

Qi Gong and High Blood Pressure, Part I

Published in *New Health Digest*, January 2007 issue

Traditional Chinese Medicine looks at hypertension (high blood pressure) as being related to Liver and Heart energy imbalances and stagnation. Diet and exercise can go a long way toward alleviating these issues. In this article, I will discuss diet changes that can be made to reduce the stagnation and cleanse the cardiovascular system to help with high blood pressure as well as improve cardiovascular health. In next month's issue I will continue this subject by teaching several Qi Gong exercises that are also quite helpful.

Liver energy stagnation is a very common problem in the west. Our general tendencies to overeat and eat rich foods and desserts is widespread and often the cause of the stagnation. Holding in emotions and feelings only makes things worse. In general, most people will feel better following the diet suggestions here, even if they don't have hypertension. Liver stagnation can also contribute to other health issues such as: nervous system disorders, allergies, lumps, swellings, distended abdomen, chest or breasts, chronic indigestion, menstrual problems, stress, neck and back tension, fatigue, rigid inflexible body, eye problems, skin disorders, slow rising in morning, muscular pain, and tendon problems. Emotionally, it can result in: emotional repression, anger, frustration, resentment, impatience, edginess, depression, moodiness, impulsiveness, emotional attachments, poor judgment, indecisive, mental rigidity, and negativity.

The following diet suggestions are best suited for those who have a robust or excessive body type: strong pulse, strong voice, extroverted personality, high cholesterol, rich diet in past. If an individual has a deficient body (frail, weak, pallid) then this diet is too cooling and cleansing and they would do better to strengthen the organs instead.

To clear out and prevent further stagnation, people need to eat less at any given meal (except in cases of malnutrition) and avoid late night eating. Use a diet based on whole grains and vegetables with plenty of fiber. Eliminate or greatly reduce foods high in saturated fat (lard, mammal meats, cream, cheese, eggs), hydrogenated and poor quality fats (shortening, margarine, refined and rancid oils), excess nuts and seeds, chemicals in food and water, unnecessary pharmaceuticals, all intoxicants, and highly processed, refined foods.

Lisa B. O'Shea Certified Qi Gong Therapist and Instructor

Qi Gong Institute of Rochester 595 Blossom Rd. Ste. 307 Rochester, NY 14610
(585) 377-2044 Toll Free: (877) 346-4017 www.Qigongrochester.com

Typically, pungent and bitter foods work well to cleanse arteries and the heart. Pungent food and other warming foods should be used cautiously by those with *heat symptoms* - person feels hot, dislikes heat, attracted to cold, desire for lots of cold liquids, red face, red eyes, nosebleeds. Items listed below in *italics* should be avoided if signs of heat are present. Those with wind signs (pain that comes and goes, or moves, spasms, cramps, dizziness, vertigo, tremors, palsy, twitching, pulsating headache, ringing in ears, paralysis, dryness in upper body), especially a tendency to a stroke or dizziness, should avoid buckwheat and use all warming foods with caution.

The following foods help eliminate cardiovascular problems like hypertension by removing mucus and stagnant Qi and blood, directing cooling yin fluids to the liver, and detoxifying the system. The items in **bold** are especially good for hypertension. Add moderate and satisfying amounts of any of the foods listed below into your diet. You may mix them together or alternate between items, eating them 4-6 times per week.

Legumes: **Mung** and soybeans and their sprouts, aduki bean, tofu, tempeh, and most other legumes such as peas, beans, and lentils.

Grains: Whole grains especially rye, oats, and amaranth. Also rice, sprouted wheat (preferably hard red winter wheat), and buckwheat (not if wind problems). Rutin in buckwheat strengthens arterial walls.

Vegetables and fruits: Pungent foods- **radish**, *horseradish*, *hot peppers*, and *the onion family* (**garlic**, *onion*, *leek*, *scallion*, *shallot*, *chive*), leafy greens, cabbage, spinach, carrot greens, mint leaf, nasturtium leaf, dandelion greens, kale, wheat and barley greens, broccoli, kohlrabi, parsley, asparagus, bell pepper, rose hip, **tomato**, citrus, **celery**, **banana**, **persimmon**, **seaweeds** (**esp. Arame, Kombu/Kelp, Nori, Irish Moss**), chlorella, cucumber, and mushrooms.

Other foods that disperse stagnation: *Turmeric*, *vinegar* (*do not use if you have deficient digestive fire: watery stools, pale, swollen, wet tongue, and feeling cold*), *basil*, *rosemary*, *nutmeg*, *sweet rice* (*not if deficient digestive fire*), *spearmint*, peach seed, eggplant, white pepper.

Nuts and seeds: Almond, hazelnut (filbert), *chestnut*, flax seed, chia seed, pumpkin seed (lightly roasted to remove surface E. Coli), poppy seed, walnut (toasted or cooked to remove parasites), and sunflower sprouts. Use oily nuts and seeds in small quantities only.

Animal products: Fish- sardine, salmon, mackerel, and other deep/cold water fish. **Raw honey** and bee pollen.

Lisa B. O'Shea Certified Qi Gong Therapist and Instructor
Qi Gong Institute of Rochester 595 Blossom Rd. Ste. 307 Rochester, NY 14610
(585) 377-2044 Toll Free: (877) 346-4017 www.Qigongrochester.com