
An Electronic Journal for NSP Distributors

Cat's Claw

(Una d'Gato)

By Steven Horne

In 2002 I had the opportunity to spend some time with Brent Davis, a chiropractic physician and professional herbalist, at his home in Tennessee. Dr. Davis was one of the first people to introduce Cat's Claw into the US market. He gave me a copy of the article he wrote in 1992 on the benefits of this plant. It was shortly after the Cat's Claw boom came.

Cat's claw, also known as una de gato, is native to the jungles of Peru. It is used by native people for gastritis, ulcers, cancer, arthritis, rheumatism, female problems, acne and even some forms of depression. It is also applied topically as a treatment for wounds, fungus, fistulas, and hemorrhoids.

Medical research on cat's claw shows it contains a series of alkaloids that have been demonstrated to have immune stimulating properties. These alkaloids also enhance the tone of the parasympathetic nervous system and inhibit striated muscle contraction (which helps muscles relax). These properties contribute to a hypotensive (blood pressure lowering) effect in the herb. Cat's claw is also fever reducing, diuretic and stimulating to the uterus.

Other researchers found quinovic acid glycosides and triterpenes in the plant that have antiviral and anti-inflammatory activity. A steroidal compound was also found to be anti-inflammatory. Other research showed that cat's claw help to prevent cellular mutation (thus having a protective effect against developing cancer).

In practical clinical applications, cat's claw has been observed to have a beneficial effect in people suffering from skin disorders, allergies, rheumatic conditions, chronic inflammation, and viral diseases such as herpes and cancer. Another wonderful benefit of cat's claw is its ability to help restore intestinal integrity in leaky gut syndrome, chronic parasite infections, and imbalances in the intestinal microflora.

Dr. Brent Davis wrote that in four years of clinical experience with about 150 patients, he saw cat's claw resolve "severe intestinal derangements that no other available products can touch." He used cat's claw as a single to achieve these results. Dr. Davis believes that cat's claw's primary benefits are due

to its effect on the intestines. Most, if not all, of the conditions cat's claw has been used to treat have connections to intestinal health.



Photo by Steven Foster

One of the major problems with the use of this plant is that it is being collected from delicate forest ecosystems and is not being replanted. A native elder in Peru told Dr. Davis that even though cat's claw "is powerful, it is nevertheless very sensitive, and that if it is utilized with a lack of good motivation, it will lose much of its wide healing ability and will become only a chemical shadow of its real self."

This is a common teaching among native peoples. Plants must be harvested with respect in order to obtain their full healing benefits, especially to our mind and heart. High quality cat's claw does have a very beneficial effect on the mental and emotional state of individuals who have unresolved emotional wounds that are causing neurological problems. It has been shown to have a positive effect on serotonin and dopamine, two important mood-enhancing neurotransmitters.

Cat's claw is available through NSP as an ingredient in the Cat's Claw Combination. This formula is primarily used as an immune-enhancing formula for viral infections and cancer.

Selected References

"Uncaria tomentosa" by Brent Davis
PDR for Herbal Medicines by Medical Economics Company

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Steven Horne's Ramblings and Ravings

Iridology: An Important Health Assessment Tool

To help people regain their health, one of the most important things we need is assessment tools. Unless we want to “prescribe” herbs for medically diagnosed conditions, we need methods of determining what is really going on in the body so that we can determine what natural healing therapies are appropriate. One of the most important of these tools is iridology.

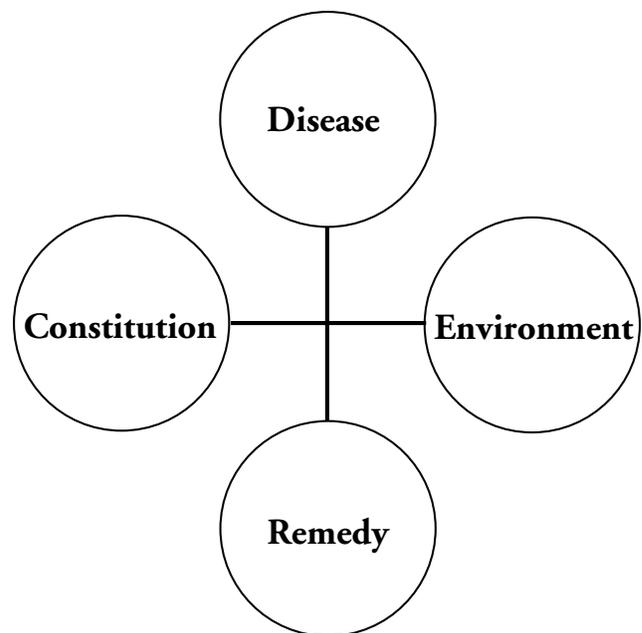
Iridology is the study of the markings in the iris (the colored part of the eye). Like most people in North America, my introduction to iridology came through the writings of Dr. Bernard Jensen. In the mid 1980s, I had some of his basic materials and decided to try to read my parents eyes. I had never taken a class in iridology. I started by looking at both my mother's and my father's iris patterns, comparing their eye patterns with Dr. Jensen's pictures and chart. It took me about an hour to complete my reading, but when I was finished, both of my parents felt that I had accurately identified all of the health problems they had experienced in their lives. Needless to say, I was impressed and continued to practice reading eyes using Dr. Jensen's materials.

Dr. Jensen taught that the iris revealed tissue conditions (levels of inflammation or degeneration) in the body. He also claimed that the iris reflected changes in the body through markings he called healing lines. As I used Dr. Jensen's iridology materials, however, I encountered a few problems with these teachings. For example, I saw numerous markings in the irises of young children who were perfectly healthy that didn't seem to correlate to any diseases. I also encountered a neighbor who had experienced very serious health problems with her colon and I could not find any markings that suggested there were any problems in her colon.

In 1986 however, I was privileged to go to an iridology seminar and listen to Bill Caradonna and Harry Wolfe speak. Harry Wolfe had translated more recent iridology texts from Germany, where iridology is used by medical doctors, specifically the works of Dr. Joseph Deck.

Research from Germany suggests that the iris patterns are primarily genetic and do not mirror exact tissue conditions. In fact, I learned from Bill Caradonna that no one has been able to photographically document the appearance of Jensen's “healing lines.” In addition, several scientific studies have been done which tested the ability of iridologists to determine specific disease conditions in the iris and each of these studies has demonstrated an inability of iridologists to accurately diagnose diseases from the iris.

In contrast, research has been done that demonstrates that iridology can be used to determine where a person has inherent strengths and weaknesses and where they are likely to develop health problems. For instance, in one study in Russia, thousands of factory workers were examined over a period of a couple of years. Their constitutional strength had been rated based on their iris photographs. There was a perfect statistical correlation between their constitutional rating and the number of sick days they experienced during the study. That is, those with the weakest constitutions experienced the most sick days, while those with the strongest constitutions experienced the fewest sick days.



This information helped me to understand that what I was seeing in the iris was primarily genetic, meaning I was not seeing actual disease conditions, but the potential for weakness in various organs and body systems. Subsequent experience has confirmed this to be a valid approach. In fact, the older a person is, the more likely it is that I can correlate the marking in their iris with specific health problems they have (or have had) during their lifetime. Whereas, when examining children's eyes, these same markings often show no history of any health problems in these areas.

At one time, NSP taught iridology classes. However, after an undercover investigation by CNN where iridologists were "caught" using iridology to "diagnose" diseases in a person who had been screened by doctors and pronounced healthy, NSP was put under a restraining order by the FTC. So, NSP cannot endorse or promote the practice of iridology. This is sad, because if the iridologists that were investigated had really understood how to use iridology correctly, the problem never would have happened.

The Value of Iridology

If iridology cannot be used to diagnose either diseases or current tissue states, then why is it so important? In the Disease Tree model that we use at Tree of Light, the soil represents a person's constitution. This is one's inherent physical and emotional makeup. A person who has a strong constitution can handle more physical stress than a person with a weaker constitution. In other words, under the same physical conditions, one person may thrive, while another will be taken ill. Constitution is one's basic ability to cope with one's environment.

This is where iridology has its primary value. Iridology shows us what nature gave us to work with. It is of primary value in the prevention of disease. The fact that we may have certain genetic weakness and tendencies does not doom us to poor health. If we understand our inherent weaknesses we can take steps to prevent the development of health problems in those areas.

I've seen many very sick people whose iris patterns showed they had strong constitutions. However, they had abused this gift of nature and had wound up making themselves sick. On the other hand, I've seen a number of people who have a lot of markings in their iris suggesting numerous inherent weaknesses. These people learned early

on that their body couldn't handle a lot of stress, so they learned to take good care of it and have maintained good health as a result of their choices.

This has often brought to mind a story I heard about a Utah folk hero named J. Golden Kimball. Supposedly, after hearing that a close friend had been diagnosed with an incurable disease, Golden commented, "I bet he'll live longer than most. All you have to do to live to a ripe old age is get yourself an incurable disease—and then take good care of it." My experience has suggested there is a lot of truth to that statement.

As the figure on the previous page shows, disease arises from environmental stresses that overpower the body's ability to cope. The disharmony between the person's constitutional makeup and the environment they find themselves in creates disharmony in the body. This disharmony results in disease. The remedy in this model is whatever restores harmony or balance between the constitution and the environment.

Since the iris reveals the nature of a person's constitution, it gives us a very critical piece of information that we need to know in order to solve the puzzle of disease. The iris can provide us information about what organs or systems of the body are inherently weak. It can also provide us with information about a person's basic personality type, which reveals how they react to emotional stress. By looking at the diseases a person has, examining his or her iris to determine what their constitutional strengths and weaknesses are, and asking questions about their health history, diet and lifestyle, one can get a fairly accurate picture of exactly why a person is sick. This also helps one be more effective in selecting appropriate remedies. The remedy is whatever will restore harmony and balance between the person's constitution and their environment.

In December, I'll start a series of articles on iridology and will be releasing a new iridology course.

Steven H. Horne is a past president and professional member of the American Herbalists Guild, a certified iridologist with the International Iridology Practitioners Association, and a gifted teacher and consultant in the field of natural health care. He is president of Tree of Light Publishing.





Kimberly Balas' Clinician's Corner

Solving Eye Problems and the Krebs Cycle

Floaters

What does it mean when someone has "floaters" in their vision?

Annette

Floaters are small black specks that appear to dance or float across the visual field. They are caused by cells which detach from the retina and float in the fluid in the middle of the eye. Eventually these detached cells break down and the materials in them are reabsorbed.

There are several possible causes of floaters. Stress is one possible cause. The cells lining the eye may not be receiving adequate nutrients or oxygen. These tissues are dependent on antioxidants such as N-acetyl-cysteine. Other nutrients such as vitamin A, Carotenoid Blend, vitamin B₁₂, vitamin A, zinc, vitamin C and magnesium may be helpful. Some people have had success using eye washes with EW or chamomile to ease the irritation to the eyes. Protease enzymes taken internally (between meals on an empty stomach) can help these detached cells to break down more quickly. I would also consider a person's general health, including the possibility of lymphatic stagnation, circulation and general nutrient and oxygen uptake.

Macular Degeneration

My Mom has been taking the Super Antioxidants for macular degeneration, which is in the beginning stages. She told me tonight that she gets sandy grains in her eyes, so she thought she'd better stop taking it. I've heard that having these grains come out is a good thing. I'd like to get the information to her so she can start it again.

Nolee

The grains forming in the eyes are actually created by the eyes cleansing themselves of toxic debris, so they are not a bad sign. This often happens when people use EW as an eye wash for cataracts or other eye problems. Mucus strands and little grains of material will come out of the eye. As long as the eyes are not becoming inflamed, it is not a bad sign.

As for the macular degeneration, this is basically the starvation of the retina. It is due to nutrient deficiencies and poor circulation to the iris and is often a complication of diabetes. Lipid peroxidation contributes to macular degeneration and we are seeing it more and more with all the statin drugs (i.e. Zocor, Lipitor) being prescribed.

Start by working on the digestive system with enzymes and restoring good intestinal flora with a probiotic. Corneal plaque builds up in relation to imbalances in lipid profiles. It is necessary to supplement the diet with essential fatty acids and antioxidants to help prevent protein degradation in the eye. N-Acetyl Cysteine is a very helpful antioxidant for macular degeneration.

It is necessary to improve blood flow to the capillaries in the eye. Arterial plaque may be involved. Mega-Chel, taken in place of a multiple vitamin (2 per day), has been very helpful in some cases. Mineral Chi Tonic should be taken with Mega-Chel for maximum effectiveness.

Blood pressure medications also contribute to macular degeneration. Low blood pressure at night takes away the ability to regulate blood flow to the eyes. Use blood nourishing herbs like ginkgo and eleuthero to correct this.

Doing a BTA reading and looking at the redox factors can also help you discover what is going on in the body that is causing the macular degeneration. If there is a lot of inflammation in the body, then this can impair the vision. If you don't have a BTA, the presence of inflammation can be detected by looking at the tongue and feeling the pulse. If the tongue is red and elongated and the pulse is rapid, there is a lot of inflammation in the body.

When inflammation is present then capillaries break down. If you increase the nutrients and delivery of the nutrients then the inflammation in vessels goes down. IF-C taken over an extended period of time can help this. Following the blood type diet can also help by reducing agglutination in the blood, which also helps bring down inflammation.

Eye Problems

In the past two years, my 33 year-old sister (a single, working mom) has suffered from a never-ending litany of eye problems. It started with uveitis and iritis in one eye and progressed to both. She underwent numerous steroid injections and participated in two clinical studies for implants in the cornea. Since then, she's been diagnosed with pars planitis, "sneaky eye," macular edema, and glaucoma. Now, she has a cataract due to the steroids and scar tissue caused by the implants. She is currently scheduled to have the cataract in the right eye operated on, but they will not do the surgery until the pressure in the left eye (currently 24) is reduced.

Up until about a year ago, my sister was a dog groomer and I still think that might have had something to do with the eye inflammation in the first place. Because of her eye problems, she has had to find other full time work, but she still grooms on the side.

I suggested bilberry, but because of a familial bleeding disorder, this had the effect of thinning her blood too much. Now, I'm at a complete loss as to what she could use. Besides the current eye problem and the inherited bleeding disorder, she's in good health. Your wisdom and advice would be sincerely appreciated. Thanks!

Shareen

If your sister is constantly having eye problems then she is not really in good health. In Chinese medicine, eye problems are linked to the liver, and the root of her problems is likely in the liver and the circulation. Ho shou wu is a great liver herb that can help improve the energy flow to the eyes. Cellular Energy, SF, or Elderberry Combo could be used to reduce liver stagnation and reduce heat from the liver.

The bilberry is not contraindicated in this case, and can be used to reduce the inflammation in the eye by taking it with IF-C. Also, consider working with antioxidants, as these also reduce inflammation. A good antioxidant to consider would be green tea.

The adrenals produce natural cortisol to reduce inflammation. The main imbalance in this is neurological tension and adrenal stress. Nervines and adaptagens are needed here. My favorites are Suma Combination and Nerve Eight. Eight is both a nervine and an anti-inflammatory. Eleuthero can also be used to help reduce stress and improve energy flow. She needs 20-30% more rest

than she is getting. Caffeine will make this situation worse and will increase stress and create acid pH conditions.

Dong quai and HSN-Complex will help to nourish and rebuild the ciliary muscle. Dong quai is a blood building and nourishing herb. When there is degeneration in the eye, then essential fatty acids are also essential.

Krebs Cycle

I feel funny about asking this, but I was asked about the Krebs cycle the other day. I remember learning about this years ago, but could not remember what it is. Can you help me with this?

Merry

The Krebs cycle (or TCA cycle) is a series of chemical reactions carried out in the mitochondria of the living cell. In most higher animals, including humans, it is essential for the oxidative metabolism of glucose and other simple sugars. Put simply, it is part of the process that converts food into energy for cellular function.

The breakdown of glucose into carbon dioxide and water releases energy and is a complex set of chemical conversions called carbohydrate catabolism. The Krebs cycle is the second of three major stages in this process, occurring between glycolysis and oxidative phosphorylation. The Nature's Sunshine Products Cellular Energy and Target Endurance affect this process, helping the mitochondria to produce more energy. This helps cells function better and the whole body to have more energy.

The Krebs cycle is also called the citric acid cycle. The name citric acid cycle is derived from the first product generated by this sequence of chemical conversions, i.e., citric acid. The reactions are seen to comprise a cycle inasmuch as citric acid is both the first product and the final reactant, being regenerated at the conclusion of one complete set of chemical rearrangements.

Kimberly Balas is a board certified naturopath and an instructor for NSP's NHC program. She is also a board member and a certified iridology instructor with the International Iridology Practitioners Association (IIPA). She is available for personal consultations in her Melbourne, FL office or by phone (321-725-7731).





Migraines

Natural Ways to Treat and Prevent Severe Headaches

Migraines are severe, recurrent headaches that are caused by changes in blood flow to the brain. The pain is often accompanied by visual symptoms (flashes of light across the field of vision), nausea and vomiting, dizziness, and weakness. Migraines can be very debilitating. Senses are heightened and slight noises, changes in light or movement become unbearable. They last from one to three days.

Migraines can be caused by too much blood flow to the brain, or too little. When too much blood is flowing to the brain there is a pounding or throbbing sensation in the head. It is very important to distinguish this vasodilative pain from the pain caused by constriction of blood flow to the head. Vasoconstrictive headaches are caused by tension that blocks the flow of blood to the brain. The pain in this case feels like a band or pressure (like a vise) squeezing in on the head.

The remedies for vasoconstrictive headaches and vasodilative headaches have opposite actions. This means if you take the wrong remedy, you will actually make the headache worse.

The exact causes of migraines are unknown, but this may be because migraines can be triggered by a variety of problems. Stressful emotions such as anger, excitement or anxiety have been known to trigger migraine headaches. So, learning to manage stress better can be helpful. B-complex vitamins or Nutri-Calm taken regularly may help reduce stress that brings on migraines.

It is also known that migraines can be triggered by allergic reactions to foods, especially foods containing the amino acid tyramine, or by chemical sensitivity, such as a sensitivity to MSG. MSG is common in Chinese food, but is also found in many canned soups and packaged food products. Foods containing tyramine include aged protein foods such as hot dogs, cheese, sausages, cold cuts and smoked or pickled fish, and alcoholic beverages, especially red wine. Other allergens associated with migraines include cows milk, wheat, chocolate, eggs, and oranges.

There is a strong connection between migraine headaches and liver problems. In Chinese medicine there is a concept of "liver fire rising," in which excess heat from the liver rises to the head creating a flushing of the face. Since the liver is the primary organ of chemical detoxification and is associated with food allergies and chemical sensitivities, it is very possible that migraines may be a symptom of stress on the liver.

Studies showed that feverfew can be taken daily as a preven-

tive medicine to reduce the frequency and severity of vasodilative migraine headaches. Feverfew, however, does not work on migraines once the pain has started. Other bitter herbs that help with liver detoxification can also be used to reduce the frequency and severity of vasodilative migraines. For instance, the Liver Balance formula or the Enviro-Detox formula taken regularly may also help to reduce the frequency and severity of migraines. Evening primrose oil reduces inflammation and may also be helpful.

Because the blood vessels tend to constrict in the beginning stages of a migraine, then dilate, resulting in the extreme pain, it may be possible to use relaxing herbs at the very first sign of discomfort to prevent the migraine from occurring. One sufferer found that four capsules of Stress-J and four capsules of feverfew taken at the very beginning of a migraine stopped the migraine from coming on.

For vasoconstrictive migraines, vasodilative remedies such as lobelia, black cohosh, ginkgo or periwinkle are helpful. It is important to stress that these herbs should not be used with vasodilative migraines, as they will only make them worse. Magnesium, however, can be taken regularly to help prevent both vasoconstrictive and vasodilative migraines.

A remedy that has helped many people relieve migraine headaches, once they have started, is to massage Tei Fu oils into the neck, shoulders, and temples. Work any tense muscles in the neck and shoulders and help those muscles to relax. By massaging lobelia essence and Tei Fu oils into the neck and shoulders every evening before bed, one can keep these muscles loose, which also seems to prevent migraines.

Because migraines can have emotional triggers, emotional healing exercises may also be helpful. Migraine sufferers often have very tense shoulder muscles suggesting they are carrying too many burdens. The stiffness they often have in their neck is often associated with a kind of pride that results in an inability to ask for and receive help from others. Migraine sufferers often need to learn to let go of some of their burdens and receive more help from others. Working on these issues has also helped many migraine sufferers to permanently rid themselves of this painful affliction.

Selected References

- "Migraine Success" Letter to the Editor by Cheri Abdouch, Sept/Oct 1990
Nature's Field.
Encyclopedia of Natural Healing by Siegfried Gursche
Prescription for Nutritional Healing by James F. Balch and Phyllis A. Balch

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LIV-J

Jeanne Burgess' Liver Formula

LIV-J is a gentle liver cleansing formula developed by herbalist Jeanne Burgess. It helps to decongest the liver by promoting the flow of bile while gently strengthening the liver function.

Moderate liver dysfunction is associated with a wide variety of health problems, including a general groggy or dull feeling, particularly in the morning. There may be a stuffy or bloated feeling under the right rib cage and digestive problems such as bloating, gas and nausea. Another major symptom that the liver is out of balance is nervous energy in the evening and difficulty falling asleep, followed by a groggy, "hung over" feeling in the morning. Frequent headaches, especially migraines, and skin eruptive diseases such as acne, hives and rashes are other signs of liver dysfunction.

LIV-J is also a very good digestive formula. The herbs in it help to relieve bloating and abdominal distention and improve digestion of both proteins and fats. Since the liver must filter all the blood coming from the intestines, improving digestion takes stress off of the liver.

LIV-J contains the following herbs.

Fennel Seeds

Fennel seeds aid digestion, which improves the quality of the venous blood flowing to the liver. It is a carminative and digestive stimulant, increasing digestive secretions, and relieving gas and bloating. Fennel reduces abdominal distention and inflammation. Eaten during or after a meal, fennel seeds help digest heavy oils and protein foods more easily. Fennel has also been used to ease morning sickness and nausea, both of which arise from the liver cleansing itself via the bile ducts.

Horseradish Root

Horseradish root has been used throughout history as a digestive and liver aid. It is a hot, biting, pungent herb that improves protein digestion and metabolism. People who have a hard time digesting meat will find that eating horseradish with meat stimulates gastric juices, helping proteins to digest more rapidly while producing less acid waste to burden the liver and the kidneys.

Barberry Bark

Barberry bark is a bitter herb that cleanses the liver and promotes the flow of bile. It has been used to ameliorate conditions like gallbladder pain, gallstones, jaundice and poor digestion of fats. Like goldenseal it contains the alkaloid berberine, which gives it an antimicrobial action. Barberry helps to balance the

friendly flora in the intestinal tract—killing yeast and harmful microbes. It has also been used to treat gastrointestinal infections such as amebic dysentery.

Red Beet Root

Beets have a long standing folk reputation as being a blood-building food. They are a good source of iron, but also seem to have a beneficial effect on the liver, one of the organs that helps to build the blood. They have been used for anemia, gallbladder problems, and for improving fat metabolism. Red beets also have an immune-enhancing effect.

Parsley

Parsley is both a digestive tonic and a diuretic. It helps to flush toxins from the kidneys and has been used for gout, rheumatism and arthritis. It is also carminative, helping to improve digestive function.

Dandelion Root

Dandelion root has a cleansing action on the liver. It stimulates bile production, and helps the body remove toxins via the liver and kidneys. It has been used for improving gallbladder function which aids in the digestion of fats. It has also been used to help prevent and even dissolve gall stones. Dandelion also improves digestive secretions and can help with constipation due to poor bile production. Another major use for dandelion root has been in treating skin problems, such as eczema, psoriasis and acne, all of which can arise from poor liver function.

Rose Hips

Rose hips are a rich source of vitamin C and bioflavonoids. Rose hips reduce gastrointestinal inflammation and have an enhancing effect on the immune system.

Use and Dosage

LIV-J is an excellent formula for abdominal bloating and distention, gas, liver congestion, poor fat digestion and other symptoms of moderate liver dysfunction. Typical dosage is 2-4 capsules three times daily.

Selected References

- The Wild Rose Scientific Herbal* by Terry Willard
- The Book of Herbs* by Dorothy Hall
- The Healing Herbs* by Michael Castleman
- The Scientific Validation of Herbal Medicine* by Daniel B. Mowrey.
- The Encyclopedia of Medicinal Plants* by Andrew Chevallier

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Class Schedule

Tree of Light Classes Call 888-707-4372 to register.

Biochemical Blood Analysis—Kimberly Balas
Jan 16-17 Melbourne, FL (\$295)

Dr. Mom - Dr. Dad Instructor Training Class
Feb. 2-3, 2004 Las Vegas, NV
Course to train instructors to teach the
Dr. Mom - Dr. Dad course in their area.

Other Events

**International Iridology Practitioners Association
Symposium 2004**
Feb 7-8 Las Vegas, NV (\$279)
Call 888-682-2208 to register
Speakers include: Steven Horne, Kimberly Balas, Ellen
Tart-Jensen, David Carpenter and others.

Christmas Specials

We're offering some special packages for Christmas on the subjects of blood type diet and paw paw. Go to www.treelite.com or call for more information.

Iridology Course

Steven has completed four iridology videos this year and is writing a course manual to go with them. The iridology course will be shipped at the end of December. You can preorder the complete course for \$95 (regular price will be \$150). If you already have the iridology videos, the course manual will be \$50.

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