



JANUARY 2012 WELLNESS

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Dear Friends,

Wishing you and your loved ones a healthy, happy, and prosperous New Year!

Warm regards,

Corey DiStasio, L.Ac.

NEW YEARS REVOLUTION

Acknowledging the new year is a great opportunity to recognize how closely we live with the seasons. January 1st marks the reset of the Gregorian (Western) calendar, which is synchronized with the solar year and the seasons created by the earth's revolution around the sun.

This year, January brings with it two New Year celebrations, as the 23rd marks the start of the Chinese New Year. The literal translation of the Chinese name for this holiday (Chun Jie) is "Spring Festival." It begins with the new moon occurring closest to the day traditionally viewed as the start of spring (Lichun). In the Chinese calendar, spring lasts from early February to late April. With the cold temperatures this time of the year, I welcome the thought of spring and the rising yang energy that is to come.



DANCE WITH THE DRAGON



Chinese astrology can be understood by looking at the intersection of various cycles of time. One cycle can be calculated by observing the orbit of the largest planet, Jupiter (approximately 12 years). In 2012, the animal corresponding with the 12 year cycle is the Dragon.

The Chinese Dragon represents good fortune and is associated with the mysticism and powers that are larger than what we experience in our daily lives. The Dragon brings wealth, virtue, harmony, and longevity. The Dragon is also known for bringing surprises.

Another cycle, which repeats every 10 years, relates to the Yin and Yang aspects of the 5 Elements (Water, Wood, Fire, Earth, and Metal). 2012 is a Yang Water year. As Water is a Yin element, its influential energy is more balanced in a Yang year. The Yang Water emphasizes the flow of things and should keep the activities of the year moving smoothly.

The channeled and substantial properties of Yang Water can tame the wildness of the Dragon making a Yang Water Dragon year very auspicious for creating and achieving realistic goals.

For more information about the Water element and winter's seasonal energy, read my Winter Bulletin.



The cold, dry weather of winter can cause eczema to flare up during this time of year. Eczema, or atopic dermatitis, is a chronic, inflammatory skin condition characterized by redness, scaling, vesicles, and itchiness. The cause of eczema is not clearly understood from the Western biomedical perspective. It may be associated with type 1 hypersensitivity reactions, relating to an immediate allergic response. It most often appears in infancy and is not commonly developed after the age of 20. Although there is no evidence that eczema is inherited, more than 80% of babies develop it if both parents have the condition.

Through the lens of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), there are several possible patterns that correspond to the Western diagnosis of eczema. Successful treatment is achieved by addressing the underlying patterns of disharmony that cause the condition to manifest. While topical herbal applications can be used to ease symptoms, internal herbal medicine is needed to eliminate both acute and chronic presentations.

The most common TCM pattern in people with eczema is **Damp Heat**. If Damp is more predominant, skin lesions will have more exudate and be weepy or oozing. Redness, itching, and dryness indicate more Heat. In infancy, chubbier babies who sweat will tend towards damp and skin lesions will be more yellow. Symptoms of thinner or weaker babies tend toward heat and lesions will tend to be drier with more white scales, and possibly have cracking. Damp Heat can be caused by a poor diet (lots of sugary or greasy foods, dairy, and with infants dependent on formula), which weakens the digestive and immune systems. This is known as Spleen and Stomach Deficiency in TCM and needs to be addressed in treatment.

Another pattern is Heat in the Blood showing more redness, dryness, and intense itchiness. Usually, this heat is generated by the Heart, and has some emotional involvement. Blood Dryness with Dampness can be seen in chronic eczema, as heat will damage the Yin and lead to dryness. As fluids (Yin of the body) accumulate in the skin and ooze out, this damages Yin and also leads to dryness. Damage to the blood may need to be addressed if lesions remain hyperpigmented after healing. In addition, treatment must focus on Wind, which manifests as itching, as well as Fire Toxins, corresponding to the higher populations of staph bacteria found in the lesions, a common feature of eczema.

In addition to herbal medicine and acupuncture to treat eczema, these tips can help with symptoms.

- 1. Take caution with certain foods**– Avoid common food allergens such as eggs, milk, peanuts, soybeans, shellfish, and gluten (wheat, oats, barley, rye). Also, avoid foods that weaken the digestion. According to TCM, excess consumption of fatty, spicy, fried, sweet foods and dairy weaken the energy of the Spleen.
- 2. Take helpful supplements**– While eating fish may worsen eczema, the omega-3 fats in cod liver oil can be beneficial to reduce inflammation. The fats in Flax seed oil can also be of help. Taking probiotics can aid the digestion and the immune system.
- 3. Take precautions to avoid having immune reactions**– Avoid exposure to people with colds and the flu. If you have airborne allergies, keeping clear of triggers (dust, mold, pollen, etc.) can keep your immune system stable and prevent flare ups. For more on cold and flu prevention, read my Winter Bulletin.
- 4. Keep your skin moist**– Staying clean is important but frequent hand washing and bathing can strip your skin of moisture. Using glycerin soaps or lotions can attract moisture to your skin in humid air but can leach water away from your skin in arid climates and dry, winter months. Always apply a good quality moisturizer after bathing.
- 5. Avoid skin irritation**– Contact with wool and extreme air or water temperatures (cold and hot) can worsen eczema.

To find out more about this information or to schedule an appointment to treat your eczema, contact Corey DiStasio, L.Ac. Tel: 917 881-4878, Corey@CoreHealthNY.com

UPDATED JANUARY YOGA SCHEDULE



**Wednesdays at 1:30 pm and Sundays at 9:30 am
at OM Yoga, OMYoga.com**

Classes are 1 hour and 15 minutes long and open to people with all levels of yoga experience.

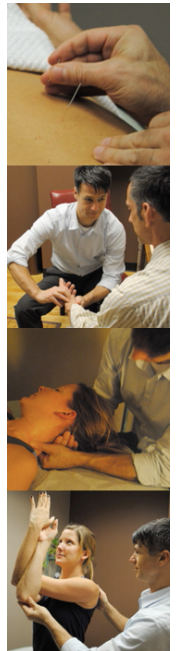
SERVICES

Acupuncture treatment– Individualized treatments can address specific health concerns, reduce pain, relieve stress, and strengthen your body's ability to prevent disease. Sessions include a thorough health consultation and assessment, and a relaxing treatment experience with meditation and bodywork selected to enhance the effects of acupuncture.

Herbology consultation– Based on your needs, Chinese herbal medicinal formulas can be provided to treat a wide variety of conditions and support your well being. Consultations include discussion of your health and lifestyle to guide the appropriate treatment. Formulas can be given as ready-to-make or pre-cooked teas, as powders, and as pills or capsules.

Bodywork sessions– A range of massage techniques, acupressure, and myofascial manipulation are provided to help soothe the nerves, soften tension, and realign the body. Sessions can be tailored for your specific needs to focus on areas of concern or for overall wellness. 30 and 60 minute sessions are available.

Yoga classes– Classes can be personalized to focus on rehabilitating specific areas of the body with pain or injury or taught for overall physical conditioning. One-on-one instruction is a very safe way to practice and easily modified for your fitness level. Scheduling a class can be convenient for people with a hectic lifestyle and beneficial for those who want to develop their yoga practice. 30 and 60 minute classes are available.



Multiple services can be combined in one session to enhance your experience.

Gift certificates are available.

**For more information visit CoreHealthNY.com or contact Corey DiStasio, L.Ac.
Tel: 917 881-4878, Corey@CoreHealthNY.com**

LOCATION



**928 Broadway (at E. 21 Street)
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Other practitioners in this location: Dr. Ivy Branin, SimplicityHealthAssociates.com;
Dr. Weymin Hago, EmpireNYMedical.com; Dr. Karl J. Bauer, GramercyChiropractic.com