

Fluids

The other day my car felt a little strange while driving, so when I got home I opened the hood. The engine was far too hot, so I checked the oil and of course it was low. And dirty. If she didn't get an oil change soon, the whole system would shut down. Then I thought, cars really are like people, especially women, both get cranky when fluids levels decrease.

Gas and oil, water and blood...without the stabilizing nature of fluids to stay nourished and cool, people will tend to experience what acupuncturists refer to as, "deficiency heat". Just like a car, a deficient amount of oil causes an engine to become hot. For people, the outward symptoms can range from dryness, constipation, headaches, cramping, emotional instability, alternating depression with irritability, easily frustrated or confused; and if the condition continues unchecked, rage and harmful behaviors may arise. In other words, without nourishing fluids, the whole system can get hotter and hotter to the point where the system will eventually seize up.

For people, the fluids typically lost that must be replenished include:

Water : excessive loss through sweating, dry windy weather, drug and alcohol use

Blood : poor absorption of food, too much blood loss during or after childbirth, and/or heavy menstruation (like having a small leak in the oil pan)

Obviously, we need to drink plenty of clean water, and sometimes hydrating drinks to replenish electrolytes. However, in order to help replenish blood loss, the following encourage red blood cell production:

- ☉ Chinese herbal formulas
- ☉ chlorella
- ☉ liquid Vitamin B12, or B12 (methylcobalamin) injections
- ☉ dark green foods and meat from animals

However, continuous blood loss through heavy menstruation needs more attention. Chinese medicine uses the term "blood deficiency" but this does not necessarily translate to anemia. Acupuncture can help regulate the endocrine system, and specific foods and Chinese herbal medicine assists in nourishing deficiencies.

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I could not write this article without including a bit of information about oils. In addition to oils providing a nice inner lubricant for those who are thin, dry, nervous, deficient, weak, or have a general feeling of instability, nut and seed oils also beautifully moisten the skin:

Specific information for each nut or seed is taken from Healing with Whole Foods by Paul Pitchford

almond oil : warming, so best for those who tend toward cold; rich in magnesium, and almond oil or almond water relieves phlegm from the Lung, alleviates cough, and lubricates the intestines.

black sesame seed : neutral thermal nature; nourishes fluids and blood, strengthens the liver and kidney, lubricates organs, relieves constipation, reduces inflammation and alleviates pain, especially the lower back, hips, leg and feet. Soak seeds over night before eating.

coconut oil : warming, so best for those who tend toward cold; used for weakness, building fluids, childhood malnutrition, emaciation and nosebleeds. NOT for those who eat meals heavy with meat and dairy, and are watching their cholesterol!

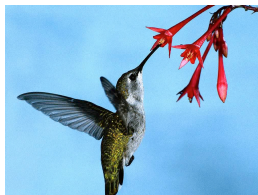
flax seed oil : neutral thermal nature; rich source of omega 3 fatty acids; strengthens immunity and cleans the heart and arteries, reduces inflammation and alleviates pain.

walnut oil : warming, so best for those who tend toward cold; moistens the lungs and intestines, nourishes the kidney/adrenal/brain, and enriches sperm; reduces inflammation and alleviates pain.

Oils are great for men, women and children. Have fun both ingesting and rubbing all over yourself after a shower! Also, always keep oils refrigerated to prevent rancidity!

Hmmm, I made a mental note of the fact that I brought the car in the same day for maintenance, and wondered when the last time I had done the same for myself...

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