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November Newsletter: H1N1 Flu – Getting Perspective Current Research, Powerful Prevention, Safe Treatments

Naturopathic Flu Clinic: Feel sick? Can't get an appointment? 20 min slots available for acute illness. Walk-in Naturopathic Clinic for flus and colds (pls call before you come): Thursdays 10am-11am

Greetings! H1N1 is in the news on a daily basis. This constant coverage has created a lot of confusion and fear, especially for those that are expecting and those of us with children. Hopefully this newsletter will provide you with clarity, greater peace of mind, and information to make an informed choices. It is also my hope you to arm you with knowledge on effective prevention and treatment of the flu. I will keep updating you as new research evolves and if anything changes in regards to this flu. Those of you who know me, know that I am thorough: you will find this newsletter comprehensive and is significantly longer than future newsletters will be.

What is important at this point in time is to **quell fear** and **give you tools** to combat the flu and ensure a mild course of illness if it is contracted. Currently the public is far more alarmed about H1N1 than the medical community is.

Important Points:

- Though it is contagious and there are a high proportion of people getting this flu, H1N1 is still considered medically to be a **mild** disease from which 98.1% of the population will survive. Thousands of people have already had this flu.
- We have many tools to prevent infection, strengthen the body's defense against the virus and we **CAN** strengthen the body's ability and efficiency in ridding it self of the virus.
- 99% of the population survived the 1918 flu pandemic despite there being no access to ventilators, antibiotics or antiviral medications at that time to deal with complications from the flu. Death rate numbers were complicated by a 3% (of 20-50 million people) mortality caused by aspirin toxicity, as it was the only first line treatment available at that time.
- 1.9% of a large population is a fairly big number but is still only 1.9%. No one wants their loved ones or themselves to be in that one percent. The media reports as many of the one percent as possible, which is creating havoc. Hearing about cases of healthy young people dying is terrible, yet the stats do remain at a 1.9% death rate. It is also possible that not all of the pieces of the puzzle were presented. (more later)



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For Perspective:

1.6 million people died from TB in 2005

1600 die daily from AIDS in the USA, 25 million people have died from AIDS since 1981

Death by car accident and murder are higher than the risk of dying from the flu.

*Death from this flu is currently **RARE**.*

Definition of Epidemic:

“ A disease that spreads rapidly through a demographic segment of the human population such as everyone in a given area, a military base, or similar population unit or everyone of a certain age or sex, such as women or children of a region is affected.” Epidemics can include metabolic disease such as obesity and diabetes.

---Mosby's Medical Dictionary

Definition of Pandemic:

“Denoting a disease affecting the population of an extensive region, country, continent; extensively epidemic.” –Mosby's Medical Dictionary

About the Flu

Flu viruses constantly change their make-up slightly because:

1. When they replicate, mistakes are made in copying their own DNA creating mutations and slightly different flu viruses
2. Flu viruses can combine with each other making unique new viruses

This is why creating a vaccine for the flu is tricky business. The virus constantly changes. H1N1 is combination of 4 different virus strains that all affected 1 pig, creating a very new and unique virus.

What You Can Do to Prevent Flu Infection and/or Ensure a mild illness should You Get it

1. Physically minimize exposure and contagion to the virus
2. Fortify your immune system against the Flu
3. Help your body fight the flu should you get sick

Your body is extremely intelligent and when it is given the tools it requires, your body can mount a powerful response to keep you healthy and/or minimize effects. When you look closely at our immune system's physiology, we see the necessity of various vitamins and minerals, and we see how important it is to exclude of toxic foods and other health detracting factors. The flu virus is after all, around us all the time.



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Flu Symptoms

Symptoms of H1N1 are fairly indistinguishable from the seasonal flu and overlap with your average cold. They are:

Almost always: fast onset, fever and cough

Common: fatigue, tiredness, muscle aches, sore throat, headache, decreased appetite, runny nose, stuffy nose

Sometimes (more frequently in children): nausea, vomiting, diarrhea

These symptoms will generally run their course and resolve. Muscle aches may last 2-4 days and the flu will resolve in 2-7 days.

www.cdc.gov/flu/about/diseases/symptoms.htm

What to Watch For: Signs of Pneumonia or Respiratory Distress

The condition will appear to be getting better and then will get worse, fever returns, lots of green mucus is being coughed up, chest pain, constriction and shortness of breath may occur. Should this occur, go to Emergency for antibiotics and ventilation, anti-inflammatories.

Risk of Contracting H1N1

H1N1 is more contagious than the seasonal flu. The virus still sheds 8-10 days after the fever breaks. This is why the government is recommending (finally!) to **stay home when you're sick.**

Risk in Order:

People with chronic illness under the age of 65. People above the age of 65 without chronic illness are less affected to date.

Low socio-economic status.

Pregnant women

Children 6 months to 5 years.

Preschool aged

People in remote or isolated communities

Children 5-18

These risk trends all reflect immune system status. Children have an immature immune response while the elderly have a weaker immune response. When women are pregnant, the body naturally down regulates her immune system to avoid rejection of the baby. People with low income or living in isolated communities have poor nutrition and less access to care.



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Your body terrain is essential to your ability to resist the flu. Mold will not grow in a sunny and dry environment because it loves dark and damp. What you put in it and what it is missing massively contributes to your immune system's effectiveness.

Viruses and bacteria are present all year round. Why do we tend to get sick in winter?

1. Studies show that viral activity mimics human vitamin D status in the body. In winter, we lack vitamin D, which plays a key role in immune system health. (for the scientists: Vitamin D is essential for prominent mechanisms in both cell mediated and innate responses eg. antimicrobial peptide production)
2. Temperature: viruses have protective coats which are more fragile in summer, and remain more intact in winter .

The Importance of Fevers: “Give me a fever and I can cure any disease.”

Hippocrates 460 to 370 BCE

Fevers are essential to effectively fight the virus and should be carefully managed, but not fully suppressed with Tylenol. The increased temperature destabilizes the virus and other invading bacteria and activates your immune system. Colds resolve much quicker when a healthy fever response is mounted and is effectively managed. (Discuss proper fever management with your ND)

An Interesting Tid Bit: Research has shown that selenium deficiency, an essential mineral for your immune system and antioxidant pathways, is a driving force behind influenza mutations. Our own poor nutrition is contributing to the creation of newer, more virulent flu strains! FASEB J 15: 1846-1848; 2001 also Free Radic Biol Med 42 (12): 1826-1837; 2007

Why Are There Some Cases of Fatality in Healthy Young People?

By far, fatality rate is higher in those with compromised health vs. healthy people. This percentage is tiny. Yet the knowledge of even one fatality is extremely unsettling. Reasons why are as follows:

1. The “cytokine explosion”: cytokines are small chemical messengers released by immune cells that “sound the alarm”. They further activate your immune system. Some people have an over active response that can be fatal. This response can be modulated if medical attention is received in time. It can also be prevented before hand with natural medicines.
2. We do not yet have autopsy reports to discern if there were other underlying factors.



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Vitally Important To Your Immune Status: How Healthy is your Gut Mucosal Immunity, How Healthy is your body's terrain? (your body's inner environment?)

60-70% of your immune system is located along the wall of your intestines. There is a thin wall of cells along your intestines whose job it is to secrete mucus, antimicrobial peptides, and enzymes to break down food, and to absorb nutrients from your food. It is the only barrier that prevents unwanted items from actually getting inside your body. Your intestinal tract is a tube of the outside environment that runs *thru* you. When this barrier gets inflamed and irritated, it becomes leaky. Breaches in this important barrier incite your immune system waiting on the other side. We know that this can lead to many diseases including asthma, eczema, allergies, autism fibromyalgia, IBS, IBD and development of autoimmune diseases that target other organs such as: ankylosing spondylitis, MS, Kidney disease, Type 1 Diabetes, Liver disease and Rheumatoid Arthritis. Any weakness in your intestinal wall contributes to you getting sick.

What causes irritation and leakiness in the intestinal wall? It's circular:

Consumption of: NSAIDS, alcohol, gluten, coffee, pop, food additives, heavy metals, bad bacteria, aging, other food sensitivities, poor diet → low-grade inflammation and leaky gut → more food sensitivities → histamine release → worse inflammation in the body, worse pain → more NSAID use → etc..

J Surg Res 140(1):12-9;2007 and Nature Clinical Practice Gastroenterology Hepatology 2(9):416-422;2005 and J Pharmacol 58(11):1421-8;2006

Sleep Deprivation and Leaky Gut:

Research has also found that sleep deprived animals develop leaky gut and were found to have bacteria present in their spleen, pancreas, gallbladder and other places where they should not exist. Am J Physiol Regulatory Integrative Comp Physiol 278: R905-R916;2000

Safe Effective Treatment and Prevention of the Flu

The seasonal flu is easily avoided for the general population with good hygiene, proper sleep, and proper nutrition. Supplementing the immune system with natural health products proven to be antiviral, antimicrobial and immune strengthening, in practice, has shown to be very effective in warding off the flu and/or significantly reducing the severity of illness for most people. A healthy, non – irritated gut wall is essential for strong immunity. Poor diet, stress, low levels of good bacteria in the gut contributes to an irritated and leakier gut wall which is a huge breach in our ability to



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resist infection. Lymphatic, elimination and detox pathways need to be in good working order.

Currently, H1N1 is only .7 percent more virulent than the seasonal flu.

H1N1 Vaccine: Important Considerations

Theoretically, it's a great idea. Except that:

1. It has NOT been sufficiently tested. We don't know that it works, we don't know if it's safe.
2. It contains 2 quite toxic components:
 - a) Thimersol, a mercury derivative which is toxic to our brain, nervous system and hormone systems.
 - b) Squalene : (MF-59) which has been shown to cause autoimmune disorders such as MS, rheumatoid arthritis and Lupus.

Illness does not usually develop immediately but often slowly over time. Pediatric vaccines are available with out squalene, however at this point, it is not known when this will be made available to family doctors.

Your body has an incredible capacity to fight infections and heal, if you support it! We have access to natural health products that are proven to effectively support your body's resistance to the flu and help it heal faster and more efficiently. Vitamins, minerals, specific herbs and homeopathics are safe and effective.

Prevention Basics:

1. WASH YOUR HANDS!! For 15 seconds. It destroys the virus's protective coat.
2. Sleep: absolutely important to get enough rest and take care of yourself
3. Stress: "Human stress hormones and cytokines can be detected by bacterial quorum sensing systems. By this mechanism, the pathogen can detect the physiologically stressed host, providing an opportunity to invade when the patient is most vulnerable." Critical Care 12(6): 236-247; 2008
4. Diet: YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT!! Avoid sugars, refined carbohydrates, processed food and meat, alcohol and limit dairy. Eat whole foods rich in phytochemicals found in colorful vegetables, plenty of greens – spinach, kale, collards, broccoli, brussel sprouts, bok choy, beets, carrots, fruits. Eat adequate protein for immunoglobulin production. Use antimicrobial fresh herbs garlic, oregano, rosemary, thyme, ginger added at the very end of cooking.
5. Healthy Gut Wall/Intestinal barrier: good diet, probiotics, colostrum.



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6. Contrast showers daily! Use “Warming Socks” if you feel a cold coming on!
7. Exercise regularly. Good circulation is essential to your immune system’s effectiveness. (think stagnant pond vs. clear, clean glacier river)
8. Essential vitamins, herbs, medicinal mushrooms, Chinese medicines, homeopathics: Vast amounts of research and clinical experience is showing the **effectiveness** and mechanism of action of using substances - made from the same things our body is made from- to heal, repair, fortify and modify immune response. (For the scientists: Th1-Th2 t-cell balance modifications, phagocytic activity enhancement, increased antimicrobial peptide secretion, IgA secretion, decreased intestinal permeability, etc etc). Consult your ND for what is appropriate prevention for you.
9. Antiviral homeopathics are available here to be taken preventatively throughout flu season. They have significant proven efficacy and are completely safe and non-toxic.
10. Concurrent homeopathic treatment with vaccination is available to help the body get rid of squalene and thimerisol and prevent adverse events.

Treatment of Flu

Each person experiences a cold slightly differently depending on their body’s terrain (inner environment) and response. Coughs can be dry, tickly, wet, sticky, productive, stuck, with concurrent swollen glands, sinus issues or headaches, or sore throats. Depending on what is happening, different herbs and homeopathics are used to help your body clear the infection, by supporting its infection fighting process. See your ND for proper, specific treatment. **If you get sick, get yourself into the clinic! 20 min appointments are available for evaluation and treatment of acute illnesses.**

In Summary: Stay calm, dissolve your fear (it’s not useful).

- Currently we know that the H1N1 flu is a **mild** disease.
- If this classification changes, you will be informed.
- We don’t know enough about the vaccine safety and effectiveness, though vaccination is your choice.
- We also know that keeping yourself healthy with a healthy diet and lifestyle, reducing your exposure via hand-washing and avoiding sick people, and creating as much health in your body as possible **WILL** have a powerful effect on your resistance to infection.
- We have effective natural medicines to fortify and strengthen your body, and treat illness in a way that very effectively supports your body’s healing and repair.

Yours in health, Tammy Grime, ND

I appreciate your feedback.

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