

# Queen St. Gazette

## Queen Street Wellness

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### Welcome to our Inaugural Issue

We hope you will find the information here useful and fun. We are dedicated to your well being as well as our own. We believe that self care is synonymous with self respect. Even in this throw-away society, we are still not machines that can be discarded after years of use without maintenance. Your body is precious. Cherish your health!

### Introducing our therapists

**Tanya Baker** worked in nursing for six years before coming to massage therapy. She cared for a variety of patients ranging from motor vehicle accident victims to the elderly. Tanya's special interest is in the rehabilitation of sport injuries and is currently studying the effects of golfing on the body and how to keep golfers in shape for their sport. Tanya herself is a champion pool player who has competed internationally.

**Carol O'Connor** spent sixteen years in Europe where she received her first massage, prescribed and strongly recommended by her doctor. The first thing he had ever prescribed for her was an herbal tea. Gradually, Carol came to value this conservative approach to health care and saw how much can be accomplished with good self care. Carol is studying nutrition and wishes to study acupuncture to deepen her understanding and practice of acupressure, tai chi and qi gong.

**Helen Theodosiou** informs her massage therapy practice with qualifications as a registered nutritionist and Western herbalist. Helen is passionate about understanding food as medicine and grows her own herbs, making tinctures, teas, creams and ointments to balance and heal the body. Helen will be speaking at the Kitchener Public Library June 12 on the whys and hows

of detoxing the body. Helen stops time whenever possible, hiking and canoeing for maximum quiet and renewal.

**James Ward** completed a degree in Political Science and went straight into massage therapy school. After six years of combined study, James is well acquainted with neck and shoulder pain associated with desk and office work in general. A keen kayaker, James has an excellent knowledge of the shoulder complex and the aches and pains that plague the back. James' future interests are in osteopathy, which studies the relationships between the organs and the musculoskeletal system.

### Inside this issue:

Meet the therapist	1
Running into Health	2
Soaking Up the Sun	2-
Growing Health	3-
From Your Garden	4

### Special points of interest:

- Get to know our team
- How is your running game?
- Why the sun is your friend
- Don't break yourself gardening
- Rekindle the relationship between your garden and kitchen

## Running into Health

Spring is here and many people take to the streets, leaving the treadmill in the basement. Here are some tips on getting started with running:

1. Keep a running journal. This will help you to track your progress.
2. Get into a routine. Set aside a certain time each day that is designated as your running time.
3. Run with a friend. Distraction and conversation will help the miles fly by.

Technique is important for safety as to maximize your health benefits.

**“Use your days off from running wisely. These days are meant for recovery”**



Afraid to go into the sun? Be afraid, but only a little afraid. Research is showing that over half of healthy Americans are vitamin D deficient. Our Canadian “slip, slap and slop” cam-

✦ Avoid hard surfaces such as concrete. Instead, aim for grass or dirt trails to minimize impact on your joints.

✦ Incorporate hills into your routine to help strengthen your legs and ankles.

✦ Focus on perfecting your stride by landing lightly on your heels, then rolling forward to push off on your toes.

✦ Proper clothing and shoes are vital. They will minimize your risk for injury and help to maximize your endurance.

✦ Be safe for night time running by wearing reflective clothing. Run facing traffic so you can react if a

motorist comes too close.

Use your days off from running wisely. These days are meant for recovery. Consider massage therapy to ease those muscle aches and speed recovery time.

### Ditch the Stitch

A stitch is the sudden, sharp pain in the side of the upper abdomen that every runner has experienced at some point. It is caused by a spasm of the diaphragm, the muscle that controls your breathing. Help by bringing your breathing back under control, slow down, concentrate on belly breathing. Push your belly out when you breathe in and relax as you breathe out. While running, you can help by taking deep

breaths in and exhaling suddenly, even noisily, to get the diaphragm to contract in rhythm with your footfall. Try to inhale and exhale as you land on your left foot.

### Help Prevent Injuries

#### 1. Start slowly!

2. Remember “R.I.C.E.” - Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation to overworked muscles and joints.

3. Stretch after your run. Remember to hold your stretch. Don’t bounce. Muscles are like elastic bands - they stretch best after being warmed up. Consider consulting your RMT for more tips on stretching safely and efficiently.

Tanya Baker

## Soaking up the Sun

pains could have us in similar trouble. Vitamin D, “the sunshine vitamin”, is linked with cancer *prevention* according to a new study to be released in June this year.

Dr. Reinhold Vieth, Professor in the Department of Nutritional Sciences at the Faculty of Medicine at UT, is one of the world’s top vitamin D experts. According to Vieth, brief full-body exposures to bright, full-spectrum sunlight can make high amounts of vitamin D in the body. He recommends 10 to 15 minutes

a day without sunscreen to achieve this. This amount of time is usually not enough to damage the skin and certainly not enough to cause skin to burn, but it will produce a good amount of vitamin D, something we are usually starved for all winter long. Obviously if you can’t control your exposure or are going to be in the sun for a long time, sunscreens can help to avoid burning. But let’s look more closely at vitamin D synthesis.

### How is vitamin D made?

The skin contains a vitamin D precursor called precholesterol that sits around waiting for UV light to turn it into cholecalciferol. This is then changed in the liver to calcidiol. A final conversion takes place in the kidneys where calcitriol is produced. Ingested cholecalciferol turns into vitamin D as it is absorbed from the intestines, travels to the liver, and so on. Calcitriol is the active form of vitamin D and it regulates calcium metabolism. Once made, vitamin D is stored in the liver, brain and bones.

## Soaking up the Sun cont.

What is a tan?

Exposure to UV increases enzyme activity in the skin and stimulates the production of melanin. With continued, careful exposure the amount and also the darkness of melanin increases. Within limits, melanin then offers protection from UV rays. As it darkens, melanin, in effect, provides shade for the layers of skin underneath. If your skin type is fair, a light tan is probably the most beneficial. Be careful not to burn or try for too dark a colour, as this damages and weakens the skin's structure and elasticity. If you are taking certain medications or herbals, such as erythromycin or St. John's Wort, extra caution is necessary, as these can produce photosensitivity reactions.

How can I tell if I have enough?

A doctor can check your blood levels for calcidiol with a [25 (OH) D] level test, also called a 25D level test. Normal values are considered to be between 35 and 50 ng/ml. Less than this concentration results in a weakening of the body's immune system, especially the nervous system, according to Dr. James Howenstine, internist and author. Vitamin D deficiency is related to higher rates of breast, ovarian, colon and prostate cancers, increased incidence of MS, progression of osteoarthritis, poor immune response, high blood pressure, Type 1 diabetes and mood disorders,

including serious depression. If you need to avoid the sun or be sure you get enough during the winter, Dr. Veith considers 1200 I.U. (international units) of vitamin D<sub>3</sub> (cholecalciferol) to be right for a healthy individual in supplementation.

Osteoporosis is a growing concern for women these days, and they are encouraged to take lots of calcium, even in their 30s. But this is not the whole picture. Calcium will not absorb or be stored in the body in the absence of vitamin D. Rickets, once thought to have been conquered, is appearing again and it is thought to be due to our fanatical use of sun screen. Sunscreen effectively stops

sunburn, but it also blocks almost all of vitamin D production in the body. Osteoporosis (loss of bone density) and osteomalacia (softening of the bones) are the result of vitamin D deficiency in adults, as rickets is in children.

As with anything, moderation is the key. Not enough sun seems just as bad as too much in the cancer department. So slip into the sun for a few minutes before slipping, slapping or slopping on the clothes, hat, and sun-screen. Have a great summer!

Carol O'Connor

## Growing Health

Gardening season is upon us. Time for nursery hopping, planting and weeding. While the former may be hard on your wallet, the latter two can be hard on your body. With all the bending, lifting, pulling and digging, gardening is a real workout. And just like a work out you should warm up before gardening and stretch afterwards. If you do, the aches and pains should be minimized the next day.

Warm Up and Stretching

Warm ups can be simple. Take a walk around your garden or better yet a walk around the block. This

way you will get your legs and body warmed up and you may get some gardening ideas from others in the neighbourhood.

Stretching after gardening is just as important as the warm up. Two of the most important areas to stretch are your low back and legs. Both areas take a beating when you bend over, pick things up and crawl around the garden. All stretches should be held for about 30 seconds and repeated 3 times for maximum benefit.

Here's a good low back stretch to do after gardening. You probably have done it already without knowing it.



**“Calcium will not absorb or be stored in the body in the absence of vitamin D”**

QL Stretch

Standing or sitting straight. Slowly bend to one side, without rotating, bringing one arm overhead. Keep hand that is above head slightly forward and always in view. Support the upper body with opposite hand on hip. Feel stretch in the side of the low back.

## Queen Street Wellness

Your Health is Our  
Priority

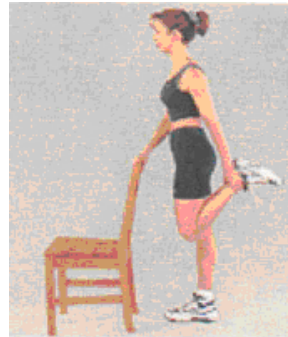
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Kitchener On.

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Leg stretches are easy and some can be incorporated into your rest time!

### Quads Stretch

Standing tall, raise one heel toward buttocks (grasp above ankle joint). Keep knees level, tilt the pelvis and squeeze buttocks to extend hip back slightly to feel stretch in the front of the hip. Hold, relax buttocks and repeat



### Hamstring

Sitting with both feet straight out in front, toes pointed to the ceiling. Bend straight forward from the hips, keeping back aligned and chest up, to feel a stretch in the back of the legs. Support body with hands on the floor.

By following these easy steps, gardening should be a bit less painful. So get outside, get some sun and enjoy the garden.

James Ward



## From Your Garden to Your Kitchen

We all have a spice rack in our kitchen. Spring is the time of the year when we can move our spice rack to the backyard. Fresh is best. Growing herbs can provide a multitude of joys. The most important is getting out of that desk chair and onto your knees, putting your hands in the dirt. The joy of watching plants grow and flower, having long silent talks with your plant friends, and the very best joy of all is tasting the fruits of your labour. Just even the aroma of these herbs can make your mind water. The more common herbs that you'll find in an herb garden are Basil, Thyme, Oregano, Fennel, Mint, Sage, Rosemary and Cayenne. We have all been told to eat our greens, I'm telling you to drink your greens:

You may be familiar with the culinary use of these herbs, making your food herbaceous; but what you may not know is that these herbs also have

medicinal qualities to them. Aside from the wonderful flavours of Basil, Fennel and Mint, these herbs also possess great digestive properties. They help to enhance digestion, improving digestive secretions and expelling gas. Sage, Thyme, Oregano are great for seasoning meat, but also have an anti-bacterial effect. If you really want to be adventurous, wait until the fall and dig up those Dandelion roots. This root aids the function of your liver, helping to cleanse the body. What to do with the roots: Freshly pulled, washed Dandelion roots need to be boiled in pot and simmered for 20 minutes to break down the more solid cellular structure of the plant. This is called a decoction, as opposed to an infusion, where boiling water is poured over more delicate herb leaves and flowers.

If you want to heat up your cup of tea

try growing Rosemary and Cayenne peppers. Both of these herbs have an affinity for the circulatory system. A rule of thumb is one tablespoon of chopped fresh herbs per cup of tea, so you would add a half tablespoon each. Of course, this is art as well as science, so let your taste buds guide you about the proportions.

After dinner why not go to you garden get a handful of fresh peppermint and brew up a pot of tea and let the power of plants soothe your full belly. Or if you feel a cold or have a sore throat coming on, just choose your allie: Thyme, Sage, Oregano and make a tea that'll tickle those germs away. Add them to your tea pot separately or in combination. You can add mint for flavour and to take a bitter edge off. For a pleasant cup of tea, let steep 2 minutes. For medicinal effect, steep for 10 minutes.

Let's take it one step further. Have you ever thought of eating a pansy? Well you can. Now your probably wondering, what is their medicinal quality? They're food for the soul. Pinch off clean, fresh flowers and toss them over your greens for a gorgeous summer salad. Nasturtiums, Lilac and Lavender are also edible flowers.

Helen Theodosiou is a your local Western Herbalist, Nutritionist and Massage Therapist. She is the owner of Revive Natural Health Clinic at 429 Queen St. S. Kit. Contact her at (519) 897-0802 of further details on how herbs can help.

**Helen Theodosiou**