

Emerald City Clinic

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Newsletter



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Vaccinations and the Avian Flu: A Naturopathic Perspective

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Two of the most popular questions that I have been asked in the past few months have been: **How do I prevent getting the Avian flu? and Should I get a flu vaccine?**

I want to address these questions with a comprehensive answer. Discussing immunizations in a public forum and in a written fashion is a scary thing to do because of the predominant medical perspective around this public health issue. So, before I start, I want to make a disclaimer that the decision for anyone to immunize is a personal, individual decision that should be fully researched and discussed at length with your physician. This article is by no means the definitive text, but I feel compelled to stimulate thought and provide an alternative point of view from the dominant allopathic medical model.

Immunizations work by giving their recipient a "mini" version of the disease they are designed to protect against. This mini-dose activates our immune systems to make antibodies to fight that specific disease. This is great in theory, but the practice has many first general flaw is that the pathogens that create the disease mutate and therefore the immunization, which is specific to a predicted pathogen, will not work as well. For example, there are many children getting a "mumps-like" virus who have been immunized for mumps. This is happening because mumps is caused by a live organism that mutates if its survival is threatened: evolution on a microscopic level. The immunization that the child may have been given is not specific for this new, mutated form of the disease, so the child's immune system is not prepped with the appropriate antibodies and they can contract the disease. One analogy is that if the immunization you receive trains your immune system to recognize the mumps in the blue coat and mumps arrives in a red coat, your antibodies may not recognize that form of mumps. The Department of Public Health recognizes this problem, especially when we discuss flu vaccines, but hopes that your body will have some cross-reaction and provide you with some immunity.

From a Naturopathic perspective, there are two major issues with this scenario. First, any immunization provides at best 80-90% protection against its associated disease. This means that your body will commit 80-90% of your immune system to recognizing blue coated mumps. This leaves only 10-20% of your immune system the flexibility to rally if a different version arrives. Your immune system will have 20% of its efforts as an effective SWAT team and 80% will be a bit dazed and confused, trying to rally. Have you really improved your immune system? If you have a sleep-deprived population that is living on sugar, caffeine, and cigarettes,

with a resultant inability to mount a quick, effective immune response, the immunization may have helped. For more healthy folks with a responsive immune system, you are committing your white blood cells to fighting a disease that may never show up, while limiting your options for those that do.

The flu vaccine is particularly insidious in this way. The public health system decides in the Spring before the Fall flu season what they think the most likely virus is going to be and produces that vaccine. Often they are wrong. A few years ago, they immunized for a type of flu that never arrived. The vaccine itself killed more elderly than the actual flu did. The vaccines are also risky: they have preservatives in them which are made of egg albumin, creating or worsening egg sensitivities. There are some vaccines that are live vaccines which may cause the disease they are trying to prevent. In this country, the only cases of polio after the vaccinations began to be administered were from the vaccines themselves. Back to the original question, is the flu vaccine going to protect you from any flu, let alone the Avian flu? The answer is that you could possibly get some protection. But, you also could be limiting your immunological options.

With any immunization you must weigh the risk of the disease versus the risks/benefits of the immunization. After that decision is made, you must remember that Naturopathic medicine is focused on optimizing your health and minimizing disease. We have an array of time-tested immune stimulating options that the allopathic community does not have. This reality leaves Public Health with immunization as the ONLY option.

My suggestion for preventing the flu or any virus is following Dr. Molly's 5 Point Health Plan:

1. Remain hydrated: drink 1/3 of your body weight in fluid ounces per day of water
2. Eat a healthy diet with good quality proteins and plenty of vegetables.
3. Sleep soundly.
4. Exercise daily.
5. A basic vitamin regimen of your multiple, omega 3 oils, and minerals.



These rules of good living serve most people well. I would also have on hand strong anti-virals such as astragalus, reishi mushrooms, and Oregon grape root tincture, as well as keeping homeopathic viral antidotes on hand. There are many over the counter versions such as oscillococcinum, gripp heal, and airborne.

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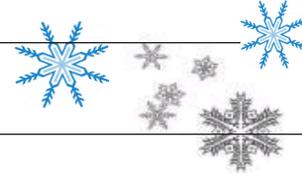
Remember, if you are having difficulty with any of the 5 Point Health plan, it is time to make an appointment. My new rule is Molly's 3-Day rule. If whatever is going on with you (e.g. a cough, fever, loose stools, flu-like symptoms) is not resolving within 3 days, it is time to contact me. There are

two exceptions to this rule. One is that health issues for children under 12 should be resolving in 24 hours. The other is that if a woman has an unusual menstrual issue, it is the third "weird" period that she should be contacting me.

This article has been respectfully submitted to my clientele. Please know that I support you in any decision you make. So, please do not hesitate to tell me if you have chosen to get a flu vaccine so I can chart it in your file. Thank you.



~ ~ Announcements ~ ~



My name is Dr. Laura Eastman, and I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the first-year resident at Emerald City Clinic. I graduated from Bastyr in June of 2005 specializing in homeopathy, physical medicine, women's health, and pediatrics. Before graduating, I worked as a licensed massage therapist for over 3 years, utilizing craniosacral therapy, visceral manipulation, myofascial release, and Swedish massage to help my clients find a deeper relationship with their bodies to encourage self-knowledge and the healing that comes along with that knowledge. I am ecstatic to be working with Drs. Linton and Riccio, and am continually inspired by their faith in our medicine and dedication to the idea that each person can heal her or himself. I, too, believe that we as doctors are here to act as guides along the way to optimal physical, emotional, and spiritual health. I look forward to meeting each of you as the year continues.

Good Day All. My name is Tara Zuluaga and I am the new receptionist here at Emerald City Clinic. I am ecstatic to be joining this dynamic team. I come to the clinic excited to saturate myself in the wisdom of these amazing doctors. I plan to share my own enthusiasm for natural health and vivacious energy with the staff and all of you. I have been passionate about herbs and natural medicine for as long as I can remember. I graduated with a degree in holistic health and applied ecology at Fairhaven College in 2004. I continually seek out ways to expand my skills and knowledge in the healing world. I am excited to meet and learn from all of you as the New Year progresses. Cheers!

Are you pregnant or considering having a baby? Emerald City Clinic offers personalized birthing experiences at home or in a birth center, including waterbirth. As naturopathic doctors/midwives, we offer a

unique approach to your transformative journey into parenthood. We offer care for preconception, pregnancy through labor, delivery and postpartum, well woman and pediatric wellness. If you or anyone you know is interested in these services, please call our office to schedule a FREE one hour prenatal consult to discuss the options available to you.

If you are not considering pregnancy for awhile and would like to know more about the option of using an IUD (intrauterine device) or any other method of birth control, we would be happy to discuss these with you. There have been many advances in reproductive research and development, and today's IUDs aren't the same as those from the 1970s. IUDs are a safe and effective method of birth control, and Dr. Loren Riccio is offering them at Emerald City Clinic.

Mail order: If you are having trouble getting in to the clinic to pick up your pharmacy, we want to remind you that you can have your order mailed to you. Just contact the office and let Tara know what you would like sent. Before shipping, we will need to verify that your prescription is correct and current and will need your credit card information.

Rental space: We are still looking for compatible tenants to rent one or more of eight treatment rooms in fully renovated professional space next door to Emerald City Clinic. Rooms start at \$400/month. Space is ideal for health providers wanting to collaborate or share space with others (massage practitioners, therapists, acupuncturists, chiropractors), and the potential for referral from Emerald City Clinic exists. Please share this information with anyone you feel would be compatible, and contact Roberta with your interest.

Physical Medicine Redux: We offer many kinds of physical medicine at Emerald City Clinic, including a new traditional Ayurvedic steam cabinet. These physical medicines are broken into 3 categories: hyperthermia, detox, and stress reduction.

Hyperthermia treatments assist the body in creating a fever to combat acute viral and bacterial infections. Hyperthermia treatments include:

- Steam shower
- Infrared sauna
- Ayurvedic steam
- Peat hyperthermia bath

Detox treatments help the body to eliminate its metabolites in an efficient, supported manner. Detox treatments include all of the hyperthermia treatments, with the skin being the largest organ of elimination. We also offer a wet sheet wrap as part of a detox program or to support detoxification from cessation of cigarette smoking or other drug dependencies.

Stress reduction therapies help reset the body to a more balanced state, creating an increased ability to respond to any stressors that may present. In a stressed out state, the body is in a "fight or flight" response, ready to run away from perceived danger. The following therapies help to induce a parasympathetic state, which is the state of deep relaxation. This relaxation can occur on many levels: physical, emotional, and spiritual. Many people find that they feel more peaceful, or "more themselves" after one of these treatments.

- Craniosacral therapy
- Visceral manipulation
- Constitutional hydrotherapy
- Myofascial release
- Massage

Because these therapies induce this deep state of relaxation, they also help bolster the immune system.