**Self-Reliance in Health Course**

**Lesson 7 –Liver & Urinary Tract**

Purpose:

The liver is the second largest organ in the body which controls many functions essential for maintaining life. It produces bile, which aids digestion, filters out waste, toxins, and poisons in blood, synthesizes nutrients, regulates blood sugar, processes hormones, manufactures antibodies and even stores vitamins and minerals. This organ does much more than this and is so complex, it is second only to the brain in body function. The liver can even regenerate itself when injured.

The urinary tract includes kidneys, ureters, bladder, and urethra. The purpose is to filter waste material from the blood, control the body's fluid balance, maintain a healthy level of electrolytes and manufacture urine for elimination of waste. This would be the waste treatment center of the body.

Liver and Kidney Care:

The liver needs to be taken good care of for healthy function. If we go back to our analogy of the body being like a home, the liver acts as the filter system. We need to keep the vents in our homes cleaned out and change the filter every six months. The way we care for the liver is avoiding as many toxins as possible, eat a whole foods diet (lesson 1), drink a lot of liquids, and feed it liver nourishing foods and herbs.

* Purified water: Did you know that tap water in the U.S. is treated with over 700 different chemicals, including “medications” such as fluoride? That is a toxic overload on the liver and kidneys which use water as the means of flushing out waste. Make sure the water you consume is filtered. There are many filtering systems available so do some research and find what system or method may work best for you. Whatever you do, be sure to consume pure water and avoid tap water.
* Breathe clean air. The air filter we talked about as part of a home system needs to be changed regularly to keep the air in your home as clean as possible and so should the air we breathe. Open the windows in the spring and fall months and get outside as much as possible.
* The lifestyle suggestions in Lesson 10 for stress relief are just the things needed for optimal function of all body systems, including the liver and urinary tract. They include adequate rest, exercise, relaxation time, positive thoughts, feelings and attitude, etc.
* Avoid toxic foods such as alcoholic beverages, excess fried foods, hydrogenated oils, processed and refined foods, artificial (and “natural”) flavors and colors.
* Cut out as many environmental toxins as possible.

**Liver Care:**

* Tonic herbs to build and strengthen the liver: shitake and reishi mushrooms, barberry root, burdock root, dandelion, golden seal, vervain, wild yam, yellow dock root, yarrow, milk thistle seeds, Oregon grape root and turmeric to name a few.
* Foods that can help the liver process toxins: broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, kale, collard greens, arugula, onions and garlic.
* Foods that improve liver function: all of the above, beets, whole grains, avocado, leafy greens, nuts and legumes.
* Dr. Christopher’s Liver Gall Bladder formula.

**Kidney Care:**

* Foods that strengthen and support kidney function: lemon, apples, cabbage, blueberries, bell peppers, cauliflower, garlic, onions, cranberries, raspberries, strawberries, cherries, red grapes, olive oil, egg whites, and fish.
* Tonic herbs to build and strengthen the kidneys: chamomile, carrot, dandelion, fennel, hawthorn berry, marshmallow, mint, sorrel, sage, yarrow.
* Kidney Support blend (from blog).

Environmental Toxins:

We live in a world surrounded by environmental toxins; pollutants, harsh chemicals – including cleaning detergents and personal care products, secondhand smoke, pharmaceuticals, vaccinations, electromagnetic radiation, etc., etc. this list could go on and on. While we cannot escape them, we can do our best to eliminate what we do have control over. The more toxins our liver must filter out, the harder it must work and sometimes it can be overwhelmed and then those toxins leak into our blood and cause all kinds of health conditions and mystery illnesses. Here is a small list of ways you can cut toxins out of your environment:

* Emotions: Studies have shown that negative thoughts feelings literally work like poison to a body, not to mention the soul. If there is any one thing you can do to eliminate toxins from your environment it would be to let go of negative thoughts and emotions. It is okay to experience and feel sadness, anger, and frustration – that is part of life – but the key is to feel it, then let it go. Give it to our Savior, who suffered, died, and atoned for not only our sins, but our weaknesses, sorrow, and negative feelings.
  + Forgive others and yourself.
  + Thinks positive thoughts.
  + Seek for understanding of others and look at them through God’s eyes.
  + Love one another, including yourself.
* Swap chemical household cleaners for natural ones. You can either make your own or purchase locally from a health food store or do a google search.
* Swap personal care products for natural ones. Again, there are many companies out there supporting natural personal care from shampoo and deodorant to makeup. You can also make your own (blog link).
* Avoid using synthetic perfumes, dryer sheets, or any items with fragrance.
* Pharmaceuticals: All synthetic medications are chemicals which the liver must process, and studies have shown the ill effects they have on it. On top of liver damage they also carry side affects and adverse reactions:
  + Prescription medications…readily deplete the body of nutrients and damage the gut lining. This is why all synthetic drugs in some way cause leaky gut. (*Eat Dirt* by Dr. Josh Axe)
  + 209 people a day – approximately 106,000 a year – die from non-error adverse effects of medications…that figure was for deaths only and did not include adverse effects associated with disability or discomfort. (*Eat Dirt* by D. Josh Axe)
  + Adverse drug reactions (ADRs) are the 4th leading cause of death in the U.S. (*Herbal Academy Intermediate Herbal Course Unit 1*)

If you are currently taking pharmaceuticals, you will want to make sure to replenish the nutrients they deplete by eating a variety of vegetables, fruits and some nutritive herbs such as alfalfa, nettle, and raspberry leaf. Please be prayerful about how you decide to use or not use pharmaceuticals and if you decide you want to cut them out of your life be sure to do it under the care of a trained physician. Getting off certain medications cold turkey can cause serious harm. Functional medicine doctors (www.ifm.org) can help as they understand and work with the body as a whole. Dr. Christopher’s Liver Transition formula can assist the body transitioning from drugs to supplements.

Liver Conditions:

Immune imbalances can happen as a result of an over toxic liver due to its job of manufacturing antibodies which mark a virus or bacteria as an invader. If an imbalance occurs no marking happens, and pathogens can run wild in the body. Mystery or chronic illness can also find their root causes in liver dysfunction. Follow the foundational principles of good nutrition and gut healing in lessons 1 and 3 first, then incorporate liver support and detox measures:

* Use hepatic herbs which strengthen, tone and stimulate liver function: barberry, sweet woodruff or cleavers, dandelion both leaf and root, fennel, milk thistle seed, Oregon grape root, selfheal, yarrow, wormwood, turmeric, yellow dock, reishi mushroom.
* Dr. Christopher Liver Gall Bladder Formula
* Bulk Herb Store Liver Cleanse blend
* Liver Cleanse & Support blend

<http://www.anniesplacetolearn.com/blog/liver-cleanse-formula>

Skin Conditions:

The skin is one of the elimination organs of the body, so when the liver is overburdened with toxins, the next place to go is the skin. Skin conditions can include eczema, psoriasis, rashes of all kinds, hives, acne, and sores. These conditions can also result from an allergy or reaction to a toxin, but either cause treating the liver is the first place to start after following the foundational principles of health.

* Use one of the liver cleansing options above. Take the herbs every morning and evening.
* Drink plenty of distilled water to aid in cleansing and flushing toxins.
* Incorporate probiotics and/or cultured foods to work on the gut.
* Clean out bowels, lesson 6 constipation remedies.
* Purify the blood, lesson 8.
* Topical soothing remedies while treating the inside with above suggestions:
  + Only use natural personal care products on the skin while conditions exist.
  + Burn salve blog
  + Miracle Face Cream (use as lotion and soothing cream)
  + Chickweed salve
  + Aloe vera
  + Raw honey, yes, it is messy but it works

Urinary Tract Conditions:

**Urinary Tract Infection (UTI):** When a pathogenic bacteria invades any part of the urinary tract and turns to infection. Symptoms include an urgent desire to urinate, typically frequent and painful, even after the bladder has been emptied there may be a desire to go again. Urine may have a strong, unpleasant odor and may appear cloudy. Abdominal pain and burning sensation may also be present.

Preventive Measures:

* Women should always wipe from the front to back after using the restroom.
* Do not delay urinating, go when you feel the urge.
* Avoid alcohol, caffeine, carbonated beverages, coffee, excess chocolate, refined or processed foods, and refined sugars. These can be hard on the urinary tract.

Home Remedies:

* Unsweetened cranberry juice – prevents bacteria from adhering to the bladder lining and acidifies the urine which inhibits bacterial growth. Drink 1 quart a day.
  + Drink plenty of fluids, at least 8 oz. every hour: distilled water, celery and parsley juice, watermelon (this is a food not drink but so full of liquid I’ll include it here), rejuvalek.
* Essential oils massage over abdomen: basil, cedarwood, eucalyptus, frankincense, juniper berry, thyme, rosemary, tea tree​.
* Hot bath with essential oils from the list below or a sitz bath.
* Consume cultured foods or take probiotic capsules (two per meal).
* Diuretic herbs (increase the flow of urine) – these help cleanse the system, flush the kidneys and help reduce the urgency to urinate: birch leaves (also have pain relieving properties), dandelion leaf, hydrangea, alfalfa, fennel, hawthorn berry, horsetail, marshmallow (also soothes irritation), plantain, sorrel, uva ursi (reduces bacteria in urine and reduces swelling).
* Herbal antibiotics specific for kidneys: Oregon grape root, garlic, ginger, goldenseal, juniper, sage, wormwood, usnea.
* Bladder Infection Blend

<http://www.anniesplacetolearn.com/blog/urinary-tract-infection-uti-formula>

**Kidney Stones:**

Accumulations of mineral salts that form crystals which clump together forming either jagged or smooth 'stones'. They can lodge anywhere along the course of the urinary tract.  Symptoms include agonizing pain radiating from the upper back to the lower abdomen and groin, profuse sweating, frequent urination, pus and blood in the urine, odorous or cloudy urine, nausea and vomiting, and sometimes chills and fever. Men are much more likely to get them than women. There are different types of kidney stones and many causes, which can be tricky to pinpoint. Some factors include high blood calcium levels, over consumption of carbohydrates, especially sugar and oxalates (found in dark green leafy vegetables), metabolism, heredity, shape of the kidneys and pharmaceuticals to name of few. While it is hard to identify the actual cause, one factor that increases risk is dehydration which concentrates the urine making it more susceptible to forming crystals.

Preventive Measures

* Drink plenty of purified water every day.
* Daily glass of lemon water can prevent stones from forming due to the citric acid.
* Include 2 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil into daily diet.
* Consume a whole foods diet, avoiding high amount of carbs, processed foods and refined sugar.
* Foods high in Vitamin A discourage stone formation. Alfalfa, apricots, cantaloupe, carrots, pumpkin, sweet potatoes and squash.
* Stay active. Exercise helps pull calcium from the blood into the bones.
* Eat meat sparingly. Diets high in animal protein can cause the body to excrete calcium, and other minerals that can crystallize.
* Avoid taking synthetic vitamin supplements.

Home Remedies

* Drink a large glass of purified water, wait for 20 minutes to absorb, and then run up and down the stairs vigorously.
* Take a hot bath with essential oils for pain relief.
* H[ot and cold therapy](http://www.anniesplacetolearn.com/blog/home-remedies-hot-and-cold-therapy) (find on blog)
* [Music therapy](http://www.anniesplacetolearn.com/blog/home-remedies-music-therapy) for pain relief (find on blog).
* [Hot Lemon Refresher](http://www.anniesplacetolearn.com/blog/hot-lemon-refresher-an-electrolyte-drink-for-the-winter) or just lemon in warm water will help flush kidneys and break down stones (find on blog).
* [Kidney Stone Capsules and Power Lemon Wate](http://www.anniesplacetolearn.com/blog/home-remedies-kidney-stones)r (find on blog)
* Drink a large glass of purified water, wait for 20 minutes to absorb and then run up and down the stairs vigorously.
* Essential oils that aid in stone dissolving, add to a carrier oil and massage into bladder area and add to bath water: fennel, geranium, juniper, lemon, spearmint, frankincense, orange, digestive blend from your favorite essential oil company.
* Essential oils for pain relief: [eucalyptus](http://www.anniesplacetolearn.com/eucalyptus.html), [helichrysum](http://www.anniesplacetolearn.com/helichrysum.html), wintergreen, pain blend from your favorite essential oil carrier. Apply to backside where the kidneys are and then place a hot pad over the area or hot and cold depending on the person.  You could also use a wet [compress](http://weebly-link/736353051871260871).
* Take a hot bath, add any essential oils from above.
* ​Herbs:
  + [Birch](http://www.anniesplacetolearn.com/blog/herb-series-birch) - cleanses and supports urinary system and dissolves kidney and bladder stones.
  + [Marshmallow](http://www.anniesplacetolearn.com/blog/herb-series-marsh-mallow) - soothes inflamed and irritated urinary tract
  + Willow - pain reliever
  + Herbs that help dissolve stones include: celery seed, gravel root, cleavers/sweet woodruff, parsley and stone root.
  + Gingko biloba and goldenseal both aid circulation to the kidneys and have anti-inflammatory properties.

Projects:

* Homemade personal care products: lotion, bug spray, sun block, facial toner and deodorant.

Resources:

* *Eat Dirt* by Dr. Josh Axe
* The Amazing Liver, Herbal Legacy newsletter, <https://archive.aweber.com/herbal-legacy/MrYn1/h/The_Amazing_Liver.htm>
* *Feelings Buried Alive Never Die* by Karol Truman
* *Natural Therapy for Your Liver* by Christopher Hobbs
* *Herbs for Hepatitis C and the Liver* by Stephen Harrod Buhner

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