proven ginger to be at least as good as motion sickness drugs while having the advantage of being a tea that’s available. When one was drinking on the Norwegian seas typically causes sea sickness in 80% of passengers. On one voyage, though, passengers were given either ginger or one of three motion sickness meds. Over 80% of them felt fine. And the ones given ginger did as well as the ones given any of the drugs (J Travel Med 1994). In another study, everyone using ginger had good results and no side effects, while only 31% of people given Dramamine had good results and 69% of them suffered side effects (Euro Phytothera 1999).

Mosquito Madness
Citronella has gone mainstream: you can find citronella mosquito repellents everywhere. But the very best natural insect repellent may be yarrow extract (Phytotherapy) which is the same study that ranked yarrow number one also found citronella and eucalyptus oils to be effective and lemongrass to be 85% effective as a mosquito repellant. Lemongrass was found in one study of over 4000 natural compounds to be the very best (Green Research Management and Production 1999). Chamomile and components of catnip are also effective. Also, try taking the vitamins, fortified with a extra 50 mg of B1 twice a day, garlic and lemongrass to be 85% effective as a mosquito repellant.

Poison Ivy
Another itchy annoyance of summer is poison ivy. One of the plant kingdom’s great itch soothers is plantain. One preliminary study found that ten out of ten people suffering from poison ivy improved when they were given plantain (N Engl J Med 1980).

Herbalist Michael Tierra says that he has seen echinacea work on severe inflammatory conditions, including poison ivy. He suggests taking echinacea, chamomal and yellow dock to purify the blood while also taking antispasmodics to calm the itch and reduce the inflammation to the pain. Tierra recommends two parts kava kava (substitute passionflower if you can’t get kava), one part each of valerian and black cohosh and a half part of lobelia. Externally, he suggests a poultice of comfrey root, marshmallow root, slippery elm, aloe vera and witch hazel. There is also anecdotal reports that applying the herb jeweledwell is effective.

Malaria
If you travel to exotic places, you may need protection from exotic diseases. For malaria, the protection comes from a herb called Artemisia annua, or Sweet Annie. This herb has a 2,000 year history of use that is backed up by research in China and at the Walter Reed Army Research Institute in the US. One study found that Artemisia annua treated as effective as current antimalarial drugs and more effective. Another study by the University of Hong Kong found that it was probably not the right preparation of the herb to use, the really exciting results have been with alcohol extracts. Secondly, the study’s authors admit that the herb may have been too small. And third, much of the world’s malaria is now resistant to quinine. Goldenseal may also help, and a test tube study suggests that curcumin may inhibit the growth of malaria (Blochlem Biophys Res Comm 2005).

Traveler’s Diarrhoea
The most common way to kill a trip is traveler’s diarrhoea. Goldenseal is the best way to make sure that doesn’t happen. This amazing antimicrobial herb works against most of the causes of acute traveler’s diarrhoea: E. coli (the most common one), shigella dysenteriae, helicobacter, giardia, cholera and food poisoning from salmonella.

When people with traveler’s diarrhoea were given goldenseal, the active ingredient in goldenseal, significantly more of them were cured of their diarrhoea in twenty-four hours than those travelers not given berberine (J Infect Dis 1987). Goldenseal is also beneficial for travelling to exotic places because it may protect you from microbes you are being exposed to for the first time. If you’re traveling this summer, start taking goldenseal a week before you go away, and keep taking it until you’ve arrived and been there for a week. Research also suggests that calcium may help with traveler’s diarrhoea (Gastroenterology 2003).

Conquering the Mountain
Since there is no way of knowing who is, and who is not susceptible to altitude sickness, being prepared is the key. We saw people dropping from it as we went further and further up the Andes. The Peruvians chew on coca leaf to prevent altitude sickness. Research recommends Ginkgo biloba (two to three capsules a day, with meals) and vitamin C (500 mg three times a day). When men who had suffered from altitude sickness before took ginkgo this time up the mountain, despite climbing to over 14,700 feet, none of them suffered altitude sickness this time, even though 41% of the placebo group did (Aviat Space Environ Med 1996). Herb authority James Duke, Ph.D., says that reishi mushroom has reduced the symptoms of acute altitude sickness in clims of over 15,000 feet in Tibet.

Lifesaver: L-carnitine and Heart Attacks
A meta-analysis of thirteen controlled studies of people experiencing acute myocardial infarctions (heart attacks) has concluded that L-carnitine is associated with a significant 27% reduction in all cause mortality, a significant 43% reduction in symptomatic heart failure and a significant 40% reduction in risk of developing angina (Mayo Clin Proc 2013,xx:1). (For more recent news on L-carnitine and heart go to our blog at www.thenaturalpathnewsletter.com/blog)
Three of the most promising are: boswellia, khella, and butterbur.

When asthmatics were given either 150mg of pine bark extract or a placebo for three months, free radical damage went down significantly in the Pycnogenol group, but not in the placebo group. A double-blind study at MIT found that Pycnogenol given to children with ADHD in a placebo-controlled study significantly reduced their hyperactivity and inattention (Eur Psychopharmacol 2007).

Pycnogenol also helps prevent the side effects of chemotherapy and radiation (Panminerva Med 2008).

Pycnogenol, or pine bark extract, is a rich source of powerful proanthocyanidins. Proanthocyanidins stabilize collagen and maintain elasticity, two important proteins in the blood vessels, connective tissue and muscle. That makes pine bark extract useful in treating a variety of collagen disorders, as well as other conditions, such as capillary fragility, easy bruising, varicose veins, athrosclerosis, diabetic neuropathy, wound healing, elevated cholesterol as well as for preventing heart attack and stroke.

But although pine bark extract is an impressive antioxidant, we now know that many of its other positive effects can be attributed to Pycnogenol’s ability to inhibit platelet-activating factor, which is responsible for triggering inflammation, asthma, and the bronchoconstriction of asthma. A controlled study of asthma patients found that it decreased asthma symptoms.

Other Supplements that Help

With its anti-inflammatory, anti-allergy, muscle relaxant, and antifungal properties, it is no surprise that licorice can help. The powerful antispasmodic and expectorant properties of garlic can also help, and an uncommon herb called Calceus forskohlii can relieve bronchial muscles and inhibit histamine. Quercetin is one of the best anti-inflammatory agents. Eat lots of garlic and onions. Onion has been shown to be an excellent anti-asthma food (Alt Med Rev 2004).

Pycnogenol improves symptoms in perimenopausal women (Acta Obstet Gynecol Scand 2007). New research now shows that it can help in smaller doses. Perimenopausal women were given 50mg of Pycnogenol for three months. Compared to the placebo, women on Pycnogenol had significant improvement in their symptoms. Pycnogenol did not affect hormone levels (J Reprod Med 2013).

Leg Pain & Joint Pain

Many people with swelling, pain and elevated vein pressure in their legs from chronic varicose veins were given either 150mg of pine bark extract or compression stockings or both for eight weeks. While pain and makers of low blood circulation in the leg all improved significantly more in the herbal groups than in the stocking only group, pine bark extract was best.

People with mild to moderate osteoarthritis were given either Pycnogenol or a placebo in their regular meals for three months. Compared to the placebo group, the people in the Pycnogenol group had significant relief from pain and stiffness. Nearly 40% of pine bark users were able to reduce their pain medications and none of them needed to increase it, while in the placebo group, only 8% were able to decrease their pain medications and 10% had to increase them.

Endometriosis & Menopause

Vitamin B6 and Magnesium are believed to be an excellent anti-asthma food (Eur Geogr Med 2007). Menopausal women can also benefit. Double-blind research has shown that 30mg of Pycnogenol improves symptoms in perimenopausal women (Acta Obstet Gynecol Scand 2007). New research now shows that it can help in some women.

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Folic Acid & Pregnancy: One More Reason

172 pregnant women were randomized into groups with or without Pycnogenol. The Pycnogenol group was found to have significantly lower levels of homocysteine compared with the control group (J Obstet Gynaecol 2007). Pycnogenol reduces the risk of spontaneous abortion, low birth weight, neural tube defects, and congenital heart defects (Phytother Res 2008).

Free radical damage in the brain contributes to impaired cognition in old age. A double-blind study gave 150mg of Pycnogenol or a placebo to elderly people for three months. Free radical damage went down significantly in the Pycnogenol group, but not in the placebo group. The quality of working memory was significantly better in the Pycnogenol group (J Psychopharmacol 2008).

In a study of university students, Pycnogenol significantly improved attention, memory, executive function, and mood. While 71.1% of students in the control group failed an exam, only 6.25% in the Pycnogenol group did. Exam scores in the Pycnogenol group were 7.6% higher than students who did not take Pycnogenol (Panminerva Med 2011).

ADHD

Pycnogenol is an antioxidant given to children with ADHD in a placebo-controlled study significantly reduced their hyperactivity and inattention (Eur Child Adolesc Psychiatry 2008).

Acne

In 2008, British researchers took a group of 300 at-risk women (Annals of Internal Medicine 1998).  Double-blind research found that 50mg of Pycnogenol reduced acne symptoms by 33%, taking them from severe to moderate (J Reprod Med 2007). Menopausal women can also benefit. Double-blind research has shown that 30mg of Pycnogenol improves symptoms in perimenopausal women (Acta Obstet Gynecol Scand 2007). New research now shows that it can help in some women.

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