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Herbalist in Question? Peter Laker C.H.

Arthritis

Q. For the past 10 years I have been suffering with pain in the knees and hips. Drugs have not given me relief and the pain is getting worse. The cause so I am told is inflammation of the joints for which there is no cure.

A. There are many different names given to arthritis and many stages to this disease, but the cause is the same. The treatment is similar for all types, with variations depending on the person involved. For instance some people benefit from a hot compress or poultice, while others need cold packs for relief of pain and inflammation. A person with gout of the big toe cannot bear anything hot touching that area, so I would suggest a cold clay compress or poultice which will draw out the heat.

So you see, without more information on an individual's condition it is difficult to give a more specific recommendation, but I will make some assumptions and try anyway! A change of diet is the first step. Acid forming foods such as milk, cheese and red meats are to be avoided. Uric acid a waste from animal protein is the start of many problems. This acid is very destructive if not eliminated through the normal channels. The trouble is we produce much more than we eliminate. This excess burns out sodium which keeps calcium in solution. This crystallizes calcium deposits in various parts of the body including joints, causing much irritation and pain.

Herbal teas containing Meadowsweet, Birch, Nettle, Comfrey, Willow Bark, etc. will reduce inflammation and flush out uric acid. Diaphoretic herbs are sometimes necessary to draw out uric acid through the skin. The juice of one small raw potato drunk daily can reduce pain.

Externally a hot cabbage poultice can reduce inflammation if wrapped around joint and left overnight.

Acne

Q. My daughter is 18 years old and has a very pretty face but is afraid to go out with her friends because of acne. This condition has badly scarred her face. She has tried many types of creams without success. Are there any natural creams or other treatments that can help her.

A. It may seem to some people that I repeat myself often in these matters and they would be correct. The cure is in the cause, proper eating habits. I know this is hard for young people to accept but it is the truth. Junk food (pizza, burgers, fries, chips, candy etc) along with too much orange juice, milk, cheese, fried foods, red meat, etc. are eaten almost exclusive of anything else.

Avoiding this kind of food goes a long way to a cure. A diet rich in raw and steamed vegetables, salads, fruits, whole grains etc is the answer. Along with this program Herbal remedies will assist in elimination and function.

Many people assume acne is for teenagers only but it can carry on into adult life if not treated properly. The usual treatment is topical, such as antiseptic salves which kill bacteria. Some conventional treatments go as far as using anti-biotic creams and pills along with skin scraping etc. Of course creams can be helpful if they are made with herbs in a natural base of beeswax and vegetable oils. Internally, alterative herbs are used to cleanse the blood. Burdock, Echinacea, Calendula, Nettle, Red Clover, along with diuretics and laxatives such as Parsley and Buckthorne bark help elimination. This combination is then tonic in action, aiding the blood, lymph, bowels, liver and kidneys in elimination and purification, carrying waste away from the skin and out through the normal channels.

A tablespoon of olive oil and fresh lemon juice should be taken every morning one hour before breakfast.

Colds and flu

Q. For the last 4 to 5 years I have been plagued with colds and flu usually twice a year. The rest of the year I feel tired with low energy and sluggish. Could you suggest diet changes and perhaps some herbal remedy.

A. Your body is trying desperately to rid itself of excess mucus and toxins. Instead of suppressing these symptoms with drugs, allow the body to take its natural course. To do this you must go on a strict eating regime, no milk (heavy mucus) cheese, meat, eggs or bread. In fact I would suggest a vegetarian diet for 6 to 8 weeks

before including fish or chicken. Eat lots of dark green leafy vegetables raw and steamed, fruits and juices, but stay away from oranges and pineapples, (these tend to upset the digestive processes). Some grains such as brown rice, millet and oatmeal. A little whole rye bread can be included. Fasting one day a week (36 hours) with red grape juice will help in mucus elimination. Eat lots of fresh garlic or take one garlic capsule 4 times a day along with 1/2 teaspoon tincture of Echinacea in a little water 4 times a day.

If a cold or flu strikes, act quickly and drink an infusion of Elderflower, Linden, Yarrow and Peppermint, add Licorice if the throat is affected. Drink this infusion very hot, after taking hot and cold foot baths, then stay in bed. This concoction will make you perspire, burning out waste, probably ending the cold before it starts without suppressing it.

When the cold or flu is over, a combination of herbs in an infusion should be taken for detoxification especially in the spring and fall. Nettle, Dandelion, Burdock, and Elderflower make a good cleansing tonic, taken 3 times a day for 3 to 4 weeks.

Fibroids

Q. My doctor sent me to a specialist because of excessive menstrual bleeding. He found fibroids and recommended a hysterectomy. I have heard that herbs can help to dissolve them. Is this true?

A. Many women have used herbal treatments with success, depending on the size and type of fibroid they have. Soft growths are easier to deal with than the hard variety.

I have taken different approaches to this problem using various herbs with success but I have found clay to be superior in many

cases. First make the appropriate dietary changes to improve circulation and elimination along with blood cleansing herbs. Use green clay as a poultice externally applied once daily and drink clay every morning for internal cleansing. For the poultice put enough clay for 3 to 4 days at a time in a glass or ceramic container (never touch clay with metal or plastic). Pour in distilled or spring water until soaked in, just covering the clay. Put a cloth over the container and leave near a window, (not in direct sunlight), for 24 hours.

When you are ready to apply the poultice use a wooden spoon and dig out enough clay to cover the area of the fibroids. Place the clay about one inch thick on to some gauze or cotton cloth and apply clay directly onto the skin. Leave on one to two hours, or you can leave it on overnight. The clay will dry out and crumble off. When the treatment is finished, throw the used clay away, do not let anyone else handle it. Continue this treatment for 3 months.

If there is any reaction to clay such as becoming very hot or staying too cold, stop treatment and try again another day.

For internal use put one teaspoon of clay in a 1/2 glass of pure water and stir. Leave by window for about one hour , stir and drink one hour before breakfast.

As I mentioned earlier, blood cleansing herbs will help along with herbs for liver congestion, such as Artichoke, St. Benedict, Dandelion, etc. If the fibroid is not responding, a liver cleansing treatment of olive oil and lemon juice may be needed.