AVWC April 2016 Newsletter

April 2016 Edition

We hope you are enjoying the beautiful spring weather. A few announcements blossomed over the last month, so here they are.

Going GMO Free!

As we announced last month, our talented office manager, Lacy Bennett, has begin setting up her health coaching practice. Following the theme of this month's newsletter, Lacy had this to say about genetically modified organisms (GMO) in your diet:

"If you are wanting to go GMO free but need a helping hand, book a coaching session with me at the front desk! I offer personalized health and lifestyle coaching programs to help you be successful in reaching your treatment goals.

A kitchen cleanse and revamp might be just what you need to go GMO free! This service is usually offered off site, but I have re-created this program just for AVWC clients! This personalized, in depth service is an excellent way to make a commitment to reaching your lifestyle goals and setting your home up for success in making lasting changes.

Cleaning out your kitchen is essential to starting a new lifestyle such as going GMO free. During this 60 minute session you will learn about cost effective meals, reading nutrition and ingredient labels, staples to have on hand, menu ideas and healthier alternatives."

Staffing Changes

Sadly, our front office candidate, Lorie Moniz, had to bow out of the position after her mother suffered a heart attack and needed full time care. We are actively exploring other options to assist Lacy at the front desk.

Meet The Pain Tamer: Open House

We are very excited to announce an Open House event on Saturday morning, May 21st. Please come and meet our new prolotherapy partner, JoAnna Forwell, ND of the Vitalia Holistic Health Centre. Dr. Forwell, who is one of the top prolotherapists in WA state, will be doing a brief talk during the event, followed by a opportunity to ask questions and talk with her. More details will be announced in our next newsletter and on our Facebook page.

Prolotherapy is a form of injection therapy used to treat chronic ligament, joint capsule, fascial, and tendinous injuries. A core principle of prolotherapy is the use of an irritant solution (like dextrose) to initiate a small, controlled osmotic shock to the injected areas, which creates a focal area of healing and tissue proliferation. This brings new blood flow and resources to the area, stimulating the body to heal itself. The technique of prolotherapy has actually been around for over 50 years and is the forerunner of the fledgling specialty of Regenerative Medicine.

New Digital Digs

More exciting news - AVWC is set to get a new website! The new site will be more useful, more vibrant, more mobile-friendly, and more interactive. We will be providing a brief survey shortly in order to get your thoughts on what you would like to see on the new website. So please let us know what works and doesn't work for you. After all, we built it for you.

In Health,
AVWC staff

April 2016 Edition

Today I Learned

Did you know that FDA doesn't even test genetically modified foods to make sure they're good for you? According to them, it's the manufacturer's responsibility to make sure their GMO products are safe.

GMOs in Your Food: The Facts You Need to Know

If food industry news has been on your radar screen, then you are probably aware that there's huge concern over Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) in our food supply. It's estimated that more than half of America's processed grocery products contain gene-altered ingredients. Since at least the 1990's we've been consuming genetically modified enzymes primarily in breads, cheeses, sodas, and beers. Today, the primary genetically modified (GM) food crops are corn, soybeans, and potatoes.

What does all of this really mean? Is there a real threat to health? Won't GM crops help us feed a planet with dwindling resources?

It's easy to get confused by arguments from both sides of the proverbial fence. We hope our basic, five-

point primer on GM foods helps you become a more informed consumer:

GE or GMO: What's the Difference?
"Genetically Engineered" (GE) and GMO are used interchangeably, but they have different meanings. Confusion arises because the USDA defines a GMO as an organism produced through *any* type of genetic modification.

Genetically engineering food is different from the way plant breeders make selections for plant traits between two cultivars. When a plant breeder (organic or conventional) selects a trait like disease resistance found in one plant and uses that trait to enhance another plant, that creates a hybrid. In this case, the plant breeder has encouraged the same kind of selections that *might occur in nature*. Breeders also *monitor the plants for effects* on specific characteristics including quality, nutrient density, and productivity. This is the true application of the term "genetically modifying organisms".

A GE crop is one in which a single gene or combinations of genes from one organism are artificially forced into the DNA of another organism (a crop). Essentially, the natural boundary between two species is broken in order to create a new life form (i.e., foods) with more desirable traits.

For example, to get cold-weather hardy tomatoes, you can splice the DNA from salmon, which has those genetic features and transfer it into the tomato. This yields a larger crop when the weather is less than favorable. The problem? Tomatoes would never *naturally* contain those fishy genes.

But far more than fish genes are being spliced into crops. According to Jeffrey Smith, President of the Institute for Responsible Technology, "GM plants, such as soybean, corn, cottonseed, and canola, have had foreign genes, such as bacteria and viruses forced into their DNA. These have never been in the human food supply."

Therein lies the problem with food that has been genetically modified outside of nature's boundaries: The genetics of a plant, not only affect its color, taste, yield and nutrient quality, they likely affect the way that food goes to work in the human body.

In the interest of larger crop yields, profits for big biotech companies, and claims that GM foods will 'feed the world,' we have no proof that these foods are safe and no data to indicate the short or long-term effects on human health. And, people are still starving around the world.

> *"Even if the transgene itself is not dangerous or toxic, it could upset complex biochemical networks and create new bioactive compounds or change the concentrations of those normally present. In addition, the properties in proteins may change in a new chemical environment because they may fold in new ways. Further, the potential toxic or carcinogenic effects could have substantial latency periods."*
> - The Need for Greater Regulation and Control of Genetic Engineering: A Statement by Scientists Concerned About Trends in the New Biotechnology (1995)

What are the Health Concerns of GMO Food?

GM foods do not undergo regulated testing in the United States. Much of what we know comes from independent scientists conducting animal studies (and the so-called unbiased studies from big biotech). However, scientists and politicians in other countries believe the threat to health is real -- GE/GM crop cultivation is now banned by 38 countries worldwide (28 in Europe).

Medical professionals claim there are potential health effects linked to eating these foods. In her article for the *Chicago Tribune*, Dr. Martha R. Herbert, a pediatric neurologist wrote: "Today the vast majority of foods in supermarkets contain genetically modified substances whose effects on our health are unknown. As a medical doctor, I can assure you that no one in the medical profession would attempt to perform experiments on human subjects without their consent... Yet manufacturers of genetically altered foods are exposing us to one of the largest uncontrolled experiments in modern history."

Potential Health Effects:

- Introduction of new allergens into crops could result in increased rates of allergies and allergy-related health conditions.
- Bacteria in our guts could pick up antibiotic-resistant genes found in many GM foods that have been spliced with antibiotics.
- Animal studies indicate GM foods may cause toxic effects on the liver, kidneys, pancreas or reproductive system.
- Animal studies show that DNA in food can travel into organs throughout the body, even into the fetus.
- The risks to children and fetuses may be greater because their digestive and neurological systems are not fully developed.

Why are food genetics being manipulated?

There are two primary traits that have been added to crops: herbicide tolerance, which lets the farmer spray weed-killer directly on the crop without killing it, and the ability of the plant to produce its own pesticide. These outcomes have no proven health benefit to humans, There is, however, economic benefit for biotech companies such as Monsanto, which develops (and owns the patent to) the weed-killer that farmers use on crops and we use in gardens (e.g., Roundup aka glyphosate). The company has been accused of everything from hiding research on the real health effects of glyphosate used on crops around the world to knowingly producing products that threaten biodiversity and cause cancer.

To date, six bio-tech giants are actively lobbying against the U.S. public's demand for GMO labeling on foods. And yet, legislators continue to protect citizens as demonstrated by California's recent decision requiring Monsanto to label Roundup as carcinogenic.

Stay Informed!

Resources for learning more about GMOs, Monsanto, and health implications are listed below.

Wherever You Shop: Say NO to GMO Foods!

From farmer's markets to grocery stores, to shop with confidence about avoiding GMO foods you need to shop smarter. Here's how:

When in doubt, Go organic. The USDA National Organic Standards prohibit the use of GMOs. Look for the USDA Organic Seal on labels for produce as well as meat, dairy, eggs and fish.

Look for the non-GMO Project logo. This third-party verification means the food has been tested for GMOs. Look for the colorful butterfly and plant logo on the label.

Check for a grocery chain's organic line. Some grocers, like Whole Foods have their own organic and non-GMO products..

Look at the PLU Code on produce. When shopping for fruits and vegetables, your first choice should be those labeled with a five-digit PLU that begins with a "9," which indicates the food is certified organic. Produce items containing a four-digit PLU are considered "conventional" - not technically GMO, but may still contain pesticides and other toxic residues. If the PLU begins with an "8," avoid it.

Avoid "at-risk" ingredients. The five most prevalent GMO crops are corn, canola, soy, cottonseed and sugar beets. These are also typically added to packaged foods as corn syrup, oil, sugar, flavoring agents, thickeners and other ingredients. Choose organic or non-GMO verified.

The most common "genetically-tinkered-with" crops are:

- Corn (especially sweet corn)
- Hawaiian papaya
- Zucchini
- Yellow summer squash
- Edamame (soy)
- Sugar - unless you are buying pure cane sugar, expect a GM variety of beet sugar.

- Artificial sweeteners are likely derived from GM sources

Go Bulk. Dry grains, beans, nuts and seeds are typically non-GMO (exceptions listed above).

Amla: Indian Gooseberry *(Emblica officinalis)*

Indian Gooseberry is an unusual, translucent fruit found in shades of yellow, green, red, or black. Berries may be perfectly round or oval and elongated and contain abundant, tiny edible seeds. The flavor ranges from tart and sweet to moderately sour.

Gooseberry is abundant in vitamin-C, and contains B-vitamins, calcium, phosphorus, iron, and beta carotene. A powerful antioxidant, Amla helps prevent and repair damage caused to cells by free radicals. Two other compounds in Amla, flavones and anthocyanins are noted for their beneficial health effects against cancer, aging, inflammation, and neurological diseases.

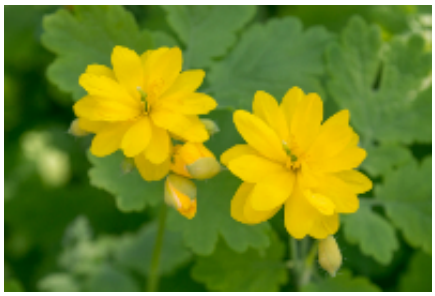
In Ayurvedic Medicine, both dried and fresh Gooseberry fruits are used alone or in combination with other plants to support health and treat a variety of medical conditions. Some of the many health benefits or effects include:

- Fortifies the liver and helps flush toxins from the body
- Balances stomach acid
- Helps regulate blood sugar
- Reduces inflammation
- Healing ulcers
- Supports heart health
- Manages fever, coughs, bronchitis or asthma

Gooseberry is of interest to researchers and health practitioners for its role in managing diabetes, prevention and treatment of certain cancers and heart disease, and its protective effect on brain health. In fact, several researchers revealed that various extracts and herbal formulations of Amla have potential therapeutic benefits and the results are similar to standard drugs. If you are interest in this option, please check with Dr. Thomas or Dr. Piscopo to determine the right amount of an Amla supplement.

Look for Indian Gooseberry in international grocery stores and enjoy the fruit as part of a healthy diet.

Greater Celandine *(Chelidonium majus)*



The dainty yellow flowers of Greater Celandine (aka "swallow") bloom when swallows return from winter nesting and die when the birds head south again. A member of the Poppy family, the medicinal use of the plant dates back to ancient Greece. It has been widely used in European herbal medicine through modern time for treatment of gallbladder disease and liver conditions.

As a homeopathic remedy, *Chelidonium* has produced favorable results for treating liver disorders. It has also been used with health conditions such as indigestion, heartburn, IBS, gout, osteoarthritis, warts and other skin diseases.

Greater Celandine is often prepared as an extract or tincture, depending upon the intended use. If extracts are not properly prepared and preserved, it can render the herb less effective or cause side effects.

Chelidonium is not appropriate for everyone. Even if it is indicated for you, if you don't use the appropriate dose of this herb for your particular health concern you could experience side effects ranging from rash to upset stomach and serious illness.

Recent debate about the liver-protective versus potential toxic effects of *Chelidonium majus* has renewed the medical community's interest in this plant. Interactions have been found when *Chelidonium* is taken with Tylenol or Erythromycin or other drugs that stress the liver.

For these reasons, please check with Dr. Thomas or Dr. Piscopo before using *Chelidonium* so that they can provide you with the appropriate dose and quality of this herb.

Cultural Corner: Ayurvedic Medicine

Ayurveda, "the science of life," is an Indian medical system dating back more than 5,000 years. It is the oldest continuously practiced health-care system in the world. The principle of Ayurveda is to prevent and treat illness by maintaining balance in the body, mind, and consciousness through proper drinking, diet, yoga, meditation and herbal remedies.

Ayurvedic Medicine examines and understands our connection with, and the influences of the energies that make up the universe: The five elements of ether (space), air, fire, water, and earth.

According to Ayurvedic principles, these energies exist within each of us-body, mind and consciousness-and comprise each person's constitution. Each person's constitution has different ratios of the elements, making everyone unique.

The three constitutional types, or doshas, reflect your physical, emotional, and psychological make-up. Usually, one or two types will dominate in a person's constitution.

Pitta energy is linked to fire and controls digestion and metabolism. Pitta types are known for their intense personality, sharp intelligence and wit.

Vata energy is connected with air and space and is associated with bodily movement including circulation, breathing, and heartbeat. Vata types are upbeat, highly alert, flexible and creative thinkers.

Kapha energy is linked to earth and water and controls growth, immunity and strength. Kapha types are often solid in build, calm and tolerant.

An Ayurvedic doctor assesses for imbalances through the understanding of the elements and doshas, and a physical examination, which includes observing the condition of the pulse, abdomen, skin, nails, eyes and tongue.

Practitioners aim to teach people how to attain optimal health through a meaningful understanding of themselves and their dosha and by strengthening body, mind, and spirit through dosha specific health practices, foods, herbs, and other natural remedies.