



Autumn Health

Ancient Chinese physicians observed the natural cycles of the seasons and recorded the best everyday practices for staying healthy and harmonizing our own energy within our environment. It marks the turning point between the buzzy heat of summer and the cold inward time of winter.

The seasonal change also causes the respiratory system to constrict, leading to coughs, asthma, bronchitis, and even pneumonia. Chinese medicine has always associated autumn with the lungs and large intestine. The Yellow Emperor advises early to bed and early to rise, practice breathing and stretching exercises such as Qi Gong and Yoga; avoid pungent flavours but increase sour ones in the diet, drink fluids and eat soups, and remain calm and relaxed to avoid the diseases typical of autumn.

As the leaves fall, they begin their process of decay. Autumn is an opportunity to cleanse, clear out the old and conserve energy in preparation for the winter, which is dominated by the need hibernate and store energy. We need to be still and tranquil in order to absorb and preserve this vital energy for us to make it through the winter in a healthy state and now slow down from the sometimes, frenetic activities of the summer.

One of the easiest ways to stay healthy is to get in touch with the energy from the bounty of our harvest through fresh foods. It is important to eat warmer cooked foods, especially soups during this time and to keep the salads and raw foods at bay until next summer.

Emotionally, this is the season associated with grief and sadness. It is important to keep the mind clear and “let go” of negative thoughts and feelings, which can impact on our health more strongly during the autumn. Now is the time to be more reflective, turning inward to our plans, our dear ones and to brighten up our homes. A lesson of autumn is taking in and letting things go. Look at how the trees are shedding their leaves!

Some Important Autumn Foods

Apples scientists have confirmed that eating a couple of apples a day decreases cholesterol levels, the fruit's rich pectin content is an important cleanser for the intestines

Sweet Potatoes, Yams and Squashes These powerhouse foods contain higher amounts of beta-carotene and vitamin C than carrots, more protein than wheat and rice. They help to regulate our hormones and support our body's anti-aging defenses to work better

Oats contains high concentrations of soluble fibers, which help trap cholesterol, binding toxic minerals and acids and move it all quickly through the gut. Oats are a great balancer for the body's blood sugar levels. Try substituting a warm bowl of whole oats for your cold cereal in the morning. Your body will thank you – for years!

See your acupuncturist for your seasonal immune boosting ‘tune up’

This is a time year when flu's, mold allergies and chest complaints are likely to worsen, often the time when people catch the most colds. Your acupuncturist can build up your protective Qi, clear out the ‘damp’ locked in joints, boost your lung function and lessen or eradicate head colds.

Yours in good health, *Gisela*