



Chinese Medicine Tips for the Fall Season

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By [Dr. Melissa Carr, B.Sc., Dr.TCM](#) • October 29th, 2012 • 2882 Views



Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) appreciates the falling of leaves, the harvesting of crops and the slowing and cooling of the energies of nature that happens in autumn. It appreciates these things because as TCM practitioners we know that our bodies reflect many of the aspects of our natural world.

Though the darkening days and [transition](#) away from the warm weather can leave us with a feeling of loss, this process of "letting go" is important. Fall is a time of refinement, getting rid of things that are not serving us.

One way to do that is through the [breath](#). Both the physical lungs and the TCM Lungs*

control the breath. The Lungs and Large Intestines are the organs most closely related to the fall season. Both can be thought of as organs of elimination. The large intestines obviously eliminate digestive waste. The lungs eliminate respiratory waste.

The Lungs also control the skin. Your skin breathes too. Sweating can help [detoxify](#) the body and cleanse the skin; but too much sweating drains the Lung energy. Because the Lungs also help with managing the distribution of water through our bodies, it is important to make sure that you stay hydrated, especially as you lose fluid through sweat.

One of the times that sweating can be specifically therapeutic is when you have the start of a cold or flu. An elevated temperature—or fever—is one of the ways that your body can defend itself against infection. At the early signs of infection, helping bring on a sweat by eating spicy food, garlic or onions; spending time in a sauna or hot bath; and exercising (if energy permits) may help fight off a cold. Pay attention to how you feel, however, as rest rather than exercise may be your better option in some situations. Still, you can bundle up in warm blankets after a hot soup or tea that contains garlic, onions, ginger, and/or honey to sweat while you sleep.

When you are well, foods that support the Lungs and Large Intestines include white foods such as pears, radishes, daikon radish, cauliflower, and cabbage. [Herbs](#) like reishi mushrooms and astragalus support the Lung energy and the immune system.

Go back to the breath. Expand your chest, open your lungs, and breathe in deep to honour and nourish your powerful body!

* To clarify the differentiation between the Traditional Chinese Medicine organ systems...

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