

EARLY FALL RECOMMENDATIONS

In early fall, yin begins to return as the intense yang of summer recedes.

It is harvest time: a time to pause after the bounty of summer — before we fully enter the fall season. Early fall is a transition time between the expansive splendor of summer and fall's inward movement toward the austerity of winter; how we handle this transition from yang to yin is crucial to winter survival.

It is important now to retain the warmth we need from summer, and to expel any excess heat so it doesn't become trapped in our bodies, causing fevers and other illnesses.

Following the humidity of late summer, fall is a dry season; the fluids of the body are in transition, becoming thicker and slower. It is time for us also to begin the process of slowing down — to prevent our essential fluids from drying up so they protect us in winter and keep us healthy in this transition. To aid in this process, consider these recommendations:

- **Edit (just as we sort through the summer harvest, now is the time to winnow out anything unnecessary from our lives):** revise the dreams of summer toward more realistic plans, remove any stagnation from your life (it's important to eliminate anything moldy, both literally and symbolically)
- **Relax to release excess heat:** take an end of summer vacation, cool down in water (don't bake in the sun), cancel appointments



ACCORDING TO CHINESE MEDICINE, the best way for us to maintain health is to have an appropriate **RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR ENVIRONMENT**. In addition to acupuncture and Chinese herbs, learning to live harmoniously with natural, seasonal cycles can be a powerful way of promoting our wellness and resolving illness.

If we can **ALLOW OUR BODIES TO ADAPT** to the different seasons, to the qi as it changes throughout the year, then health will flow naturally. Taoists closely observed the **NATURAL QI CYCLES** of 24 different seasons in order to harmonize their energy with that of their environment. The following daily practices and dietary recommendations are based on this tradition.

- **Sleep more:** go to bed early, get up by dawn to take advantage of the fresh yin of early fall), nap
- **Body scrub:** to regulate the opening and closing of pores which strengthens the immune system, evenly brush the entire surface of your body
- **Redirect:** begin to turn your attention and energy inward



FOOD RECOMMENDATIONS AND RECIPES

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greens, carrots, green beans, celery, garlic, radish, arugula, shiitake, ginger, tofu, basil, mint, pears, grapes, apples, limes, lemons, white fish, pork, sesame seeds, tea, beans.

Avoid: chili peppers, overly spicy food, turkey, walnuts, alcohol, excess sugar, eating out too much.

Carrot Ginger Soup

- 5 large carrots, peeled and cut in pieces
- 1 small white onion, chopped
- ¼ cup cooked white rice, or a handful of oats
- 2 tablespoons grated ginger
- 1 small piece kombu (kelp)

Bring 4-6 cups of water, carrots, kombu, and onion to a boil. Reduce to a simmer, and cook until carrots are soft. Remove kombu and puree in a blender. Grate ginger and squeeze ginger juice (by hand) into the soup. Add sea salt to taste and garnish with parsley.

Northern Chinese Style Pork Noodles

- 1 pound coarsely ground pork
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 2 tablespoons high-heat sunflower oil
- ¼ cup onion, finely chopped
- 5 tablespoons shaoxing wine or brandy
- 1-2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 large potato, peeled and diced (¼")
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 2 medium tomatoes, peeled and diced
- 2 scallions, chopped
- 1 package rice noodles, cooked

Mix well: pork, soy sauce, cornstarch, and 1 tablespoon oil and set aside. Heat remaining oil, add onion/garlic, and cook over high heat until browned. Stir in pork mixture and cook until the meat is no longer pink. Add wine, cover, lower to medium, and cook for about 10 minutes. Add potato and stock, cover, and cook for 20-30 minutes, or until potatoes and pork are cooked. Stir in tomatoes and scallions and cook for 3 minutes more. Season to taste with salt or soy sauce. Serve over noodles; garnish with chopped cilantro.

Many thanks to Liu Ming's "Nourishing Within" classes (www.dayuancircle.com) from which this information was derived.