

Camden Whole Health Special Bulletin



A Note from Dr. Barb and Dr. Deb Regarding the COVID-19 Virus

Questions about the coronavirus (that causes the disease, COVID-19) have been on the forefront of our patients' minds this week. Dr. Barb and Dr. Deb here at Camden Whole Health want to address your concerns and share things that you can do to help keep yourself and your families healthy in this stressful time. We have included the basics from the CDC and immune support

strategies.

Here is a list of things you can do to help keep our community healthy. For ideas on what you can do to support your viral immune system, scroll down to read Dr. Barb's article linked below.

We also have a few requests that are italicized below that will help keep us all healthier.

Hand washing

The best thing we can all do is wash our hands for 20 seconds or more with soap and warm water. The friction of washing is the best antiseptic. Please wash after contact with surfaces that others may have touched like the grocery cart, your car, the bank, gas pumps, etc. as well as your own face. Our providers and staff will continue to wash hands and sanitize frequently. Hand sanitizers that are more than 70% alcohol will kill viruses and rubbing vigorously is advised.

- If you have not used hand sanitizer prior to entering the clinic, please stop at the bathroom and wash your hands.

Social Distance

As recommended by the Center for Disease Control, as much as possible, keep at least 5-6 feet distance between yourself and others to avoid respiratory droplets from those who may be sick with the flu or other viruses. Our phlebotomist and providers doing manual therapies will wear a mask when in closer proximity.

- If you have a cough, a fever or other symptoms of a virus, even if you think it is a cold or flu, please wash your hands upon entering the building and request a mask from our staff.
- In keeping with social distancing during this crisis, Dr. Deb and Dr. Barb are offering telemedicine visits for anyone who would like to have an appointment and who does not require "hands-on" services, like acupuncture, Naturopathic manipulations, Craniosacral therapy, etc. Please ask the front desk to schedule a telemedicine visit if you are feeling sick and concerned about infecting others, or if you are well and are reducing your public exposure. Keep in mind that if you are ill there is limited examination through a telemedicine visit and Dr. Deb or Dr. Barb

may further advise you to come into the clinic for care or go to your nearest hospital or urgent care center.

Cleaning Surfaces

There are no studies on how long this new virus stays alive on surfaces. A preliminary study published last week found that it could be detected in the air for up to 3 hours, up to 14 hours on cardboard and up to 2-3 days on plastic and stainless steel. We will continue to use clean hands when handling products in the pharmacy.

- The best practice for keeping yourself healthy when touching surfaces that others touch is to wash your hands frequently and avoid touching your face as much as possible.

What to Clean With

The CDC recommends that you clean surfaces with registered products labeled disinfectants or sterilizing agents. Here is a link to the CDC's registered products that were found to kill the flu virus that you can use in your home, car, and office:

<https://archive.epa.gov/pesticides/oppad001/web/pdf/influenza-a-product-list.pdf>

Proper cleaning methods

Experts advise that plenty of cleaning solution be used and that it be allowed to dry fully before a surface is considered sanitized and to avoid re-using wipes on several surfaces. Here is an article on how to properly clean surfaces in your home, car and office:

<https://www.consumerreports.org/cleaning/common-household-products-that-can-destroy-novel-coronavirus/>

If you have trouble finding your usual sanitizing agents at the local grocery store, you may find these at home:

Bleach

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend a diluted bleach solution ($\frac{1}{3}$ cup bleach per 1 gallon of water or 4 teaspoons bleach per 1 quart of water) for virus disinfection. Wear gloves while using bleach, and never mix it with anything except water. (The only exception is when doing laundry with

detergent.)

Isopropyl Alcohol

Alcohol solutions with at least 70 % alcohol are effective against coronavirus. Do not dilute the alcohol solution. Alcohol is generally safe for all surfaces but can discolor some plastics.

Hydrogen Peroxide

According to the CDC, household (3 %) hydrogen peroxide is effective in deactivating rhinovirus, the virus that causes the common cold, within 6 to 8 minutes of exposure. Rhinovirus is more difficult to destroy than coronaviruses, so hydrogen peroxide should be able to break down coronavirus in less time. Pour it undiluted into a spray bottle and spray it on the surface to be cleaned, but let it sit on the surface for several minutes. You do not have to wipe it off and it will decompose into oxygen and water, leaving no residue.

Hydrogen peroxide is not corrosive, so it's okay to use it on metal surfaces. But similar to bleach, it can discolor fabrics if you accidentally get in on your clothes.

Supporting Your Viral Immune System Naturally

by Dr. Barb MacDonald, ND, LAc

Our bodies have strong viral immune fighters built in. Cytotoxic T lymphocytes, natural killer cells and anti-viral macrophages recognize and kill virus-infected cells. As soon as a virus enters our body from respiratory droplets or contact with the mucous membranes of our eyes, nose and mouth, we start protecting ourselves. So, what can boost this natural innate wisdom in case we get exposed to any virus?

Increase Vitamins and Minerals

- Eat a healthy diet full of fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds. Antioxidant rich plant foods support the entire immune system and maintain strong barriers between us and microbes.
- Eating these foods will increase our stores of vitamin C: citrus, kiwi, papaya, berries, bell peppers, sweet potato and tomato. You can also take vitamin C in any form. A healthy dose would be 500 – 1,000 mg at

least once daily but up to bowel tolerance the first few days to replete the system. (Caution if you take a blood thinner.)

- Mushrooms in general stimulate the viral immune fighters and infection resistance
- Increasing your body's zinc stores helps you maintain a healthy viral immune system and reduces your risk of contracting contagious diseases. So, eat more legumes like chickpeas, lentils and beans, meat, seeds (especially pumpkin seeds), nuts, eggs and unrefined whole grains or take 30 mg zinc picolinate 1-2 times daily (with food to avoid nausea).
- Selenium is key to protecting the mucous membranes and increasing resistance to infections. Simply eating a few Brazil nuts a day provides more than enough selenium to support a healthy viral immune system. Other foods rich in selenium are sunflower seeds, eggs, shellfish, sardines, spinach and 100% whole grains.
- Vitamin D, often very low in our body in winter, plays a key regulatory role in the immune response to viral infection. Have your provider test your blood to ensure that you have at least 50 ng/mL blood level. Taking 2,000 iu daily or 15,000 weekly is a safe amount for most people if you don't know your blood level. (Speak to your doctor first if you have kidney disease or parathyroid disease.)
- Simply taking a high quality multi-vitamin/mineral may be a good choice at this time as well. If you have ever smoked, avoid those that only have beta-carotene in lieu of mixed natural carotenoids and choose one with vitamin E that includes mixed natural tocopherols.

Avoid Immune Suppressing Foods and Beverages

The immune system needs the above healthy foods to function at its peak. It also needs for us to limit or avoid things that suppress its function.

- Sugar and other sweeteners should be reduced or eliminated as studies have demonstrated that they alter our immune response to viruses and bacteria
- Alcohol to excess can suppress immune function
- Dairy products for some of us increase inflammation that can create a sticky home for viruses to live in the sinuses and lungs. Since this new

virus creates toxic dampness in Chinese medicine terms, avoiding sugar, dairy, excessive alcohol, rich foods in general is recommended

Herbal Anti-Viral Medicines

Many botanical medicines stimulate our antiviral immunity. There are many excellent single plants and herb combinations found in tea, tincture and even chewable forms. These are readily available at our local health food stores, from local herbalists like Herbal Revolution and Avena Botanicals and at Camden Natural Pharmacy. These are just a few antiviral herbs to consider:

- Elderberry
- Astragalus
- Mushrooms such as Ganoderma Reishi
- A combination product called ViraCon by Vital Nutrients can be purchased online or at the clinic.

Fresh Air, Plenty of Sleep, Exercise and Lots of Fluids

Fresh air has actually been studied in the context of forest walking to support natural killer cell levels in cancer patients. Getting plenty of sleep has been found in numerous studies to help us maintain proper immune function. Regular exercise that pumps microbes out of the lungs, moves the blood and detoxifies our bodies and improves immune function. A simple act like walking 20 minutes improves our white blood cell status and cleans the lungs of microbes. Get at least 6-8 cups of non-caffeinated fluids daily.

Homeopathy

If one were to contract a virus that caused fever, cough that stifles the breathing, swollen glands, fatigue, etc. consider the following homeopathic remedies to help the body help itself: Phosphorous, Bryonia, Lycopodium, Sulfur, Belladonna, Kali carb

Here is the complete article referenced

<https://www.doctorbhatia.com/treatment/coronavirus-covid-19-symptoms-homeopathic-remedies-for-treatment-and-prophylaxis/?v=7516fd43adaa>

Classical Chinese Herbal Therapy

Dr. Heiner Fruehauf, LAc, PhD conferred with Chinese doctors in WuHan and

found the following description to characterize the body's response to this particular virus. "Damp toxicity that lingers and clings to the sick person like "oil mixed into flour. When choosing a course of treatment, therefore, practitioners must be very careful not to mistake damp toxicity transforming into heat with heat toxicity accompanied by dampness. When treating this disease, therefore, the focus should be on resolving turbidity with aromatic herbs, thus outthrusting the surface and regulating the up-down dynamics of the Spleen/Stomach network." He recommends the following formulas to be considered: Thunder Pearls for prevention, Perilla and Lightning for exposure and with symptoms use Ease, Lightning and Fengsui Dan.

Perspective

While the spread of the novel coronavirus is very concerning, keeping it in perspective is important to help our stress levels. Many more people will die each year from viruses like the flu that most of us can fight with our masterful immune systems.

The rapid spread of this virus has brought together people from around the globe. Perhaps the silver lining will be compassion and peace as nations, countries and communities work together regardless of our differences, to keep each other healthy and care for those who are sick or have lost a loved one from Covid19.

To calm the mind and support the immune system by reducing stress practice mindfulness, being in the moment, therapeutic breathing and consider the apps: Headspace and Calm.

We will get through this together.

Dr. Barbara MacDonald is a naturopathic doctor, Chinese herbalist and acupuncturist at Camden Whole Health in Camden, Maine.

Drbarbmacdonald.com or <https://www.camdenwholehealth.com/practitioners/dr-barbara-macdonald/>
