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UNIT 7: Human Science 3

Introduction

This unit reviews the changes that occur in healthy tissue when the body is exposed to factors that provoke illness, and investigates how various body systems, organs and tissues combine to mount a healing response.

Overview

In This unit you will

- Be introduced to the senses
- Learn about the nervous system
- Learn about the endocrine system
- Learn about the genito-urinary system
- Learn about the macro-physiological approach to making an assessment of disease
- Understand the Western herbal medicine approach to helping people who have migraine, or are transitioning through menopause
- Explore the pros and cons of conventional medicine in relation to Western herbal medicine in the treatment of two common conditions.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of Section 1, you will

- Understand what is meant by the term functional condition
- Be introduced to the idea of macro-physiology
- Know that medical herbalists (phytotherapists) value the taking of a detailed case history when seeing a patient and how this is considered part of the treatment itself
 - Be introduced to the idea that there are important concepts of mechanism of action within herbal medicine; these include the herbs themselves as (1) functional and (2) energetic.

By the end of Section 2, you will be able to

- Be introduced to the wonders of the basic structure of the nervous system

By the end of Section 3, you will be able to

- Identify the major components of a nerve cell, and describe the function of myelin sheaths
- Explain what a synapse is, and how it works
- Describe the functions of cerebrospinal fluid
- List the five main nerve plexuses

- Differentiate between the sympathetic and parasympathetic divisions of autonomic nervous system
- Reflect on the interconnectedness of the nervous system.

By the end of Section 4, you will be able to

- Describe the structures and processes underlying the perception of the five senses
- Understand the central integration of sensation within our body
- Consider how important and accurate our senses of touch, taste, smell, hearing and sight are
- Do we have a sixth sense?

By the end of Section 5, you will be able to:

- Explain the origins of the word migraine
- List the major features of migraine
- List the different categories of migraine
- Describe the orthodox approach to treating migraine.

By the end of Section 6, you will be able to describe

- Describe the herbalists approach to the treatment of migraine
- Discuss herbs used for pain relief.

By the end of Section 7, you will be able to describe

- What does the endocrine system consist of?
- How does it work?
- What does it do for us?
- List the major endocrine glands of the body, ie pituitary gland, thyroid gland, adrenal glands and the pancreas
- Differentiate between the anterior and posterior pituitary gland
- Differentiate between the words endocrine and exocrine.

By the end of Section 8, you will be able to describe

- Describe the structures of the female reproductive system
- Consider the hormonal influences upon the female reproductive system
- A word about menopause
- Describe the major structures of the male reproductive system
- Consider the function of the prostate and glands of the male reproductive system and the production of semen
- Be introduced to some of the hormonal influences of this system

By the end of Section 9, you will be able to describe

- Know how conventional medicine views and offers treatment for migraine and menopausal syndrome
- Know how the conventional medical view differs from the Western herbal medicine viewpoint
- Understand the rationale behind common herbal protocols and regimens for the management of migraine and menopausal syndrome

- Be able to discuss why phytotherapy's patient-centred (as opposed to disease centred) approach makes it difficult to talk about what herb is 'good for' any particular condition
- Have an understanding of the rationale for choosing particular herbs in specific clinical situations.
- Key ways in which a medical herbalist can offer help to relieve menopausal symptoms
- Some simple foods that can be beneficial around the time of the menopause.

Additional Information

This unit contains additional interviews with three consultant medical herbalists: Fi Taylor talking about migraine treatment; Anita Ralph on the menopause; and Aviva Romm, talking about the capacity of the body to heal, and about functional medicine.

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