

NEWSLETTER November 2000

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READY? SET! OVEREAT!

You know it is going to happen. You are going to go off whatever diet you are on and you are going to eat things that are not good for you and, if you are like most Americans, you are going to put on between five and ten pounds by the time you reach New Years' Eve and drink champagne to try to forget the whole thing. I know this, because I will do the same thing. My advice to you is this: unless there is some pressing health problem, like diabetes, that makes it mandatory you stick to a boring and regimented routine, enjoy yourself. This is the time of year to indulge and to love and to laugh and yes, to overeat. In the Chinese medical system, it is believed that, in the winter, the body meridians are weaker and we improve (tonify) the system by eating, resting, and producing the next generation.

DEALING WITH THE CONSEQUENCES

If you are among those whose payment for the festivities will reach beyond the weight gain, I can suggest several things:

1. Do not permit yourself to become or remain constipated. This brings up the question of what constipation is. Most Americans think they are not constipated if they have two to three bowel movements a week. Wrong! There should be a bowel movement **every day** and without straining, moaning, etc. The colon is so large that it is connected to, touches, sits next to, or is near every major organ in the body except the brain. When you are constipated, the colon swells, expands, and can even herniate. The "drug" of choice is probably an enema, because it does not flood the system with irritants. There is a good herbal formula, Yi-gan-san, which I recommend and which many patients have used with wonderful results.
- 2, Indigestion will be the uninvited guest to the feast. Please do not bomb

the system with over-the-counter nostrums. Most of these do far more harm than good. An acupuncture treatment or two will rebalance the outraged system.

3. Cleanse your liver. Your liver is the filter for your blood. If you overload it with toxins, it will not only be poisoned itself, it will dump lots of little rocks into your gallbladder. I carry the old standby Milk Thistle, LVR™ (liver protector) from Pure Encapsulations, and Wormwood Combination from Kroeger. The liver is particularly susceptible to alcohol, so you might want to think about that while lifting that 5th, or was it 6th? glass of bubbly.
4. Your head hurts. Resist the temptation to reach for Tylenol or any other compound with acetamenophen. It eats your liver. This is particularly true when combined with alcohol. I am not kidding. If you must use an NSAID, use aspirin; it will at least have the side-effect of helping you avoid a stroke.
5. Balance rest and exercise. Most of the ill-effects of over-indulgence can be resolved by using exercise and by letting the body have its normal rest cycle. Try to remember that most societies induce trance states by keeping the participants up all night.
6. Detoxify. There are a great many regimens for this. The easier way is to try to balance what you are eating – not so much fried food, for example, and more steamed vegetables. The other way is to take herbs to calm down your system. An excellent one is “Purge Phlegm” from Chinese Modular Solutions. Phlegm here does not refer only to the mucus collecting in your respiratory system, but to the general clogging that has occurred system-wide.

Chrysanthemum Flower Tea

This tea is a cooling beverage. It is calming, clears wind and heat, soothes the liver, and improves vision. It will relieve indigestion and calm the nervous system, chrysanthemum flowers have a lubricating, yin-nourishing effect. The preferred species of chrysanthemum flowers are the full, yellow-flowered varieties. You can buy dried chrysanthemum flowers in Chinese markets and pharmacies.

Use 9 grams of Chrysanthemum flowers and 1 or 2 slices of licorice root.

(Also available in Chinese pharmacies and markets. Licorice is excellent in harmonizing food and for detoxification for the overuse of alcohol and drugs. Make 2 cups of the tea by infusion.* More water can be added for a second brewing.

How to make an infusion: place the herbs in a selected container. Heat water in a pot until it boils. Pour the hot water into the receptacle containing the herbs. Cover the container and allow the herbs to steep for 5 to 15 minutes or until the infusion is cool enough to drink. Strain the tea and drink.

A final word. There is as much to be said for other indulgences as for food and drink. Please try not to overindulge in negativity, criticism, lack of gratitude, incivility, and worry. None of this does any good and it does have measurable effects on the body.