

HERB STOP

March 2010 Highlight



Is Your Liver Healthy?

How do you know if your liver is healthy? The absence of a liver disease does not necessarily mean your liver is healthy and functions at its optimal performance. This large organ, with over a thousand of duties to perform, has a connection to other areas of your body, even your every day life. A couple of self-tests may let you know if your liver needs your attention.

- ☸ Lie down and find your liver. Your liver is located in the right upper abdomen and can often be felt under the rib cage on the right side of the body. With your hands, gently palpitate that area and find out if there is any tenderness or discomfort. Close your eyes and meditate on your liver, “feel” your body’s great laboratory.
- ☸ You may also perform a simple liver function test. With your fingertips, press down on your skin, and then quickly lift your finger. If a blanched, white area remains, it is an indication that there is increased vein pressure due to liver congestion.

The task of your liver is essentially to inspect everything you do, what you eat, drink, breathe, think, even your emotions and all of your decisions you make. It is your body’s largest internal organ and reservoir of blood. It plays a major role in digesting foods, eliminating wastes, preventing infection, balancing hormones, and producing essential blood elements.

A Look At Your Live-r

A person with a strong liver enjoys healthy digestion, clear skin, strength and flexibility, good eyesight, the ability to sleep deeply, stable emotions, especially the emotion of anger.

A person with an unhealthy liver may experience mood swings, depression, IBS, menstrual problems, eye problems, migraines, gallstones, alcohol and substance abuse, insomnia with nightmares, violent behavior.

Spring Is The Liver’s Season

Spring is the season when the liver enjoys an increase in energy (chi). This increased energy can bring about greater healing, if appropriate measures are taken, or it can cause manifestations of underlying causes. Therefore, spring is the most ideal time to rejuvenate your liver and gallbladder. Green foods are what the liver loves and luckily they are plentiful at this time. Some of the local greens in my garden are sorrel, malva (hollyhock), dandelion, lovage, spinach, turnip greens, parsley, and a whole variety of salads. Bitter greens refresh and revitalize the liver. The sour taste also energizes and invigorates the liver. Drink freshly pressed lemon and lime juice first thing in the morning, or enjoy grapefruits and oranges. But, do not mix with other foods. Wait for about ½ to 1 hour before eating your breakfast. Foods that stress the liver are sugar, fried foods, alcohol, coffee, caffeine, chocolate, drugs and too much dairy and meat.

The Liver Loves The Green Color

The color green is associated with the liver as well as the gallbladder (bile is green). If you are drawn to the color green or perhaps you dislike this color, this may indicate an imbalance in the liver.

Wind Is Associated With The Liver

Wind is associated with the liver, creating newness and movement. Wind blows and spreads the seeds, your ideas, inspiration, and creativity. Too much exposure to the wind can injure the liver. The wind is said to enter the body through the neck or throat, so protect these areas when it is windy in early spring.

Flexibility – Stiffness

The liver is a great reservoir of blood and is responsible for supplying adequate blood, oxygen, and energy to muscles, tendons and joints. If they are tight, stiff, or weak, these symptoms may reflect a congested and deficient liver. Injuries suffered to tendons are considered symptoms of an overworked liver. Herbal answers to these conditions are fo-ti, hawthorn, amla, and the Herb Stop extract Flexibility.

Ingrown Toe Nails

A lack of energy and nutrients to the toes can lead to ingrown toe nails and bunions. Refresh the liver with greens and sour.

Happiness – Anger And Shouting

If the liver is congested or unhealthy, the increased energy will not flow smoothly through that organ. Instead, the liver will become unsettled, active and even chaotic. This can give you a feeling of underlying discomfort, a sense of internal conflict, as well as excessive thinking in attempt to work

through such conflicts. In the Chinese healing system “stuck liver chi” refers to the energy flow trapped in the liver, causing anger and frustrations. Citrus fruits are excellent in helping move this energy, as well as the formula Liver Tonic. These can bring about more creativity and cheerfulness. Metaphorically, the liver’s general condition should be similar to that of spring: light, open, and flowing with energy.

The Eyes Reflect Your Liver's Condition

It is said that the liver opens into the eyes, nourishing the eyes. As the liver becomes congested, its ability to send blood, oxygen and energy to the eyes is diminished, which causes weakening of the eye muscles, as well as the eyes’ ability to maintain its original shape. Other eye problems may manifest when you are not able to efficiently eliminate waste from the eyes, causing floaters, glaucoma and other symptoms. Overwork and eyestrain causes the liver to become tired, and in turn diminish your eyesight. An excellent herbal program to enhance liver strength and eyesight would be amla, bilberry, morinda, eyebright, and of course lots of carrots.

Sleep – Insomnia

The liver receives optimal amounts of energy between the hours of 1 am and 3 am. At this time the liver is being infused with additional energy, enabling to heal itself, as long as you are resting. Insomnia affects many people between these hours. If you wake up regularly around this time you may want to calm your liver and your thinking. Get up, and do not turn on bright lights, keep the lights dim (light interferes with the sleepy hormone, melatonin). Make a cup of warm chamomile tea and you may take 1 – 2 capsules of Herb Stop formula Quiet Mind. Go back to bed and close your eyes. Whenever you close your eyes, the energy goes inward to the liver for rejuvenation and regeneration. Before you know it you are back to sleep. At the other end of the spectrum, the low energy point of the liver is between 1 pm and 3 pm. At this time many people feel sleepy, especially after a good lunch. It is actually your liver asking you for more energy to make it through its low point. You close your eyes, take a little nap for 15 to 30 minutes and wake up renewed and refreshed. This is a healthy way in responding to your liver’s demand, better than taking caffeinated drinks, which weakens the liver even more.

Organized – Messy

People who tend to be messy and unorganized may suffer from a liver imbalance, perhaps because the liver is too cluttered. The capacity to maintain a clean and orderly environment, as well as clear and focused thinking, may reflect a strong and healthy liver. Herbs to help with mental clarity and focus are eleuthero, rosemary and schizandra.

Herbs For A Healthy Liver

Dandelion is an excellent bitter tonic, as it stimulates liver activity. It is indicated for chronic constipation due to poor digestion. Dandelion stimulates the growth of healthy bowel flora, and is a superb liver cleanser, lowering cholesterol and blood pressure.

Lemon can improve digestion, in particular when bloated with a heavy feeling after a greasy meal (lemon can cut through fat). Lemon is well-known for its ability to increase circulation, eliminate cellulite, move lymphatic congestion, balance oily skin, and to clear acne. Lemon is refreshing, cooling, depurative, as well as anti-viral and anti-bacterial. It contains anti-oxidant and preservative properties. Lemon has a “clean” feeling; the scent is uplifting and refreshing with a positive effect on the psyche, promoting mental clarity.

Milk Thistle can cleanse and regenerate the liver after toxic exposure; increases bile to help breakdown fat. Reverses toxic liver damage. It is indicated for cirrhosis of the liver as well as nephro-toxicity, psoriasis and Hepatitis A-D. Used in Germany to dispel jaundice. Free radical scavenger.

Schisandra is known for its anti-hepatotoxin properties, strengthens adrenal function, normalizes the nervous and immune systems. Schisandra enhances athletic performances and stimulates metabolism. It astringes the *jing* – the vital essence – and is rich in anti-inflammatory flavonoids.

Yellowdock is indicated for liver and gallbladder weakness, chronic skin problems, e.g. psoriasis, eczema and acne, especially with excessive oily secretions, poor iron absorption/storage, poor fat digestion, and constipation.

Wild Yam contains bitter properties to help tone the liver. It is the herb of choice for liver congestion and inflammation. Wild Yam is specifically for those who have excess heat in their bodies or who have high blood pressure. Wild Yam has a soothing effect, calming a liver gone wild.

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