

The Beacon

A Free Monthly Newsletter For The Friends and Practice Members of The Lighthouse

“The greatest mistake you can make in life is to be continually fearing that you will make one .” – **Elbert Hubbard**

"BEWARE: COLD GERMS ARE OUT TO GET YOU!"

Smyrna – With ‘cold and flu season’ upon us, there is the usual increase in the number of new items focused on germs. Here’s one excerpted from The Week, Nov 14, 2008, p. 24:

"If someone in your home or office has a cold, they're leaving viruses on everything they touch, says the Associated Press. Scientists at the University of Virginia asked 16 volunteers suffering from colds or the flu to lead them around their homes, showing them the surfaces they'd touched over the past 18 hours. Previous research has shown that cold and flu viruses can live up to three days on surfaces such as countertops and doorknobs. Tests found that six out of 10 remote controls in the homes of the sick volunteers tested positive for rhinovirus, along with eight out of 10 faucets, four out of seven phones and all of the salt and pepper shakers."

Here's the problem with this "scientific" study. It didn't compare surfaces in homes of volunteers NOT suffering from colds or the flu, and it didn't prove a causal relationship between the amount of 'germs' and the sickness of the household members. Question, did every one of the household members become ill when they were exposed to these germs? No? Then there must be something else at work, some other force that can keep you well. Something known as a host factor.

The type of thinking that goes into designing research like this is symptomatic of our current 'no responsibility' society. All of our problems are blamed on something outside of ourselves. Our parents, the government, germs...

"Ohmigosh, McDonald's coffee is too hot! Someone should be sued!"

What's next? Suing your neighbor when you or a family member comes down with the flu? Sounds ridiculous? Many years ago people would have said the same thing about suing a restaurant over hot coffee.

Deconstructing The Germ Theory

We all come in contact with bacteria and viruses on a daily basis. Why don't we all become miserably sick? Because when we are healthy, our bodies' are able to deal with normal levels of 'germs'. When our immune systems become compromised, such as when we are too stressed, eating poorly, not exercising and/or getting adequate rest we are then susceptible to these germs. Likewise, if we are exposed to an extremely high amount of foreign invaders, we may 'come down with something'.

But looking at germs and saying they are solely responsible for sickness and disease is like looking at a garbage dump, infested with rats, and blaming the rats for the piles of garbage. Rats, like germs, are opportunistic. The rats go where there is garbage, the germs multiply in a weakened host.

Do Chiropractors Believe In Germs?

I've often heard it said that chiropractors do not believe in germs, to which I have two comments: First, each chiropractor is free to choose what he or she believes in. In studying to become a chiropractor, I didn't have to take some oath that I would or would not believe in certain concepts. So this commentary is my opinion, and doesn't necessarily apply to my entire vocation. Second, of course I believe in germs. I'm an engineer by training, so I have an appreciation for science. I've watched bacteria multiply. If I keep it too long, my bread gets moldy, too. It's not a question of whether or not I believe germs exist, it's a question of whether germs cause disease. So here's my take on it.

Many people walk around scared of germs. But germs are only part of the health equation. Host factors play an ever larger role in determining each person's relative level of health. By host factors I mean how well a person's immune system is functioning, which is directly affected by eating healthy, getting adequate rest and exercise, having a mostly positive mindset, maintaining a properly functioning nerve system (research has shown that chiropractic adjustments can improve immune system function), as well as certain inherited traits.

But regardless of how well a person's immune system is functioning, I'm not suggesting that you should knowingly overexpose yourself to germs. I am a big fan of hygiene. It's a good idea to bath, wash hands, eat clean food, etc. Thinking otherwise would be folly. But I don't worry when someone says, "Don't come near me, I've got a cold," or similar. Are there times when my system is overcome and I get 'sick'? Sure. Usually it's because I've neglected my normal healthy routine.

I will not be so cavalier (arrogant?) as to suggest that if everyone followed the previously mentioned methods for improving immune function that there would be no disease. As I mentioned, there are genetic factors. Some people are just born unlucky. As well, some people have acquired factors, such as severe trauma that limits their immune function. Finally, there are limitations of matter. The amount of germs can become so great as to overwhelm even the strongest immune system.

So no, this isn't about eradicating disease from the face of the earth. But what it is about is empowering you to know that there are things you can do to improve your odds of succumbing to the next super bug. Even the sickest, most immune-deficient individual would be better off eating a healthy diet, getting adequate rest, and having a nerve system free from interference.

What would you rather focus on, something that is more-or-less out of your control (the amount of germs 'out there'), or that which you can control (your internal resistance, your relative level of health)? I hope you choose the latter. Empower yourself, take charge or your health, do something pro-active. Simply fearing germs and running from anyone who is 'sick' is no way to live. Have faith that your body can heal from most illness, have faith in the power that made your body.

OK, rant over. I look forward to your comments.

p.s. I posted some videos at the blog about the flu vaccine, www.lighthousechiropractic.org/blog. Have a look and feel free to leave you comments.

And remember, if you ever have any questions or concerns about your health, talk to us. Contact us with your questions. We're here to help, and enjoy participating in your life long good health.

The Shoe Box

By: Author Unknown

There was once a man and woman who had been married for more than 60 years. They had shared everything. They had talked about everything. They had kept no secrets from each other, except that the little old woman had a shoe box in the top of her closet that she had cautioned her husband never to open or ask her about. For all of these years, he had never thought about the box, but one day the little old woman got very sick and the doctor said she would not recover. In trying to sort out their affairs, the little old man took down the shoe box and took it to his wife's bedside. She agreed that it was time that he should know what was in the box. When he opened it, he found two crocheted doilies and a stack of money totaling \$25,000. He asked her about the contents...

"When we were to be married," she said, "my grandmother told me the secret of a happy marriage was to never argue.

She told me that if I ever got angry with you, I should just keep quiet and crochet a doily."

The little old man was so moved, he had to fight back tears.

Only two precious doilies were in the box. She had only been angry with him two times in all those years of living and loving. He almost burst with happiness.

"Honey," he said, "that explains the doilies, but what about all of this money? Where did it come from?"

"Oh," she said, "that's the money I made from selling the doilies."

Over-Scheduling May be Dangerous to Your Health

By: Jeffrey Jacoby, LMT

We can all relate to a comforting smell. The sensation of smell may bring up memories from childhood, or remind you of a pleasant time in your life. Have you ever said to yourself "That smell just makes me feel relaxed" and it's as if other things, stressful things, just sort of go away? Relieving stress is very important. Telling yourself that feeling stress is "normal" and equates to being important, getting things done, being productive and so forth may be dangerous to your health. Recent evidence points to stress having a very definite and negative effect on our health has encouraged many people to relieve this stress. Once you relieve the stress it is better able to fight off illness on its own. As long as the stress remains, however, these healing systems stay on-hold, waiting for you to somehow de-stress and let the healing begin. Chiropractic and Massage Therapy are obvious choices to make, but having something on-hand in your home that relieves stress and strengthens your health with no side effects is hard to find. As we become aware of the negative effects that common prescription drugs, like antibiotics may have, it becomes apparent that safe but effective alternatives are needed. Many years ago, the healing properties found in plants, especially their essential oils, were found to be highly effective in the management of stress as well as many common illnesses such as depression, arthritis, anxiety, muscle pain, hemorrhoids, bronchitis, sinusitis, and even the common cold and cough (to name just a few).

If you peel a clove of garlic and rub it on the bottom of your foot, within a few minutes you will be able to smell it on your breath. This illustrates how easy it is for your body to absorb things. If you apply essential oils (or EO's) to the skin, especially the hands and feet, they will be absorbed and used by your body. Inhaling the oils is another way to reap their many benefits. Air-born EO's are easily assimilated into the body when they enter the lungs. This is the best way since your body doesn't need to absorb them or digest them, they can work almost immediately.

One of the best things about these oils is that they are very safe and are considered an "adaptogen". This means that your body will use only what it needs with no side effects. Prescription drugs as well as over-the-counter drugs rarely make this claim. In many cases the number of side effects far exceed the positive effects. Not so with essential oils.

Hospitals in the UK and France always have EO's on hand to support their allopathic practices. In the US there is more and more use of these oils as well. Most alternative treatment centers as well as some regular hospitals now use EO's regularly.

The terpenes found in these oils is what gives them the ability to react so successfully with our body's chemistry. Their chemical make-up is complimentary to our hormones and it is this synergistic relationship that causes the amazing positive effects to happen (as reported by Kurt Schnaubelt Ph.D.). High or low blood pressure, rheumatism, and even seriously burned skin (as discovered by RM Gattefosse in the 1920's) have been successfully managed with essential oils. Because of their natural properties, they will not react negatively with current medications. Medications prescribed by medical doctors do not interact with essential oils so they are usually safe to use in small quantities along with your existing medications.

The question may arise "If these oils are so great, then why aren't they being used everywhere by every doctor and hospital?". The answer is simple. Since the oils come from every day plants, like lavender, eucalyptus, cloves and orange trees, they cannot be patented. Anyone can grow these plants or find them growing naturally and produce essential oils from them. This limits the amount of money that can be made from them. The process that a drug must go through to become approved is so costly that the ability to patent it is a must in order to make it worthwhile for a drug company to produce it. Essential oils may be safely made and used by almost anyone. It is helpful to have a deeper knowledge of the oils and their properties before self use, but even a quick education in the basic oils is all most would need.

Most health food stores and many websites sell these amazing oils. Be aware that the term "Aromatherapy" is sometimes used without meaning. If something contains "essential oils" then it is indeed Aromatherapy, but if the product only contains synthetic versions of the oils (look for "fragrance" or "fragrance oil") that smell like the oils, you will not receive any of the health benefits. Just because it smells like the plant does not mean that it will work the same way. Synthetics do not contain the terpenes and have no beneficial effect on our chemistry. On the contrary, synthetics are more likely to cause negative reactions.

On your next visit to the Lighthouse, you may want to explore some of the Aromatherapy products that I offer. There are room sprays, bath salts infused with essential oils, and vials of synergy essential oil blends. Or book a massage- I always include several essential oils into the oil I use, which may help with various conditions. This is part of the reason why so many of you report feeling great even hours after your session- the massage works on the outside while the EO's work on the inside.

If you have any questions about anything in this article just ask me next time you come in, call 770-337-9426 or email at JeffreyLMT@MassageInspires.com

Oddball December Holidays

Of course December is known for the biggies like Christmas, Chanukah, and Kwanzaa but there are plenty of other fun holidays to celebrate, just in case you don't feel like being a part of the biggies, or if you just want another excuse to celebrate. Here for your amusement are the lesser known December Holiday:

- 1st – Eat A Red Apple Day
- 2nd – National Fritters Day
- 3rd – National Roof-Over-Your Head Day
- 5th – National Gazpacho Day
- 6th – General Election Day
- 7th – National Cotton Candy Day
- 8th – Take It In The Ear Day (No idea what this is)
- 9th – National Pastry Day (Yes!)
- 10th – Festival for the Souls of Dead Whales
- 11th – National Noodle Ring Day (National yet!)
- 12th – National Ding-a-Ling Day
- 13th – Ice Cream and Violins Day (perfect combination)
- 14th – National Bouillabaisse Day
- 15th – National Lemon Cupcake Day
- 16th – National Chocolate Covered Anything Day
- 17th – National Maple Syrup Day
- 18th – National Roast Suckling Pig Day
- 19th – Oatmeal Muffin Day
- 20th – Games Day
- 21st – National Flashlight Day (Day? Why not night?)
- 22nd – National Date-nut Bread Day
- 23rd – Roots Day
- 24th – National Egg Nog Day
- 25th – National Pumpkin Pie Day (who knew?)
- 26th – National Whiners Day (for those who didn't get what they asked for?)
- 27th – National Fruitcake Day
- 28th – Card Playing Day
- 29th – Pepper Pot Day
- 30th – Festival Of Enormous Changes At The Last Minute
- 31st – Unlucky Day

AND YOU THOUGHT KUDZU WAS BAD...

We're all familiar with that lovely green weed that pops up in the spring. Some interesting facts: It is native to Asia, where the climate and predatory insects keep it from becoming a problem. It is edible, and cut kudzu can be fed to goats and cattle. It was first introduced in the US in 1876 and in the 1930's, during the depths of depression, the government created jobs to plant it all over the Southeast, as a cover crop to prevent soil erosion. It wasn't until 1953 that the United States Department of Agriculture recognized it as a pest weed and removed it from its list of approved cover plants. Now, the government has created jobs for its removal. Well folks, we may have the next kudzu, and this one might just give you the 'heebie-jeebies'.

Entomologist Phil Koehler discovered that the Madagascar hissing cockroach, which grows to 5 inches long, is being sold as reptile food on the Internet. Koehler said that it is only a matter of time before some roaches escape and multiply in Florida's climate. "This is not good news for anybody," he said.

Well, maybe it is. With the downturn in the economy, will the government creat jobs such as hissing cockroach hunter?

Can We Talk?

If you go to a psychiatrist, more times than not the answer is, "No." Psychiatrists now spend 71 percent of patient visits prescribing antidepressants and other drugs, and only 29 percent on talk therapy, according to a Johns Hopkins University study. One of the big reasons? Insurance companies provide more reimbursement for medication visits than for psychotherapy.

People in the US take more antidepressants than any other country, and in a couple of years the World Health Organization predicts mental illness will be our number one disability. By 2002, six percent of all children in the US were using antidepressants and between 1994 and 2000, the number of adults using antidepressants tripled.

Alaska Trivia...

One out of eight Americans thinks Alaska is a nation, territory, or commonwealth. (It's a state, by the way, the 49th, in 1959). Alaska has over 3 million(!) lakes, more than 3,000 rivers, and 17 of the country's 20 tallest mountains. It is bigger than all but 18 of the world's largest nations, but it's population of 683,000 is smaller than that of Columbus, Ohio. The capital, Juneau, is inaccessible by land and unconnected to the North American highway system. For every dollar Alaska pays to the U.S. Treasury, it gets back \$1.84, higher than all but two states. Per capita, that's 30 times the national average. I'm trying to work that same deal with my bank. I'll let you know if I pull it off!