

UPMC Center for Integrative Medicine

Dedicated to increasing knowledge about safe and effective complementary and integrative medicine approaches.

Grandma Knew What She Was Talking About

It's interesting to learn that much of our research supports some of the things that grandma told us. Also, many things that we do every day support our health. Here are updates from the research world to keep in mind as we start the New Year.

Have a nice warm relaxing cup of tea:

Let's face it—this time of year can be hectic and anxiety-provoking for many of us. L-Theanine, an ingredient found in green tea, was found to reduce heart rate, anxiety, and stress levels as well as blunt the body's immune reaction to a stressful task. So find time to sit down and enjoy a cup of green tea.¹

Get in touch with your spiritual side:

We've known for a long time that religious observance is health promoting, but it's not clear why. Gary Bernston, PhD and colleagues from Ohio State found that spirituality helps to regulate heart rate and the cardiovascular system and may have a protective effect against heart disease.²

Better nutrition, better mental health:

A healthy diet quality score was inversely related to depression and anxiety, in other words, the healthier a person eats, the less anxiety and depression a person has. A healthy diet was defined as one that includes fruits and vegetables as "core food groups" and includes two or more servings of fruit per day and four or more servings of vegetables, and avoids processed foods as much as possible.³

Eat your fruits and vegetables for better health:

Diets high in fruits and vegetables have been shown to be associated with improved survival in two groups of cancer patients. Improved diet was protective for

women with early stage breast cancer (in combination with exercise) and people with Stage 3 colon cancer (in combination with low fat, low red meat and low refined carbs).^{4,5}

Managing stress can help your health:

A review of mindfulness intervention studies for patients with cancer found that people reported improvement in stress levels, anxiety, and depression. Several studies measured immune system function and found improvement in serum cortisol as well as cytokines (chemicals that produce inflammation). While we don't know how this will affect the cancer, helping the immune system to work better can't hurt.⁶

“Ess, ess, mein kind ” (Eat, eat, my child)

— chicken soup is good for you. Chicken soup has long been hailed as a cure-all during cold and flu season. Bringing a bowl of homemade chicken soup to a sick patient is comforting, to be sure, and in recent years scientists have come up with research to prove that it has measurable health benefits by the standards of modern medicine, not just Grandma's wisdom. Researchers Stephen Rennard, MD, Barbara Rennard, BA, and colleagues at the Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine Section at the Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha found that homemade chicken soup (as opposed to commercial, canned soup) inhibited neutrophil migration — meaning it reduced inflammation, a common characteristic of colds and the flu. In an older study, Kiumars Saketkhoo, MD, and colleagues revealed that chicken soup, even more than plain hot water, increased nasal mucous velocity — meaning that it enhanced mucous secretions which can help in the management of upper respiratory

infections.^{7,8}

¹Kimura K. Ozeki M. Juneja LR. Ohira H. L-Theanine reduces psychological and physiological stress responses. *Biol Psychol.* 74 (1):39-45, 2007 Jan.

²Berntson GG. Norman GJ. Hawkley LC. Cacioppo JT. Spirituality and autonomic cardiac control. *Ann Behav Med.* 35(2):198-208, 2008 Apr.

³Jacka FN, Mykletun A, Berk M, Bjelland I, Tell G. The association between habitual diet quality and the common mental disorders in community-dwelling adults: the Hordaland Health study. *Psychosom Med.* 73(6):483-490, 2011 Jul/Aug.

⁴Pierce JP, Stefanick ML, Flatt SW et al. Greater survival after breast cancer in physically active women with high vegetable-fruit intake regardless of obesity. *J Clin Oncol.* 25:2345-2351, 2007.

⁵Meyerhardt JA, Niedzwiecki D, Hollis D et al. Association of dietary patterns with cancer recurrence and survival in patients with stage III colon cancer. *JAMA.* 298:754-64, 2007.

⁶Shennan C. Payne S. Fenlon D. What is the evidence for the use of mindfulness-based interventions in cancer care? A review. *Psychooncology.* 20(7):681-97, 2011 Jul.

⁷Rennard BO. Ertl RF. Gossman GL. Robbins RA. Rennard SI. Chicken soup inhibits neutrophil chemotaxis in vitro. *Chest.* 118 (4):1150-7, 2000 Oct.

⁸Saketkhoo K. Januszkiwicz A. Sackner MA. Effects of drinking hot water, cold water, and chicken soup on nasal mucus velocity and nasal airflow resistance. *Chest.* 74(4):408-10, 1978 Oct.

Contributions by Ronald Glick MD, Engkeat Teh LAc, Deborah Grice-Conway PhD, Sari Cohen ND, and John Laird ND

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2012 Lectures and Classes at the UPMC Center for Integrative Medicine

UPMC Employees receive 75 Take a Healthy Step points for attending all lectures and classes at CIM.

January

Thurs. 1/5 – 3/8	7 – 8:00 a.m.	QiGong & Meditation Space still available \$10/class	\$100	Joseph Bozzelli, MMQ
Tues. 1/3 – 3/6	6 – 7:00 p.m.	Tai Chi—All Levels, Space still available \$10/class	\$100	Joseph Bozzelli, MMQ
Mon. 1/16 – 2/20	3:15 – 4:45 p.m. 6 – 7:30 p.m.	Yoga — Level I (6 sessions)	\$75	Alicja Walczak, MS, CRS
Wed. 1/18 – 2/22	5:30 – 7:00 p.m.	Yoga — Level I (6 sessions)	\$75	Alicja Walczak, MS, CRS
Thurs. 1/19	5:30 – 6:30 p.m.	The Alexander Technique: A Proven, Safe, Self-Care Method to Relieve Pain, Stress, and Muscle Tension	FREE	Lisa Levinson, AmSAT
Wed. 1/25 – 2/22	5:30 – 7:00 p.m.	Alexander Technique 5-week series, including two 1/2-hr private sessions	\$200	Lisa Levinson, AmSAT

February

Mon. 2/13	7 – 8:00 p.m.	Mindfulness Meditation Orientation Session	FREE	Carol Greco, PhD
Thurs. 2/16	5:30 – 6:30 p.m.	Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction: Tools and Tips for Increasing Your Happiness	FREE	Carol Greco, PhD
Mon. 2/27–4/16	6:30 – 8:30 p.m.	Mindfulness Meditation Class (8 sessions)	\$300	Carol Greco, PhD
Mon. 2/27– 4/2	3:15 – 4:45 p.m.	Yoga — Level II (6 sessions)	\$75	Alicja Walczak, MS, CRS
Mon. 2/27– 4/2	6 – 7:30 p.m.	Yoga — Level I (6 sessions)	\$75	Alicja Walczak, MS, CRS
Wed. 2/29 – 4/4	5:30 – 7 p.m.	Yoga — Level I (6 sessions)	\$75	Alicja Walczak, MS, CRS

March

Thurs. 3/15	5:30 – 6:30 p.m.	Massage, Hands-On Workshop for Self-Care	FREE	Jessie Violet Larson, NCTMB
Thurs. 3/15 – 5/3	12 – 1:30 p.m.	Mindfulness-Based Anxiety Reduction (8 sessions)	INS.	Dinnie Goldring, LCSW

UPMC Center for Integrative Medicine Team

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The Center for Integrative Medicine at UPMC Shadyside is a hospital-based center in Pittsburgh that combines natural healing practices with conventional medicine. "Integrative medicine" refers to the incorporation of evidence-based complementary therapies into conventional treatments for patients. Integrative medicine is meant to work in conjunction with traditional medicine, providing a more holistic approach to healing — mind, body, and spirit.

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