

64. SELF-TREATING KNEE PROBLEMS

Many people are afraid of their bodies. When a symptom or ailment manifests itself, they assume the worst ... especially if it lasts for more than a few days. Or they ignore it, ostrich-like, until it demands attention: then they rush to the doctor in quiet panic.

Yet most visits to the doctor are actually unnecessary. Seventy-nine percent of these visits, if Lawrence Cherry (a member of the National Association of Science Writers) is correct, occur simply because we have no other alternative. Most people don't realize that not dozens, but literally hundreds of "self-health" techniques exist.

Remember, it's only been the past several centuries that doctors and conventional medicines have been readily available. Before then, we healed ourselves using simple means or suffered the consequences. And believe me, such means have always been available for us. Modern (wo)man has simply ignored or forgotten them.

As Executive Director since 1976 of arguably the world's only self-health educational organization -- The G-Jo Institute -- I've investigated numerous "alternative therapies." The best ones have certain things in common: they're a.) safe, of course; b.) simple; c.) noticeably effective; and d.) easily available. "Low-cost" or "free" help a method reach our list of "all-star self-health techniques"; but "well-known" and "commonly-accepted" are not important factors for being included.

Our favorite methods -- the ones we've found to be most effective -- are acupressure, homeopathy, herbs, Bach Flower Remedies⁹ (for relief of emotional suffering), and a vegetarian diet. But we're open to other ideas. I've even sprayed WD-40⁹ -- the petroleum-based lubricant -- on my knee once or twice to treat achiness from a childhood injury (I'd heard rumors it worked for pain relief, and it actually did help my knee without causing apparent side-effects).

Welcome to the world of self-health. It's a sometimes wacky, possibly lonely and always interesting voyage of (self-)discovery. Twenty years ago, most of the methods the Institute teaches were nearly unknown in the West. And by the year 2000 or 2010, we'll all be playing important roles in our own health care using many of those same techniques.

But today, the state of alternative healing is in flux. Too large for the information to be kept "underground" any longer; too small for the FDA to pay much attention. Yet.

Many of the self-health methods and remedies The G-Jo institute explores are "anecdotal" (meaning "not scientifically-proven"). We hear about them word-of-mouth, in the popular press, from books and newsletters on healing; and (especially) from ancient literature, usually Oriental. If the methods fit our parameters, they enter our database.

Admittedly, some are flops, others are too bizarre or complicated to share easily. But some, like acupressure, are worth all the effort. Download a free Basic G-Jo Training Chart from The G-Jo Institute's website www.g-jo.com for illustrations of six important G-Jo points.

For my knee problem, for example, I'd normally use the acupressure points illustrated. To try them for yourself, press that approximate area of your own body until you feel a "loud" twinge of sensitivity. Like a toothache or pinched nerve.

Next "trigger" the point(s) in a digging, goading kind of massage for a few seconds, until you feel an "acupressure reaction" -- warmth, clamminess, perspiration, etc., in some part of your body. This reaction usually, but not always occurs, so don't trigger more than a few seconds -- half a minute or less should be plenty.

Then find and trigger those same points on the opposite side of your body. Test your aching knee gently ... and I think you'll be pleased with the results. But avoid acupressure if you're pregnant or suffer from serious health problems (e.g., cancer, diabetes, etc.) ... at least until you check with your doctor or other health care professional. (All the many G-Jo Acupressure points and their hundreds of uses are found in the G-Jo Institute's *Master of G-Jo Acupressure Home-Study Certification Program* -- see www.g-jo.com).