Horse Chestnut  
(*Aesculus hippocastanum*)  
By Steven Horne

The rather whimsical photo on the right hand side of the page shows six horse-chestnut seeds. The four at the bottom are just starting to break out of their spiked, green hulls. At the top, one of the seeds outside of the hull can be seen with its rich, chocolate brown color and cream-colored “eye.” The final fruit (seed) is on the right side of the photo.

Also known as buckeyes, these seeds come from trees which have some wonderful medicinal value. The seeds are not edible, a fact I learned early in childhood. But this fact didn’t interfere with my fascination with them. I loved to gather them up in the fall. They were fun to “pop” in the fireplace, but more than that, I just loved the feel of them in my hands. In fact, I would sometimes stuff my pockets full of horse-chestnut seeds.

Years later, I learned why I probably loved the feel of them in my pockets. My midwife friend, Joan Patton, told me that they absorb harmful energy and block electromagnetic frequencies (EMFs). Pollution from EMFs is a major problem in our society. Cell phones, computers, microwaves, TV sets and other electronic equipment emit these harmful energies that are known to contribute to the development of cancer. Devices that shield the body from these frequencies also appear to block harmful energy. So, it makes perfect sense why it would feel good to have them in one’s pockets.

Of course, horse chestnuts aren’t widely known for their use as natural protection against electromagnetic pollution and harmful energies. They are well known as a remedy for the circulatory system. An extract of horse-chestnut seeds (a triterpene glycoside mixture) has been demonstrated to enhance venous circulation. This has been verified in a number of randomized, double-blind, and cross-over studies.

Put in layman’s terms, this means that a standardized extract of horse-chestnut seeds has been scientifically proven to relieve varicose veins, edema in the legs and venous congestion. This may help lymphedema, leg heaviness and peripheral vascular disease (in combination with ginkgo and hawthorn). Other uses for horse-chestnut seed extract include easing nighttime leg cramps, easing bruises, swellings and sprains, and as a topical application for hemorrhoids and trauma.

This is one case where a standardized extract is preferable to the whole herb, because the seeds themselves are toxic. Ingestion of the seeds can cause vomiting, diarrhea, reddening of the face and enlarged pupils. So, don’t go making your own extract of the seeds.

The leaves and bark have also been used medicinally for similar purposes. The bark has been used in folk medicine as an astringent for diarrhea and hemorrhoids. The leaves have been used as a tea for arthritis, rheumatism, and coughs.

The standardized extract of horse-chestnut seeds is a part of two NSP formulas, Vari-Gone and Vari-Gone cream. The encapsulated product, Vari-Gone, can be taken internally for varicose veins, congested venous circulation, spider veins, hemorrhoids, tired, sore legs from standing too long, or edema in the legs. Vari-Gone, which also contains the herb butcher’s broom, can help reduce the risk of blood clotting in the circulatory system. Improving venous circulation can also improve liver function.

Vari-Gone cream can be applied topically to varicose veins or spider veins. Since horse-chestnut seeds have also been used for treating bruises, trauma, and localized swelling, the cream may also help some of these conditions. It may also be helpful as a topical application for hemorrhoids.

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In our last issue, we discussed the process of cellular irrigation. We learned how osmotic pressure holds the plasma in the blood stream and only allows tiny amounts of fluid to leave the circulatory system to irrigate the cells. The fluid that irrigates the cells is known as lymph.

The illustration on this page shows the healthy state of the cells. At the top is a blood capillary. The larger circles represent the plasma proteins and the small grey dots are the water molecules that attach themselves to these proteins.

At the bottom of the illustration is a lymphatic capillary, which picks up excess fluid and protein to keep the tissues in their normal “dry” or subatmospheric pressure condition. As you can see, there is very little fluid around the cells.

Tissue Damage

With the basic understanding of lymphatic function we covered in our last issue, we’re ready to understand what happens when tissues get injured. This also reveals how the disease process begins. Every time we damage tissues (whether the damage occurs through trauma, nutrient depletion, toxicity or stress) they respond through a process called inflammation. Inflammation can be thought of as the “mother of all diseases” because all disease processes in the body start with cells becoming injured and an inflammatory response being initiated.

Recent medical research suggests that even serious chronic and degenerate diseases have their roots in chronic inflammation. For example, it is now known that heart disease begins with an inflammatory process, which sets the stage for hardening of the arteries. Inflammation is the first, or acute, stage of disease and corresponds to a tissue state we call irritation. Here’s what happens.

When cells are damaged, they burst and release certain chemicals into the surrounding tissues. One of these substances is called histamine, another is bradykinin. There are several others but these are the two most important ones.

Even if you’ve never heard of histamine, you’re still probably aware of the existence of antihistamines (drugs which block histamine reactions). Histamine reactions are well-known for their involvement in allergic responses, but they are also involved in all inflammatory reactions. Bradykinin is also involved in inflammatory reactions, particularly the symptoms we experience with the common cold.

Histamine and bradykinin cause the capillary pores to enlarge. This, in turn, allows massive amounts of fluid, including the plasma protein albumin, to flood the tissue spaces. So, our smashed finger begins to swell. Fluid and protein rush out of the blood stream and into the spaces around the cells, filling them with fluid. This takes the cells out of their normal “dry” state and slows down the exchange of oxygen. It also causes waste material to accumulate in the spaces between the cells. In effect, the cells start “drowning.”

This state is represented on the next page. Our “sick” cells are surrounded by excess fluid and plasma protein which has “leaked” out of the circulatory system through the enlarged pores. The cells are pushed apart and the lymphatic system is trying to draw away the excess fluid.

The Acute Stage of Disease—Irritation

This pooling of fluids creates the first symptom of inflammation—one we can all readily observe when we’ve bumped our head, smashed a finger or twisted an ankle. That symptom is swelling. Because the swelling deprives cells of oxygen and nutrients, they send out a distress signal that we call pain. This is the second symptom of inflammation—sharp pain.

The other two symptoms of inflammation are redness and heat. That’s why it’s called inflammation. These symptoms arise from three primary causes. In response to the situation, tissues become hyperactive. They speed up their metabolism trying to clear out the surrounding area and repair the damage. There is also a tendency for oxygen radicals to form and cause free radical damage in inflamed tissues. In effect, oxygen spins out of control and starts “burning” tissues. The cells, of course, send out a distress signal—a cry for help that we call pain. The final cause of the “flames” in inflammation is the activity of white blood cells which are drawn to the area as a “clean-up crew.”
blood cells will use oxygen radicals to “burn up” and destroy microbes and toxins that may be present at the site of injury.

Anytime we see the symptoms of heat (elevated temperature either locally or generally as in fever), swelling, redness and sharp pains we are dealing with an inflammatory condition. In other words, tissues have been chemically injured and are in a state of acute distress. The Latin word for inflammation is *itis*. So anytime you have an -*itis*, you are dealing with inflammation, whether it is tonsillitis, sinusitis, laryngitis, or bronchitis.

It is the job of the lymphatic system to “suck up” the debris and clean up the area. The lymphatic system captures the proteins that have escaped from the circulatory system and carries them, along with the fluid they attract, back to the circulatory system through a series of one-way check valves. If the body can successfully discharge the irritant and clean up the area via the lymphatics, then the problem is solved and it ends there.

The Subacute Stage—Tissue Stagnation

If not, then the process moves into the next stage of disease, known as stagnation. Stagnation occurs because albumin isn’t the only plasma protein that can leave the circulatory system at the site of a serious injury. Fibrinogen, an even larger plasma protein, can also enter the tissue spaces. Fibrinogen is the substance responsible for forming blood clots. When the fibrinogen penetrates the tissue spaces, surrounded by weakened and injured cells, the conditions are conducive to clotting. In other words, if the plasma proteins are allowed to remain in the tissue spaces too long they will clump together and hold the fluid in the tissues, creating, in effect, a large stagnant “pool” of fluid in the tissue spaces.

This creates a kind of swampy condition in the tissues in which fluids are no longer moving rapidly. Toxins build up in the tissue spaces, further weakening and damaging cells. The heat dissipates as the cells tire and start to become underactive. We have now entered the subacute stage of disease characterized by the tissue state we call stagnation.

The Chronic Stage of Disease—Tissue Depression

As the stagnant pools persist, tissues continue to be starved for oxygen and nutrients. They also become increasingly poisoned in their own metabolic wastes. This causes them to become chronically underactive or weakened. In this chronic state of disease there is a lack of tissue activity, so the tissues are said to be depressed because they will not respond properly to normal stimuli.

This stage of disease can last for months and even years. There may be periodic times when tissues attempt to heal, in which case the subacute or even acute stages of disease will reappear. However, there is a chronic feeling of malaise, lack of energy and perhaps dull, aching pains.

In the chronic stage of disease, we can also encounter heat again. This heat is not over activity of the cells, however. It is the heat that one encounters in a compost pile. It is brought on by the action of infection and decay. The weakened tissues are susceptible to the activity of microbes, which create heat as they feed on weak and dying tissue.

The Degenerative Stage of Disease—Atrophy

As the situation remains chronic, there is an eventual breakdown of not only function, but structure as well. This is the final stage of disease. Tissues become dry as fluids stop moving. They lose their mobility and their elasticity and become brittle and rigid. Just as tissues were generated through the process of life, in this final stage of disease, the process of life-generation breaks down and de-generation begins to occur. Because the tissues lose both their functional and structural integrity, they are in a state of atrophy.

Think of atrophy as the condition of a leaf after it has fallen off the tree in the fall and has dried out. When the leaf was on the tree, it was supple, flexible and green. Now, it is brown, dry and brittle. This is the condition of atrophied tissues.

Fortunately, as long as there is life remaining in any tissues, they have the capacity to regenerate, to overcome the process of breakdown and decay and renew themselves. This is what the healing process is all about—supplying the right conditions so that the process of life can regenerate and repair damaged tissues.

In the next issue, we’ll expand on these four stages of disease and examine the healing process in greater detail.
Kimberly Balas’ Clinician’s Corner

Menstrual Problems, Vitiligo

Irregular Periods

I have a question concerning a young woman. She is 20 years old and has very irregular periods, ranging from 38 days to 70+ days between cycles. When she has her period they last anywhere from 3 to 8 days. She does not have serious cramping or headaches, but does suffer from severe nausea when she has her period. In general, 5 days before the start of a period she will have moderate cramping that disappears when the period starts. She is tall, slender, and energetically on the cold side, cold hands and feet, however she is on the “fast side” with verbally talking a mile a minute. She also has a sensitive digestive system, not being able to handle fatty foods. Thanks in advance.

Patricia

From what you have given it seems that there is a problem metabolizing fats and this is throwing the hormones out of balance. When the gallbladder is flushing irritants from the liver there is nausea. The gallbladder may be having a hard time breaking down fats. This, in turn, affects hormone production. Fats are needed for the production of certain hormones. They are also needed to keep the body warm.

I would suggest having her take Hi-lipase between meals. She may also benefit from Blood Build (BP-C), a Chinese formula that strengthens the liver. If she can tolerate it, then she should drink lots of lemon juice in water. It works better if it is taken warm.

Another issue to look at that goes in hand with the liver/gallbladder issue is cholesterol. Cholesterol is a byproduct of protein metabolism, which is the bonding of oily fats to nitrogen, and is produced by every cell in the body. This is called endogenous cholesterol. Exogenous cholesterol comes from dietary intake.

The majority of cholesterol produced and taken in through diet forms an enzyme called cholic acid. This is usually higher in A blood types. Cholic acid is an enzyme, which is released by the gallbladder to emulsify fats, which you take in through your diet. If you do not take in any fat, then your body does not need any cholic acid. Since 50-60% of your cholesterol is used to produce cholic acid, your cholesterol levels will rise. This is what happens with all the people on low-fat diets trying to reduce their cholesterol levels. It actually can elevate.

25-35% of the cholesterol is used as a precursor to make your sex hormones, estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone. So cholesterol is needed for healthy reproductive function.

The anterior pituitary controls protein digestion and placement, which affects cholesterol because it is a byproduct of protein metabolism. The anterior pituitary also produces the Follicle Stimulating Hormone (FSH) and the Luteinizing Hormone (LH). These hormones regulate the menstrual cycle. Supplements that aid the pituitary include: Master Gland, Ultimate Green Zone, Super Algae and alfalfa.

In order for hormones to function properly you have to change the membrane permeability in the cells. This occurs by opening or closing membrane ion channels such as sodium, potassium, and calcium in the cell membranes. Mineral Chi Tonic should help with this. But, the first and most important concern I would address in this case is the ability of the body to digest and process fats.

Prolonged Menstrual Bleeding

I’ve got a pretty healthy 15-year-old young lady who has had a continuous period for about four weeks. This is the first time this has happened. Her mom took her to the doctor, who did blood work on thyroid, CBC, and prolactin—all came back fine. Mom wanted a sonogram done to see if there is a cyst, as this young lady has had an ovarian cyst in the past that was found with a sonogram. The doctor told mom that because there was no pain, a sonogram wouldn’t pick up a cyst even if there was one, so he didn’t order it. Mom is not convinced.

The doctor did order the von Willebrand screen, which tests for clotting factors in the blood, and the only one that was out of range was ristocetin—normal range is .45 - 1.6 and hers was .39. The doctor also wanted to do an internal pelvic exam, which the mom refused to permit. I think that was wise—in my semi-professional opinion that is way too invasive of a procedure to do at
Kimberly D. Balas has an N.D. from Clayton College and a Ph. D. in Bioelectrical Engineering. She is a professional iridologist with the International Iridology Practitioners Association and an instructor in NSP's NHC program. An excellent teacher and consultant, she resides in Melbourne, Fl.
Uterine fibroids are benign growths that form in the uterus. They may occur on the interior muscular wall, in which case, there may be little pain, only heavy menstrual flow. They may also form on the exterior of the uterus, which may cause them to press against other organs causing abdominal pain and discomfort. About 20-30% of all women develop these small growths, and in about half of the cases they produce no symptoms at all. Abnormally heavy and frequent periods are a typical symptom. Bleeding between periods, fatigue, anemia, painful intercourse, or abdominal pain are other common symptoms.

Causes

Uterine fibroids tend to develop in the late 30s and early 40s and disappear at menopause. High estrogen levels appear to be a factor, but the precise mechanisms that cause these growths are not fully understood. Xenoestrogens may be a contributing factor. Birth control pills also increase risk for fibroids.

A diet of processed and fast foods, coupled with stress, also appears to trigger fibroid growth. In natural medicine, fibroids could be considered a symptom of stagnation—poor flow of the blood and lymph. They also appear to occur in women who need to improve liver detoxification. The liver plays an important role in breaking down excess hormones such as estrogen in the body.

Nutritional Therapy

Natural therapy for uterine fibroids begins with dietary changes. Methylxanthines, found in coffee, must be eliminated from the diet, as they contribute to fibroid growth. Since estrogen aggravates fibroid growth, intake of dietary estrogens also needs to be curtailed. Hormones are added to most animal products, so red meat, chicken, and dairy products should be avoided.

Phytoestrogens, such as those found in soy, may actually tie up estrogen receptor sites and reduce fibroid growth. Even better are dark green, leafy vegetables, which not only contain phytoestrogens, they also improve liver detoxification and build the blood. Essential fatty acids (Omega-3 EPA and Super GLA) should be added to the diet as they reduce inflammation. Vitamin C with bioflavonoids may also be helpful, as this helps reduce bleeding by making blood capillaries less fragile. It also assists in the assimilation of iron.

Herbal Therapy

Liver detoxification is important in natural therapy for uterine fibroids. All Cell Detox has been helpful in many cases. Where anemia and general weakness is a problem, the Chinese Blood Build formula helps the liver build the blood and improve detoxification.

Herbs that reduce blood stagnation may also be helpful. Yarrow alone has been reported to clear up cases of uterine fibroids. This herb helps reduce stagnation of the blood and lymph. It also helps control bleeding.

Yarrow is one of the major ingredients in Menstrual-Reg, a formula designed to control heavy menstrual bleeding. Where fibroids are causing heavy menses or bleeding between periods, this formula may be helpful. Another way to stop heavy or irregular bleeding is to mix one ounce of colloidal minerals with one pint of purified water and use this mixture as a retention douche. Prop the hips up with pillows and use a douche bottle to inject the mixture into the vaginal area. Retain the mixture for about 15 minutes before expelling. This can stop spotting in as little as 3-4 days.

Progesterone is an antagonist to estrogen, so Pro-G-Yam Cream can also be an effective part of a natural program for shrinking and eliminating fibroids. The cream can be applied once daily onto soft tissue areas such as the chest, breast, underarms, inner thighs or abdomen. It is best to rotate the sites of application. For fibroid tumors, use approximately 1/2 tsp. daily from day fourteen to twenty-eight of the menstrual cycle (the 14 days prior to menses).

Another useful herbal formula that can help shrink or eliminate uterine fibroids is V-X. This modified version of a formula by Dr. John Christopher may be taken internally, along with All Cell Detox, but its best application is as a vaginal bolus.

To make a vaginal bolus, the herbal powders are mixed with cocoa butter to form small pill-shaped boluses the size of the end of your little finger. These are wrapped in wax paper and stored in the fridge. Insert one vaginally one to two times daily. Used along with All Cell Detox, this procedure can help the body expel the fibroids.

The foregoing recommendations are general suggestions that have worked for other people, but every situation is unique. Consult a qualified herbalist or natural healer to determine the program that is right for your individual needs.

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V-X
Vaginal Bolus Formula for Uterine Fibroids

V-X is a modified version of a vaginal suppository formula originally developed by Dr. John Christopher. The formula was used to make vaginal suppositories to treat a variety of female complaints, including vaginal infections, vaginitis, and uterine fibroids. The formula is primarily composed of mucilant herbs, plants that contain water soluble fibers called mucilage. These plants absorb irritants, soothing and cooling irritated and inflamed tissues.

The ingredients in this formula, and their benefits are listed below.

Plantain
Plantain is a sour tasting herb with cooling, astringent properties. It absorbs toxins, reduces swelling, and cools and soothes inflamed tissues. As a drawing agent, it is unsurpassed in being able to pull toxins and irritants from tissues.

Golden seal root
Goldenseal is a bitter herb that has a slight astringent action on mucus membranes. It helps to fight infection, remove stagnation and ease subacute inflammation of membranes.

Yellow dock root
A source of easily assimilated iron, yellow dock also improves tissue uptake of iron, helping to overcome anemia. It is also a blood purifier and liver herb, promoting improved detoxification of the blood via the liver.

Marshmallow
This cooling and moistening mucilaginous herb soothes irritated membranes, absorbs toxins, cools inflammation and promotes a natural mucus secretion. It is particularly soothing to the lungs, digestive organs, and the genitourinary tract.

Chickweed
Chickweed helps emulsify fats and fat soluble toxins. Used topically it reduces itching and irritation. In fact, it has been known to reduce itching when all other remedies have failed.

Mullein
This soothing herb helps hydrate membranes and soothe dry, irritated tissues. It is also a lymphatic herb, promoting better lymphatic drainage.

Slippery elm bark
A mild nourishing food and mucilaginous herb, slippery elm absorbs toxins to reduce swelling and irritation of tissues. It also softens and soothes mucous membranes.

Topical Application
To use this formula as a suppository, mix it with pure cocoa butter. Simply empty the capsules and blend the powders into a small amount of cocoa butter. Three to four capsules per tablespoon of cocoa butter is a good place to start. If the mixture will handle it, add more herb powders. If the mixture doesn't hold together well, you can add more cocoa butter. Form the mixture of herbs and cocoa butter into small rolls about the size of the end of your little finger. Wrap them in wax paper and refrigerate them. This allows them to harden for easy insertion.

The suppositories are inserted into the vagina where the cocoa butter melts, allowing the herbs to come in contact with the tissues. These suppositories could also be inserted rectally to help shrink hemorrhoids, although adding some white oak bark powder to the formula would make it even more effective. One can also add a single drop of an essential oil such as helichrysum or lavender to each suppository to help fight infection or promote more rapid tissue healing.

Of course, it isn't necessary to make this product into suppositories to obtain its benefits. It can also be taken in capsule form. The ingredients will soothe irritated tissues in the digestive tract, which will help other tissues in the body to heal as well, since the digestive tract is the first line of immune defense.

Internal Use
V-X can also be taken internally. Although it is most effective against uterine fibroids when used as a suppository, it has also been reported to shrink fibroids when taken internally when taken with All Cell Detox. This is probably because the combination is reducing toxins in the intestinal tract and liver, which is indirectly helping the uterus. Other herbs to use internally with V-X for uterine fibroids include yarrow or Menstrual-Reg (for heavy bleeding) and BP-X (for anemia and fatigue).

Internally, V-X can also be helpful for reducing intestinal inflammation and easing respiratory congestion. Suggested internal use is 2-3 capsules 3 times per day.

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Each of us is unique. The same diet that helps one person achieve optimal health will make another person sick. In this video, Kimberly Balas explains metabolic types and shows how they relate to the nervous system function. Seven different metabolic types are discussed, including how they are determined through blood work. The optimal diet for each type is also covered. (VID-404)

Blood Type and Nutrition

Kimberly Balas has over four years of clinical experience helping people with blood type diets and Nature’s Sunshine Products. In this video, she shares her knowledge and expertise in why understanding one’s blood type is important to health, along with practical suggestions for working with each of the four blood types. (VID-405)

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