



# Emerald City Clinic

Newsletter

[www.emeraldcityclinic.com](http://www.emeraldcityclinic.com)

Spring 2008

## Sleep: The Ultimate Frontier

by Molly Linton, ND, LM

Number three on Dr. Molly's 5 Point Health Plan is sleep. Insomnia and lack of quality sleep is an epidemic in American life and a major causative component of much disease in our population. Let's start with a definition of a good night's sleep. A good night's sleep is that you fall asleep within 15 minutes of lying down and sleep uninterrupted for 7-8 hours. If you do not do that you are not having optimal sleep and restorative time for your adrenal glands. If you have a healthy adrenal gland, you wake up between 6 and 8 am, without an alarm, hungry and alert and ready to go. Often the cause of an "unhealthy adrenal" gland is lack of sleep. Recently I got pneumonia and missed work due to illness for the first time in 25 years. I attributed it to many things, but the biggest cause was lack of sleep over the past 3 years that I have been commuting from Bainbridge. It became so obvious that I changed my hours to increase my sleep and am feeling so much better that I decided to focus this newsletter on sleep.

Lack of quality sleep has been associated with all sorts of disease processes such as epigastric reflux, anxiety, metabolic syndrome and diabetes, heart disease, immune malfunction, auto immune disease. The basic problem is that if your adrenal glands do not get to "restore themselves" they go into a "fright and flight" response causing havoc throughout the body. On an energetic level without the ability to have REM, sleep does not balance our spirits. Interestingly, in the Bible there is a passage that says that our day starts when we go to sleep, so that we are preparing ourselves to do God's work the following day. That is a completely different attitude than most of us have in addressing our sleep.

I divide sleep problems into three basic categories: trouble going to sleep, choosing not to sleep, and trouble staying asleep. Each of these areas has different physiological causes and can be addressed independently.

First I will address choosing not to sleep and our attitudes about sleep. During a normal sleep cycle our "melatonin" is at its peak between 9 pm and 11 pm. Melatonin is our "time to go to sleep" hormone. (The peaks in children and young adults are different). In any case, there is a point in the evening that our energy slumps. That is the time to go to bed. If we miss that time, many people have a "cortisol rush" and cannot get to sleep until 2 hours later. These people tell me: I always stay up late, I cannot go to sleep, it is the only time I have for myself- any number of excuses for not sleeping. We must address good sleep hygiene first. Dinner should be eaten at least two hours before retiring. The evening time after 8 pm should be filled with quiet activities and relaxation, not stressful movies or energetic video games. You should be quiet enough to notice that

hormonal shift of melatonin and be ready to go to bed. Individuals will be more organized, have more quality time and be more emotionally stable if they actually choose to get 8 hours of sleep a night. You need to design your schedule to allow this.

Trouble staying asleep is multi faceted. The three major causes of interrupted sleep are hypoglycemia, "shaky leg" syndrome, and nocturia (night time urination). To combat hypoglycemia you need to eat most of your heavier protein prior to 2 pm in the afternoon. Americans eat their heaviest meal at night which indicates to the body it is time to start the day. Our adrenal glands and digestion should be the most awake and ready for fuel between 6 am and 10 am. Dinner should be lighter.

Other things that interfere with good glucose balance are alcohol and coffee. Alcohol interferes with quality sleep. The sanctity of coffee in Seattle is well known. People drink coffee for three reasons: stimulant, taste and ceremony. (If people slept well they probably would not need the coffee). If you need a stimulant, then drink green tea or licorice root tea. These teas affect the physiology differently than coffee. Both of them assist the adrenal glands. The bitter taste of coffee is really hard to replace. Many tell me Teccino, a roasted barley drink, is a close clone. Finally, the ceremony of coffee drinking can be replaced with a warm drink. The dark winters of Seattle drive us to drink coffee and many people have been able to quit by taking vitamin D. (Please get your baseline vitamin D levels before embarking on high dose supplementation, because it can be liver toxic). Finally, I recommend a small protein snack before bed (5-8 grams) to stabilize sugar levels over the course of the night. That would be equivalent of 5-10 almonds, 1 tbs of yogurt, ½ slice of turkey, for example.

"Shaky leg" syndrome is usually a calcium/magnesium deficiency. If you supplement calcium/magnesium with your protein snack right before bed you will sleep sounder.

Nocturia is usually caused from dehydration throughout the day. If you are well hydrated and take a few electrolytes during the day, it will often prevent nocturia. Also, not drinking after 8 pm helps as well. The sleep is more important. Post menopausal women often have bladder issues at night which can be helped with a product we have at the Clinic, made out of pumpkin seeds. Men often have prostatic problems that also can be helped with herbs.

Trouble falling asleep is an anxiety reaction. The body will go into anxiety reactions for many physiological reasons besides emotional and spiritual ones. This type of insomnia is a little more complicated to address in an article but there are some simple approaches to begin with. The first, as mentioned before, is sugar stabilization. If your glucose levels are stable (eating a little protein every two hours, no refined sugars, no caffeine) the

**Earth Chi Kung classes offered at ECN with instructor Andrew Clauer! Three class series Mondays: June 2, 9, and 16 from 6-7:30pm. Cost is \$55 for the series. Call 206-781-2206 to sign up!**

body is less anxious. If you are hydrated and have good mineral balance the body is less anxious. The best medicine for anxiety is exercise. Even if you get 20 minutes a day you will sleep better. Beyond that, Naturopathic physicians have many approaches to aiding the neurotransmitters that help healthy and balanced brain and adrenal function.

If you try these simple things and have not obtained optimal sleep, please schedule an appointment to address the insomnia as it is preventing you from obtaining optimal health.

## Healing from the Inside Out with Chi Nei Tsang

by Laura C Walton, ND, LMP



I recently attended a continuing education seminar that I am excited to bring to the Emerald City Clinic community. I was able to spend close to a week at peaceful Breitenbush, a hot springs retreat center in Oregon, learning a Taoist abdominal massage technique called Chi Nei Tsang from instructor Andrew Clauer.

Chi Nei Tsang (CNT) translates literally as Energy Transformation of the internal organs or viscera. The technique was practiced for thousands of years by Taoist Monks living in monastic communities throughout China as a way to strengthen and refine their bodies in order to cultivate and conduct the energy needed for the highest levels of spiritual practice. They developed meditation and rejuvenation practices to bring their bodies to a state of wellness and unity of body, mind and spirit. CNT was part of this practice, for both personal use and as a healing aid to the communities in which the monks lived.

The transformative idea behind CNT is that we all store unexpressed emotions in our bodies, specifically in our abdominal organs. For example, someone cuts you off while driving and you almost hit them. You are not able to safely stop in order to cry or otherwise express fear or anger, and you keep driving. This emotion does not simply disappear ( $E=MC^2$ ), it is often stored as physical tension in the body. The abdominal organs often serve as a receptacle for unexpressed emotions because they are a vulnerable part of our bodies. The expression "gut instinct" reflects the relationship between our emotions and our abdomen. This relationship, still present in our language, has been lost from our current scientific understanding of how the body works. But, it has not been lost from the innate wisdom that our bodies hold. To listen to these emotions, these "gut instincts," is the work of CNT.

Through a process of acknowledgment with targeted gentle, yet deep physical pressure, the body can help to reclaim these lost areas of ourselves. A foundational tenant of naturopathic medicine is that the body can heal itself, given the right tools and support. CNT offers the least invasive support—the idea that your body simply needs to revisit unexpressed emotions in order to process them fully. The power to heal is not in a pill or with someone else, it lies in each person's own body. In freeing up the physical tensions created by unexpressed emotions, organs can function more optimally. This allows the body to express itself with less symptoms of pain, tenderness, tension, holding, etc. CNT is about listening to the body because it knows what it needs, realizing that symptoms are the body's only way of expressing itself. Imagine that your best friend tells you something

(i.e. symptom of pain) and you do not listen. Do you think that your friend will continue to talk to you? Now imagine that you listen and your relationship grows. Soon you will be getting more and clearer information. The body will begin to feel again instead of being numb. (Perhaps this is why so many people feel numb or depressed.) How life-affirming and transformative to turn this process around, allowing the space to process these stored up emotions for true lasting healing.

Chi Nei Tsang is experienced while lying fully clothed on a table, with the abdomen exposed from the pubic bone to the rib cage, and the legs raised and bent at the knees. A session starts with some guided breath work to bring movement to areas of our abdomen that may be holding. (In order to block the painful emotions, we often stop breathing into the places where undigested emotions are stored. We breathe into our chest instead of our bellies, resulting in shallow breathing.) Once a more optimal breathing pattern has been established, the tensions in the abdomen are explored. A soft, gentle, and often deep touch is used to guide the client to breathe into these tensions and try to soften and relax them. Often, when one allows oneself to feel the tensions, an emotional charge may also be felt. Memories may resurface during or after sessions. A range of exercises to practice at home may be taught at the end of a session. These start with easy self-massage and lead to various forms of chi kung (energy cultivation) practices, depending on the individual client.

I am honored to offer CNT to the Emerald City Clinic community. This is powerful work with potential for deep, lasting healing. I encourage you to make an appointment with me to deepen your relationship to your body, and to see what arises for you. In addition to the emotional therapeutic work of CNT, it also helps with digestive concerns including constipation, GERD (reflux) and hiatal hernias, chronic cough from diaphragm spasm, PMS due to uterine position, hemorrhoids, gall bladder issues, fertility concerns, bladder incontinence or irritation with frequent urination, inability to lose weight, and a myriad of other concerns.

### It's Time Once Again for the CIMT Scanning!

ECN will be scheduling appointments for IMT scanning on July 22nd from 8:30am-5 pm. The scanning takes 10 minutes, patients are not exposed to any radiation and do not need to undress. Vital signs will be taken before the scanning, and a follow up visit will be scheduled for 2 weeks after the test. For more information about the scan, please refer to the Winter '07 Newsletter on our website.



The procedure costs \$175 if you prepay at the time you schedule or \$200 if you pay on the day of service. We do not bill insurance directly, and payment is due at the time of service. We will provide you with a superbill for potential reimbursement by your insurance company. Please call the office to schedule and with any questions you may have.

### Admin Alerts:

**TB:** TB tests are available at ECN.

**Dates to Note:** The office will be closed: 6/13/08 from 12:00 for staff vision meeting; 7/11/08 for inventory; 7/25/08 for staff party at Wild Waves!

**Having a blood draw?** Be sure to drink lots of water the night before and 16-20 ounces in the morning, even when instructed to fast. This is important for correct results, sufficient sample, and your comfort!

**Lab handling fees:** when we process a specialty lab sample, there is a charge of \$20 to the patient for the extra time to handle and mail the sample. This charge is also billed to cover the doctor's time when she reviews your chart outside of a visit to determine what tests to order for you.



## Neurotransmitter Testing *by Loren Riccio, ND, LM, CPM*

There has been a steady increase in the number of people experiencing difficulty sleeping, attention deficit, poor concentration, poor motivation, anxiety, high stress, fatigue and depression. In response to this there has been an increase in the number of prescription medications attempting to address these concerns.

Sometimes they are helpful and sometimes they are not. These medications act by changing the brain chemistry or neurotransmitters (brain chemical messengers). Neurotransmitters send messages from your brain to various places in your body, telling your heart to beat, your lungs to breathe, your stomach to digest your food, your muscles to move your limbs. Neurotransmitters are also important for thought processing, sleep, energy, and emotions. These messages can be disrupted by stress, poor diet, infections, toxic chemicals, medications or injury.

Neurotransmitters come in two types: those that are **excitatory**, which stimulate your brain and your body; and those that are **inhibitory**, which calm your brain and your body. It is important to maintain a balance between these two types. An imbalance can cause a variety of unpleasant symptoms, which are listed below. Your body can also feel very tired working hard to keep you in balance. At Emerald City Clinic, we have been using urine and saliva testing to measure these neurotransmitters to find out where the imbalances are, find the cause, and help bring you back into balance. If you are experiencing any of the symptoms below, talk to your doctor about neurotransmitter testing and how it may help you find health through balance.

| Associations with HIGH Levels   | Associations with LOW Levels:  | Associations with LOW Levels:   |
|---|--|---|
| Cortisol  | Cortisol   | Serotonin   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anxiety</li> <li>Poor Sleep</li> <li>Insulin Resistance</li> <li>Immune Suppression</li> </ul>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fatigue</li> <li>Inflammation and Allergies</li> </ul>                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Depression/Low Mood</li> <li>PMS and Hot Flashes</li> <li>Sleep Difficulties/Anxiety</li> <li>Carbohydrate Cravings</li> </ul> |
| Dopamine  | Dopamine   | GABA  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developmental problems</li> <li>Schizophrenia</li> <li>Psychosis</li> </ul>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor Focus/Energy/Motive</li> <li>Addictions and Cravings</li> <li>Low Libido</li> </ul>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anxiety</li> <li>Hyperactivity</li> <li>Sleep Difficulties</li> </ul>  |
| Norepinephrine  | Norepinephrine   | DHEA  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stress and Anxiety</li> <li>Hyperactivity</li> <li>Increased Blood Pressure</li> <li>Pain</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of Focus/Energy/Motive</li> <li>Depression with Apathy</li> </ul>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low Libido</li> <li>Fatigue/Lethargy</li> <li>Aging</li> </ul>   |
| Epinephrine   | Epinephrine  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insomnia</li> <li>Anxiety/Stress</li> <li>Blood Sugar Elevation</li> <li>Insulin Resistance</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor Methylation</li> <li>Lack of Focus/Energy</li> <li>Poor Blood Sugar Control</li> </ul> |   |
| Glutamate   | Glutamate  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neurotoxicity</li> <li>Anxiety/Stress</li> <li>Decreased Mood</li> </ul>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fatigue</li> <li>Low Brain Function</li> </ul>  |   |

### 'Tis the Season to Sweat it Out!

*by Jamine Blesoff, 3<sup>rd</sup> Year ND Work-Study Student*

Many of you are familiar with Spring as the "Detox Season." Utilizing your body's 5 elimination channels is a great way to detoxify the accumulation of toxins from the fall and winter months. These elimination channels are: kidneys/bladder, lungs, colon, skin, and liver. The first step to any detoxification regimen is to minimize your exposure. This way you are minimizing toxins that enter your body as you maximize the amount of toxins that are excreted. Enhancing elimination through the skin, our largest and most underutilized detox organ, is an important component to any cleansing regimen. Skin brushing and sweat therapy are two great ways to optimize toxin elimination through our skin.

Dry skin brushing removes dead skin cells, improves lymph and blood circulation, and calms the nervous system. It's a quick and convenient way to help your skin detoxify and rejuvenate. It can easily be done just before showering. See your ECN provider for a patient handout on dry skin brushing, or refer to our website.

Toxins can include insecticides, herbicides, solvents, toxic metals, and natural body waste. One of the places where toxins are stored is in our adipose tissue. These toxins are encouraged to leave the body quickly and safely by the stimulation of sweating. By increasing our body temperature and encouraging sweating we mobilize these built up toxins by increasing lipolysis (breakdown of fat) and enhancing circulation. Through increased circulation of blood and lymph, toxins are directed to-

ward the skin where they can be excreted through sweat. At least 20-30 minutes of aerobic exercise and/or sauna therapy each day are two important ways to get you sweating.

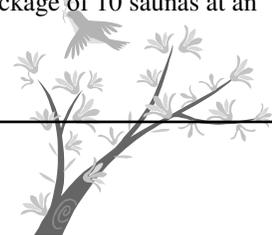
As with any part of a detoxification protocol it is important to ensure that your body is equipped with the nutrients it need to optimize the process. Increasing your water intake, eating foods high in fiber, and taking supplements that contain helpful nutrients (such as antioxi-

dants, amino acids, B vitamins, and essential fatty acids) are essentials to support all 5 elimination pathways.

To introduce sweat therapy into a Detox-plan customized just for you, call and make an appointment with your ECN doctor. We can schedule you for infrared sauna treatments here, and **to encourage you we are offering the first sauna at a 50% discount when you schedule by June 30<sup>th</sup>**, or a package of 10 saunas at an 15% discount.

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## Dr. Molly's Corner



**Molly's new hours:** 10:00am—noon and 2:00—5pm, Mon—Fri.

**Three Day Rule:** You are all familiar with the 5 Point Health Plan but many are not familiar with the 3 Day Rule. If something is affecting your health and is not resolving by the third day, it is time to contact your physician at Emerald City Clinic. You may not need an appointment but it is a “red flag” that your doctor should know about. If you have not slept for three nights in a row, or have had loose stools for 3 days, or a flu or cold without improvement for 3 days, please contact us. Issues are much easier to resolve if they do not become chronic. There is something magical about the number three! The 3 Day rule also applies to longer cycles like the third menstrual cycle in a row with problems, or the third winter in a row with chronic cough.

**Cataract treatment:** I recently realized that many of our clients do not know that we have eye drops that will dissolve cataracts in 4-6 months. They really work and are preventing many of my clients from cataract surgery.

**Allergy season:** Please remember that quercetin 500-1500 mg 1-3x/day will stop most airborne allergies without the side effects of Benadryl. But please remember that although it is a non-toxic treatment, it is not getting to the cause of your weakened immunity. You can “cure” and stop your allergy reactions permanently.

**Bottle recycle:** We will recycle all glass tincture bottles and would appreciate you bringing them back.

**Atherosclerotic/Plaque study:** We are getting closer to starting an in office research study to dissolve atherosclerotic plaque. To be in the study you need to have documented plaque. This is done by a test called an IMT (carotid intima media thickness). This test is offered at least twice a year at Emerald City Clinic (the next one is on July 22). If you know or suspect you have plaque please contact the office to see if you are eligible for this research study. The study is limited to 10 patients and the supplements will all be supplied free of charge for the length of the study (one year).

**Traveling:** If you are traveling in countries that are prone to parasitic infections I advise you to set aside \$250 for parasite testing. You should test your stools 10-12 days after you get back, unless you are having acute symptoms upon your return in which case you should do so right away. Too many people go undiagnosed for years before correcting a parasitic infection.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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