

**Life Begins With a Breath®**  
**The Chinese Medicine Guide to Health**  
**Courtesy of the Goodman Wellness Center**

## **Summer's coming to an end**

Oh yes, it is true, the glory days of summer are at an end. Even if you have been out of school for 50 years, you're probably still carrying that early conditioning of "**summers off!**" Most of us still have the idea that our vacation begins in June and ends in September. I know we all still go to work, but it is hard to shake that feeling of those *lazy days back when we were kids*. With September upon us, stress starts to begin to pile up again. The responsible thoughts start, planning begins all over again and those lazy days seem to vanish into thin air. I see it year after year in my practice. People seem to recover miraculously from ailments in June and then get sick again in September and October. There is no clear-cut cause or purely medical reason other than that old conditioning. It's summer time and time to relax. Since that stress-free time of year is about done I wanted to talk about an area of the body that is highly affected by stress. No, not your head: your belly and all of the organs inside.

## **My belly and stress?**

Yes, your belly. The organs that make up that region of your body are the **stomach, small intestine, large intestine, gall bladder, pancreas, spleen, the bladder and partially the liver**. That's right almost all of them. When you get stressed out none of it wants to work. You may experience *belching; heartburn; constipation; borborygmi (talking stomach); stomach or abdominal pain and bloating; and diarrhea*. These are just to name a few. No one will be able to take your stress away, but there are some things you can do to help protect your organs from the effects of stress.

## **Protection against stress**

*Diet: well balanced and rich in fruit and veggies*

*Exercise: increases overall blood circulation*

*Sleep: 7-9 hours per night and one short nap midday*

*The Belly Massage: daily*

### **Belly Massage©**

I call it the belly massage because it sounds better than abdominal massage. Anyhow, it is important for you to understand that you should massage your belly daily. One sure-fire test to see how we are doing is palpating the belly. Is there any pain or discomfort? Odds are there is or will be depending upon your stress levels. ***Here are the steps to help your organs function and move what may be stuck:***

1. Start under your rib cage and begin a gentle but deep massage with your finger tips following both sides of your rib cage
2. Move down the center of the abdomen pressing gently but deep down toward your pubis bone (*the first bone you will come to*)
3. Place your hands on either side of the umbilicus (*belly button*) and again massage gently and deeply, moving out to the sides of your abdomen

4. Spend time in the areas that you feel discomfort by placing pressure directly on the area and taking three long breaths (*don't spend all day because you will not solve the problem that quickly*)
5. Vigorously massage with your palms in a circular motion covering your entire abdomen 18 times
6. **Reverse the direction**
7. Vigorously massage up and down the abdomen with your palms for a count of 30 seconds
8. Rest your hands on your lower abdomen for a few seconds and you're done

*It will take you all of few minutes to complete, so time is not an excuse.* Your daily belly massage is for maintenance and prevention of your abdominal organs. If there is any pain that persists, your body needs more assistance to regain its normal function. Call Steven M. Goodman L.Ac. at 949-460-9378 if that is the case.

## **Digestive Aids**

If you want to give your digestive system a little help try to add the following suggestions to your daily regime:

- ***Fresh ginger***: It is excellent for nausea and indigestion. The tea also helps to fend off colds in the early stages
- ***Radishes***: They help the gall bladder and aid in the prevention of gallstones. One before meals is the best
- ***Lemon tea***: Warm lemon juice (*fresh squeezed*) also helps to prevent gall stones.
- ***Orange peel tea***: Excellent at adding the digestion and relieving bloating after a large meal
- ***Prune juice***: I know it's not a great thing to drink, but it helps digestion by cleaning out the intestinal tract as a mild laxative
- ***Zucchini***: Steam or boil and add some ground almonds. They are good for a weak digestion

***Eat lots of veggies and fruits each day.***

## **Taming the Dragon**

This herbal concoction is used to help restore the digestive system after a holiday or vacation. The ingredients are:

2 ounces papaya juice  
6 ounces grapefruit juice  
1 dropper ginger  
1 dropper hawthorn berry

Pour juices into 8-ounce cup and stir. Add the ginger and hawthorn berry drop extracts and stir.

Recipe from “Elixer’s Tonics and Teas” by Stein and Veytia

**If you are still suffering from digestive issues such as heartburn, bloating, diarrhea, constipation or other pain please call Steven M. Goodman L.Ac. at 949-460-9378.**

**Thank you for all your support and just pretend summer is with you all year.**