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Ask the Naturopath: Touch Your Toes in 30 Days

Can you bend over and reach your toes? It was easy when you were a kid; heck, maybe you could even put them in your mouth! While putting your toes in your mouth may not be your goal, it sure would be nice to be more flexible and have less joint stiffness and pain. Let this be your guide to joint health using well-known natural health practices and remedies.

To understand joint health, you first need information on minerals. When teaching students of natural health, we start by assigning fun names to minerals, making them easier to remember. For example, iron is the “frisky horse” element because, without this element, you would be very low in energy and not be frisky like a happy spring horse. The elements or minerals that greatly affect the joints may surprise you. Sodium is considered the “youth” element, Chlorine is the “flexibility” element, and Sulfur is the “arthritis” element.

Although many people focus on Calcium and Magnesium for bone health if stiffness, pain, and inflammation are the concern, the aforementioned minerals are far better. Let's figure out how all this works and how you can get long-term, real relief without side effects!

Sodium has a bad name in our culture because of all the sodium chloride (table salt) used in processed foods and the high number of heart and circulatory problems caused by its buildup. However, from the right sources, sodium can be your best friend. Sodium obtained from celery, dandelion greens, beets, and grapefruit is helpful in pulling out the build-up of unusable sodium chloride. Sodium from food and herbal sources actually keeps the calcium in your body strong and pliable. My mother had “hammer toes” and had to buy shoes that allowed room for this curvature of her toes. Of course, she could have had surgery to correct this, but instead, she drank 2 ounces of celery juice, fresh each morning from her juicer, and 3 months later, found all of her toes to be straight and without pain.

These great results with celery juice work well for most joint problems. Some people have pains that travel from joint to joint and are worse in certain weather conditions. This is what we call a “cold damp” condition and indicates a lack of natural sulfur in the diet. Sulfur is obtained from warm spicy foods like onions, garlic, and my favorite, ginger, which can be taken in capsules, tea, or used from the peeled root in many stir-fry recipes.

The final mineral to reach those toes is chlorine, which is very different from chloride. This mineral is known for creating flexibility. Have you ever seen the Chinese acrobats? They have a diet very high in chlorine-rich foods, allowing them to do amazing acts of flexibility. They consume a greater amount of sea vegetation, such as kelp and dulse than we do. The chloride found in swimming pools and drinking water actually depletes the natural chlorine supply in our bodies.

It is also important to cut back on acid-producing foods that leach these minerals, such as coffee, pop, and fried foods. So, if you see people around town tickling their toes and grazing on dandelions, all is well!