

Got Energy?



Every woman wants it; few truly have it. Having adequate energy, or qi, to perform our daily required activities is at

times elusive. How is it, then, that many people seem to have endless abounding energy, enough to seemingly spare and share with the world? Like the energizer bunny, we have been stimulated to be stimulated. From Starbucks to Red Bull, our lives are one big fabrication when it comes to having enough qi to work, raise a family, have a partner, take care of a house, business, yard, and still give your self enough free time to maybe have some fun. We are constantly on the go, and living with this kind of daily stress wreaks havoc upon our human system. Eventually, we can exhaust our essential qi, and that's when the curtain comes down for the last time.

The fountain of youth, that sweet elixir of life, is what it has always been... a legend. In my experience, I have found one way to rebuild and harness this essential energy, that way is through healthy balanced living.

What is qi? In Oriental medicine, qi is the energy that makes our body function. It is the sparkle in your eye and the glisten of your skin. With too much, we appear hyperactive, and with too little, we are fatigued and lethargic, unable to even complete our daily activities without great distress. In Western terms, qi can be associated with the adrenal gland functioning. Once the adrenals are exhausted, even the smallest activity can feel like climbing Mt. Everest, without adequate training or gear.

How do I know if I have exhausted adrenals? Here are some questions to ask yourself: Are you tired all of the time? Do you avoid activity

even though you may really want to get outside and do something? Do you use stimulants like caffeine or drugs? Are you still tired even after sleeping? Do you have racing thoughts when you stop working? Do you have decreased libido, hair loss, or digestive disturbances? Do you sweat spontaneously or with little activity? If you have answered yes to even a few of these questions, chances are your adrenals need a little perking up. Your qi can be enhanced by living a healthy balanced lifestyle.

What is a healthy, balanced lifestyle?

A healthy, balanced lifestyle is when the body, mind, and spirit are in harmony. There are no pains and aches, the body is strong and free from physical restriction in movement, the mind is clear of clutter and the spirit is unrestricted and able to soar. How do I get to this planet, you ask?

The recipe. Exercise, nutrition, and meditation are the keys to the kingdom. In order for the body to be strong, free of pain, and unrestricted in movement, you must actually move. Exercise is an absolute necessity. From walking to rollerblading, regardless of skill level, you need to exercise at least four days out of every week for a minimum of 45 minutes. You should seek professional

help if you are a beginner, and you should always get clearance from your physician if you are medically fragile. Athletic trainers and physical therapists are good resources because they understand the mechanism of injury and can help assist you in developing a program that will be sure not to exacerbate any preexisting physical problems you may have.

Nutrition, another required factor, is so controversial now with all the fad diets and best-selling books on the market. A good rule of thumb is to drink clean water, eat clean, living, whole foods, and get adequate rest.

First, our bodies are living organisms, and what we feed our bodies should be living as well. The vitality of whole food is 100 percent; not only is it fresh, organic, and whole, it has the vitality that comes from its history of growth. We can also view this vitality as the qi of the food. So, by ingesting this food full of vital qi, we are increasing the vital qi in our bodies. If I eat a fully processed product, what kind of vitality am I putting into my body?

The last key, meditation, is needed to clear the clutter from you mind and allow your spirit to become what it is truly meant

to be. Everyone requires quiet calm time to process and rejuvenate the mind and spirit. Since more theories arrive every day regarding the body healing itself, the mind needs to be clear and calm to enable such a healing. A good start is with guided meditation tapes, and activities like yoga, tai chi, and qigong are blends of physical exercise with a meditative aspect to rejuvenate the body, mind, and spirit.

Finally, there are times when the body, mind, and spirit continuum are so out of alignment that guidance is required. Natural healing modalities such as acupuncture, chiropractic, homeopathy, supplementation, and Chinese herbs can be used to help guide the body back into harmony. You've got the recipe, now the only ingredient to add is you. To borrow a phrase... *Just do it!*

Christina Captain is a board certified acupuncture physician. To make an appointment at the Family Healing Center in Sarasota, call 941-951-1119, or at Integrated Healing Arts in Bradenton, call 941-739-2225.

