

## 5 HABITS FOR HEALTHY LIVING

What is the picture of a person who enjoys complete health? Attributes that are common to healthy people include lots of energy, good digestion, clear complexion, even mood and good sleep. If you ask the majority of people around you if they fit into this category, most people will answer, “no”. Why is that so?

Our world is not the world that our grandparents or even parents grew up in. Since the industrial revolution, commerce has taken priority over protecting and nurturing our self and our environment. As a result, we are constantly bombarded with environmental toxins from the air that we breathe, water that we drink and the foods that we eat. Lack of sufficient water prevents toxins from being removed from our body. Our protective mechanisms just can't keep up with the onslaught.

In addition, most activities that we are involved in on a daily basis stimulate our “fight or flight” response in our nervous system. Examples of these types of activities include working long hours, pushing past fatigue to get our “second wind”, and watching violent shows on television. Once our nervous system believes there is impending danger, our healing mechanisms are shut off and sleep is profoundly disrupted. Foods that we eat such as sugar (including pasta and bread) and caffeine – containing foods such as chocolate, coffee and tea all support the stimulation of this response. Together, our present lifestyle and nutritional choices do not allow our body to rest and rebuild itself, which is key to maintaining balance and health. Clearly, simply eating a well balanced diet is not enough to keep us healthy.

Disease does not happen overnight. Our body gives us gentle “nudges” in the form of symptoms in the beginning to let us know that things are not quite right. Instead of blunting these symptoms with medications, it is important to listen to our body to find the root of the imbalance. Typically, imbalance begins with acid/base disruption, which leads to chronic inflammation and congestion. This causes changes in the permeability of our digestive tract, which causes unwanted toxins to enter the blood stream. This action sends our immune, hormonal and nervous systems into serious disorder and panic, leading to abnormal functioning. Once our protective mechanisms malfunction, increased DNA mutations causes even more serious health problems.

What five things can you do to start getting yourself back into balance?

1. Drink enough water everyday. Take your weight and divide it by 2. This is the number of ounces per day that you should drink (8 oz in one cup).
2. Eat your vegetables. Your mother was right! Vegetables contain the most absorbable form of vitamins and minerals.
3. Get enough sleep so that you feel rested in the morning. This maximizes time that your body has to heal itself.
4. Relax for 15 minutes everyday. Just give yourself a break!
5. Take supportive nurturing herbs that calm the nervous system (Wild Oats, Passionflower, support the adrenal glands (Ashwaganda, Siberian Ginseng) and help good digestive function (Slippery elm, Chamomille).