DIGESTIVE SYSTEM

LESSON 6



Self-Reliance in Health Course

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For the next couple of lessons, I would like to go through the different "rooms' in the body home that we are building. I feel it is important to understand the way our body systems work so we can know how to build and strengthen those areas, as well as help in determining a possible root cause of a condition and how to aid the body in healing – if that be the Lord's will.

The digestive system is the next place to focus on healing, cleansing, strengthening, and building because this is the place for eliminating toxins from the body. If this system is not properly eliminating, a myriad of complications in the body can manifest in all kinds of symptoms and mystery illness.

The purpose of the digestive system is to take in food for the assimilation of nutrients, so the body has fuel and building blocks with which to function and then remove all the waste. The digestive tract, which goes from the mouth to the anus is lined with epidermis which protects us from pathogens (harmful viruses, bacterial and other "invaders"). The digestive system can be broken down into the following parts:

- Ingestion (mouth, pharynx, esophagus)
- Digestion (stomach)
- Absorption (small intestine)
- Elimination (large intestine, rectum, anus)

INGESTION

The Mouth

There is a lot going on in the mouth. It is the first line of defense in the immune system, where the saliva can kill off certain pathogens. The saliva also starts the digestive processes of breaking down food, and lubrication for passage down the esophagus. The tongue contains taste buds which are the pleasure center for tasting our food, remember how the Lord wants us to enjoy the creations he has blessed us with.

"It was pointed out to him (Adam), as it has been pointed out to you, that there are many good fruits to be plucked, to be eaten, to be enjoyed. We believe in enjoying good food. We think that these good things are given us of God. We believe in getting all the enjoyment out of eating that we can; and, therefore, we should avoid gluttony, and we should avoid all extremes in all our habits of eating."

Jesus the Christ by James E. Talmage, chapter 3

These "tastes" send messages to stimulate or support other body systems depending on the specific taste: salty, sour, bitter, sweet, and savory.

Conditions in the Mouth

Canker/Mouth Sores also known as mouth ulcers, that are formed because of inflammation - not infection. They can appear anywhere in the mouth; tongue, lips, cheeks,

gums, etc. Canker sores are small, white swellings that are painful and can also burn or tingle. They last anywhere from four to twenty days and can be triggered by a number of reasons including, dental work, accidental biting or injury, stress, fatigue, hormone imbalance, allergies, viral infection or abnormal immune response. The most common causes are stress and allergies. The best prevention would be to have a clean diet (Lesson 1) and a healthy gut (Lesson 2).

- Avoid sugar, refined and processed foods, chewing gum, mouthwash, citrus fruits, or any other trigger foods.
- Probiotic foods such as yogurt, kefir, and rejuvalec.
- Gargle with one of the following, swishing specifically on the sore; raspberry leaf tea, sage leaf tea, plantain tea, or witch hazel.
- Aloe vera gel from a fresh aloe leaf.
- Raw honey applied to the sore.
- Four Thieves essential oil; can apply directly to the sore (will sting) or add 6 drops to 1 cup of water and swish around. (recipe)
- Gum and Tooth powder (recipe)
- Herbal Detox formula (recipe)
- Canker Sore Gel: 1 tsp each of the following tinctures - echinacea, Oregon grape root (or goldenseal), calendula, grapefruit seed extract. Mix with 1 Tbsp of aloe vera in a small jar with a sealing lid. Place a small amount of the gel on a cotton swab or gauze and apply to sore. This can be used several times a day up to hourly. (Recipe comes from *The Herbal Drugstore*)
- Blood cleansing and purifying herbs can help to cleanse the bloodstream and decrease infection; goldenseal* - tincture mixed with water and swished, apply directly, burdock, red clover, Blood Purifying blend (recipe).

Herbs

Onions and/or garlic
Calendula
Chamomile
Cloves
Ginkgo - strong herbal infusion applied to sore
Gotu Kola - tea or rinse
Horsetail
Licorice - apply powder right to canker
Acacia (Mimosa tree) gum juice

Essential Oils

Any of these essential oils can be used as a mouthwash by placing a couple of drops into a glass of water, swish and spit. They can also be applied directly to the mouth sore, Four Thieves is my favorite for this purpose.

Melaleuca (Tea Tree)

Clove
Melissa
Thyme
Lavender
German and Roman chamomile
Myrrh
Oregano
Sage
Wintergreen

Cold Sores are a viral infection caused by the herpes simplex virus 1 that resides in nerve endings. Many people harbor this virus but it only "surfaces" when over stressed, immune system compromised, overexposure to the sun and wind and for women, menstruation. It manifests as a tingling in the affected area which can swell to painful blisters that can cluster around the mouth and lips and even on the nose. The blister will ooze and crack and eventually crust over. They can last anywhere from four days to three weeks. The best prevention for a cold sore outbreak is to keep the body in a healthy condition by eating nutritious food (Lesson 1), building the immune system (Lesson 5), and practice stress relief techniques (Lesson 10).

- Because of how contagious the virus is, be mindful of what you touch to your mouth and always wash your hands after touching sores.
- Consume probiotic rich foods(Lesson 2)
- Apple, cranberry, grape, pear, prune, and strawberry juice.
- Relax and practice stress relieving remedies (Lesson 10).
- Dr. Christopher's X-ceptic Formula, apply directly to sores (purchase or recipe below).
- Raw honey, applied directly to sores and taken internally.
- Kloss's Liniment (recipe)
- Cold Sore Balm (recipe)
- Pain Salve (recipe), or Dr. Christopher's Cayenne Heat Ointment
- Dr. Christopher's Plague remedy (recipe)

Herbs

Lemon balm, poultice over sore or apply tea and drink it.
Garlic or ginger juice applied to the sore and taken internally.
Aloe Vera
St. John's wort (herbal oil topically or tea both topical and drink)
Red clover
Echinacea
Goldenseal (avoid if pregnant or nursing)
Myrrh (tincture or essential oil applied topically)
Support the nervous system with nervine herbs (Lesson 10)
Anti-Viral herbs (Lesson 5)

Essential Oils
Apply at the first sign of tingling and continue applying until gone.

Bergamot
Eucalyptus
Tea tree (Melaleuca)
Lavender
Lemon
Melissa
Peppermint
Thieves or antiviral blend of your choice

Tooth and Gum Care

- Keep teeth clean by brushing and flossing every day.
- Swish mouth with water every time you eat something or drink something that is not water.
- Stay away from sugar and processed foods and consume a whole foods diet.

Tooth decay can have several causes, including diet, heredity, infection, mechanical problems and endocrine disorders, or severe illness as a baby while teeth were developing.

- Four Thieves essential oil, brush teeth, swish with it in water, place directly on area of concern.
- Dr. Christopher's Herbal Calcium formula, take every morning.
- If there is a cavity or tooth ache and you cannot get immediate dental care, pack the tooth with tooth powder regularly until you can get help.

Gum Issues including receding gums.

- Comfrey or plantain, chew up and place between lip and gum.
- Gum formula; ½ part slippery elm, ¼ part white oak powder, ¼ part comfrey – make a paste and apply to gums or use Gum and Tooth Powder (*recipe*).

Gum Infection of any kind is referred to as gingivitis. If infection continues untreated it may lead to periodontitis, which involves not only the gum tissue but also the teeth supporting bone.

- Dr. Christopher's X-ceptic formula (recipe), swish around teeth 3-4 minutes after teeth have been brushed and flossed.
- Gum and Tooth Powder (recipe)

Tooth and Gum Pain

- Essential oils: Four Thieves, clove
- Herbs: Tarragon (chew on leaf for temporary numbing), spilanthes (numbing)

- Gum and Tooth powder, add a little water to form a paste and pack area of concern.
- Follow pain relief remedies from Lesson 10.

The Esophagus

After the mouth does its job of starting the food breakdown process it moves through the esophagus and on to the stomach.

Conditions in the Esophagus

Heartburn often occurs when hydrochloric acid, which is used by the stomach to digest food, backs up into the esophagus, causing sensitive tissues to become irritated. Causes include obesity, overeating, gallbladder problems, stress, allergies, enzyme deficiencies, emotional issues, pharmaceutical side effects, and hiatal hernia to name a few. Food triggers include but are not limited to alcohol, caffeine, chocolate, citrus fruits and products, fats and fatty or fried foods, spicy foods, tomato-based foods, processed food, sugar, rich foods such as cheese, and desserts.

Some prevention measures include chewing food well and slowly, don't eat three hours before bedtime and do not overeat. If overweight, weight loss may be all that is needed to remove symptoms. Avoid trigger foods.

Foods

Papaya, including papaya seeds
Raw vegetables, include more into the diet
Cabbage juice and salad greens

Herbs

Aloe vera juice
Catnip
Fennel seed (avoid when pregnant)
Ginger
Marshmallow root, soothes and heals dry and irritated linings, best used as a cold tea.
Chamomile, aids in digestions, soothes and relieves pain.
Calendula, soothes and heals digestive tract and mucosal linings.
Cardamom, eliminates gas
Dill, soothes digestive tract (avoid if pregnant)
Dandelion leaf
Heartburn Tea (recipe)
Gut Soother Blend (recipe)

DIGESTION

The Stomach

The stomach is where actual digestion takes place. Mucus lines the stomach to protect it from the acid. This acid helps break down the food even more and kills pathogens that got past the first few lines of immune defense (Lesson 5).

Conditions in the Stomach

Nausea/Upset Tummy can be a symptom of pregnancy, anxiety, motion sickness, side effect of pharmaceuticals, eating fatty meals, food poisoning, harmful bacteria, etc.

Herbs

- Peppermint
- Fennel
- Ginger
- Catnip
- Chamomile

Herbal Formulas

- Heal All/Sick Syrup (recipe)
- Kiddie Calm (recipe)
- Dr. Christopher's Stomach Comfort Formula

Essential Oils

Massage onto abdomen with a carrier oil and/or diffuse in the air.Peppermint/spearmint

- Ginger
- Lavender
- Fennel
- Oregano
- Thyme
- Anise seed
- Frankincense
- Marjoram
- Rosemary
- Juniper
- Pine
- Citrus oils
- Black pepper
- Tarragon
- Digestive blend

Ulcers are raw sores in the upper gastrointestinal tract that can have many causes including excess stomach acid, smoking, alcohol, coffee, stress, certain drugs like aspirin and anti-inflammatories, heredity, food allergies, and lack of certain nutrients from poor eating habits. Symptoms include chronic pain in the stomach that feels deep, burning, aching, and gnawing. Pain may ease right after eating but comes right back and increases when stressed or after drinking coffee or alcohol. Other symptoms include blood in the stool, recurrent upper abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, loss of energy, lower back pain, headaches, choking sensation, and itching.

- Striving to deal with and avoid stress where possible and having good nutrition and gut health can prevent ulcers from forming.
- Blackstrap molasses
- Consume whole foods and clean up the diet if necessary (Lesson 1).
- Avoid sugar, processed food, fried food, black tea, coffee, chocolate, animal fats, carbonated drink, alcohol, and any trigger foods.
- Anti-Ulcer Fruit Cocktail (recipe)
- Stomach Soothing Tea (recipe)
- Heartburn Tea (recipe)
- Stress-Relief Tea for mind and ulcer healing: 3 parts milky green top oats, 1 part licorice root, 1 part marshmallow, 1 part purslane or chickweed.
- Incorporate stress relieving techniques (Lesson 10).
- Eating frequent, small meals of softer foods can ease the pain.
- Fresh cabbage juice, two or three times a day. Drink immediately after juicing.
- Dr. Christopher's Soothing Digestion formula

Healing Foods

Bananas
Dark green leafy vegetables
Red pepper
Pineapple
Blueberries
Cabbage
Cultured foods

Herbs

Aloe Vera
Calendula
Chamomile
Garlic
Ginger
Licorice
Marshmallow root
Purslane
Plantain

Essential Oils

Apply over the stomach with a hot compress, massage oil and/or add to bath water.

- Frankincense
- Chamomile
- Myrrh
- Bergamot
- Cinnamon Bark
- Clove
- Lemon
- Oregano
- Rose
- Thyme
- Vetiver

Blend 1 – 3 drops orange, 2 drops fennel, 2 drops carrot seed in 1 tsp carrier oil
Blend 2 – 5 drops spearmint, 5 drops pine, 5 drops rosemary in 2 Tbsp carrier oil
Blend 3 – 6 drops each; orange, tangerine, spearmint in 1 tsp carrier oil
Blend 4 – 15 drops cedarwood, 10 drops lemon, 5 drops peppermint in 2 oz carrier oil

ABSORPTION/ELIMINATION

The Gut

We have talked a lot about gut health and here we are at the body system that is considered "the gut". It consists of the small and large intestines, as well as most of the friendly bacteria discussed in Lesson 2 on gut health. 75% of the immune system resides here, mostly in the small intestine. This area is considered the microbiome. These are some of the jobs these bacteria do in exchange for food and a home:

- Help the body metabolize foods.
- Feed the cells of the intestinal walls.
- Make vitamins B and K.
- Help maintain the mucus coating of the intestinal lining.
- Compete for living space with pathogenic bacteria, which inhibits their growth.
- Prevent infection, they are the security guards of the body.

<u>The Small Intestine</u> (Absorption)

The largest collection of lymph tissue, which is part of the immune system is in the small intestine, where all the nutrients from food is absorbed into the body through the lymph and blood.

<u>The Large Intestine</u> (Elimination)

Continues to absorb electrolytes and water to form a solid piece of waste called feces, which is then excreted through the anus. The waste consists mainly of food residue, dead

cells, dead bacteria and viruses, and inorganic substances. This is also the place where most of the friendly bacteria in the body live.

Conditions in the Colon

Diarrhea is an increase in the volume of wateriness of stool or increase in frequency of bowel movements. Symptoms include cramping, vomiting and gas. Main causes are food poisoning or pathogenic virus or bacteria. Can also be from a chronic condition such as food sensitivities, anxiety, inflammatory bowel issues, or irregular eating habits.

- #1 rule is to stay hydrated and consume a lot of electrolytes while the body is working on the problem. Consume mostly liquids as food intake.
- Bone broth (Lesson 2)
- Hot Honey and Lemon with electrolytes (Lesson 3)
- Herbs, best taken as a tea to help with hydration:
    - Chamomile
    - Red raspberry leaf
    - Marshmallow
- Consume cultured food or take probiotics (Lesson 2)
- Redmond clay water

Constipation is infrequent or irregular bowel movements, with difficulty, discomfort, and sometimes pain on passing dry, hard feces. Regular bowel movements are important for removing toxins and can affect all areas of the body and overall health. It is estimated that 90% of all diseases and imbalance in the body stem from a clogged or unclean intestinal tract. The number of healthy bowel movements will be different from person to person because of the unique constitution of each individual (Lesson 1). Some people go three times a day, after each meal, and if it goes down to once a day, they are constipated. Still another may have a daily BM and another, every other day. It's important to discover what your "regular" is so you can be aware if you need to do some work in getting the bowels moving and those toxins out. Main causes of constipation are poor diet (processed, refined foods and fried foods), and stress. Others can be a lack of exercise, not drinking enough water, eating too much meat or dairy, not eating enough fiber, withholding the urge to go, pharmaceutical and antibiotic use, virus or bacteria, abuse of laxatives and even trapped emotions.

Symptoms of constipation can range all over the place since this is a toxic build up condition in the body which can manifest as all kinds of disease. I will just list a few of the more common signs of toxic build up and blockage; pain in the abdominal area (this can be real intense), difficulty passing stools, infrequent passing of stools, or diarrhea, strong body odor, bad breath, strong-smelling gas, coated tongue (toxins trying to be released from the body), headache, fatigue, skin conditions, and indigestion.

- Eat only whole foods, avoiding anything processed or refined.

- Avoid dairy, cheese and meat until the bowels are cleared and then introduce slowly to see how you feel. These should be consumed sparingly as part of a balanced diet. Cultured dairy, such as kefir and plain yogurt, are fine and may also help the condition because of the probiotics.
- In addition to the above, other constipating foods to avoid; oatmeal and other "pasty" cereals, pasta, fried foods, and doughy foods.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Some causes of constipation are not enough fluid. Avoid soda, processed drinks, and concentrated juices. Include a lot of purified or distilled water and fresh juices.
- Chew your food thoroughly. Do not swallow until the food is like a paste.
- Eat small, light meals, avoid heavy and large meals.
- Get moving! Exercise! Yoga is especially good for getting the bowels moving. Other great ones are walking, jogging, climbing, dancing, and swimming.
- Pay attention to how you feel after you eat something and avoid items that seem to trigger the condition.
- Redmond Clay water, try for a quart a day.
- Diatomaceous earth
- Natural Calm - this is a name brand for a magnesium supplement that can get things moving. Look for it at your local health food store.
- Fiber Flush (from *The Prime*): 1 tsp each of ground flaxseed and psyllium seed powder, stir together and add some water then drink quickly before the psyllium powder turns gelatinous. Take this as often as you feel but always every night before bed and with a glass of water afterward.
- Laxative Gruel (Dr. Christopher): 3 parts each of flaxseed, psyllium seed, licorice root powder, marshmallow root powder, and comfrey root powder. 1 part lobelia, powder. A gruel is made by boiling water and slowly pouring over the herbs while stirring until a paste is formed. Sweeten with raw honey.
- Abdomen Massage: Use any of the digestive essential oils above alone, in combination or one of the DIY blends. Drop 3-5 drops of essential oil into a teaspoon of carrier oil or herbal infused oil and begin at the bottom left side of the abdomen and massage in a circular, clockwise motion.
- Heating Pad: Just having heat on the abdomen can bring relief of pain and aid the body in moving the bowel. I like to apply the heat right after the abdomen massage.
- Warming Compress: Use any of the digestive essential oils. Fill a bowl with hot water, add several drops of essential oil along with 1 teaspoon of a carrier oil (olive oil, almond oil, etc.). Soak a washcloth in the water mixture, then squeeze out excess water and place over abdomen. Insulate with plastic wrap and can even place a heating pad over that, keep on until the cloth cools to body temperature. Repeat several times. Alternatively, you can make a tea with any of the herbs listed and use that to soak the washcloth in.

Healing Foods
Fresh, ripe fruit of all varieties, papaya fruit or enzyme tablets, dried fruit, especially prunes and figs, raw fibrous vegetables, green leafy vegetables, whole grains, chia seeds, cultured foods rich in probiotics.

Herbs

Triphala, Indian formula used in Ayurveda.
Raspberry leaf and alfalfa aid in detoxifying the body.
Warm chamomile tea with raw honey is soothing and pain relieving.
Cumin seed, coriander seed, fennel seed in equal parts, make as a decoction.
Teas using the following herbs, alone or in combination: fennel seed, dill seed, catnip, any of the mints, ginger, and chamomile.
Dr. Christopher's Lower Bowel Formula (recipe)
Heal All formula (recipe)
Autumn Spice Tea Blend (recipe)
Anise seed

Digestive Support and Lifestyle for a Healthy System

- Eat in a pleasant setting that is unhurried and chew food thoroughly before swallowing.
- Eat whole foods (Lesson 1)
- Avoid eating while stressed, working or in pain.
- Consume fluids between meals, not during.
- Do not overeat or eat too frequently, the system needs a rest.
- Light movement, like walking, aids digestions after meals.
- Incorporate cultured foods to feed and build gut flora (Lesson 2).
- Exercise regularly. Twisting yoga postures are great for digestion!

Herbs for Digestive Health

Carminative herbs are aromatics that ease digestion, soothe intestinal walls, ease cramping, reduce inflammation and help expel gas. These can be used as daily tonics in food and beverages or tincture or capsules.

Bee balm
Cardamom
Catnip
Chamomile
Ginger
Fennel
Lavender
Lemon Balm
Mints

Sage
Thyme
Basil

Bitter herbs send a message to prepare the body for digestion, increase digestibility of food, and calm the nervous system (for emotional health). They should be taken 15-20 minutes before eating.

Dandelion
Rosemary
Wormwood
Angelica
Barberry Root
Burdock Root
Motherwort
Hyssop
Mugwort
Orange Peel
Oregon Grape Root
Yellow dock root

References

Memmler's The Human Body in Health and Disease by Barbara Janson Cohen
Prescription for Nutritional Healing by Phyllis Balch
Herbal Recipes for Vibrant Health by Rosemary Gladstar
Herbal Home Health Care by Dr. John R. Christopher
The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Healing Remedies by C. Norman Shealy
Reference Guide for Essential Oils by Connie Higley
The Herbal Academy Intermediate Course

Lesson 6 Formulas & Recipes

GUM AND TOOTH POWDER

This tooth powder is a modified version of Dr. Christopher's Herbal Tooth and Gum Powder. It can be used to brush your teeth in place of toothpaste (get brush wet and sprinkle powder over the brush or dip into container), strengthen gums, tighten loose teeth, stop cavity formation and rebuild enamel.

Use powdered herbs:
3 parts oak bark
6 parts comfrey
3 parts horsetail
3 parts peppermint
2 parts slippery elm

1 part lobelia
1 part cloves
¼ part stevia

COLD SORE BALM

1 Tbsp cocoa butter (or 4 wafers)
2 Tbsp lemon balm infused coconut oil
1 Tbsp beeswax
7 drops Melaleuca alternifolia (tea tree) essential oil
10 drops lemon essential oil
3 drops eucalyptus essential oil
6 drops melissa essential oil (optional since it is so expensive)

Make an herbal oil using lemon balm and coconut oil. Melt the lemon balm oil, beeswax, and cocoa butter over very low heat. Remove and add the essential oils, stir well, and pour into lip balm tubes or containers and let them sit until hardened. Cap and label. Apply liberally when dealing with a cold sore or use as a daily lip balm.

KLOSS'S LINIMENT

1 part echinacea root
1 part goldenseal (or substitute Oregon grape root)
1 part myrrh gum
¼ part cayenne

This is an old formula that came from a famous herb doctor, Jethro Kloss. Traditionally it was made with rubbing alcohol and used only as a liniment to disinfect wounds and rub into inflamed muscle and tissue. I like to make it with Vodka so it can be used internally as well. Use either rubbing alcohol (external only!) or 80 proof alcohol.

DR. CHRISTOPHER'S X-CEPTIC FORMULA

Equal parts:
Oak bark
Echinacea
Myrrh gum
Comfrey
Garlic
Cayenne

Make into an alcohol extract.

HERBAL CALCIUM

6 parts horsetail
3 parts oatstraw
4 parts comfrey (or nettles)
1 part lobelia
2 parts peppermint

Mix all the herbs together and use to make a tea, tincture or capsules.

Dr. Christopher created this formula as natural, absorbable form of calcium for body function. We all know how important calcium is for strong bones and teeth, but did you know it is also needed for the nerves, veins and artery walls? Pregnant mothers need extra calcium for growing another person, children for developing strong and even straight teeth, the elderly for bone strength. Dr. Christopher even used this formula for relieving cramps and muscle spasms.

HEAL ALL (SICK SYRUP)

This herb blend has been around a very long time and can be found in just about every herb book you can open. Each herbalist calls it something different and I have even given it my own name. My kiddos always referred to it as sick syrup (because they know it in glycerite form) and I like to call it "Heal All" because it seems to do just that. No matter the ailment I always use this blend, many times combining it with others. It is the number one thing I make sure to have on hand going in to cold and flu season. It is especially good for naturally reducing fevers and boosting the immune system to aid the body in combating cold and flu symptoms.

Mix equal parts of the following herbs:

- Peppermint (or mint species of choice)
- Elder flowers
- Yarrow

Make into an extract or tea. Taking as often as needed for upset stomach, allergies, or any type of illness. Also works great for an herbal bath or foot soak.

KIDDIE CALM

Mix equal parts of the following herbs:

- Spearmint
- Chamomile
- Lemon balm
- Catnip

Make into a tea, extract or syrup. Not only is this a wonderful blend for upset stomach and digestive concerns but is calming for stress or anxiety relief and a mild pain reliever. I love to administer this to my children for whatever ailments they come to me with.

ANTI-ULCER FRUIT COCKTAIL

Cut up bananas and pineapple in a bowl, add blueberries and season generously with cinnamon, cloves, and fresh ginger. Sprinkle with raw honey and stir well. You can also improvise with any of the herbs and foods listed above.