

In This Issue

Tips from all our therapists on how to stay healthy this Winter

New Services Arriving Soon

We will soon be adding Reiki and Meditation to our list of therapies! We will keep you posted!



How to Stay Healthy this Winter

The nights are getting darker and the weather is certainly getting chillier. Now that winter is upon us, November is a good time to assess our state of health and realign with our natural rhythms. The transition from summer to winter is especially noteworthy because it signifies moving from the more active seasons to the more passive. This directly impacts how we feel, and how we prevent and treat illness, from both a physical and mental point of view.

6 Easy Steps for a Healthy Winter

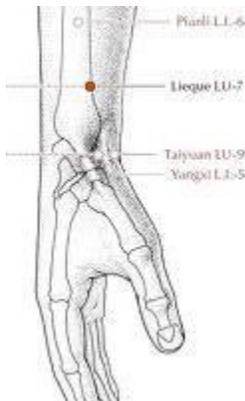
1. Make a list of your priorities

Winter is a time to reassess, to get down to business and to gain clarity about what really matters to us. As satisfying as this can be, it also can be overwhelming. *If I spend more time achieving my goals at work, how will I make time for my family? ... If I focus on cooking healthy meals and eating at home to save money, how will I socialize with my friends?*

Make a list of which priorities deserve your attention. Write them down and refer to the list regularly throughout the season to make sure you're keeping close to your main priorities.

2. Do regular acupressure on yourself

One of the best acupuncture points for relieving cough, nasal congestion and shortness of breath is located just above the wrist. Known as Lung 7, it is also an extremely effective point for treating neck pain and stiffness.



Lung 7 is easy to access yourself. Make a thumbs-up sign. When you do that, you'll see a depression at the base of your thumb (referred to as the anatomical snuffbox). From that depression, Lung 7 is located approximately two finger widths up your arm (*see picture on left*). Press firmly and hold for up to one minute. Repeat at least twice daily.

Get the lowdown on lots more useful acupressure points from your acupuncturist.

3. Stay Hydrated

Central heating, open fires, air conditioning and cold air all contribute to dry, cracked skin. Drink plenty of water and keep your skin hydrated with non-alcoholic (alcohol will dry you out more) moisturizer. Another reason to stay hydrated is to regulate digestion and avoid constipation.

4. Stretch

Taking the time to stretch can really boost your immune system. Your immune system depends on the flow of lymphatic fluid, which travels through ducts that are embedded in your muscles. Tight muscles might mean a weakened immune system. Enhance lymph circulation with this stretch:



Place your hands on the back of a chair or counter and walk back until your arms and spine are fully extended. Keep legs straight and tailbone slightly lifted as you relax your head, stretch your spine, and sink your chest and belly toward the floor. Hold for one minute.

Exercise helps to release endorphins, our natural hormones which can ease pain and promote a sense of relaxation and well-being. All of which can help you de-stress and sleep better, which in turn improves immunity.

5. Support thoughts and emotions

Our emotional state is naturally altered as Autumn and Winter slowly creep in. We tend to feel a pull inwards and experience a low, some more poignant than others, after the surge of energy that many of us experience during the summer. It is therefore important to support self and keep our interests and spirits alive. To do what makes us happy, what brings us calm and peace whether that is opening up to something new or consolidating whatever we are doing that is keeping us awake to the beauty and wonder of being alive.

If you sense that what you are experiencing may be more than this i.e. struggling with prolonged overwhelming thoughts and emotions, it is important not to be alone, to talk to someone you know and/or a professional.

At Harbour Clinic our counsellor offers a confidential consultation where you can discuss, one to one, any worries or queries you might have and explore whether counselling may help.

6. Winter Foods

With flu season upon us again it's important to keep our immune system in tip top form for the winter months ahead. Forget flu shots and immune depressing vaccines! Turn to the hearty warming vegetables like *winter squash, pumpkin, celeriac and sweet potato* which are great sources of vitamin A and C, two important supporters of your immune system. Eat for the season that's in it- soups, stews and slow cooked casseroles are all favourites, as are beans and lentils. Don't worry about calories as such. (Although avoid using too much fat and sugar in your cooking). Focus instead on the nutritional content. It's normal to gain up to 4kg in the winter. This makes up part of your yin, for the yang months ahead!

Eat more *garlic and onions*- Besides being abundant in antioxidants and selenium, garlic is antibacterial and anti-viral. Both garlic and onions are part of the protective Allium family and are a great base and flavour enhancer for winter dishes.

We're not all fans of supplements but we could probably all do with a little extra of the sunshine vitamin right now! *Take your vitamin D3 supplements*. While you can get your vitamin D blood levels checked- most practitioners, including myself recommend 5000 - 10,000 units daily.

Wishing you a happy and healthy November

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