

As the excitement, enthusiasm and sheer prowess of international athleticism of the 2008 Summer Olympic Games in Beijing was amazing me, I was reflecting on what does it take to be in Olympics? What about all the injuries from over-use, sprains, strains, bruises and the like? How many people could use affordable and drug-free approach of homeopathy if only they knew about it? That reflection has led to this article.

Let us begin with injuries, the scary part that may inhibit us from entering the dream world of visualizing ourselves as Olympic athletes. Pain is a healthy response to injury-a part of body's defense mechanism that tells us where we are hurt and how severe the injury is, and that reflexively initiates a healing effort to the part. Swelling brings nutritious tissue fluids to the area as well as special inflammatory cells to clean up the injury and begin the process of repair. Swelling also helps stabilize the area. Injured cells are allowed to die or recover based on their natural strength.

### **The Best Option**

For ordinary people who suffer injuries during sports, accidents, or trauma, the best care is RACE. By using rest, Arnica, gentle compression, and elevation followed by judicious reuse and retraining of the injured part, our body's natural healing effort is assisted. Instead of using RICE (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation), as a homeopathic practitioner, dedicated to assisting nature in her healing ways, I recommend that we remove the I (for ice) and replace an A (for Arnica). So with the addition of homeopathy, we RACE to win a speedy and complete healing.

Rest prevents further damage to the injured area. With our pain sense intact, we can rationally regulate use of the injured part because we will know our limits.

Arnica completes RACE therapy. It is homeopathic, not contrapathic, so it works in accordance with the body's defense mechanism. Arnica is used for healing during the first stage of injuries because its proving symptoms are similar to such injuries. Arnica helps when an injury is worse from any motion, sensitive to touch, and worse from exertion. It helps stabilize bruised or injured tissues and stops bleeding within the wound.

Compression helps stabilize the area. I recommend a moist, tepid cloth held against the area for 15 minutes every hour for three hours right after the injury. A pleasant-feeling elastic bandage-wrap can be worn for a few days or more on areas accessible to such care.

Elevation helps move the healing tissue fluids in and out of the area, bringing nutrients and removing waste products.

Arnica can be used for all injuries of the "soft parts" that are closed injuries where the skin is intact, not lacerated, not cut and not open.

- Arnica is a treasure in situations where there is bruising of muscles whether from boxing, wrestling, mountain climbing, falls or whatever.
- Concussion, contusions, falls and injuries to any part of the body are relieved quickly with use of Arnica.
- Pain due to mental and/or physical shock is relieved rapidly by Arnica.
- Dental extraction, sprains of joints due to overexertion or falls, fractured bones internal administration of Arnica provides good results.
- Many women have regained quickly from hemorrhage and strain of birthing process by few doses of Arnica during and after delivery. Thus it is a common practice in Homeopathic community to give Arnica to a mother and baby after birth of the baby.

Arnica can be applied locally to the injured part two or three times a day using a variety of easily available in most health food stores in United States as liniments, creams or ointments (but never apply it to skin that is broken or lacerated).

Arnica 30C may also be taken by mouth for the first one to four days to speed healing. Most health food stores carry homeopathic remedies.

- If the injury is mild but bothersome, take Arnica 30C three times a day.
- If it is a moderately bad injury, take Arnica 30C every three hours on the first day.
- If it is a severe injury, take Arnica 30C once an hour for three doses, and then take it every three hours for the first day.
- As improvement occurs, doses can be decreased and then stopped.

After three or four days using Arnica, a different remedy is often needed, depending on the severity and type of injury. For example, Ledum is excellent for cases of severe bruising, black eye and extravasations of blood and hematomas, where Arnica is not sufficiently potent to absorb it. After the bruising and swelling improves, an ankle sprain might require Rhus toxicodendron.

Two or three days after an injury, wet heat can be applied to the area for 15 to 20 minutes two or three times a day as a dressing or soak to help encourage the healing process. Wet not dry heat is used, as it penetrates more fully and does not dry out the tissues. Wet heat increases circulation to the injured part, bringing blood and healing tissue fluids and aiding in removal of waste products.

If a layoff of more than one week is required, restart exercise at 25% of the prior effort for less than one-half of the time. Slowly increase exertion, letting pain be your guide.

## **Homeopathy Perfect For Elite Athletes**

Working with elite athletes is a pleasure as they are determined, disciplined, and wanting to optimize their performance. High-level athletics do put a strain on the person's physical, mental, and emotional worlds. Stressors, even the good ones, cause people to develop symptoms in reaction to the stress. And those symptoms tend to arise in predictable and patterned ways, depending largely on the constitutional type of the person. That's where homeopathy and a

homeopathic practitioner comes in! My approach is to treat the whole person, support the body's inborn abilities to strike balance and find health, and that is how I have helped the athletes in my life or practice immeasurably. I realize that is how close I am going to get to becoming a Olympic athlete.

I have helped athletes optimize performance, reducing the chance of injury, healing injuries that occur, and add to the positive mental game. Homeopathy—with its safe, effective remedies that will not turn up on a drug test—is the perfect thing to offer athletes of all abilities.

Optimize nutrition by creating an appropriate, individualized diet and supplement regimen. Many privately coached individuals often have already had nutritional advice from other professionals, but a surprising number of athletes have not. Many athletes overlook the need for healthy protein to build and maintain strong muscles. Good sources for vegetarian athletes are nuts and other legumes like garbanzo, kidney beans in addition to soy proteins.

Natural protocol to prevent injuries, decrease lactic acid build-up after strenuous exercise, and promote healing, especially after big event can make a big difference in some cases. Bromelain, the enzyme derived from pineapple, along with Vitamin C should be in every athlete's gym bag. Both will help to reduce inflammation and adhesion formation and act as gentle anti-inflammatory agents to help with tissue repair.

In addition, depending on individual athlete's history and areas of vulnerability if needed, I do

not hesitate to recommend yoga, massage, chiropractors and craniosacral therapy. Psychological work such as mindfulness meditation or sports psychology therapy or working on playing a tough mental game enabling them to “stay in the zone” to get over losses quickly, to take feedback, to integrate advice with grace and to stay focused regardless of what the surrounding environment might throw their way, might be advised. The books I recommend are:

- *The Way of the Peaceful Warrior* by Dan Millman
- *Mind Gym, An Athlete's Guide to Inner Excellence* by Gary Mack and David Casstevens.
- *The Sacred Hoops* by Phil Jackson
- *Inner Game of Tennis: The classic Guide to the mental side of Peak Performance* by Timothy Gallwey.

I truly hope that you will use this information to get closer to your dreams of being active, enjoying outdoors or taking yourself to that experience of exhilaration of being an athlete in your own power.

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## **THE WHOLENESS APPROACH**

The sixteenth-century alchemist and physician Paracelsus was way ahead of his time in his belief in observation and research, and in taking an overall view of the patient, not just looking at the disease of symptoms. Holistic medicine accepts the intimate interrelation of parts of the body, and of body and mind. Today's wisdom tends to perceive us not as pure spirit inhabiting a machine-like body, nor as a set of merely physical function, but as an infinitely complex fusion of the two. "1001 Pearls of Wisdom" by David Ross.