

VETERAN AFFAIRS

# **MANAGING PAIN WITH TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE**

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## Session One

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### Managing Pain with Traditional Chinese Medicine

1. Qi
2. Meridians & Vital points
3. Imbalance of Qi / Yin Yang
  - a. Qi blocking the channels
  - b. Blood stagnating the channel pathways
  - c. Cold
  - d. Heat
  - e. Damp/Phlegm
  - f. Wind
  - g. Kidney deficiency
  - h. Liver qi stagnation
  - i. Insufficiency of qi
4. Five Elements
5. Acupuncture
6. The body: An interconnected system of Mind, Body, Spirit
7. Sleep/Mind/Pain/Digestion interplay
8. Stagnation causes pain
9. Individualizing a treatment plan
10. AIR, FIRE and WATER

# Five Elements



## AIR, FIRE and WATER Qualities

### AIR Qualities

- Governs movement and activities of the nervous system
- Cold
- Light
- Dry
- Irregular
- Rough
- Moving
- Quick
- Changeable

If AIR predominates, movement and change are characteristic of your nature. You will tend to always be on the go, with an energetic and creative mind. As long as AIR is in balance, you will be lively and enthusiastic, with a lean body.

### Physical Characteristics of AIR

Those with a predominance of AIR usually have a thin, light frame and excellent agility. Their energy comes in bursts, and they are likely to experience sudden bouts of fatigue. AIR types typically have dry skin, thin hair and cold hands and feet. They sleep lightly and their digestion can be sensitive. When the AIR becomes imbalanced, it manifests in the body as weight loss, constipation, hypertension, arthritis, weakness, restlessness, and digestive challenges. All types of pain involve this air quality, in that it is too much and needs to balance out. AIR stage of life begins around 50 and gradually increases.

## **FIRE Qualities**

- Controls digestion, metabolism, and energy production
- The primary function is transformation.
- Hot
- Light
- Intense
- Penetrating
- Pungent
- Sharp
- Acidic

Those with a predominance of FIRE have a fiery nature that manifests in both body and mind.

### Physical Characteristics of FIRE

FIRE types are usually of medium size and weight. They sometimes have bright red hair, and baldness or thinning hair is common. They have excellent digestion, which sometimes leads them to believe they can eat anything, including spicy food. They have a warm body temperature and they sleep soundly for short periods of time. When in balance, FIRE types have a lustrous complexion, perfect digestion, abundant energy, and a strong appetite. When out of balance, they may suffer from skin rashes, burning sensations, anger, peptic ulcers, excessive body heat, heartburn, and indigestion. FIRE stage of life is 25-50, robust.

## **WATER Qualities**

- Governs the structure of the body
- It holds the cells together and forms the muscle, fat, bone and sinew.
- The primary function is protection.
- Heavy
- Slow
- Steady
- Solid
- Cold
- Soft
- Oily

### Physical Characteristics of WATER

WATER types tend to have a strong build and excellent stamina. They typically have large, soft eyes, smooth and radiant skin, and thick hair. Those who are predominantly water, sleep soundly and have regular digestion. But when WATER builds to excess, weight gain, fluid retention, lethargy and allergies manifest in the body. When they're out of balance they may become overweight, sleep excessively, and suffer from asthma, diabetes, and depression. WATER stage of life is 0-25.

## Three Treasures and Catabolism

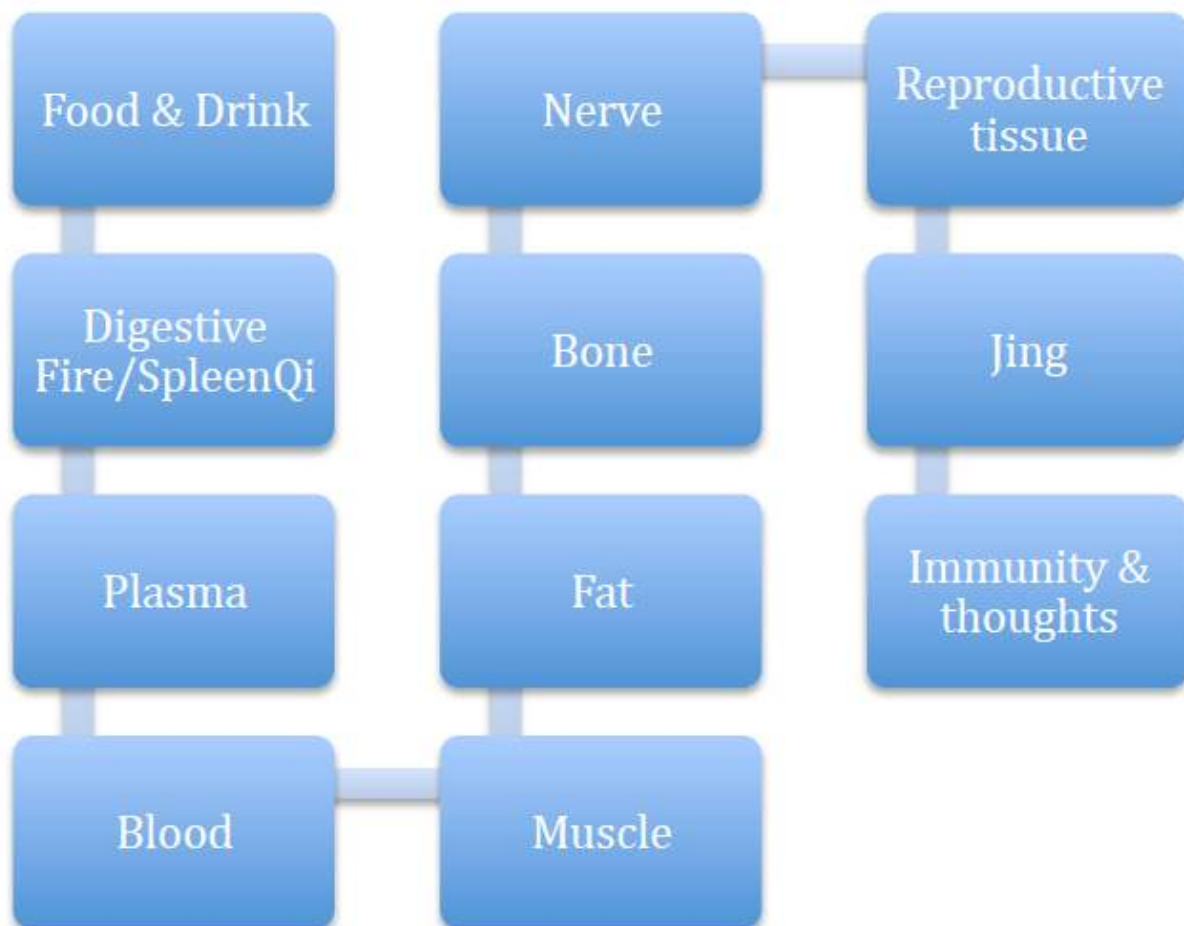
### The Three Treasures:

- *Jing* – “nutritive essence, essence; refined, perfected; extract; spirit; seed”
- *Qi* – “vitality, energy, force; air, vapor; breath; spirit, vigor; attitude”
- *Shen* – “spirit; soul, mind; god, deity; supernatural being”

### Definition of Catabolism:

*Noun* Biology

Catabolism is the breakdown of complex molecules in living organisms to form simpler ones, together with the release of energy; destructive metabolism





## Session Two

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### Bodywork

Body work refers to exercise, Qi Gong, Dao Yin/Yoga, self-massage and self-acupressure.

#### Exercise

- Get some!
- Reduces pain and stress
- Facilitates weight loss to reduce pressure on joints
- Strengthens the muscles and ligaments to keep joints in place
- Increases circulation of Qi and Blood
- Releases endorphins beneficial for the mind and emotions
- Gets your heart rate up
- Walking, jogging, cycling, swimming, aerobics class, tennis, etc.
- Stretch before and after
- Warm up the joints/massage your area of pain before exercise
- Pace yourself: set a goal and work towards it over a period of time, incrementally
- Consult your Physical Therapist to learn ways to exercise that are best for you
- If you have pain while exercising, do you need to rest? Is the pain expected?
- Be aware of your posture and body mechanics, be present, mindful exercise
- Remember to maintain a balance always: be consistent, don't overdo it, stick with the plan and conserve your energy even when it feels good.

## **Qi Gong**

- Life Energy Cultivation
- Aligning body breath and mind for the purpose of health, meditation and martial arts training
- Coordinating slow flowing movements, deep rhythmic breathing and a calm meditative mind
- Many forms
- The Daily Dozen

## **Dao Yin**

- Internal Energy Conductance (similar to Yoga)

Lao Tzu (a philosopher and poet of ancient China, wrote Tao Te Ching)

“The developed one keeps his mind unoccupied and his energy substantially within. He weakens his ambition and strengthens his bone.”

“When people are alive, their bodies are soft and supple. When people die, they are still and hardened”.

## **Self-massage & Acupressure**

- See handout on how to do it
- Entire body or focus on area of pain
- Tin Man phenomenon/needs oil
- Locating tender points and applying pressure for a few minutes on and off

## **Tools**

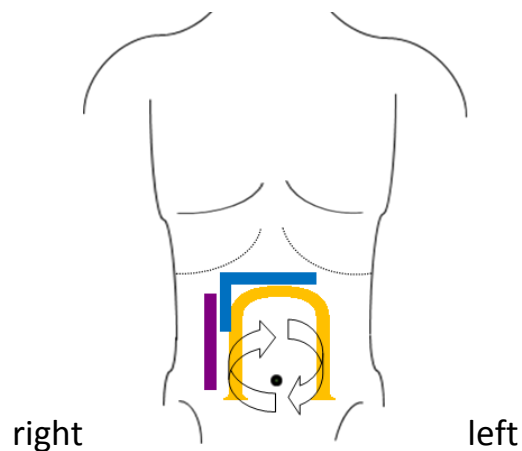
- Physical therapy (PT) exercises
- Porcupine balls, tennis ball, thera-cane, flat bands

## Self-Massage

### How to Self-Massage at Home

- Air and Water types can use untoasted and unrefined organic sesame oil
- Fire types can use either a good quality coconut or olive oil
- The bathroom is an ideal place to massage. Be sure the room is warm enough for your comfort. After a bath or shower is a great time, as your muscles will be relaxed and warm. Warm a little oil in your hands; you really don't need very much. Apply sweeping strokes, varying according to the effect you want – larger, softer strokes are more relaxing. Slide over the skin using a steady pressure with the entire surface of your hands. If massaging your shoulders, sweep hands over the whole shoulder, encompassing its shape, then gently glide back to where you began, and repeat several times working the oil into the skin. You can massage your single area of pain or your whole body.
- Massaging your stomach can aid digestion. Massage the lower right side of the abdomen working your way upwards to just below the rib cage in a firm, circular motion. Continue across and then downwards along the opposite side towards the pubic-bone area, and repeat several times.

This is a diagram of the abdomen, massaging in the direction of your digestion.



- Deep-tissue massage loosens muscle tissue, releases stagnation and improves circulation. Use slow strokes with deep finger pressure over areas of tension, moving along the muscles. Be careful, however, not to damage delicate tissue if you're recovering from an operation or injury – always reduce pressure if it feels too painful. Massaging after exercise can help prevent the build-up of lactic acid in the muscles, which means you'll feel better the day after, too. Massaging joints before exercise can also assist with less pain and stiffness during your work-out or stretching session/
- Massage helps prevent and treat headaches. Use two fingers to apply pressure on the bridge of the nose between the eyebrows (Yintang) and along the eyebrows into the divot next to the eyes. Tension is often carried in our hairlines. Massage at the front hairline and then work your way around the ear and into the back of the scalp. Apply gentle pressure to areas that may feel tender. Repeat this five to 10 times every day for prevention or during an acute phase of headache if it feels good to you. For sinus pain, work along the cheekbones towards the ears with your fingers to ease congestion. To release tension in your jaw, apply a small amount of oil and use your index fingers to perform circular pressure on outer edges of the jaw and in the joint focusing on tender areas. Breathe deeply and enjoy the massage.
- Before bed, a simple foot massage can aid in relaxation and sleep. Apply a small amount of oil and massage the sole of your foot with your palms and fingers. You can start at the heel and work towards the base of your toes, massaging your toes and between your toes. Hold your foot in your palm and massage along the sides and arch of the foot. Repeat on the other foot. You may want to wear socks afterwards so as not to slip on the floor or get oil on your flooring.



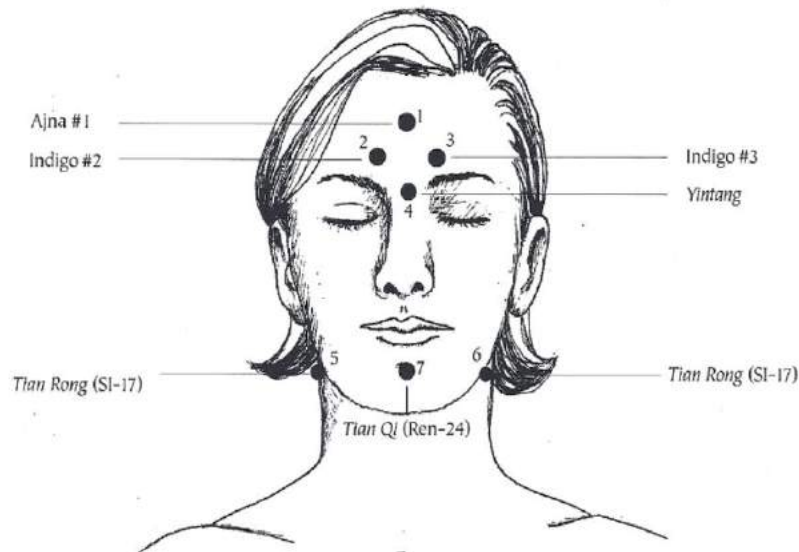
- Massage is helpful for:
  - Improving the health of your skin by making it stronger and softer
  - Reviving the skin tone and reduces the effects of dryness from aging
  - Supporting restful sleep patterns
  - Opening the energy channels
  - Nurturing positive emotions and feelings as you care for yourself
  - Calming the nervous system and sense organs
  - Reducing stiffness in the joints
  - Benefitting sore and tense muscles
  - Helping to ease pain

## Deep Breathing

The mind and body work together. The way your mind controls thoughts and attitudes affects the way your body controls pain.

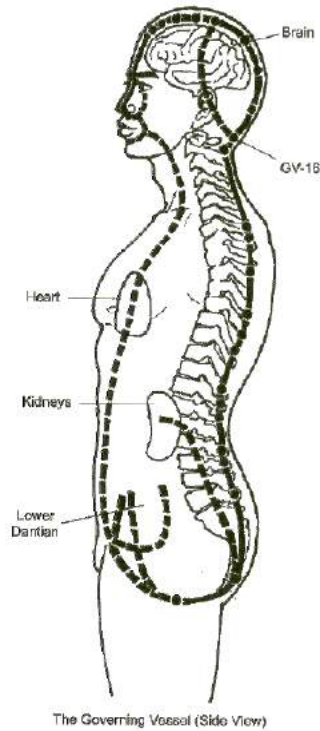


Du20, the “ Hundred Meeting Point”, improves mental state, dizziness, headache, obstruction of the nose, agitation, and heart palpitations due to fright or anxiety.



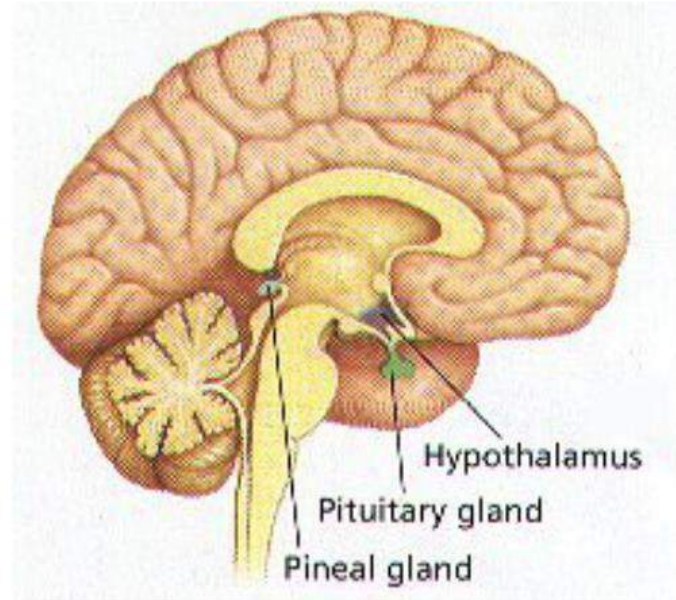
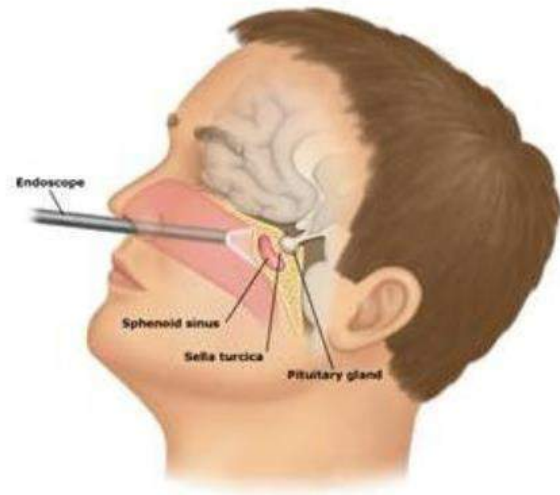
Yintang, is the “Hall of Impression”. Located at the midpoint of the eyebrows. It is used for acute and chronic fright, frontal headache, dizziness, insomnia, agitation, and restlessness.

The Governing Vessel originates in the pelvis and ascends up, emerging at Du20. It then enters the brain and connects with the Urinary Bladder Meridian along the sides of the spine. It spreads throughout the spine. The right side channel is the left side of the brain which is the YANG. The left side channel is the right side of the brain and is YIN.



Controlled breathing can influence the flow of energy through these channels. Nasal breathing brings air into the sphenoid sinuses to cool the pituitary gland and help regulate the body temperature.

The pituitary gland and the hypothalamus – a part of the interbrain effect the autonomic nervous system, which manages the balance of energy, heat and water in the body. Body temperature, heartbeat or the amount of urine, are all regulated this way, and so are sleep, hunger and thirst. The pituitary gland also produces a series of hormones that either control most of the other hormone glands in the body or have a direct effect on specific organs.



Together they regulate all processes having to do with primitive reactions, such as stress, rage, fighting body temperature, thirst, hunger, sexual activity, and survival in general. Between the two, they secrete 16 different hormones including human growth hormone (reduces liver uptake of glucose, stimulates the immune function).

The pineal gland is the major source of melatonin production in the body. It plays a role in circadian rhythm, inducing sleep and seasonal affective disorder. In animals, it plays a key role in hibernation.

Nasal breathing has many functions. It promotes ability to smell, filters out dirt and pathogens, and moisturizes and warms incoming air with mucous membranes. Nasal breathing stimulates the olfactory nerve; the impulse is passed to hypothalamus and pineal glands. Yintang and acupuncture points in this area are influential on these glands.

When you are feeling sluggish and fatigued, focus on breathing through the right nostril, and when you are excited, agitated or anxious, focus on breathing through the left nostril.



## Breathing Techniques

- **Cooling Breath Practice:** mouth breathing inhalation, nasal breathing exhalation. Tongue is connected with organs.
- **Relaxation Breath:**
  1. Find a comfortable position to sit in and keep your spine (Du channel and urinary bladder channel) straight and open. Close your eyes. Spend a minute or two relaxing your mind. To relax the mind, listen to your natural breath, 'talk to yourself' (maybe say to yourself, "relax, relax"; "inhale, inhale"; "I don't need to think about that now"; "nothing matters right now, I'm letting that go"; etc.)
  2. You may connect your thumb and first finger (air & ether, lung & large intestine) to assist with dilating the bronchi, increases the vital capacity and improve concentration. Also, touch the tip of the tongue to the roof of the mouth.
  3. Using your nose to inhale and exhale, start with a deep breath in, filling up your lungs and your belly. Listen to the noise that the process makes. Exaggerate this noise in the back of your throat if you feel comfortable. Focus on filling up the belly with each inhale and focus on emptying the belly with each exhale. Envision the breath at times making contact with the important glands behind your nose.
  4. The lungs negative, or imbalanced emotion, is Grief. In the normal breathing process, air is not completely expelled and residual air remains. This is where grief, sorrow, frustration, anxiety and hurt reside. We carry these negative emotions with us in the deep structure of the lung. With deep breathing, we can throw these out and feel more peaceful, as in the axiom: 'A Sigh of Relief'.
  5. You can practice this relaxation breath for a set of 10 or 20.
  6. When finished, sit still with your eyes closed and 'feel' how your body feels. You may notice a tingling sensation, a sense of peace or happiness. Your mind may feel clear and happy, you may feel warm or have a sense of your blood pumping through the body in a pleasant way.
  7. When you are ready, you may open your eyes and move about as needed. You might notice you see somewhat clearer or brighter. Take note of how you feel so you can remember this feeling when you feel stressed or anxious.

- **Alternate Nostril Breathing**

Again, prepare as above.

1. Use your right thumb to close the right nostril and your small and ring finger of the same hand to alternatively close the left nostril.
2. Obstruct the left nostril and inhale through the right
3. Close the right nostril and exhale through the left
4. While continuing to obstruct the right nostril, inhale through the left
5. Close the left nostril and exhale through the right
6. Repeat for 5-10 rounds at first, take it slow, and then you can increase up to 20.

## **Meditation**

Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche: “We don’t meditate to become better people or have special experiences. Meditation is simply the way we relate to our already existing enlightened state”.

Evidence of meditation dates back approximately 5,000-3,500 BCE. Descriptions of meditation techniques date back in Indian scriptures to 3,000 years ago. Many of the world’s religions adopted basic concepts of meditation; methods vary from culture to culture. Many believe meditation is an essential cornerstone of spiritual development. Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Taoism, and Christianity, to name a few, all have their forms of meditation.

Old Testament: “Be still and know that I am God”; Repetitive prayer or counting rosary beads.

ZaZen: “seated meditation”, a meditative discipline practitioners perform to calm the body and the mind, and concentrate enough to experience insight into the nature of existence and thereby gain enlightenment. Suspending all judgmental thinking and letting words, ideas, images, attachments, labeling, and thoughts pass by without getting involved with them.

Koan: is a story, dialogue, question, or statement which is used in Zen practice to provoke introspection, or doubt.

Insight Meditation: Buddhist tradition, mindfulness, Vipassana. It aims to free the mind of the distortions of self-centeredness, negativity, and confusion.

Equanimity. Moment to moment investigation of the mind and body, a slowing down and paying attention. [www.seattleinsight.org](http://www.seattleinsight.org)

Walking meditation, Loving-Kindness meditation, Tonglen, The middle way, MahaMudra, Visualization, Dzogchen, Mantra

Reasons to meditate daily:

1. Lowers blood pressure
2. Relaxes mind, better sleep
3. Elicits physical relaxation
4. Improves concentration
5. Improves breathing
6. Decreases the feeling of pain
7. Reduces stress and tension
8. Increases self-awareness
9. Makes you present
10. Source of inspiration
11. Rejuvenates you (clears blockages)

Tips for meditation/relaxation:

1. Make it a formal practice.
2. Start with the breath.
3. Stretch first.
4. Meditate with purpose (single pointedness).
5. Notice the frustrations that you feel and think. Really focus in.
6. Experiment with posture, types, etc.
7. Feel your body parts.
8. Pick a specific location where you can meditate; a designated spot.
9. Read a book or two on meditation.
10. Commit to the long haul.
11. Listen to instructional recordings (e.g., CDs, apps).
12. Generate moments of awareness during the day.
13. Make sure you will not be disturbed.
14. Use a candle, stare at the flame and practice focusing on it.

15. Do not stress. If too stressed, don't meditate right now.
16. Find a partner or group if you would like.
17. Try to meditate early in the morning, as the mind tends to be quieter.
18. Be grateful at the end. Spend 2-3 minutes feeling appreciative for the moment.
19. Notice small amounts of progress.
20. Tell others about your practice and the benefits you feel.

## Sessions Three & Four

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### Kitchen Medicine

“Let food be thy medicine and let thy medicine be food.” -Hippocrates

- Food
- Spices
- Herb/Medicine
  - What you eat affects your pain. Food feeds our healthy and unhealthy tissue.
  - Cook more! Use spices! Less eating out and less processed foods.
  - Avoid poor quality fats, salts and sugars. Replace with healthy fats, healthy salts and sugars (rock salt, sea salt, grade B maple syrup, raw local honey, extra virgin olive oil, untoasted sesame oil).
  - Eat at the same times every day. Try to stick with proper meal times. If we eat whenever we want, the body will just do whatever it wants.
    - Breakfast, 0700-0900 (moderate)
    - Lunch, 1100-1300 (stronger)
    - Dinner, 1700-1930 (light)
- Do not nap after lunch. You may rest on your left side to facilitate digestion for 15 minutes, especially if you are Water type. Fire and Air type could benefit from relaxing after lunch.
- Take a walk after dinner for 15-20 minutes to facilitate digestion prior to bed. You may notice if you eat a heavy meal before bed, you will have a difficult time sleeping or vivid dreams. Avoid spicy foods for dinner if you have trouble sleeping. No heavy exercise in the evening.

- When you eat at proper meal times regularly, the body will learn the pattern and digestion will become easier. If we graze all day long, there will be some food going through one process of digestion and other food going through another process. This is confusing to the digestive function and can weaken the spleen. Food should be fully and properly digested prior to giving the body more food.
- If you have a low appetite or feel that you cannot eat, that is okay. Listen to your body and try to wait until the next scheduled mealtime to eat. To stimulate the appetite, you can sip on some hot fennel and ginger tea 30 minutes before your meal.
  - Be mindful of how much you eat. Don't overeat, and avoid eating two hours prior to bedtime.
  - Proper elimination is important, especially for anxiety, low back pain and insomnia. Moving the bowels once per day is very beneficial. If you have constipation, talk with your doctor or modify your diet. Diet is the most common reason for constipation.
- Pain → poor sleep → mood changes → poor choices in diet → pain → medications → poor digestion → mood changes → poor sleep → pain
- Anti-inflammatory diet
- Spices for cooking and teas to be used to flavor the food, all in moderation (if you are on any anti-coagulant, consult your doctor or prescription)
- Treat your body like a garden: Nurture, fertilize (healthy food), water, sunshine (vitamin D), till (oxygenation: exercise), weed (sweat, deep breath, water, eliminate).
- Strengthen spleen Qi: Warm cooked neutral food.

## **Foods to Fight Pain**

### **Carotene**

The carotenoids are antioxidant nutrients found in many fruits and vegetables. The best known is beta carotene (found in foods like cantaloupe, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, carrots, kale, butternut squash, and spinach), but its sister carotenoid, beta-cryptoxanthin, may also reduce rheumatoid arthritis. Researchers have found that people who eat diets high in beta-cryptoxanthin are half as likely to develop a form of inflammatory arthritis as those who ate very few. In fact, adding just one additional serving each day of a food high in beta-cryptoxanthin helped reduce the risk. Best foods for beta-cryptoxanthin: winter squash, pumpkin, persimmons, papaya, tangerines, red peppers, corn, oranges and apricot.

### **Ginger**

A helpful food for digestion and reducing inflammation in the body.

Ginger contains beneficial phytonutrients gingerols and paradols that seem to have anti-inflammatory effects, and therefore should be considered for arthritis treatment. Ginger contains chemicals that work similarly to some anti-inflammatory medications. Get creative: grate fresh ginger into stir fries, steep dry ginger powder as a tea, or bake healthy ginger muffins.

### **Green Tea**

Compared with regular black tea, green tea looks weak but contains a natural antioxidant called epigallocatechin-3-gallate (EGCG) not found in black tea. Studies suggest that EGCG works to stop the production of certain inflammatory chemicals in the body, including those involved in arthritis. Preliminary research suggests that EGCG and other catechins in tea may prevent cartilage from breaking down, possibly helping to preserve joints longer.

**Olive Oil**

In addition to healthy monounsaturated fats, olive oil contains a natural compound called oleocanthal which may help prevent arthritis-related inflammation. This compound blocks the same inflammatory pathways as ibuprofen and aspirin, medications commonly used to fight arthritis pain. If you're also trying to lose weight to manage your arthritis, incorporate olive oil but be stingy with the amounts since all fat (including healthy fat like olive oil) is high in calories. For the highest antioxidant content, choose "extra virgin" olive oil; and note that the stronger the taste, the higher the amounts of oleocanthal the oil is likely to have.

**Red Grapes**

Contains resveratrol (also found in Hu Zhang, Bushy knotweed, a Chinese herb for pain by blood invigoration) which can relax tight blood vessels and improve blood flow to damaged back tissue. Your back's vertebrae and discs depend on blood vessels to bring healing nutrients and oxygen to them. Try one cup daily.

**Salmon &  
Sardines,  
Omega-3 Fats**

The healthiest of fats for people with arthritis or other inflammatory disorders are omega-3 fats. While other foods increase levels of inflammation in the body, omega-3s actually work to decrease inflammation by suppressing the production of enzymes that erode cartilage. A host of studies have demonstrated that omega-3 fish oils can reduce symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis. Study participants reported greater strength, less fatigue, reduced joint swelling and tenderness, less joint stiffness, and less overall pain. The best foods for omega-3 fatty acids are salmon (wild, fresh or canned), herring, mackerel (not king), sardines, anchovies, rainbow trout, Pacific oysters, flaxseeds (ground and oil), chia seeds, and walnuts.



- Soy** Contains isoflavanoids, which assist with bone density and has anti-inflammatory properties. A study showed 40 grams of soy protein daily for 3 months, reduced pain and cut pain meds in half. Foods: tofu, soymilk, edamame and miso. Be consistent for 2-3 weeks .
- Tart Cherries/  
Sour Cherries** Fresh or frozen Morello, Amarelle, Montgomery,& Balaton varieties are best. Look for dark tart cherries over sweet cherries. Serving size is 1 cup. They are high in Vitamin C & betacarotene. Try 20 cherries daily to assist with pain. They supply melatonin and can assist with sleep. Contains anthocyanins, an anti-inflammatory for muscle pains after exercise, gout, and prevent and treat pain. Other foods with anthocyanins: blackberries, black currants, blueberries, eggplant, elderberries, raspberries, boysenberries, red and black grapes, strawberries, and plums.
- Tomato Juice** (or sundried tomatoes) are very high in potassium. Leg cramps are often due to potassium deficiencies, which occur when minerals are flushed out by diuretics, caffeinated beverages or heavy perspiration during exercise. Sip 8-10 ounces daily if you have painful leg cramps, and be sure to inform your doctor if you experience this symptom.
- Turmeric** Pain, inflammation, immune system, eases pain from osteoarthritis, and fibromyalgia. Contains curcumin: shuts down cyclooxygenase 2 (an enzyme that makes pain-producing hormones). Use ¼ to 1 tsp daily onto a savory dish. Add to stir fry, soup or as tea. Bring four cups of water to a boil. Add one teaspoon of group

turmeric and reduce to a simmer for 10 minutes. Strain the tea through a fine sieve into a cup, add honey and/or lemon to taste. Add a teaspoon of ginger (optional) and a pinch of black pepper.

**Vitamin C** A nutrient responsible for the health of collagen, a major component of cartilage. Examples: guava, bell peppers (yellow, red, orange, and green), oranges, grapefruits, strawberries, pineapple, broccoli, kidney beans, kiwi, and cauliflower. (High-dose vitamin C supplements can actually be harmful for osteoarthritis sufferers, so talk to your doctor about what's right for you.)

**Water** Eight, 8-ounce glasses of water daily. Drink water warm or at room temperature to preserve the digestive fire and dilate, versus constrict with ice. Flushes out histamine, a pain-triggering compound produced by damaged tissue. Water is the key building block of cartilage that cushions bones, soft discs and joints. When tissues are well hydrated they can move and glide over each other without causing pain.

**Whole Grains** Fight inflammation that creates pain. High in magnesium that reduces muscle pain. 3-5 servings of whole grains (not refined grain) can lower C-reactive protein in rheumatoid arthritis. Whole grains can assist with weight loss.

**High Blood Pressure Formula:**

- Pomegranate juice one glass daily; pomegranate juice is sweet, sour and astringent. Its actions are to clear heat and moisten dryness. It is also a rich source of potassium, which is known to lower the blood pressure via clearing heat.
- Kiwi fruits one serving daily; kiwi is sweet, sour and cool. Its

actions are to clear heat and engender fluids. It is also a rich source of potassium.

- Bananas one serving daily; bananas are sweet and cool. Its actions are to clear heat and moisten the intestines. It is also a rich source of potassium.
- Apples one serving daily; apples are sweet and cool. Its actions are to clear heat and engender fluids. Apples are also an excellent source of dietary fiber. Contain Malic Aids: digestion benefit, weight loss, detoxification.
- Celery two to four pieces daily; celery is sweet, bitter and cool. Its actions are to level the liver, anchor the yang and clear heat.
- Beets two to four servings per week; beets are sweet and cool. Its actions are to clear liver heat, nourish and quicken the blood, and moisten the intestines.

## **Worst Foods to Eat**

### **Fried Foods**

Caloric, high-fat foods like fried chicken, French fries, donuts, and deep-fried appetizers should be avoided by anyone who has arthritis. When eaten in excess, these foods can increase body fat, which puts extra stress on the joints and amplifies the risk of wear and tear. Body fat is not an inert substance; it is metabolically active, capable of producing hormones and chemicals that actually increase levels of inflammation. To make matters worse, some restaurants fry their foods in hydrogenated oils, which means you may also be getting a dose of dangerous trans fats. Instead of frying, choose a healthier way to prepare your foods; grilling, steaming, roasting, and baking are all better.

**Refined  
Carbohydrates**

Refined carbohydrates are found in anything baked with white flour, such as white bread, rolls, crackers, and most baked goods — as well as white rice and junky cereals. They're all made by milling whole grains and removing the bran and germ — the two parts of the grain that contain the most nutrients. Refined carbs produce a state of inflammation in the body, causing increases in cytokines and other pro-inflammatory compounds, which makes arthritis worse. Whole-grain options: whole-wheat bread, whole-grain cereal, whole-wheat pasta, brown and wild rice, quinoa, millet, barley.

**Saturated Fats**

This category includes fats primarily found in animal products, such as fatty beef, pork, and lamb, poultry skin, ice cream, butter, whole or 2 percent milk, regular cheese, bacon, bologna, salami, pepperoni, and beef sausage. Saturated fats are also found in palm oil and palm-kernel oil found in the ingredient list of any number of items on your shelves, including crackers, cookies, and nondairy creamers.

**Simple  
Sugars/  
Sugary Candy**

Found in foods like cookies, fruit juice, soft drinks, and candy — are also refined carbohydrates; they send your blood-sugar levels soaring and set off an inflammatory response in the body, making arthritis and its symptoms worse. If you crave sweets, eat fruit with nuts, use cinnamon dates, maple syrup, or honey.

**Trans Fats**

In an effort to give baked goods a longer shelf life, scientists took common vegetable oil and added hydrogen molecules in the right places. The result was that the liquid oil turned solid — and dangerous:

Trans fats — found in some baked goods, fast-

food items, processed snack foods, and most stick margarines — are thought to be at least as damaging (and maybe even worse) as saturated fats in terms of inflammation, heart disease, and other health problems. Choose only products that have 0 grams trans fats and do not contain any partially hydrogenated oils.

## Session Five

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### Sleep

Develop a nighttime ritual for deep sleep.

1. Begin to wind down an hour before sleep.
2. Sip on hot tea or warm milk.
3. Take a warm bath, or soak your feet in warm or cold water.
4. Massage your feet with sesame oil.
5. Turn off the TV: avoid politics, social media, stimulating audio/visual.
6. Be sure the bedroom is warm and conducive for sleep.
7. Listen to relaxing music, dim the lights.
8. Practice deep breathing, sigh of relief, to ensure letting go.
9. Think about 5 things you are grateful for.
10. Avoid ruminating on the negative aspects of your day.
11. Use aromatherapy: saffron, lavender, lemonbalm, neroli, patchouli, clary sage, cedarwood, valerian (jatamansi).
12. Expectations: form a habit and allow it 4-6 weeks to achieve results.
13. No napping during the day, don't sleep in (practice relaxing is okay).
14. Spend time in nature/take a 15-minute walk after dinner.
15. Exposure to adequate sunlight: 15-20 minutes a day for melatonin.
16. Meditation preparation: journaling, read a couple of books on the subject, 10,000 hours to create a new habit, "the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step", regular practice, lifestyle changes take time to grow roots
17. Take Epsom salt baths to relax tight muscles, massage areas of pain and apply moist heat, stretch out before bed and purposefully relax painful areas.
18. Sensory deprivation: dim lights, ear plugs, diminish stimuli to senses
19. Sleepy time tea of your choice
  - a. Celestials Seasonings: Sleepy time tea with chamomile and rosebuds
  - b. Traditional Medicinals: Nightly night and relaxation tea
  - c. Yogi Tea: Bedtime
  - d. Choice Wellness (Bastyr): Rest Assured
20. Choose a bedtime and stick to it! Choose a waking time and stick to it!

21. Avoid heavy meals in the evening.
22. Spicy foods may interfere with sleep.
23. Alcohol may assist you to fall asleep, but it will make you wake in the night.
24. Lack of sleep may increase pain levels, cause migraines, contribute to depression, and daytime fatigue.
25. Melatonin/serotonin cycle
26. Ask your doctor for help to assist with your sleep-wake cycle.
27. Seattle VA: Sleep classes and Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)
28. If you need a pharmaceutical to sleep, implement changes in lifestyle and use it as a means to an end.
29. Stay healthy and get exercise.
30. Follow the guidelines for your element, and you will enjoy deep sleep.

## Air, Fire, and Water Quiz

Rate the following statements on a scale from 0 to 7:

0 ----- 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
 Does Not Apply                      Applies Sometimes                      Applies Most of the Time

Evaluating My Air	Rating
1. My physique is thin – I don't gain weight easily.	
2. I am quick and active.	
3. My skin is usually dry.	
4. My hands and feet are usually cold.	
5. My energy fluctuates and comes in bursts.	
6. I usually develop gas or constipation.	
7. I usually have a difficult time falling asleep or having a sound night's sleep.	
8. I am uncomfortable in cold weather.	
9. My nature is lively and enthusiastic.	
10. I have a difficult time memorizing things and remembering them later.	
11. It is easy for me to learn new things quickly but I also forget quickly.	
12. I am not good at making decisions.	
13. I am anxious or worrisome by nature.	
14. People think I am talkative and that I talk quickly.	
15. I am usually emotional by nature and my moods fluctuate.	
16. My mind is restless, but also imaginative.	
17. I have irregular eating and sleeping habits.	
Total Air Points:	



<b>Evaluating My Fire</b>	<b>Rating</b>
1. My hair is fine, straight, light, blonde, red, graying early, or balding.	
2. I don't tolerate hot weather.	
3. I sweat easily.	
4. I can't tolerate delaying or skipping a meal.	
5. My appetite is very good; and, I can eat big meals.	
6. My bowel movement is regular; I might have occasional loose stools, but rarely constipation.	
7. I like ice cold drinks.	
8. I often feel hot.	
9. Spicy hot foods upset my stomach.	
10. I consider myself efficient.	
11. I try to be organized and accurate.	
12. I have a strong will; and, my friends consider me to be stubborn.	
13. I am impatient by nature.	
14. I tend to become irritable or angry quite easily.	
15. I try to be meticulous and am a perfectionist by nature.	
16. I get angry easily, but I don't hold a grudge.	
17. I am usually critical of myself and others.	
<b>Total Fire Points:</b>	

<b>Evaluating My Water</b>	<b>Rating</b>
1. It is easy for me to gain weight, but difficult to lose.	
2. Skipping meals is easy for meal and does not cause any problems.	
3. I tend to have congestion, mucous, or sinus problems.	
4. I'm a sound sleeper.	
5. I have thick, wavy, dark, oily hair.	
6. My skin is smooth and soft with an almost pale complexion.	
7. My body frame is large and solid with a heavy bone structure.	
8. My digestion is slow, so I feel full after eating.	
9. I have a steady energy level with good endurance and strong stamina.	
10. I am sensitive to cool and damp weather.	
11. I tend to be slow, methodical, and relaxed.	
12. I need to sleep a minimum of 8 hours to feel well the next morning.	
13. By nature, I am calm and composed; and, I don't get angry easily.	
14. I am not a quick learner, but I am good at memorizing things and remembering them later.	
15. Many people consider me affectionate, forgiving, and peaceful.	
16. I usually oversleep and have trouble getting up in the morning.	
17. I am very reluctant to take on new responsibilities.	
Total Water Points:	

My Total Score:

Air \_\_\_\_\_

Fire \_\_\_\_\_

Water \_\_\_\_\_

Consider your normal healthy ideal state and then consider how you might have come away from this state, and where you are now in this point system based on these questions.

### **Air Information**

Air governs movement in the body, the activities of the nervous system and the process of elimination. Air influences fire and water.

Air is: cold, light, dry, irregular, rough, moving, quick, and changeable.

Movement and change are characteristic of your nature. You will tend to always be on the go, with an energetic and creative mind. Air in balance is lively and enthusiastic, with a lean body.

Those with a predominance of Air usually have a thin, light frame and excellent agility. Their energy comes in bursts, and they are likely to experience sudden bouts of fatigue. They can be prone to dry skin and hair and have cold hands and feet. They sleep lightly and their digestion can be sensitive. When imbalanced, it manifests in the body as weight loss, constipation, hypertension, arthritis, weakness, restlessness, and digestive challenges.

They love excitement and new experiences. They are quick to anger but also to forgive. When in balance, they are energetic, creative, and flexible. They also take initiative and are lively conversationalists. When unbalanced, they are prone to worry and anxiousness and often suffer from insomnia. When they feel overwhelmed or stressed, their response is to take the blame and worry about their own actions.

If excessive stress in your life leads to an air imbalance, your activity will start to feel out of control. Your mind may race, contributing to anxiety and insomnia. You

may start skipping meals, resulting in unintended weight loss, and your digestion may become irregular. If you notice these early symptoms: slow down and relax, don't skip meals, and get to bed earlier. A regular lifestyle routine helps to ground the excess energy so you do not get carried away.

- Cold, light, irregular, dry, and always changing need to be balanced with warmth, stability, and consistency. Try to get to bed before 10:00pm, awaken by 6:00am, and eat your meals at regular times.
- Avoid becoming chilled. Wear adequate clothing appropriate for the season and keep your head covered when the weather is cold.
- Perform a daily self-massage using warmer, heavier oils like sesame and almond.
- Light exercise that enhances balance and flexibility is best. Take care not to push yourself too far and exceed the limits of your energy. Beneficial activities include Qi Gong, Tai Chi, walking, yoga and short hikes, light bicycling, light tennis, golf, dance, and aerobics.
- Fresh ginger root is beneficial and can be used frequently. During the cool weather, sip ginger tea throughout the day.
- Be certain that your bowels move regularly on a daily basis.
- Favor soothing, calming music.
- Favor aromas that are sweet, heavy, and warm. Basil, bay, cinnamon, citrus, cloves, frankincense, lavender, pine, sage, and vanilla.
- Eat foods that have a balancing effect on the drying, cooking and light; favor healthy foods that are oily, warming, or heavy such as sweet, salty and sour. Minimize foods that are pungent, bitter, or astringent. Nuts, seeds, olive oil, sesame oil, sweet potatoes, avocado, oatmeal, & rice all benefit air.
- All sweeteners pacify and may be taken in moderation.

- Eat larger quantities, but don't overeat.
- Healthy fats and oils are beneficial on the digestive system and lubricate the intestine.
- All low-fat dairy products are recommended in moderation. Milk is easier to digest when warm or heated. Rice and wheat are the best grains.
- Reduce the amount of barley, corn, millet, buckwheat, and rye (may be cooking or too drying).
- Favor sweet, heavy fruits such as: bananas, avocados, mangoes, apricots, plums, berries, coconut, figs, grapefruit, orange, lemon, melons, papaya, peaches, pineapples, rhubarb, kiwi, dates, nectarines, and dried fruits.
- Eat fewer dry or light fruits such as dried apples, cranberries, pears and pomegranates. To ease digestion, fruits are best eaten lightly cooked or sautéed, or eaten alone. Melons alone!
- Cooked vegetables are best. Raw vegetables should be minimized. Favor asparagus, beets, carrots, zucchini, and sweet potatoes.
- Sprouts and cabbage tend to produce gas and should be minimized.
- Include cardamom, cumin, ginger, cinnamon, salt, cloves, mustard seed, basil, asafetida, cilantro, fennel, oregano, sage, tarragon, thyme, and black pepper.
- All varieties of nuts are recommended.
- Beans can aggravate, so minimize your consumption of them, with the exception of tofu and mung beans.
- For non-vegetarians, use fresh chicken, turkey, seafood, and eggs.
- Favoring heavy foods such as sweets, oils, and richer foods may contribute

to weight gain. Focus on natural grains and heavy, moist fruits and vegetables. Keep your sweets to a minimum and use low-fat milk products. Cook your food for easy digestion. As always, avoid processed foods.

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## **Fire Information**

Fire controls digestion, metabolism, and energy production. The primary function is transformation. Fire is: hot, light, intense, penetrating, pungent, sharp, and acidic.

Those with a predominance of fire have a fiery nature that manifests in both body and mind.

They are usually of medium size and weight, maybe more muscle definition. They sometimes have bright red hair, but baldness or thinning hair is also common. They have excellent digestion, which sometimes leads them to believe they can eat anything. They have a warm body temperature and sleep soundly for short periods of time. When in balance, a lustrous complexion, perfect digestion, abundant energy, and a strong appetite are noted. When out of balance, skin rashes, burning sensations, peptic ulcers, excessive body heat, heartburn, and indigestion occur.

They have a powerful intellect and a strong ability to concentrate. When they're in balance, they are good decision makers, teachers, and speakers. They are precise, sharp-witted, direct, and often outspoken. Out-of-balance they can be short-tempered and argumentative. When overstressed, their typical response is blaming.

Hot, sharp, sour, pungent, and penetrating qualities are balanced with cooling, sweet, and stabilizing qualities.

- Balance rest and activity allowing some free time every day. Be careful not to create unnecessary time pressures for yourself.
- Avoid skipping meals and do not wait until you are famished to eat.
- Favor foods that are sweet, bitter and astringent. Favor cooling foods such as cucumbers, sweet fruits and melons; apples, melons, cranberries, dates, figs, grapes, pears, and persimmons.
- Regularly spend time in nature. Take walks in the woods and along natural bodies of water. Keep plants and fresh flowers in your home and office.
- Walk in the moonlight, the moon is Yin energy (cooling).
- Use a thin layer of coconut oil or olive oil to massage your whole body daily.
- Favor cooler colors in your environment such as blues, greens, and silver.
- Laugh.
- Favor aromas that are cooling and sweet such as sandalwood, rose, jasmine, mint, lavender, fennel, and chamomile.
- Since an excess fire can over-heat, favor cool foods and liquids. Foods with sweet, bitter, and astringent tastes are best. Reduce foods that are pungent, salty, and sour.
- Dairy can be helpful in balancing the heat. Sour, fermented products such as yogurt, sour cream and cheese should be used sparingly as sour tastes aggravate. Ghee and milk are helpful.
- All sweeteners may be taken in moderation except white sugar (avoid white sugar).

- Olive, sunflower, ghee and coconut oils are the best oils.
- Wheat, rice, barley, and oats are the best grains.
- The sweeter fruits such as grapes, melons, cherries, coconuts, avocados, mangoes, pomegranates, fully ripe pineapples, oranges, and plums are recommended. Reduce sour fruits such as grapefruits, apricots, and berries.
- The vegetables to favor are asparagus, cucumbers, potatoes, sweet potatoes, green leafy vegetables, pumpkins, broccoli, cauliflower, celery, okra, lettuce, green beans, and zucchini. Reduce tomatoes, hot peppers, carrots, beets, eggplant, onions, garlic, radishes, and spinach.
- Seasonings that are soothing and cooling include coriander, cilantro, cardamom, saffron, and fennel. Hotter spices such as winter, cumin, black pepper, fenugreek, clove, salt, and mustard seed should be used sparingly.
- Very hot seasonings such as chili peppers and cayenne are best avoided.
- Chew on fennel seeds after meals to cool down acid in the stomach.
- For non-vegetarians, chicken, pheasant and turkey are preferable; beef, seafood, and eggs increase heat.

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## Water Information

Water governs the structure of the body and holds the cells together to form the muscle, fat, bone, and sinew. The primary function is protection.

Water is: heavy, slow, steady, solid, cold, soft, and oily.

Water types have a strong build and excellent stamina, large, soft eyes; smooth, radiant skin; and thick hair.

Those with water predominance sleep soundly and have regular digestion. When water builds to excess, weight gain, fluid retention, and allergies manifest in the body. When out of balance they may become overweight, sleep excessively, and suffer from asthma, diabetes, and depression.

Naturally calm, thoughtful, and loving, they have an inherent ability to enjoy life and are comfortable with routine. When in balance, they are strong, loyal, patient, steady, and supportive. People with an excess of water tend to hold on to things, jobs, and relationships long after they are no longer nourishing or necessary. Excess water in the mind manifests as stubbornness and resistance to change. In the face of stress, a typical response may be avoidance.

- Water is cold, heavy, and dense. The key to balancing it is stimulation. Water tends to cling to routine, so stimulation of new sights, sounds, and experiences would be good.
- Follow a regular daily routine, ideally awakening by 6:00am. Avoid taking naps during the day.
- Stay warm and avoid dampness. Water types may be sensitive to cold and damp conditions and benefit from heat. Use dry heat if you are congested. Using a heating pad under your back is helpful. Avoid exposing your nose, throat, and lungs to cold winter air if you aren't feeling well.
- Perform a daily dry massage, no oil

- Clear your space, avoid clutter from accumulating in your home, office, car, and other physical spaces, regularly clean out and give away things you don't use.
- Get exercise every day to avoid stagnation and the accumulation of excess water in your body. Focus on building endurance, running, bicycling, swimming, aerobics, and sports.
- Use warm, stimulating aromas including cloves, camphor, cinnamon, eucalyptus, juniper, and marjoram.
- Eat foods that have a balancing effect on water. Opposites of heavy, oil and cold foods are light, dry, and warm. Foods with pungent, bitter, and astringent tastes are most beneficial. Reduce foods with sweet, sour, and salty tastes.
- Try a liquid fast one day per week, ingesting only fresh vegetables and fruit juices, and pureed vegetable soup, gazpacho.
- Reduce the intake of dairy, which tends to increase phlegm. You can use small amounts low-fat milk, and low-fat yogurt, ghee.
- Honey is the best sweetener for water. Other sweeteners should be avoided because they increase the water/phlegm, contributing to problems such as blocked sinuses, allergies, colds, and lethargy. One tablespoon or two of raw honey everyday helps phlegm. Never cook with or heat honey.
- Drinking hot ginger/black pepper tea with meals helps stimulate slow digestion and sharpen dull taste buds. Drink two to three cups of ginger tea daily.
- All beans are good except for soybeans and soybean-based foods such as tofu, which should be eaten in moderation.
- Favor lighter fruits such as apples, pears, pomegranates, cranberries, dry fruits and apricots. Reduce heavier fruits like bananas, avocados, pineapples, oranges, peaches, coconuts, melons, dates, mangoes, and figs.

- In general, all vegetables are recommended but reduce consumption of sweet and juicy vegetables such as sweet potatoes, tomatoes, and cucumbers.
- All spices except salt are good for water. Use pungent spices like pepper, cayenne, mustard seed and ginger freely in your diet. Garlic, horseradish, mustard, cardamom, cloves, turmeric, fennel, fenugreek, coriander, cinnamon, cilantro, basil, cumin, asafetida, and parsley can all be helpful.
- Reduce intake of all nuts and seeds. Favor pumpkin seeds and sunflower seeds.
- For non-vegetarians, fresh, white meat chicken, turkey, eggs, and seafood are acceptable. Limit consumption of red meat.
- Diet should be lively and full of energy to help spark the digestive and metabolic systems. Eat your largest meal at lunchtime and a smaller meal at dinnertime. Allow at least three hours to digest before bedtime.
- Fats and oils: Use small amounts of extra virgin olive oil, ghee, almond oil, corn oil, sunflower oil, mustard oil, or safflower oil.
- Grains: Favor barley, corn, millet, buckwheat, and rye. Reduce intake of oats, rice, and wheat.
- Avoid 'the whites': white rice, white flour, white sugar, dairy (in excess), fried foods (French fry potatoes), and excess refined salt.

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## Resources

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Your beliefs become your thoughts  
Your thoughts become your words  
Your words become your actions  
Your actions become your habits  
Your habits become your values  
Your values become your destiny  
-Mahatma Gandhi-

Low cost acupuncture in the community:

1. [www.thepincushion.com/](http://www.thepincushion.com/) Capitol Hill
2. [www.communichi.org/](http://www.communichi.org/) Beacon Hill
3. [www.acupunctureforall.org/](http://www.acupunctureforall.org/) Columbia City
4. [www.siom.edu/clinics/](http://www.siom.edu/clinics/) Green Lake
5. Seattle Acupuncture for Veterans/O'Kelly Clinic at Solid Ground in Wallingford/ Mon 6-8pm

Books:

1. *Attune Your Body with Dao-In* by Hua-Ching Ni
2. *The Healer Within* by Roger Jahnke
3. *A Tooth from the Tiger's Mouth* by Tom Bisio
4. *Why Did You Put that Needle There?* by Andy Wegman
5. *The Web that Has No Weaver* by Ted Kaptchuk
6. *Healing with Whole Foods* by Paul Pitchford
7. *Meditation for Beginners (with CD)* by Jack Kornfield
8. *Mindfulness for Beginners* by John Kabat-Zinn
9. *The Biology of Belief* by Bruce Lipton
10. *The Book of Jook* by Bob Flaws
11. *The Tao of Nutrition* by Maoshing Ni

Websites:

1. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/acupuncture>
2. <http://nutritionfacts.org>

3. <http://www.webmd.com/balance/stress-management/stress-management-relaxing-your-mind-and-body#>
4. <http://www.seattle-meditation.org/>
5. <http://thewayofseeing.com/meditationclasses.html>
6. [www.yinyoga.com](http://www.yinyoga.com) Bernie Clark
7. [www.healingwithwholefoods.com](http://www.healingwithwholefoods.com)

Understanding the elements within you and in your environment helps you: maintain physical balance, achieve harmony at the subtle level, establish an appropriate life regime, understand disorder tendencies, choose a diet to follow, determine the amount of activity and the type of exercise best for you, improve relationships, and add life to living.