

## Practical Preventable Medicine



### ACHING JOINTS AND THE COLD

#### WHAT CAN HELP?

It is well known to all those that suffer joint pain that usually cold weather exacerbate the pain and that seems to be inescapable at this time of year. Exactly how cold weather affects pain is a lot to do with how we react to cold. Imagine yourself in front of a warm fire and notice how relaxed your body and muscles are. Now imagine you are out in the snow, and feel how tight you become, muscles clench, shoulders up around your ears and often we can shiver that increases warmth by agitating muscles and increasing blood flow. Therein lies the secret!! Blood flow, reduction in blood flow to certain areas, especially chronic conditions will increase pain, which is why a heat pack or warm bath can alleviate a lot of suffering. This is true for many arthritis sufferers as well as muscular pain such as fibro myalgia.

So ways to help this is to increase your consumption of warm nourishing foods such as slow cooked stews, soups and casseroles and adding warm spices such as ginger and cinnamon. In Chinese Medicine we use cinnamon in many formulas that treat aching joints and muscles.

Supplements that are clinically proven in pain management include Glucosamine and Chondroitin and MSM, often blended together in powders or pills, these have been used to treat joint pain for thousands of years in Chinese medicine as shark cartilage. Now sharks are less used with Bovine cartilage now used instead. This must be taken daily for 3-4 weeks for maximum benefit and considered a food, as it helps in cartilage replacement and blood circulation (caution in patients on blood thinning medication).

Ginger is also fabulous, take as a supplement or eaten is a powerful medicine, as is chillies that helps deplete substance P that is a mediator in pain aggravation, so go the Tabasco sauce!! Devils Claw (*Harpagophytum procumbens*) and turmeric are showing very promising clinical results with inflammatory pain such as arthritis and is available locally in a blend with ginger and Glucosamine for side effect free pain relief. Acupuncture is very effective also as it moderates the immune response, increases blood flow and removes 'blocks' in the body's flow of Qi and relieves inflammation.

Externally warming liniments are valuable and important but must be used regularly for maximum benefit such as Red Tiger balm; and of course keep moving as nothing moves blood like exercise!

Until next time

Stay well

Dr Angela Palmer

Chinese Medicine

Written by: Dr Angela Palmer - Kinglake Chinese Medicine  
**Chinese Medicine CMRBV REG AH/1347**  
**Member AACMA 2154**

# Practical Preventable Medicine

Written by: Dr Angela Palmer - Kinglake Chinese Medicine  
**Chinese Medicine CMRBV REG AH/1347**  
**Member AACMA 2154**