

Enjoying the Season of Fall - Metal Energy

I woke up this morning and the air was crisp while the sky was still waiting for the sun. Fall is knocking on our doorstep and I eagerly await the changing of the season. Autumn is the time of year when active yang energy of summer begins to return to the earth, slowly giving way to the time of yin. As we find ourselves slowing down from summer's pace, gathering the harvest, and returning to our more rigorous rituals and routines at work or school; we welcome the Metal Element in Chinese Medicine and all that it brings.

According to Oriental medicine, Metal governs organization, determination, communication, the mind, setting limits, self worth and protecting boundaries. It's a good time to finish projects that you began in spring and summer. As well as being the perfect time to begin more introspective, indoor projects. In this season, let go of the things that are of no use to you.

The Lungs and Large Intestines are most influenced at this time of year as they fall under the classification of the Metal Element. They both deal with purification and elimination in our body. According to TCM principles, the lungs are the connection between the body and the outside world as they take in oxygen and expel carbon dioxide through breathing. The large intestines absorb water, nutrients, minerals, and vitamins. It also holds and eliminates waste.

Eating in harmony with the season is important to keep your Metal Element in balance. Make choices that consist of hearty, rich and warm foods. Cooking methods that focus the energy of the food in a more inward fashion, such as baking and stewing, are favored. Eat more brown rice for increased energy and stronger digestion. Navy beans, pears, and almonds benefit the lungs and eliminate phlegm. Mustard greens improve circulation and clear chest congestion. Root vegetables – such as sweet potatoes, carrots, garlic and onion, grains (quinoa, buckwheat), nuts and seeds, which are high in fiber for the Large Intestine, can be rotated back into the diet. Cayenne, ginger and curry are wonderful spices that promote good digestion and elimination.

The emotion associated with fall is grief. This is the time of the year to pull inward, to grieve, let go and reflect on any unresolved sadness. This can be an adjustment after the surge of energy and mood that many of us experience during summer, but it is normal to feel somewhat somber and pensive in the fall.

Restoring our Metal through Acupuncture

In the season of autumn, the Metal element is at its peak and particularly amenable to treatment. Fortunately, using the system of Chinese medicine, we can resurrect and rebuild the Metal within us - in its physical expression as well as in mind and spirit. As acupuncturists, we help restore our Metal using needles and their knowledge of energy.

This Autumn remember to :

- Practice letting go. Release old resentments or hurts. Start anew
- Take time each day to breathe slowly and deeply. As you inhale the clean autumn air, feel yourself energized and purified.
- Drink plenty of water, at least 8-10 glasses a day.
- Make a list of your priorities - What are your core values? What kind of life do you want to live? What makes you feel good? What are you ready to see fall away so that you can emerge anew and grow?
- Eat hearty rich warm foods. Oatmeal for breakfast, oven roasted vegetables over brown rice for lunch, and stews for dinner.
- Do weight training to make good use of the muscle-building protein you crave as winter comes
- Focus on relaxation in the evening hours. Autumn is associated with late afternoon and evening time, and getting ready for sleep.
- Dream Big
- Wear a scarf to protect from wind invasions - ie: upper respiratory colds, runny noses, and headaches.