



Healing Arts Center  
AT NORTHEASTERN REHABILITATION ASSOCIATES, P.C.

# Newsletter

Volume 6, Issue 1

Spring 2009

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## Is it cold and flu season, or Vitamin D deficiency season?

Why does the flu occur predictably in the months following the winter solstice when the days are the shortest? Why is influenza more common in the tropics during the rainy season? Why do children who are not exposed to sunlight get more colds? Scientists agree that most likely due to a deficiency of Vitamin D.

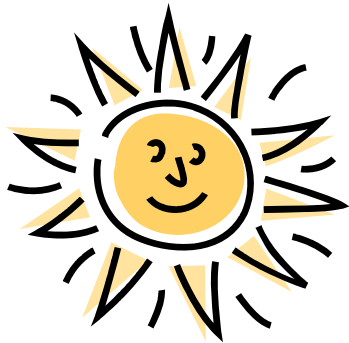
Flu season for us in the northern hemisphere strikes when the sun is at its lowest level in the sky, the days are cold, and our exposure to sunshine is at its lowest level of the year. Exposure to sunlight is an important source of Vitamin D. Ultra-violet rays from sunlight trigger Vitamin D production in the skin. It is the only vitamin that people make on their own. It takes a fair-skinned person only 15 minutes or less to generate 10,000 to 20,000 IU of Vitamin D on a sunny day. A paper published in Nature in 2006 showed that Vitamin D was a potent antibiotic, that worked by increasing the body's production of proteins called antimicrobial peptides. Antimicrobial peptides destroy the

cell walls of bacteria, fungi and viruses, including the influenza virus.

Vitamin D has positive effects not just on influenza, but also on: heart disease, cancer, diabetes, inflammatory bowel disease, rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis and osteoporosis.

Many scientists believe Vitamin D deficiency is an unrecognized epidemic worldwide. In the

United States, experts are calling for revisions to the Food and Drug Administration's Vitamin D recommendations, which are outdated. The FDA recommends 200 IU of Vitamin D daily for those under 51 and 400 IU for those 51 to 70. However, researchers say the recommendations should be around 1,000 IU daily for all ages and perhaps as high as



2,000 IU.

If you are prone to colds and flu get out into the sun! If the temperature prohibits that, please talk to your health care professional about supplementing with Vitamin D.

For more information about Vitamin D, please visit The Vitamin D Council, [www.vitaminDcouncil.org](http://www.vitaminDcouncil.org).



### Cocktail Fact:

S.A.D. (seasonal affective disorder) but true:

Residents of Alaska and Washington state suffer most from S.A.D.; Floridians the least.

### Locations:

5 Morgan Highway  
Scranton

150 Mundy Street  
Wilkes-Barre

For more information on  
the Healing Arts Center and its  
services, please call

Catherine Harrington  
at (570) 344-3788 ext 342

or email us at  
[HealingArts@nerehab.com](mailto:HealingArts@nerehab.com)

*Spotlight on:*

**Maria Ciufferi-Wansacz**



Maria is a nationally board certified acupuncturist and a naturopathic doctor. She graduated from Wilkes University with a B.S. degree in biology in 1997. Following Wilkes, she received her doctorate in naturopathic medicine from Bastyr University in

Seattle, Washington. She then went on to receive her degree in acupuncture from the Tri State College of Acupuncture located in Manhattan. Maria incorporates her naturopathic knowledge into her acupuncture treatments by discussing nutritional changes and sup-

plements with patients.

Maria has been an acupuncturist at the Healing Arts Center since 2004.

**Massage and the Immune System**

How do you rev up for the cold and flu season? For some it might be the diligent use of vitamins and supplements, an extra glass of OJ or a serving or two of broccoli. For others, it might be constant hand washing procedures. But have you ever considered massage as a means to boost immune function? Is massage helpful? The answer is yes!

Regular massage sessions provide benefit beyond that of the immediate relaxation we enjoy. Studies have shown positive results from regular

massage treatments. They show increased serotonin levels and an increase in the body's natural killer cells which are considered the first line of defense in the immune system. Massage also benefits immune support by directly affecting circulation in the circulatory and lymphatic system (the body's "waste disposal" system). Improved circulation of blood helps nourish the body. The lymphatic system helps absorb waste products, bacteria, dead cells, viruses, fats, fluids and proteins.

People who have immune disorders may feel estranged or disconnected from their bodies. The healing, gentle touch of a caring and patient massage practitioner may help him or her feel whole or balanced and give a strong sense of well-being. As Jesse Steff, M.D., says "hope can free the ill from despair and help maintain a good quality of life and a reason for living. Hope, transformed by the will of the human spirit, can sustain life, even under the most difficult of circumstances."

*"...regular massage treatments show...an increase in the body's natural killer cells..."*

**People want to know...**



A recent study examined outcomes in 1,555 patients with back pain who were treated by primary care physicians, chiropractors, or orthopedic surgeons. Time to recovery, return to work, and complete recovery were the same in all 3 groups, with primary care providing the least costly treatment. However, patients reported the greatest satisfaction with chiropractic care. This finding could not be ex-

plained by a greater number of visits, the chiropractor spending more time with the patient, or the more hands-on treatment characteristic of chiropractic care. Patients felt more satisfied because chiropractors gave better explanations of their conditions.

Diagnostic and prognostic uncertainty is distressing to patients who have a chronic condition, especially when the malady leads to days lost from

work, insomnia, or an inability to engage in hobbies. Practitioners can provide a great deal of healing comfort to patients by helping patients understand their condition. Giving patients insight into their anticipated recovery time and the benefits of exercise can ease their anxiety and facilitate compliance. It can also speed recovery time.