



“When life gives you lemons...use them to clean up your Gallbladder !”

Product of the Month:

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Dissolve GS

by Evergreen Herbs

Dissolve GS is a Chinese herbal formula that reduces inflammation in the gallbladder and helps dissolve stones that are present. Check with our docs to see if it is right for you!

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It's Nice to Meet You, Gallbladder

By Dr. Mohammad Shegeft

Did you know your gallbladder has a favorite band? It's the rolling stones!

This pear-shaped & hollow organ is located under the liver on the right side of the abdomen. It serves as a reservoir for bile made by the liver and used in the digestive tract to help with the break down and absorption of fats. We actually produce over a quart of bile a day to help us digest the foods we eat. Once food passes from the stomach to the small gut, a hormone is released that signals the gallbladder to contract and secrete bile into the intestine through the common bile duct. This bile helps the digestive process by emulsifying fats, neutralizing acids and aiding in absorption of fat

soluble vitamins. The bile salts also provide an exit pathway for toxins from the liver to get out of the body via the GI tract..

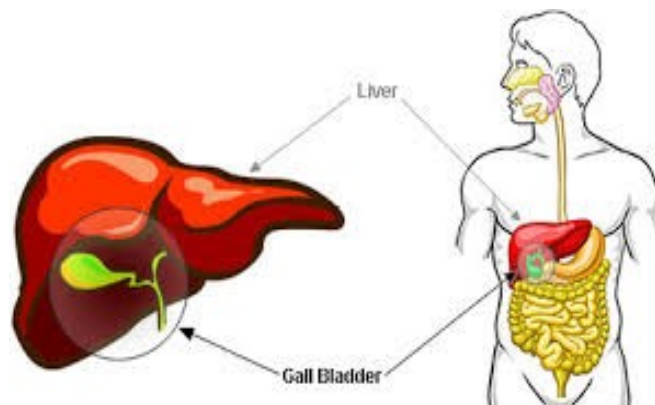
Bile stored in our gallbladder can crystallize, and form small stones known as gallstones. They are made up mostly of cholesterol and dead blood cells. A diet a high in cholesterol, (red meat, pork, shell fish) ,fried foods vegetable oils and hydrogenated oils (which show up in a lot of packaged foods) results in more gallbladder stones. A person with gallstones will rarely feel any symptoms until the stones start to obstruct the bile ducts. In most cases a stone will either dissolve or will be passed through the duct and the digestive tract without any complication or pain. In some cases, a stone that is larger than the bile duct may get stuck and prevent flow from the liver. Surgical intervention

may even be necessary to break up a lodged stone or to remove the gallbladder completely.

Your body will essentially work okay without the gallbladder, as the bile will just flow freely from the liver to the intestine. However it is not optimal. Since the bile no longer has the time to collect in the gallbladder you wont have as much on demand as needed when you eat a meal.. There will be definite changes in how you can digest food so lifestyle and dietary modification is necessary.

Myth – It doesn't matter if your gallbladder is removed. It's not an important organ and you can be perfectly healthy without it.

Fact – Yes, it's true that you can survive without a gallbladder, but you are at greater risk of developing certain liver conditions. You will also have impaired fat digestion and deficiency of fat soluble nutrients such as vitamins D, K, E and A, as well as essential fatty acids.



TCM Perspective: Using food as Medicine for a Healthy Gallbladder

By Nichole Santoro, LAc

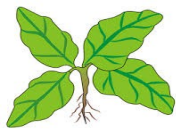
Spring has finally sprung and in Chinese Medicine it is the time to show some love to your liver and gallbladder. They are the organs that resonate most with this season and for that reason it is the perfect time to clean and nourish these organs with their favorite foods. This month we focus on the gallbladder. Its task of storing and releasing bile for fat metabolism is the same in Chinese and Western Medicine. The Chinese perspective however includes the deeper psychological bearings of the gallbladder, including; decision making, planning, action and assertiveness. When we are having problems being assertive and making decisions, are lacking passion, feeling timid or uninspired, we are experiencing an imbalance of the Gallbladder. When the Gallbladder is balanced and flowing healthy, we are inspired, assertive and passionate.

It is easy to please the gallbladder by just giving it the food it requires, and limiting the foods that cause distress. A poor diet is the number one cause of gallbladder dysfunction, so, foods that gum up the works must be avoided. These include the notorious greasy or fried foods as well as processed and sugary foods.

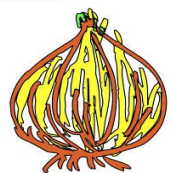


On the other hand, the foods that enhance bile flow and help keep the gallbladder clean and highly functioning tend to be sour, bitter or pungent.

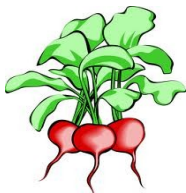
Sour Citrus fruits (grapefruit, lemon, lime, kumquat and orange), green apple, kiwi, vinegar



Bitter Leafy greens (kale, collards, mustards, chard), fresh herbs (parsley, basil, dill, dandelion)



Pungent radish, arugula, ginger, garlic, onion, chive, scallion, spices, hot peppers



Additionally, Beetroot has been shown to have a markedly positive effect on gallbladder function including being used as a medicine to calm an acute GB attack.

These earthy and strong flavors offer just the right elements needed for the liver to make a soapy bile salt to help emulsify and digest the fats we consume. Many of these foods additionally are able to gradually dissolve gallbladder stones, especially when consumed regularly..

The Gallbladder Cleanse: a Cautionary Tail

By Dr. Brooke Azie-Rentz

Some people call it a gallbladder cleanse, others call it a gallbladder flush... I call it dangerous! The basic principle is to flush out gallstones from your gallbladder and bile ducts. It consists of drinking down a concoction of olive oil, lemon juice and salt. The theory is that this combination causes the gallbladder to contract strongly in order to release bile, stones and sludge. While this is true, doing this procedure without knowing your anatomy and that of the gallstone itself can be extremely detrimental to your health.

The gallbladder releases bile into your common bile duct which is only about 5mm in diameter on average. A gallstone on the other hand can be anywhere from a grain of sand (.02mm-2mm) to a golf ball (42mm) in size! Imagine trying to squeeze a cherry or a golf ball through a straw! OUCH! Not to mention it can be all different shapes, including spikey! Best case scenario, the slurry tastes terrible, you get some abdominal cramping, and you pass some small stones. Next scenario is the stone is too big to pass into the duct and causes a blockage. This in turn will make you have some mild discomfort and a feeling of a pit in the stomach; in addition there may be more localized pain in the upper right quadrant of your stomach with possible radiation to your right shoulder blade. Additional symptoms might include dark urine, nausea, vomiting, fever, itching, and jaundice. This will usually result in a trip to the hospital for treatment including shockwaves to break up the stones, medications or possible surgery to remove the blockage, at which time they usually remove the gallbladder which as mentioned above, is really important for fat digestion, therefore absorption of fat soluble vitamins. Worst case scenario, the stone is large enough to get into the common bile duct but then gets stuck. Usually, this is extremely painful and lands someone in the emergency room. Ruptures, infections, and acute pancreatitis are all possible in this scenario. All of which can be life-threatening and will often require emergency treatment.

If you are having any of the mild symptoms mentioned above and are feeling adventurous and want to drink something nasty, a gallbladder cleanse may be right for you. However, I strongly advise all patients to consult with their Naturopath before attempting any type of cleanse/flush so that gallbladder function, size and gallstone size can be evaluated. This usually involves a simple and relatively cheap ultrasound.