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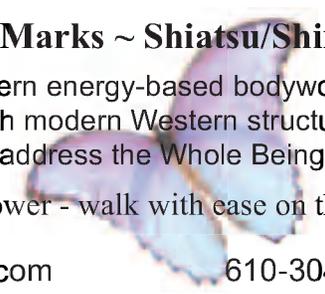
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What is Naturopathy?

Here's a term that has been left out of common usage, and when people hear the word, they usually think "homeopathy", or "natural foods", or something that has a vague connection to Nature. To be honest, they're absolutely right. Naturopathy is a term that encompasses so many different techniques and practices that it defies any one explanation. Breaking a word down into its core components often helps with comprehension: *natura*, "nature" and *pathos*, "disease" or "affliction". Naturopathy is thus treating disease or affliction by Nature. In fact, the original meaning of *pathos* is "what can be felt or sensed", giving naturopathy a different signification, "feeling and sensing Nature". Interestingly, Naturopathy responds well to both of these definitions.



Naturopathy is both a therapeutic practice and a way of life. Based on precepts first established by Hippocrates, it is a philosophy, an art and a science developed to maintain the human being in perfect health using

only natural methods. Whatever our purpose in life, isn't the best way to achieve that purpose to stay in optimal health? Believe it or not, that's how we were designed – to always stay healthy.

The human organism is an amazing piece of work – hundreds of thousands of subtle processes operate at split second speeds to maintain "homeostasis", or balance, which translates into good health. As soon as one element changes, another kicks in to counterbalance whatever change the first element produced. It is constantly moving, a non-static equilibrium which obeys only the laws within which humans have evolved over several million years. These unchanging laws are the same ones that have governed nature and the universe for as long as we can tell, and are the Laws of Life as we know it.

WHAT CAN NATUROPATHY DO FOR ME?

We all have at least one thing in common: we were born, live and will die human beings. Since humans are no more exempt from the laws of the universe than any other creature, plant or animal, we experience extraordinary health and well being when we adhere to the guidelines that Nature has provided for us, within the context of what we were given at birth. What are these guidelines?

Living with the *Elements*, spending time outdoors, getting sufficient sunlight, fresh air, pure water, and contact with the Earth. Eating pure, untainted foods, gathered wild or cultivated using earth-friendly methods (organic and biodynamic agriculture, permaculture...), preferably whole and unrefined. Giving the body enough exercise on a daily basis (or as much as needed) to keep our systems functioning. Recognizing that we are total beings, and that all levels of our existence, physical, mental, emotional and spiritual, must each

be seen as parts of a whole, all connected by a universal life force (which some call *chi* or *prana*) that makes us who we are. Observing how the universal life force permeates every atom of the universe, and is the same healing force that makes our wounds heal spontaneously. Exchange and contact with other human beings, with Nature and with ourselves: relationship. Knowing that the universal life force connects us all to the greater whole of the Universe, and as such we are all interconnected, our individual lives like strands of light intertwined into the great Tapestry of Life.

I can already hear some of you protesting, "That's impossible! With my work and family schedule, how could I ever live such an idealistic life?" My goal here is not to ask you to drastically change your life, implementing harsh rules that would probably defeat their purpose anyway. If anything, I would ask you to be gentle with yourself, doing only what you feel would be good for you at this time. That being said, living a naturopathic lifestyle has many advantages, not the least of which are increased energy, better health and a more fulfilling life. Remember, we are dealing with the *whole* person, which means taking into account all aspects of the individual, including our relationships with others and ourselves.

KNOWING OUR NEEDS

If nothing else, naturopathy helps us to ascertain whether or not we are living according to our true needs, or if there is an imbalance, on whatever level it may be. For instance, when we start to pay attention to what we put into our mouths over and over again, we can begin to realize that yes, *we are what we eat*. Eating fast food day in and day out will create a state of health that mirrors the quality of the food ingested: *poor*. Becoming consciously aware of the kinds of things that go into your body, whether food, medicine or recreational drugs (including tobacco and alcohol) allows you to gain access to the underlying drives behind your behavior. You will start to notice when you eat food only because you are hungry and your body needs it, when you eat to be social, or when you are numbing some inner pain or anguish. This is also true for any behavior involving consumption of any kind (including shopping, gambling, etc.). Becoming conscious of our behavior allows us to begin to understand the underlying causes and to transform unhealthy behavior into health conscious choices.

HOW DO I DO IT?

Interestingly, living your life according to the laws of the universe is not fundamentally difficult, mainly because that's how we have evolved over the past 3 to 4 million years. It has only been in the last century or so that humans have strayed from having to respect Nature's guidelines, euphoric over technological advances and wanting to prove that we will no longer be subject to her capricious whims. Our eating habits have changed so much, with the proliferation of refined foods lacking most if not all, vital nutrients (including white flour and sugar, high fructose corn syrup, partially hydrogenated vegetable oil, and countless chemical additives, artificial colors and sweeteners, each more dangerous than the next) that the American population is generally overfed and at the same time malnourished. Today's American diet is causing obesity and an impressive array of diseases such as diabetes, heart

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Carol Bowman, MS, past life regression therapist for fifteen years, is the internationally-known lecturer and author of *Children's Past Lives* and *Return From Heaven*.

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disease, high blood pressure, autoimmune diseases...because we have to eat more in order to be satisfied, which we never really are, since our bodies are still craving vital nutrition.

Living a naturopathic lifestyle involves taking a careful inventory of several areas of your life, deciding which ones could benefit from change, and then implementing gradually those changes into your lifestyle. As you can guess, diet is going to be a major focus, especially if you are not at all familiar with eating organically, or any of the diets that are often associated with organic foods, such as vegetarianism, Macrobiotics, whole foods diet, etc. It is possible to research and decide on your own, however a naturopathic practitioner can help you to determine which diet is best adapted to your needs and physical constitution. He may also advise the use of supplements or plant remedies in order to modify your terrain*, or give you a protocol of exercises or hydrotherapy (see below) to follow.

THE PILLARS OF NATUROPATHY

As you know by now, diet is one of the main pillars of naturopathy. By eating a diet rich in organically grown fresh fruits and vegetables, a good portion of which should be eaten raw, you are giving yourself the best chance of creating good health and eliminating the conditions that disease needs in order to exist. If your body has already manifested some form of disease or malaise, you will be surprised at how much better you will feel by integrating a large quantity of raw fruits and veggies into your diet. They can be juiced, grated, and processed in many different ways to provide varied, healthful nutrition to your body. This is one factor that should be taken into account, as in certain specialized diets (Macrobiotic, in particular) raw fruits and vegetables are somewhat overlooked. *Homo sapiens sapiens*, our species, evolved over a period of about 130,000 years, even if the genus *Homo* is much older than that. During that time, most of the food our ancestors ate was **raw and wild**. The first traces of deliberate fires in prehistoric camps are about 450,000 years old, however we do not know precisely when humans started cooking their food. In any case, raw food has always held an important role in the diet of our ancestors, and disregarding it can have catastrophic consequences on our health today.

Emphasis should be placed not only on the quality of what we eat, but also on how we eat it. Using fresh, organically grown products is wonderful, but rushing to work, munching on a whole wheat bagel with cream cheese, then taking 10 minutes at lunchtime to grab a sandwich, organic or not, pretty much defeats the purpose of trying to eat well. "Conscious" is the keyword here, and by taking the time to eat consciously, becoming aware of the simple process of chewing, swallowing, digesting and assimilating, we can alleviate a good many problems related to the digestive system.

Assimilation is one thing, elimination is another, just as important. In our society, we tend to consider anything eliminated as being undesirable, dirty or even obscene. We all have daily bowel movements (hopefully), and yet are quite reluctant and sometimes ashamed to talk about the subject. It's taboo, and yet eliminating properly is 50% of good nutrition, and therefore good health. Keeping the colon in good health is a number one priority of naturopathy, since it is the seat of assimilation and elimination. When our systems of elimination are sluggish and clogged, or irritated, or hampered by oxidation, the body is forced to find another pathway to get rid of the waste generated by digestion and assimilation. For instance, if our liver has been damaged or clogged by disease or over-consumption of sugar, fats and/or alcohol, the toxins will be sent towards the skin via the blood and lymph, where skin afflictions such as eczema, psoriasis, acne, or even grave conditions such as lupus will occur. If we do not flush out the liver and restore the original

pathways of elimination, that condition will persist, no matter how much cortisone or antibiotics we take. Allergies are an obvious manifestation of our increased difficulty of eliminating toxins from our organism: as the poisons that we breathe and ingest increase, without a functional path of elimination, so do our allergies.

Another important aspect of naturopathy is our natural rhythms. How often have you felt mediocre, or down right terrible, after a restless or sleepless night? Do you ever wonder why you always wake up at the same time each night, and cannot get back to sleep for another hour, if not more? These questions have to do with our natural rhythms, and knowing how to deal with these problems can greatly improve the quality of your life. There are also monthly and yearly rhythms that affect our health, as well as certain anniversary dates that can trigger uncomfortable feelings, sometimes seemingly for no good reason. The human organism follows even greater cycles – in 7 years the body will have replaced every single cell, meaning that 7 years ago we had an entirely different body than we do today.

On a different note, our development follows a sequence of 7-year intervals, and as we attain each multiple of seven a new phase begins as the old one falls away. Everyone has heard of 7 years old as being the age of reason – this is the age at which a child is able to evaluate and become conscious of her environment, and to pursue relationships on a more expanded level than that of simply "taking". The child is now able to understand how she will also benefit from giving, and thus becomes more "reasonable". At age 14 the child moves into a phase of testing her identity and values against those of her parents, and so on. Each 7-year interval has its particular developmental phase, which evolve more into transitional phases as we move through adulthood.

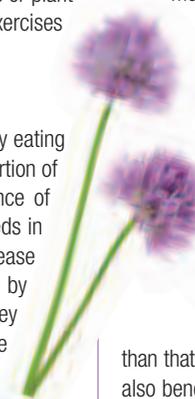
WHAT TECHNIQUES DOES A NATUROPATH UTILIZE?

There are several different techniques used by a naturopathic practitioner, either for gaining information about a client's condition or for treatment, or both.

Iridology (from *iris*, "iris" and *logos*, "study of") is a screening tool used to gain insight about the state of the systems and organs of the human body, by taking a close look at the iris, where information about the entire body can be found. The naturopath employs a special iridology loupe, or a more sophisticated iridology camera to take a snapshot of the iris. They are then able to ascertain which of the systems are functioning poorly, or if there has been trauma or disease related to any organs, all of which are visible in the iris.

Reflexology (from *reflex*, "something reflected") is both a screening tool and a form of treatment. It is often practiced on the feet, but can also be used on other parts of the body, in particular the skin covering the abdominal cavity. By palpating zones of the feet and abdomen, the practitioner receives information concerning the quality of exchange between systems and organs, according to the symptoms encountered. Is the skin, hard, rough, soft, or clammy? Does a certain area feel tense or taut rather than supple? Is one place thicker than another? As in iridology, the organs are represented by a mirror effect that is discernable to the trained practitioner. Reflexology is also a treatment technique – the representations of the organs on the feet and abdomen are actually in resonance with those organs, and massaging these areas will affect the corresponding organs. This may be why people love foot massages, since they are actually getting a full body massage at the same time!

Hydrotherapy (from *hydro*, "water") is a treatment technique, advised by naturopathic practitioners to help move stagnant areas and create more



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exchange between the cells and the liquid surrounding them. It uses water in the form of baths, showers or jets, at different temperatures and in different successions, to stimulate underactive zones or calm overactive ones. These treatments can be done at home, or in a specialized treatment spa, according to what is available to the client. We actually use hydrotherapy without necessarily knowing it – a cold shower to perk you up, or a warm bath to calm your nerves can do wonders! But by following a specific hydrotherapy protocol, it is possible to alleviate many annoying symptoms (hemorrhoids being a prime example) just by locally improving the circulation and cellular exchange. Colonic hydrotherapy is also becoming more and more popular, and if used correctly can have an extremely beneficial effect on the colon, and therefore on health in general.

Homeopathy is a very popular form of medicine in Europe and India, but like naturopathy in this country, it lost its stronghold in the U.S. around the turn of the last century, with the coming of modern medicine and powerful drug companies. *Homeopathy* comes from *homeo*, “like” and *pathos*, “disease” – it treats pathological conditions using dilutions of extracts of plants, animals or minerals that in their non-diluted state produce a similar condition as the one being treated. Developed by Samuel Hahnemann in the 18th century, this technique is used with success all over the world. The original extraction, or “mother tincture”, can be diluted from 1x to up to 300,000x or more, each dilution having a specific effect. The reasoning behind this is: the greater the dilution, the subtler and yet more powerful it will be on the psyche of the individual. Most practitioners use the lower dilutions, from 4x to 30x. These dilutions are indicated on the container as “C” which comes from the French *centième d’Hahnemann*, meaning that 1 drop of the extract is diluted into 100 drops of pure water. The number in front of C indicates the number of dilutions made. Some practitioners specialize in using the higher dilutions, claiming that they have a greater effect on the aura, and thus on the origin of the imbalance. Many practitioners claim that if you apply just the right remedy, the effects will be immediate, and if you are off, there will be neither a positive nor a negative effect, since the body will merely eliminate the remedy with no negative consequences.

This differs from allopathic, or conventional medicine, which employs synthetic drugs to treat symptoms in order to rid the body of them. The secondary effects of most modern drugs are well-documented, and there is often a full page in fine print included with your prescription, explaining what could possibly happen if you use such and such a drug. It is said that natural remedies such as used by homeopathy, and of course naturopathy, are “recognized” by our body, since we have evolved with the plants and animals, using them and minerals for millions of years. As such, they are relatively easy to eliminate, since the body knows what to do with them. Synthetic drugs, food additives and certain foods like high-fructose corn syrup and partially hydrogenated vegetable oils, on the other hand, are foreign to the subtle ecosystem of the human organism, having only been introduced in the last 50 to 100 years. They create a state of cellular pollution comprised of molecules foreign to our organism that most of us have a very hard time eliminating.

Biotherapy refers to different biologically based techniques used by a naturopathic practitioner.

Herbalism is the use of plants or herbs in the form of teas, tinctures, salves, poultices, etc. It resembles conventional medicine in the way the plants are chosen to alleviate certain symptoms, however the naturopath or medical herbalist is careful to obtain enough information about the client to be able to act as more than just a symptomologist, healing the whole person rather than the symptom. Many herbs are also given as dietary supplements in capsules or pill form.

Gemmotherapy is a more specific type of herbal medicine that uses glycerin extracts of the leaf buds of certain ligneous plants like Black Currant, Linden or Hawthorne, usually taken in a dilution of 1 drop of extract to 10 drops of water. This preparation is qualified as 1D, or 1 *décimale d’Hahnemann*. These remedies have a remarkable propensity for modifying the “terrain”*, or particular state of an organism at a particular time.

Bach Flower Remedies were developed by Richard Bach, a 19th century English physician who intuitively was able to determine which emotional states certain flowers would alleviate. Over the course of his life he developed 38 remedies, which are now used worldwide to treat certain emotional states that can be problematic, such as despondence, rigid thinking, shock, etc. His Rescue remedy, a mixture of 5 flower remedies, is carried in many a purse or travel bag. Other flower remedies have been developed since Bach, but my personal preference is for the original Bach Flower Remedies.

IN CONCLUSION...

You don’t have to be a total health nut or “new-ager” in order to benefit from Naturopathy. This system is based on principles that are ageless, defying fads or fashion, founded on pure, common sense. And although some of the techniques mentioned may be completely new to you, most if not all of them have been tried and tested over hundreds, and even thousands of years. The list of techniques used is far from exhaustive, and others such as Morpho-psychology and Vitamin therapy have been developed more recently. However, the basis of this lifestyle remains the same: living your life as Nature intended.

Some well meaning individuals would doubt the effectiveness of naturopathy, since some of the techniques have not been found to have conclusive scientific evidence of their results, or if there are positive outcomes that they were due to a placebo effect. I would say to these individuals, look and see how many people in the world live by these principles (there are more than you might think) and swear by the results. Placebo or not, the effect is there, and healing happens.

Adopting a naturopathic lifestyle affords a sense of freedom, independence and responsibility for one’s life that I, personally, would have a hard time living without. My lifestyle is my health insurance policy. And although I do have health insurance, especially for my two daughters, I know deep within myself that nothing is giving me more a sense of security and well being than the fact that my health is in my own hands. I cordially invite you to discover the infinite wealth of being the Master of your Health and Well Being.

* *terrain*: the particular state of an organism at a given time. Also pertains to morbid tendencies known as *miasmas*, such as tuberculin and syphilitic, or to an acidic or alkaline state. ▲



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How to Survive Anxiety Over Today's Economy



IN MY ROUGHLY 25 YEARS OF PRIVATE PSYCHOTHERAPY PRACTICE, I'VE NEVER SEEN PEOPLE AS ANXIOUS AND WORRIED ABOUT FINANCES AS THEY ARE TODAY. Certainly it is not without reason. Most people have seen their retirement savings dwindle. Unemployment is at a several-decade high, and of course the media drives home reminders of possible economic calamity every day. How are YOU coping?

Some people cope by burying their heads in the sand. But inevitably, this denial has unpleasant consequences. The troubles in our economy are real. Even if you're confident your job or income is secure, the effect of the overall economic downturn will sooner or later impact us all. But panic is also counter-productive. It accomplishes nothing except to fuel the flame. As in most areas of life, balance is usually the best approach. Here are some ideas to help you maintain yours:

Exercise. Exercise is one of our best stress relievers. Moving our bodies, getting our heart rates up, stretching our limbs actually have a very positive effect on brain chemistry and give us a feeling of well-being. Not only that – it's free – or very inexpensive. Walking or running requires only a good pair of shoes. Stretching takes not even that! Get away from the house, office, or television, and take a yoga, Pilates, or aerobics class. Join a hiking club. You'll feel better – and much more relaxed.

Meditate. Whether you listen to guided imagery audios, or do something as simple as sitting and following your breath, meditation calms us. Studies show that when meditation becomes a regular daily practice, as opposed to just an occasional event, the mental and physical benefits are huge and lasting. Not only do we worry less, but creativity seems to improve – leading to recognizing options for helping ourselves through difficult times.

Perspective. Considering a longer term point of view can be very helpful. Look at economic cycles over a hundred year time frame. There have always been ebbs and flows. Some are a little more pronounced than others, but the pendulum is always swinging. And remember, when the pendulum is out at its farthest point, it is poised to reverse course. Always has, always will. Everything in life is temporary, including whatever situation you find yourself in at the moment.

Friends and Family. A joy shared is doubled, a problem shared is halved. I'm not encouraging you to spend a lot of energy ruminating with others about your situation, but it's

helpful to talk with those close to you about your concerns, brainstorm ideas, and give and get emotional support. Instead of going out to dinner, have a potluck evening with friends, and play some board games or watch a movie. Rediscover the joys, and savings, of quiet evenings at home with family. Help friends out and save money at the same time. Instead of hiring a babysitter, take turns taking care of a friend's children, giving you each a day or evening of free sitting!

Be Proactive. We have become a society of spenders. It is as much a habit as was saving for those who grew up during the depression. But habits can be changed. Make a game out of saving money. How much can you save each week if you just ask yourself the questions, "Do I really need this right now?" or, "If I don't have this, will it really affect my life?" or "Can I accomplish the same thing for less?" For example, books are my addiction. I'm always buying books. But most of them I only read once, and I could easily get them for free from the library. Do you need all those premium cable channels, or would it be cheaper to just rent the DVD's (or get for free from the library)? Have a family contest to see who saves the most each week.

Practice Gratitude. For all the struggles we have, we are truly fortunate. My mother grew up during the depression, one of twelve children, in a three bedroom house without indoor plumbing or electricity, and with winters that regularly saw temperatures below freezing and snow measured by the foot rather than the inch. I've been fortunate enough to have seen a lot of the world, including some third world countries, where even today, people live in hovels. I am truly grateful to be living here, and at this time. I'm grateful for friends and clients and good health and music and books and my critters and so many wonderful things in life. I'll bet you have quite a list too – review it regularly!

So Happy New Year. May 2009 be your very best one yet. No matter what happens with the economy, may your year be filled with riches beyond measure. ▲



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WINTERIZING YOUR PET

THE ARRIVAL OF WINTER BRINGS A SMILE TO THOSE WHO ENJOY THE PLEASURES THAT THE COLD WEATHER

BRINGS, SUCH AS SKIING, SNOW BOARDING AND SKATING.

To those of us in the Northeast part of the country, this generally falls between the months of November and February. We prepare our homes by putting in the storm windows and turning on the heat. We prepare ourselves by getting our winter boots and clothes out of the attic. We even prepare our cars by putting in antifreeze and placing chains on the tires. What do we do, however, to prepare our pets for the long cold days and nights that winter brings?

One of the greatest potential dangers to animals in winter is antifreeze (ethylene glycol). Antifreeze is extremely toxic to pets. It has a sweet taste and this is often what attracts dogs and cats to taste it. Consequently, even the small amount that may spill on the garage floor can be fatal. Be sure to clean up even the tiniest amounts. Less than a teaspoon can kill a cat! Antifreeze is rapidly absorbed into the bloodstream and the mortality rate is very high. Pets will appear as if they are intoxicated. Vomiting, stumbling and depression are common signs in the first twelve hours after ingestion. The chemical has an affinity for the kidneys and quickly causes kidney failure. If you suspect that your pet may have ingested antifreeze, get them to the veterinarian immediately. This is a medical emergency. Minutes can make the difference between life and death. Antizol-vet is an antifreeze antidote that is available to licensed veterinarians. Check with your veterinarian to see if they carry this. It has saved many a dog and cat's life if prompt treatment is given.

There is a product on the market that is an alternative to the active ingredient in antifreeze, ethylene glycol. It utilizes propylene glycol in place of ethylene glycol. If you own a pet or care about the animals that wander outdoors, please consider purchasing the safer antifreeze. It costs a few dollars more but it could save the life of someone's pet.

Snow and ice are hazardous to your pet if it gets stuck between their pads. Ice balls can form and cause frostbite and trauma to the skin. Be safe by wiping off your pet's pads when they come in from the outside. Even cats that go outdoors can have major difficulties. Keep a bath towel near the door as a reminder. Feet that stay wet also set up the kind of environment that bacteria and fungus thrive in.

Routinely check you pet for evidence of frostbite. Frostbitten skin can appear gray or red in color. The most common places affected are the ears, feet and tail. If you suspect your pet has frostbite, wrap them up in a blanket to start the warming process and get

to the veterinarian promptly. DO NOT use a heating pad. Animals with frostbite must be warmed gradually.

Another hazard to be aware of is the salt and chemical de-icers spread on the ground. Some of these materials can be caustic and irritate the pads and skin between the toes. There are environmentally safe products that can be used in place of these others. If you and your dog walk trails, it is not unreasonable to ask the township or who ever is in charge what kind of materials they use for snow and ice removal.

Various companies provide doggie boots to protect your pet's feet from the elements. Some of them are made of leather. In my experience, the dogs tend not to like the boots on their feet and they often do not fit around the foot properly. Keeping the hair between and around the pads trimmed in winter will make it easier to clean them and to keep them dry.

The cold and damp weather can also aggravate degenerative conditions such as arthritis. Arthritis can be present at any stage of your pet's life, but it is more common in middle aged and geriatric years. A person with arthritis can feel stiff and painful in the joints in cold weather. The same holds true for our companion animals. Dogs and cats are not very obvious in their expression of pain or discomfort. If your elderly pet seems more lethargic, is reluctant to move, or walks a little stiff then he or she may very well be in discomfort. Aloe is an herb that has anti-inflammatory properties and could benefit pets with this condition. Organic aloe vera liquid that can be ingested can easily be utilized. Just add a tablespoon to your pet's water bowl daily. Aloe facilitates digestion and supports the immune system. Aloe is a good blood cleanser and tonic for the body, as well. Yucca is another herb that has anti-inflammatory properties, is a natural pain killer, and also helps with rheumatism. Solid Gold puts out a product of 70% Yucca powder that can easily be mixed with food.

For those pets best suited to the outdoors other factors come into play. Obviously, adequate shelter from the rain, snow and wind is important, as well as, insulation against the cold weather. Even breeds like Huskies and Samoyeds should not be kept outdoors for long periods of time. They too can succumb to frostbite and hypothermia. Fresh water is necessary at all times. Avoid metal bowls if your pet is outside because they freeze quickly and their wet tongue can get stuck to the ice. Ceramic is a better choice. Heated dishes are available but not recommended for dogs that tend to bite or chew on wires.

Finally, I believe it is a good idea to have extra supplies for your pet during the winter months just in case a snowstorm leaves you house bound. Take the time to purchase extra pet food, kitty litter and medications or supplements that your pet needs. I also recommend having a pet first aid kit available. ▲