

Those Pesky Critters!

What I am going to write about in this column, you may not want to read about. It's not a pleasant topic and it's something we don't talk about much. And yet, it can exert an important role in our overall well-being. I'm talking about those pesky critters called parasites.

I can't tell you when I got parasites or for how many years I was carrying them around before somebody suggested I might have them. I was having a colonic cleanse for the first time, as part of an overall diet cleanse, when the wonderful woman who does this important work noted that she thought she saw some parasites.

others in our muscles, and yet others can even cross the blood/brain barrier.

A few years ago, when visiting Uruguay, Viviana, my host family's daughter-in-law, told me about growing up in rural Uruguay in a large family without lots of money. "Every spring we would be given castor oil to deworm us. Maybe it helped, because we have all grown up healthy and strong."

Many of the spices and herbs we use have anti-parasitic properties. Some examples are thyme, turmeric, cilantro, garlic, and epazote.

What parasites do seem to like is sugar and sweets of all types. Coffee is also appreciated by many of them. So one part of an anti-parasite regime is to remove from your diet for several months any foods that they do like, and at the same time try to consume frequently spices and herbs that are anti-parasitic.

But before even doing this, Caroline Gagnon suggested that it is important to acknowledge to yourself that you have parasites living in your body and to tell them to leave. "Just the act of recognizing these parasites and telling them you no longer want them can sometimes get rid of them."

This got me to thinking about how we may not only have actual parasites within us, but also energetic parasites in our lives and the life of our nation and the world. As is so often true, what goes on in the micro level also can be reflected and replicated in the macro-realm – and vice versa.

As for me, I never took a parasite test because my insurance would not cover it. But I did follow an anti-parasite regime for several months, including a few rounds of heavy duty herbal anti parasite pills. I asked those nasty critters to leave me, that they were no longer welcomed in my body.

My husband says I no longer grind my teeth at night. My dentist agrees.

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Healing Perspectives

with Skye Stephenson



Parasites? This took me aback at first, but when I read some of the wide ranging symptoms of parasites, like teeth grinding, it rang a bell. Since at least my teen years I have been told I make a strange humming, grinding noise when I sleep. "You sound like a squirrel," is how my sophomore year college roommate once described the sound.

Around the same time I was told I may have parasites, I went to an alternative dentist to remove some amalgam fillings. He, like all the dentists I go to, noted that I grind my teeth. "Why do you do that?" he asked. "I believe it's due to parasites," I told him.

He looked at me in astonishment and asked, "How do you know that parasites cause tooth grinding?" Then he added, "I attended a conference in Russia on the topic of tooth grinding, and they said that it was almost always caused by parasites. But in the US most people don't consider parasites as a health problem."

So true. Last month I attended a half day workshop on parasites at a local herbal conference. Caroline Gagnon, the facilitator, found it hard to give her presentation because so many participants started sharing stories. A 30-something woman spoke up. She was lean, trim, and quite attractive. She said that she worked on an organic farm and twice had expelled an enormous parasitic worm at least nine inches long. She surmised she had gotten them from working with pig manure. When she had taken the parasitic worm to her local hospital for identification and to seek medical help, they did not know what to do. And so they had sent it to off to the biggest hospital in Vermont – Burlington – where she was also told that they did not know about parasites.

"Yep, that's the problem," Caroline Gagnon agreed. "Most doctors and other health care people aren't taught about parasites and how to treat them. Many think that we might get parasites in other countries, other climates, but not around here. But that's not true."

In fact, the Center for Disease Control, the paragon of mainstream medicine, states that there are literally millions of people who have parasites and don't realize it. These parasites can cause many health complications, some life threatening.

I have pretty good health insurance, and yet the stool tests for parasites are not covered. And even if they were, many types of parasites can't be found through stool samples. Some reside in our tissues,

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