



Unlock a Vital Key to Health

Learn how to balance biological terrain

It's widely recognized that modern medicine focuses primarily on relieving disease symptoms. Billions of dollars are spent researching diseases and treatments that manage, but don't really cure, those conditions. So it's little wonder people think of health primarily in terms of fighting disease. This viewpoint is strongly linked with Louis Pasteur's germ theory, which taught us that germs invade an otherwise healthy body and make it sick. The war against germs has become the model for health care in general—diseases are invaders, which must be fought and conquered.

Disease care is necessary, but it shouldn't be called health care. It is time to shift the focus away from disease and focus instead on health. It's time to look more closely at the way healthy people eat and live. It's time to place less emphasis on treating diseases and more emphasis on building the health of the person.

Returning to Traditional Wisdom

In our quest to do this, traditional systems of medicine, such as traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) and Ayurvedic medicine from India, can help us. Even the wisdom of traditional Western herbalism can come to our aid, because all traditional systems of medicine viewed health as the natural state of balance within the body. Disease was primarily seen as the result of an unhealthy diet and lifestyle that threw the body out of balance.

Traditional medicine used metaphorical models, such as the western four elements (air, water, fire and earth) or the Chinese five elements (wood, fire, water, earth and metal) to describe these imbalances. Herbs, diet and lifestyle changes were recommended, not to treat the disease directly, but rather to bring the person back to a healthy, balanced state.

Because of this, two people suffering from the same disease could receive completely different treatments in traditional medicine. This seems strange to those steeped in the Western medical model, but it's really easy to understand. The treatment isn't aimed at fighting the disease; it's aimed at correcting the underlying imbalances in the body that allowed the disease to occur. When these imbalances are corrected, the body does what it does naturally, it heals itself.

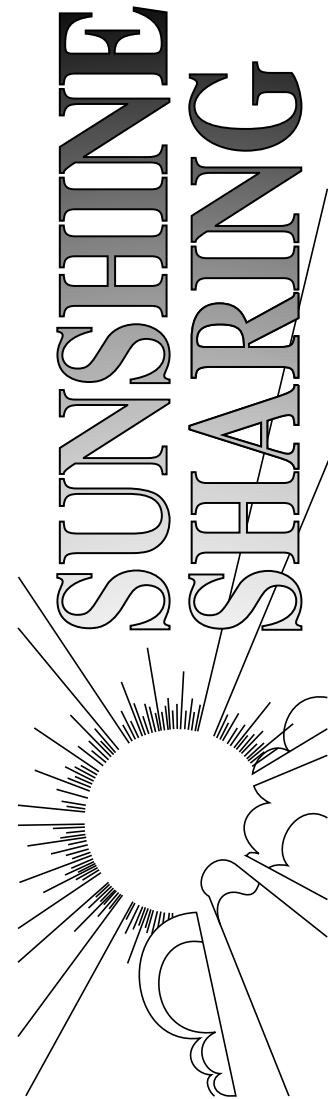
Contrast this with modern medicine, where a person may spend the rest of their life on medications to control high blood pressure or depression and one can start to see the wisdom in the traditional approach. It just requires us to unlearn our disease-care thinking and learn health-care thinking instead, which is what this issue of *Sunshine Sharing* will help you do by introducing you to the concept of biological terrain.

Understanding Biological Terrain

The concept of biological terrain is best understood by looking at agriculture and the process of growing healthy plants. Chemical agriculture is focused on what's directly happening to the plants. If the plants are being eaten by insects, then the insects must be destroyed with pesticides. If the plant is being choked out by weeds, the weeds must be killed with herbicides.

Many people mistakenly think that organic agriculture is only about using non-toxic pesticides and herbicides to achieve the same goal, but the real experts in the organic movement know that the key to healthy plants is healthy soil. Nature abhors weakness and insect pests and diseases attack weak plants. Improve the health of the plant by improving the health of the soil it grows in and the plant is naturally resistant to insects and disease.

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Your guide to better health the natural way.

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Important Notice

The information in *Sunshine Sharing* is for educational purposes only and should not be used to diagnose and treat diseases. If you have a health problem, we recommend you consult a competent health practitioner before embarking on any course of treatment.

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Balancing Biological Terrain

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There is even evidence to suggest that different weeds grow because of imbalances in the mineral composition of the soils. Improve the balance in the soil and the weeds are suppressed and the crops supported.

The soil is the biological terrain of the plant. You improve the health of the plant by balancing the health of the soil. This is analogous to the shift in focus we must make in our approach to our own health.

The body has an internal environment (blood and lymph) in which its cells live. Research has demonstrated that if the cellular environment is healthy, the cells will be healthy. Thus, if you can identify imbalances in the underlying biological terrain of the body and correct them, the entire body will return to a state of health. This means that multiple, seemingly different diseases, will automatically correct themselves when we focus on the health of the body's environment.

Mosquitoes and Swamps



Rudolf Virchow, one of the early researchers and advocates of Pasteur's model, is reported to have stated the following on his death bed, "If I could live my life over again, I would devote it to proving that germs seek their natural habitat—diseased tissue—

rather than being the cause of disease; [just as] mosquitoes seek stagnant water, but do not cause the water to become stagnant." [Food is Your Best Medicine, Henry G. Bieler, M.D., pg 40]

Spraying pesticides to kill the mosquitoes in the swamp is the same approach modern medicine takes when they fight infection. The microbes that are breeding in the unhealthy environment of the body are being killed, but the swampy internal environment of the body that allowed them to gain a foothold still remains. Working on balancing the biological terrain of the body would be analogous to draining the swamp, which would help the body indirectly to overcome the infection by changing the terrain of the body back to a healthy state.

Six Tissue States: A Model for Balance

Professional herbalist Matthew Wood helped to create a modern Western model of biological terrain that incorporates and simplifies many of the traditional approaches to this topic. It's a model of six imbalances in biological terrain, or six imbalanced tissue states. According to Wood, "The six tissue states represent simple excesses and deficiencies in three basic physiological factors."

The three factors in Wood's model are metabolic rate, tissue density and tissue tension or tone. Metabolic rate can become imbalanced by becoming hyperactive (hot) or underactive (cold). Wood labeled the hyperactive state *irritation* and the underactive state *depression*.

The second factor, tissue density, relates to the balance of minerals to fluids (water and fats). Tissues can become too damp,

resulting in congestion and swelling, or too dry, resulting in rigidity and brittleness. Wood calls the damp state *stagnation* and the dry state *atrophy*.

The final pair of imbalances relate to muscle tone. Too much tension in the muscles causes cramping or spasticity, which also reduces flow, movement and secretion. Too little tension in the muscles, an atonic or lax condition, causes a loss of tissue integrity and tone, plus excessive drainage and flow. Wood calls the tense state *constriction* and the atonic state *relaxation*.

Space doesn't permit an in depth look at all the applications of this idea, but here is a more detailed description of each of these six tissue states and examples of remedies that will correct these underlying imbalances in biological terrain. Once you are able to grasp this idea, you will become much more effective at using herbs and supplements because you will have a health focus rather than a disease focus. You will be learning how to restore balance to the person's health, rather than trying to fight a disease.

Irritation: Cooling Overheated Tissues

Irritation is the easiest of all tissue imbalances to recognize because it is the body's first response to all damage. Anytime the body suffers injury, tissues respond through a process called inflammation. In the case of infection, the body may also respond to the irritation with fever. So, fever and inflammation are the imbalances in biological terrain we are calling tissue irritation.



As the term in-flame-ation suggests, damaged tissues become hyper or overheated, because whatever is damaging the tissues is irritating them. It doesn't matter what the nature of the irritation is (pathogen, toxin or mechanical stress) the tissues go into a hyper state of function to discharge the irritant and repair the damage.

These irritated tissues feel hot to the touch and will also appear red. So, redness is also a sign of irritation, whether it is a bright red tongue or a flushed, red face. Swelling and pain are also associated with inflammation and the irritated tissue state. The pain associated with irritation is acute and typically feels sharp or stabbing.

The suffix *itis* is Latin for inflammation. So many disease names are simply Latin terms telling us where the inflammation or irritation is located. For example: tonsillitis (inflamed tonsils) appendicitis (inflamed appendix) or arthritis (inflamed joint).

Irritated tissues need to be cooled and soothed. Traditional herbal remedies for irritated tissues are often sour in taste, which is a possible sign of plants with high antioxidant properties. Burning is an oxidative process, so when tissues are burning (in-flame), antioxidants, which are also typically anti-inflammatory, are indicated. Here are some specific suggestions.

Thai Go is a powerful general antioxidant and anti-inflammatory blend. You can use it for any condition where there is excessive heat, tissue redness or acute pain to cool down the irritated tissues.

IF Relief is a great anti-inflammatory. It is particularly helpful for tissues that have been irritated by injury or surgery. **IF-C** is also an anti-inflammatory that is good for tissues that are irritated

primarily due to acute infection. **VS-C** is a cooling remedy, but better suited to more chronic infections. Other possible remedies for irritated tissues include **aloe vera** juice or gel, **Curcumin BP** and **licorice root**.

Depression: Stimulating Sluggish Activity

When we speak of tissue depression, we're not talking about feeling emotionally down. We're referring to a state where tissues are sluggish and not responding appropriately to irritation. The overall symptoms of tissue depression include a general feeling of tissue coolness and fatigue. Any part of the body that appears pale or excessively white and feels cool to the touch is depressed. So, a tired person, with a pale complexion and cool skin has a depressed biological terrain. Low grade irritation is sometimes present with tissue depression, but the tissue color is purplish or blackish (such as the color of a bruise) and there is still coolness and fatigue. In addition, all organs that are underactive, such as hypothyroid (low or depressed thyroid), are depressed organs.

To restore balance to the biological terrain depressed tissues must be stimulated or warmed. This is typically done with pungent or aromatic herbs, such as capsicum and ginger. All essential oils are also warming in the sense that they stimulate sluggish tissues back into activity.

Mood Elevator is a warming formula that helps to treat emotional depression, but does so by energizing and warming tissues, particularly in the digestive organs. **Trigger Immune** is also a warming remedy that helps to overcome general weakness and underactivity of the body. It is indicated when a person is tired, pale and feels depleted. Other possible remedies for tissue depression include **Capsicum, Garlic and Parsley** combination and **Tei Fu** essential oil and lotion.

Stagnation: Draining the Swamp

Just think of a swamp and you'll immediately have the intuitive understanding of this tissue condition. The tissues are bogged down with stagnant fluid creating a toxic environment around the cells. Fluid retention, swollen lymph nodes, congested lungs and sinuses and a sluggish digestive tract are all examples of stagnant conditions in the tissues.

A stagnant biological terrain was traditionally considered to be the underlying cause of many health problems, such as skin eruptive diseases like acne, rashes and eczema. It has also been traditionally linked with the development of growths like boils, uterine fibroids, cystic breasts and even tumors.

The Eclectic doctors in the Western herbal tradition called this tissue state torpor. They called the herbs that removed this stagnation *alteratives*. Alteratives have also been called blood purifiers. They are indicated whenever the body is damp, swollen, congested and toxic.

Traditional alterative formulas include **All Cell Detox** and **Enviro-Detox**. Both of these formulas can be used to help clear up stagnant, toxic conditions in the body. They also form the basis of cleaning programs, such as **CleanStart** and **Tiao He Cleanse**,

which are also great for clearing stagnation from the system. Use these detoxifying remedies whenever you feel dull, sluggish, tired and bogged down. Using these products to "drain the swamp," can help to clear such diverse problems as PMS, frequent headaches, skin eruptive diseases, chronic low grade infections, frequent bloating and indigestion and much more.

Atrophy: Nourishing Weakened Tissues

The opposite condition to stagnation, atrophy often occurs with increasing frequency as people age. The bodies of young children tend to be moist, supple and very flexible, but as people age, they become increasingly dry, withered and stiff. The skin becomes increasingly dry and wrinkled, joints become painful and inflexible due to a lack of lubrication and mobility and all parts of the body begin to lose fluidity and function.

This state, which we call atrophy, isn't due to just a lack of water, although dehydration can be a factor that contributes to atrophy. It's also due to a lack of lubricating healthy fats and fat soluble vitamins, as well as increasing imbalances in metabolism due to the disrupted glandular functions that are part of what is now called Metabolic Syndrome.

In traditional cultures, special tonic herbs were given to the elderly to help combat the aging process. Herbs like **ginseng, astragalus** and **cordyceps** were employed to help slow these processes. Formulas which help to restore moisture and suppleness to the body include **Nervous Fatigue Formula**, which helps combat chronic stress and burn-out, and **Spleen Activator**, which improves digestion and helps counteract wasting

HY-C is a very specific Chinese formula for dryness. It is indicated where the skin, eyes and mouth are dry. There is frequent thirst, but also frequent urination and the inability to hold moisture in the tissues. This formula also helps with the blood sugar imbalances involved in Metabolic Syndrome.

A more modern approach is to use essential fatty acids like **Super Omega-3** and fat soluble vitamin supplements like **Vitamin A&D, Vitamin D3** and **Krill Oil with K-2**. These are very valuable remedies for counteracting this increasing tendency to atrophy.

Constriction: Relaxing Tension

Constriction refers to an excess of tension or tone of muscles. The obvious example of this is muscle cramps or spasms, but there are many other conditions caused by the tissue state of constriction. Constriction inhibits flow, so high blood pressure is a sign of constriction in the arteries. Sharp, shooting pains, chronic stiffness and high anxiety are also associated with constriction.

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Additional Help and Information

For more information about how to rebuild health by balancing biological terrain contact the person who gave you this newsletter. You can also consult the following resources:

The Comprehensive Guide to Nature's Sunshine Products, 6th edition by Steven Horne and Kimberly Balas

The Practice of Traditional Western Herbalism: Basic Doctrine, Energetics, and Classification by **Matthew Wood**

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Maintaining the Balance of Health

The idea that balance is the key to health is a foundational principle in all traditional systems of herbal medicine, including Ayurveda, traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) and even traditional Western herbalism. Learning to identify how the body is out of balance and what we can do to restore balance is a key to learning how to recover health.

Part of this balance is learning how to work with the internal environment or biological terrain of the body. In this issue of *Sunshine Sharing* we discuss the importance of biological terrain and a model of six tissue imbalances you can easily correct with herbs and supplements.

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By blocking flow and movement, constriction can create conditions that are jerky, sudden, unpredictable, irregular and alternating; something the Chinese call “wind” disorders. These include problems like alternating diarrhea and constipation or alternating chills and fever.

Antispasmodic herbs and magnesium are the primary remedies for constriction. Good antispasmodics include **lobelia**, which has sometimes been called the intelligent herb because it works on so many different conditions, and **kava kava**, which promotes muscle relaxation and improved mood. There is also a formula of antispasmodic herbs called **Cramp Relief. Magnesium Complex** is another helpful remedy for any condition where there are tense muscles.

Relaxation: Toning Tissue to Stop Leakage

The final tissue state is relaxation, a loose or atonic state of the tissues, which is characterized by an excess flow of fluids. Copious discharges of urine, mucus or sweat, as well as bleeding and watery diarrhea are all signs of an overly relaxed biological terrain. Leaky gut syndrome, varicose veins and hemorrhoids are also examples of tissue relaxation.

Relaxation is an indication for astringents such as **bayberry rootbark** or **white oak bark**. **Calcium, Citrus Bioflavonoids with Vitamin C** and **Ionic Minerals with Açai** are also remedies that help balance tissue relaxation.

Learning to identify these imbalances in a person’s body is a vital key to learning how to select the right herbal remedies and supplements to restore a person’s health. Start observing these states in others and experimenting with various remedies to experience the effectiveness of this approach for yourself.