

McQuinn Naturopathic

Time for relaxation?

Summer Newsletter
2012

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- **Healthy Snacks for Maintaining Your Energy**— Simple recipes you and the family will love!
- **Natural Allergy Remedies**— Save yourself this pollen season with these helpful suggestions.

As summer approaches, we find ourselves with ever-growing to-do lists, wish lists, and wait lists. In the meantime, we tend to ignore the simple cues our body is sending, trying to clue us in to the effect our stresses are having. Because stress can be both positive and negative, it is easy for us to excuse ourselves from addressing it properly.

Stress, as you may already know, is detrimental in many ways. Beside the plethora of physical effects that are noticed by the afflicted, there are many things you may not feel directly, but may be caused by your un-checked stress levels.

Disturbed sleep patterns: Reduced REM cycles (the time when your body restores cells and repairs neuron pathways) may lead to decreased mental acuity, increased levels of depression, and insomnia.

Adrenal fatigue: Increased levels of cortisol (a stress hormone), may lead to decreased lipid metabolism (ability to process fats), and insulin resistance (inadequate response to glucose) causing weight gain, obesity, diabetes type 2, and metabolic syndrome X.

Cardiovascular disease: Due to decreased lipid metabolism, we also see increased levels of cholesterol, hypertension, and increased blood viscosity - which is more likely to clot, causing a heart attack or stroke. The body's inflammatory response is also affected, causing increased levels of chronic inflammation, and decreased efficiency in our acute inflammatory response, meaning our bodies are more likely to "overreact" to simple irritations.

Decreased Mineral Absorption: Reduced ability to absorb trace minerals affecting electrolyte balance, cause water retention, hair loss, and decreased immune function.

Decreased Ability to Detoxify: Due to over-worked adrenal glands, impaired electrolytes, and an increased inflammatory response, our liver's ability to detoxify our system decreases. Heavy metals are more likely to stick around, and so are things like hormones and environmental toxins, which are stored in our fat cells until we are able to "flush" them out.

So, what can we do??

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Time for Relaxation? Continued...



Making time for relaxation now, may save you time in the future!

Finding healthy ways to deal with your stress may lengthen and improve your quality of life!

First, prioritize. Are *all* the stressors in your day really worth your time?

Eliminate unnecessary stresses by deciding their level of importance, and your ability to affect them. If you can't do anything to help the situation, it won't help matters to stress over it.

Second, use stress relieving techniques. Breathing is a very basic way to affect your whole system. Use a counting method with your breathing, making the "out" breath twice as long as the

"in" breath. Other techniques include meditation (quiet time), stretching, reading, daydreaming, Epsom salt baths, journaling, singing, listening to peaceful music, even cat-naps are an effective way to show yourself some appreciation!

When you find yourself making excuses for the time you aren't taking for yourself, remember: If you don't take time to care for yourself, who will?



Healthy Snacks for Maintaining your Energy

Many of us would love to prepare healthy meals and snacks for our family, but are challenged with limited kitchen abilities, or time. Here are some easy make-ahead snacks that will satisfy your on-the-go lifestyle needs.

Protein is the best way to maintain your energy levels, so these snacks are going to be high in protein and low in carbohydrates. These will keep your energy up and provide fuel for your busy life.

Chicken Meatballs

1 lb. ground chicken breast (all-white-meat)

½ small onion , grated

2 garlic cloves , grated

½ cup parsley , chopped

salt & freshly ground black pepper

Olive oil or MCT oil , for drizzling

Directions:

1.)Pre-heat oven to 400°F.

2.)In a large mixing bowl, combine the ground chicken with the onion, garlic and parsley and season with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

3.)Flatten out the meat in the bowl and score it into four portions. Shape each portion into four balls – you should have sixteen meatballs in total. (Wash your hands after handling the raw poultry.)



4.)Arrange the meatballs on a nonstick sheet pan and drizzle them with extra-virgin olive, or MCT oil.

5.)Bake until the meatballs are golden brown and cooked through, about 10-12 minutes.

*To change it up, simply add your favorite chopped veggies & herbs, such as bell pepper with oregano, or mushrooms and asparagus, garlic and cumin, etc.

Tuna Salad Wraps

6 ounces Albacore tuna in water (1 can)

12 leaves Romaine lettuce (cut to desired wrap size

½ cup diced celery

½ chopped radish or 1/4 cup chopped apple

2 tablespoons light mayonnaise (or MCT

oil) or 2 tablespoons mustard (optional)

12 toothpicks (for keeping wraps together)

Directions:

1.) Drain tuna and put in a small bowl with celery & radish. Mix well. (If adding mayo or mustard, mix that in as well.)

2.) Take one lettuce leaf and place 1-2 Tbsp. tuna mix in the middle of it.

3.) Wrap the lettuce up and stick a toothpick in so it will stay. You should be able to make 12 of these.

4.) Serve and enjoy!

Avocado & Egg-white Salad Breakfast Roll-ups

9 hard-boiled eggs, whites only, cut into

1/2-inch pieces

1 rib celery, cut into 1/4-inch pieces

1/2 avocado, cut into 1/2-inch pieces

Healthy Snacks for Maintaining your Energy...cont'd.

Avocado & Egg-white Salad Breakfast Roll-ups, cont'd...

1/2 Granny Smith apple, cut into 1/4-inch pieces
1-2 tablespoons MCT oil or Greek Yogurt (fat-free)
1-2 tablespoon finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
2 teaspoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
Pinch of cayenne pepper
1/2 teaspoon coarse salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
Butter lettuce, for serving
Place all ingredients except lettuce in a large bowl;
gently toss until well combined. Serve wrapped in lettuce leaves.
Makes 3 servings



Roasted Edamame

Ingredients:

2 teaspoons MCT oil or Olive oil
1/4 teaspoon dried basil, crushed
1/2 teaspoon chili powder
1/4 teaspoon onion salt
1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
1/8 teaspoon paprika
1/8 teaspoon black pepper
1 (10 ounce) package ready-to-eat edamame,
thawed if using the frozen variety.

Roasted Edamame Directions:

- 1.) Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
- 2.) In a small bowl, stir together oil and dry spices.
- 3.) Drizzle mixture over edamame and toss to coat well.
- 4.) Arrange beans in a single layer in a shallow baking dish.
- 5.) Roast, uncovered, for 12 to 15 minutes, stirring once, until edamame begin to brown.
- 6.) Serve hot as a vegetable dish or cooled as a snack.



Natural Allergy Remedies!

Annual bouts with pollen aren't just uncomfortable, they also take a toll on mental well-being. Studies have shown that during ragweed season, allergy sufferers often experience a general sense of fatigue — especially mental fatigue — and are more prone to feelings of sadness. People who suffer from allergies also are up to 14 times more likely to experience migraine headaches than those who don't have allergies.

Given these statistics, you might want to pull the covers over your head and wait until the whole season blows over. But it is possible to step outdoors safely without first loading up on allergy medications, even when ragweed is in full bloom. Here are several natural alternatives that are medically proven to help control allergies and help you breathe easier, even when pollen counts are at their worst.

**When you understand what's happening during allergy attacks, treating them naturally seems like plain common sense. First, picture a grain of pollen — it looks something like a spiny sea urchin. Now imagine this prickly invader entering your nasal passages and latching onto soft mucous membranes. These mucous membranes line our bronchial and nasal passages and contain immune cells, called mast cells, which are loaded with histamines. Receptors sit on top of these mast cells, and when an allergen trigger — such as pollen, mold or pet dander — lands on top of the receptor, it alerts the mast cells, which respond by releasing histamine and other chemicals. The histamine initiates a series of reactions designed to help the body get rid of the intruder, including sneezing, watery eyes and itching. For some people, particularly those with asthma, this reaction may also include swelling in the bronchial tubes that makes it difficult to breathe.*

Most allergy medications attempt to treat the symptoms your body instigates to get rid of the allergen. But doesn't it make more sense to shore up your defenses *before* your body goes into attack mode? Many of the natural remedies discussed below are designed to prevent a reaction before it occurs.

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Natural Allergy Remedies, continued...

- ◆ **Neti Pots.** What could be simpler than rinsing away allergens with saltwater? Neti pots, small vessels shaped like Aladdin's lamp, have been used in India for thousands of years to flush the sinuses and keep them clear. It's an idea that takes some getting used to for most Westerners, but it's a bit like using nasal spray. A little douse of saltwater can rinse away those prickly pollen grains and help treat allergies and other forms of sinus congestion. Just last year, an Italian study published in the *International Archives of Allergy and Immunology* found that nasal flushing was a mild and effective way to treat seasonal allergies in children, and markedly reduced their use of anti-histamines. You could simply use your cupped hand instead of a Neti pot to rinse sinuses, but Netis are inexpensive, and many people find them much easier to use. To flush your sinuses, mix a quarter to a half teaspoon of non-iodized sea salt into a cup of lukewarm water and pour it into the pot. (You can adjust the amount of salt, depending on what feels most comfortable.) Lean over a sink with your head slightly cocked to one side, then put the spout of the Neti into one nostril and allow the water to drain out the other nostril. Use about half of the solution, then repeat on the other side, tilting your head the opposite way. Gently blow out each nostril to clear them completely. Neti pots are widely available online and at natural food stores. Use your pot about twice a day during allergy season, especially in the morning and after spending time outdoors. You also can use a Neti pot before bed to prevent snoring caused by allergies and promote optimal overnight breathing.
- ◆ **Quercetin.** A natural plant-derived compound called a bioflavonoid, quercetin helps stabilize mast cells and prevents them from releasing histamine. Quercetin also is a natural antioxidant that helps mop up molecules called free radicals that cause cell damage, which can lead to cancer. Citrus fruits, onions, apples, parsley, tea, tomatoes, broccoli, lettuce and wine are naturally high in quercetin, but allergy sufferers will most likely need to use supplements to build up enough of this compound to prevent attacks. The recommended dosage is about 1,000 milligrams a day, taken between meals. It's best to start treatment six weeks before allergy season. Those with liver disease shouldn't use quercetin, so please consult your doctor before using this or any other supplement — especially if you are pregnant or nursing.
- ◆ **Allergy-Fighting Foods.** A German study, published in the journal *Allergy*, found that participants who ate foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids were less likely to suffer allergy symptoms than those who didn't regularly eat these foods. Omega-3s help fight inflammation and can be found in cold-water fish, walnuts and flaxseed oil, as well as grass-fed meat and eggs. To help keep airways clear when pollen counts are high, add a dash of horseradish, chili peppers or hot mustard to your food — all act as natural, temporary decongestants. It's also a good idea to avoid foods that you're slightly allergic to until the air clears. Fighting off allergies can render the body hypersensitive to those foods, causing more severe reactions than usual.
- ◆ **Stinging Nettle.** If you decide you need an antihistamine but want a natural option, stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*) behaves in much the same way as many of the drugs sold to treat allergies, but without the unwanted side effects of dry mouth and drowsiness. Nettle actually inhibits the body's ability to produce histamine. It's a common weed in many parts of the United States, but the most practical medicinal form is a freeze-dried extract of the leaves sold in capsules. Studies have shown that taking about 300 milligrams daily will offer relief for most people, although the effects may last only a few hours. You also can make your own tinctures or teas with stinging nettle. (Contact with the stinging hairs on fresh nettle can cause skin inflammation, so wear protective gloves when handling it.)
- ◆ **Butterbur.** Derived from a common weed in Europe, butterbur (*Petasites hybridus*) is another alternative to antihistamines. In the days before refrigeration, its broad, floppy leaves were used to wrap butter during warm spells, hence the name butterbur. A Swiss study, published in *British Journal of Medicine*, found that butterbur was as effective as the drug cetirizine, the active ingredient in Zyrtec. Even though cetirizine is supposed to be a non-sedative antihistamine, researchers reported that it did cause drowsiness, though butterbur did not. Participants in the study took 32 milligrams of butterbur a day, divided into four doses. A word of caution though — butterbur is in the same family as ragweed, so it could worsen allergy symptoms in some cases.

If you suffer from allergies and would like more information on how to survive the pollen season, set up an appointment today! (425)293-0107