
An Electronic Journal for NSP Distributors

Green Tea

Camellia sinensis

By Steven H. Horne

My first experience with green tea was not a pleasant one. I was sick and my mom gave me some green tea to drink as per the doctor's instructions. I didn't like it.

My second experience with green tea was in Mainland China in 1986. I was touring with a group from Nature's Sunshine home office to help launch the new Chinese formulas. It was a hot day, there wasn't much to drink and we were served green tea. Although I was raised in a family and religion where we didn't use caffeinated beverages, I drank the stuff because it was the only thing available and I needed something to keep from dehydrating. (I also drank Coca Cola for the first time on that same trip for the same reason.)

My attitudes towards green tea have changed. While I still think consuming caffeinated beverages constantly isn't a good idea, I do think green tea has some positive health benefits.

For starters, green tea contains a number of compounds that work together to prevent tooth decay. One of these is natural fluorine, an element that helps to strengthen tooth enamel. The fluoride added to our drinking water supplies is a toxic chemical, but natural fluorine is important to our bodies and green tea is one of the richest sources of this element.

Green tea is useful in treating gastrointestinal infections and has also been used for fever, eye problems and hemorrhoids. It has an astringent action due to its tannin content, as well as a stimulating quality due to the caffeine, theophylline and theobromine alkaloids it contains.

In Chinese medicine, green tea is thought to clear the head and expel fidgets. It helps resolve (or clear) excess phlegm, remove stagnant food from the digestive tract and promote urination. It is used to help treat headaches, dizziness, thirst, indigestion,



Photo by Stephen Foster

diarrhea caused by malaria and stagnant phlegm (or respiratory congestion).

Interestingly enough, the Chinese consider green tea a tonic for the heart. The theophylline and caffeine in green tea stimulate the heart and dilate the peripheral blood vessels, thus aiding the circulation of blood. Research suggests green tea also protects the heart by preventing blood clots and reducing cholesterol levels.

This is because green tea is also a powerful antioxidant, which means it counteracts the inflammation that is the root cause of coronary heart disease. The polyphenols in green tea are a form of condensed tannins and have a similar structure and properties to pycnogenol (Grapine). One chemical in green tea, epigallocatechin, has been found to be 200 times more powerful than vitamin E in neutralizing free radicals that attack lipids in the brain. These compounds also aid liver detoxification.

For those who want to use green tea for its healthful properties, but don't want to drink it, it is available in capsule form from Nature's Sunshine. Each capsule contains 400 mg. of green tea extract standardized to 80% polyphenols. This extract is also caffeine free for those who don't want (or need) the stimulation. Suggested use is one capsule three times daily with meals.

Selected References

The Green Pharmacy by James A. Duke

An Illustrated Dictionary of Chinese Medicinal Herbs by Wee Yeow Chin and Hsuan Keng.

Oriental Materia Medica: A Concise Guide by Hong-Yen Hsu.

"The Encyclopedia of Medicinal Plants" by Andrew Chevallier.

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Improving With Age

by Steven H. Horne, RH (AHG)

Twenty years ago, when I first started teaching Manager School for Nature's Sunshine Products, my area of expertise was family health care. Why? Because I was a parent and the issues I faced on a regular basis were colds, flu, sore throats, earaches, tummy aches and so forth. Yes, I learned stuff about chronic and degenerative diseases, too, but it was mostly head knowledge.

It's not that I had no experience at all with natural remedies for the chronic ailments associated with aging. After all, my parents were older (in their 70s) and I helped them a lot with problems like high blood pressure, arthritis, varicose veins, prostate problems and so forth, but these were problems I didn't personally encounter, so they weren't as important to me personally.

A few of years ago, that started to change. I turned 50 two years ago and I've started to notice a few signs of wear and tear. So, I now have a very personal interest in learning all I can about anti-aging, which has increasingly occupied "center stage" in my personal research and practice. My plan is to live to a "ripe, old age" and to be healthy and active until the day I die. If my life is cut short because of some accident, that's okay, but I don't want any of this slow "wasting away" from chronic and degenerative disease that I see in so many people.

My reading in this subject has lead me to I believe there are four major factors that contribute to the development of chronic and degenerative disease as we age. These factors are:

1. Free Radical Damage
2. Chronic Inflammation
3. Hyperinsulinemia (metabolic syndrome)
4. Stress (excess or diminished cortisol)

These factors are the focus of our next two herbal hour videos. The one we're releasing this month is about free radicals and chronic inflammation, which are like the flip sides of the same coin. Next month's video will talk about tonic herbs and will specifically address the hyperinsulinemia and stress issues, which are also interrelated.

In fact, all of these factors is interrelated, because each contributes to the others. So, it's not just about correcting any one of them, it's about simultaneously working to

prevent all four. This is mainly done through adopting a healthy lifestyle, and cannot be achieved by supplements alone, although they are a part of the picture.

I've always had a healthier lifestyle than the average American, but that's not good enough for me anymore. The little signs of aging I see in my body tell me that my program is less than optimal, so I've been tweaking it and improving it. Anyone who tells you that you don't need to adjust your lifestyle for maximum health doesn't know what they are talking about. It's all about lifestyle.

So, this month I'd like to share with you the features of the anti-aging program I've designed for myself. There is nothing mysterious or magical about what I'm going to tell you. In fact, I'll lay good odds that you already know everything I'm about to tell you.

There is a common misconception that you don't know you're developing chronic and degenerative diseases like cardiovascular disease, cancer, mental deterioration, etc. until they "take you down," because most people, including most medical doctors, don't recognize the "early warning" signs that tell you your lifestyle isn't healthy. They think that little

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aches and pains, constipation, digestive upset, headaches, joint stiffness, waking up at night to urinate, gaining weight around the abdomen, etc. are all just natural parts of “growing older.”

I reject that hypothesis. In fact, the more I’ve researched the subject, the more I realize that the extra weight I was carrying around my middle (which I gained under a period of great stress) was a serious indication that my metabolism was out of whack. And, when I see people who are in their 70s and 80s who are active and healthy, I know that we aren’t meant to deteriorate like this as we age.

Deep down inside I think that most people know what they should be doing to stay healthy and prevent premature aging. They just don’t do it because they don’t think it’s that important. Unlike me, they don’t take these little warning signs seriously. But, I’m not content with just “not being sick.” I want a high level of wellness. I want to have a clear mind, lots of energy and be free of minor aches and pains. Is that possible? I not only believe this is possible, I’m taking active steps to make this a reality in my life. Here’s what I’m doing.

A Check Up From the Neck Up

The first, and most important, lifestyle change that any of us need to make is to adjust our thinking. We all need a frequent “check up from the neck up for stinking thinking.” I recently saw the DVD *The Secret*. (If you haven’t seen it, I highly recommend it. You can purchase it at www.thesecret.tv.) The program impressed on me again the power of the mind/body connection. What we focus our mental attention and emotional energy on will become our reality. So, if we worry that we’re going to get diabetes because it “runs in the family,” we more than likely will. If we’re convinced that old age will bring lots of chronic health problems that will cause us to need lots of medical help, it will. That’s why I’ve chosen to believe that I can live a long and healthy life and have set about doing it.

I’m not saying genetics doesn’t play a role in our health, or that we don’t age. But, I think it’s the lifestyle and attitudes we “inherit” from our family that do more damage to our health than our genetics. My own parents were active right up to the time they died in their early 80s. And, while they had some health challenges, they both told me how much better off they were with the natural remedies I’d recommended to them than their friends were with their numerous drug medications.

In fact, my parents were in their late 60s and early 70s when I was working for NSP in the 1980s, and after I helped them get started on some supplements, both of them saw improvement in their health over the next decade, instead of a decline.

I believe there is always a mental/emotional component in chronic illness. We are not victims of disease. For example, disease can be an excuse for getting out of an unpleasant situation we don’t have the courage to get out of on our own. For others, it becomes a way to get pity and sympathy. Have you ever noticed that old people who complain constantly about their health problems are less healthy than those with a positive outlook on life? I have.

So, our first task if you want a long and healthy life is to not buy into the fear of disease. Remember the secret (the one discussed in *The Secret* DVD) is that what you focus your mental and emotional energy on you will create. It’s really a principle of faith. What you hold firmly in your mind and heart will eventually materialize in your life.

The problem with most people is that they never focus on health. They don’t even think about their health until they get sick, and then, they still don’t focus on health, they focus “curing” the sickness. So, the focus is never on health, it’s always on either disease or nothing. If you want to be healthy you have to start by picturing yourself as healthy. You need to visualize seeing yourself living a healthy lifestyle and being active, healthy and pain-free as you grow older.

Building health is different than curing disease. It’s a completely different mind set because it’s focused on the positive outcome of health rather than the fearful activity of trying to avoid or get rid of disease. Even if you’ve already developed some degenerative disease, focusing on your health will help you heal; focusing on the disease will only maintain the disease. Also, if you already have a chronic or degenerative disease, it’s really important to assess your beliefs and emotional “payoffs” that surround the illness. You may even need some flower essences or emotional healing work to help you move past these issues.

Be a “Picky Eater”

Now, that brings us to the second thing we all need to do if we want to slow the aging process. We need to eat healthy and to do that you need to become a picky eater. Now, when most of us think of a picky eater, we think of the child who won’t eat their fruits and vegetables and only wants to live on junk food. I’m talking about the opposite kind of picky

Continued on Next Page

eater, the one who eats the fruits and vegetables and avoids the junk food.

Look, supplements are great, but they are meant to supplement, not replace, a healthy diet. I know you're not a kid anymore, so you don't need or want some parent-figure (like me) hanging over you bugging you to "eat your vegetables." But, if you shift your attitude about health and then start eating your vegetables (and fresh fruits, too), it's one of the best things you can do to stay healthy.

I think most of us should know why those fruits and veggies are so healthy, but in case you don't—fresh fruits and vegetables are loaded with antioxidants, and antioxidants help reduce inflammation and free radical damage, which in turn slows aging and reduces one's risk of heart disease, cancer, diabetes and so forth. You can, of course, supplement your diet with some antioxidants (like Thai-Go, for instance), but again, that should be in addition to, not instead of, your healthy diet.

Of course, it also helps to avoid refined and processed foods, but again, if you're thinking about the negative (what you shouldn't be eating) that makes it hard. You want to focus on the positive, i.e., eating stuff you know is healthy for you. That makes the job of improving your diet easier.

Oh, and there's another aspect to being a picky eater that I might mention. That's eating less. According to Barry Sears in *The Anti-Aging Diet*, there's only one way that is scientifically proven to extend the life of animals in laboratory experiments. You guessed it—limiting food intake. Apparently, one of the biggest sources of oxidative stress comes from processing nutrients. So, if you eat less, you have less oxidative stress. You'll also lose weight, which is another part of the anti-aging equation.

In that arena, I've made some progress. I have tended to be the kind of person who skipped meals and then ate big meals. That's a sure-fire way to gain weight (or at least not be able to lose it). What does work is to eat lots of small meals. I recently read about a professor at BYU here in Utah who is helping people lose weight by telling them to eat a little bit whenever they are hungry and not worry too much about what they are eating.

The article said that people whose parents tried to control their eating are more likely to gain weight as adults than parents who didn't fuss over their children's diets. Apparently, it has to do with learning to pay attention to your body and what it wants. When you have parents like mine, who stressed "clean up your plate or no dessert" or "some starving child in China would just love to have that food,"

you learn to override your body's messages about hunger and fullness.

This professor said that you should learn to image hunger on a scale of 1-10 where 1 is you are starving to death and 10 is you are so stuffed from that big Thanksgiving dinner that you couldn't even think of eating another bite. What you want is to keep your hunger around 5. So, whenever you feel just a little bit hungry, you eat a little bit, but not enough to make you feel full. Just enough to take the edge off the hunger. This sounds like a good practice for longevity and not just for weight loss.

I do know that not skipping breakfast and following NSP Senior National Manager Jack Ritchason's long standing advice of breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince and dinner like a pauper (instead of the other way around, which has been my norm) has given me better energy and helped me get trimmer, but it's not quite enough to take off those last few pounds. For that, I need the next one.

Exercise

Groan! Okay, here's where one of those "check up from the neck up..." sessions had to come into play for me. I know that exercise is an important part of staying healthy. Over and over again, the research shows that regular exercise helps diabetes, helps you lose weight, reduces your risk of cardiovascular disease, relieves depression, etc., etc., etc. So, why has the thought of exercise been so "negative" for me?

It's because that word—exercise— takes me back to Junior High and High School Gym classes where a more than slightly uncoordinated young man experienced a lot of humiliation and stress. So, the word exercise brings up those negative feelings, which makes me avoid it, even though it's "good" for me. So, as I've evaluated my own anti-aging plan, I've had to figure how to deal with those emotions in order to get myself to exercise.

My best success so far has been working in my garden. Until the weather got hot and my sleep schedule was thrown off by having company, I was out working in my new garden just about every morning. (And I do mean working—rototilling, digging, weeding, watering, planting, etc.) and I felt great doing it. You see, it's not about exercise, per se, it's about being physically active. If you've got a sedentary desk job like mine, then you need to find a hobby or activity that gets you out of the chair and using your muscles. Gardening and hiking are my favorites, but I'm going to add more to my program. I love swimming and basketball and they're opening a new Gold's Gym practically across

the street from my office which is going to have a basketball court and an indoor swimming pool, so I've signed up on their pre-opening discount. Who knows? I might actually lift a few weights while I'm at it. But, in order to get around my mental blocks against exercise, I've had to utilize that first, and most important anti-aging secret of working on my mental attitude.

Sleep

Here's our next to the last one, and it's an important one, too. A lot of people start having problems sleeping as they get older, and that's a problem. During deep sleep, your body produces growth hormone from the pituitary. (It's also produced during exercise.) Growth hormone stimulates tissue repair. So the combination of physical activity and deep sleep is what allows your body to repair itself. That's an important part of the reason why adequate rest and exercise are an essential part of an anti-aging program.

So, if you're having trouble sleeping you need to do something about that. The most common problem I find that disturbs sleep is adrenal fatigue and nervous exhaustion. This can cause a person to feel tired during the day, but toss and turn all night long. Nervous Fatigue Formula or Adrenal Support will often correct this.

It's also important to know that if you suddenly wake up at night and can't go back to sleep that this is a sign of blood sugar problems. What happens is the blood sugar drops so low that the body uses adrenaline to bring it back up. This causes you to suddenly "wake up" as if you were startled and lie there thinking about all of your problems. The solution—become a picky eater and get those refined carbohydrates out of your diet. It also helps to have a high protein, high fat snack (like nut butter or cheese) right before bed. Supplements that stabilize blood sugar levels (like licorice or Super Algae) may also be helpful when taken during the day.

Another thing that can disturb sleep is kidney, bladder and prostate problems. This causes you to wake up in the night needing to urinate. It can be related to adrenal fatigue and Nervous Fatigue Formula sometimes corrects it. For some Men's Formula or PS II may help. I was having this problem, and after some experimentation found the combination of two urinary herbs—pipsessewa and goldenrod stopped the problem for me and got me a peaceful night's sleep.

If the problem is getting to sleep, there are several healthy habits that might help. One is getting the refined carbs out of your diet, another is exercise and the final one is adopting

a set bedtime to help regulate the body's biological clock. Instead of watching TV at night, read or listen to music. If stress is a problem, adaptagens or nervines may help you relax and get to sleep.

If you have trouble getting to sleep, but feel groggy and irritable in the morning, you need to "cleanse" your colon and liver. A congested liver will give you nervous energy at night, but leave you feeling "hung over" in the morning.

If none of the above helps, consult a natural health practitioner for additional help and suggestions, but try to avoid sleeping pills as they don't give you a natural night's sleep.

Supplements

Now we come to the final part of my anti-aging program. It's an important part of the anti-aging program, but it isn't going to make up for bad lifestyle habits in the other four areas. Because it's hard to get really good food in modern America and because of the high level of pollution, I think some degree of supplementation is appropriate. I adjust what I take regularly, depending on what is happening and how I feel, but here are some of the items I use regularly.

Enzymes. These diminish as we age and it is important to maintain good digestion.

Fiber. It not only helps keep me regular, it also protects my body against environmental pollutants and cancer.

Thai-Go. Love the stuff. Antioxidants should be an important part of any anti-aging program.

CoQ10 and MegaChel. I have little signs that indicate I could be at risk for cardiovascular disease (such as spider veins around my nose and a tendency to gum disease) so I decided I should start protecting myself before I have any serious problems. So, I've been taking Co-Q10 75 since I turned 50 and recently added MegaChel (2-4 per day) instead of a vitamin and mineral supplement. It's something I had my parents do and it worked great for them.

Tonic Herbs. Elderly people the world over have used tonic herbs like ginseng to maintain health as they got older. I vary what I take with how I feel. Right now, I'm on cordyceps. There's a lot more I want to say about tonic herbs, but that's next month's topic. So, we'll continue this discussion in the next issue of Nature's Field.

Meanwhile, I hope I've given you some good ideas about how you can develop your own anti-aging program for health and longevity.



Kimberly Balas' Clinician's Corner

Issues with the Blood Type Diet and Other Questions

Issues with the Blood Type Diet

I'm going to go out on a limb here, but I have a bit of a problem with the blood type diets - I see them as being good in a general sense, but they break down a bit when you are talking about individual people. I don't think you can make a blanket statement that all (fill in the blank food) is bad for EVERYONE with (fill in the blank) blood type. I see 'A' blood types who barely exercise because they believe that they are not supposed to "exert" themselves and people who cut out entirely valuable food sources because they are not "supposed" to eat them based on generalities. Blood type may be a factor in metabolism and utilization of nutrients, but it is not the only factor.

I am an 'O' blood type and, in general, I do better with very little wheat and corn and very little meat, although I do need to include some. I don't do well on milk, but I do really well on raw, cultured yogurt, which is a big part of my diet. I eat avocados all the time and they are very beneficial for me. I do well on sprouted grains, but if I soak my whole wheat flour for 24 hours or more in cultured buttermilk before making bread or hot breakfast cereal, it is just fine, in moderation -

So I see the blood type diet as an oversimplification that can be taken too far, and doesn't even begin to address the many food preparation methods that change the way food is digested. Am I missing something here?

Allison

What you're saying isn't invalid. We do have to pay attention to how our body feels and nourish it accordingly. But, it isn't about "good" or "bad" here. It is about a chemical reaction in the blood. There are antigens that agree or disagree in the blood, making it sticky or not. When it is sticky for "too" long a period of time, then you get a sub-clinical marker for most diseases, chronic inflammation. This doesn't mean you can't eat anything that's listed as an avoid. It simply means you don't want to make avoids the bulk of your diet.

Also, you do have to pay attention to how a food affects you personally. Proper food preparation does make a difference, too. For instance, when you soak your grains in the cultured buttermilk, you do alter their chemical com-

position, making them easier to digest, and the nutrients in them more bioavailable.

I use the Blood type information, but I also alter it to incorporate concepts from the zone diet and the acid/alkaline values. It's also important not to eat a lot of carbohydrates so that you have a high glycemic load. If you use the charts we developed for Tree of Light, you use one red (protein), three green (low-glycemic carbohydrates), one blue (fats), one purple (fat/protein combination) at each meal. You should also make a blue or purple food your first bite at each meal and avoid the brown category (high glycemic carbohydrates) even though they are listed as beneficial for some.

Eating this way alters your metabolism to burn fats, and reduces cravings for the wrong kind of carbohydrates (simple sugars and starches). This will also reduce your subclinical markers for disease.

Segmental Heterochromia

I had a client come in who had a mixed eye overall, but in the right eye there was one "slice of pie" looking portion that was dark brown. I say "slice of pie" because the shape of this was as if you were cutting a piece of pie. If any of you have the Jensen Cards, it looks like the Iris that is half-brown and half-blue, only in this lady's case, the dark brown is about 20-25% of the Iris. Can you tell me what this means?

Lisa

It is called a segmental heterochromia. This is a genetic sign and the color suggests it is an indication of inherent liver insufficiency where the person may be prone to toxin accumulation and congestion. It is a more serious issue if it appears in the liver area, but it is still a liver sign even if it occurs elsewhere in the eye.

Introducing Baby to Solid Foods

I've got a mom with a totally herbal baby wanting to know if there is a website or book that would give her the proper introduction of solid foods to her 4-month-old baby boy, who is an "O" blood type.

The doctor told her to introduce cereal through his bottle then fruits, vegetables, then anything off the table. She is supplementing breast-feeding with a whey-based formula. I think we can do better than that. What are your suggestions.

Carol

Children shouldn't be started on any solid foods until they start cutting teeth. Prior to this time they lack the enzymes to break this food down properly. Feeding cereals and other high-glycemic foods to start, also pre-disposes children to food allergies, intestinal problems, obesity and diabetes.

I started my daughter at 8 months on veggies and we skipped the whole high glycemic thing of cereals. She stayed on raw goats milk for 10 months too for the good fats.

Large Systolic and Diastolic Spread

Do you know what it means if there is more than 45 points difference between the systolic and diastolic numbers on blood pressure.

Marilyn

Systolic is the blood pressure when the heart is contracting. It is specifically the maximum arterial pressure during contraction of the left ventricle of the heart. Diastolic is referring to the time when the heart is in a period of relaxation and dilation. I believe that when they are further apart that electrolyte imbalances are a major problem. This is also a sign of stagnation or atrophy, which frequently happens in seniors.

So, when the systolic goes high, I work on kidney and electrolyte issues. Some herbs to consider using here are: black cohosh root, cayenne, garlic, ginger root, ginseng (panax ginseng), goldenseal root, valerian root, kelp, maitake mushroom, olive leaf, passion flower, scullcap, hawthorne berry, celery seed and parsley seed.

Low Cholesterol

I have heard that total cholesterol below 175 is not good. I have a client who had a total cholesterol of 176 and it has dropped to 154. The doctors are pleased. Is there a need for concern?

Liz

Absolutely, when cholesterol is too low you will have problems with hormonal balance in the adrenals and reproductive glands. Cancer risk increases as cholesterol drops too low. At 130, one has a very high cancer risk because the low cholesterol leaves the body no way to defend itself against

environmental toxins. For more information, get the book on cholesterol from Tree of Light.

Carrot Juice and the Paw Paw Program

I'd like to know if it's OK to drink lots of carrot juice with pH Green Zone in it while doing the Paw Paw program? The article says that you don't want to do things that increase cellular activity. So what foods increase cellular activity?

Medina

You don't want to elevate insulin levels because this increases inflammation in the body. The carrot juice will do that. So, you would avoid high glycemic foods while on the Paw Paw program.

Chinese Lung Support for Blood Sugar Problems?

Why do you recommend Chinese Lung Support for blood sugar problems?

No name

Part of the reason I do this is because the lungs are the first layer of the pH buffering system and control the nitrogen binding capacity which is involved in sugar metabolism. When the glucose molecule isn't polarized, then the blood can hold the insulin in solution and the blood has to utilize its buffering resources to keep the blood from getting too acid.

A lot of this is regulated by the baroreceptors and how they release CO₂ from the blood. If the blood is working on hormonal stuff (insulin) then the CO₂ can elevate. If you get this regulated, you can control insulin levels better.

Chinese Lung Support does contain herbs that are used to balance blood sugar, too. This shows why it's important to not put herbal formulas in "boxes" in our minds. I find I use Chinese Lung Support for blood sugar problems more frequently than Sugar Reg.

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The *Nature's Field* E-zine and website are published by Tree of Light Publishing, a division of Kether-One, Inc.

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