



# Emerald City Clinic

Newsletter

www.emeraldcityclinic.com

Winter 2010

## **Nothing is Random: How to apply critical thinking to your health**

by Molly Linton, ND, LM

Recently, one of my clients paid me a really high compliment by saying the one thing she has appreciated about me over the years is that *at an early age I taught her critical thinking about her health and she is now her own best advocate*. This struck me profoundly and it seemed to sum up a large principle of the medicine that we practice; that is **nothing is random**. Things don't just happen, there is always a reason, whether we can identify it or not. On the physical plane our bodies are always trying to give us information in the least harmful way possible. If we do not notice these subtle changes the message gets louder and louder until we can't ignore it anymore. Even psychological and spiritual messages can manifest as physical messages. If I were to rewrite our Hippocratic Oath it would say, "Our job, as physicians, is to assist the physical body while each client evolves emotionally and spiritually." All stresses, good or bad, physical or emotional, have an effect on us. It is our job to minimize the ill effects and maximize the beneficial effects. One should always start with foundational approaches to health, such as Dr. Molly's Five Point Health Plan, in addition to practicing preventative guardianship. With this practice we can make sure we direct our health away from dishealth. This proves difficult in our current health care system, which is NOT health care at all but "disease management," not the type of medicine I want to practice or teach.

### **PREVENTION: WHAT ARE THE TOOLS AVAILABLE?**

As my aforementioned client said it is time for critical thinking. We need to realize two things: 1) How to prevent health issues ahead of time and 2) To recognize our bodies' messages early in their process. Preventative principles include having an annual visit to really analyze, design and implement health goals; and obtaining necessary preventative testing such as blood work, heavy metal screening, physical exams, etc. It is economically smart to do preventative maintenance. If you and/or your physician fail to ask why an issue has come up with your health, then what is to prevent it from occurring in the future?

*"Our job, as physicians, is to assist the physical body while each client evolves emotionally and spiritually."*

The exponentially rising rate in breast cancer, and the subsequent evolution of Breast Cancer Awareness month, exemplifies where our health care system has begun to recognize the need to excel in preventative medicine. There are now blood tests, urine tests and thermographic imaging that can give us a great deal of insight into preventing this disease. We are even beginning to ask, "Why?" when it comes to this predominant issue. For instance, iodine absorption and intake has now been linearly correlated to breast cancer occurrence. Ideally, we will apply this preventative attitude to the many other disease states we find our bodies in.

### **TAKING ACTION**

If you start to notice changes in your health and they are lasting longer than three days, it is time to contact your physician at Emerald City Clinic to figure out "what changed." Part of what we teach is to ask the right questions. Remember: **Nothing is Random**. You may not know the right questions to ask your health care provider, and we are here to help guide you through that process to better address and understand the causes to your health imbalances.

Part of recognizing your body's messages are *sharing* them with your physician. I have often noticed that I get a "negative response" when I ask my clients if they have any health concerns. But in further inquiry I find out they are on hypertensive medications, but it is not a concern because it is managed with medication (whether natural or prescription). Or I discover that their PMS is "normal" and not a concern because they have always had it. Or I am faced with the fact that they evacuate their bowels 3x/week and are not concerned for the same reason, *"It is normal for me."* I see these as health concerns because these situations are not optimal. Please do not settle for "normal"—strive for "optimal." Optimal to me is for the patient to feel like a "9-10" energetically, not taking any additional supplements or medications beyond a simple routine supplement regime (eg multiple, oils, minerals and vitamin D), and following the guidelines of the 5 Point Health Plan. Otherwise we should continually try to seek the cause and remove it so you can come off those prescription drugs or supportive supplements. Remember nothing is random: you do not have heartburn from lack of Prilosec, there is an underlying issue that we need to critically assess.

Continued on page 2



**STRESS PREVENTION: FROM PATIENT, TO COMMUNITY, TO HOME**

The best prevention for stress effects is to minimize deleterious stress. One thing that is affecting us all is the economy. First, I always want to thank each one of you that trusts us to give you quality care. As the airlines and other big corporations are always saying, "We know you could take your business elsewhere and we appreciate you choosing Emerald City Clinic," especially in these challenging economic times. We know it is NOT random you are here and we have unconditional regard for you because you chose us and we want to continue to make that possible. As I mentioned before, preventative medicine is the most economic approach. What Emerald City Clinic is doing to assist each person that graces our doors is to extend hours to make more time available for "off work hours." You can be seen by me (Molly Linton) some mornings as early as 6:30 am, some evenings as late as 7 pm and one Saturday a month. Please use these times sparingly as many people have the need to be seen in off hours. In addition to being more flexible around hours, I want to make sure you are all aware of our low income option of the Full Circle Clinic. This clinic offers discounted labs if uninsured, discounted supplements, free donated supplements and significantly discounted service fees. Please contact the front desk for further information.

The Emerald City Team has also decided to take on service projects in the community. We have adopted cleaning 85<sup>th</sup> street and will invite anyone to help who would like to each time we do it. Our next cleaning date is on Friday, January 21<sup>st</sup> in the morning. We are cooking for Tent City in the future, which you all can do. We will help recycle any used eye glasses, unopened bath products for Urban Rest Stop (a free shower service for the homeless in downtown Seattle), and all your tincture bottles.

I just feel that we should each do what we can to do preventative health care for our community and starting close to home is important. What I have seen from this economy in my own home: more dinners at home, more scrabble, book reading, and exercise. This is not a bad thing; in fact I think that this is a new beginning for all of us and an opportunity to prioritize what is really important in life.

In closing, my take home message is thank you for teaching me along the way and I promise to continue to be the best doctor possible and train the best doctors possible at Emerald City Clinic to help you preserve the most valuable thing you have: your health. I want to thank all my staff for their commitment to the clinic, themselves, our clients, and our community. Each day is a new beginning to strive for optimal health for all of us.

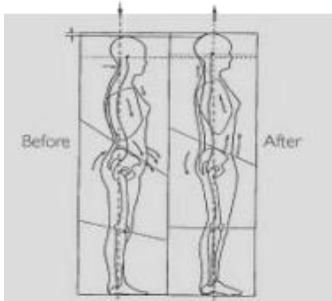


Respectfully submitted (randomly ☺),  
Dr. Molly Linton

**SOMA® and GRIEF ♥ RECOVERY®: New additions to ECN's extended community**

Hi, my name is Tracey Nichols, LMP, and I am thrilled to be partnering with the ECC community beginning January 1, 2011. Through my business, Healing Doorways, I will be providing SOMA NEUROMUSCULAR INTEGRATION® (SI), an evolution of Roling, as well as Grief♥Recovery® classes.

SI is a form of bodywork which works by way of the fascial network (connective tissue) to release chronic, stored, structural aberrations and effectively realign the entire body. There are 10-11 sessions. (Note: the first session can be standalone so that you can give it a try, and then together we can determine if you would like to complete the series.) **All ECN patients**



**will receive 25% off of Soma Sessions.** From my own personal journey, I have found that my experience with SOMA has not only reduced physical pain in my body, but has provided ease of movement. It has increased both my energy and my overall enjoyment of life.

Grief♥Recovery® classes will also begin in January. This is a 10-week class that will meet one night per week. This class will provide each individual who participates with a great set of tools in which to work through their own grief and/or learn how to be with someone who is grieving. **Cost per class: \$25.**

Please feel free to contact me with any questions, schedule an appointment, or sign up for the classes at 425-691-0884 or email me at [traceyn@healingdoorways.com](mailto:traceyn@healingdoorways.com). I look forward to talking with you.

## The Brain- Gut Connection

by Loren Riccio, ND, LMP, CPM

Our gut and brain originate from the same embryonic tissue. As we develop into a living being, one part becomes our central nervous system (brain and spinal cord) and the other forms our enteric nervous system (lines the esophagus, stomach, small intestine and colon). These “two brains” are connected by the vagus nerve. This connection between the brain and gut are the reason why you get butterflies in your stomach



or stomachaches before a performance, why headaches can lead to nausea, and indigestion can lead to nightmares. The brain and the gut are so connected that when one is upset, so is the other.

*“The brain and the gut are so connected that when one is upset, so is the other.”*

Optimal health begins in the gut. Healing the gut not only helps restore optimal function for digestion, absorption and elimination; it also helps improve mental health, brain functioning and sleep.

An unhealthy gut can have a profound influence on our overall health. If our gut is unhealthy, this can lead to ill health in our nervous system, endocrine system (hormones) and immune system. Nearly the same number of nerves and neurotransmitters (nervous system messengers) are found in the gut compared to the brain.

We are always learning more about this connection and how it can be used for healing. Many medications that are designed to heal the brain have an influence on the gut and vice versa. Sometimes these medications are used to target the brain through the gut. Many people are familiar with the neurotransmitter serotonin. Serotonin is most commonly known for its role in the treatment of depression (the SSRI acronym found on many anti-depressant medications stands for selective SEROTONIN reuptake inhibitor). Interestingly, there is more serotonin in the digestive system than in the brain. Serotonin helps to regulate peristalsis (movement through the gut). High levels of stress can impact this movement leading

to irritable bowel syndrome, which can cause constipation and/or diarrhea. Unhealthy digestive systems can decrease serotonin levels, which can negatively influence mood.

Our bowels also move through different patterns just as our brain experiences different phases of sleep. These cycles work in conjunction with each other. If one is functioning abnormally it will impact the other. People with abnormal bowel health will often have abnormal REM sleep patterns leading to restless sleep and insomnia.

### NOTES FROM THE ADMIN SIDE:



**Dr. Molly’s Contact Information:** Dr. Molly has been living in her home on Queen Anne for just over a year now! PLEASE remember to call her home number in case of emergency after hours BEFORE trying her pager. Her home answering machine will tell you exactly where to find her! That number is 206-283-9718: be sure to save this number in your cell phone!

**Email Addresses:** ECN is making a valiant attempt to move into the electronic world and we are doing a lot of communication via email now. Please be sure that we have your correct address! Be on the look out for surveys, electronic newsletters, and remember to sign up for blog alerts.

**Pharmacy:** We are approaching the end of the year, and as many of you know, ECN tries to decrease our inventory in preparation. Please be sure to make orders ahead of time, and be ready to pre-pay! We’ll ship the items to you for a nominal fee if you can’t find the time during the holidays to come into the office!

**ECN OFFERS HOLIDAY GIFTS!** Give the gift of health to your loved ones this year! We are offering Detox Gift packages (\$35), Homeopathic First Aid Kits (\$40), and Gift Certificates as well as Entertainment Books (\$25) and other great reads. We’re here for your last minute shopping!

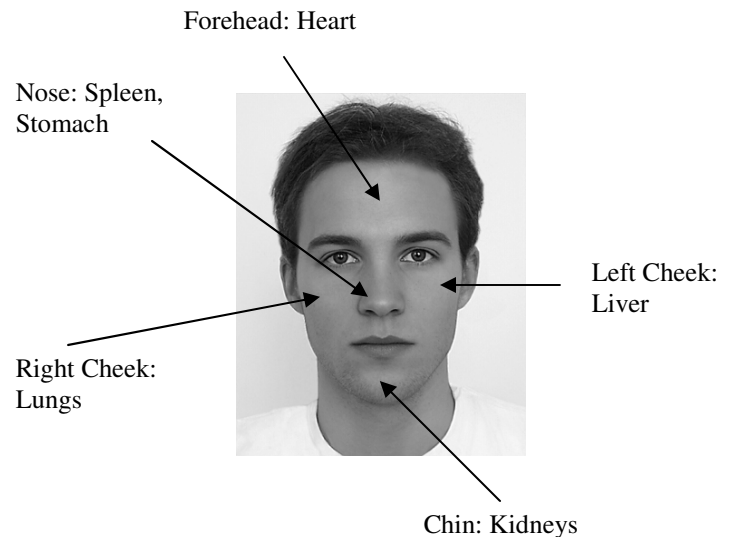


### Our “Face Maps”

by Kristen Spitz, ND Candidate

Have you ever wondered why you keep getting acne in the same spot or why you have certain lines or wrinkles in specific areas of your face? In the Eastern philosophy of medicine areas of your face correspond to the internal organs and can be used as a clue to what might be going on inside or simply a tool to improve skin tone in general. The basic areas of the face and their corresponding organs are shown in the picture to the right.

We all want to put our best face forward, so using this “face map” to recognize where you may need extra naturopathic support for the organ systems can help us all look and feel our best.



## Chinese Medicine Series Part One: Basics

by Tamara Dickson, ND

As Naturopaths, we have a variety of tools with which to approach a treatment design. We may offer botanical medicines, hydrotherapy, nutrition and dietary advice, homeopathic remedies, and physical modalities like adjustments and cranial-sacral therapy. *The institution I attended, Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine, also has Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture written into the curriculum so I received an extra tool with which to approach disease and treatment.* Although Eastern philosophies differ from Western in many ways, Eastern medicinal philosophies and practices are often woven into Naturopathic practice seamlessly.



### YIN AND YANG

You have likely seen a yin/yang symbol somewhere. Do you know which side is which and what it represents? One key concept in Chinese medicine is the idea that energy, our life force, has yin properties and yang properties.

YIN is represented by the dark side of the circle. Words that help describe the concept of yin are: darkness, cold, contractility, inward, falling, dense, slow. YIN energy is considered to be female.

YANG is represented by the white side of the circle. Words that help describe the concept of yang are: light, sun, heat, expansion, rising, rapid. YANG energy is considered to be male.

It is important to note the visual representation of the relationship of these two forces; they are in balance with one another and a bit of each exists within the other. Disease and illness occur when one of these forces becomes unbalanced and affects the other force. Both can become weak or deficient and both can become overpowering or excessive.

### ORGANS AND MERIDIANS

One of the most important ways in which a Chinese Medicinal approach is different from Western is in the fundamental beliefs of how the body works. In Chinese medicine, all pathology and disease can be traced back to malfunctions or imbalances within the 12 organs of the body:

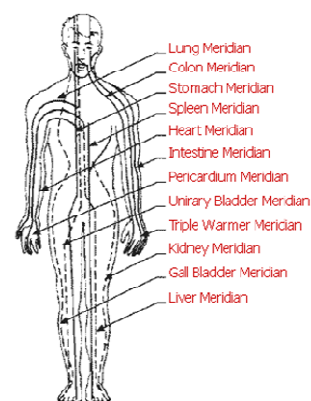
Stomach	Spleen
Small Intestine	Heart
San Jiao or Triple Burner	Pericardium
Large Intestine	Lung
Gallbladder	Liver
Bladder	Kidney

Each of the 12 organs is believed to be essentially yin or yang. These classifications are made according to whether the organ is solid or hollow and whether it produces or receives. Each set of yin organs has a yang organ that it is intimately connected to and the health of one affects the other – just like the

main principle of yin and yang. In the organ pairings above, the yin organs are on the right, yang organs on the left.

You may notice that some key parts of the body that are important to Western ideas of physiology are not considered: the brain, the thyroid, the adrenals, the pancreas, and the male and female sex organs. Conversely, there are organs in Chinese medicine that have no understandable physiological relevance or existence in Western Medicine like the san jiao and the pericardium. For the organs that the two perspectives do have in common, there are tremendous differences in belief about what the organ does for the body (that will be described in more detail in later editions.) The most important difference is that according to traditional Chinese medicine, the health of internal organs can be manipulated and treated through a system of meridians and points.

The energy of each internal organ can be accessed through specific points on the body and when the points are connected, we have what is called a meridian. Each organ actually has two meridians placed symmetrically along the left and right sides of the body. A meridian is like a highway that the organ's energy travels along and the specific points are the highway exits. Within the organ pairings, one of their meridians will start low and ascend up the body while the other will begin high and descend, true to the principle of yin and yang.



### BRINGING THE BODY TO BALANCE

There are many different ways that meridian points can be stimulated and therefore affect the energy and health of the corresponding organ. Most well known is acupuncture, where needles are placed into the body at specific organ points. Naturopaths, myself included, practice what is called Naturopathic or free needling as only those with the LAc degree may call their skill acupuncture. There are also acupressure techniques used by massage therapists and NAET practitioners, as well as colorpuncture where different wavelengths of light are used to stimulate the points. Some chiropractors and other types of physical therapists offer injections of homeopathics or anesthesia at 'trigger points' whose locations are commonly the same as Chinese medicine points. All of these methods are successful at treating illness and disease by stimulating these points and re-directing the organs' energy highways.

In part two of the Chinese Medicine series, I will discuss the concept of Qi (energy/ life force) and Chinese diagnosis patterns.

**If you are interested in learning more about your body through Chinese medicine and/or are interested in a free Naturopathic needling session with Dr. Tamara Dickson, please contact the office to schedule.**

## Body Pain Series: Part 1

by Gretchen Imdieke, ND

I want everyone reading this to start by taking a few seconds to scan your body, start at your head and work down to your feet. Do you notice any areas of pain? What kind of pain to you feel? Sharp, shooting pain down your leg, back or arm? Achiness in your lower back or knees? Pressure in your abdomen or head? Cramping in your back, calves or uterus? Perhaps throbbing and a tightness in your neck and shoulders, or is it another type of pain? Do you know what's causing your pain?

There are several causes of pain, and pain can be divided into two general categories, Non-nociceptive pain and Nociceptive pain. To make a long story short, non-nociceptive pain is caused by specific receptors on our skin and in our muscles or organs that are stimulated by temperature change, lack of oxygen, or damage and degeneration leading to inflammation. Nociceptive pain, on the other hand, is caused by the nervous system itself being injured, like a pinched nerve or an infection in a nerve, such as shingles.

In my Body Pain Series, I will be discussing causes and effective treatments for 3 different types of pain: Somatic Pain, Visceral Pain and Nociceptive Pain.

In this edition, I'm going to start with Somatic Pain. Somatic pain is the pain we feel on our skin when we burn it or in our muscles when we strain or overuse them. It is also the pain we feel in our joints and bones due to injury, chronic overuse and degeneration or infection.

How do we prevent these pains, and if we have pain how do we treat it?

### JOINTS

Let's start with joint pain, otherwise known as arthralgia. If you're over the age of 30, you can probably relate to this type of pain. Joint pain is commonly caused by overuse of a joint which leads to degeneration and inflammation of that joint. Other causes of joint pain are infection, injuries, and in rare cases, allergic reactions to medications. Treatments for



joint pain depend on the cause of the pain. Degeneration and inflammation in a joint usually begin from injury or chronic overuse of that joint. Some naturopathic therapies that treat this type of joint pain are: contrast hydrotherapy, anti-inflammatory herbs, Glucosamine Sulfate, ergonomic design, and exercise that help strengthen the muscles around the joint. Infectious joint disease includes anything from a bacterial infection in the joint space to chronic Lyme disease. Infectious joint disease will vary in treatment strategies depending on the perpetrator. Always remember, if one of your joints gets hot, swollen, and painful in a short period of time; call your doctor right away, because joint infections are a very serious medical condition that will need immediate attention.

### MUSCLES

Muscle pain has several causes including injury secondary to overuse or overstretching, dehydration, infection, muscle imbalances, and poor posture. A lot of people hold stress and emotion in certain muscles and as a result will have shoulders that almost touch their ears or hips that are so tight they are unable to sit cross legged. Because many of us sit at a desk all day, and then go for a run after work, certain muscles are over used, while others are



neglected. Do you notice how many people hold their heads forward, in front of their body, rather than lined up with the rest of their body? This causes the muscles in the front of the neck to shorten and the muscles in the back of the neck to lengthen. These imbalances lead to increased strain of several muscles in the neck, shoulder and upper back, which then in turn cause a strain on muscles throughout the entire body.

Muscle imbalances also increase our risk of injury; for example, long periods of sitting cause our hamstrings to tighten, tight hamstrings lead to low back pain and increased risk of injuries, especially vertebral disc injuries. There are several naturopathic treatments for muscle pain. Depending on the cause, they include: supplements, anti-inflammatory herbs, Molly's 5 Point Health Plan, craniosacral therapy, muscle energy stretching, contrast hydrotherapy, ultrasound, strength training exercises, posture awareness, and ergonomic design.

The sooner you come and talk to your doctor about your pain, no matter what type of pain it is, the easier it will be for us and you to treat and eliminate your pain.

### **Emerald City's Upcoming Events**

**Closures:** Christmas Eve, Dec 24th— 2-5pm  
Christmas Day, Dec 25th— all day  
New Year's Eve, Dec 31st— all day

Martin Luther King Day, Jan 17th— all day  
ECN's Adopt A Street Day, Jan 21st— all day (come join us in the morning!)  
President's Day, Feb 21st— all day

**IMT Day:** Thursday, January 27th from 8:30am-1pm. Call the office to sign up today! \$175 pre-payment price.

**In the near future:** Look for information on future upcoming classes. Dr. Molly Linton plans to hold a class titled: How 2B Fit 4U with colleague Peter Cannon from Cannonbilt Studios. Come take care of your body after the holidays!





**From the BLOG: emeraldcityclinic.blogspot.com.** *We at ECN want to keep our patients informed, in the moment. Following are some sample articles and information that can be found on our blog. We hope that you will join us there soon. Sign up for email notices when there are a new posts!*

**It is flu season and I am never without an opinion:** by Dr. Molly, posted on October 19th, 2010

1. I have seen multiple cases of high fever, aches/chills, with no sign of location of infection resulting in dry cough and sore throat. If you are faced with this type of infection, the best defense is "THE ZAP PACK": 100,000 IU of Vitamin D (***1x/only***), 100-150,000 IU of Vitamin A (***not to exceed 7-10 days without talking to a doctor at ECN***) and some herbal formula to address the microbe whether it is viral or bacterial. These are adult doses not to be used for pediatric, pregnancy or breastfeeding doses without consulting your physician.
2. Do NOT get the flu vaccine. This year's flu vaccine has the "leftover H1N1" vaccine from last year that they could not use up. If you want to discuss this with me then email Molly, but there is no good science for the flu vaccine. Better to improve your immune system.
3. It is time to contact us if an adult's fever is over 101 or a pediatric fever is over 103, if the symptoms have progressed to your lungs, or if you feel ill longer then 3 days. I have not yet figured out the exact homeopathic remedy, but I am sure that the Naturopathic community will spread the news the minute we find the right remedy for this bug.

Once again, besides **Molly's 5 Point Health Plan** there is **Molly's 3 Day Rule**: If you are not better in 3 days from anything (eg flu, diarrhea, joint pain, insomnia, etc) it is time to let your doctor at ECN know. Thanks!

**Insurance Simplified:** by Amanda Zuluaga, Clinic Manager, posted on August 19th, 2010

I'd like to quote an excerpt from one of our previous newsletter articles by Dr. Molly, "I have struggled both professionally and personally regarding medical insurance. It is a crisis in our country. As a Naturopathic Physician, I cannot do my medicine and make a livable wage if I am a "contracted provider." As a health care consumer I cannot afford insurance premiums. My financial advisor, Marti Lee, made the comment causally in my office that hit the nail on the head for me, 'Medical insurance is not insurance; it is financing our medical needs.' It is a poor investment."

Unfortunately, as Dr. Molly voices, we will be unable to comply with the request to contract with insurance providers that many of our patients expressed as the #1 thing they would change about Emerald City Clinic in an email survey last spring. However, many of our patients have had great success with their reimbursement rates. Here's a quick guide to being reimbursed that I know will make all the difference for you if you follow these simple steps:

1. **Make sure you receive your superbill after each visit.** Remind the doctor and remind the front desk. If it is unavailable at that moment, we will mail it to you.
2. **While you are checking out, begin filling out your superbill!** It only asks for your personal information and your insur-

ance information that is found on your card, which you most likely have right there in your wallet. If you have it filled out before you leave—we will hand you an envelope to address, and we will put it in our mailbox for you! Done!

**3. Understand your benefits.** Emerald City Clinic doctors are all "out of network" providers. Each and every insurance company has an out of network plan. Most likely you will have additional deductible costs, and then the carrier will pay a percentage of the "allowable" visit fees. This percentage will go toward your deductible if you haven't met it yet, or will be paid to you once your deductible has been covered.

**4. Be sure to follow up.** If you receive an Explanation of Benefits (EOB) from your insurance and you do not understand it, call me! (Amanda 206-781-2206) I am more than happy to walk through this with you, and will even call your insurance company for clarification if necessary.

You all are making an investment in your health by coming to Emerald City Clinic, and our doctors here invest their time and energy into you in return. Why not collect from the insurance company in payment of your efforts? We're all here to help.

We hope that you continue to fill out surveys that we may send periodically via email, as they do provide us with invaluable feedback.



## **Blog TidBits:**

**Ongoing Research that YOU can take part in!:** Bastyr University is continually recruiting for subjects in their research institute. The following website will take you to their recruitment page which is updated regularly. <http://www.bastyr.edu/research/recruit/default.asp>

## **Hungry for a new read? Check out these recommendations!**

- No More Heartburn: Stop the Pain in 3- Days-Naturally!: The safe, effective way to prevent and heal gastrointestinal disorders by Sherry A Rogers, MD. Recommended by Dr. Molly Linton and available for sale at Emerald City Clinic.
- Brave Girl Eating: A Family's Struggle with Anorexia by Harriet Brown. "For any parent with a teenager, or teenager to be, this is a must read." Recommended by patients of ECN.
- Video Games and Your Kids: How Parents Stay in Control By Hilarie Cash, PhD and Kim McDonald, MA. This book defines when video games are addictive, how to prevent this addiction in different age groups, and what to do if you suspect a gaming addiction. A must read for both parents and expectant parents in this day and age. Reviewed by Molly Linton, ND