

Cellular Regeneration

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We are all born with a genetic coding that is loaded into the DNA of each and every cell in our bodies. This coding is, in part, a blueprint for maintaining the life of the organism for as long as possible. Even if individual cells in our bodies wear out, we are designed so that our cells will reproduce in order to maintain the blueprint, to reconfirm our shape. As well as this, the genes carry the commands that determine the specific metabolic activity of every type of cell; certain liver cells are programmed to produce bile, pancreatic cells produce digestive enzymes, etc.. Without these enzymes and secretions, essential metabolism is severely impaired. The DNA coding in the genes control the life of our cells and the overall integrity of the body.

There are two attitudes that we can take to this genetic coding: either we can regard it as the footprints of an immeasurable phenomena called Life Force; or we can conclude that it a very sophisticated assemblage of chemicals that we just haven't yet fully worked out. Both these points of view have a validity, yet there is a wide philosophical difference between them which goes back a long, long time.

An Ancient Debate

2,500 years ago in ancient Greece, the physician Hypocrites proposed a theory of healing based on the idea that the body has an inner healing power or life force. He called this force *physis*, from which we get the word *physician*. The physician, from Hypocrites point of view, was the guardian of the life force, charged with nourishing and supporting it and keeping it strong.

Hypocrites had a contemporary named Democratis, who opposed him. Democratis preached the idea that we are nothing more than a conglomerate of tiny particles (which he called *atoms*) that combine and recombine. Since Democratis could imagine no healing power in a particle, he argued that no natural healing power could exist and that our health was a matter of physical law.

These two philosophies came to be known as *vitalism* and *atomism* and the debate between the two has raged ever since. Modern medicine, as it has developed in the West over the past couple of centuries, has emerged clearly on the side of the atomists. Dr. Benjamin Rush, one of our early medical doctors (who signed the Declaration of Independence), stated that "... *physicians are the masters of nature. Instead of waiting for the slow operations of nature to eliminate a supposedly morbid matter from the body, we take the business of healing out of nature's hands.*"

From then until now, that has been modern medicine's goal and attitude, to take the place of nature. It is this premise which leads to more deaths per annum than those that we get from car accidents. From 1981 until 1988 there were four million deaths from medical treatment in the United States alone. Doctors have assumed the responsibility that is the natural role of our genes. Within this practice there is much room for error.

This is not to say that drug use is inherently wrong. It's not. It's use is limited to acute and traumatic situations. When life is threatened, medical drugs can stabilise a patient and prevent death. But they cannot reverse long term chronic illnesses, apart from suppressing symptoms, they cannot create health. Clearly, modern medicine focuses on disease. It is a disease management system and, in times of crisis, it can be very effective; but when we wish to treat long term disease, or if we wish to improve our general health and vitality, we must apply a different principle.

Focus on Health

Over the last few centuries Western medicine has been the dominant paradigm in the collective consciousness, but the pendulum is well and truly swinging back to a wholistic viewpoint. Natural medicine focuses on encouraging the life force to maintain the health of the individual, thus fulfilling Hippocratic philosophy. There are many natural medicine modalities such as acupuncture, chiropractic, herbal medicine, homeopathy, massage therapy and remedial dietetics. They all share the common goal of revitalising the body in one or more of the three main modes of our existence: the physical/mechanical, the chemical /nutritional and the mental/emotional modes.

Such a comprehensive approach has proved itself to be very effective over the years in keeping people vital and happy. There is no medical drug that can compete with a regular massage and spinal adjustment, a good diet and a positive mental attitude. But when it comes to serious disease, to be fair, traditional natural therapies can be too slow. We are all exposed to deoxygenated air, chlorinated water, chemical residues and radiation on a daily basis. This environmental bombardment is taking its toll. Auto immune system diseases, cancers, AIDS and arthritis, are rapidly increasing and our collective quality of life is at threat.

Strengthening the Cells

What we require, collectively, is a blending of the very best of our modern and traditional knowledge in order to strengthen our immune systems and to enhance our vitality on the cellular level. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) has an enormous wealth of information in this field. They were experts in the principles of regeneration, the art of prolonging life or of maximising the potential of the genetic coding.

Regeneration differs from modern medicine in that it has nothing to do with disease. Rather it refers to internal systemic weaknesses - usually reversible - that manifests themselves in certain patterns of symptoms. By using the symptom pattern to discern the weakness, and by strengthening the corresponding system, the symptoms of imbalance will be replaced with balance and vitality.

For example, a weak immune system may manifest in allergies, chronic infections or cancers. From the medical point of view these are all separate conditions which require various and complex treatment procedures. From the regeneration point of view, the challenge is much simpler. We must discover and live principles of healthy living that will restore balance to the immune system. This same approach applies to all of the systemic weaknesses.

So how did the ancient Chinese go about discovering the principles of regeneration? Well apart from the obvious adjustments of life style (rest, exercise and moderation), the most significant areas of exploration was in diet. Much of the research of the early Chinese was directed towards finding herbs that would help to maintain the health of the Emperors and their families.

Across the centuries the Chinese discerned three categories of herbs: 1) poison herbs which have very short term, specific benefits in emergencies but no margin for error and if misused would bring rapid deterioration of health; 2) medicinal herbs with short term, specific benefits and a wider margin for error, but which lead to a reversal of benefit if overused; and 3) food herbs which have broad general benefits with a virtually unlimited margin of error and which can be eaten abundantly and indefinitely. The ancient Chinese described the food herbs as "kingly" because they were highly prized and, in many cases, their knowledge was preserved for the exclusive use of the emperors.

The Chinese further discovered that the food herbs could be categorised according to which system they nourished. Some herbs had specific benefits for the digestive system, others were directed towards the circulation, the immune system or the endocrine glands.

They also discovered that they could improve the effects of the herbs by blending them in combinations. After all, the human body does not consist of a collection of separate systems but a unified whole. So too, the Chinese discovered, our diets needed to reflect a richness and complexity of food sources. Variety is indeed the spice of life.

Modern Research

Many of the old, secret formulas have become available in the modern era and the herbs are being grown, processed and blended so that they are accessible and convenient. In this way we can gain tremendous benefit from the centuries of research of the ancient Chinese.

On the other hand there is a wealth of modern research that is also available, for those who care to seek it out. One of the positive outcomes of modern analytical research is that we have amassed a wealth of knowledge of nutritional requirements. We know for sure that there are eight essential amino acids, two essential fatty acids and a wide range of essential vitamins, minerals and trace elements which the body **must have** in order to maintain the metabolic processes of life. Without these essential nutrients we are subject to a death sentence. [Although this knowledge is available to those who seek, it is a long way from becoming widely accepted. Cheap junk food is more profitable for the greedy bastards who make their fortunes at the expense of the ignorant. As far as truth is concerned there is a golden rule: the ones with the gold make the rules!]

I am not saying that we can attain eternal life simply by maintaining some super dietary regime; what I am saying is that if we do not get the **essential nutrition** that our bodies require, then we **must get** some form of degenerative disease. Sooner or later one or other of our systems will begin to seriously malfunction as the body struggles to rebuild cells and produce enzymes without the essential raw materials.

An excellent example of this can be found in our knowledge of the cellular membrane. This consists of a protein-lipid sandwich, a layer of lipid or fat surrounded by two layers of protein. The lipid layer is derived from essential fatty acids and the protein layer is built from essential amino acids. If these essential nutrients do not appear in the diet, the body will not be able to repair or replace the cell walls which are so essential to our overall integrity. This is sadly the case: we have an entire generation who are chronically deficient in the Omega 3 fatty acid.

Essential Nutrition

So what sorts of foods provide us with essential nutrition? It should be no surprise to discover that the best foods are whole, fresh and organically grown plant foods that come from mineral rich soils.

Organically grown food comes from soils which can support earthworms. They are rich in humus and not deficient in minerals. Food grown in mineral rich soils will provide the body with the broad range of minerals it requires as basic building blocks.

If these foods are eaten whole then the full range of nutrients will be available. Much valuable nutrition is discarded by modern food processing. The body prefers whole foods rather than food extracts or laboratory synthesised vitamins because the broad range of components in complex foods react synergistically.

Foods eaten fresh and raw assure us of two things: flavour and enzymes. These are the signs of life force in our food. Enzymes are destroyed with cooking and enzymes are essential for all levels of metabolic activity, especially digestion. If enzymes are not present in the foods we eat, the body needs to create enzymes from its own resources; this means drawing on the mineral reserves of the body. Again, these facts do not compel us to consume **only** raw food. On the contrary, substantial health problems can be generated by exclusively raw food diets. However we can conclude that a daily proportion of raw food will be a significant advantage to our body's ability to regenerate.

Food derived from animal sources can be a useful source of nutrition; indeed certain blood groups (O-type and B-type) require regular animal foods. However modern animal production takes place with a concentration of chemical fertilisers, pesticides, herbicides, growth hormones and antibiotics, all of which end up in the meat. Of particular concern is chicken and pork. It is therefore important to seek out organically or biodynamically raised meats. Individuals with A-type blood would do well to minimise or eliminate meat consumption. Their metabolisms are less acidic and not suitable for digesting animal flesh.

Milk and milk products are suitable only for Individuals with B-type or AB-type blood groups. The majority of human beings lose the ability to digest milk by the time they are five years old. There are also serious implications that the homogenising process is the contributing factor in cholesterol build up in the arteries. Pasteurisation effectively destroys the enzyme content of milk rendering it a cooked rather than a living food.

On the other hand, biodynamically produced, unhomogenised and unpasteurised milk that is converted into an assimilable form by the digestive action of micro organisms, such as in yoghurt, kefir and quark, is an excellent source of nutrition. The Hunzas of the Pakistani mountains are a good argument for this: they tend to live healthy lives on a diet of curdled milk up to the age of 130 years or more!

The Super Foods

As well as paying careful attention to what we consume as daily food, there are a number of super foods and supplements that are very beneficial. These include the antioxidants, minerals, enzymes, spirulina, chlorella, bee pollen, flax oil, acidophilus, psyllium and herbs. Very few people have access to fresh organic food grown in mineral rich soils; for those of us who wish to stay healthy we must supplement our diets with whole food concentrates and super foods.

Antioxidants

These are a range of nutrients that have the ability prevent free radical damage. This is a process that takes place on the cellular level wherein the cellular membrane is slowly destroyed leading eventually to arthritis, cancers and a variety of degenerative diseases. It is a result of a build up in the blood of toxic by-products and is exacerbated by environmental toxicity and the consumption of rancid oils and transfatty acids (as in margarine).

The antioxidants are the vitamins A, C and E and the trace elements chromium and selenium. Vitamin A is best ingested in two forms: raw vegetables with a high beta carotene component (carrots!), or sunlight, absorbed through the retina of the eyes at sunrise or through the skin in the early hours of the morning. Vitamin C is best ingested in the form of fresh fruit, especially the sharp tasting acid fruits (cherries, lemons, kiwi fruits etc.), or as freshly sprouted seeds (especially mung beans). Vitamin E can be taken as a supplement.

Vitamins A, C and E are thought to work synergistically: the effect of the combination is more potent than the individual effects. These three vitamins are available in the form of concentrated fruits and vegetables, a process whereby the fibre and water is removed leaving a concentrated powder of rich organic compounds. This is by far the superior way to take antioxidants.

Another substance which is gaining a strong reputation as an antioxidant is pycnogenol or proanthocyanidine. This is extracted from the bark of a particular pine tree and is also found in the seed of red grapes. It is renowned for having powerful healing properties and is capable of boosting the immune system and healing wounds and skin very rapidly.

Minerals

There are sixty minerals, both macro and micro, which are essential building blocks for the body. They are widely used throughout all the enzymatic, hormonal and metabolic interactions that take place constantly within your body.

It is a common naturopathic practice to focus on mineral supplementation to correct metabolic disturbances. Yet mineral supplementation based on inorganic forms have limited benefit to the human body as they cannot be adequately absorbed. This includes such things as dolomite, crushed rocks, oyster shells and limestone. Chelated minerals, which are inorganic minerals with an amino acid bond, can be 40% absorbable. However the superior way to supplement your diet with minerals is in a liquid (colloidal) form or from whole food concentrates, both of which are 98% absorbable. Colloidal minerals are negatively charged and are attracted to the intestinal walls. Incidentally, it is the colloidal minerals in the glacial mountain water the Hunzas drink that is widely believed to be the key to their longevity.

The connection between mineral deficiency and disease states is fundamental. An experienced organic gardener can look at a soil analysis and tell a farmer exactly what diseases his animals will have! The following are examples of some of the connections that can be made between disease states and mineral deficiencies.

Calcium: Bell's Palsy; osteoporosis; bleeding gums; arthritis; hypertension, insomnia; cramps; twitches; pre-menstrual syndrome; lower back pain; diabetes

Calcium, magnesium and boron: kidney stones; osteoporosis

Calcium, chromium and vanadium: diabetes

Copper: aneurysms (cerebral hemorrhage, aortic aneurysms); grey hair; wrinkles; varicose veins; elastic fibre breakdown

Magnesium and selenium: cardiomyopathy

Tin: deafness; baldness

Zinc: prostate problems; loss of smell and taste

Enzymes

Anyone who has not maintained a diet with a significant component of raw food is a candidate for enzyme deficiency. Enzymes assist the pancreas in the digestion of food. An excellent natural source of enzymes is mature green papaya which contains proteolytic (protein digesting) enzymes. These break down the muco-protein complexes that are clogging up the digestive tract and lymph vessels as a result of partially digested proteins and carbohydrates. They will also digest tumours. Other enzyme supplements are widely available that will support a sluggish digestive system through the transition to optimum health.

Spirulina and Chlorella

These are algae, abundantly rich super foods that contain masses of chlorophyll, enzymes, minerals and vitamins. Chlorophyll is almost identical in formula to haemoglobin, one of nature's little hints to eat more green food!

Bee Pollen

Two of the essential amino acids, tryptophan and lysine, are destroyed with cooking. This is why regular meat eaters can still be protein deficient! It is essential to ingest a source of raw protein in order to obtain the full range of amino acids. Bee pollen is an ideal food source for this reason (it's not an animal product ... the bees processed it raw from flowers!).

Flax Oil

There are two essential fatty acids, known as omega 3 and omega 6. Omega 6 is commonly found abundantly in most of your good cold pressed seed oils such as corn, sunflower, safflower, pumpkin seed etc.. Omega 3 is very rare. Apart from very small doses in pumpkin seed oils, the only known sources are cold water fish oils and flax oil. Cod liver and halibut oils have been available for many years, but regrettably they are usually heat processed and therefore rancid. The alternative is to eat cold water fish daily or supplement your diet with a good quality fish oil or flax seed oil.

Flax seed oil, if processed properly in the absence of heat and light, has 50 -60% omega 3 content. This oil has been used extensively over several decades of research in Germany as a prime treatment for cancer and heart disease. It has the ability to oxygenate the cells and reverse the build up of cholesterol in the arteries. It is a wonderful anti-inflammatory and nervous system soother.

Why not do it all? Take the fish oil capsules, eat lots of cold water fish and splash the flax oil regularly on your food!

Acidophilus

An essential component of good health is a healthy large intestine. The large intestine acts, partially, like a compost heap: it contains several strains of bacteria which act to complete the process of digestion by converting the waste food components into faeces. The most important of these bacteria is lactobacillus acidophilus, the same one that is found in yoghurt. Acidophilus thrives on an alkaline diet, rich in vegetable matter and low on the acid forming foods. Anyone who has an acidic diet (which is three quarters of the population) or anyone who has taken antibiotics, which kills off the natural acidophilus in our intestines, will benefit from taking acidophilus regularly as a supplement.

Psyllium

Another very useful herb for maintaining the health of the intestines is psyllium seed. This is a mucilaginous herb. The husk of the psyllium seed absorbs enormous amounts of water and turns into a bulky, slippery mass which then passes through the intestines and very gently cleans the intestinal walls, helping to remove old wastes.

Remember that good elimination is essential to overall health. The large intestine has a prolific network of lymph vessels around it to cater for the high concentration of bacteria and toxins. Many diseases begin with poor large intestine health. Psyllium has no detrimental side effects with long term use and is therefore recommended as a regular food.

Herbs

Herbal medicine lore goes back into pre-history. Wherever humans have lived they have used the healing properties of the abundant plant life around them in the form of leaves, roots, bark, stems, seeds and fruits. Most people would be familiar with the idea of using garlic, echinacea and ginseng to enhance their health, but there are literally thousands of different plant substances with a huge variety of properties that are available, both from Chinese herbal traditions as well as traditional Western herbal lore. Don't wait until you're sick . . . go and find a good herbalist and find out exactly how well you can be!

The Secret Ingredient for Abundant Life

Chinese herbs and super foods are not drugs. They do not cure anything by interfering in the body's systems. Rather, they support the bodily systems to regenerate by providing the right raw materials and conditions which cells require to make enzymes and to reproduce themselves.

Taking the care to nourish yourself thoroughly may not lead to immortality, but there is a good chance that it will lead to a flourishing and vital life without the usual diseases and disharmonies to which most people are subject. So if you would like to die young at a very old age, if you would rather invest in yourself now than pay the hospital bills later, then I commend you to direct some energy towards feeding yourself well and taking some regular nutritional supplements and super foods for the rest of your life.

Nutritional supplements can assist your life in the direction of abundance and liberation, because you will feel better and make better decisions. If you combine that knowledge with massage and exercise and a positive mental attitude you will indeed be a healthy specimen. Yet these alone are not enough . . . you still need an open and loving heart in order to be truly healthy.

Compassion may well be the most important contributor to good health; it may also be the mysterious something that opens up the possibility, at a level beyond the cells, of true regeneration and eternal life. For most of us, opening the heart does not come easily. If we wish to attain a state of compassion we have to work hard at it and be willing to be tested every step of the way; but these tests are also our nourishment; they help us to grow.

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