

Nature's Field

An Electronic Journal for NSP Distributors

Pain Can Teach us to Be Healthier

by Steven Horne, RH(AHG)

My first year in college I took a class in religious philosophy. One of the topics we discussed is called the theological problem of suffering. Basically, the question this problem asks is "How can an all-loving and all-powerful God allow suffering in the world?" It was interesting to hear how people through the ages have debated this question and I've thought about it a lot since, especially in my work as a natural healer.

Don't worry, I'm not about to engage in a philosophical or religious debate about the issue of suffering. I just want to introduce our topic for the month of April, which is relieving pain, because however suffering came to be, pain is a reality in the world we live in. All of us have experienced it and are going to experience it again.

Some pain and suffering is unavoidable, but much of it can be prevented when we are willing to learn from our pain. In the beginning of my Dr. Mom-Dr. Dad course, I discuss how pain (and pleasure) can teach us to take better care of ourselves. You can learn more about this approach to pain by reading Just Say No to Drugs at treelite.com.

The idea that pain is a teacher is not original with me. In fact, it was crystalized in my mind by a poem introduced to me by a fellow lover of poetry, Earnest Endeavor. I met Earnest at an NSP Manager school in the 1980s. He was an elderly man, but vibrant and energetic. Like me, he loved to recite poems, and one that he recited for me was "I Am Pain" by C.J. Buell. You can read it below.

As we explore different strategies for easing pain this month, let's keep in mind that pain is usually a warning that we have somehow violated the laws of nature, either

physically or emotionally. If we start to look for the cause of our pain, instead of just treating its effects, pain can actually motivate us to lead a healthier life and lead us to greater happiness.

In the next four weekly issues of Nature's Field we'll cover some basic strategies for relieving pain naturally without resorting to pain-killing drugs. These strategies are:

- * Pain is a Lack of Oxygen
- * Heal Inflammation to Relieve Pain
- * Relax Your Way to Pain Relief

We're also hosting a special webinar on herbs and supplements for relieving pain. See the sidebar or click here for more information.

As we learn more about relieving pain, let's keep in mind that the best way to relieve pain is to learn to stop doing the things that damage our body and our soul. As the poem below suggests, the best way to ease pain is to learn from it.

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I Am Pain

by C. J. Buell

I am Pain. Most people hate me,
Think me cruel, call me heartless;
Study ways to bribe and fool me,
Try by every means to slay me.

Dope themselves with anesthetics,
Fill themselves with patent nostrums,
Call the one who practices medicine,
Seek the allopathic healer.

Beat the tom-tom of the savage,
Build the alter, burn the incense;
Seek to sate the wrath of devils,
Pray to saints, and gods, and angels.

Not to cure the ills within them,
Not to cleanse and purify them—
Just to calm the pain that hurts them;
Just to kill the guide that warns them.

Pain I am; but when you know me,
When you once have learned my secret—
How I come to help and bless you,
Guide you, warn you, lead and teach you;

When you know my loving nature,
How, at first, I gently twinge you,
Lightly twinge you, as a warning,
Hoping by this kind endeavor,
You will heed my voice and listen.

Sure am I that when you know me,
You will gladly then embrace me,
Call me friend and give me welcome,
Call me friend and ask my message.

This the message I would bring you,
This the secret I would teach you;
This the warning I would give you,
This the reason for my visit,

When you learn to know that nature,
In her wise and boundless mercy,
In her tender, loving kindness,
In her wisdom, and her goodness,
Meant that men should live and labor;

When you learn to shun the by-paths,
Leading off to vicious habits;
When you learn to keep your body
Strong and clean and pure and active;

Give it work in right proportion,
Give it air and food and water,
Fit to build its every member,
Fit to nourish every function;

When you teach your mind and spirit,
Pure and noble thoughts to harbor;
Drive out fear, and hate, and malice;
Cherish love and kindly motive;

Think of every man and woman
As your brother, as your sister;
Scorn to do to any other
What to you would seem injustice;

Help to build a state and nation
Founded on the rock of freedom;
See that chance to none is lacking
Where withal to earn a living,
Where withal to live in comfort;

When you learn these things I've told you,
When you know them, when you do them—
Then will I depart and leave you
Then will pain no more be needed.

This is then, the truth I bring you;
That I hurt you but to heal you,
Thus I come to guide and lead you.

I am God's most blessed angel,
Sent to point the way to virtue,
Sent to teach the noblest manhood,
Sent to rouse the soul to action.

Love me, trust me, heed my message;
I will bring thee peace and bless thee.

**From The Health Poetry Prescription by
Earnest Endeavor**

Pain is a Lack of Oxygen

by Steven Horne, RH(AHG)

In 1982, I was privileged to work with Dr. C. Samuel West at the International Academy of Lymphology. It was Dr. West who first taught me the secrets to relieving pain naturally. One of his favorite sayings was, "Pain is a lack of oxygen at the cellular level." While I'm not sure this is always true, I believe that in most cases pain is caused by a lack of oxygen reaching the tissues.

Usually pain is caused by inflammation, which is the normal response to tissue damage. When inflammation occurs, fluid and protein leave the blood stream and enter the tissue spaces. This slows down the exchange of oxygen and nutrients at the cell level.

With minor injuries, it's possible to literally squeeze or rub the pain away. By grabbing the injured area tightly, or rubbing it lightly, one can move the excess fluid in the tissue spaces and move it into the lymphatic system. If you keep this up until the pain stops, a process that usually takes 5-20 minutes, the pain will be immediately relieved and won't come back.

This is because normal exchange of oxygen and nutrients at the cell level has been restored. I've used these simple techniques many times with great success, as talked about in my Dr. Mom-Dr. Dad course and my Simple Secrets to Pain Relief audio CD.

But one of simplest and most effective secrets to relieving pain is to breathe deeply. The odd thing is that most of us do exactly the opposite when we feel pain—we hold our breath or we breathe shallowly. This is a reflex reaction we use to try to numb our sensation of the pain. Unfortunately, it doesn't help. Deep breathing, however, does!

Most books I've read on natural pain management stress the deep breathing as a major secret to chronic pain relief. I've seen it work for me, and others, on numerous occasions. If you concentrate on breathing very slowly and deeply when you have a headache, neck ache, backache or other type of chronic pain, you'll be amazed at how much it can be eased by 5-15 minutes of deep breathing.

There are at least three reasons why deep breathing works. First, deep breathing floods the body with oxygen, which neutralizes toxins and acid wastes and improves overall tissue function.

Secondly, deep breathing pumps the lymphatics, so it works much like rubbing or holding an injured area. Deep breathing moves fluid out of the tissues and into the lymphatics, resulting in better oxygen and nutrient exchange at the tissue level.

Finally, deep breathing reduces stress and muscle tension. Since stress and muscle tension increase pain, helping to relax the body helps to ease pain. Again, we tend to "tense up" when we feel pain, which actually makes the pain worse, not better.

A number of supplements can help to oxygenate tissues and contribute to the pain relieving effect of deep breathing. For instance, Liquid Chlorophyll is excellent at increasing oxygen uptake in the blood. I've used water with Liquid Chlorophyll and a little powdered Vitamin C in it to perk up the energy and ease the pain of a woman in labor. Drinking a glass of chlorophyll water with a little Vitamin C powder in it every hour will probably help with other kinds of chronic pain. In fact, since dehydration also contributes to pain, this practice has a dual-action pain relief effect.

The Chinese Lung Support formula also helps oxygenate the tissues and alkalize the system. It's another supplement to consider if a person is suffering from dull, chronic pain.

IF Relief

by Steven Horne

As we'll discuss in next week's Nature's Field, most pain is due to inflammation. Therefore, something that relieves inflammation is going to help ease pain and promote healing at the same time.

IF Relief is a great pain reliever for all kinds of inflammation-related pain. My first experience with it was taking it after I had a tooth pulled. I took two IF Relief every two hours at first, gradually lowering the dose to two capsules three times daily. I didn't need anything else.

I've also used IF Relief to ease inflammation associated with allergies. I get a dust-related allergy when I work in my garden and I use a combination of high doses of Vitamin C, Hista-Block and IF Relief to relieve the suffering.

I recommend NSP's IF Relief to anyone suffering pain from acute injuries or surgery. In fact, I like it so much that I now consider it an essential component of my home first aid supplies.

Stress and Pain

by Kimberly Balas, ND

In today's world we are constantly under stress and this stress contributes to the pains we experience. In stressful situations, the sympathetic nervous system is activated, releasing increased levels of epinephrine and norepinephrine. These hormones create vasoconstriction, stress on the cardiovascular system and affect glycolysis in muscles. Emotions like anger, anxiety and grief affect hormones and neurotransmitters that can actually bring about physical sensations of pain.

Stress makes us feel anxious, short tempered and overwhelmed. It takes its toll on the adrenal glands, contributing to adrenal exhaustion, which can increase inflammation and pain. Pain causes us to clench our muscles and breathe more shallowly, which makes pain worse. Pain is stressful, so experiencing pain increases our stress level. Since stress makes pain feel worse, this creates a vicious cycle that contributes to fear, depression and feelings of exhaustion.

Clearly, it is necessary to both reduce pain and control stress at the same time. Things like time management, bio-feedback, chiropractic, yoga breathing, hypnosis and acupuncture are all really beneficial for pain relief because they also help to manage stress.

Food choices are also a big issue. When eating processed foods the nerves aren't being properly fed. They become innervated, raising pain levels due to irritation. pH values become too acidic, which also contributes to pain. An alkalizing diet that features plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables will feed the nerves and reduce irritation, easing pain. Staying hydrated also helps to relieve stress and reduce acid elevation in the pH.

Exercise is also a key element in pain reduction. Exercise pumps lymphatics and prompts endorphin release, which blocks pain signals and makes you feel better. So, exercise helps you both emotionally and biochemically with pain as long as you don't put undue stress on injured areas of the body. Stretching, yoga and Tai Chi and are all helpful for pain management.

Adaptogenic herbs are a key element in controlling adrenal and stress responses, which in turn will help with pain management. Suma Combination and Adaptamax work well with Fibromyalgia and other pain related issues that are triggered with stress. Nervous Fatigue Formula

helps to calm the nerves and makes it easier to relax so you can sleep and rejuvenate.

Adrenal Support is a glandular that helps rebuild an exhausted adrenal and works well in conjunction to support thyroid for those on thyroid meds. Nature's Cortisol formula can help with those who experience prolonged elevated cortisol levels thus leading to inflammation and nerve irritation. Essential Fatty Acids are also very important in nerve health and help with glycolysis to support the movement initiated by the adrenals.

Antispasmodics like kava kava and lobelia can relax muscle spasms to further reduce stress and pain. Magnesium is a valuable mineral for easing tension and reducing stress and pain due to muscle tension.

So, when considering ways of managing pain, don't forget to manage stress at the same time. This dual approach will increase your effectiveness at easing both.

Adrenal Support and Other Adrenal Herbs for Pain

Corticosteroid drugs are often used to ease pain in conditions involving chronic inflammation such as asthma, autoimmune disorders and arthritis. These drugs mimic the adrenal hormone cortisol, which reduces inflammation and relieves pain.

In my experience, most people with these disorders show signs of exhausted adrenals and benefit greatly by improving adrenal function. For this reason, Adrenal Support can be a great remedy for chronic pain. It isn't going to immediately "numb" one's pain, but it will slowly and cumulatively help to reduce the inflammation that is causing it.

Licorice root and yucca are also remedies which ease pain by supporting the adrenals and reducing chronic inflammation. Often you can wean people off of dangerous corticosteroid drugs by rebuilding their adrenals with Adrenal Support and using licorice root or yucca as natural steroidal medications instead.

Considering the numerous side effects caused by corticosteroid drugs, it makes much more sense to rebuild your adrenals and make your own natural anti-inflammatory pain reliever. Generally, you can start the supplements while the person is taking the drugs and allow them to gradually decrease the amount of the drug they take.

Heal Inflammation to Relieve Pain

by Steven Horne, RH(AHG)

All acute pain (and most chronic pain) is the result of inflammation. In fact, pain is one of the four classic symptoms of inflammation, which are: heat, swelling, redness and pain. So anytime you injure yourself, the pain you're experiencing is the result of inflammation. So is the pain from sore throats, earaches, indigestion and most headaches.

When most people reach for a pain reliever, they reach for an analgesic. An analgesic is a remedy that numbs the nerves to deaden the sensation of pain. Sure that lessens the experience of pain, but it doesn't do anything to heal the inflammation that's causing it.

The justification people use for this is that natural remedies are "slow-acting" or undependable. I disagree.

When you understand inflammation, you can relieve pain very rapidly using safe, natural remedies. I've posted a very extensive article on the subject on my personal website.

This article explains what happens when tissue becomes inflamed and how to relieve the pain of minor injuries (and reverse the damage) using pressure, massage and rapid, light stroking. What makes these techniques even more useful is to combine them with the use of topical analgesics, remedies that help to ease pain when rubbed into an injured part of the body. (See sidebar, "Tei Fu: My Favorite Topical Analgesic")

Using massage and topical analgesics, it's not only possible to ease acute pain, it's also possible to promote healing in many chronic conditions, as well. I wrote about my own experience in helping my injured knee in another article I've posted: Chronic Pain Relief: A Tribute to Dr. C. Samuel West

This article tells about how my kneecap was broken when I was 23 and how I managed to help it heal using the same techniques described in my article on Applied Lymphology. I'd be lying if I said that my knee never bothers me, because it acts up from time to time, but I simply use the techniques again and get it feeling good again.

So, for 31 years I've been able to keep my knee working well without drugs or surgery, using these simple techniques. It may eventually give me problems, but considering the severity of the injury, I've done very well.

Teaching people how to relieve pain by reversing inflammation is one of my passions. It's the primary focus of my Dr. Mom-Dr. Dad course and I'm expanding on this knowledge by doing two webinars on herbal remedies for pain with K.P. Khalsa, who co-authored our Chinese herb module. You can learn more about our Pain Relief Without Medication Class at treelite.com.

The plant kingdom contains some pretty powerful pain relievers that actually work better than many modern drugs. They are fast acting, effective and safer than drugs. Herbs aren't "magic bullets" for pain because they aren't isolated chemicals. They're complex mixtures of substances that act on the body in multiple ways. You just have to know how to pick the right remedy for the kind of pain you're dealing with.

Nerve Eight for Pain and Inflammation

by Steven Horne, RH(AHG)

Nerve Eight is a natural anti-inflammatory and analgesic herbal blend. It works on pain and inflammation in several ways.

First of all, it contains two herbs with natural salicylates (the forerunner of aspirin), white willow and black cohosh. Both are helpful for inhibiting the prostaglandins involved in the inflammatory response, just like aspirin. Black cohosh also has the benefit of being antispasmodic, so it eases muscle tension (another common factor in pain).

The antispasmodic action of black cohosh is aided by valerian and hops. These are sedative herbs, meaning they sedate the central nervous system. This gives them a relaxing and mild pain relieving action.

Wood betony and Devil's claw are two more herbs in this formula with anti-inflammatory properties. Devil's claw, white willow and black cohosh have all been used

historically to ease the pain and inflammation of arthritis. Wood betony is a good remedy for soothing the nerves and has been helpful for neuralgia (nerve pain).

The capsicum and ginger in this formula help to stimulate circulation. Ginger is anti-inflammatory and capsicum is directly analgesic. Capsaicin, a compound in capsicum directly blocks pain receptors.

Nerve Eight is an excellent blend for chronic muscle and joint pain, tension headaches, arthritis, neuralgia and other forms of pain due to chronic inflammation. Take two capsules every two to four hours up to about 10 or 12 capsules per day maximum. Nerve Eight combines well with Joint Support for arthritic and muscle pain.

Herbal Back Adjustment

by Steven Horne, RH(AHG)

Here's a little secret. Bones are held in place by muscles, so when your back is out of alignment, adjusting it by simply moving the bones doesn't really fix the problem. The secret is to get the muscles on both sides of your backbone to relax, so the vertebrae move more easily into position and stay there.

This can be easily done by means of an "herbal back adjustment." This procedure can be done before going to the chiropractor to make adjustments easier and hold longer, or it can be done by itself to encourage the spine to align itself naturally.

Start by applying a mixture of capsicum and lobelia extracts to the muscles on both sides of the spinal column and massaging them in. Follow this by putting Tei Fu oil on both sides of the spine and massaging that in, too. If there are problems with disks, spray Nature's Fresh on the spine before applying the Tei Fu.

If you have chronic back problems try doing an herbal back adjustment every day and taking KB-C daily. I think you'll be pleased at how much this will help.

Tei Fu: My Favorite Topical Analgesic

by Steven Horne, RH(AHG)

Ever noticed that your instinct is to rub something that's sore? It's because massage moves lymph and moving lymph helps reduce both pain and inflammation.

But, if you want your rubbing to have a more long-lasting and healing effect, it's even better to apply a topical analgesic. Topical analgesics are remedies that relieve pain when applied to the skin. They may have a direct analgesic (nerve-numbing effect), but they may also work by:

- 1) Promoting blood flow to the area (which brings in oxygen and nutrients for tissue healing and repair)
- 2) Encouraging lymphatic drainage (which reduces swelling and "cleans up" tissue debris)
- 3) Providing a direct anti-inflammatory effect.

I've tried a lot of essential oil blends that work as topical analgesics (Tiger Balm, Olbas, and many others), but my favorite is still Nature's Sunshine's Tei Fu oil. It's an incredible remedy and one that I try never to be without. It's available both in lotion and oil form.

I've used Tei Fu oil for insect bites, colds, sinus congestion, sinus headaches, tension headaches, muscle aches, sore neck, sore throat, swollen lymph nodes, bruises and canker sores.

Tei Fu works really well when used in combination with lobelia extract and capsicum extract combined in equal parts. Capsicum has a direct analgesic effect and draws blood into the area. Lobelia relaxes muscles and promotes lymph drainage.

These three remedies can ease backache, neck pain, sore muscles, arthritis pain, sore throats, headaches and much more. One of my favorite uses for these three remedies is doing an "herbal back adjustment" as described below.