illnesses. A typical western diet is low in omega 3 oils and therefore supplementation can be important.
- **A (tissue specific) flavonoid**. These are important antioxidants, but also have other actions. For example in diabetes Bilberry extract would be a suitable flavonoid as it is specific for the eyes and circulation, both of which are damaged by diabetes.

In addition to this "foundation", specific supplements can also be used. Amazingly over 400 traditional plant medicines have been documented for use in diabetes alone¹.

¹ Diabetes Care, 1989, Sept 12, pp 553, quoted in Bartram T, Encyclopedia of Herbal Medicine, 1998, Robison, London

Contraindications & Precautions.

The contents of this newsletter are for information and education purposes and to assist in the use of herbs. It is not intended to replace the advice of a professional.

NEWS AND VIEWS

COLDS AND FLU'S IN THE MEDIA

It seems that every week there is a newspaper article saying that a herb or supplement does or does not work. Here are a few views on some of the recent stories:

"Vitamin C does not prevent cold and flu's" was a recent headline. A **meta-study** (a review of many individual scientific reports) showed that there is no conclusive evidence that Vitamin C prevents colds and flu's. However there is plenty of evidence that it is useful when you have a cold or flu'. A suitable title would be **"Vitamin C reduces the duration and severity of colds and flu's"**.

"Echinacea does not prevent colds and flu's" was the headline after an article was published last month. This article reported a small study where volunteers took Echinacea and were injected with a cold virus. No significant improvements were observed when the Echinacea was taken. It is well known from meta-studies that Echinacea both reduces the frequency of colds and also reduces the duration and severity of colds. There are also studies that show some of the ways in which Echinacea affects the human immune system. A suitable title would be **"Small study fails to provide yet more evidence that Echinacea helps prevent colds and flu's"**.

"Take XXX, YYY and Goldenseal for your cold" is an incredibly common recommendation in glossy magazines and newspapers. What isn't mentioned is that Goldenseal is an endangered species and that there are a huge range of good alternatives. A better suggestion would be **"Consider taking XXX, YYY and ask your local health store to suggest a herb to suit your symptoms"**.

HAIR LOSS



One of the most common requests we receive over the counter is for help with hair loss and hair thinning. We have just finished writing an information sheet that describes the most common forms of hair loss and what steps you could take to try reduce the loss.

The most common cause of hair loss in men is hormonal. In men hair loss normally starts at the temples and recedes towards the top of the head (see figure above). The hair loss is due to a hormone called dihydrotestosterone (DHT) causing the hair follicles to become thinner until they are unable to grow a new hair. In females the same culprit (DHT) is responsible for female pattern hair loss (most frequently after the menopause). There are currently very few treatments available and any treatment would need to be taken long term.

The most common hair loss amongst females is CTE (chronic telogen effluvium) which is a thinning of the hair all over the scalp. In the majority of cases (although not all) this is due to low iron levels, and the use of an iron supplement or increasing iron in the diet can help, although it may take several months to notice an improvement.

It is always worth consulting a medical professional about hair loss, as it can sometimes be an indication of other problems.



November 2005 Newsletter Offer

This voucher entitles the bearer to a free 50g Herbal Tea Blend (We can help you choose teas that are refreshing, relaxing or to help an ailment)

Terms & Conditions Not valid with any other offer. Offer covers loose herbal teas from the dispensary. Offer ends 31st January 2006.

CLASSES & COURSES

Indian Head Massage

Learn the theory and practice of Indian Head Massage. After the course you will be able to give friends or family a relaxing Indian Head Massage. Course tutor: Barney Green.

Times: 7pm Tuesday 7th February for 4 weeks. Cost £50.

Homeopathic First Aid

Homeopathy is a gentle therapy that is suitable for all. During the course you will learn about homeopathic remedies and make your own homeopathic first aid kit. Course tutor: Joan Thomson (RGN, MLCHom).

Times: 7pm Tuesday 7th March for 6 weeks. £80 including remedies. (Concessions available).

Introduction To Treatment With Acupressure Points

This course will introduce you to some simple acupuncture points and combinations to treat conditions such as headaches, digestive problems and anxiety. It will involve the use of acupressure and magnets and demonstrate how these can be used to treat yourself or others. Course tutors: Francesca Howell (MBAcC) and John Williams (MRSS).

Times: 7pm Tuesday 25th April for 4 weeks. Cost £50

Introduction To Herbal Medicine

How to make herbal medicines for home use and common ailments. Learn how herbs work, when to use herbs, and an introduction to herbal remedies. Course tutor: Ian Boyd (MNMH).

Times: 7pm Tuesday 23rd May for 5 weeks. Cost £60 (includes materials).

Seated Massage (For Therapists)

A course for massage and bodywork therapists. This course offers the opportunity to add some shiatsu pressure and stretching to your own bodywork. Course tutors: Ian Boyd (MRSS) and John Williamson (MRSS)

Times: 7pm Tuesday 1st August for 8 weeks. Cost: £80

CHRISTMAS AT WOODLAND HERBS

Enclosed with this newsletter should be some information on this year's **Christmas offer**; a FREE 20 minute head, neck and shoulder massage when you spend £25 in the shop. The massage vouchers will be valid during January and can either be kept or given to someone else as a special present.

Our **gift display** was available from the end of November.

Gift vouchers are available for a wide range of therapies or to spend in the shop.

Opening Hours

Sat 24th December 9am to 4pm

25th, 26th, 27th **CLOSED**

Wed 28th 9am to 5.30pm

Thurs 29th 9am to 8.00pm

Fri 30th 9am to 5.30pm

Sat 31st 9am to 3.00pm

1st, 2nd, 3rd January **CLOSED**

4th January onwards as normal



Make Your Own

We recently expanded our Make Your Own range to include five kits that are an ideal introduction to natural bodycare, and would be ideal as unusual presents. These include making your own perfume, insect repellent, lip balm and bath scrubs.

The ability to make your own skincare or haircare requires a little time, some trial and error and no more skill than that needed to make an omelette!

At the simplest level using coconut oil as a hair conditioner could give you incredibly rich looking hair (coconut oil is also referred to as coconut fat). Making your own natural lip balm simply needs 3 ingredients (beeswax, an oil and a jar), and a stove with a pan of water and a heat proof dish.

Please feel free to ask us for any information or suggestions.

CLINIC

ACUPUNCTURE

Francesca Howell (MBAcC) explains about acupuncture:

Acupuncture is an ancient form of healing, which originated in China over 2000 years ago. The basic principal of the treatment is to balance the energy in the body. We call this energy *Qi* and it circulates through the meridians or channels, which run through the whole body.

This energy may become obstructed or deficient for all sorts of reasons, such as illness, lifestyle or day to day stress. This can cause blockages or emptiness in the channels which leads to many symptoms of ill health, or just a feeling of not being as well or balanced in yourself as you would like to be.

Acupuncture aims, through the stimulation of acupuncture points along the channels, to balance the energy and restore the body's ability to heal itself. Its intention is for the body to fulfil its potential for good health and well being. As well as helping with specific conditions, people often come back saying that they 'just feel better', clearer mentally or more able to cope and work through things. I think this is a very important part of the treatment; it provides a sense of emotional and physical well being.

The treatment itself consists of placing extremely fine needles in specific points on the channels. The needles are not like the needles people experience in hospitals. There is often no feeling or just a slight sensation as they are inserted. After that, the patient may experience some tingling or a dull sensation; but generally, most people find the treatment relaxing and any anxiety about needles soon disappears.

Each point has an individual function, such as nourishing the energy or moving it if it has got stuck, which is often the case in joint and muscular problems. The first consultation involves taking a detailed history of the

patient, which enables me make a full diagnosis, according to the theory of Traditional Chinese Medicine, and decide on the best treatment, specific to the patient's individual condition. We will also talk about lifestyle and diet, and look at any improvements or changes that may be appropriate to complement the treatment.

Acupuncture can help with many conditions including: headaches, stress, digestive problems, IBS, menstrual and menopausal problems, joint and muscular conditions, high blood pressure, skin complaints, infertility, sleep problems, M.E., low energy and emotional issues. If you would like to talk to me about any health problem you have and whether acupuncture would be suitable for you then I can be contacted through the clinic, and would be very happy to meet you or chat with you on the phone.



NEW THERAPIES & THERAPISTS

We have increased our range of therapies and now also offer:

- Hypnotherapy
- Hopi Ear Candling
- Pregnancy Massage

We have also been joined by 2 new therapists:

Bill Cleave MNIMH is a vastly experienced herbalist who also teaches herbal medicine. **Carolyn Dick** has replaced Annie Gardner offering Reiki, Aromatherapy and Massage.

TASTERS & TRIAL SESSIONS

We believe we have a very talented collection of therapists at Woodland Herbs and they are all prepared to spend time discussing their therapy. You can either book a 10 minute discussion, or ask us to arrange for the therapists to answer any queries by telephone. Simply phone us on 0141 564 3184.

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