

## **Subject: Dr. Woodbine--Immune enhancement strategies**

Dear Family, Patients, Students and Colleagues,

This morning I was a guest on a radio talk show discussing the mental health implications of the **FEAR** and **ANXIETY** in this country around the Ebola virus issue that is happening in West Africa. While the Ebola virus is a formidable and highly infectious virus wreaking havoc on the citizens in the three West African countries of Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia, there is very little actual threat here in the US. As all of the medical and science researchers as well as the White House have repeatedly stated, transmittal of the Ebola virus is **only** from a person who is already **symptomatic**. If one is asymptomatic (no symptoms), that person is a possible carrier, but not infectious. Once a person becomes symptomatic (fever equal to or greater than 101 degrees (F), flu-like symptoms with joint and muscle aches, sore throat, headaches followed by **vomiting, diarrhea, and abdominal pain**, then it is possible to be infected by coming into **direct contact with their bodily fluids (vomit, feces, semen, breast milk, saliva [maybe])**.

Despite this specific clarity about the transmission of the virus, people are unnecessarily fearful and anxious. Politicians (New York, New Jersey, Florida, Illinois governors) have instituted measures that, as Dr. Fauci of the NIAID/NIH, states, do not comport with the science. These mandatory quarantines themselves give the public a mixed message and gen up fear and anxiety. They are short-sighted reactions and seem to serve the ego and political agendas rather than actually serve the long-term health interests of the general public they purport to serve. If mandatory quarantines dissuade trained healthcare workers from volunteering to travel to West Africa to help because they know they will experience a mandatory 21-day quarantine when they return to the US, who will intervene to stop the exponential spread of the Ebola virus in Africa? Eventually, in that scenario, it will make its appearance on US and other foreign soils. Mandatory quarantines of the type enacted in New Jersey are politically self-serving, short-sighted , and void of the medical and science facts as we currently know them.

The initial flu-like symptoms are pretty generic this time of year during flu and cold season. Living in densely populated New York it's not uncommon to be sneezed and coughed on in the crowded buses and subways, or to come in contact with the residual germs sick people leave on the straps and poles we hold onto while traveling. In spite of that level of exposure, the majority of people do not get sick with the flu. Only certain susceptible individual seem to. If you're a critical thinker, you must ask that secondary question—Why don't all people exposed to virulent bacteria and viruses succumb to them? Even with Ebola outbreaks from 1976 when it was first identified in Sudan and Zaire up through 2103, there were only 1716 cases. Of those, roughly 50% did not die. Why?

You will recall that Louis Pasteur is credited with the "Germ Theory" of disease upon which most of modern western medicine is built. This gives rise to the consistent strategy of waging "war" on bacteria and viruses and supports the pharmaceutical industry's production of vaccines and other drugs—the ammunition with which to wage these wars. The misuse and overuse of these weapons of war (i.e., the over prescribing of antibiotics) has resulted in a major medical care crises of drug-resistant bacteria. Dr. Marc Lappe', Ph.D. is quoted as saying, "Underestimating the evolutionary potential of living organisms is the single most important mistake by those who use chemical means to subdue nature."

It is said that on his deathbed, Pasteur stated that his germ theory was incomplete and gave credit to his contemporary, Koch, by stating that it was not the germ in of itself that was the culprit in disease, but rather the terrain it could thrive in. There is a Chinese proverb mentioned in the book first edition of Herbal Antibiotics-Natural Alternatives for Treating Drug-Resistant Bacteria by Stephen Harrod Buhner that summarizes this. It says: "**The man is not sick because he has an illness; he has an illness because he is sick.**" The issue of individual susceptibility and the critical importance of the quality of each person's immune system is paramount to keep in mind.

Our immune systems are the first line of defense in protecting the body from illness. This is the "terrain" that must be optimal to ward off disease and its quality can contribute to this concept of

susceptibility. While an estimated 20,000 to 40, 000 people die from the flu annually in the US, not everyone that is exposed to the flu “bug”, gets the flu. While measles (594 to date) and enterovirus (998 to date) cases among children seem to be increasing (about 594 to date), not every child get the measles or is beset by the enterovirus.

With this in mind, I believe it is critical to bolster and support your immune system. One of the most important actions you can take is to manage your emotions by thinking critically and evaluating the hype from the facts in the media. Being well informed supports correct behavior and helps to lessen fear and anxiety. It is well-documented how chronic negative emotions and stress can diminish your immune system's effectiveness (google the field of psychoneuroimmunology or read Candace Pert's The Molecules of Emotion).

Additionally, there are specific action steps and lifestyle choices that can make a difference in how you can strengthen your immune system and decrease your susceptibility. One of the most insidious culprits affecting our well-being is cigarette smoking either direct or second-hand exposure. As of 2011, lung cancer was the leading cause of cancer deaths and second most common cancer among men and women. A total of 207, 000 cases were diagnosed and 157,000 deaths were attributed to lung cancer (close to 8,000 deaths were due to second-hand smoke). The primary cause of lung cancer is cigarette smoking.

This is just one important example of a lifestyle choice that compromises not only the smoker's immunity and health, but those who inhale their smoke who themselves are not smokers. If you smoke, get the help to stop. Other lifestyle choices, although not an exhaustive list, include the quality of the foods you eat (it's optimal to eat organic and non-gmo foods whenever possible), your sleep hygiene, relationships (reconcile toxic ones including personal, family, social, and employment), whether or not you exercise regularly (use it or lose it), and your use of pharmaceutical (only when absolutely needed) and recreational drugs.

The links below will provide you with specific options to consider in designing a regimen that optimizes your immune system and its ability to respond to viral and bacterial assaults appropriately. In addition, you can consider visiting Willners Chemists at 41<sup>st</sup> Street and Park Avenue or online at [www.willner.com](http://www.willner.com) to become familiar with products like **Crucera-SGS** (Thorne Research), **V Clear EPS 7630** (Integrative Therapeutics), **HMF Replete**(Seroyal), and **MyCommunity** (Host Defense). There are the benefits inherent in meditation and mindfulness disciplines (Yoga, Qigong, Tai Chi, etc.) you can explore as well.

In summary, unless you've traveled to West Africa or been exposed to someone who has and that person is symptomatic, there is no cause for alarm. If you know of someone who happens to be from Liberia, Guinea, or Sierra Leone, but they have not been to West Africa recently or come in contact with anyone who is symptomatic, there is no cause for alarm or suspicion. Ebola is not an airborne infectious virus like the seasonal flu. You have a risk of infection if you make direct contact with the bodily fluids of a symptomatic individual or the surfaces of where those fluids are. If in the course of this season, you develop sudden flu-like symptoms with a fever, joint and muscle pains, fatigue and you haven't been in contact with someone who was in West Africa (whether a native born person or a health care worker returning to the US) chances you are very high that you probably have the flu and not Ebola. The flu is more likely to kill more American citizens this season than Ebola.

Stay informed, think critically, not emotionally, and be proactive about supporting and enhancing your immune system, in particular, and your overall health and well-being, in general. As Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. used to say, “It's in your hands!”

1. Herbal Anti-virals: [http://www.amazon.com/Herbal-Antivirals-Remedies-Resistant-Infections/dp/1612121608/ref=pd\\_sim\\_b\\_1?ie=UTF8&refRID=089PX4ZH4PWJ9W3Z9H3H](http://www.amazon.com/Herbal-Antivirals-Remedies-Resistant-Infections/dp/1612121608/ref=pd_sim_b_1?ie=UTF8&refRID=089PX4ZH4PWJ9W3Z9H3H)
2. Herbal Antibiotics: <http://www.amazon.com/Herbal-Antibiotics-2nd-Edition-Drug-resistant/dp/1603429875>

3. A good resource for understanding how microbes affect us:[http://www.rightdiagnosis.com/artic/microbes\\_in\\_sickness\\_and\\_in\\_health\\_publications\\_national\\_institute\\_of\\_allergy\\_and\\_infectious\\_diseases\\_niaid.htm](http://www.rightdiagnosis.com/artic/microbes_in_sickness_and_in_health_publications_national_institute_of_allergy_and_infectious_diseases_niaid.htm).
4. Understanding the relationship between your gut and your health: [http://www.amazon.com/dp/0060930721/?tag=mh0b-20&hvadid=3520739045&ref=pd\\_sl\\_57k20i5tik\\_e](http://www.amazon.com/dp/0060930721/?tag=mh0b-20&hvadid=3520739045&ref=pd_sl_57k20i5tik_e).
5. On Psychoneuroimmunology: [http://www.amazon.com/Molecules-Emotion-Science-Mind-Body-Medicine/dp/0684846349/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1414429816&sr=1-1&keywords=candace+pert](http://www.amazon.com/Molecules-Emotion-Science-Mind-Body-Medicine/dp/0684846349/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1414429816&sr=1-1&keywords=candace+pert).
6. The Whitehouse response to Ebola: [http://www.whitehouse.gov/ebola-response?utm\\_source=email&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=email383-text2&utm\\_campaign=ebola#section-the-facts](http://www.whitehouse.gov/ebola-response?utm_source=email&utm_medium=email&utm_content=email383-text2&utm_campaign=ebola#section-the-facts).
7. The Centers for Disease Control updates on Ebola: <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/index.html>.
8. Ebola vaccine research: <http://www.niaid.nih.gov/topics/ebolaMarburg/research/Pages/default.aspx>.

Regards,

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