You Give Me Fever

By Wendy Marks

September 11, 2015

When I was a child, if I ran a fever over 102 degrees my parents would fill the bathtub with ice water and immerse me in it in order to get my fever down. Not only was this an extremely unpleasant experience, it probably was not good for my body. Fever is one way that a body fights infection. Let's take a look at what fever really is.

Fever is hyperthermia, or when the body gets hotter than normal range, usually 98 to 100 degrees. Your body is heating up to kill the bacteria, fungus or virus that is attacking it.

Normal body temperature varies under many conditions. What you eat, how much you exercise, your menstrual cycle, your sleep cycle, and even the time of day, are all factors that affect your temperature. In fact, your temperature is the highest around 6 pm and the lowest around 3 am.

Fever is one of the best ways that our immune system can combat infection. An elevated body temperature helps kill off viruses and bacterial infections. Essentially, the higher temperature cooks them and they die off. In many cases fever can be a friend. If fever is not severe, it can be a very effective way for your body to protect itself. There is even a controversial treatment for metastatic cancer that elevates a body's temperature to 105 degrees. There have been reports that this treatment kills off the cancer cells and puts people in long term remission. This is just one of many examples that show that we don't fully understand the function of fever

Problems occur, however, when fever gets out of control. The question is, what is out of control? Often Western medicine will treat people with aspirin or similar drugs to reduce fever of 100 degrees. Of course you should check with your doctor, but I would suggest you consider using a higher temperature as a basis for concern. I don't take anything to curtail my fever unless it goes over 102 degrees. Ear infections and other normal childhood events often cause quite high fevers. Children can often tolerate higher fevers, and often "spike" a fever as their bodies learn how to fight infections on their own.

Although I don't think putting somebody in an ice bath for a 100 degree temperature is a good idea, there are some real dangers associated with fever. Some of these dangers include dehydration and drowsiness. Obviously, if you're sick you should stay home and rest. If you are running a fever your body is impaired. If you are running even a

slight fever you should drink significantly more water than you normally would. Dehydration can be very serious and can have long term effects on the body. One sign you should be concerned about is having a bad headache.

It can be fun to actually find your normal temperature. Get a good thermometer and take your temperature at different times of the day to see the variation and determine what your range is. My body temperature runs 1 degree below what is considered normal, so if I see a reading of 98.6 degrees, I actually have a fever.

Another important thing to be aware of is a low-grade persistent fever, which can be a sign of something chronic like Lyme disease or an autoimmune problem. This is something that should certainly be checked into.

Namaste,

Wendy

****

Breaking news my new book "Your Body's Companion" is in the works. I'll update you with progress. Wendy

****