

# Newsletter

Winter 2011

## **Insomnia:** by Ian Murray B HSc (Acu) Acupuncturist & Chinese medicine practitioner

We have all experienced the odd sleepless night here and there. Those nights when you have trouble falling off to sleep or when you do fall asleep it is uneasy and you toss and turn waking often or perhaps you wake too early and can't get back to sleep. Most of us would be unaware however that if you experience sleep disturbance for more than a month you have chronic insomnia. All too often we tend to think of insomnia as a minor inconvenience but getting good quality sleep is just as important to our health as having a good diet and regular exercise. Insomnia that appears to be minor can affect you both mentally and physically resulting in a reduced quality of life. Insomnia can lead to health issues such as weight gain, depression, anxiety, poor immune function and can lead to an increased risk and severity of long-term diseases such as high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes.

The Victorian government's better health channel says that sticking to a sleep routine is the first place to start. It also recommends the simple home strategies in the following table:

Another simple home remedy is the milk drink "Horlicks". Many patients with insomnia benefit from a warm cup of Horlicks before bed.

If these simple remedies aren't enough to restore your regular sleep patterns then you should seek professional help. Here at *Kenmore Centre for Health* we have developed an approach using a combination of acupuncture, Chinese herbal medicine and specific nutritional supplements to calm and balance the autonomic nervous system and promote a healthy sleep pattern. Remember, chronic insomnia can lead to health issues such as weight gain, depression, anxiety and poor immune function. Any steps which improve the quality and quantity of sleep can also improve your physical and mental wellbeing.

### Healthy Sleep Tips

Don't nap during the day.	Cut down on smoking and drinking.
Avoid tea, coffee and other caffeinated drinks before bed.	Don't exercise strenuously before bedtime.
Do something to relax, such as meditate or have a warm bath.	Avoid 'judging' your sleep on a day-to-day basis.
Go to bed later.	Stop reading, worrying or watching television in bed and limit your activities in the bedroom to sleeping.
Only go to bed if you feel sleepy.	
If you can't sleep, get up, go to another room and do something else until you feel sleepy again.	Get up at the same time every morning regardless of how much sleep you have had.

## **A Naturopathic Approach to Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS):**

by Ruth Sladek, BHSc (Nat) BHSc (Nut) Naturopath - Nutritionist.

Irritable bowel syndrome is a common and distressing condition experienced by about one in five Australians at some time. Symptoms include abdominal bloating, gas, diarrhea and/or constipation as well as increased anxiety or depression. It is rare for a first episode of IBS to occur after the age of 40. There is no structural damage in IBS but because a number of other conditions can have similar symptoms it is always important to see a doctor initially to exclude another diagnosis. Conventional care is usually symptomatic because there is no specific cause of IBS. Therapy usually involves using smooth muscle relaxants for pain as well as laxatives and anti-diarrhea agents for proper bowel function. The use of certain antidepressants has also shown some improvement in a number of IBS sufferers. The Naturopathic approach to IBS aims to identify and treat underlying and associated imbalances in the body which irritate the bowel. A range of common issues are found time and again which respond well to naturopathic care.

**Food sensitivities:** About two thirds of people suffering from IBS are thought to have food intolerances. The most common ones are lactose (from dairy) and grain (especially wheat).

Continued over page ...

### In this issue:

- Insomnia
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome
- Immune tonic foods
- Practitioner news
- Ian Murray elected AACMA President

### Last issue:

- Stress management for flood victims
- The clinic's chronic disease strategy
- Start with a detox
- What is dry needling?
- Hot stone massage

Back Issues available at:  
[www.kenmorehealth.com.au/newsletters-downloads](http://www.kenmorehealth.com.au/newsletters-downloads)

### Specialised treatment for:

- Back Pain
- Neck Pain
- Insomnia
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)
- Plantar fasciitis (heel spur)
- Trochanter bursitis
- Achilles' Tendonitis
- Fertility
- Pregnancy care
- Detox

**Cold and Flu kit available now from reception!**

**Six week Professional detox package available.**

Gift Vouchers Available  
Vouchers can be used for massage, acupuncture, naturopathy or products including our new organic skin product range.

**Ph 3878 4477**



Fast claims... on the spot

### IBS continued...

It is rare for IBS sufferers to have true food allergies so standard food allergy tests (IgE) or skin prick tests are not helpful. An elimination diet as well as specific testing for food sensitivities can be useful in this case.

**FODMAPS** : This stands for Fermentable Oligosaccharides, Disaccharides, Monosaccharides and Polyols. These are a collection of molecules found in food. These molecules can be poorly absorbed by some people and if not properly digested in the small intestine they continue on to the large intestine where bowel flora ferments the FODMAPS. This fermentation can cause bloating, pain, wind and changes in bowel habits. An avoidance of certain foods high in FODMAPS can be useful in this case.

**Dysbiosis**: The normal bacterial environment in the bowel can become out of balance following poor diet or antibiotics.

Correcting bowel flora often helps IBS and can reduce FODMAPS intolerance. The presence of certain parasites or candida (yeast overgrowth) can also be responsible for symptoms associated with IBS. The Naturopathic approach identifies possible dysbiosis and then treats this with a comprehensive bowel detox and restoration program.

**Stress**: There is a direct link between increased stress levels and the severity of IBS symptoms. Whether the stress is a cause or effect of IBS is uncertain but treating stress often improves IBS.

IBS is often complex however a holistic approach involving specific dietary modification and careful supplementation and lifestyle factors can offer better control and confidence for many people experiencing IBS.

---

### Immune Foods: by Ruth Sladek, BHS (Nat) BHS (Nut) Naturopath - Nutritionist

I am often asked which foods and nutrients support the immune system. As the key to arming yourself against colds and flu is a healthy and strong immune system, here are some tips to keep your immune system strong throughout our chilly months with an emphasis on diet and lifestyle.

**Vitamin C** is fuel for our white blood cells (immune defense cells). C nourishes and strengthens our immune system and is also one of the strongest antioxidants protecting our cells. So include plenty of vitamin C containing food into your winter diet like navel oranges, fresh strawberries and pineapple. The body can only absorb a limited amount of vitamin C at one time so small amounts frequently if you are feeling a sniffle is the best option.

**Zinc** is needed for the development of T cells which protect us from viral infection. Zinc is also a wound healer and a natural anti-inflammatory. Foods high in zinc are pumpkin seeds, sea food and eggs.

**Manuka Honey** is a strong natural antibacterial so if you feel like you are getting an itchy throat drink some hot lemon water with ginger and manuka honey, it will soothe the throat and kill off nasty bacteria at the same time!

**Garlic** is a true super food! It is antibacterial as well as a general immune tonic, Garlic is also known to help lower cholesterol and blood pressure. So eat lots of it! Especially raw!

**Herbs** : certain Herbs such as **Echinacea**, **Andrographis**, **Astragalus** or **Pelargonium** are excellent immune tonics however it is best to consult a Naturopath or Herbalist for optimum herbal immune support.

**Keep active!** Regular vigorous activity has also been shown to boost our immunity. It's also a healthy and sustainable way to get warm.

**Rest and relaxation** is probably the most important one of all. If our immune system becomes run down it can no longer protect us and we get sick. We become run down if we get stressed and keep pushing ourself. So take time to relax and if you do feel like you are getting sick take some time off and get plenty of TLC.

---

### Practitioner News: Clinic members have been active in a range of activities lately:

**Congratulations to Ian Murray who was elected National President of the Australian Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Association (AACMA)**. Ian takes up this role with the imminent registration of Acupuncture & Chinese medicine under the National Registration & Accreditation Scheme for the Health Professions. From 1 July 2012 only registered practitioners will be able to use the title Acupuncturist or Chinese medicine practitioner.

**The Australasian Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Annual Conference (AACMAC) was recently held in Perth**. Two of the clinic's practitioners presented workshops and papers at the conference. **Ian Murray** conducted workshops on acupuncture point injection therapy for low back pain and trochanter bursitis. **Stephen Janz** delivered a keynote address and conducted a workshop on plantar fasciitis.

**Stephen was awarded best overall paper** at the conference for his paper *Dry Needling: where has it come from and where is it going to : Issues and Risks*. Stephen reported his research finding that the best qualified acupuncturists in Australia identify as Chinese

medicine practitioners, typically completing a four year degree in acupuncture and/or Chinese medicine. Medical practitioners often complete a distance education graduate certificate or similar program in acupuncture. Physiotherapists, massage therapists and other health professionals typically complete a two or three day course even though quality postgraduate programs are available. These short courses are usually called 'dry needling'. The World Health Organization advises against short courses in acupuncture because of the risks associated with brief training in acupuncture. Stephens's paper has been published in the *Australian Journal of Acupuncture & Chinese Medicine* and is available online at:

[http://www.acupuncture.org.au/articles\\_&\\_abstracts.cfm#link1](http://www.acupuncture.org.au/articles_&_abstracts.cfm#link1)

**Our Naturopath Ruth Sladek** attended the annual Natural Medicine Congress in Melbourne in June. This congress brings together the latest research and clinical strategies in natural medicine from around the world. Of particular interest were the latest clinical approaches to children's health, fertility and pregnancy. Clients directly benefit from Ruth's ability to implement the latest insights and innovations in their treatment.

**Our Practitioners: Acupuncture & Chinese Medicine:** Stephen Janz, Ian Murray, Michelle Blum  
**Naturopathy:** Ruth Sladek **Massage:** Karen McGrath, Uli Graf, Teena Stefanovic