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## **TOPIC OF THE MONTH**

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### **THE BEST THERAPIES IN LIFE ARE FREE**

This is the start of a two month / two part topic ... This month is the good news, how simple it is to be healthy and next month is the "bad news" ... How much we have gotten wrong over the last 40-50 years concerning our health, food, and medicine.

The best way to stay healthy? Breathe deep every day. "In humans, the failure of oxygen energy metabolism is the single most important risk factor for chronic disease including cancer and death." From [GreenMedInfo.com](http://GreenMedInfo.com) article by Capt. Randall.

**Deep breathing** is a simple and free way to improve your health -- improving your health from a cellular level. Is getting to the root of our Healy. Most every process in a cell needs oxygen, including how nutrients get into our cells. When cells lack oxygen they mutate and become dysfunctional, this is the start of a broad range of diseases -- including cancer, cancer thrives in the lack of oxygen.

The prescription? Breathe deep and a bit slower most of your day. Inhaling and exhaling both through your nose. Inhaling through your nose filters the air you breathe, humidifies it to just how your body needs it, and turbinates or spirals the air down deeper into your lungs where you have more oxygen rich blood (the lungs are gravity fed so blood accumulates in the lower lobes first).

Exhaling through your nose is important too, most western fitness "experts" tell you to exhale through your mouth, however you absorb more oxygen into the cells when you exhale through you nose. This is due to the fact that our plasma absorb more oxygen under pressure -- hence the reason for hyper-baric oxygen treatments for people dealing with disease. . Exhaling through your nose creates a back pressure that helps us absorb more of the oxygen. It's that simple. And if you think of it, slightly flare your nostrils with each inhale to further increase the amount of air taken in.

As you can remember, slow down your breath rate to about a five second inhale and a five second exhale. This allows more time for the lungs to absorb oxygen from the air we breathe, and excrete more carbon dioxide.

Yoga practices place importance on the breath, if you practice yoga this is a good time to set your habit with your breath. If you create the habit when you are operating under good stress free circumstances it is easier to recall the habit during other busy or stressful times in your day. Yoga also includes breathing exercises called pranayama that improve how your body handles oxygen, these are very beneficial as well. And most meditations are centered around breath awareness. Any of these techniques will help to oxygenate your tissues :)

So far ... The best therapies in life are free, here is a list of simpler lifestyle adaptations that can improve your health and how you feel every day:

### **Mother Nature**

Earthing and sunshine are two easy ways to improve health in our bodies. Earthing is the process of putting your bare feet on Mother Earth. We absorb negative electron charges from the earth through



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our feet. These negative electron charges reduce inflammation and pain in our body, improve how our blood flows, promote healing, reduces stress, reduces PMS, and they also help us sleep.

The sole of your foot has more nerve endings inch per inch than any other part of our body. This is why the popular K1 acupuncture point is located on the bottom of our foot, near the ball of our foot, centered. In Chinese philosophy this point is called the "bubbling well". When this part of our foot is connected to earth we absorb more electrons. Also our feet (and head and hands) sweat the most, water being a conductive carrier helps us absorb this energy as well. The body is very intelligent.

Sunshine is not bad for us. Sunshine is our source of vitamin D. Vitamin D is an important fat soluble vitamin that supports our immunity. Because it is fat soluble we can store it in our fat tissues for the winter months, this is important since the sun is too far away in the winter to provide us with vitamin D. From April through November it is important to get a minimal of 30 minutes of sunshine per day to help support your immunity all winter long when we need it the most. You want to expose your skin to the sun where the sunshine mixes with the cholesterol on our skin to make vitamin D. And don't shower for several hours after being in the sun or you simply wash a good portion of it away.

It is important not to get sun burned, this is still shown to increase your risk for skin cancers. Your body slowly will acclimate to the sun. Also certain foods help give us sun protection from the inside out, coconut oil and certain fishes especially. Tidal pool fish or fish that get exposed to the sun such as salmon, lobster, crabs, etc. produce an antioxidant called astaxanthin that protects these fishes from the sun. It does the same for us when we eat these fish.

Coconut oil gives us sun protection from the outside and inside, putting coconut oil on your skin is about an SPF of 4. And I have seen some preliminary data that pomegranate seed oil may be as high as an SPF of 30 when blended with other carrier oils and rubbed on our skin.

Do NOT use sunscreens, not only do these block your absorption of vitamin D, they are also loaded with toxic chemicals and nano particles that get through your pores and into your blood stream where they confuse your immune system and put you at increased risk for autoimmune diseases.

Light clothing is also a good option when you will be in the sun for long periods of time.

Sunshine recharges our batteries :). There is some interesting research coming out by dr. Gerald Pollock that shows Sunshine charges and alkalinizes the water in our bodies.

Short on time? Exercise outdoors in your bare feet when weather permits. This is a nice trifecta approach, you get your earthing, sunshine, and exercise all at once :)

## **Sleep**

Sleep is an important part of our health. Consistently getting less than six hours sleep per night sets us up for a series of ailments.

Number one your brain shrinks! This sets you up for a higher risk of dementia and Alzheimer's as you age. While we sleep our brain detoxes (we just recently discovered that our brain has its own lymphatic system -- termed the glymphatic system). When we get less than six hour sleep per night our brain is not able to completely detoxify.



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Number two when you have inadequate sleep your head is foggy and you can not think as well resulting in a more challenging time making decisions.

Number three lack of sleep messes with our blood sugar and sets one up for diabetes. You crave more food when you have less sleep. There are scientific explanations as to why this happens. Personally I feel it is your body looking for energy wherever it can get it!

Most research shows most people thrive with 7-9 hours of sleep per night. It is important to plan your life around this sleep time. Getting up at 4am do to your yoga practice is only beneficial if you have adequate sleep first, otherwise you are better off sleeping.

Having a night of bad sleep here or there is part of life and won't wreck your health, it is when sleep is consistently deprived that it becomes problematic. If you do get a short nights sleep or have problems falling asleep naps are good! A 20-30 minute nap in the afternoon can help recharge your batteries for the remainder of the day. And for those who struggle with falling asleep naps help your body practice falling asleep, so hopefully it becomes easier to do so at bedtime. Also it has been helpful for me to turn off all normal lights by 9pm and use only orange light bulbs or candle light. Orange light or firelight does not interfere with your melatonin production, melatonin is secreted by your pineal gland which is connected to your eyes and senses light. In the evening as the sun sets and light fades, cortisol production drops (cortisol wakes us up!) as your melatonin increases. This helps to prepare your body for sleep.

### **Don't marinate in stress hormones all day**

There is some exciting new research exposing that staying in your calming side of your nervous system for most of your days operations is a big part of staying healthy. When you understand how the body works and how the nervous system programs it, this makes perfect sense.

There are two sides to our nervous system, the parasympathetic nervous system which is our digest and rebuild program, and the sympathetic nervous system which releases stress hormones that divert all our energy to our muscles to run, fight, and a little to our brain to think quick. Being in your stress response for 20-30 seconds a couple of times per day is not harmful -- and at times helpful! Like when a car swerves your way on the road, you are able to react quickly-- then emergency over and no more stress hormones necessary.

To marinate all day in these stress hormones is a problem. When we are in our stress response all systems of our body go into a holding pattern; digestion stops, organs slow down, immune function is impaired. In a stress response the most important thing is to get safe again. Once we can get back in to operating within our parasympathetic nervous system, digestion turns on helping us to extract nutrients from our foods, organs operate more functionally keeping our body healthy, and immune function gets strong killing diseases, bad bacteria, and cancerous cells. This is where we want to be most of our days.

The easiest ways to stay functioning throughout our day in our parasympathetic nervous system is to MEDITATE, learn to not believe most of the thoughts that run through your mind. Our mind thinks silly thoughts all day long that are simply not true and have nothing to do with reality, when we believe



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them we stress ourselves out. It's always better to take a wait and see approach instead of stressing about a situation you may be worrying about.

DEEP BREATHING stimulates our parasympathetic nervous system of which the receptors to are in the lower lobes of our lungs. The upper lungs house the sympathetic nervous system receptors and are stimulated with shallow breathing.

BANDHAS :) or internal muscular contractions. Certain areas of our body can stimulate either side of our nervous systems. Both mula bandha and uddiyana bandha stimulate the parasympathetic nervous system. Mula bandha is akin to a little anus squeeze . . . And uddiyana bandha is a pulling inward and upward of our lower abdomen giving our spine support and making us feel light in our movements by picking ourselves up by our "boot straps" so to speak.

When we are operating in our parasympathetic nervous system most of our day this also makes another important tenant of health easier ...

### **Just give Love**

Our emotions effect our health greatly (especially our heart health). This goes hand in hand with some of the other best free therapies already expressed; deep breathing and operating in our parasympathetic nervous system make it easier to respond in all situations with love. Its earlier than you think, just try it. And if you don't feel it, in some situations it is ok to "fake it until you make it". There are times I have had to do this and I have always been surprised at the turn of events when I do.

### **Yes, We Need to Move Our Bodies**

Exercise ... It's does not have to be what you think it has to be. We need to move our bodies. Not just like an hour in a gym or an hour and a half on our yoga mats (if you're an ashtangi ...) — and this too is helpful but more in the quantities of 20-30 minutes in the gym or 20-75 minutes on your yoga mat (including meditation and pranayama), but most important are little movements all day long. Try not to sit for more that 20 minutes at a time (as I type this I am sitting in a three hour plane ride from Istanbul to Hamburg in a tight seat in a packed plane ... And I want to move!). Lifestyle is the answer. A lifestyle that has you running up and down steps, hanging out laundry, diggin in your garden :), cooking from scratch, walking to work, riding your bike to the store, playing with your children or grand children or nieces and nephews, and moving your body all day long is most beneficial.

All this deep breathing we learned about gets the oxygen in our bodies, now we need to circulate that oxygen to cells and tissues. When we sit "things" like blood, lymph, and neurons do not circulate well. A big portion of our health is circulation. Movement circulates. Wherever in our bodies circulation is stagnant it is like mini "heart" attacks. When your heart does not have good circulation it stops working ... Same thing else where, if your big toe does not have circulation you have a "toe attack" you develop things like gout, bunions, and deformations of the foot that create pain.

### **Nutrition! FOOD IS YOUR MEDICINE!! Especially Herbs.**

I have written extensively about food as medicine . . . but not only medicine — food is your preventative medicine. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. The best way to stay



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healthy is to eat real food and make it yourself. **Recipe is a french word that means “medical prescription :)”**

Vegetables! Ideally buy as much as local, in season, organic produce as possible. A farmers market close by, or a CSA are ideal ways to keep this easy. Each meal — especially lunch and dinner (maybe not so much breakfast) try to make the bulk of your meals vegetables.

Herbs are very medicinal, so adding herbs to your meals and teas is a wonderful way to keep illness at bay, here are a few tips:

- 🕉️ Oregano for any virus or to combat candida
- 🕉️ rosemary for memory loss and to enhance cognitive function
- 🕉️ turmeric to heal your liver and kill cancer
- 🕉️ ginger for pain, inflammation, any digestive issues, and anytime you feel ill
- 🕉️ peppermint for digestive issues
- 🕉️ Black pepper to help your body digest and absorb nutrients from the foods you eat
- 🕉️ fennel for PMS
- 🕉️ cumin to help relieve gas and bloating
- 🕉️ thyme is good for hormonal issues (as is pomegranate)
- 🕉️ flax seeds are good to reduce your risk of breast cancer
- 🕉️ black seed for asthma and allergies
- 🕉️ basil to relax you
- 🕉️ tulsi to balance adrenal function and reduce stress
- 🕉️ cinnamon to balance blood sugar
- 🕉️ chili peppers to reduce phlegm in your lungs and to thin mucus to help get it out of your body
- 🕉️ Salt (real mineral salt — no processed salt!) to help your body digest foods

This is just a sampling off the top of my head, the list of herbs and their benefits goes on and on.

Eggs from pastured and loved hens is good protein source, omega3 source, and good to keep your HDL cholesterol up.

Eat a small condiment size of fermented foods with each meal, such as:

- 🕉️ sauerkraut
- 🕉️ kimchi
- 🕉️ olives from an olive bar
- 🕉️ kombucha
- 🕉️ pickles
- 🕉️ vinegar
- 🕉️ Raw cheese
- 🕉️ yogurt (grass fed, full fat, plain, raw, local if possible)
- 🕉️ cottage cheese
- 🕉️ sour cream
- 🕉️ mustard
- 🕉️ kefir

Nuts and seeds are good for you, they are nice for breakfast.





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Fruit in small amounts and eaten alone. Best first thing in the morning, then wait 20-30 minutes and have some nuts and/or yogurt drizzled with some honey and cinnamon.

Always eat fruit as they are in season, as for tropical fruits that many can not get locally they are important to include in your diet too. Citrus is especially good in the winter. Here are some fruits and their benefits. Fruit comes from the Latin word “frui” meaning to “use and enjoy”.

- ॐ grapefruit for infection
- ॐ lemon to kill bacteria and for kidney stones
- ॐ pineapple for pain and to kill cancer
- ॐ watermelon for high blood pressure
- ॐ cherries for inflammation and pain
- ॐ pomegranate for hormones
- ॐ papaya for skin ulcers
- ॐ kiwi to help control cholesterol
- ॐ cranberries for UTIs
- ॐ Elderberry for the flu
- ॐ coconut for stomach ulcers
- ॐ strawberries for heart disease
- ॐ blueberries to keep you from getting sick in the winter and to kill cancer
- ॐ apples for fiber and regularity

FAT! Yes we need fat! We need more saturated fat than any other fats. Eat fat and watch your health and skin improve.

- ॐ Grass fed butter and ghee — use liberally and for cooking
- ॐ coconut oil put a teaspoon in your morning coffee or tea for brain power and detoxing. Also good for cooking with.
- ॐ avocados — eat one per day when they are in season (summer and winter).
- ॐ olive oil (DO NOT COOK WITH) drizzle on salads and foods after cooked.

This is just some sampling to get you started on your way to health through foods. These are simple remedies and ways to learn how to cook for yourself that is not time consuming or complicated. Just give it a try and be pleasantly surprised :)