

NATURAL HEALTH NEWS: YOUR KEY TO A HEALTHIER YOU!

Fall 2009

On motherhood

Dr Julie Zepp Rutledge ND

What a trip! Who would have thought (aside from all of you mothers and fathers out there!) that you could learn so much from such a little itty bitty being?! I've been through post graduate studies in medicine (naturopathic), I've taken countless seminars and CE courses. I've been to hundreds of hours of various types of therapy—from counseling to various energetic therapies. And despite all of the learning I've done in the last 34 years, nothing has compared to the learning I've done in the last 3 months since the birth of my daughter!

And my little teacher is quietly and innocently sleeping peacefully in the next room—likely completely unaware of the enormity of who she is and what she has already accomplished in her short life.

She has brought her parents so much closer together, as her dad and I have had to sit down and put our heads together in order to figure out what she is trying to tell us. I look at him with even more loving eyes now, as I see the gentleness with which he cares for his little girl. She has opened my heart up so wide—not only to her but to my parents (who did this for me!), each and every person we meet on the paths while we walk, the people we interact with on our trips to the farmer's market—anyone we talk to and meet.

She is holding me to a higher standard of living—everything I do is modelled for her and as such I try to ensure that I choose my words carefully, I try to remain free of judgment, I live with an open loving heart, I practice patience, I ensure that what I am eating are foods I want her to be nourishing herself with one day. We go outside on little adventures—rain or shine. We watch the birds, we enjoy the changing colors of the seasons, we notice the blades of grass moving in the wind. It is a lesson in slowing down, being mindful and aware—as each of my actions is being picked up by her as she is curious and alert and observing everything we do. She has taught me to ask for help. This is a big one—I've had to put into practice something that I often preach: Ask for help—it's ok—we can't

do it all on our own. This humbling knowledge, that I can't do it on my own, was a big lesson for me. I have had to turn to my husband countless times to “take over” when I just need a nap. Or to my parents for childcare so I could go for a swim and just take a time out.

If my mind ever starts to question what I am doing that is “productive”, as I sit on the floor singing Baby Beluga to her for the 5th time to make her smile, I can quickly



*"Thy bounty shines in autumn unconfined
And spreads a common feast for all that live."*

- James Thomson

move past that thought—knowing there is **nothing** more productive than nurturing a child, another human life, as they grow and learn and bring their gifts to the world.

I know the learning she has in store for me has only just begun.☀



Inside this issue:

<i>On motherhood</i>	1
<i>Knee injuries</i>	2
<i>Recipe: African Stew</i>	3
<i>Having an impact</i>	4
<i>Post Partum Depression</i>	4
<i>Special Event notice</i>	6

Special points of interest:

*Please welcome
new receptionist
Megan Kaytor
to our team!*

Knee injuries

Submitted by Margaret Levett BSC PT on behalf of The Canadian Physiotherapy Association

Anyone can be a victim of a knee injury; whether you are a professional athlete, a weekend fitness buff or someone just busy carrying out your day-to-day activities. The knee joint is unique in that it carries body weight at the same time as it provides flexibility and mobility. It is formed by the femur, the tibia and the patella and held together by muscles, ligaments and tendons. This construction predisposes the joint to risk of injury from sudden movement and repeated wear and tear.

WHAT CAUSES KNEE INJURIES?

- **Ligament Sprains** – ligaments are bands of strong tissue that stabilize the knee joint together. Overstretching can cause the ligament fibre to tear and bleed into the surrounding tissues, causing pain, swelling and a feeling of ‘giving way’. Severe tears may require surgery.
- **Cartilage Tears** – cartilage also helps stabilize and protect the knee joint. Pressure from twisting and turning during weight-bearing exercise like squash may tear the cartilage, causing pain, swelling and locking of the knee joint.
- **Tendon Strains** – tendons are cord-like bands that connect muscle to bone. The patellar tendon connects the kneecap (patella) to the tibia (shin). Patellar tendinitis or ‘jumper’s knee’ is inflammation of the patellar tendon. This is an overuse injury commonly caused by repeated jumping, as in basketball.
- **Patello-Femoral Syndrome** – excessive friction between the surface of the patello-femoral joint (kneecap) and the femur (thigh) can result in knee pain. It may have a number of causes and

should be assessed by your physiotherapist.

Knee injuries can be caused by trauma, such as an accident or a fall, or even by a sudden increase in your daily activities. Other injuries develop over time, from factors including structural problems within the joint itself, incorrect athletic training methods or technique, and poor equipment.

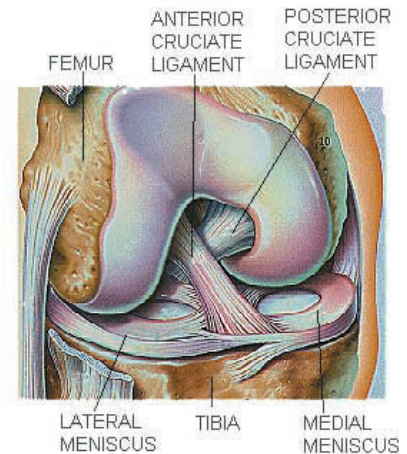
- **Footwear** – a new pair of athletic shoes or a change to heels instead of flats can affect the way you walk and, in turn, can place stress on the muscles and tendons around the knee joint.
- **Frequency and intensity of a regular activity** – Any change such as jogging or playing tennis on a different surface can affect the knee joint. For example, simply moving the activity from a soft track or clay court to a hard surface such as a road or hard court can add stress to the knee joint and increases the risk of injury.
- **Compensation for an injury elsewhere.** A blister on your foot, for example, may cause you to change the way you step to minimize the pain, thus placing a strain on the knee.

TREATING KNEE PAIN

Physiotherapists work closely with doctors, surgeons and sports specialists to provide effective care and assist recovery. A physiotherapist will assess your knee to determine the source of the problem and to develop an individual treatment program.

Depending upon the type and degree of injury, the program may include:

- Applying ice to control swelling;
- Stretching exercises to regain flexibility around the joint. The most common stretches are for the



hamstring, quadriceps, gastrocnemius (calf), iliotibial band and groin (hip adductor), hip flexors and buttocks; and

- **Strength training to build up the muscle.** If you are involved in organized athletics, the physiotherapist may also want to work with your coach to ensure a safe return to your sport. Strengthening exercises are specific to the injury, but would include the quads, hamstrings; hip adductors and abductor muscles.

RETURNING TO ACTIVITY

A physiotherapist can provide a program to help prevent re-injury as you return to normal activities. A key element of that program is to return to your regular activity levels gradually. Don’t try to do too much too soon! After a break in routine – whether as a result of an illness or accident, the seasonal nature of the activity or even a holiday – you can’t just jump back in at full speed. Instead, build up gradually to your previous level of activity.

Another element of the rehabilitation program is to retrain balance and coordination. A knee injury involves more than just stress and strain to the soft tissue. It also af-

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

fects the tiny receptors in the muscles, ligaments and tendons that 'tell' you where your knee is positioned. These receptors send signals to correct balance or shift weight. When they're damaged, the messages are interrupted and you are more likely to stumble and/or turn an ankle. Your physiotherapist will provide you with an exercise program that will include retraining the receptors as you strengthen the muscles strength around the damaged tissues.

The Canadian Physiotherapy Association (CPA) recommends the following **S.M.A.R.T.** tips (Stretch, Move, Add it up, Reduce strain, Talk to a physiotherapist) to prevent knee injuries:

- **Stretch** – before, during and after activity. Stretching – as a warm-up, as a break during re-

petitive movements and as a cool-down – helps you to move easily, keeps your muscles flexible and relaxed, your joints mobile and relieves tension and strain.

- **Move** – today for tomorrow. Get moving. Keep moving. Stay moving. Through the seasons. Through life. Maintain good general fitness and lower body strength.

- **Add it up** – an hour is power. To gain mobility, plan activities throughout your day that keep you moving for periods of at least 10 minutes. To maintain your mobility, make every movement count. Add up all you do in a day and aim for a minimum of 60 minutes of movement every day.

- **Reduce strain** – vary activities and use proper biomechanics to achieve a good balance of muscle development. For example, where possible, don't twist your trunk first when turning— instead point your

feet in the direction that you want to go to and let your body follow.

- **Talk to a physiotherapist** – physiotherapists are healthcare professionals who help people of all ages and lifestyles gain and maintain their desired level of active living and physical mobility. With their applied knowledge and understanding of the human body in action, physiotherapists are able to help you to increase your mobility, relieve pain, build strength and improve balance and cardiovascular function. Physiotherapists not only treat injuries, they also teach you how to prevent the onset of pain or injury that can limit your activity.

For more information, please visit www.physiotherapy.ca ☀

African stew

By Julie Zepp Rutledge ND

This is one of my favorite dishes. It is delicious and so easy to make! I have often thrown all of the ingredients in my slow cooker on low for 3-4 hours (with the nut butter mixture added in the last hour) for a wonderful meal to come home to.

Ingredients:

- 1 chopped onion
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- 2 diced yams
- 1 cup cooked chickpeas
- ½ cup brown rice
- 2 cup chopped kale
- ½ lemon- juiced
- 4 cup vegetable stock (reserve 1 cup)
- ¼ - ½ cup of nut butter

Directions:

In a large pot, on medium heat, saute onion and garlic in oil or stock. Add remaining ingredients, except lemon juice, nut butter and 1 cup stock. Bring to a boil. Blend last 3 ingredients together and add to pot. Cover and simmer 45 minutes.☀

Soups and Stews are wonderful fall foods— These have the benefit of releasing nourishment easily into our system and are particularly helpful for those with weak digestive systems. They are unlikely to congest our system because they are already so well digested by cooking.

Because they release nourishment so easily, this allows for our energy to be conserved for helping keep us warm during the colder seasons.

Having an impact

By Warren Barry RMT

I have always said that it is the small things that make the biggest difference. Or in this case, it's the small things that have the biggest impact. Sometimes we always seem to look for the big things, or wait until we "get it right", or wait until we put all the pieces together before we do something for someone. Why not try and do something small for someone today, or not even plan it. A random act of kindness. How about flashing an honest smile at someone you do not know, open a door for someone, say hi and have a conversation with a homeless person. These small things, which are free by the way, can have a huge impact on someone else, and really brighten up their day, and yours too! My personal favourite which I do quite often is to pay for a coffee (or whatever they are having), for the person behind me in line at Tim Horton's or Starbucks. (I am a coffee lover). I do not say anything to the person behind me,

I just get the opportunity to walk out and feel good that I have done a random act of kindness for someone else. These small things that we do can create quite a ripple effect that we will never know about. The smile you gave someone can brighten up their day, which in turn they can pass on to others around them, and just like the shampoo commercial, and so on, and so on, and so on. One small simple thing can make the difference.

So, in saying that, I am going to challenge all of you to do one small thing everyday for the next week (and longer I hope), after you get this newsletter to do one small thing for someone else. Get creative and really let yourself have some fun with it, and feel good about doing it. It's a win-win. Some idea's, including the ones mentioned above are: calling a friend or family member you haven't talked to in a while, sending flowers to a loved one, send some-

one a card or e-card, just because, letting someone in your lane while driving, cut your neighbours lawn, visit an old folks home and talk to someone who could use the company, make someone laugh, or send an inspirational e-mail. These are only ideas, let your mind go and see what else you can do.

You will be amazed by the impact that you can have on someone's day, or their life, by doing the small, simple things. And just when you need it most, that will be the time when someone does it for you. You always get what you give!

I would love to hear of the idea's that you have come up with to make someone's day, and if you would like to share, please send me your idea's to warren.barry@reginarehab.com

I wish all of you a wonderful fall season, and I will check back in with you in our Winter Newsletter. Did I just say Winter? Sorry! ☀

If you ever think that you are too small to have an impact, try going to bed with a mosquito in the room.

~ Anita Roddick

Postpartum depression

By Julie Zepp Rutledge ND

This summer, I had the honor of being contacted by a woman who was assisting in organizing a very prestigious event, here in Regina, taking place early this fall. She wondered if I might be interested in taking part in a panel discussion on Postpartum Depression (PPD) taking place during the *Unmasking Postpartum Depression Conference*

(for details please see page 6 of this newsletter). As I am always interested in being a spokesperson for Naturopathic Medicine's role in health care—I was naturally inclined to want to participate. Enjoying working with expecting and new mothers has always been a joy for me and was added incentive for my participation. More than

anything, being a new mother and huge advocate of natural medicine myself, I was aware of the important role Naturopathic Medicine can play in preventing and treating PPD, and my commitment to taking part in the conference was confirmed. Thankfully, PPD is not

(Continued on page 5)

Postpartum depression

(Continued from page 4)

something I have had to work through, though there have been numerous times that I have been able to see how and why it might develop in first-time-moms with their new babies.

Postpartum depression affects women from all walks of life. Left undiagnosed and untreated, the condition profoundly affects the mother's mental and emotional state, as well as her relationship with her newborn child, and the rest of her family.

The exact cause is unknown but is likely a combination of factors. As humans we are affected by absolutely everything—and all must be considered when looking for the root cause of a condition. PPD's biggest risk factor seems to be the hormone changes that occur after birth, which can affect how the brain functions. Women with a past history of depression, even times of just "feeling low", a family history of depression, or stressful life events (and a lack of ability to cope with them) are more likely to develop postpartum depression.

About 1 of every 10 women will develop serious depression during the first year after birth, more often in the first few months. Symptoms include:

- Feeling like a failure as a mother
- Feelings of panic
- Loss of appetite
- Fear that you will hurt yourself or your baby
- Feeling guilty
- Feelings of anxiousness and insecurity
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Crying a lot
- Feeling like you are not normal or real anymore

-Difficulty sleeping – you can't sleep, even when the baby is sleeping

-Angry: feeling like you might explode

-Feeling lonely

-Can't make decisions

-Inability to concentrate or focus

-Thinking the baby might be better off without you

Naturopathic perspective on PPD treatment:

Nutrition:

A healthy diet pre-pregnancy, during pregnancy and postpartum are essential for the prevention of PPD, and postpartum proper nutrition is used to help treat PPD. Hormone and neurotransmitter (the chemical messengers in our brains) balance in our bodies relies on proper nutrition. A whole foods diet that includes lots of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and high quality protein is essential for the proper functioning of these messengers.

Often new moms are overwhelmed and cannot conceive of, or find the time to cook healthy meals. This is where preparation comes in—developing healthy eating habits before the baby comes ensures that once your baby arrives, these habits are so engrained in your day you naturally reach for an apple over a chocolate bar. It is also imperative to enlist the help of others. If *anyone*: a friend, relative or co-worker ask if there is anything they can do to help—say YES! and ask for a stew or a soup. I made it through my first few months with a regular supply of whole grain Red River Cereal muffins arriving weekly from my mom! Taking a multivitamin every day is an easy way to provide some of the basic requirements for vitamins and minerals. I always recommend a top quality pre-natal vitamin taken during pregnancy be taken through the year following the birth. An extra B

complex, usually 50 to 100 mg, is helpful to support the adrenal glands. Pregnancy and postpartum are stressful times in a woman's life and supporting the adrenals during this time helps avoid the feelings of burn out that worsen the symptoms of depression.

Also critical is taking essential fatty acids (EFAs). These are key to helping with mood balance. Taken with a Vitamin D supplement, essential fatty acids found in flax, hemp and fish oil are great for regulating mood. It is important when purchasing a fish oil supplement that you look for a high quality, pharmaceutical grade oil that is guaranteed free from heavy metals. Cheaper brands of fish oils are often contaminated with toxins such as mercury.

There are also a variety of natural anti-depressant herbs and nutrients that can be prescribed by a knowledgeable health care provider in order to assist with depression. It is important to consult with a licensed practitioner before taking anything herbal if breastfeeding.

Understanding and support:

The naturopathic model of medicine does not judge. Women who are depressed after having a baby feel like their world has come to an end and often feel guilty and ashamed. It is vital for society and mom to realize that this condition is not her fault and it does not make her a bad mother or person. Understanding and acceptance by family and friends is essential for her to begin to believe in herself again, giving her the strength she needs to seek help.

Our society and culture have sadly moved away from the strong community model that we have had in the past and that exists in other cultures around the world. There

(Continued on page 6)

Postpartum depression

(Continued from page 5)

is an expression that says “It takes a community to raise a child” - and it truly does! Our culture has isolated us so that often the job of raising a child falls solely on the mother’s shoulders, with dad at work, or sometimes not there at all; grandparents living in other cities and conditioning that prevents us from asking for help from friends. It is vital to break the conditioning, ask for help and seek out other resources especially professional help to cope with the depression and begin recovery. Support groups are very helpful, as often the best understanding comes from those who have experienced the condition.

Rest and relaxation:

Sleep is critical in health and healing. Most women with postpartum depression have difficulty sleeping. We all know how difficult it is to function and think clearly without sufficient rest. Without sleep, we

aren’t able to repair our bodies which leads to increased fatigue, susceptibility to infection, moodiness and difficulty with decision making. If a new mom is having difficulty with sleep it is imperative to focus on restoring sound sleep. This may be done through supplementation with magnesium glycinate, a calcium-magnesium supplement or other natural sleep aids recommended by a health care provider; meditation, warm baths—even having a grandparent sleep over for a middle of the night feeding.

Exercise:

Physical exercise improves brain function and sense of well-being and has been shown to help alleviate the symptoms of all types of mood disorders. It is also beneficial for new moms who might also be struggling with their changed body, to help them regain self-confidence.

Even more beneficial is exercise that

takes place outdoors, where the added benefits of fresh air, sunshine and being close to nature help rebalance the mood.

Spirituality:

It is important to understand where we draw our strength from—this might be in a walk in the fresh air, through painting, journaling, yoga, prayer or meditation. Knowing what brings us joy helps us to ground us in tough times.

These strategies represent only a very brief overview of PPD and naturopathic care. As with any condition, naturopathic medicine looks to treat the individual rather than the condition or disease state and in so doing takes into consideration all the many aspects of a person and thereby increasing the likelihood of a return to health on all levels of being. ☼

“Real Pain - Real People - Real Hope: Unmasking Postpartum Depression” Conference September 29th - October 1st 2009, Delta Hotel, Regina, SK

September 29th, 2009 - Margaret Trudeau—Guest Speaker

After seeking medical treatment for her bipolar condition, Margaret Trudeau now has a balanced and happy life. Today she advocates strongly on mental health issues to help people overcome the stigma of mental illness that often prevents sufferers from getting help.

September 30th and October 1st, 2009 - 2-day conference with presentations from leading specialists on the subject and concluding with a Call-for-Action and panel discussion.

Register on-line at www.entgrp.ca/unmaskingppd or call 306-584-3556 for more information Presented by CNT Management Group and the Smiling Mask Team (www.thesmilingmask.com). Click to view event poster.

“The purpose of The Smiling Mask is to create awareness, understanding, and acceptance of post partum difficulties. To bring peace and validation to mothers by engaging and empowering families, and communities in the life changing and natural experience of parenthood.”