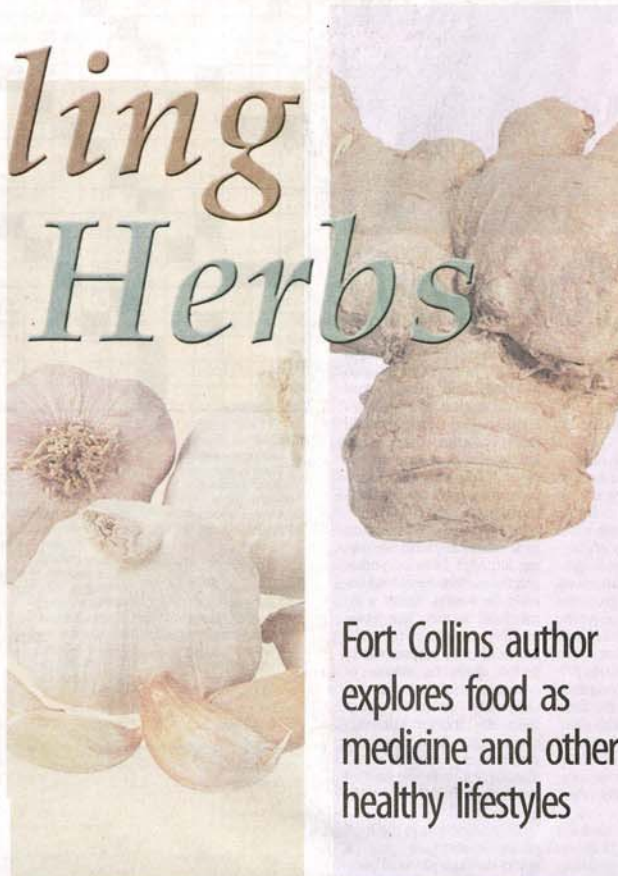


NICE TO KNOW

It is important to remember that although many herbs are thought to have medicinal values, there are still some risks connected to them, for example, the risk of toxicity.

— herbalremedyfacts.com

Healing Herbs



By JOYCE DAVIS
FOR THE REPORTER-HERALD

From ginger tea baths to dandelion greens sautéed with olive oil and garlic, Susan Mead perpetuates the time-honored use of natural remedies for health needs.

A certified master herbalist and yoga instructor, Mead writes about ways to effectively prevent disease and heal imbalances through a combination of plant use and prudent lifestyle choices.

In her new book, "Take Back Your Body: Using Time-Tested Health Tips and Uncommon Sense," the Fort Collins author takes readers on an intriguing journey that opens the door to a world of common, health-happy herbs.

Her practical tips are sprinkled with folksy and fun personal stories that illustrate a variety of themes that include the use of food as medicine, men's and women's health issues and creating successful partnerships, coupled with common-sense approaches to avoiding stress by finding an inner serenity.

Packed with savvy advice for listening to body and then finding ways to make it healthy, Mead also addresses issues such as weight gain brought on by harmful eating habits. While not a traditional "one size fits all" diet book, Mead — who shares how she changed her own relationship with food — offers tips for creating a mind-body connection as a foundation for permanent weight loss.

"It isn't about just one aspect of your life," she says. "You can't cure one symptom at a time and ignore the rest of your body the rest of your life," she says. "It's all about what you eat and the way you eat, how you shop, how you move your body, how you interact with others. It all contributes to the health of your body, mind and soul."

Mead believes that too many people fail to lose weight because they fall into

Fort Collins author explores food as medicine and other healthy lifestyles



Reporter-Herald CHRISTOPHER STARK

Master Herbalist Susan Mead of Fort Collins recently published her book, "Take Back Your Body," which suggests ways for people to stay away from prescription drugs and surgery. She offers tips to maintain the body and help it to heal imbalances.

the trap of believing total deprivation of certain foods is the way to go.

"It's really more about changing your lifestyle and finding healthy substitutes for those foods we know are bad for us," she says. "If you love potato chips, you don't have to cut them out of your life forever. You can substitute a healthier alternate such as baked chips, or choose to eat them only now or then. If you can make sure that 80 percent of what you eat is healthy, then you can occasionally treat yourself to that handful of chips."

What we eat and how we eat is most often connected to what gives us comfort. "Part of my role is to help find

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About the Author

Susan E. Mead received her master herbalist certification from The Artemis Institute in Boulder in 1996. A yoga instructor, she has a bachelor's degree in business administration and is a member of the Herb Research Foundation, the American Herbalists' Guild and the Weston Price Foundation. She lives in Fort Collins and Steamboat Springs.

• For information about "Take Back Your Body: Using Time-Tested Health Tips and Uncommon Sense" by Susan E. Mead, go to www.susane.mead.com.

• The book is available at Reader's Cove in Fort Collins and Amazon.com.

• To see a video presentation from her book, go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=uPTDICIWyo8.

Low-cost heart disease screenings offered

During February, Salud Family Health Center in Fort Collins will offer low-cost heart disease screenings.

For \$10, Salud will analyze the participants' blood pressure, test for cholesterol, triglycerides, LDL, and HDL levels, and discuss the cardiac risk ratio.

Nearly 50 percent of all adults in the United States have an increased risk of having a heart attack due to their blood cholesterol level being above the desirable range recommended by the National Cholesterol Education Program. High blood pressure is also a key risk factor for heart attack and strokes.

Knowing those risk factor numbers can help patients and their doctors assess their potential for cardiovascular disease and find strategies to lower their risk.

Appointments are available at the Salud Clinic at 1635 Blue Spruce Drive, Fort Collins. To schedule an appointment or for more information, call 494-4040.

— Reporter-Herald staff

CSU professor joins global health research advocates

Barry Beatty, Colorado State University professor and infectious disease expert, has been selected to join a group of 25 experts in global health research who will advocate for greater U.S. government spending on global health research.

Research! America's Paul G. Rogers Society for Global Health Research is working to build a national conversation around the value and importance of U.S.-funded global health research.

Beatty is a professor in the College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences' Department of Microbiology, Immunology and Pathology, where he has studied diseases spread by insects, such as malaria and dengue fever, West Nile fever and yellow fever.

— Reporter-Herald staff

Study: Oxytocin plays part in forming social memories

It's the hormone that makes people bond with mates and helps mothers fall in love with their babies. Now researchers have shown that oxytocin plays a key role in forming social memories.

A dose of oxytocin, administered by nasal spray, made Swiss men more likely to recognize faces they had seen briefly the day before. But the hormone made no difference when it came to recalling pictures of houses, landscapes or sculptures, according to a study published last week in the Journal of Neuroscience.

Scientists from the University of Zurich recruited 41 volunteers and administered three puffs per nostril of either oxytocin or a placebo. After giving the hormone time to reach the brain, volunteers watched 84 photos of faces and 84 images of inanimate objects flash onto a computer screen for 3.5 seconds each.

One day later, volunteers were shown the same pictures mixed in with additional images and were asked to identify which were new and which they had seen before.

The 22 men who inhaled the hormone had an overall "recognition memory rate" of 46 percent for faces. That compared with 36 percent for the 19 men who got the placebo. But both groups scored an identical 44 percent for pictures of houses, landscapes and sculptures, according to the study.

— The Los Angeles Times

HEALTH STUDY

In women not taking hormones, obesity may increase risk

HERBS: Stop beating up on yourself over body image and expectations

FROM PAGE D1

alternatives that taste good and satisfy not only your hunger but your emotional needs," she says.

Mead also believes we must stop beating up on ourselves when it comes to body image and expectations. "If you're constantly fighting with yourself, then you will constantly be drawn toward the foods you think you shouldn't eat," she says. "When you give in to temptation, you then tell yourself you're a failure and wonder why you can't get motivated."

Mead suggests eliminating restrictions and replacing them with positive changes. "Instead, set good intentions. Choose to eat four servings of vegetables or fruit every day. When you succeed at that, add another good intention. Words make a big difference in how we achieve success."

The book includes sections for men's and women's health issues, letting go of bad habits and getting enough sleep.

It also speaks to aligning ourselves with nature when it comes to where we buy our food and from whom. She advises shopping at local farmers

markets as a way to meet and build a relationship with those who grow our produce.

"It reaffirms our connection to the earth and makes you a caring steward," she says.

One section in the book addresses herbs for healing and prevention and how to incorporate them into your life. These are foods that can often replace expensive medications and supplements. "The Chinese believe that your first medication should be food," Mead says. The chapter includes her personal favorites, "The Three Musketeers": — garlic, onion and ginger.

"Take Back Your Body" also offers readers creative and successful ways to free their bodies from pharmaceuticals, harmful pre-packaged foods and the whims of health insurance companies by relying on plants whose health properties have been proven through the years.

Herbs, Mead believes, are Mother Nature's greatest gift for restoring health to our minds and bodies.

"Their healing powers allow us to make adjustments in the way we live so we can squeeze the juice out of each precious day of our lives," she says.

Healthy living tips

Suggestions from author and master herbalist Susan Mead.

The Quick Six

- Rest: Take a short 10-minute nap when you're feeling sluggish
- Eat well: Consume five to seven fruits and vegetables a day
- Drink two quarts of water a day (includes herbal tea)
- Do your best to minimize unhealthy foods and make good choices 85 percent of the time
- Move your body: Shoot for one extra movement — a walk, for instance — each day
- Create quiet time: If you can't meditate, gaze out the window for a few minutes, gently pushing away distracting thoughts
- Be creative: Join a club, take an art class to wake your creative side
- Love yourself and others: If you're stressed, stop and remind yourself of two priorities — serenity and compassion — both for yourself and others