

Emotional Effects of Flu on Parents

by Douglas Christian Larsen

Overview

Parents worry when influenza rages in epidemic, especially during the time of global pandemic. Even garden-variety flu can prove fatal in some individuals. Parents must be vigilant and make the tough calls regarding vaccinations, hospitalization, and natural remedies.



Signs of Stress

According to the Oregon.gov website concerning the flu season, typical signs of accumulating stress, including anxiety, irritability and impatience, changes in sleep and appetite, difficulty in concentration, and muscle aches, nausea, sweating, and shakiness.

Noticing Stress in Others

We are more likely to notice increasing levels of stress in others before we notice it in ourselves. The Oregon.gov website explains that if we are noticing stress in others, they are probably noticing it in us as well.

Flu Preparations

As indicated in the “Pandemic Flu Factsheet” provided in PDF format by The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) on their website, preparing for flu season—especially during the time of pandemic flu—as well as keeping the whole family informed, is important in reducing anxiety and worry. Families should learn and practice cleanliness together and be familiar with the best ways to avoid influenza infection.

Inexpensive Natural Flu Remedies

As noted on the Flu HQ website, there is an abundance of inexpensive, natural remedies available in super markets and health-food stores, which can go far in reducing the stress of parents in preparation for influenza epidemics and pandemics. Parents should have a firm plan for protecting both themselves and their families in the event of flu infection.

Self-Care

Rest, adequate diet, proper hydration, and maintaining a healthy attitude are all aspects of managing stress, as detailed on the Oregon.gov website. It is important to exercise, find enjoyment in activities, and keep the mind engaged.

References & Resources

- [Oregon.gov: Social and Emotional Health During Flu Season](#)
- [NCTSN: Pandemic Flu Fact Sheet](#)

About the Author

Douglas Christian Larsen is a writer with more than 20 years' experience in creative and technical writing and editing, desktop publishing and graphic design, and is a published author and novelist. He is currently the Christian Spirituality Examiner on Examiner.com, and writes for eHow and Associated Content.

Online Article: <http://www.soyouwanna.com/emotional-effects-flu-parents-23407.html>

Factory Farming and the Swine Flu

by Douglas Christian Larsen

Overview

It is a loud and volatile issue, whether or not “Swine Flu” is tied directly to modern factory-farm methods. The chief reason for the hullabaloo is that scientific truth might chisel away factory farming profits.

Origins: Bird Flu

Viral diseases pass genetically from animals to people through reassortment and mutation, including measles, tuberculosis, small pox, Ebola, mad cow and bubonic plague. Influenza originated in birds, and is prevalent in wild migratory fowl without the virus killing them.

Transmission

Swine are the perfect breeding ground, as they are a link between humans and birds. Pigs get sick from humans, and vice versa, and birds and pigs can also pass disease back and forth. As reported on the Wired.com website by Brandon Keim, “industrial farms are super-incubators for viruses.”

Reluctance to Report

As Roberta Rampton reported at Reuters, U.S. farmers are reluctant to report to authorities when their swine are ill, while in Asia, millions of domestic chickens and ducks are purposefully culled.

Reassortment

Influenza has spread from migratory birds to domestic chickens, and through the evolution of reassortment—when varied flu viruses combine with different subtypes to produce a new virus—passed to swine, and ultimately to people.

Factory Farming Danger

Current factory farming practices force animals to live compacted too closely together near human beings. As Jonathan Safran Froer states on the CNN website, “It’s a perfect storm: The animals have been bred to such extremes that sickness is inevitable, and the living conditions promote illness.”

References & Resources

- [Wired Science: Swine Flu Ancestor Born on U.S. Factory Farms](#)
- [Reuters: Hog Farmers Wary of Reporting New Flu](#)
- [Rolling Stone - Pork's Dirty Secret: Boss Hog](#)
- [CNN: Eating Animals is Making Us Sick](#)
- [The Washington Post: Playing Chicken with a Nightmare Flu](#)

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Online Article: <http://www.soyouwanna.com/factory-farming-swine-flu-23558.html>



Benefits of Flaxseed Oil for Alternative Medicine

by Douglas Christian Larsen

Healthy Alternative

The health benefits of flaxseeds are increasingly acknowledged in the alternative-medicine community as well as among health nutritionists and dietitians. Especially with current developments in the media regarding health risks associated with fish oil, flaxseed oil proves to be a healthy alternative in supplying healthy omega 3 fatty acids. And unlike fish oil, flax tastes good.



Origins of Flax

As documented on the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine's website, it is believed that the flax plant (*Linum usitatissimum*) was originally grown in Egypt and now grows throughout Canada and the northwestern United States. Flaxseed oil is expressed from flaxseeds.

Soluble Fiber

Flax is high in soluble fiber and is beneficial to digestive health and can be used as a laxative. High-lignan flaxseed oil also contains fiber that benefits the digestive tract.

Omega 3 Fatty Acids

Flaxseed oil is rich in alpha-linolenic acid, an essential fatty acid that is the digestive precursor to the production of omega 3 fatty acids, as detailed on the Mayo Clinic website. Evidence suggests that the omega 3 produced by the digestion of flaxseeds and flaxseed oil is beneficial for a healthy heart, although studies have produced mixed evidence as to how well flaxseed oil can prevent disease of the coronary artery.

Dietary Flax

According to the Whole Foods website, flax tastes good, with a rich nutty flavor. Whole or in meal form, flaxseeds can be added to any food, or even to a glass of water for health benefits. Flaxseeds are very high in omega 3 fatty acids, manganese, dietary fiber, magnesium, folic acid, copper, phosphorous and vitamin B6.

Flaxseeds and Cancer

As the University of Maryland website reports, flaxseeds contain chemicals called lignans that may aid in preventing cancer, as well as a variety of other health conditions such as high cholesterol, heart disease and heart arrhythmia.

Fish Oil Chemicals

Because fish oil is high in omega 3 fatty acids, the health benefits of fish-oil consumption outweigh the risks associated with mercury poisoning, as well as other contaminants. As the San Francisco Chronicle reports, an environmental group tested fish oil and discovered high levels of toxic-chemical contamination. The choice looks increasingly better for flaxseeds and flaxseed oil, when fully considering a healthy diet.

Adding Flaxseed Oil to Other Oils

It is safe to add flaxseed oil to other oils, enhancing all the combined health benefits. The Healing Daily website recommends adding flaxseed oil to olive oil, sesame oil, or evening primrose oil, as these oils contain greater levels of omega 6 fatty acids, which balances the high level of omega 3 in flaxseed oil.

Writing Samples of Douglas Christian Larsen

Original articles researched and written for Demand Media for electronic delivery via a variety of online e-magazines.

References & Resources

- [Whole Foods: Flaxseeds](#)
- [HealingDaily.com: Flaxseed and Health](#)
- [NCCAM: Flaxseed and Flaxseed Oil](#)
- [MayoClinic.com: Flaxseed and Flaxseed Oil](#)
- [San Francisco Chronicle: Lawsuit Says Fish Oil Supplements Contain PCB](#)
- [University of Maryland Medical Center: Flaxseed Oil](#)

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Online Article: <http://www.soyouwanna.com/benefits-flaxseed-oil-alternative-medicine-21393.html>

Respiration in Plants & Animals

by Douglas Christian Larsen

Overview

Earth is a biosphere, with complementary systems integrated to produce and sustain life. Plants and animals are the two primary systems in the biosphere's cycle of life, with plants "exhaling" oxygen through photosynthesis and animals inhaling oxygen through the lungs and exhaling carbon dioxide as a byproduct. Plants require carbon dioxide to live and flourish with their end-product again becoming oxygen. This balancing process of complementary systems is known as respiration and photosynthesis.

Photosynthesis

Both plants and animals respire, as detailed on the University of Hamburg's website, but only plants continue the process of photosynthesis, which is the conversion of the sun's energy into usable energy for both plants and animals. Photosynthesis is the conversion of sunlight into a molecule of adenosine triphosphate (ATP). This ATP is a storage container of energy, which can be accessed by life forms other than plants. According to Estrella Mountain Community College, this is the process activated in plants when converting energy from the sun into oxygen. Plants take in sunlight, water and carbon dioxide molecules, and release oxygen molecules.

Respiration

As stated on TutorVista.com, "respiration can be broadly defined as the breakdown of organic compounds into simpler compounds accompanied by the release of energy in the form of ATP." This is the process we call, at the most basic level, "breathing." Plants and animals breathe, but animals, including humans, require plants to convert the energy of the sun into oxygen. Animal life receives oxygen molecules, and—after a process called internal respiration and cellular respiration takes place inside the animal or human body—exudes carbon dioxide molecules.

External Respiration

External respiration is the process wherein animal life receives air from the environment and in a gaseous exchange returns the air to the environment in another form. This gaseous exchange takes place in all life forms, from insects to fish to human beings to plants, including algae and fungus.

Internal Respiration

Internal respiration is the distribution process in the body of an animal wherein oxygen is carried via the lungs and bloodstream throughout the body and broken down and converted into cellular energy.

Cellular Respiration

Cellular respiration is the conversion process that is initiated in the cytoplasm and finishes in the mitochondria, with the end-product resulting in carbon dioxide molecules. The cellular system is like a furnace burning energy, and the byproduct of that combustion is carbon dioxide. After expulsion into the atmosphere, that carbon dioxide becomes an element in the continuing process of photosynthesis.

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How to Locate Venus in the Night Sky

by Douglas Christian Larsen

Locating the Planet Venus

Locating the planet Venus in the night sky is usually not difficult. Venus is the closest planet to Earth, and it resides between the Earth and the sun. Therefore, after the moon, Venus is the brightest body in the night sky. Known as “the morning star” when seen just before sunrise in the eastern sky and “the evening star” when seen in the western sky at twilight, Venus is most easily seen during its cycles of moving farther away from the sun.



Things You'll Need

- Clear night sky
- Binoculars
- Telescope

Instructions

Step 1: Situate yourself in a dark location with an open view of the night sky, preferably away from city illumination.

Step 2: Depending on the time of day you are viewing the sky, you will view either the western or the eastern horizon. Since Venus is closer to the sun than is Earth, it helps to imagine that Venus is following the sun; so in the evening, Venus is in the west following the setting sun, and in the morning, the planet is in the east running ahead of the sun.

Step 3: In the evening, Venus should be visible in the western sky for approximately 3 hours after sunset. Toward morning, Venus should be visible in the eastern sky for approximately 3 hours before sunrise.

Step 4: Venus will always appear brighter than any other star or planet. Once Venus is located with the naked eye, the planet may be viewed through either powerful binoculars or a telescope. Seen through a telescope, Venus may be seen in phases, similar to the moon (from full to crescent), depending on its position in relation to the sun.

Note: Venus will also appear brighter, and larger, when closer to Earth.

References

- [Universe Today: How to Find Venus in the Sky](#)
- [The Naked Eye Planets: Venus](#)

Resources

- [The WVHS Planetarium: Observing Venus in 2010](#)
-

Crafts for Vacation Bible School for Ages 6-9

By Douglas Christian Larsen, eHow Contributor

Crafts and Fun

Crafts in Vacation Bible School (VBS) are a must for children aged 6 to 9, as the activity and concentration provides kids the opportunity to focus their energy into creating something that they will view as valuable. Craft-time can aid children learn eternal truths in a fun way.

Two Tablets of 10

Create a simple “Ten Commandments” out of construction paper, poster board, or foam board with the first tablet labeled “About God” and “Great Commandment,” and the second tablet labeled “About People” and “Golden Rule.” All the words can be pre-printed on felt pieces, or bits of colorful paper. The children can cut out the pieces with safety scissors and paste them onto the tablets.

The numbered commandments should be cut out with safety scissors: 1. Worship only God, 2. Do Not Worship Fake Gods, 3. Respect God’s Name, and 4. Keep the 7th Day as the Sabbath. These all should be pasted onto the first tablet, explaining that what God shows here is how people should love and honor Him.

On the second tablet: 5. Honor Parents, 6. Do Not Kill, 7. Respect Marriage, 8. Do Not Steal, 9. Be Honest and 10. Be Satisfied with What You Have. These all should be pasted onto the second tablet, explaining that what God shows here is how people should love each other, and themselves as well.

Memory Verse Scroll

Create a double-roll scroll of parchment with a key memory verse such as John 3:16. The younger children (6 to 7 years) can cut out a pre-printed verse with safety scissors, while the older children (8 to 9 years) can carefully print the memory verse by copying directly onto the parchment. The strips of parchment should be about 3 inches wide, a little narrower than the width of a wooden popsicle stick, and about 11 inches long.

Glue a popsicle stick at about 1/4 inch from each end of the parchment strip, and fold the remainder of the strip over the top of the sticks and glue it down, so that both sticks are covered by folded parchment, with a bit of stick showing at each end. When the glue dries, roll the two ends of the parchment toward each other, meeting in the middle, forming two rolled tubes. Tie a gold ribbon around the scroll.

Door to the Heart

Draw a large “heart” shape on red construction paper. Cut out a large “door” from another color of construction paper, and decorate. The door should fill about half the area of the large heart that was first drawn. Cut out the heart and paste the left side of the door to the surface of the heart, creating a doorway that opens and closes in the middle of the heart. Beneath this door have the child draw a smiling self-portrait, holding hands with Jesus. Explain to them that Jesus knocks on the door of their heart, and they only have to open the door for Him to enter.

Homeschooling the Strong Willed Child

by Douglas Christian Larsen, eHow Contributor



Will power

Homeschooling is vastly rewarding. As the proverb says, the more effort, the greater the reward. Homeschooling is rarely an easy endeavor, but with a willful child, it can prove even more stressful and trying, a tough job for even the most patient of parents. Patience is important, as well as persistence. A teacher must be consistent in method, manner, and mindset in teaching a child.

Creative Rewards

Praise your child liberally when he is successful, and encourage him when unsuccessful. Maintain a healthy positivity, encouraging your child that it can be done, that they can get this, and that they are making progress every day. Remind yourself of these facts, as well.

Reward your child with breaks, or even on-the-fly recess, especially during stressful moments or times of tough learning. Encourage your strong-willed child to run, even if it is only to the other side of the yard. A small amount of brisk exercise outdoors can go a long way during indoor learning.

Place music practice between two mentally taxing classes. Younger children need more small breaks than older children. Sometimes an elective class, such as the daily practicing of piano or another musical instrument, can be a good break between two challenging classes. Other elective classes such as physical education, chess, art, or hobbies are appropriate, especially when the elective class enables a change of pace from rote school work.

Spiritual Time

Begin each school day with a small, quiet time in the morning. It could be a “prayer time.” For those who do not include any form of religion in their homeschooling, a quiet time that student and teacher spend together—before class time—with questions and answers is good, and does not have to be longer than 5 or 10 minutes.

Play soothing classical music during classes—or other gentle music that does not distract the attention, and can be listened to subconsciously rather than actively—especially music that includes the sounds of nature, such as waves, animal and bird noises, pattering rain and storms. Recordings pairing classical music with nature sounds are very common, and are available at most school-supply outlets.

Teach strong-willed children consistently with firmness, but always patience and love should be foremost. When a child refuses to cooperate and discipline is in order, have the child sit in “time out,” demonstratively, turning off any soothing music during the disciplinary time. Also, inform the disciplined child that this time-out period is a time in which outside time could have been enjoyed, and that the “time out” cancels access to the “treat bag.” Relegate “time outs” to 5-minute intervals.

Tips & Warnings

Always ensure that discipline is moderated with love and patience. Homeschooling can be tough, but the benefits far outweigh the hardships. Remain calm, and remember that listening to classical music with nature sounds is as beneficial to the teacher as it is to the student.

What Makes Me Ache When I Have the Flu?

by Douglas Christian Larsen, eHow Contributor

The deep ache of flu.

Generally, the first symptom of influenza is a deep ache in the bones, experienced when the human body begins to respond to a viral infection. As the illness progresses, a pervading soreness may be experienced throughout the muscles, accompanied by a general feeling of weakness and exhaustion. This achiness, first in the bones and then in the muscles, is a defining factor in distinguishing a flu infection from a common cold infection.



Initial Cytokine Ache

As Medical News Today reports, the immune system's response of white blood cells releasing large amounts of inflammatory agents called cytokines and chemokines results in the common symptoms of influenza, including body aches and pains. In his book "The Great Influenza," author John M. Barry writes about the initial symptom experienced when the body's immune system responds to an invasion of the influenza virus, which is a deep ache in the bones. This symptom is due to the bone marrow beginning to produce an abundance of white cells in the blood in response to a viral invasion.

Muscle Soreness

As influenza progresses through its stages of infection, the body becomes dehydrated, at first due to fever. To combat the viral infection, the human body raises its temperature, which can burn off the water contained in the cells. With fever, nausea may commence, making it difficult to retain food and water. The resulting ache in the muscles is due to overheated cells and a lack of water.

Keeping Hydrated

Hydration is the best way to alleviate the muscle aches generated by the flu. While vomiting and diarrhea are usually uncommon with the flu, these symptoms are often present with influenza and can be contributing factors to severe dehydration.

Rest

When infected with the influenza virus, rest is a very important factor. Stay at home and remain in bed, especially when suffering either a deep ache in the bones or the more diverse soreness experienced throughout the muscles. Refrain from exercise, and get as much sleep as possible, until fully recovered.

Green Tea and Ginger

As reported on the Whole Foods Website, green tea is a proven effective tool in the lessening of symptoms and duration of influenza. Add the spice ginger in powdered form to green tea, or use a slice of fresh, crushed ginger root. Ginger ale is also a soothing way to introduce ginger to the body, but check to ensure that real ginger is listed in the ingredients.

Job description of the Senior Pastor of a Church

by Douglas Christian Larsen, eHow Contributor

The Senior Pastor of a church is the figurative shepherd of the flock, providing spiritual and emotional support to the congregation, preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ and teaching the principles of the Word of God. The Senior Pastor should not only be proficient in talking church talk, but must actively walk the Christian walk.

Spiritual Maturity

The Senior Pastor must have a powerful vision that extends beyond material gain and common comforts, with eyes set on a prize beyond Earthly reward, and must not be subject to political sway, bullying, or intimidation. Integrity is requisite, as is honesty, kindness, purity, thoughtfulness, bravery, and a complete reliance on God.

Primary Duties

The Senior Pastor will conduct ongoing daily and weekly church activities including sermons, communion, baptism and baptismal counseling, child dedications, visitation of the sick, weddings and funerals, counseling, and heading and consulting with all elders of the church, as well as deacons and deaconesses. The Senior Pastor will be accessible to the congregation, known by the church and available for questions and comments.

Living Attributes

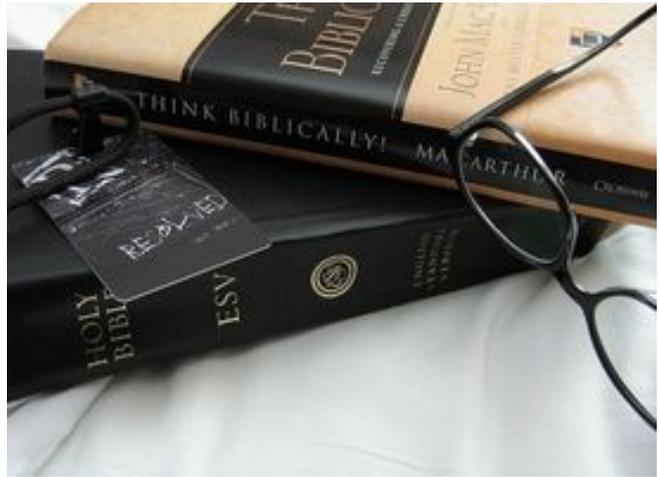
The Bible clearly delineates the attributes of a Senior Pastor: “If anyone wants to provide leadership in the church, good! But there are preconditions: A leader must be well-thought-of, committed to his wife, cool and collected, accessible, and hospitable. He must know what he's talking about, not be overfond of wine, not pushy but gentle, not thin-skinned, not money-hungry. He must handle his own affairs well, attentive to his own children and having their respect. For if someone is unable to handle his own affairs, how can he take care of God's church? He must not be a new believer, lest the position go to his head and the Devil trip him up. Outsiders must think well of him, or else the Devil will figure out a way to lure him into his trap” (1 Timothy 3:1-7, The Message). See also Titus 1:5-9 and 1 Peter 5:1-4.

Christian Outreach

The Senior Pastor will head the outreach to the community, providing an example to the unchurched, the disenfranchised, the unbelieving, as well as the critics and those antagonistic toward the church, displaying love, real faith in action, Christianity in vibrant actuality and the joy in Christ available to all people regardless of race, creed, nationality, personality, education, or birth.

Reliance on Scripture

The Senior Pastor must know the Bible personally, from daily devotions and the constant practice of hiding the Word of God in his or her heart. The Scriptures should be the first place of appeal, not tradition, opinion, public consensus, or political pressure.



Writing Samples of Douglas Christian Larsen

Original articles researched and written for Demand Media for electronic delivery via a variety of online e-magazines.

Encouragement

The Senior Pastor should be the bedrock of foundational support, to the Associate Pastor, to elders, deacons, and deaconesses, as well as all ministry staff, church employees, and the entire congregation, through both personal example and godly advice, as well as displaying a constant spirit of helpfulness and kindness.

About the Author

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Games to Play at Bible Study

by Douglas Christian Larsen, eHow Contributor

Studying the Bible should never be performed as a chore, and it does not have to be drudgery. The Word of God should be thrilling, stimulating, refreshing, and even fun. Of course, the Bible should be studied seriously, and the Scriptures should be respected at all times; however, in a proper spirit, fun games are an appropriate accessory to studying the Bible.



Bible Reference Exploration

Ensure that everyone is equipped with a good reference Bible. In a large group, it is also best that there are many diverse versions of the Bible present. Suggested versions include the King James Version (KJV), New International Version (NIV), New Living Translation (NLT), Amplified Bible (AMP), New English Version (NEV), God's Word Translation (GWT) and New Jerusalem Bible (NJB).

Begin with a single verse. Stress the point that everyone should attempt to stick as closely as possible to the subject of the verse. Read this verse in the King James Version, as it is the most universal version of the Bible. Call for readings from different versions.

At this point everyone should be asked to find a reference in study Bibles, linking to the initial verse. The first person who looks up a reference to the verse should raise their hand, and when called upon by the leader, read the reference verse. All verses should be annotated as the study progresses. Move from reference to reference, allowing the study to branch off from reference to reference. There should be a quorum about whether or not each successive verse pertains to the original subject, and how it applies.

Bible Trivia

Bible trivia is perhaps the most common game related to Bible study. For children, even simple Bible trivia is a great way to begin the process of memorizing Biblical detail.

For adults, trivia questions should be more related to the peripheral specifics of Scripture. Instead of asking, "What was the name of the giant David slew?" ask: "How many stones did David gather out of the river before facing Goliath?" Incidental information can be easily supplied beforehand, such as Goliath's brothers, and other giants mentioned in the Bible.

The leader of the Bible study should prepare a list of trivia questions and answers. When no one knows the correct answer, the group should look up the verse that contains the answer.

Skits and Sketches

Biblical drama is a way to bring home a point by illuminating Scripture. Either work out a drama before the Bible study and have actors ready to perform the skit, or sketch, or have two or three people from the study come up with a Biblical parable to act out, on the fly.

Specify that the actors must think of a way—in a very short period of time—to illustrate a Bible passage in modern terms. The purpose is for the rest of the Bible students to figure out what Biblical passage or story is being depicted.