

CHAKRA FOUR



Anāhata

UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

Location: In the center of the chest.

Governs: Our immunity.

Main issue: Involves our ability to feel self acceptance and unconditional love

Externalizes: As the thymus gland.

Element: Air.

When balanced: We feel compassionate.

Color: A harmonic of **GREEN**.

Key words: Healing, ecstasy, serenity, intimacy, nurturing, forgiveness, joy, grief, oxygen and balance.

Influences: The heart, blood vessels, lungs, diaphragm, thoracic spine, ribs, breasts, arms and hands.

Deficiencies: Manifest as feelings of isolation, loneliness, low self esteem, jealousy and anxiety. Shallow respiration with an inability to take a deep breath or feelings of pressure in the chest are also indicators.

Excesses: Manifest in codependent relationships where we give ourselves away and loose our center.

Imbalances: Manifest physically as asthma, pneumonia, bronchitis, emphysema, lung cancer, hypertension, heart attacks, palpitations and immune dysfunction including allergies, immune deficiencies and autoimmune diseases.

The energy of the 4th chakra can be easily felt. Unfortunately for many this only becomes obvious after experiencing the breakup of a desired relationship or the loss of a dream. The resultant pain felt in the center of the chest is what we call a broken heart.

It is our false belief in the scarcity of love that generates these feelings and our resultant defensive and offensive behaviors. When the heart center is fully open these feelings and behaviors fade away because we realize that a shortage of love is impossible. Love is our natural state of being and the more we give away the more we get back.

Through the crown or 7th chakra we connect with the Cosmos, the home of the Divine masculine, through the base or 1st chakra we connect with the Earth, the home of the Divine feminine. It is only through the heart chakra, however, the center point of the seven chakras that we can fully manifest the totality of our divine energy. The heart, not the head, is the portal through which we can both return to and become Source once again. Through the heart we experience ecstasy.

The endocrine gland which interfaces with the 4th chakra is the thymus gland. The thymus gland is located behind the sternum. It is the master regulator of the immune system and secretes hormones which include thymosin and thymopoetin. These hormones stimulate certain white blood cells, the immune systems living defense network, to migrate to the thymus where they mature and develop the ability to protect against and resolve infections and cancers.

The immune system is incredibly complex and intelligent. Included in this system, in addition to the thymus, are the lymph nodes, the spleen and the bone marrow. Lymph nodes are found throughout the body and act as filters for detecting and removing potentially harmful substances from the lymphatic system. The spleen acts as a giant lymph node which filters blood instead of lymph fluid. The bone marrow is the origin of both red blood cells and white blood cells.

White blood cells which are also called leukocytes consist of a vast array of different cell types. A routine blood test called a CBC measures the total number of WBCs which is an indicator of immune function. A high number usually indicates an acute infection but can also be a marker for certain cancers like leukemia. A low number often indicates some sort of immune suppression and is a common finding in HIV infection, AIDS and chronic fatigue and immune deficiency syndrome (CFIDS).

WBCs are divided into 5 categories which include lymphocytes, monocytes, and neutrophils. Monocytes develop into cells that act like pac-mans and roam the body engulfing unwanted visitors and cleaning up after other immune cells have neutralized the danger. Neutrophils are especially important in the defense against bacteria. Lymphocytes are perhaps the most interesting of all and are particularly important in our defense against viruses.

The lymphocytes are the cells which retain the memory of what we have been exposed to in the past. They are the cells that confer immunity against illnesses like the measles and chicken pox once we have had the illness or hopefully after we have been immunized. Lymphocytes are further divided into T cells and B cells. T stands for thymus which is where these cells mature. T cells are predisposed to respond to specific foreign substances called antigens. These cells are responsible

for the intense reaction that occurs when we become sensitized to substances like poison ivy. Helper T cells also called T4 or CD4 cells are responsible for producing chemical messengers like interferon which tell other immune cells what to do. T4 cells are the ones which decline dramatically in AIDS. B cells produce antibodies which are also called immunoglobulins.

Antibodies are proteins which target or flag antigens for elimination. Immunoglobulins are further divided into subsets which include IgG and IgE. IgE is what causes the immediate allergic, and sometimes life threatening, reaction people have to certain foods, and substances like bee venom. It is also the cause of hay fever. IgE causes the release of histamines which is why we use antihistamines to combat allergies. It is routinely measured in the skin prick allergies tests. A much less commonly done allergy test involves testing the blood for IgG sensitivities. IgG can cause immediate reactions but more often these reactions are delayed for hours, sometimes even days. Most food allergies are mediated through IgG. The skin prick allergy test will not pick these allergies up. Many people who have this skin test done will be told they are not allergic to certain foods when in fact they are. A simple blood test is available which measures both IgG and IgE reactions to over 100 different foods and spices. It is a good test to do for chronic problems like digestive disturbances, skin rashes, fatigue states, and sinus problems.

Interestingly many people who suffer repeated infections also are the ones who often develop numerous allergic reactions. It is as if a chronically stimulated immune system exhausts its ability effectively defend against infections, yet in its attempt to do so, overcompensates by attacking everything else including our own body. The end results can include worsening food and environmental allergies, eczema, and autoimmune conditions and lingering infections. All of these skirmishes require enormous energy and often leave the person exhausted.

Fortunately the herbal and nutritional world is full of solutions to address this perplexing set of circumstances. The celebrated Chinese tonic herb astragalus and the tonic mushrooms Ganoderma, grifola, polyporous and tremella are frequently used to treat chaotic immune systems. Pharmacological evaluation has shown these particular herbs contain polysaccharides which have immune regulating properties. Polysaccharides are long chain sugars which exert an activating and normalizing influence upon both the T cell and B cell regulated immunity. In addition to their ability to enhance resistance to viruses, bacteria, yeast and parasites they have anti-inflammatory, anti-allergy, and anti-carcinogenic properties. Quercetin is a bioflavonoid which is commonly used to treat allergies that has also demonstrated antiviral properties. It should be taken with bromelain to increase its absorption. Adequate vitamin C, zinc and selenium are also essential for proper immune function.

Breath is the key to opening the heart chakra, energizing the body, clearing our emotions, increasing mental clarity, and accessing expanded states of consciousness. Most spiritual traditions

of the world equate the breath with the universal life force. It has been called Qi by the Taoists, prana by the Hindu, and mana by the Hawaiians. These traditions and many others have all developed conscious breathing exercises in order to transform themselves and enter states of bliss and ecstasy.

Activities to open the heart will also help regulate the immune system. Sign up for a transformational breathwork class. Laugh allot. Volunteer for a cause dear to your heart. Go to the mountains for breath of fresh air. Celebrate Earth Day. Plant a tree. Buy more plants. Fill your home with green eco friendly products. Give generously and receive graciously.

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