

Getting sick...A Blessing in Disguise?

Note to Self: please go back and read last month's blog about listening to your body. Cuz this past month, you apparently slacked off a spell.....or Dear Connie, can it be you are just human?

As an Ayurvedic practitioner, I am often seen as someone who should have perfect health all the time. The reality is, I have known many a practitioner who are great healers, but at times can be wacky as heck and off about their own health..yours truly being one of them... 'til the big sick comes. I admit it. I was caught off guard and I caved in to the flu...Since I don't go to the doctor unless I'm hanging by a thread, I have to therefore become my own healer. Easier said than done when you feel like you've been hit by a mack truck!

But on the other side of that coin, this is also a great opportunity to learn more about how the body works. Whenever I get sick, I use it as a learning tool.. trying all kinds of potions and ancient Ayurvedic tricks to wash that flu right outa my hair. While I don't like falling prey to Krimis (ayurvedic term for germ or parasite), once I am there, I find it a great opportunity to learn. What better way can there be to understand the imbalances in others, than to know thyself? As the various and sundry items I had just taken to rid my body of pain and discomfort were projecting like a wet ray of light, paying homage to the porcelain god, I was thinking to myself...Kapha...you are ridding your body of excess earth and water..cool...so this is what it feels like to balance out the tattvas, or elements in my body.

You may think this is strange, and even I do. But apparently I'm not alone. One day, while listening "Ted Radio Hour," I heard a brain scientist Jill Bolte Taylor talk about how she had a stroke and was watching her body slowly die. But instead of becoming frightened, she was in complete fascination, almost feeling lucky, that here she was a brain scientist and going through the very thing she had been studying for years, but could not know what others were feeling.....until she realized, Hey, I better get help, I'm dying here! She had lost that part of the brain that connects you to the form of worry, doubt, stress, etc. She was in a state of pureness and oneness with the universe, a state of love. And through this blessing in disguise, she became what we yoginis all strive for, Sattvic.

So here are a few things I've discovered this week as I was taken over by alien microbe, keeping me flat on my back.

1. When you start to feel something coming on and feel sick, don't drink a big glass of water, then two emergencies, take vitamin D, Zinc, baby aspirin for headache, eat overly salted mung tortilla because you don't want the aspirin to burn your stomach, and then an orange because you feel dehydrated, all at once -- UNLESS -- you want to throw up! In Ayurveda, vomiting is one, albeit icky, procedure that we do to release the extra kapha in our upper body. Kapha has the elements water and earth and

resides in our stomach and upper chest and when out of balance, forms excess mucous. Rather than taking a journey down the GI tract, kapha is more readily expelled projecting out the mouth. (sorry to be graphic)

2. Don't drink hot tea, sit in a window with sun coming in and do a yerba santa hot pot herbal steam (hence the headache) unless you want a really really red face and strawberry looking tongue, aggravating an already angry Pitta
3. When the sickness is at its peak, DO NOT, I repeat, DO NOT look in the mirror unless you plan on trying out for that witch part in your local theater group. Aaaaah!
4. Do take Sitopaladi. This ayurvedic formula is a wonder.. it contains all sorts of properties to loosen that tight band-like feeling around your head (should have done this at the start, instead of baby aspirin, but when I get sick, I turn into drama Q. and lose anything resembling reason) This formula is great even for kids...put a little in a teaspoon of honey, and they love it! This helps to loosen the water and earth element that has turned into heavy mud, which in laymen's terms is kapha congestion. The thing about herbal medicine is that most times the result isn't immediate. You have to be consistent with it and patient, and it will pay off.
5. Rest
6. Rest
7. Rest
8. Drink tea and cook food with chai spices. This aids your digestion, which is weakened by the illness. Your digestion is the key to ward off those pesky Krimis.
9. When you are feeling better, do get out of the house. Fresh air does you wonders. and laughter is the best medicine.. Watch a funny movie or surround yourself with those that make you see the funny side of life! Laughter is proven to be one of the strongest immune boosters.



10. Your ability to assimilate your nutrients relies on your digestive strength. Equally as important, your ability to eliminate also relies on your digestive strength.. If you are effectively absorbing nutrients and eliminating the part of the food that your body doesn't need in a timely manner, this will aid in taking those krimis for a ride right out of your body before they are able to take over.

11. If you do succumb to krimis, start a journal journey. Write down what worked, what didn't. How you were feeling. You are your best healer. And when you become your best healer, you can also be the best healer for loved ones too.

12. If you want to avoid “note to self” altogether, you might consider going on a cleanse. Springtime is the optimal time for Panchakarma. The environment is changing into more water and earth elements. If we are not careful, Kapha can accumulate in the form of extra mucous, allergies, colds, flu, etc. Going on a cleanse and re-setting your digestive fire, whether it be overly rambunctious in the form of heartburn or food just sitting in the tummy, can make or break immunity. If cleansing seems out of the question right now, simple things, such as ginger tea and upping your intake of leafy greens, can help to melt and flow Kapha accumulation.

We are living in a busy time. We forget that it's all about balancing the elements ether, air, fire, water and earth that are forever changing in nature, outside and within us. All of us will feel dis-ease at one time or another. It's just a fact of being human. Yes, it sucks getting sick. I'll be the first to admit it...but each time I do, it makes me stronger and more in touch with myself. And just like the opposing qualities dark to light, rough to soft, etc., sickness to health is a little blessing in disguise, because when you come out of that darkness and see the light of day, it makes living in this body and walking on this earth so sweet.

to watch the powerful and touching video “My Stroke of Insight,” by Jill Bolte Taylor click link http://www.ted.com/talks/jill_bolte_taylor_s_powerful_stroke_of_insight?language=en