

Turning up the heat on a common problem

Interest is heating up in the many ways heat can be used to relieve pain. People have been using heat to relieve pain for centuries, whether through a simple warm bath or a hot water bag.

A recent study by rehabilitation specialists Depace and Newton found that applying heat to the site of pain not only relaxes mus-

cles, but also stimulates the body's heat signals, which inhibit the transmission of pain signals to the brain.

This is especially good news for the estimated 30 to 50 percent of women who suffer from monthly menstrual pain. According to recent surveys from the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, one in 10 women experience

symptoms so severe that they are unable to handle everyday activities.

Often described as a dull ache or pressure in the lower abdomen, menstrual pain is caused by complex chemical processes. An overproduction of prostaglandins causes strong and painful contractions that temporarily cut off blood supply to the uterine muscle, thereby

depriving it of oxygen and thus causing pain.

Fortunately, continuous, low-level heat is an increasingly popular therapeutic option for the relief of such pain.

Insights about heat have led to the development of such therapeutic options as ThermoCare Menstrual HeatWraps. These air-activated heat wraps are

designed to provide continuous, low-level heat for powerful pain relief and deep muscle relaxation.

"Low-level heat therapy is a good option for all women seeking relief from cramps," said Roger Smith, M.D., professor, vice chair and program director, Truman Medical Center, University of Missouri-Kansas City and a member

of the Heat Responsive Pain Council. "I especially recommend it to teenage girls who may need a non-drug alternative for relief at school."

Heat not only relaxes muscles, but can inhibit the transmission of pain signals to the brain.

For more information on the benefits of heat therapy, visit www.thermacare.com.

**Kings Mountain Hospital
Invitational
Women's Soccer Tournament**

Join us Friday, February 28
and Saturday, March 1
at *Kings Mountain High School*
for a tournament exhibiting some of
the region's finest women's soccer talent.

**Admission: Adults - \$5
Students - \$3**

Schedule

Friday, February 28

6 p.m. Weddington vs.
Kings Mountain

8 p.m. Ashbrook vs.
Shelby

Saturday, March 1

1 p.m. Ashbrook vs.
Weddington

3 p.m. Kings Mountain vs.
Shelby

Kings Mountain Hospital
Carolinas HealthCare System
www.carolinashealthcare.org

The evolution of immune system care

Did you know your body's first line of immune defense is what scientists call GALT, Gut-Associated Lymphoid Tissue? The GALT is comprised of many islands of immune system cells sprinkled throughout the stomach and intestinal lining. It acts like a separate organ in our bodies to help defend against bacteria and germs. But GALT doesn't resist everything that enters the body; therefore humans can take supplements to assist the body's natural immune defenses.

From soup to science, centuries of natural immunity enhancers have proven to be beneficial as humans attempt to stay healthy throughout the year.

Early 20th Century: Chicken Soup-Comforting and warm, chicken soup was a soothing solution of the past. Although mom's homemade recipe tasted delicious going down, the real value may have been its steam and much needed liquids for your body.

1970s: Vitamin C-Based on his experiments, Nobel Prize-winning chemist Linus

Pauling championed megadoses of vitamin C as a way to support the immune system. Vitamin C rich foods such as oranges, grapefruits and kiwis are well known for their immune enhancing and antioxidant properties.

1979: Zinc-When leukemic toddler Karen Eby wasn't feeling well and couldn't swallow her prescribed zinc, her father insisted she let it melt in her mouth. Based on the unexpected immune-enhancing results, two doctors began researching zinc's benefits as an immune system supplement.

Unfortunately, many of the extras added to improve the bitter, metallic flavor of zinc lozenges may hinder its effects.

Early 1990s: Echinacea- The power of this flower, originally recognized by North American Plains Indians, reached \$230 million in sales nationwide in 1998, making it one of the nation's top five herbal supplements.

2002: ImmunoLin- The dawn of the new millennium brings the next genera-

tion of immune support ingredients: ImmunoLin. ImmunoLin supplements a person's level of immunoglobulins (or antibodies) to support the body's natural defenses and boost the immune system.

The use of oral immunoglobulins for immune support is backed by scientific studies.

"Consumers want natural ways to strengthen and care for their immune systems, as witnessed by the millions of people who have popularized products such as Echinacea and vitamin C," explains Luke Bucci, Ph.D., vice president of research for Schiff Vitamins. "ImmunoLin harnesses an important ingredient in a concentrated formula and delivers it in a choice of convenient forms, including daily support tablets and great-tasting drink mixes."

If you're interested in learning more about immune system supplements such as ImmunoLin, visit www.SchiffVitamins.com or call 1-800-526-6251 (Mon. to Fri. 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. MST).

Tips for a healthy heart

A growing number of Americans are taking heart from knowing they can take steps to promote their own heart health.

More than 61 million Americans have some form of cardiovascular disease and every 33 seconds someone dies from high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, stroke, congestive heart failure or another

related condition.

Cardiovascular disease cost the nation an estimated \$329.2 billion in 2002 including health care costs and lost productivity.

Individuals who are overweight, physically inactive, have a diet high in cholesterol and salt, smoke, or have diabetes are at increased risk for cardiovascular disease.

According to the Chronic Disease Directors (CDD), a Washington, DC-based public health association, it's important to have your blood pressure and cholesterol checked regularly and to maintain an active lifestyle. If you have been diagnosed with cardiovascular disease, work with your physician to develop a plan that includes diet, exercise and medication. There are many new medications currently available to help with all types of cardiovascular diseases.

Adopting healthy lifestyle habits is an effective first step in both preventing and controlling all forms of cardiovascular disease.

Suggested habits include:

- Following a healthy eating pattern;
- Reducing salt and sodium in your diet;
- Maintaining a healthy weight;
- Being physically active;
- Limiting alcohol intake; and
- Quitting smoking.

Increasing physical activity can help improve your overall heart health. If lifestyle changes alone are not effective in controlling your disease, it may be necessary to add medications. If your physician does prescribe drugs, make sure to fill your prescription, take the medicines as directed and get follow-up care.

CDD is composed of the chief public health executive of each U.S. state and territory. CDD works to educate the public about risks and choices and strives to create access to preventative health services. For more info visit www.ChronicDisease.org.

Our Outpatient Surgery Services Go The Distance, So You Don't Have To.



At Kings Mountain Hospital, our Outpatient Surgery staff go the distance to provide a comfortable atmosphere before, during and after surgery. From easy check-in to one-on-one care following surgery, services are delivered in a way you and your family will appreciate.

And, whether your surgery is complex or routine, you can feel confident knowing our highly-trained medical staff have the expertise and technology you need to get you on your feet again. Our physicians provide a range of outpatient procedures - from cataract and orthopaedic surgery to facial plastic and gynecological surgery. You can have a procedure in the morning and be home just hours later.

At Kings Mountain Hospital we treat you like a neighbor, not a number.

Outpatient Surgery Procedures:

■ Cataract Surgery ■ Gastroenterology/Endoscopy
■ General & Vascular Surgery ■ Gynecologic Surgery
■ Orthopaedic Surgery ■ Plastic Surgery
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