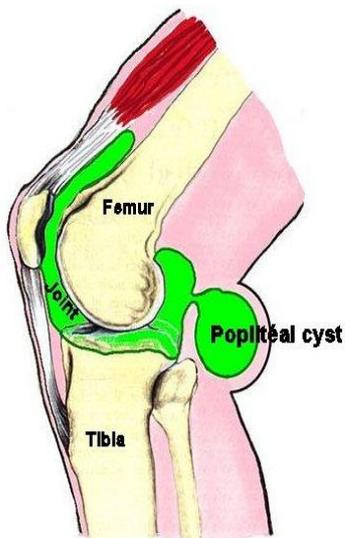


Newsletter

Spring 2011

How to Keep on Your Feet with a Baker's Cyst

Do you have trouble straightening out your leg? Do you have a soft lump at the back of your knee? Does your knee ache in bed at night? Are you avoiding exercise because of this? Chances are that you may have Baker's cysts. A Baker's cyst (also called popliteal cyst) is a build up of fluid in a bursa of the knee. Bursa are fluid sacks which act like cushions to allow the muscles and tendons to move freely around the bones of the knee. An injury, torn cartilage or arthritis in the knee commonly leads to a build up of fluid in a bursa in the knee resulting in a soft lump at the back of the knee. This lump is not always obvious but it restricts the normal movements of the knee and can lead to a persistent ache. The back of the knee usually feels tight when the leg is straightened out. Although a Baker's cyst is a sign of other damage in the knee, treating the Baker's cyst itself often reduces pain and discomfort and increases mobility. Conventional treatment usually involves medication for the underlying arthritis or surgery for the damaged cartilage. In some cases fluid can be removed from the cyst however it often comes back again.



Acupuncture is another way of treating this condition which usually leads to a reduction in pain, increased mobility and a reduction in pain relieving medication. Four or five acupuncture treatments about a week apart usually results in significant improvement. Follow up treatment between four and eight weeks apart often keeps the condition under control. Glucosamine with chondroitin and Methylsulfonylmethane (MSM) along with fish oil are useful supplements which often help to manage any underlying arthritis and inflammation. It is surprising how many people put up with this condition without realising that in most cases it responds well to treatment. With ageing one key to health is maintaining mobility so don't let a Baker's cyst keep you off your feet!

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

Do you keep losing your car keys & your mojo?

Maybe you have adrenal fatigue. Adrenal fatigue, sometimes called adrenal exhaustion, is one of the most under diagnosed conditions in western society. It has been estimated that 80% of adults suffer some sort of adrenal fatigue. Unlike diseases of the adrenal glands like Cushing's syndrome or Addison's disease which require careful medical management, adrenal exhaustion is a functional imbalance of the adrenals. This functional imbalance can be assessed by salivary cortisol testing if necessary and responds well to naturopathic care.

Adrenal fatigue is marked by a wide range of symptoms including ongoing fatigue and a feeling of exhaustion, poor sleep, hard to get out of bed in the morning, a decreased ability to cope with stress, poor concentration and brain fog, depression, anxiety, sugar and/or salt cravings, weight gain especially around the abdomen and an inability to lose weight, low sex drive and poor immunity. Long term stress is the usual trigger for this condition. This can be physical (excessive exercise, pain), mental (pressure at work, uni, school) or emotional (conflict with family or work colleagues). Often it is caused by a combination of these but can also be from an isolated stressful event. There are three stages of adrenal fatigue as cortisol levels change from high to fluctuating and finally to low. Naturopathic treatment focuses on identifying the correct stage then rebalancing the cortisol levels as well as tonifying the adrenals and improving the overall stress response. It is important to determine what stage of adrenal fatigue is present to choose the appropriate combination of herbs. Herbs such as rhodiola, withania and various types of ginseng can be...

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... useful here. Nutrients like B group vitamins and especially vitamin B5 are also essential in improving stress responses and adrenal functions. Vitamin C is also important in adrenal hormone production as well as being an antioxidant and immune stimulant. A diet high in easily digestible protein, low in sugar and any stimulants can also aid the recovery of the adrenals. Of course other measures that assist with managing

ongoing stress such as meditation, exercise, massage and acupuncture can also play an important role in long term stress management and wellness. Identifying and treating adrenal fatigue however helps to overcome the often chronic and stubborn underlying basis of anxiety, fatigue, depression and unwellness by restoring the normal function of this important but often overlooked hormone system.

Hayfever and Chinese medicine

For many people spring is synonymous with Hayfever – sneezing, a runny nose; itchy ears, nose and throat; red, itchy and watery eyes; headaches and lethargy. Also known as allergic rhinitis, hayfever is often worse in spring when pollens and grasses are abundant. Hayfever is an allergic reaction to what are otherwise harmless substances. The body's immune reaction tries to drive out the allergen by sneezing and increasing mucous production to "wash away" the allergen. Other triggers can include dust mites, moulds, animal hair and even a rapid temperature change. Avoiding allergens where possible is best. This might be easy if the problem is cat hair and you don't own a cat but very difficult if airborne pollens are the problem.



Avoid going out on windy days to reduce airborne exposure, and smearing some Vaseline inside the nostrils to stop the pollen from entering the nose can help. Drinking plenty of water can flush some of the troublesome histamine out of the

body and rinsing eyes with cold water can flush out some of the pollen as well. Antihistamines are a common medication to help with this complaint as are eye drops. A salt water nasal spray can relieve nasal congestion however more severe cases are often offered a steroid spray. Immunotherapy desensitization treatment by a medical specialist is another option for some where an unavoidable allergen is clearly responsible.

Natural medicine can also help this condition. Acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine have long been used to help with hay fever (and its often related sinusitis) and two Australian randomised controlled trials have proven their value. In one trial acupuncture twice a week for eight weeks gave good results. Chinese herbal medicines typically include herbs that not only manage symptoms but also moderate the immune response as well. In the clinic we typically combine acupuncture and herbs in treatment to achieve a faster longer-term result. Another simple strategy (provided you do not have a severe allergy) is to consume locally produced honey. Local honey contains local pollens and for some can be a do it yourself desensitization program.

Practitioner News Clinic Director Stephen Janz will be speaking at the **International Forum and Exhibition on Integrative Medicine** in Sydney in October. Stephen will be speaking on the practice of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Australia. The aim of the Forum is to bring together researchers, industry and practitioners involved in the practice and integration of evidence based Chinese medicine with conventional healthcare services. It is a prelude to the opening of a purpose built Centre of Excellence in Integrative Medicine. The Centre of Excellence in Integrative Medicine is a \$75 million collaborative initiative of the NSW Government and the Government of the People's Republic of China. The Centre of Excellence is aimed at holistic patient care, wellness, health prevention and early intervention of chronic diseases. Specialist visiting medical staff and support services will be provided by the Chinese Government, while other partners in the venture, including the University of Western Sydney, will support clinical education and research with PhD students and post-doctoral staff.

<http://www.healthpac.com.au/forum/sci.html>

Hot & Sour Cabbage Soup by Linda I love this simple and quick recipe from my sister. A great little boost for your digestion with the beneficial ingredients of cabbage, turmeric, ginger, lemon, coriander and garlic. Also a great recovery after feasting or eating rich foods. Serves 3.



- 1 inch finely chopped Tumeric
- 1 inch finely chopped Ginger
- 2 cloves finely chopped Garlic
- 1-2 finely chopped Birdseye Chillies (depending on heat preference)
- 1 small onion cut into fine rings
- 2 cups of finely shredded cabbage
- 6 cups Chicken Stock (heated in a separate saucepan)
- 50g Glass (Mung Bean) Noodles
- 1 thinly sliced chicken breast
- Juice of half a lemon
- Handful of chopped fresh Coriander
- 1 Tble spoon Olive Oil

Warm oil in saucepan and add Tumeric, Ginger, Garlic and Chilli. Gently warm for a couple of minutes. Add onion and gently sauté 2 minutes. Add cabbage and stir over heat 1 minute. Add hot chicken stock and bring to boil. Add noodles, boil 5 minutes. Add chicken and boil 3 minutes. Before serving add lemon juice and coriander.

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