Cathedral
CENTRE FOR WELLNESS

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The flu shot: What can I do instead?

By Julie Zepp Rutledge N.D.

Now that fall is upon us the television ads, health region campaigns and other pressures have begun encouraging you to get your "flu shot". Some of the information out there, like much of the info presented in the media on any topic, tends to be presented with the goal to invoke fear or guilt as a way to motivate, as opposed to simply to educate and inform. This is true for both sides of the flu vaccine debate.

I have put together some information on the flu and my hope is that I can help inform from my perspective on this controversial topic and to provide you with some strategies that you can do to help prevent flu naturally in your household this winter season.

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The flu is a viral illness, different than a cold (Influenza = flu; Rhinovirus = cold) with varying symptoms and as it generally affects the whole body (think the body aches that come with the flu; vs a cold that is typically all respiratory) it can have more body-weakening effects and because of that can potentially lead to greater risk of complication.

The flu is an airborne pathogen, which means a strong immune system and proper hygiene including regular hand washing can readily fight the virus. Because it is a viral infection and its manifestation in our body is proportional to the health of our immune system and our lifestyle habits when we are exposed to someone with the flu different outcomes are possible.

We might: 1) be exposed to the virus, have our system mount a rapid fire response and fight it off before we get any symptoms at all, 2) develop low-grade symptoms – maybe a fever, body aches and a cough, 3) have a slightly worse version that also includes diarrhea and vomiting. In the latter two cases we might be stuck in bed feeling like crap, but our bodies will get stronger from this challenge. Seriously. Not much different from the stress of training for a marathon in that when we challenge our bodies it can make them stronger. This has been an age old practice: think spiritual fasts, sweat lodge ceremonies, etc. Can you imagine what our bodies would be like if we never challenged them to get uncomfortable? we wouldn't build resilience, our muscles wouldn't get stronger, we wouldn't learn new skills. It is the same thing with our

Email Policy

Our Cathedral Wellness professionals have instituted a new clinic policy regarding email. **Medical consultations can no longer be provided by email.** In order to ensure privacy of your information, to provide better and more timely care to you, and to maintain balance in our own personal and professional lives, we are all opting to manage professional communications either in person or over the phone only.

Please call reception at **306.757.4325** to arrange a phone or in-person consult - either booking a 15-min time that is convenient for you or choosing to have us call you back as the time presents itself through our day.
Phone calls beyond 5 minutes will be billed as consultations at a rate of $10 per 5 minutes up to 20 minutes. Standard visit rates apply to longer phone consultations.

If you require prescription refills please call or email the clinic at info@cathedralwellness.ca.
We sincerely appreciate your understanding and look forward to continuing to work with you on a truly personal, face to face level.

In health,
Drs. Marika Geis, Laura Stark, Julie Zepp Rutledge and Allison Ziegler.

immune systems. Small challenges actually help them to learn to fight illness better than never being challenged in the first place.

Yes it is true that in some cases the flu can result in more severe fluid loss and loss of appetite that may necessitate IV-rehydration and anti-viral medications (the latter is rare) and in very unfortunate cases when a person has very low immune function they are at risk for secondary infection such as bacterial pneumonia which has the potential to be fatal in those seniors (mostly) whose bodies just cannot fight the infection even with antibiotics. Therefore careful consideration needs to be given in these cases. Unfortunately these people are often in a "damned if you do, damned if you don't" situation: they are the ones most at risk of complications of both the vaccine and most at risk of the illness itself. In these cases it is likely most prudent to take the shot.

It takes about two weeks after the shot to develop the antibodies needed to protect you so during this time period one is actually more at risk of illness. And while you are developing the antibodies you may feel ill because it is not a virus itself that causes symptoms in the body it is how the body reacts to the virus. For instance when we sneeze or have a runny nose or a fever or shakes after exposure to a virus these are the body's mechanisms to attempt to flush it from our bodies, or heat it up enough to kill it off!
If you are considering the shot, it is important never to get the shot if you have an active infection or illness as your immune system is already compromised. Also the normal immune response following flu shot might not develop properly in those people undergoing immune suppressive therapy (such as systemic steroids or other stronger immune suppressing meds).

There are some known side effects to the flu vaccine: fever, body ache, allergic reaction and a potentially severe paralytic illness (Guillain Barre syndrome). These side effects are greater in children. There is also risk of allergic reaction in those with an allergy to eggs. Signs would be breathing difficulties, wheezing, hives, paleness, rapid heartbeat, dizziness. There are other less direct potential complications to vaccinations and those are hypothesized to be increased prevalence of thyroid and neurological disease (due to the adjuvant toxins in the shots), auto-immune diseases like RA, SLE, Hashimoto's, etc. (due to the way the shots interfere with the natural immune response).

In my mind when dealing with non-complicated cases (the vast majority of you!! I consider a complicated case to be someone with severe immune compromise, kidney disease, infirm elderly) I would suggest the following strategies in lieu of the shot. This

doesn't mean you won't get the flu (but getting the flu shot doesn't guarantee that either!) but hopefully your chances will be minimized and these great lifestyle habits will make you feel all around better and more energized this winter season.

1. **Wash your hands**, wash your hands, wash your hands. Also, avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth, which can introduce the virus into your receptive passageways. If you cough or sneeze, use a tissue and throw the tissue away afterwards. This will help protect you and everyone else out there who is trying to avoid the flu.
2. **Give your immune system a boost** by taking Echinacea, Elderberry (superb anti-viral), Reishi (medicinal mushroom – fantastic immune support), Zinc (5 to 25 mg) and lots of Vitamin D (3000 IU).
   For kids I love VitaKids Immune liquid by Douglas labs or Sambucol elderberry syrup. For adults I love Defense Plus by Nutribiotic or Natural Factors Anti-viral capsules or tincture.
3. **Eat immune boosting foods**: 5 to 10 servings of organic vegetables and 3-4 servings of organic fruit every day.
   Include citrus fruits - loaded with Vitamin C, oranges, limes, lemons and grapefruit are a yummy, easy way to support your immune system. Grab a glass of fresh squeezed OJ or grapefruit juice. Even better, mix lots of lemons into water with stevia (a natural sweetener) and cayenne pepper. Not only is it a zingy tasty spice filled with Vitamin C, it also alkalinizes your body, which helps it fight infection and enhances circulation and immune function. Other helpful foods include Garlic, onions, thyme, oregano: make yourself a soup filled with these immune-boosting and anti-microbial ingredients. Garlic has been used to treat everything from the common cold to the Plague.
   Carrots - Bursting with beta-carotene (pro-vitamin A), carrots give your body a leg up when you're fighting infection. Drink a few carrot juices to get enough in your body. Sweet potatoes and spinach also contain lots of beta carotene, so eat up.
   Fish like salmon, mackeral, and tuna are filled with omega-3 fats, which support white blood cells in fighting viruses.
4. **Rest, sleep and rest some more!** Sleep is underrated. When you're well rested, your body fights infection more effectively.
5. **Give up sugar, alcohol and caffeine** for a while. Staying sugar-free, sober and decaffeinated helps your body mount immune responses. Get rid of processed foods and stick to a whole foods diet. Avoid mucous forming foods like milk and cheese that can trap viruses.
6. **Drink green juice** instead. If you have a juicer stashed tucked away pull it out and load it with kale, celery, cucumber, swiss chard, lemon, spinach, ginger, garlic- whatever you've got around that can support your good health.
7. **Hydrate.** Drink, drink, drink pure clean water. It keeps your mucous thin and helps you mucous membranes resist infection.
8. **Supplement with probiotic bacteria**, which supports the gut and mucous membrane lymph tissues and helps your body resist infection.
9. **Get your exercise and get outside.** While this may not be the best time to go to a crowded gym, a long walk in nature can do wonders for your immune system, your general health, and your psyche.

10. **Sweat.** Exercise to the point of sweating or use a sauna to get your body sweating. It is a great way to boost immunity and improve circulation. Natural periodic "fevers" help fight viruses. Another great tool is contrast showers. Alternate hot and cool when showering. 3 cycles and end with cold will do wonders for your vitality and keep you warmer through the winter as them improve hypothalamus and thyroid function.
11. **Use essential oils.** You can get a diffuser or simply drop some drops into a pot of water on low on the stove or add them to a spritzer to make your own air purifier. Great oils for boosting the immune system include oregano, rosemary, lavender, eucalytus, clove.
12. **Don't panic about the flu.** Stress weakens your immune system and makes you less capable of mounting an immune response. Manage your stress in healthy ways, by meditating, listening to guided imagery CD's, walking, deep breathing, yoga, and other healthy stress-relieving activities.
13. There are **homeopathic preparations** designed as flu prevention. One of my favorites is Mucococcinum. An adult would take 1 tablet every 2 weeks and for those with lower immunity or children they would take 1 tablet each week through the cold and flu season.

You can also optimize the strength of your immune system by addressing outstanding health concerns with your Naturopathic Doctor or other health care provider!
Not only will regular work with your Naturopathic Doctor address your health concerns as they arise (colds, flus, etc.), regular visits will assist you in identifying any underlying chronic health concerns and will help you to determine the daily healthy regime or additional supplements that are best for maintaining your optimal health!

Honestly in my mind (and this is personal and not meant to sway anyone in any way!) "better the devil you know than the devil you don't" – that is I would rather nurse myself and my kids through the flu using neutral baths, herbal teas, rest, garlic and onion rich broths knowing their little bodies are getting stronger for these challenges – than deal with possible exposure to things that we don't know the long term consequences of having injected into our bodies. These shots have been around since the 40s and many forms of odd unknown chronic, neurological and auto-immune diseases have also been on the rise exponentially since then. And I know there are many factors and there are no definitive correlations between the two, however for me it is simply not a risk I like to take, especially when it comes to an illness as generally benign as the flu. We are a society that doesn't like to take time out of our busy lives to get sick, rest and allow ourselves to recover. We feel like we "don't have time to get sick"! but I see people all the time that keep pushing themselves non-stop through minor illnesses and through life in general, and when we don't take the time to slow down, our bodies will often do it for us: colds or flus that we could normally fight hang on for weeks, we get burnt out, run down or worse. Perhaps allowing the odd cold or flu would give us short little rest breaks that we need to strengthen our immune system through allowing a natural immune response and grant us the chance to rest.

That being said this is an individual choice and all choices must be respected! I would never judge a family that concluded that taking the shot would be in their best interest. And there are definitely situations that this would be the case. That is absolutely fantastic when we can arrive at our own decision of what is best for us and this is something I support 100% regardless of the choice itself.

Hopefully this article has given you a little food for thought and you will be able to make a more informed choice when deciding to line up for your flu shot!

Finding Your Inner Healer

By Dr.Laura Stark N.D.

Cancer is a really tough label to wear. I actually think the toughest aspect of the disease to contend with is that label (with all the beliefs, fears, attitudes, judgements, assumptions and opinions that is comes with). Cancer is a word that provokes emotional over-reactions like no other. This is reason that I avoided working with cancer patients at the beginning of my career. I had a big over-reaction to all the fear-based, scare-tactic messages and prescriptions cancer patients receive. My anger towards this fear driven cancer-war is now the energy I channel into providing a different kind of cancer care.
The fundamental issue here that frustrates me so profoundly is that no one seems to be conscious of the massive impact our belief systems around cancer have on the outcomes for cancer patients.

The basic assumption (belief system) that drives the cancer-war culture in conventional medicine is that cancer is out of control cell growth that is going to kill you therefore necessitating aggressive attack. The underlying message here is that your body cannot be trusted.

Standing here in my role as a naturopathic doctor, this is horrifying. The basic assumption that guides my approach to treating disease is quite different. I believe that the body has an innate drive toward healing that is intelligent and needs to be respected in order to support life. Naturopaths call this the *vis medicatrix naturae* – the healing power of nature. This is my favourite of our naturopathic principles because it speaks to the most fundamental law of nature – that life instinctually preserves life. When we cut ourselves a scab forms and new tissue heals the wound. When we come down with a cold a fever is mounted and mucous is produced to cleanse the effected mucous membranes. Chronic disease like cancer may seem like they don't fit this pattern of self-healing, but don`t worry, they do!

A chronic condition occurs when there are obstacles blocking our healing abilities. For instance, a nutrient deficiency, a burden of toxic heavy metals, or a chronic stress could each supress immune system function. The trick about our innate life preserving mechanism is that is still requires us to fulfill the bodies' basic needs of complete nutrition, adequate hydration, clean air and total body movement.

So what does this all mean for dealing with cancer? First, it means that we do not need to descend into fear and feelings of chaos. Next, we must ask why the body is needing to form a tumour – what biological purpose could this be serving? Is there anything blocking the ability to heal? Then, of course, we need to appropriately respond to the answers we find by providing optimal support for normal body function and targeted remedies to aid the return to normal function.

The most overlooked but critically important part of cancer care, though, is supporting these healthy beliefs systems that I like to rant about.

The fear based cancer culture that we are surrounded by can easily overwhelm a person shocked with a cancer diagnosis, but they need the full strength of their inner healing force more than ever. Huge amounts of vital energy can be wasted while stuck in emotions like fear.

I want to share my favourite ways to help people stay connected with their own inner healer. Some practical resources:

-**Mindfulness** – a meditation practice that enables one to be more conscious and present in the experiences of life.

-**Somatic Experiencing** – a profound therapy that focuses on body awareness in order to release stored traumas from the body. www.traumahealing.org

-**BodyTalk** – a consciousness-based therapy that brings awareness to and reconnects aspects of our selves that have become fragmented. www.bodytalksystem.com

-**Journeywork** – a self-discovery process of looking inward to discover the deepest source of our ills. www.thejourney.com

-**Creative visualization** – the use of imagination to affect the physical state of the body.

-**Yoga/Tai Chi/Qi Gong** – focused movement practices that foster mind-body alignment and balanced energies through the body.

-**Coherence Breathing** – a simple breathing technique with a profound ability to relax the body and quiet the mind. www.coherence.com www.heartmath.com

-**Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT)** – a self-tapping technique utilizing acupuncture points that facilitates moving through troubling emotions. www.emofree.com

And perhaps my very favourite…

-The IV room in our clinic has organically become a place of supportive friendship brought together through cancer healing work. Everyone in this group has a pretty good mutual understanding of the challenges, horrors, hopes, triumphs and total life overhauls that a cancer diagnosis has brought on for each of them. They share stories, experiences, ideas, words of caution and words of wisdom. By all wanting the best outcomes for each other, they inspire hope in the members who need it most each time we meet. Because of the compassion they have for one another the group also avoids the common pitfall of some support groups that become a party that revels in victimhood.

This is certainly not a group of cancer-war victims.

It is a group of inspiring cancer healers!

Amazing Lunch Boxes

By Dr. Allison Ziegler, ND

With the return to school comes the gentle hope for your child to succeed in whatever the school year holds – school work, friendships, extracurricular and family activities. An important factor in this success is the nutrition our children receive. What can we provide them in their daily lunch box that will optimize their brain growth, development and behaviour?

Our brain's biochemistry is determined by the food we eat far more than any other organ in the body. Nutrition has significant effects on brain function. It helps with alertness, intellectual acuity, and in-class behaviour. It is important to remember that eating habits develop early and most children acquire them from parents and siblings. Children don't develop food preferences entirely on their own, they acquire

habits by observing others and by what they have access to; therefore, eating healthily in the home can improve a child's nutritional status.

Good nutrition is when the diet provides the required combinations of vitamins, minerals, and vital nutrients allowing optimum physical and mental health to be attained. For Children, nutrition also paves the way for essential early neurological and physiological development. Proper nutrition enables the body and the brain to grow. The development of the frontal lobe in the brain is especially influenced by nutrition. The frontal lobe is associated with a set of cognitive abilities called executive functions; these include problem solving, planning, using strategies, evaluating and monitoring and staying on the task. These cognitive abilities have been shown to have a direct link to nutrient availability.

When the body is starved of essential nutrients the hormone balance in the brain is affected and the individuals may outwardly express these imbalances as anti-social behaviours. Rather than being relaxed or friendly, an individual may now seem antisocial, introverted, and hyperactive.

When packing a lunch box for yourself or child, it is important to keep in mind 3 parts that every lunch box should contain before it is complete - colourful and fresh, protein and healthy fats. Keeping these in mind will help to create a balanced and nutritious lunch box.

1. Fresh and Colourful

- Include fruits and vegetables in every colour. Find out what your child loves, and keep introducing new options.
- Traditional apples, oranges and bananas can be rotated with sliced pineapple, kiwis, berries, mango slices, watermelon, grapes or pears.
- Chop a bunch of fresh fruits in a fruit salad. Make fun fruit kabobs.
  Veggies are easiest for children to reach for if they are finger sized and fresh. Carrots, celery, red, yellow and green pepper slices can be combined in a container with new choices such as beets, broccoli, cauliflower and cucumber.
- Dips are a great way to persuade non-vegetable lovers to munch away.

Picky-eater idea: Homemade or store-bought hummus, tzatziki, or bean dips combine fiber and nutrient rich veggies with protein. Hide veggies in pasta sauces, soups, and smoothies.

2. Protein

- Many children do not eat enough protein with their snacks and lunches.
- Lean protein sources can be animal or plant-based, and should be consumed every few hours to help balance blood glucose levels.
- Adding chicken, fish, nuts/seeds, lentils/legumes, eggs and non-genetically modified soy products to salads, stir-fry, cut up and eaten as whole foods, can be great ways to assure children are getting the essential building block throughout the day.

Picky-eater idea: Make a big batch of lean chicken or turkey breast fingers – Use quinoa flakes or brown rice flour as coating for gluten-free benefits.

3. Healthy Fats

•Everyone needs healthy, whole fats in the diet – they are the backbone of our cells and neurological functions.
•Omega-3-essential fatty acids, especially fish oils, are hugely important in learning and growing. They are found in all types of fatty fish, such as salmon. Other healthy fats include olive oil, avocado, nuts and seeds.
Picky-eater idea: Walnuts, almonds, cashews mixed with some raw shredded coconut, and dried fruit for mid-morning or mid-afternoon snack. Fruit and seed bars – see recipe below.

Small changes can make the world of difference in your child's health, both at home and school. Providing them with an amazing and nutritious lunch box will give them the foundation to excel in the days to come.

Recipe: Seed and Fruit Bar

Ingredients

- 1/3 cup pure honey
- 2 tbsp coconut flour (or ground flaxseed)
- 1 tbsp all-natural sunflower seed butter
- 1/8 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 cup unsweetened coconut flakes
- 1 cup unsalted pumpkin seeds
- 1/3 cup unsalted sunflower seeds
- 1/2 cup chopped dried organic fruit

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 300 degrees. Trim parchment paper to line an 8×8-inch baking dish, leaving parchment paper to hang over two sides of the dish.
2. In a large bowl, add the honey, coconut flour (or ground flaxseed), all-natural sunflower seed butter and salt. Use a spoon to stir until well combined.
3. Measure 1 cup of coconut flakes. Place coconut flakes on the cutting board and coarse-chop. Add chopped coconut flakes to honey mixture.
4. Next, coarse-chop any combination of dried fruit you choose and then measure out 1/2 cup. Add the chopped dried fruit to the honey mixture.
5. Finally, add the pumpkin seeds and sunflower seeds.
6. Using a spoon, mix ingredients together making sure they are thoroughly combined.
7. Place the bar mixture into the parchment-lined baking dish. Fold overlapping flaps down and evenly press the top of the bar mixture firmly to pack-in the ingredients so they hold together better after baking. Then, peel back the parchments flaps from top of bars. (Do not trim, as the flaps make it easier to remove the bars after baking.)

8. Bake for 20 minutes. Then remove from oven and allow to completely cool on stovetop for approximately one hour (or until bottom of baking dish is room temp).
9. Place in fridge to continue cooling. (Do not freeze as it makes it impossible to cut the bars without them crumbling.) Once cold, remove dish from refrigerator. Then, run a knife along the two edges without parchment. Using the parchment paper ends, lift the bars from the baking dish and place on a cutting board.
10. Cut into 8 bars and individually wrap and store in the fridge or freezer. Then you can easily take out what you need and place directly into your child's lunchbox (or yours) – no need to thaw.

Upcoming Events!

Dr. Julie Zepp

See Dr.Zepp's website for more information on her **3 upcoming events** this fall!
http://www.drzepp.com/events-and-classes.html

Dr. Allison Ziegler

Understanding Autism Seminar

Come join Dr. Allison Ziegler, ND and financial advisor Nadege Koskamp in a two-part seminar. Allison will be outlining what autism is, dietary and lifestyle factors and alternative approaches to help your child. Nadege will offer financial advice regarding educational savings plans in order to provide the best opportunity for your child's future.

When: Tuesday, October 27 at 7:00 pm

Where: Cathedral Center For Wellness located at 2146 Robinson Street, upstairs.

Dr. Marika Geis

Dare to Rise Course

In health,

The Cathedral Centre for Wellness Team