

# NATURAL MEDICINE NEWS

BOULDER NATURAL MEDICINE CLINIC

ERIK FLATLAND, ND

## Natural Medicine News

### Welcome to Natural Medicine News!

Dear patients and friends,

This inaugural issue of Natural Medicine News is kicking off what will be a monthly newsletter dedicated to sharing with you, your family and friends the most up to date and interesting information in natural medicine. I discuss many diseases and illnesses that can be effectively treated using natural medicine. It is my wish that you have this information in order that you may lead a more comfortable, full and rewarding life and that you may also help your family and friends with improving their health.

This first issue of Natural Medicine News will focus on the philosophy of naturopathic medicine and help to guide us as we explore a variety of medical conditions and their answers. If you are

ever unable to figure out what to do, you can refer back to this beginning issue and review the basic underlying principles of naturopathic medicine.

Without further ado, let's begin a discussion of the philosophy of naturopathic medicine.

### Philosophy of Naturopathic Medicine

*The healing power of nature, vis medicatrix naturae*

The body has the inherent ability to establish, maintain, and restore health. The healing process is ordered and intelligent; nature heals through the response of the life force. The physician's role is to facilitate and augment this process, to act to identify and remove obstacles to health and recovery, and to support the creation of a healthy internal and external environment. (continued on page 2)

### Beyond (Synthetic) Hormone Therapy

**A New Study Raises Fears About the Risks For Millions Of Women. Here's What You Should (quotes from Newsweek July 22, 2002)**

"Federal health officials announced that Prem-pro does significantly more harm than good. Women had been told for decades that estrogen taken with progestin would not only ease hot flashes and insomnia but would help preserve bone strength, mental

acuity and, most important, heart health. There's no question that HRT can ease the acute symptoms of menopause and the claim about bone strength has held up to scrutiny. After observing more than 16,000 women for roughly (continued on page 3)



## Philosophy of Naturopathic Medicine (continued from page 1)

### *Identify and treat the cause, tolle causam*

Illness does not occur without cause. Underlying causes of disease must be discovered and removed or treated before a person can recover completely from illness. Symptoms are expressions of the body's attempt to heal, but are not the cause of disease. Symptoms, therefore, should not be suppressed by treatment. Causes may occur on many levels including physical, mental-emotional, and spiritual. The physician must evaluate fundamental underlying causes on all levels, directing treatment at root causes rather than at symptomatic expression.

### *First do no harm, primum no nocere*

Illness is a purposeful process of the organism. The process of healing includes the generation of symptoms which are, in fact, an expression of the life force attempting to heal itself. Therapeutic actions should be complementary to and synergistic with this healing process. The physician's actions can support or antagonize the actions of the *vis medicatrix naturae*. Therefore, methods designed to suppress symptoms without removing underlying causes are considered harmful and are avoided or minimized. Therapeutic actions are applied in an ordered fashion congruent with the internal order of the organism.

### *Treat the whole person. The multifactorial nature of health and disease*

Health and disease are conditions of the whole organism, a whole involving a complex interaction of physical, spiritual, mental, emotional, genetic, environmental, social, and other factors. The physician must treat the whole person by taking all of these factors into account. The harmonious functioning of all aspects of the individual is essential to recovery from and prevention of disease and requires a per-

sonalized and comprehensive approach to diagnosis and treatment.

### *The physician as teacher, docere*

Beyond an accurate diagnosis and appropriate prescription, the physician must work to create a healthy, sensitive interpersonal relationship with the patient. A cooperative doctor-patient relationship has inherent therapeutic value. The physician's major role is to educate and encourage the patient to take responsibility for health. The physician is a catalyst for healthful change, empowering and motivating the patient to assume responsibility. It is the patient, not the doctor, who ultimately creates/accomplishes healing. The physician must strive to inspire hope as well as understanding. The physician must also make a commitment to his/her personal and spiritual development in order to be a good teacher.

### *Prevention, prevention is the best cure*

The ultimate goal of any health care system should be prevention. This is accomplished through education and promotion of life-habits that create good health. The physician assesses risk factors hereditary susceptibility to disease and makes appropriate interventions to avoid further harm and risk to the patient. The emphasis is on building health rather than on fighting disease. One cannot be healthy in an unhealthy world, and therefore, it is the responsibility of both physician and patient to create a healthier world in which to live.

Naturopathic medicine is a distinctively natural approach to health and healing that recognizes the integrity of the whole person. The practice of naturopathic medicine emerges from these six underlying principles of healing. It is these principles that distinguishes true alternative medicine from other medical approaches.

**"Symptoms are the expressions of the body's attempt to heal, but are not the cause of disease."**

The Natural Medicine News is a private health letter based upon the practice and research of its Editor, who is a naturopathic doctor. This journal is not intended as an advisory on specific cases but as a forum of popular and professional inquiry on issues of health and healing. In all cases I urge readers to discuss the Editor's ideas on these issues with their own health-care practitioners. Copyright, 2002 by Boulder Natural Medicine Clinic. All rights reserved.

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**(Beyond (Synthetic) Hormone Therapy  
A New Study Raises Fears About the Risks For Millions Of Women. Here's What You  
Should (quotes from Newsweek July 22, 2002)**

(continued from page 1)

"...hormones in Prempro raise the risk of heart attack, stroke, blood clots and breast cancer."

five years, researchers found conclusively that the hormones in Prempro raise the risk of heart attack, stroke, blood clots and breast cancer. The announcement caused a near panic among 13 million American women now on HRT. Wyeth Pharmaceuticals the maker of Prempro, saw its stock price plunge by 25% overnight."

What this article fails to discuss is that Prempro is not the estrogen that is naturally produced by women. Prempro is not bio-identical to what human beings manufacture in their bodies. Prempro contains a synthetic conjugated estrogen. The progesterone in Prempro is a synthetic progestin. The article does a wonderful job discussing what synthetic chemicals can do to women's bodies if taken over a long period of time. The article does not discuss the usage of bio-identical or "natural" hormones.

Drugs companies can either patent the chemical and/or they can patent the delivery system of a drug that they manufacture. A natural molecule like ordinary estrogen cannot be patented. (It *can* be sold within a patented delivery system.) Natural molecules work quite well and if taken at a reasonable dosage the side effects are nil. Natural hormones are well metabolized because the liver recognizes these molecules and has the metabolic enzymes to detoxify them reducing the length of time that they circulate and stimulate cells in the body. Synthetic hormones like Prempro present a difficult problem because the liver has a comparatively difficult time metabolizing a chemical it is not familiar with. These synthetic estrogens also cause much stronger stimulation on cells than the ordinary estrogen that is produced by the body.

The alternative to taking the synthetic hormones like Prempro and Premarin is to take the natural hormones or

phytoestrogens (plant chemicals with estrogen-like activity). Also isoflavones and Vitamin E have a proven track record in reducing menopausal symptoms. Now if we could only get proper research performed on the natural bio-identical hormones. This probably will never happen because the drug companies have found that it is not economically feasible to spend millions of dollars and not be able to have a patentable product.

For more information on natural hormones and other treatment for menopause please ask me at your next visit.

It appears that most arthroscopic surgeries are no more effective than pla-

**Black Cohosh Plus-Herbal Support  
for Healthy Hormonal Balance in  
Women**

Black Cohosh Plus is a unique herbal formula designed to provide support for women during the reproductive and menopausal phases of life. Black cohosh was traditionally used by native North American women during menopause, and is especially popular today in Europe. This valuable herb is combined with lemon balm and motherwort, herbs traditionally used to ease tension and support relaxation.

Black cohosh was used to relax the muscles in the pelvic area, and to maintain menstrual cycle balance. The chemical profile of black cohosh-most notably phytoestrogens, triterpene glycosides, and salicylates-account for its relaxing and hormone balancing influence. Motherwort was used to induce quiet and lighten the mood during times of stress. Lemon balm was used to relax the reproductive system and relieve irritability. Dosage: 1 tablet 2 times daily.

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*Where you always find  
natural answers to your  
health problems.*

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### Is Knee Surgery A Waste of Time and Money?

cebo. Dr. Nelda Wray who led the study at the Houston VA Medical Center, "I will not be performing this surgery anymore and I hope other doctors stop doing it also."

Researches divided 180 patients into three groups: two groups had damaged cartilage removed, while the third got simulated surgery. An equal number of patients in all groups felt better after two years. About 650,000 people have the surgery each year and they're wasting their money, says Dr. Wray. Are the people who received the fake surgery mad? No. In fact, they are still reporting that they feel much better!

Obviously if a person's knee pain is caused by a cartilage tear or severe degeneration, surgery may be the

most appropriate treatment option available. If a person's knee pain is caused by a small amount of cartilage degeneration an operation appears to be no more effective than a mock operation. What does this mean? Should everyone with knee pain get fake surgery in order to relieve their pain?

Another type of treatment, *prolotherapy* or stimulated ligament repair, has been studied to reduce the pain associated with osteoarthritis arthritis of the knee while providing increased strength and flexibility. Prolotherapy will be discussed in-depth in a future *Natural Medicine News*.