

The Common Cold

CHINESE MEDICINE

Here in the United States when someone catches a cold, they rarely think about running to an acupuncturist. However, in China it is a common practice to seek help from Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). TCM, which includes Acupuncture and Chinese Herbs, is used as a primary health care system by one of the world's largest populations, the people of the People's Republic of China.

From the TCM viewpoint, it doesn't matter if your cold comes from a virus or a bacterial infection. Rather, it is believed that acute illnesses usually arise from an "external pernicious influence" (EPI). EPIs correlate to the exposure of too much cold, heat, wind, dampness, or dryness. Once the EPI invades the body, it often makes the person to have symptoms much like itself. For example, some person's colds have the symptoms of chills and clear phlegm. This person has a "cold" cold. Some have fever and burning sore throats; this is considered a "hot cold". Others have profuse phlegm and these people are thought to have a "damp cold". Yet others from a dry cough and these people are thought to have a "dry cold". For those whose symptoms change frequently, and/or have muscle pain that moves around, this is considered a "windy cold".

There are acupuncture treatments and Chinese herbal formulas for all these kinds

of colds. In some cases, if you are able to get a treatment or start the herbal formula soon enough, you can ward off the worst of the cold. Even if the cold settles in, acupuncture or Chinese herbs can ease the symptoms and shorten the course of the illness.

No one has really proven exactly how acupuncture works, but studies have shown that acupuncture can stimulate the body's ability to produce endorphins, the body's natural pain killers, and even raise the body's white blood cell count, an indicator of a healthy immune system. Thus, acupuncture appears to strengthen the body's immune system, which in turn helps the body to better combat the cold.

In addition to acupuncture, there are several forms of Chinese herbs available to treat colds. In China, dried herbs are boiled until a potent tea is formed. Here in the United States, a variety of herbal pills that are easier on the palette and suit a busy lifestyle are available. The important thing is to match the right formula to the person and his or her symptoms, which is why an acupuncturist or Chinese herbalist can be very helpful for someone with a cold.

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attempt to eliminate internal toxins. Overload of toxins depletes the immune system and provides a favorable environment for virus or bacteria to grow. Therefore, keeping the body toxin free and maintaining a healthy immune system are generally considered to be the keys to avoiding colds.

Herbal and nutritional supplements have a long tradition of use in treating and preventing colds. They nourish the body's immune system and strengthen the body's healing mechanisms.

Herbs such as Echinacea and golden seal are effective cold fighters. Other useful herbs are yarrow, eyebright, eclecampagne, and elderflower, depending on the symptoms and their severity.

Some blood cleansers such as red clover, burdock, sage, etc., can assist in cleaning toxins out of the body and can make the whole treatment more effective.

Drinking more fluids such as water, herbal teas, soups, and organic vegetable juices helps to eliminate toxins and stimulate digestion.

Vitamin C at the start of the season

A short fast is good for kapha people. Tea with lemon juice, fresh ginger and honey reduces kapha. Dry ginger and long pepper (pippali) improve digestion, assimilation and metabolism.

For a vata type cold, there might be dryness and mucus membranes with little mucus and insomnia. Three drops of sesame oil in each nostril (nasya) once or twice a day can help. Licorice root tea improves circulation and helps reduce mucus in the upper part of the body. Ashwagandha and shatavari (1/4 teaspoon each) boiled in milk and water (1/2 cup each) with saffron, ginger, and cardamom help increase the resistance to vata type cold. Avoid yogurt, cheese, and tofu.

The supreme herbal formula (rasayana) for treatment and prevention of colds is Amrit Nectar and Ambrosia (found in health food stores), a full spectrum antioxidant combination which has over 1000 times more antioxidant power than vitamin C or E.

It is important to drink plain boiled

helps prevent severe colds. Other supplements that can be effective in reducing cold symptoms are Zinc and combinations of antioxidants and bioflavonoids.

Proper diet, along with some herbal and nutritional supplements and the avoidance of alcohol and tobacco, give the immune system a fighting chance against colds. Nevertheless, any herbal treatment should not be continued for a long period of time without proper guidance from a Naturopathic physician.

Homeopathic remedies trigger a strong healing response from the vital force to restore balance in the physiology. Homeopathic remedies effective against the common cold are Aconite, Allium Cepa, Arsenicum, Bryonia, Gelsemium, Eupatorium Perforatum, etc., depending on the specific symptom picture. If cold symptoms persists for more than 5-7 days, then other similar conditions such as influenza or allergy should be considered and treated under the guidance of a licensed Physician.

Questions on this article may be

water several times a day to eliminate impurities from the body, stimulate digestion, and pacify the doshas.

When good health returns, you want to be careful to follow the diet and daily routine that matches your individual Ayurvedic constitution for optimum digestion and prevention of future colds.

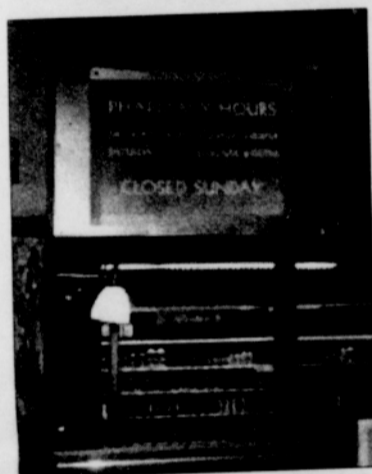
Questions on this article may be directed to Prafulla S. Morris, N.D., Medical Director of Ayur-Ved Samhita Center for Perfect Health. Call 503/699-BLISS.



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directed to Prafulla S. Morris, N.D., Medical Director of HealthCrest Quantum Healing Center. Call 503/699-2547. An extensive array of Herbs and Homeopaths are available for purchase at Nature's Northwest Pharmacies.

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NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE

All of us have experienced the runny nose, sore throat, achiness, maybe headache, etc., that announce the onset of a cold. It is the most common illness known. Is the cold caused by a virus? If so, why is it that not everybody exposed to the virus gets a cold?

Many of the symptoms of a cold come from our body's defense mechanism at work. Symptoms are a sign of the body's

AYURVEDIC MEDICINE

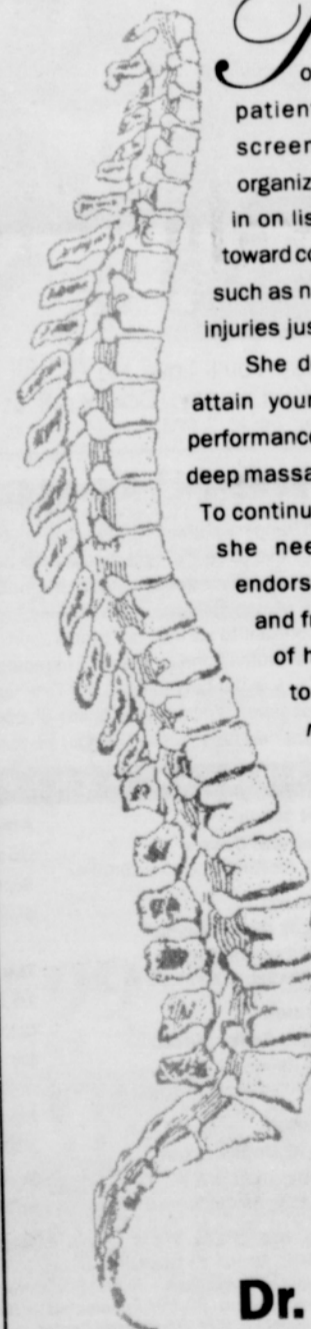
Ayurved is the original holistic science of health and well-being from India. Ayurved removes problems of health by restoring balance to a person's physiological constitution. One's constitution (prakriti) is made up of vata, pitta, and kapha. These are the doshas that control all the functions of the body. When the doshas are out of balance (vikriti) they create imbalance, disease, and, finally, symptoms.

Ayurved views aggravation of vata and kapha along with reduced digestive power (agni) as the cause of the common cold. Cold, dry, and windy weather lead to a vata type cold. Cold and wet weather lead to a kapha type cold. Ayurved works quickly to pacify the vata or kapha and to restore balance in the physiology.

In the kapha type cold, mucus is abundant and accumulates in the upper part of the body. Favor fresh, light, dry, warm, pungent, bitter, and astringent foods. Avoid dairy, oily, cold, heavy, sour and salty foods. Bread must be avoided.

TRADITIONALLY, many Physicians spend a part of their work weeks and time seeking new patients through advertising and store screenings to the general public and organizations. At Dr. Failla's practice her focus is on listening, detailed diagnoses and working toward correction of chronic and traumatic injuries, such as nagging shoulder pain for instance or auto injuries just sustained.

She devotes 100% of her energy to helping attain your pre-injured health and peak sports performance through her individualized Chiropractic, deep massage and specified stretching techniques. To continue this level of commitment and service she needs your help. Your enthusiastic endorsement of Dr. Failla's practice to family and friends enables her to concentrate more of her time building on her education base to even better serve her patients - the reason for her practice.



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