



Improving Thymus Function

Building the Body's Immune-Regulating Gland

The thymus gland is one of the seven major endocrine glands. Located in front of the heart beneath the breastbone, the thymus gland regulates the immune system. It is largely composed of lymphatic tissue.

In our younger years, the thymus gland is quite large, and active. It helps program our immune system to resist various infections, by helping lymphocytes (white blood cells) to mature and be programmed to attack specific microorganisms and invading irritants. The thymus produces a hormone known as thymosin A. This hormone stimulates the proliferation of and increased activity in lymphocytes.

A weakened thymus gland can result in reduced immune activity. Unfortunately, this gland shrinks as a person ages, and by old age, most people's thymus glands are composed primarily of fat and fibrous tissues.

Fortunately, there are herbs that can help to strengthen the function of this important gland, enhancing immunity. Several single herbs appear to have strong affinity for this gland. They include echinacea, yarrow, thyme, licorice, olive leaf, pau d'arco, rosehips, wheatgrass and barley grass. Cruciferous vegetables like broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, etc. also appear to enhance thymus function, as do the essential oils of bergamot, clove, tea tree, oregano, thyme and eucalyptus. Nutrients that help thymus function include black currant oil, organic germanium, vitamin A and beta carotene, and zinc.

The essence of immunity, and of thymus function, appears to be the ability to distinguish self and not-self, that is, to determine what belongs to the body and what does not belong to the body. A weakened thymus not only results in a lowered immune response, it also increases a person's attraction to negative energies and poor quality foods. Emotionally, symptoms of a weak thymus include poor self-esteem, lack of self care, lack of order in a person's personal life, and attraction to junk food. Building the thymus gland can not only help a person resist disease and infection better, it can also help in resolving some of these emotional issues.

Echinacea is a primary thymus remedy, working both on a physical and an emotional level. Physically, echinacea stimulates a non-specific immune reaction, increasing white blood cell count and activity (just like the thymus does). This makes it especially useful for chronic, low grade infections or immune deficiency where a person has a general lowered resistance to disease.

Echinacea not only stimulates the thymus gland as an herb, it is also used as a flower remedy for people whose self-image

is shattered from trauma or abuse. So, echinacea not only physically stimulates the immune system and the thymus, it also emotionally strengthens a person's ability to resist harmful influences.

Ultimate Echinacea is a blend of several species of echinacea and a powerful thymus-boosting remedy. It can be used in an almost homeopathic manner by taking small doses (2-3 drops once or twice a day) to help rebuild a damaged self-esteem.

Yarrow is another important thymus remedy, again acting both physically and emotionally. Yarrow physically strengthens the body's ability to fight off infection, particularly viral infections. It's valuable for the person who has a poor self-image and tries to feel good about themselves by trying to fix everyone else's problems. In other words, they derive their sense of self-worth from being a rescuer. The flower essence, or just one capsule per day of the herb can help this.

Jeanne Burgess' THIM-J formula is a very beneficial remedy for the thymus gland. Containing rose hips, beta carotene, broccoli, cabbage, eleuthero root, parsley, red clover, wheatgrass and horseradish. The formula is valuable for people with run down immune systems who are prone to frequent infections. It has been used for a variety of immune-related diseases including AIDS, Epstein-Barr virus, vaccine detoxification and cancer.

Another powerful formula for enhancing the thymus gland, and probably one of the most effective is Trigger Immune. Low thymus function causes a problem in the body's energy polarity that makes accurate muscle response testing impossible. Essentially, it causes the body to respond negatively to healthy influences and positively to unhealthy influences. Trigger Immune corrects this problem, improving thymus and immune function, while correcting the body's natural energy flow. Trigger Immune is especially valuable for the person who feels tired or "run down" with lowered resistance to disease.

Other formulas that may help stimulate the thymus gland include AL-J (which combines well with THIM-J for people who have frequent colds or allergic reactions) and Immune Stimulator (which stimulates a non-specific immune reaction like echinacea, but in a much more powerful way).

For more assistance in enhancing thymus function and building immunity consult a local herb specialist. You can also check out some of the references listed below.

Selected References

What's Wrong with You? by Dorothy Hall
Biochemical Blood Analysis by Kimberly D. Balas
The Endocrine Symphony by Steven Horne

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