



# TAO OF WELLNESS

ACUPUNCTURE  
CHINESE MEDICINE  
NUTRITION

SPRING 2007

1

BRAIN FOG—THE FOG THAT NEVER LIFTS

2

FOOD FOR THOUGHT  
COOKING FOR CLARITY

3

NERVOUS SYSTEM  
OVERLOAD  
MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS)

4

ALL SHOOK UP?  
IT MAY NOT BE  
PARKINSON'S DISEASE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TAO OF WELLNESS

1131 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD, SUITE 300  
SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA 90401  
PHONE 310-917-2200 • FAX 310-917-2204  
WWW.TAOFWELLNESS.COM

Copyright 2007 Tao of Wellness,  
a Professional Acupuncture Corp.

Graphic Design: Justina Krakowski

THE BRAIN AND NERVOUS SYSTEM ISSUE

# brain fog

## THE FOG THAT NEVER LIFTS

Many of us have experienced feelings of spaceyness, together with difficulty focusing and a slight feeling of being disoriented. When these feelings cannot be associated with any identifiable disease or condition, I group them under the nonspecific category called “brain fog”.



DR. MAOSHING NI

Most people's episodes of brain fog are brief and fleeting, but for some the feeling is semi-permanent. It is one of the most frustrating and non specific conditions that patients complain about because it robs them of their quality of life. Those afflicted are often not sick enough to be bedridden, but are not well enough to enjoy a productive life. Brain fog can be associated with other conditions where maintaining mental focus is an issue, as in Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) and Autism.

The inability to concentrate can affect both adults and children alike and is often associated with other physical, psychological, and emotional problems. Some causes relate to infectious diseases such as Lymes disease, Epstein Barr virus and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome that go undiagnosed and untreated for years. Physical changes from concussive accidents, low blood pressure, and menopause can leave people dazed and unfocused for months and even years. Neuropsychological problems such as depression, anxiety, and insomnia can also produce alarming rates of cognitive decline. In some cases there may be added complications such as memory loss.

In Chinese medicine, the ability to concentrate relies heavily on the abundance of vital energy (Qi) and a smooth flow of nutrient rich blood to the brain, providing for a clear mind, healthy heart, and radiant spirit. The source of the nourishing vital energy that is essential for clarity of mind comes from the normal digestive functioning of the stomach, spleen, and pancreas as well as the kidneys. Excessive damp and mucous build-up in the digestive organs, notably the spleen, prevents pure energy from rising to our heads and denies the energetic nourishment needed for clear mental activity and a bright spirit.

In my experience poor diet and inadequate sleep are the most common causes of digestive weakness. Excessive consumption of foods such

as sugars, dairy, wheat and fried foods are commonly implicated in the production of dampness and mucous.

At Tao of Wellness, over the past 30 years we have successfully treated numerous patients with brain fog. It is important to first pin point the underlying cause of the brain fog and determine how the pure energy is being obstructed from rising to the brain.

Treatment is often two fold: first, we focus on removing the cause of the fogginess, and second, we strengthen and harmonize the functioning of the digestive organs and of the heart blood circulation to increase production and flow of vital energy and restore clarity of spirit.

A successful treatment involves the following: Changing one's diet to remove the foods that contribute to dampness and/or heat, and to include foods that regulate blood sugar and nourish bodily functions; weekly acupuncture to direct the flow of nourishing energy to the brain; Chinese herbal tea to restore organ function and balance; and regular energy enhancing exercise and meditation to improve circulation and mental concentration.

Gradually, over the course of several months, our patients observe their vitality returning and they are able to regain a normal and full life.

Brain fog does not have to become part of your life. If you or someone you know suffers from an inability to concentrate or a lack of mental clarity, support for restoring a good quality of life may be available through a naturalistic approach like in Traditional Chinese medicine. If necessary, it is also our approach at TOW to work with other mental health professionals and neurological specialists to ensure that the highest quality of care is given. I invite you to speak to any of our doctors about your mental health concerns.

To read two brain fog case studies, please visit our web site [www.taofwellness.com/spr2007](http://www.taofwellness.com/spr2007) ■



# FOOD *for* THOUGHT



JESSICA CHEN

**W**hat do we feed our most complex yet delicate organ? Everything! Well, almost everything.

According to recent studies, a brain healthy diet consists of foods that increase blood flow and are low in cholesterol, and high in antioxidants. Such a mix is not only beneficial to the brain but also to the heart, the aging process and diseases conditions such as diabetes.

Providing good nutrition for our brain is a must. As we move towards our golden years we realize that our minds just do not work the way they use to. Progressive aging of our brain can trigger symptoms of dementia, which can lead to diseases like Alzheimers. According to the National Health Institute (NIH) 4.5 million Americans suffer from this disease.

Free radicals have been identified as a major cause of the loss of cognitive function associated with aging. Our brains are bombarded daily with free radicals from polluted air, unhealthy food, and lifestyle. They cause a low-grade

inflammation, which damages normal cell structure and function. Thankfully, through an increase in scientific research, we now know the importance of good nutrition for brain health. So why not help ourselves in slowing down the aging of our brain by nourishing it with the right "brain foods". We can then cruise through our golden years clearly and keenly.

The heart or cardiovascular system is a complex organ that plays a major role in nourishing and maintaining the blood flow throughout the whole body including the brain. In order to provide the brain with nutrients, the blood flow must be smooth and blood vessels must be clear of any obstructions such as from a plaque build up.



## salmon

Our brain consists of 60 percent fats. Deep seawater fish such as salmon are rich in Omega-3 fatty acids helps to reduce inflammation and promote good circulation thus supporting nerve cell activity in the brain.

## walnuts

Chinese Medicine believes that herbs and foods that resemble certain body parts are actually beneficial to that particular body part. So it is not surprising that walnuts which is packed with vitamin E and antioxidants also resembles a brain. Walnuts are also the only nuts that contain a significant amount of Omega-3 fatty acids.

## blueberries

Foods that are small and compact in size tend to have an abundance of Qi, so the smaller the food, the better the Qi. It is no wonder that out of 50 fruits and vegetables blueberries contain the highest antioxidant properties. The phytonutrient rich anthocyanidins found in the blue-red pigments of blueberries protect the brain by neutralizing free radical damage.

For further information and a more comprehensive list of brain foods and herbs, along with healthy brain tips, visit our web site at [www.taofwellness.com/spr2007](http://www.taofwellness.com/spr2007). For further questions or concerns regarding nutrition for a better mind and body ask about our nutritional counseling. ■

## COOKING FOR CLARITY DR. CAI'S RECIPES FOR MENTAL CLARITY



DR. XIAOMEI CAI

**B**rain fog is often a result of poor digestion and dampness obstructing the smooth flow of Qi and blood to the brain. I have prepared some simple and tasty recipes that will help promote the free flow of Qi and Blood to nourish your brain, help lift the fog and improve your memory and mental clarity.

### BLACK BEAN 'MENTAL CLARITY' SOUP

Brain fog is often accompanied by a feeling of heaviness, fatigue, water retention and difficulty in losing unwanted weight. If these symptoms are familiar to you, I recommend my Black Bean Mental Clarity Soup. This recipe makes two to three servings and you can have it at least 2-3 times a week along with your acupuncture and herbs.

Combine 2 oz. black beans with 2 oz. pearl barley and 7 lotus seeds

in 4 cups of water. Cook in a pot or slow cooker for up to 2 hours. Add 7 prunes in the last 10 minutes for natural sweetness and to tonify your blood. This soup can be served hot or cold.

### REISHI MUSHROOM MEMORY SOUP

Taken regularly this recipe will promote sleep, as well as tonify your yin and blood to increase memory and mental clarity. Soak 1 oz. of white wood ear fungus for 30 minutes. Lightly

rinse 1 oz. of Reishi Mushroom before combining with the wood ear in a pot or slow cooker with 4 cups of water. Cook for up to 2 hours then add 10 pieces of dry logan fruit, 5 dried dates, and 1 tablespoon of gou ji berries and cook for a further 30 minutes. (Makes two to three servings.)

Please refer to our web site, [www.taofwellness.com/spr2007](http://www.taofwellness.com/spr2007) for suggestions on where to buy ingredients and other helpful hints.

# Nervous System OVERLOAD

FIVE WAYS TO CALM DOWN YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM TO LEAD YOU TO A RICHER AND MORE DAZZLING LIFE



DR. DAOSHING NI

**D**o you feel anxious every morning because you feel you have too much to do? Do you feel anxious at night because you failed to accomplish all that you set out to do? Does worrying about things keep you awake at night? Do you frequently run out of time in the day to exercise or look after your health? Do you feel like a “slave” to your life circumstances and not the “master”?

If you answer yes to many of these questions, you may be suffering from an overloaded nervous system or what we often call Life Overload Syndrome. It is usually due to your daily activities putting too much stress on your nervous system and causing you to feel imbalance and stressed all the time.

Many of the reasons for your situation can be due to genuine life challenges that all of us encounter on a regular basis, but there may be better ways you can cope and regain control over your life. There are five positive steps

towards wellness and stress reduction in your life that we would like to share with you.

## Know yourself.

Appreciate who you are. In Taoist healing tradition, this is called the Wu Dao, “knowing the Way”. The Way means your true nature. Take time to reflect on your life and take inventory of your strengths and weaknesses.

## Know your Qi.

Qi or vital energy is the fuel of life. If you have an abundance of Qi you have a strong constitution and abundant vitality. Many of our patients suffer from decreased vitality causing them to experience difficulty with normal life challenges. Restoring your Qi is vital for health and wellness.

## Create happiness in your life.

Wu Wei means being empty and engaging your life with openness. Changing your perspective in life, by welcome changes as opportunities to grow your life can become more simplified and richer. Remember to embrace life with open arms and fluidity, approach dangerous situations as opportunities to learn, and most importantly, create your happiness now and don't wait.

## Be selective with your engagement.

Creating time to be quiet and having free time to daydream and play is beneficial to your physical and psychological well being. This comes back to knowing the quality of your Qi.

## Compassion

Bo Ai means unconditional compassion. This begins with loving life. Value and treasure your life, never abuse your talents and bring love to those who surround you. This includes people, plants, animals, and even your possessions.

You will notice these five elements are really about changing your perspective and attitude in life. It is not about doing more or less of what you are already doing, but to approach it differently. By practicing these simple but potentially profound essential elements, we hope your life will be richer, healthier and happier. If you have any questions please contact us as your wellness is our priority.

Please visit [www.taoofofwellness.com/spr2007](http://www.taoofofwellness.com/spr2007) for this complete article. ■

# Multiple SCLEROSIS (MS)



DR. QINENG TAN

**Not too long ago, a patient visited Tao of Wellness with lower back pain along with a tingling sensation in his left leg.**

He had seen several doctors, and had a number of X-Ray

and MRIs to reveal a moderate bulging of the disk between lumbar vertebrae 4 and 5. When I first saw him he had been taking different pain medications while undergoing physical therapy, however he was feeling depressed and frustrated as nothing seem to be helping. In fact his condition had gradually worsened as he began to experience numbness and weakness in his left leg. I noticed he had a tendency to roll his eyes and was unstable on his feet, especially when walking. On questioning him further I discovered that he had been experiencing periodic bouts of blurry vision and inspecting his walk, I noticed that he tended to fall on his left side. These symptoms, along with a hyperactive reflex response made me almost certain his condition was something much more serious. My hunch was that it was Multiple Sclerosis a disease

involving the central nerve system. So I immediately referred him to a neurologist for further testing. Two weeks later, he returned with a confirmed diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis. Unfortunately this patient is just one of several thousand new patients diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) every year in the United States.

## WHAT CAUSES MS?

The cause of MS is relatively unknown. It is thought to be an autoimmune disease that has been associated with certain viruses and environmental contaminants. The symptoms of MS are varied and caused by the immune system attacking the protective sheath (myelin) surrounding nerves within the central nervous system. The damage caused by the attacks disrupts the transmission of nervous responses. Often the first signs of MS are sensations of numbness or tingling in the legs or arms accompanied by muscle weakness, spasticity and dizziness.

## HOW DO WE TREAT MS?

In Traditional Chinese Medical a similar condition to MS has been documented in ancient texts. So

Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine has been involved in the treatment of MS like symptoms for over 2,000 years. The results of treatment vary depending on the severity and progression of the disease. In our experience acupuncture and herbs may decrease the side effects of many of the medications and assist patients to balance their lives and stabilize and halt the progress of the disease.

At Tao of Wellness we have seen an increasing number of MS patients over the past ten years. We have observed that patients who have regular acupuncture treatments and take herbs, while making significant lifestyle changes, have often managed to stabilize and even slow the progression of the disease. In clinical studies and surveys conducted within the US, pain, spasticity, numbness, and tingling are among the many symptoms reported to be improved due to acupuncture treatments. In our experience additional symptoms improve such as fatigue, depression, anxiety, and bowel or bladder function when using both acupuncture and herbs together. ■

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### YAHOO HEALTH EXPERT

Dr. Mao is one of Yahoo's newest health expert contributing tips to enhance your wellness. For

Dr. Mao's health tips, visit

<http://health.yahoo.com/experts/drmao>



### THE ART OF HEALING

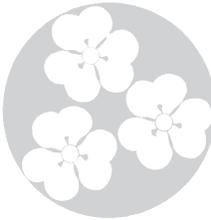
*with Dr. Daoshing Ni*

as part of the Culver City  
Lecture Series.

Saturday May 5th

10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

FREE.



### UP COMING CLASSES AT YO SAN UNIVERSITY

*For more information on  
up coming lectures and  
movement classes, visit*

*[www.yosan.edu/continuing-education](http://www.yosan.edu/continuing-education)  
or call (310) 577-3000.*



### AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

April is Autism awareness month.

For information go to

[www.cureautismnow.org](http://www.cureautismnow.org)

# All Shook Up?

IT MAY NOT BE PARKINSON'S DISEASE.



BAN B. WONG

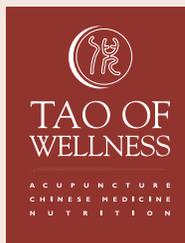
When you have shakes and tremors, it may not always be Parkinson's disease. It really depends on what factors are present. Typical symptoms associated with Parkinson's are finger tremors, unsteadiness, facial muscle weakness, muscle stiffness, and slow movement. But there are many other conditions that can cause tremors such as: Brain infection, injury, tumor, thyroid conditions, psychiatric disorders, Alzheimer's disease, hereditary, heavy metals, chronic alcohol abuse leading to liver disease.

Chinese medicine views shakes and tremors as a deficiency in the functioning of the hepatic (Liver) system, digestive and endocrine systems. Weakness in these body systems can create an environment whereby the nervous system becomes malnourished. Starving nerves the very instruments used by our brains to control movement will lead to poor neural transmission to the muscles and ligaments. Another reason for the loss of motor control is poor circulation, which causes inflammation in the nervous

system. In order to help patients with shakes and tremors, we use acupuncture to balance the Qi flow throughout the body and we prescribe customized herbs to nourish the digestive and endocrine systems.

Acupuncture and Chinese herbs both actively support Qi and blood circulation. As circulation improves, the inflammation in the nervous system decreases and the nerves become better able to be nourished. As a result, the shakes and tremors slowly diminish. At Tao of Wellness, we treat the root cause of the patients' tremors, in order to normalize and help the patient return to a good quality of life.

So next time you feel all-shook-up, make sure to give us a call. Our practitioners will be glad to help you recover your steady hand. ■



1131 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD SUITE 300

SANTA MONICA, CA 90401

[www.taoofwellness.com](http://www.taoofwellness.com)

(310) 917-2200

PSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
LOS ANGELES, CA  
PERMIT NO. 1494

*address correction requested*