

Healing Thyme

NEWSLETTER

WINTER – JAN/FEB 2009

CONTENTS:

Welcome to Healing Thyme...

We're growing!

Herbs for winter health

Acupuncture and winter woes

Food intolerances

Reflexology and well being

Welcome to Healing Thyme.....

At the time of writing the weather keeps changing from deep sparkling frosts, to rain and gloom, to bright and breezy, to sunny and dry. Just keeping up with what to wear is wearing me out!

Although the days are almost imperceptibly lengthening, we are still very much in winter's grip and almost everyone I know has had the 'flu, or bronchitis, sinusitis or just a really nasty cold, as is so often the case at this time of year – everyone's resistance seems to be low in the 'dog days' following the Christmas and New Year holiday period. It seems a long, long time until spring. If it's not the dreaded snuffles, people are feeling lethargic after the excesses of Christmas, or anxious about the state of the economy and their financial or job security. Gloom, gloom, gloom!

BUT..... yesterday I saw the first tiny green shoots of the snowdrops, and our garlic, planted in October, is beginning to show signs of life. Spring is definitely on the way, and I've been out in the garden

digging, ready to transplant all my Echinacea plants into their new home.

We at Healing Thyme are also looking forward to having a new home, later on this year, so all is excitement and planning at the moment.

Inside these pages you will be able to read all about our plans along with learning more about treating winter woes with herbs and acupuncture and thinking about food intolerances and shaking up your diet.

We hope you'll enjoy this second newsletter – don't worry if you didn't see the first one – it was only a small 'pilot' run. Please feel free to contact us, by phone or email, and let us know what you think!

*Alison Morton MSc MNIMH
Medical Herbalist and Editor*

We're growing!

"The spring has sprung, the grass is riz" well nearly! Healing Thyme will soon move to a larger and more convenient location which will allow us to continue growing. Having acquired No. 29 High Street in Whitchurch (previously Henry Lees, solicitors), we are pleased to be restoring this lovely building ready for business as a integrated health practice of excellence.

Healing Thyme will re-locate to No 29 in late summer. The range of practitioners and therapies will expand and will be complemented by the sale of supplements and health related products. The centre and its facilities will be accessible by wheelchair. Repair and restoration work will commence shortly to ensure that the building will be fit for purpose and able to bring joy and healing to patients, practitioners and customers alike. We would welcome your views on what you would like to see in the new centre.



For further information about the products we will stock or to enquire about practice room availability please contact us. Watch out for regular updates on progress.

*Therese Hickland BSc (Hons) MNIMH
Medical Herbalist, Aromatherapist &
Healing Thyme Founder*



Herbs for winter health

What do we suffer with most in winter?

Colds, 'flu, coughs, sore throats? Or is it stiff aching joints, cold fingers and toes and dry skin?

Well, the good news is that herbs can help with all of these and more!

Here's some simple tips for remedies you can find in the kitchen cupboard or local health food shop.

Colds and flu



Echinacea purpurea – a Native American herb which has an amazing ability to stimulate the immune system.

Echinacea – most people have heard of it by now, you can buy it just about everywhere, in tablets, liquid, or even tea. Taken regularly it can help to boost your immunity generally. If you get a cold or sore throat, take it straight away and every two hours to help you get rid of the virus more quickly.

Garlic – an easy and powerful remedy. Take it raw if you can, or in capsules or tablets. Add it to your cooking. Good for coughs, colds, sore throats and also good for your cholesterol levels!

Ginger – dried in your tea, fresh in your cooking, crystallized if you have a sweet tooth. It will stimulate your circulation, keep you feeling a bit warmer, and if you have a virus, helps you to sweat, burning off the infection and bringing down your temperature.

Thyme – dried is fine; make a tea with it and sip through the day if you develop a cough. Taken with garlic it can deal with even a bad cough, as it helps you to get rid of the excess mucus and disinfects your lungs in the process.

As with all illness – if your symptoms don't start to improve within a few days, consult a qualified herbalist or see your doctor.

Poor circulation

Horseradish – not just an accompaniment for beef – 'the English cayenne' can boost the circulation and keep you feeling a bit warmer. Use it like ginger to make you tingle!

Ginkgo – again just about everyone's heard of it – get it from health food shops (or us!) to improve the circulation all over the body. Good for those frozen fingers and toes – also helps with asthma and poor memory!

Rosemary – another good circulatory stimulant, rosemary can also improve your digestion. Add some dried herb to a mug of hot water – smells lovely too.

Remember that if you are taking any conventional drugs or medicines, or have an existing medical condition, you should seek advice before taking any herbal remedy: please feel free to ring us.

Alison

Acupuncture and winter woes

Greetings to all past and present acupuncture patients, and of course to those we are yet to meet.

In Traditional Chinese Medicine the season of winter is associated with the water element and "Kidney energy". Located at the base of the lungs, just below the diaphragm, the

kidneys are seen as providing support for a healthy lung system and influencing the lower back. No wonder then that so many people suffer from bad backs at this time of year, as well as the usual coughs and fluey colds.

Acupuncture can be particularly helpful for those of you who suffer from winter aches and pains, coughs and colds, or who find that your energy levels drop with the shorter days, and feel like your "batteries" need to be recharged. For those who suffer from hay fever and allergic rhinitis, winter is a good time to start some preventative acupuncture treatment to prepare your system for the springtime.

Chinese Medicine also emphasises the need to look after ourselves by healthy living. So what can we do to support our kidney energy?



The obvious ideas are often the best, like keeping our lower backs warm by dressing appropriately, drinking enough suitable fluids and paying particular attention to looking after our backs. Suitable fluids are those which moisten and maybe nourish, such as water, herbal teas or good quality green tea, rather than alcohol, coffee and fizzy drinks.

Gentle warm up exercises in the morning can help to get our muscles going, to keep our backs flexible and ready for the tasks ahead, just as an athlete would prepare for a race by warming up beforehand. This doesn't have to mean practicing Tai Chi in the park every morning, (although that



can have great benefits!), but could be just five or ten minutes on your own at home. If you do fancy getting out and about why not look for a local class such as yoga, tai chi or qi gong where you can make new friends and learn to look after your body. General back care principles are important to remember when you are moving around or have to lift something, such as keeping the knees soft, the spine in line and the load close. Bring your mind into your body and this will help you be aware of your own abilities and limitations.

Winter is also a time of rest and regeneration. We can see it in nature all around us; the sun is lower in the sky, the nights are longer, animals hibernate, trees have lost their leaves and plants return to the earth before spring's renewal. We too should rest when we feel tired, rather than pushing on and running on empty. Try to take a rest in the early evening, perhaps by sitting or lying down, and listen to what your body is telling you. Happy listening!

*Liz Castle Dip Ac MBAC
Acupuncturist. Please call 01948
880170 for appointments.*

Food intolerances

Talking about food intolerances has become quite the vogue, but what are they really and what symptoms may food intolerances cause?

Food intolerances can result in a number of unpleasant symptoms, including bloating, cramping, excessive wind, diarrhoea, constipation, weight problems, sinusitis, aching muscles, joint pains, migraines, headaches, fatigue, impaired concentration and eczema. On the plus side, food intolerances are unlikely to be life threatening (unlike severe food allergies)! The difficulty in identifying food intolerances is that the symptoms often only occur some time after the food has been eaten or when certain

foods are eaten in excess quantities. This is when keeping food diaries and adhering to exclusion diets can prove very useful. Diagnostic tests also have a role to play and can sometimes elicit surprising results!

An example of such a diagnostic test is The Food Detective Test™, it has been developed to test for reactions to 59 of the foods which most commonly cause food intolerances. The test takes 40 minutes to perform and is done through using a finger-prick blood sample. The results can then be assessed and an action plan developed. This usually involves eliminating the offending foods from ones diet for a period of three months and then gradually reintroducing them and monitoring the response.

Healing Thyme now has the Food Detective Test in stock. If you are interested in having the test done please call the practice to arrange an appointment, which will last for one hour. As a special Spring offer valid in February and March 2009 we are offering a one hour consultation with a herbalist, who will perform the test for £25, plus the cost of the test which is £40. The consultation will include a discussion of your symptoms, your general diet and basic medical history. The results from the test, along with the information you provide will enable your herbalist to put together a tailored treatment approach for you to follow.

It is important to note that food-related symptoms can also be caused by other factors like enzyme deficiencies or chemical sensitivities and that your symptoms could relate to other medical problems. Having a consultation with a medical herbalist could help to shed some light on what your symptoms may be related to.

*Bergitte McGovern BSc(Hons) MNIMH
Medical Herbalist & Aromatherapist*

Reflexology and well being

Reflexology involves the application of pressure to the reflexes on the hands or feet in order to relax the patient, stimulate the body's healing processes and help maintain a state of balance and well being.



Sheila is a retired nurse and midwife and has been practicing Reflexology, Bach Flower Remedies and associated therapies for over twenty five years. She works with patients of all ages and using her extensive knowledge, is able to treat a wide range of conditions. Reflexology may prove very useful in the treatment of infertility and pregnancy related problems, both of which are particular interest areas to Sheila.

*Sheila Elmer BRA
Reflexologist & Bach Flower Remedies.
Please call 01948 710948 for
appointments.*

Therapies and availability:	
Monday:	<i>Acupuncture Herbal medicine Aromatherapy</i>
Tuesday:	<i>Acupuncture Herbal medicine</i>
Wednesday:	<i>Acupuncture Bach flower remedies Reflexology</i>
Thursday:	<i>Acupuncture Herbal medicine Aromatherapy</i>
Friday:	<i>Herbal medicine Aromatherapy</i>



Sign-up for regular updates!

If you would like to receive regular updates via our e-newsletter, please email us at mail@healing-thyme.co.uk and we will gladly add you to our e-list.

You can have a paper newsletter posted to you, but we'd like to keep the amount of paper we use to a minimum and get information to you speedily without harming the environment.

We aim to publish a newsletter every season and update our website regularly.

We need your feedback!

We hope you've enjoyed this first proper run of our newsletter. In future editions we'll be informing you of what we're planning for Healing Thyme later in the year, so watch out for:

- Herb walks
- Talks and workshops on a variety of subjects
- Spring offers
- And, of course, news of how our new premises are coming along!

But ----- We really need your feedback, so that we can tailor our activities to suit your needs.

Please contact us and let us know what you'd like; maybe you are a member of a group and would like a speaker to come and talk about a particular aspect of herbal medicine or acupuncture; maybe you'd like to attend a workshop, or even a short course. If you live on a farm and would like to know what medicinal plants are growing there, why not host a herb walk in the summer? Or perhaps you'd just like to have your questions answered in the pages of our next newsletter?

***With every best wish,
The Healing Thyme Team!***

