

Phone (281) 548-1638, (281) 682-3387
E-mail: wang3888@embarqmail.com
Web site: www.WangsMartialArts.com

School Phone number:
281-548-1638,
281-682-3387 (Cell)

June 2012 Newsletter Summary

INNER SCHOOL TOURNAMENT

Date: 06-30-2012 (Saturday)
Ages 5 - 80 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM
Entry Fee: \$40.00 up to three events
\$ 5.00 goes to scholarship fund

Kung Fu Rank Test

Date: 9-14 yrs: 6-14-2012, Thursday, 6-8:30 pm
5-8 yrs: 6-16-2012, Saturday, 1:30-3:30 pm
15 yrs +: 6-16-2012, Saturday, 3:30-5:30 pm
Must register on or before 6-9-2012.
Test fee : \$35.00 and up

Proverbs 12-11.

"Those who work their land will have abundant food,
but those who chase fantasies have no sense."

There is no class on May 28, 2012 (Monday) due to memorial Day.

Brown & Black Belt Test on 04-21-2012



Black Belts picture.



Cross stance.



Jaqueline Ajucum - Brown/stripes



Elmer Whitehead ranked to Brown Belt.

Brown & Black Test Result: 4/21/2012

Ekmer Whitehead - Brown ,
Padraic Gilbert - Black (1st),
Congratulations!

Jaquelin Ajucum - Brown/stripes,
Chris Castillo - Black (2nd),

Chris Avelar - Black (1st),

Wang's Martial Arts College Student Scholarship Fund:
 2009 Scholarship Fundraising Banquet - \$628.98
 Inner-School tournament:
 December 5, 2009 - \$105.00
 March 6, 2010 - \$85.00
 July 10, 2010 - \$100.00
 December 6, 2010 - \$105.00
 March 19, 2011 - \$80.00
 June 4, 2011 - \$115.00
 September 10, 2011 - \$150.00
 December 3, 2011 - \$110.00
 March 3, 2012 - \$150.00
 Outdoor Training (3-25-12) - \$100.00
Total - \$1728.98
 Current student at Wang's Martial Arts who is taking 12 or more credit hours at semester final report card:
 All A's - \$300.00
 A & B's - \$200.00
 All B's - \$100.00

June Birthday

Angela Morales	6/14
Robert Carlile	6/21
Rafael Gonzalez	6/08
Tye Botting	6/06
Sharon Strickland	6/25
John Barron	6/3
Megan Payne	6-2
Travina Jones	6-3
Miguel Valladares	6-4
Sabrina Rawls	6-9
Zoe Whitehead	6-10
Jada Small	6-17
Dustin Ferguson	6-21
Tomekka Williams	6-26
Christian Chickwanda	6-26
James Moricca	6-2
Kaeden Sims	6-15
Adela Limones	6-7
Owen Elliot	6-8

Happy Birthday

Chinese Vegetarian Food & Tour Chinatown

Date: 06-09-2012 (Saturday)
 Time: 1:00 pm Meet at Wang's Martial Art.
 Place: 2:30 pm Pine Forest Garden Vegetarian Restaurant
 9108 Bellaire Blvd. At Ranchester.
 Houston, TX 77036
 (713) 772-2888, (281) 682-3387 (Cell)
 Cost for Food: \$10.00 for 10 years old and above.
 (Includin food, tax, tip, soft drink or tea.
)
 \$ 8.00 for 9 years old and younger.

Tournament Point:

Emmory leach	30
Marvin Henderson	30
Jaqueline Ajucum	30
Jose Guzman	24
Diego Ramirez	21
Darren Bush	21
Andrik Sanchez	18
Chris Avelar	18
Brandon Roll-Bush	15
Conner Roll-Bush	15
Brandon Sarton	15
Kayla Warner	15
Julie Rogers	15
Seth Rogers	15
Brandon Warner	12
James Dyess	6
Rosalie Conry	6

Be sure turn in your tournament point.
 For point 2012, every one must turn in before 12-31-2012.

Report card point:

Aramis Valdivia -	5.25
Mireya Mendoza -	4.50
Brandon Roll-Bush -	4.50
Conner Roll-Bush -	4.50
Andrik Sanchez -	4.50
Kayla Warner -	3.00
Sean Paul -	3.00
James Bolton -	3.00
Brandon Warner -	2.25
Sebastian Garcia -	2.25
Mireya Mendoza -	2.25
Kevin Papa -	2.25
Emmory leach -	2.25
Kameron J. Guevara-Smith	2.25
Dirgo ramirez -	1.50
Julian Rosas -	1.50
Alex Solhjou -	0.75
Sara Solhjou -	0.75
Austin abner -	0.75
Nick Limones -	0.50
Dustin Ferguson -	0.50

Be sure turn in a copy of your report card as you receive it. For point 2012, every one must turn in before 12-31-2012.

Report Card Points - Turn in your report cards all year long for a chance to win a seven foot trophy at the Chinese New Year Banquet!
 All A's-12pts; A's & B's- 9pts; All B's-6pts;
 Turn in your report card - 3pts

Nunchaku Class:

Date: June 4, 2012 (Monday)
 Time: 7:00 - 9:00 pm
 Cost: \$19.00
 Free for Black Belt Club members.

Basic Sabre

Dates: 7-07-2012 (Sat.) Time: 2-3 pm
 7-14-2012 (Sat.) 2-3 pm
 7-21-2012 (Sat.) 2-3 pm
 Cost: \$39.00 or \$19.50 for review
 Pre-requisite: Adults (15 years old and up) - Yellow belt and up.
 Jr. students (5-14 years old)- green belt and above. (Minimum 6 people register.)

Tai Chi Rank Test

Date: 6-23-2012 (Sat.)
 Time: 12 noon - 2:00 pm

Black Belt Club & Accelerated Program

Tournament Competition Class:

Date: 6-28-12 (Thursday)
 Time: 8:00 - 9:00 pm

Nunchaku Class:

Date: June 4, 2012 (Monday)
 Time: 7:00 - 9:00 pm

Conditioning & Reaction Drill Class:

Age 5 - 12 years old
 Date: 6/14/2012 (Thursday)
 Time: 8:00 - 9:00 pm
 Age 13 - 80 years old
 Date: 5/24/2012 (Thursday)
 6/07/2012 (Thursday)
 6/21/2012 (Thursday)
 Time: 8:00 - 9:00 pm

Red, Brown and Black Belt Class

Every Saturday morning from 9:00 - 10:00 am

New Student:

luis Nunez
 John Monroe
 Husain Ibrahim

Welcome!

Tournament Points: Don't forget to turn in your points after each tournament for a chance to win a seven foot trophy at the Chinese New Year Banquet!
 1st Place-12pts; 2nd Place-9pts; 3rd Place-6pts;
 Participation-3pts

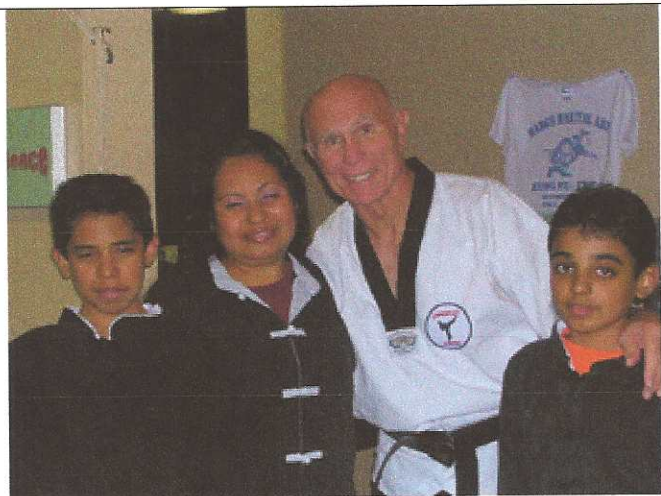


April 20, 2012

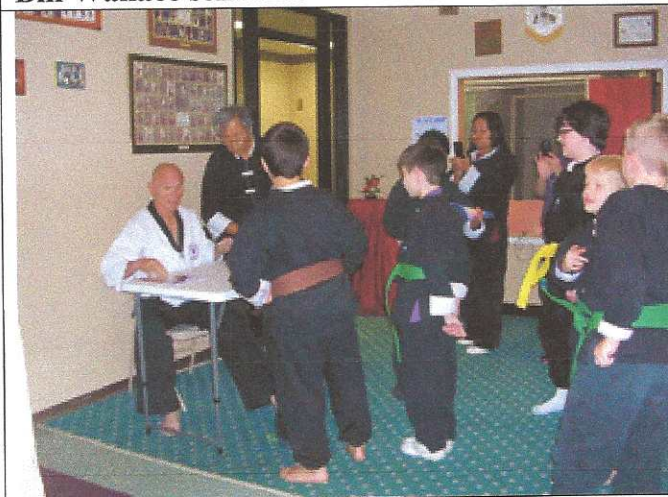
Bill "Superfoot" Wallace seminar



Bill Wallace seminar.



Bill Wallace with Limons family.



Carrie Wilkerson, Bill Wallace, Andrew Bolton,
Julie Rogers.



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Chinese Vegetarian Food & Tour Chinatown

Date: 06-09-2012 (Saturday)

Time: 1:00 pm - Meet at Wang's Martial Art.

Place: 2:30 pm -
Pine Forest Garden Vegetarian Restaurant
9108 Bellaire Blvd. At Ranchester.
Houston, TX 77036
(713) 772-2888
(281) 682-3387 (Cell phone for Instructor Wang)



Cost for Food: \$11.00 for 10 years old and above.
(Including food, tax, tip, soft drink or tea.)
\$ 8.00 for 9 years old and younger.

Registration Form

Name : _____ . **Date :** _____

Address : _____

Home Phone : _____ . **Work Phone :** _____

Cell Phone : _____ **e-mail:** _____

Number of People (10 years and above): _____ x \$11.00 = _____

(9 years and younger) _____ x \$ 8.00 = _____

(Total Amount Paid) = _____

Wang's Martial Arts

92 – B Wilson Rd.
Humble, TX. 77338
U.S.A.

Phone (281) 548-1638
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e-mail wang3888@embarqmail.com
Web site www.WangsMartialArts.com

Nunchaku Class



Date: June 04, 2012 (Monday)

Time : 7:00 - 9:00 PM

Place : Wang's Martial Arts
92 – B Wilson Road
Humble TX, 77338
(281) 548-1638
(281) 682-3387

Fee : \$19.00, Free for Brown, Black, Jr. Black
& Accelerated program.

Need bring your own nunchaku or purchase a foam nunchaku for \$8.00 to \$15.00

REGISTRATION FORM

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

STREET: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE (HOME): _____ PHONE (WORK): _____

Amount Paid _____ .

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INNER SCHOOL TOURNAMENT

Date: 06-30-2012 (Saturday)
Time: Ages 5 - 80 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM
Place: Wang's Martial Arts
92 – B Wilson Road at First St.
Humble, TX 77338
(281) 548 - 1638
Entry Fee: \$40.00 up to three events
\$ 5.00 goes to scholarship fund

Listed below are the divisions; in each, a first, second, and third place trophies will be awarded.
Encouragement awards are given for everyone who does not place.

***** FORMS*****

Ages 5-8 Beg./ Int./ Adv.
Ages 9-14 Beg./ Int./ Adv.
Ages 15-17 Beg./ Int./ Adv.
Ages 18-80 Beg./ Int./ Brown/ Black.
TAI CHI Beg./ Int./ Adv.

***** WEAPONS*****

Ages 5-14 Beg./ Int./ Adv.
Ages 15-17 Beg./ Int./ Adv.
Ages 18-80 Beg./ Int./ Adv.

***** SPARRING*****

Ages 5-8 Beg./ Int./ Adv. (Boys & Girls)
Ages 9-14 Beg./ Int./ Adv. (Boys)
Ages 9-14 Beg./ Int./ Adv. (Girls)
Ages 15-17 Beg./ Int./ Adv. (Boys)
Ages 15-17 Beg./ Int./ Adv. (Girls)
Adult Men Beg./ Int./ Brown & Black.
Adult Women Beg./ Int./ Brown & Black

Registration form for INNER-SCHOOL TOURNAMENT

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____, STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

HOME PHONE: _____ WORK PHONE: _____

CELL PHONE: _____ e-mail address: _____

RANK: _____ AGE: _____ DATE OF BIRTH: _____

DVISIONS: FORMS _____ SPARRING _____ WEAPONS _____ Amount Paid _____

Wang's Martial Arts

92 – B Wilson Rd.
Humble, TX. 77338
U.S.A.

Phone (281) 548-1638
(281) 682-3387
e-mail wang3888@embarqmail.com
Web site www.WangsMartialArts.com

Baisc Sabre



Date: July 07, 2012 (Saturday)
July 14, 2012 (Saturday)
July 21, 2012 (Saturday)

Time : 2:00 - 3:00 PM

Place : Wang's Martial Arts
92 – B Wilson Road
Humble TX, 77338
(281) 548-1638
(281) 682-3387

Pre-requisite: Adults (15 years old and up) –
Yellow belt and up.

Jr. students (5–14 years old)- green belt and above.
(Minimum 6 people register.)

Fee : \$39.00
\$19.50 for review class

REGISTRATION FORM

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

STREET: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE (HOME): _____ PHONE (WORK): _____

Phone (cell): _____

e-mail: _____

Amount Paid _____ .

The Best Anti-Stress Medicine We Have May Be Right Under Your Nose

BY CAROL KRUCOFF
From Washington Post

Think you know how to do it? Try this simple test: sit or stand wherever you are and take a deep breath, then let it out. What expanded more as you inhaled, your chest or your belly? If the answer is your chest, you're like most people and you're doing it wrong. Take another deep breath – and keep reading.

The technique is so powerful that physician James S. Gordon, director of the Center for Mind/Body Medicine in Washington D.C., teaches it to nearly every patient he sees – from people with advanced cancer to schoolchildren struggling with attention-deficit disorder. He's taught it to refugees in war-torn Kosovo and to health professionals who have attended his workshops.

"Slow, deep breathing is probably the best anti-stress medicine we have," says Gordon, also a clinical professor of psychiatry at the Georgetown University School of Medicine and author of *Comprehensive Cancer Care: Integrating Alternative, Complementary and Conventional Therapies*. "When you bring air down into the lower portion of your lungs, where oxygen exchange is most efficient, everything changes. Heart rate slows, blood pressure decreases, muscles relax, anxiety ceases and the mind calms."

Breathe Like A Baby

Obviously, everyone alive knows how to breathe. But Gordon and other experts in the emerging field of mind-body medicine say that few people in Western industrialized society know how to breathe correctly. We are taught to suck in our guts and puff out our chests. At the same time, we're bombarded with constant stress, which causes muscles to tense and our respiration rate to increase. As a result, we have become a nation of shallow "chest breathers," using primarily the middle and upper portions of the lungs. Few people – other than musicians, singers, and some athletes are even aware that the abdomen should expand during inhalation.

"Watch a baby breathe," says Gordon, "and you'll see the belly go up and down, deep and slow." With age, most people shift from healthy abdomen breathing to shallow chest breathing. This strains the lungs, which must move faster to ensure adequate oxygen flow, and taxes the heart, which is forced to speed up to provide enough blood for oxygen transport. This result is a vicious cycle, where stress prompts shallow breathing, which in turn generates additional stress.

Dr. Andrew Weil, director of the Program in Integrative Medicine and clinical professor of medicine at the University of Arizona in Tucson, teaches breath work to all his patients. "I have seen breath control alone achieve remarkable results: lowering blood pressure, improving long-standing patterns of poor digestion, decreasing anxiety and allowing people to get off addictive anti-anxiety drugs, and improving sleep and energy cycles."

Unlike any other bodily function, he notes, "breathing is the only one you can do either completely consciously or unconsciously. It's controlled by two different sets of nerves and muscles, voluntary and involuntary. And it's the only function through which the conscious mind can influence the involuntary, or autonomic, nervous system," which is responsible for revving-up the body in times of crisis.

Techniques that use breath control can be traced back to ancient India, says Weil, who learned some of the methods he uses through the study of yoga.

Super Stress-Buster

Pamela Peeke, clinical assistant professor of family medicine at the University of Maryland School of Medicine and author of *Fight Fat After Forty*, also incorporates breath work into her practice, in part by getting patients to exercise. She often takes them out for a "walk and talk." And when she does, they tend to breathe correctly, says Peeke. "It's very hard to walk and take shallow breaths."

In our stressed-out world, the fight-or-flight response that kept our ancestors alive has turned into a "stew and chew," says Peeke. If no physical response occurs after stress revs the body up, chronically elevated levels of stress hormones can stimulate appetite and encourage fat cells deep inside the abdomen to

store what she calls “toxic weight.” Peeke also encourages yoga and tai chi, which rely on taking deep abdominal breaths.

In hospitals, breathing techniques are taught only to women for use during childbirth. Today, some institutions are teaching breathing to patients being treated for many conditions. At Duke University Medical Center in Durham, N.C., nurse-clinician Jon Seskevich has taught abdominal breathing to most of the 18,000 patients he’s work with since 1990. About half of the people he sees have cancer; the others have differing ailments, including heart disease, cystic fibrosis and various lung disorders.

One of his most dramatic cases involved a lung cancer patient. “I walked into the room to find this large man literally fighting for breath,” Seskevich recalls. “His pulse oxygen was 74, and you want it to be 90 or above. I had him sit back in his chair and place his feet on the ground. I then asked if it was ok if I touched his belly. He nodded, so I put my hand on his belly and told him to breathe softly into my hand, to let his abdomen rise into my hand.”

After about six minutes of this, the man’s pulse oxygen was 94 and he was breathing comfortably. “All day people were telling him to relax,” says Seskevich, “and it seemed to make his struggle worse. I just told him to breath into his belly. We didn’t cure his cancer, but we may have saved him a trip to the intensive-care unit.”

On the Research Front

One of the few scientific studies to examine “belly breathing” found that menopausal women who learned the technique were able to reduce the frequency of hot flashes by about 50 percent. “The average breathing rate is about 15 to 16 cycles (inhaling and exhaling) per minute,” says Robert Freedman, professor of psychiatry and behavioral neurosciences at Wayne State University School of Medicine in Detroit. “But with training, women can slow their breathing down to seven or eight cycles per minute.”

Deep diaphragmatic breathing and other mind-body techniques can significantly reduce systems of severe PMS as well as depression, according to research conducted by Alice D. Domar, and assistant professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School and director of the Mind/Body Center for Women’s Health.

In addition, her studies suggest that these practices can also combat infertility. After completing a mind-body program for women with infertility – in which 132 participants learned a variety of techniques including deep-breathing, stress management, and lifestyle changes – a surprising 42 percent of the women conceived within six months.

Physicians and other health care professionals are flocking to continuing-education being offered by mind-body medicine experts. As graduates of these programs bring breathing techniques – and other aspects of self-care – to their practices, teaching breath work to patients may become a common part of American medical care. “Not only do these strategies work,” says the University of Arizona’s Andrew Weil, “something like breathing is a pretty cheap intervention.”

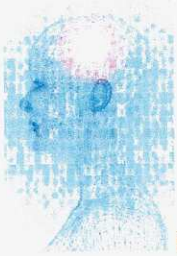
Taken from December 2000 edition of
READERS DIGES



Feed Your Head

By Lisa Turner

12 Steps to Sharpen Your Mind



Feeling a little foggy? It may be a normal part of getting older, or it may be something more serious.

As we age, it's typical to lose some mental sharpness as brain cells begin to deteriorate and our bodies deliver essential fuels less efficiently. Alzheimer's disease, on the other hand, is not an inconvenient aspect of getting older—it's an incurable, degenerative, and ultimately fatal illness.

Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia. It's characterized by a buildup of amyloid protein plaques, tangled bundles of nerve fibers, and the loss of connections between nerve cells in the brain. Symptoms generally appear around the age of 60, and the disease is usually diagnosed in people over the age of 65, but it can occur earlier. And it's an enormous and troubling problem: Current estimates show that as many as 5.1 million Americans may have Alzheimer's disease.

The exact cause is unknown, but contributing factors include genetics, lifestyle, and diet. And while there's no known cure, there are things you can do to help prevent it—especially if you start early enough.

"Childhood isn't too soon to start protecting your brain," says Daniel Amen, MD, author of *Change Your Brain, Change Your Body*. "And changing habits in adulthood can delay the onset of Alzheimer's, and may prevent it entirely."

Here are some simple steps to help you do just that:

- 1 CUT BACK ON SATURATED FAT.** Saturated fat appears to increase the risk for Alzheimer's disease, possibly by compromising the blood-brain barrier and allowing harmful substances to enter the brain. In one study, people who ate smaller amounts of high-fat dairy products, red meat, organ meat, and butter lowered their chances of developing the disease.
- 2 GET MOVING.** Study after study points to physical exercise as the most effective way to prevent Alzheimer's disease. Increasing your heart rate by exercising for at least 30 minutes several times each week appears to inhibit Alzheimer's-like brain changes. Try riding a bike, swimming, skiing, walking briskly, or playing tennis—anything you enjoy that you can do consistently, day after day.
- 4 EAT LIKE A BIRD.** Many studies suggest that eating less food decreases overall inflammation in the body. Other studies have found that restricting calories—especially carbohydrates—may help prevent Alzheimer's disease by triggering activity in the brain associated with longevity.
- 5 MIX IT UP.** Because foods aren't eaten in isolation, one study examined the results of a specific set of dietary patterns. It seems that eating a varied diet made up of dark leafy greens, tomatoes, cruciferous vegetables, nuts, fish, poultry, and fruit is the most brain-protective. In particular, focus on fresh fruits and vegetables for their antioxidant value and defense against free radical damage, a key in Alzheimer's prevention.

6 CHECK YOUR B VITAMINS. In one study, people with elevated levels of homocysteine—an amino acid that's also linked to heart disease—had nearly double the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease. The body naturally takes care of excess homocysteine if it has enough folate and vitamin B12. So if you have a family history of Alzheimer's or other risk factors, consider taking a folate and B12 supplement to keep your homocysteine levels in check. Other supplements that show promise in staving off Alzheimer's disease include Ginkgo biloba, vinpocetine, Huperzine A, acetyl-L-carnitine, and alpha-lipoic acid, says Amen.

7 LOOK TO LYSINE. New research suggests that the herpes simplex virus type 1—the same virus that causes cold sores—may be associated with Alzheimer's disease. Reactivation and growth of the virus inside nerve cells can contribute to cognitive decline, say scientists. If you get cold sores, start taking the amino acid lysine on a daily basis. Lysine helps inhibit the herpes virus naturally.

8 FLEX YOUR MENTAL MUSCLES. "Being bored is not only boring, it's also potentially harmful to the long-term well-being of your brain," says Amen. "In several new studies, people who don't engage in regular learning activities throughout their lives have a higher incidence of Alzheimer's disease." New experiences are always mentally stimulating: try traveling to a foreign country, driving a different route to work, learning to play chess, or taking up a new sport. Or learn to dance: You'll get exercise, and memorizing the moves will put your brain to work.

9 SOBER UP. Alcohol may increase the risk of Alzheimer's disease, and drugs such as marijuana, cocaine, benzodiazepines, and prescription painkillers diminish brain function and damage neurons, says Amen. "Educate kids early about the dangers of drugs and alcohol," he adds. "Adults should avoid recreational drugs, take prescription medications with caution, and limit alcohol consumption to no more than one to two normal-sized drinks per week."

10 PROTECT YOUR HEAD. Brain injuries—even ones that don't result in concussion—can cause lasting damage and lead to Alzheimer's disease. Helmets only offer partial protection. "If your head hits the ground or a hard surface, it shakes the brain inside the skull, with or without a helmet," says Amen. "Inside the skull are a whole lot of sharp, bony ridges—and a helmet can't protect your brain from those."

11 CATCH SOME RAYS. Decreased levels of vitamin D can increase Alzheimer's risk. The best way to get more is exposure to the sun, but wearing sunscreen inhibits the skin's production of vitamin D. The American Medical Association recommends 10 minutes of direct sun exposure, without sunscreen, several times each week. If you're worried about burning, consider a vitamin D supplement; the current recommendation is 400 IU per day, but most experts agree that as much as 2,000 IU per day is more appropriate. Ask your health care provider to recommend the best amount for you.

12 RETHINK YOUR COOKWARE. Although aluminum cookware hasn't been definitively linked to Alzheimer's, many studies confirm that aluminum concentrations in the brain are associated with increased risk. "Aluminum is toxic to brain function and one would assume less is better," says Amen. Consider switching to stainless steel cookware and avoiding other sources of aluminum such as tap water and certain drugs.

Alzheimer's 10 Warning Signs

Forgetfulness or early signs of dementia? If any of these signs sound familiar, it may be time to seek medical care:

1. Memory loss that interferes with daily life, such as forgetting important dates or events, or asking for the same information over and over.
2. Difficulty solving problems, developing and following a plan, or working with numbers; for example, following a recipe or keeping track of bills.
3. Challenges in completing familiar tasks such as driving to a usual location or remembering the rules of a game.

4. Becoming confused about times or locations; losing track of dates or seasons; or forgetting where you are and/or how you got there.
5. Difficulty understanding visual problems and spatial relationships, such as judging distance, or determining color or contrast.
6. Difficulty following a conversation, repeating things over and over, or calling things by the wrong name.
7. Misplacing things or putting things in unusual places.
8. Poor judgment or decreased capacity for decision making; for example, giving large sums of money to telemarketers.
9. Withdrawing from work or decreased involvement in social activities or hobbies, sometimes due to difficulties remembering how to complete tasks.

Personality changes or changes in mood; for example, becoming anxious, confused, or depressed, or easily upset.

Surprising Superfood

By Jonny Bowden, PhD, CNS, and Jeannette Bessinger, CHHC

Holiday-favorite pumpkins boast unexpected health benefits

We never seem to notice the pumpkin until holiday time, but really, we should. It's a high-fiber, low-calorie food that's loaded with nutrients such as vitamin A. Plus, it's one of the few exceptions to the rule that canned fruits and vegetables are never any good (another exception being pineapple).

If you're looking for a high-fiber snack that's perfect any time of year, just try mixing that fabulous pumpkin with some great northern beans for a delicious pumpkin hummus. To add a bit of holiday flare, Chef Jeannette took that classic mixture (from our book *The Healthiest Fifteen Minute Recipes on Earth*) and updated it with seasonal cranberries and oranges.

In addition to the oranges' beneficial boost of vitamin C, cranberries offer a bevy of antioxidants. According to a study published in the *Journal of Agriculture and Food Chemistry*, cranberries have been shown to contain more antioxidant phenols than 19 other commonly eaten fruits. And emerging research suggests that cranberries contain compounds that may offer a natural defense against atherosclerosis and protect the brain against free radical damage and loss of cognitive function.

Put it all together with the pumpkin, and you've got an easy-to-make, super-nutritious dip that's perfect for holiday entertaining.

Infection Protection

By Lisa Turner

What to eat and how to live for healthy immune function

We're right in the middle of cold and flu season, and inside your body, a series of small battles is being waged. The army, your immune system, is made up of a number of key players dedicated to protecting you from foreign invaders. How to keep these trusty defenders healthy and balanced? Here's the best advice.

How to Move Studies show that regular exercise elevates levels of compounds involved in immune function. The exception is exercising to the point of exhaustion, which diminishes resistance. Otherwise, dance, swim, jog, do yoga—whatever moves you.

Walking. Brisk walking appears to be better for overall immunity than hard-core running. In one study, women who engaged in brisk walking or other moderate exercise for 30 minutes each day had half the risk for colds as those who didn't exercise.

Yoga helps prevent alterations in the number of immune cells. It's also associated with stress reduction and a corresponding drop in cortisol—a hormone that's linked to suppressed immune function. In most studies, yoga has shown auxiliary benefits such as reduced blood pressure, increased muscle strength, and reduced anxiety and depression.

Tai chi, a Chinese martial art, benefits immune and autoimmune conditions, in addition to decreasing heart rate, blood pressure, and cholesterol. Research shows that Qigong has similar benefits. One study showed that a moderate Tai Chi and Qigong practice improved immune response in older adults after only five months.

What to Eat The immune system is like an army protecting the body from invaders, so it's important to keep the soldiers well nourished.

Brazil nuts. They're high in selenium, which has been shown to improve immune response in several studies. Other sources of selenium include halibut, turkey, and sardines.

Easy fix: Make a pesto of puréed Brazil nuts, garlic, fresh basil, and olive oil.

Pumpkin is packed with vitamin A, which enhances immune functions including white blood cell activity. Studies have shown that a vitamin A deficiency actually increases risk of infectious disease. Carrots, sweet potatoes, spinach, collards, and kale are other good sources.

Easy fix: Add puréed pumpkin to pasta sauce.

Sunflower seeds are high in vitamin E, essential for overall immune function. In studies, even a small vitamin E deficiency has been shown to impair immune response. Other good sources: almonds, turnip greens, spinach, and beet greens.

Easy fix: Swap sunflower butter for peanut butter on sandwiches.

Papayas are packed with vitamin C, which improves many components of the immune system, including natural killer cell activity. Strawberries, grapefruit juice, peaches, peppers, broccoli, and Brussels sprouts are other good sources.

Easy fix: Combine chopped papayas and peaches with minced jalapeños, red onion, and lime juice for salsa.

Red peppers contain vitamin B6, which is necessary for the production of several important immune cells. Other good B6 sources: tuna, spinach, cod, bananas, soy, and beans.

Easy fix: Purée roasted red peppers and white beans for a quick dip.

What to Take In addition to food, supplements can help give your immune system a healthy boost.

Some of the best:

Ashwagandha. Traditionally used as an adaptogen to combat stress, it may also help enhance immune function. One study suggested that ashwagandha may also help protect against colon cancer.

Propolis, a substance produced by honeybees, is strongly antibacterial. In one study, it was more effective than an antibiotic against a strain of *Enterococcus* bacteria.

Astragalus, traditionally used to treat diabetes, also has immune-supportive effects. It's especially useful in supporting the immune system during chemotherapy.

Reishi mushroom (*Ganoderma lucidum*) is traditionally used in Chinese medicine for health, longevity, and recuperation. Many studies have pointed to its immune-supportive effects, and recent research suggests that it inhibits tumor growth.

Probiotics have a wide range of immune-supportive actions that are especially effective in cases of diarrhea, allergies, eczema, viral infection, and irritable bowel syndrome. They may also help reduce inflammation.

Olive leaf extract has strong antiviral properties. In one study, it inhibited HIV-1 replication. It's also been shown to lower blood pressure and reduce LDL cholesterol.

What to Avoid Some foods, toxins, and drugs upset immune system balance. The worst:

Sugar can decrease the ability of white blood cells to engulf bacteria by as much as 40 percent. The same is true for pasta, bread, and other refined carbohydrates. Stick to low-glycemic carbs, and use sugar in moderation.

Alcohol. Excess alcohol inhibits the ability of white blood cells to protect against cancer. Additionally, heavy drinking can result in deficiencies of immune-boosting nutrients.

Allergenic foods. Food allergies put a great deal of stress on the immune system. If you suspect that you're allergic, work with a nutritionist to identify offending foods.

Coffee. In excess, coffee can tax the adrenal glands and central nervous system, which impacts immunity.

Obesity. Excess fat can upset the immune system. Obesity can also lead to resistance to leptin—a hormone that supports white blood cell production and enhances immune function.

The Yin and Yang of Asian Diets

The stellar health and longevity of many Chinese and Japanese is testimony to the life-sustaining qualities of an Asian diet. Rich in vegetables, fish and rice, and deeply rooted in ancient Chinese medicinal and agrarian values, the diet has slight variations in different Asian countries. But it does have one key common ingredient—a carefully cultivated sense of balance.

By Allan Richter - April 2008 (Energy Times)



Linda Yo was the picture of health when she immigrated to the United States at age 18. Growing up in Indonesia and elsewhere in Asia, she loved to eat as a young girl but never gained weight. Yo, who is Chinese, remembers rice porridge breakfasts and vegetables, fish and some meat for lunch and dinner. Simple noodle soups were often appetizers and meals just before bed.

“I came to the United States in the fall of 1986—by Christmas I was already chubby,” recalls Yo, who says that her fast weight gain of 25 pounds began at a Virginia community college cafeteria. “I would eat a hamburger, but it was small and didn’t fill me up, so I would come home and eat something else. At that time I didn’t know how to cook, so I would buy macaroni salad, fish and chips, that kind of thing. A lot of desserts, too. The ice cream in this country is fabulous.”

Motivated by a classmate who teased her about her weight, Yo set out to regain her slender figure. She tried teas, diet pills and starvation diets. She emptied store shelves of weight-loss books. “Nothing worked,” she said. One day, as Yo stared in the mirror, her mind began to drift back to Asia. “People there ate three to five times a day,” she says. “They like to eat out a lot because apartments are small and it’s not really convenient for them to cook, but they were slim. So I thought maybe I should prepare my food the traditional way.”

Yo was short on cooking skills; she had to use what was available and what she knew. So she began to marry rice, an Asian staple, with Western foods like frozen fish that she baked. “That’s what you do in Asia. You combine everything with rice and, when you eat meat, slice the meat thinly,” says Yo, who put the lessons she learned in her book *Asian Slim Secrets (Asian Way)*. “In about four months, I lost the 25 pounds.”

Yo's transformation from and back to her more slender self is but one more piece of evidence that the Asian diet and lifestyle is a fountain of youth. The life-sustaining qualities of Asia's diet have long been affirmed by the endurance and longevity of its people.

Proof in the Pudding, and Fries

In more recent years, the benefits of the Asian diet have become more apparent because of the damage that Western influences have had on the Asian lifestyle. Many Chinese children have become obese as their families have found prosperity—and the greater amounts of food and more sedentary lifestyle that come with it. The arrival of fast-food restaurants in China has exacerbated the problem. Similarly, Asian immigrants to the United States have become more susceptible to obesity, cancer and other afflictions normally associated with life in the West.

Before Western influences left their mark, Chinese were found to eat about half the fat, one third less protein and 70% more fiber than Americans, according to the China-Cornell-Oxford Project, an ongoing study that began in the 1980s, cited in *Healing with Whole Foods: Asian Traditions and Modern Nutrition* (North Atlantic Books) by Paul Pitchford. Nearly all of the protein the Chinese consume is from plant sources, while 70% that Americans eat is from meat. Heart disease and cancer cases in the United States vastly outnumbered those in China.

The good news is that Asian immigrants are bringing with them many of the ingredients heretofore found mainly in their native countries. Even in the absence of those ingredients, Americans can create authentic, healthy Asian dishes with alternative but similar foods. And Asia is so geographically vast that anyone looking there for healthy recipes has a richly diverse menu from which to choose.

Balance, Above All

Each Asian country has its own dietary nuances that are based on culture, climate and available ingredients. The fertile banks and rich soil of Vietnam's Mekong River Delta, for example, have produced many varieties of extraordinarily fragrant rice and helped cultivate a diet of fresh-grown herbs and greens as a matter of routine, says Wendy Chan, a co-author of *New Asian Cuisine* (International Food, Wine & Travel Writers Association). The river has also produced a catfish called a *basa* that is popular in the Vietnamese diet. "It is not a bottom feeder, so it is healthier" than the American catfish, says Chan.

Whatever their differences, all Asian diets stem off the same centuries-old search for a balanced life—the yin and yang—that is rooted in China, where food and medicine are often synonymous.

China's culinary tradition is tied to an almost scientific approach and ancient reverence for agriculture, says Bruce Cost, author of *Asian Ingredients* (HarperCollins).

Chinese cuisine represents Asia's "mother cuisine," Cost says. Unlike Western weight-loss trends that have at times dispensed with carbohydrates and fats, the Chinese diet is more welcoming.

The Chinese have known these things empirically. You have a much more intricate system where you get a variety of foods, and they all have a reason in the meal."

The Chinese sensibility for balance has taken root in India, too, in its diet, observes Linda Bladholm, author of *The Asian Grocery Store Demystified* (St. Martin's Griffin). "They have the same sense that certain foods are heating and cooling, like chilies, which cool the system by making you sweat, and you have to have a balance of them to have your system working correctly," she says. "Each Asian country is a little bit different but it's the same sense of keeping an inner balance through what you eat."

Yin foods are considered cooling; they are moist and soft, like melon or crab, says Bladholm. Yang foods are hot and include garlic, chili, ginger, fried foods and red meat. But more than seeking equilibrium between hot and cool, Asian diets pursue a balance of color, flavor, aroma and texture, Bladholm observes, as well as salty, sweet, sour, bitter and spicy.

The Asian grocery store, its aisles mirroring a similar balance of tastes, colors and aromas, is a microcosm of the diet, she adds.

Chopsticks and porcelain spoons are used at Chinese tables, while knives, cleavers and forks are left in the kitchen, underscoring that Chinese cooking is meant to be "humanizing" rather than "brutish," observes Francine Halvorsen, author of *The Food and Cooking of China* (John Wiley & Sons).

Further, Chinese cooking is filled with symbolism. The cuisine's well-known five-spice blend (star anise, fennel seed, clove, Chinese cinnamon and Sichuan pepper) in part represents the five segments of the heavens and China's five sacred mountains, says Halvorsen.

Many of the Asian ingredients and staples are more powerful in combination than they are on their own. "The mushroom combined with rice and soy sauce is just as high protein as meat," but without the fat, Bladholm says.

At the center of it all is the key Asian staple—rice. Bland steamed rice complements and contrasts the strong flavors of Asian dishes, observes Yo. Rice helps keep Asians slim and less likely to overeat, Yo says, because it is bulky—some 70% is water, making it large in volume but low in calories. In contrast, its comparable Western food—bread—is filled with air pockets.

Although obesity in China has become a newfound status symbol and evidence of prosperity, the close connection between food and healing has not been lost. "The Chinese medicine concept is widely adopted everywhere by Asians," says author Chan, adding that so-called herbal restaurants are a growing trend throughout the continent, particularly among the wealthy.

"A doctor/herbalist sits outside and will check your balance and recommend dishes for you, and the dishes will be prepared with tonics and medicines," Chan says. "They touch your pulse and they would detect a lot of things about your health, and make recommendations. They also look at your face, the color of your complexion, and they can tell a general state of health that you're in."

Only Fresh Will Do

An emphasis on fresh ingredients has also contributed to the health benefits of Asian diets. "Even in India today and parts of China, a refrigerator is a status symbol that is not put in the kitchen but in the living room. The mindset is to go shopping for every meal," says Bladholm.

In Japan, for example, small markets where tofu and noodles are made fresh are on just about every corner. "People shop for fresh-made tofu in the morning, and then mushrooms, vegetables and seafood are all bought fresh," Bladholm says. "That's how I lived in Asia. The apartment I lived in had a tiny little refrigerator, but you couldn't fit anything in there, so I got in the habit of shopping twice a day."

Because fresh food is so highly prized, Japanese cuisine changes with the seasons, says Keiko Aoki, author of *Easy & Healthy Japanese Food for the American Kitchen* (Quill Driver Books). She renewed her interest in Japanese cooking to help improve the health of her husband, restaurateur Rocky Aoki, whose physical adventures in his youth took a toll.

Green leafy vegetables might be popular in the spring, for instance, while rice with peas picked that morning might adorn a summer table. Fall menus are likely to feature rice harvested in season with mushrooms, while root vegetables are popular in the winter.

As color and visuals are used to give balance to the meal, Aoki adds, table decorations are also seasonal: cherry blossoms in the spring, for example, and leaves in the fall.

Culinary experts who have traveled widely in both Asia and the United States say many ingredients to make authentic Asian dishes have become more available here as Asian markets have cropped up to support an influx of immigrants. Online shopping has also brought Asian spice racks and food shelves closer to American consumers. And often, where ingredients are difficult to find, reasonable substitutes are not.

Miso and soy sauce are readily available for many Japanese dishes. But *shiso*, an herb that brings to mind basil, curry and cinnamon with a hint of citrus, might not be. So Aoki recommends employing basil instead. Similarly, her miso cod dish would ordinarily be built around mackerel, but cod is more available here and is a perfectly acceptable substitute, she says. Likewise, any white fish can replace the *anago*, or sea eel, typically used in tempura dishes in Japan.

One Japanese ingredient for which author Cost says there is no substitute is *dashi*, a sea stock made from kelp and flakes of dried *bonito*, a member of the tuna family. Dashi is used widely in Japanese cooking. If you can find it, the ingredients keep well because they are dried and the stock is easy to prepare, Cost says.

Chan's *New Asian Cuisine* cookbook is filled with recipes from modern chefs, who she says maintain the "essence" of Asian cuisine, but packaged with a tilt toward Western tastes. One beef recipe, Chan acknowledged, is not entirely healthy because of its portion size. "Typically this dish would be shared by a whole family," she says, "but in America it would be an entrée." Many others, however, straddle both cultures while supporting good health.

Herbalist Letha Hadady, DAc, applies elements of the Asian diet to the West by describing the eating habits of different personality types with Asian animal imagery.

Hadady recommends berries, parsnips and an Asian "superfiber" called *shirataki* for "bears" who have a sweet tooth. For irritable "tigers" who might overindulge in fried or oily foods, she suggests cleansing green herbs like alfalfa. "Dragons" lay low but get anxious and "fiery," and need foods to build endurance. "Cranes" are

congested, feel isolated or depressed and seek comfort from fattening foods; they should eat “anti-mucus” foods and teas.

“The emphasis is on a lighter, more easily digestible diet,” says Hadady, author of *Feed Your Tiger* (Rodale). Hadady also stresses balance. “If it’s a fish day, have fish; if it’s an egg day, have eggs; if it’s a tofu, have tofu,” she says. “But don’t mix all kinds of protein because it’s easier to digest one kind of protein a day.”

It doesn’t take a wok in every kitchen and a pantry with an exhaustive list of Asian ingredients to benefit from the dietary habits of the East. “It involves the philosophy more than the diet,” says Chan. “The general thinking is not to get yourself full. From China to Singapore, they know the key is to eat a greater variety of food and to exercise self-control.”

Tai Chi rank test pictured on March 24, 2012.

