



# Points To Ponder

Healing, Health, & Well-being Through Acupuncture

Spring 2008

*With the past, I have nothing to do; nor with the future.  
I live now. ~Ralph Waldo Emerson*



**Shannon Considine**  
Licensed Acupuncturist

## *Emerging From Winter's Peace May Create Imbalance*

It only takes a peek outside to realize that spring is here. Little green shoots are appearing everywhere and some are even blooming with beautiful flowers. Nature is telling us all that it is time for us to do the same—to emerge from the restful season of winter and to harness the energy from the longer days.

In the process of opening up ourselves, and seizing spring, however it is not all glorious. Just as a perennial works hard to emerge from the hard ground, many people actually feel irritable at this time of year, as they sense the need for a transition yet have grown comfortable with winter's slower pace and peacefulness.

If you are feeling frustrated or even angry, don't wonder why, just accept it—it's the nature of the season—and schedule a treatment or two to re-balance yourself.

In a treatment, I pay particular attention to the officials of the season, according to Traditional Chinese Medicine—the liver and gall bladder, which are responsible for planning and decision making and plan implementation respectively. From a biological perspective, the liver is where the body detoxifies, nourishes, replenishes, and stores blood.

In addition to seeking a treatment, most people find that doing chores or even implementing major changes that they thought about during the winter (such as changing a job) actually energizes them and improves morale. Like the blooming narcissus that emerged from the earth, individuals who tackle a dreaded chore (yes, spring cleaning...) or take the plunge with something important will be smiling for the world to see soon, too. Exercise is also a great fix for embracing the energy of spring.

And, another suggestion is to eat detoxifying foods (mushrooms, tofu, celery, cucumber) and foods that reduce stagnation, including: beets, chicken, ginger, squash, beans, seafood, and cabbage.



## *Stop Sniffing & Rubbing Those Eyes*

While the beauty of tender shoots emerging from the earth and flowers marking the miracle of re-birth, not everyone is excited by the season. For many, spring brings runny noses and itchy eyes as pollen flies freely on the wind.

Western medicine addresses allergic reactions with medication that suppresses the body's allergic reaction. Antihistamines, for instance, tell the body to not produce histamines when exposed to allergens. Other drugs act on the nervous system, such as steroids and decongestants.

Doctors also tell people to avoid what causes them allergic symptoms, or to get allergy shots in an effort to administer small amounts of the allergen with hopes of de-sensitizing the individual.

With Traditional Chinese Medicine, however, the acupuncturist not only wants to reduce or eliminate the allergic-reaction symptoms, but to address the imbalances that may be making the individual more sensitive than normal. In addressing the immune system, I would certainly address the spleen, kidney, and lung. Treatments, in combination with some dietary suggestions (such as avoiding dairy products that increase mucous production and adding green tea to the diet in place of coffee), may not only reduce symptoms in the short-term, but may impact the body systemically, so it no longer reacts to those substances causing allergic reactions.

Before pumping yourself with anti-histamines or decongestants, why not try a treatment or two. The worst you can lose is a runny nose and itchy eyes, so you welcome spring instead of dreading it, and enjoy the beauty of the season to the fullest.

## Shannon Considine, L.Ac., Dipl. Ac

Towson Wellness Center  
1206 York Road, Suite L4  
Lutherville, MD 21093  
410-494-1152

Hours: Mon-Thurs: 10am-6pm • Fri: 10am-3pm



## F Y I

### *Kick Cancer In The Can*

Shannon's 8-year old nephew, Matthew, is a cancer survivor whose mother founded A Place Called Hope, Inc. to help families dealing with childhood cancer. He is collecting cans that you may otherwise trash or recycle, to earn money for A Place Called Hope. Please bag up your cans, collect them from friends or co-workers, and drop bags by Shannon's office. Matthew will take them to a recycling center, collect the rebates, and donate the money. Thanks for your help.



### *New Website!*

Please visit our new website,



### [AcupunctureByShannon.com](http://AcupunctureByShannon.com)

Sign up to receive our newsletter via our web form, or just send me an email to sign up: [info@AcupunctureByShannon.com](mailto:info@AcupunctureByShannon.com)

Hope you like it!  
I look forward to your feedback!

## *Don't Let Gardening Get Your Back*



Spring is a time when most of us come out of our cozy hibernation and decide that the yard needs an immediate overhaul so we can get all the chores out of the way in order to truly enjoy more outdoor living. Our weekend-warrior mentality, however, often takes its toll on the hamstrings and lower back—with aching muscles almost being a rite of spring.

It doesn't have to be that way.

With some simple pre-gardening/digging stretches, you can minimize over-stretching muscles.

1. Hold onto a table or railing. Put one foot out in front of the other, pulling up the toes on the front foot so only the heel is on the ground, toes pointed up. Now, bend the knee on the back leg deeply and bend down so you can get your nose as close to the knee on the outstretched leg as closely as possible. Feel the hamstring stretch in the back of the thigh. Hold and enjoy the stretch. Switch legs

and stretch the other one.

2. Stretch your arms over your head and bend gently from one side to the other, to stretch the waist.
3. Try the Cat Stretch. Get down on your hands and knees. Arch your back like a cat. Then reverse the arch, pushing your stomach toward the floor. Feel the stretch.
4. Lie on your back, legs extended. Bend one knee and gently pull that leg toward your chest with your arms, leaving the other leg flat. Feel the muscles in your butt stretch. Switch legs and repeat.

You should repeat these stretches when you are done gardening or working in the yard, too. And, if you notice discomfort in your lower back, other than stiffness, call for an immediate appointment.

Acupuncture has a proven track record of addressing low back pain by reducing inflammation and stimulating the body's natural pain-reducing chemicals. Many clients also report an improvement in their sleep as the discomfort of back pain is reduced.