

Tricks of Traditional Chinese Medicine

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Editor-in-Chief

School brings out the best and worst of us. For students it seems that school and acne start simultaneously, which is not a coincidence. Whether you are often under stress,

eat poorly, or don't have time to exercise anymore, your body—more specifically your face—will tell you what is up.

Toxins are often released through the skin when other systems in your body, such as the liver and kidneys, are sluggish. Through Traditional Chi-

nese Medicine, or TCM, face maps, acne-ridden teens can find the root cause of their blemishes and heal their bodies from inside out.

To understand how to heal needy organs, one must first understand the basics of TCM.

The two fundamental theories

of TCM are The Yin-Yang theory: everything must consist of two opposites—hot and cold, left and right, stillness and movement and light and dark, along with the Five Element Theory: wood, fire, earth, metal and water—the basic substances constituting the material world.

Relating to the human body, qi, correct function and substance, blood and body fluid are fundamental substances which sustain the normal physiological functions of the zang-fu organs, or organs that have mutual relationships and tissues. The qi between organs in your body may be off, or the yin-

yang inside the organ itself may be off-balance, leading to acne.

The area in which your acne appears correlates to the organ that is off-balance. Because facial skin is the most sensitive part of the human body, the face represents a miniature body map that helps you pin-point which

Add heat to an exercise routine

Brianna Muzzall

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Hot yoga is the *hottest* trend in yoga.

The class is fast paced, moving the body in 26 different positions for 90 minutes. Oh, and the room is heated to 104 degrees Fahrenheit.

For those who are not experienced in yoga, Hot Yoga, otherwise known as Bikram Yoga, is an intense class. The point is to sweat out the toxins in the body and leave the class feeling revived and clear minded.

Bikram yoga is offered all around the greater Lansing area, at places such as Bikram Yoga, which specializes in hot yoga, and Yoga State. Bikram yoga is a controversial practice due to the injuries such as lower back pain and torn muscles.

When attending a Bikram yoga class, the first thing you notice is the minimal clothing on every person involved, and the overwhelming, lung-tightening heat. Sweating begins the moment you start the class and does not cease for the next 90 minutes, until sweat will come out of places you did not even know it could.

When I attended an evening class at Yoga State in Okemos, I found myself taken with the idea of Bikram Yoga, realizing the actual class may be more challenging. As both a beginner at yoga and a fan of room temperature classes, I looked forward to the experience.

The instructor was very well trained through her constant insistence to ignore the sweat and leave it on my face seemed to me at least intolerable. While the body eventually gets used to the heat and starts to acclimate itself, the sweat seems to never let up. The heat did help my body stretch and hold in ways I had never before imagined (or hoped) it would. The other practitioners seemed to have no issues with the moves and I continued to be extremely happy that I had claimed a space in the very back row. The 90 minutes seemed to fly by, and before I knew it, we were told to lay silently while listening to the instrumental of "Stay with me" which, while slightly distracting, was an interesting way to end the class.

As the class ended and I was released back into the refreshing room temperature air, I started to understand why many attend these classes. The body felt refreshed and well stretched. That feeling would soon be replaced by intense soreness and a desire to lay in bed for a week.

For those who enjoy yoga, Bikram yoga is a must. It is a new and interesting way to experience a classic way to exercise, and bump up the intensity for those bored with classic yoga. I would recommend this class to all those fitness buffs always looking for a new way to expand their exercise horizons.

Which organs need some love?

Liver

Function: The liver is the organ that works to detox your body around the clock.

What you need in your diet: Antioxidants (beets), Vitamin C (lemon) (helps your liver produce more enzymes), Selenium (garlic), Dandelion tea (magnesium).

Stomach

Function: This organ digests food.

What you need in your diet: drink liters of water a day to flush out toxins.

Spleen

Function: The spleen acts as a filter for blood and fights bacteria. Old red blood cells are recycled in the spleen, and platelets and white blood cells are stored there.

What you need in your diet: Warm foods to keep the chi in your spleen burning, such as kidney beans, sweet potatoes, brown rice, oats, ginger, figs and pu'er tea.

Kidneys

Function: The kidneys extract waste from blood, balance body fluids, from urine, and aid in other important functions of the body.

What you need in your diet: Juice cleanses—beet juice, lemon juice, watermelon juice.

Intestines

Function: The intestines absorb nutrients.

What you need in your diet: Herbal teas, magnesium (supplement), enzymes (kombucha).

Lungs

Function: The lungs help oxygen enter the red blood cells.

What you need in your diet: Grapes (resveratrol), pineapples (bromelain), celery (organic sodium), dandelions (magnesium), cilantro (cleanse heavy metals).



Illustration by Erin Wakeland

Pumpkins prove to be more than porch decorations

Glorianne Francavilla

Staff Reporter

Your favorite fall decoration might be pumpkin, but there is more to it than meets the eye: try eating it! Pumpkin is not usually thought of as a nutritional powerhouse, but it has many health benefits. The one caveat: do not eat it raw.

"Consuming fruits and vegetables raw is always best to preserve nutrients that may be lost in the cooking process, but pumpkin is not a vegetable that is easily eaten raw, unfortunately. Pumpkin is best served in whatever forms you will eat it. Pumpkin soup, pumpkin ravioli, roasted pumpkin and seeds too!" registered dietitian Kelly Gemmel said.

Looking at their carved faces, you might never guess that behind their goofy grins their packing a nutritional load.

"Pumpkin is high in vitamin C, vitamin A, fiber and potassium," Gemmel said.

In fact, one cup of cooked pumpkin has 200 percent of daily needed Vitamin A, according to the National Institutes of Health. This can help aid vision especially in dim light.

A study by the National Eye Institute found that consuming high levels of antioxidants, including vitamin A, can decrease the risk of developing age-related macular degeneration (deterioration of the eye's macula), the most common reason for vision loss for people 50 and over.



Illustration by Kendall Cassella

Because of pumpkin's yellow and orange pigment, it is full of beta-carotene. Beta-carotene is an antioxidant, which according to Cancer.gov, can help neutralize free radicals (a particle with an unpaired number of electrons that can harm living cells), lowering the risk of developing cancer.

For post practice fuel up, ditch the banana, and instead eat one cup of cooked pumpkin. It has 564 mg of potassium as opposed to a banana, at 420 mg, according to the National Center for Biotechnology Information.

The fruit of the pumpkin isn't the only source of nutrition, though. Pumpkin seeds have long been valued as great sources of zinc, with 25 percent of daily zinc needs in one quarter cup. Adequate

levels of zinc may help you get over your cold faster and help rid acne, reports the University of Maryland Medical Center.

Another pumpkin nutritional treasure: fiber. The average American does not eat enough fiber a day. You should consume 25-30 grams of fiber a day to support a healthy digestive system, according to Harvard School of Public Health. Just one cup of pumpkin puree contains 7.1 grams of fiber, helping you digest your food efficiently, making it easier for your body to absorb the nutrients you consume.

So think twice about throwing away the inside of the pumpkin you carve this fall. It might be the answer to boosting your immune system, bettering your eyesight, lowering your risk of cancer, and keeping your digestive system healthy.