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Immune Boosting Home Care

Dry Skin Brushing

1. Skin is the largest organ of the body and is an important organ of detoxification and elimination. Dry skin brushing improves circulation to the surface of the skin, aids exfoliation of dead skin cells thus **enhancing the skin's function in shedding toxins, and stimulates sensory nerves and circulation of lymph fluid**. Do dry skin brushing prior to bathing or showering.
2. Use a long handled brush with soft, natural bristles.
3. Brush with short strokes toward your heart and brush lightly (especially when starting out.)
4. Start with the soles of your feet, then feet, legs, and thighs up to your groin.
5. Hands and arms are next, then neck,
6. Abdomen and back are last. Remember to do short strokes toward the heart.

Cold Showers (Just kidding...)

1. The water doesn't need to be cold, just 10 degrees cooler than your shower was. This should be started in the warmer weather.
2. In naturopathy we talk about the 3 hearts. First is our heart and it's easy to see it functions as a pump. Our blood vessels with their muscular walls move fluid and blood through arteries and veins, they are considered the second heart. Our lymphatic channels move fluid from head and extremities to the torso, where it re-enters the blood stream. Lymphatic vessels have weak walls. By using directed applications of cold water we can move fluid through lymphatic vessels, thus making a "third heart" to pump fluid through the body.
3. Actively moving lymphatic fluid through lymph channels **gets information about viruses or bacteria in one region of lymph nodes to many more lymph nodes**, thus mobilizing much more of the immune system against the invading bug.
4. The sequence for cool water after showering is:
 - a. feet and legs first,
 - b. hands and arms second
 - c. front of torso third
 - d. back last
5. Spend total of 30 to 60 seconds under cold/cool water. This moves lymphatic fluid from the periphery to the thoracic duct next to the spine.

Castor Oil

Castor oil is used externally for **detoxification, muscle relaxation, and pain relief**. It is somewhat thick and sticky, so cover any topical applications with old clothes. Castor oil has a slight warming effect and can be applied over the lymph nodes of the neck during upper respiratory infections, or over the chest during bronchitis. Castor oil over the abdomen, including over the liver (the right upper quadrant) at bedtime **aids sleep** and aids detoxification while we sleep.

Netti Pot

Netti pot is an East Indian personal hygiene practice of sinus irrigation which may be done once or twice daily, or may be reserved for the onset of cold or flu symptoms. Netti pots are widely available in drug stores and health food stores. When using a Netti Pot, follow instructions included with the pot regarding how much salt to use. Too much or too little salt will cause sinus stinging when you irrigate.