

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2018



MAXIMISE YOUR FERTILITY

By Dr of TCM, Kim.

SURVIVING SPRING

By nutritionist Laura P

9 TIPS FOR BETTER SLEEP

By Naturopath Laura Y

& a delicious recipe for PB & J Oats

By your local team of natural health practitioners: Laura P, Kim & Laura Y.

By Laura P.

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GUT FRIENDLY

peanut butter & jelly oats

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 CUP ROLLED OATS
- 1 TBS CHIA SEEDS
- 3/4 CUP WATER
- 1 CUP ALMOND/COCONUT MILK OR WATER
- 1/2 TSP CINNAMON
- 1/2 CUP MIXED BERRIES
- 1 HEAPED TBS NATURAL PEANUT BUTTER
- 1 TSP HONEY (OPTIONAL)

Method: Add oats and chia seeds to a bowl and cover with the 3.4 cup water, leave in fridge to soak (30 mins min but overnight is best). Place soaked oats in pot with cinnamon and extra milk/water. Gentle simmer on a medium heat for 3-5 mins, until warmed through. Place berries and a spoon of water in a separate pot to warm. Mash to create a jam consistency. Pour oats into a bowl, add the berries and berry syrup and drizzle with peanut butter and honey.

9 Tips to a Better Night's Sleep

BY LAURA YEN, NATUROPATH.

1. **GOOD SLEEP HYGIENE** Do you like your bedroom? Is it peaceful and relaxing? If your bedroom is cluttered and dirty you're probably not going to enjoy being in it. Create a sleep environment that you love. Get rid of any clutter in the bedroom and under the bed.

2. **SOFT LAMPS** Instead of bright lights, a dark environment in the evening is essential for melatonin production which is the hormone that regulates your sleep/wake cycles.

3. **EAT YOUR DINNER AT LEAST 2 HOURS BEFORE YOU GO TO BED.** This gives your body time to digest your food before you go to sleep. If you're still trying to break down your dinner when you go to bed your body can't focus on rest and repair and you probably won't have a very sound sleep.

4. **TRY TO EXERCISE IN THE MORNING.** Some people find that exercising at night amps them up too much but exercising in the morning helps to provide energy to get through the day.

5. **TURN ELECTRONIC DEVICES OFF** Watching or reading the news is likely to stimulate your mind too much to be able to have a restful sleep, so are best avoided in the evening. This rule also applies to work. If you must bring work home from the office, finish up one hour before bed time so that you can release all of the work clutter from your brain before you retire.

Sleep is very important for mental and physical health. If you can get yourself into a healthy sleep routine you will feel more energetic, get sick less often and your days will be more productive.



6. **TRY TO SPEND THE HOUR BEFORE BED RELAXING.** Dim the lights, have a bath, meditate, do yoga, listen to calming music, write in your journal (to get rid of those circling thoughts), and remember to breathe deeply.

7. **GO TO BED AT 10PM** or as close to 10pm as possible. Studies have shown that the optimum sleep/wake times are 10pm-6am. Getting up early allows you time to do your exercise, have a good breakfast and generally be more productive. Going to bed at 10pm allows your body enough time to get into the deep stages of sleep to repair and restore your body effectively. Did you know that your adrenal gland does it's repair between 11pm and 1am? If you aren't deeply asleep between these hours your adrenal gland never gets a chance to restore itself which can lead to fatigue, anxiety and burn out.

8. **NATUROPATHY** Naturopathic medicine such as herbal medicines, vitamins, and minerals can help. These are best prescribed by your practitioner to get the right fit. You may require magnesium to help relax your nervous system and muscles. Maybe you need a vitamin B complex in the day time or herbs for stress and anxiety? There is even a Bach Flower specifically for 'unresolved circling thoughts' which I often put in my sleep mixes to help switch the worry off at night.

9. **DRINK HERBAL TEAS** The right herbs can help relax your nervous system and induce a restful sleep. These may include Lavender, Passionflower, Chamomile and Lemon Balm. Try Burton Health TeaStress or Rest and Digest to help unwind your nervous system in the evening.

SPRING CLEAN YOUR DIGESTIVE SYSTEM

By **Laura Phongsavath**, nutritionist.

If winter has left you feeling a little sluggish, tired and run down, then it might be time to give your digestion a little “spring clean.” A well-functioning digestive system does more than excrete waste, it ensures the effective break down and absorption of nutrients, regulates the immune system, and helps with the production of hormones, neurotransmitters and overall energy production. So by making sure things are moving as they should in the bowel, can mean your body and mind functioning better as a whole!

Here are 4 easy ways to help support that wonderful system:

- Eat more fibre

There are two main types of dietary fibre – insoluble and soluble. Insoluble fibre doesn't break down, but instead helps to add bulk to your stools, ferments to feed the beneficial bacteria in your gut and basically “sweeps clean” your digestive tract.

The soluble kind mixes with water to become gelatinous which slows down movement to allow for more nutrient absorption, keeps you fuller for longer and helps to stabilise blood sugar levels. Both kinds are needed to help support healthy bowel movements!

Insoluble sources: Brown rice, buckwheat, quinoa, wheat bran/whole wheat, legumes (eg. lentils and chickpeas), spinach, kale, corn, kiwi, berries, almonds, walnut, pumpkin seeds and chia seeds.

Soluble sources: fruits and vegetables (especially sweet potato, pumpkin, carrots, okra and green beans), rolled oats, legumes, lentils and beans.

- Keep your hydration up

Adequate hydration is essential for overall health, but in chronic digestive issues it becomes even more important to ensure you're drinking enough water. If you're experiencing constipation, or your stools are dry and hard to pass, increasing your water intake can help to hydrate and soften everything, making the process a whole lot easier. Aim for 2L of water a day, and if you struggle to drink this amount, include things like naturally flavoured water (add bits of fruit or fresh herbs into your bottle of water), herbal teas, bone broth or miso soup into your routine.

- Enjoy more warm, cooked foods

Cold, raw foods, especially tough fibrous vegetables (eg. kale and carrots) can be hard for the body to break down, especially if your digestive system is already under-functioning to begin with. Opting for lightly sautéed/steamed or even roasted/slow cooked foods can be helpful in improving digestive function as you've done some of the hard work for your body. Swap some of your raw salads for roasted veggies, your cold yoghurt, fruit and granola for warm bowls of porridge and stewed fruits, and your frozen fruit smoothies for eggs and sautéed veggies.

- Manage your stress

Your central nervous system has two main phases: sympathetic (“fight or flight”) and parasympathetic (“rest and digest”). When you are presented with stress/danger, your sympathetic nervous system essentially pauses the “less important” functions like digestion, and blood is diverted away from your organs and into areas like your limbs to help you fight or escape.

When your digestion is slowed down or paused, it can cause issues like heartburn/indigestion, bloating, cramping, constipation or diarrhoea. Reducing or managing your stress, especially around eating time, is a good way to improve your digestive function as it allows your body to switch from your sympathetic to parasympathetic state. There is a reason why it's also called your “rest and digest” phase, because your digestion works best when you are calm and relaxed.



3 Tips to Improve Your Fertility Potential

BY KIM GATENBY, DR OF CHINESE MEDICINE

Even if procreation isn't on your radar yet, your fertility potential can actually be a good sign of your general wellbeing. While we all have to go through the ageing process, there are some nifty ways to turn back the clock on your sperm and eggs to help prolong your fertility, and improve your chances of conception. Here are my top 3 tips for how to do just that.

1. Basic Nutrition

As much as we like to ignore this one, the food we put into our bodies does have an impact on our overall health, and not just our waistline. Foods that are closer to nature, ie less processed, contain higher amounts of nutrients and antioxidants, which are the foundations of egg and sperm health.

Supplements can help to fill any nutritional gaps, but they should always be prescribed by a natural health practitioner who has done extra training in fertility. One of my favourite supplements to improve egg and sperm quality is Co-enzyme Q10 (CoQ10). CoQ10 is an antioxidant that has been scientifically shown to improve the quality of sperm and eggs, making them stronger and more likely to result in a healthy embryo.

2. Stress Reduction

This one can often feel out of reach for some people, especially when life is inherently stressful these days, but you can definitely improve your body's response

'Men and women can both maximise their fertility while improving overall health, with just a few small changes to their lifestyle.'



to stress. The time it takes to become pregnant has been shown to be longer in women who are more stressed, so this is not a step to skip!

Start by writing a list of your favourite things to do that make you happy and feel calm. It could be taking a warm bath, reading a novel, or even a warm cup of herbal tea. Make time in your schedule for these activities in the evening to help you unwind and get good quality sleep, which will help manage stress.

Acupuncture has also been shown to reduce stress, and helps your body adapt to tough times better, which is why it's a great adjunct to fertility treatments.

3. Chinese Medicine

A recent review of studies showed that Chinese herbal medicine can increase fertility potential 2-fold in the space of 3-6 months compared to drug therapy. Amazing right!?

Chinese medicine focuses holistically on what is going on in your body as an individual, rather than just your clinical diagnosis. By maximising your health overall, you will naturally be improving your fertility as well. Our reproductive systems are just one part of our whole body, after all.

Working towards improving fertility potential doesn't need to be daunting. With the right support and a positive attitude to improving your wellbeing, you will be well on your way to maximising your fertility potential.



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