

Autumn Health

Autumn is the time of changing leaves and changing seasons – it brings its own healthy challenges!

What's the best things to eat?

- Eat the autumn colours – think dark green, yellow, orange and red! The foods to look out for: broccoli, pumpkin, sweet potato, carrots, squash, apples and pears. The more colourful it is, the better it is for your health and immune system!

How do you boost your immune system before the cold and flu season?

- Autumn is a great time to boost your immune system for the cold and flu season ahead. Foods that boost the immune system are high in allicin which has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. These include: garlic, onion, shallots and leeks.
- Eating a diet high in fruit and vegetable can ensure that you get plenty of immune boosters such as Vitamin C.
- Drinking plenty of water, sleeping well and doing some exercise all helps to boost the immune system.

What's the best exercise for autumn?

- As the days cool and shorten, it can be difficult to keep up with your summer exercise routine. Try exercise earlier in the day or if the cooler morning temperatures aren't your thing, maybe take in a lunchtime class.
- Set yourself up for winter – in the cooler temperatures many people change from outdoor to indoor activities. Now is the time to set yourself up for the winter months – get set in a routine of classes or going to the gym so it isn't so hard on the short, cold days.
- Make sure you're warmed up in the cooler mornings – the mornings are getting cooler so make sure you're really warmed up before launching into strenuous exercise. And remember: in the cooler temperatures, it takes longer to warm up.
- Breathing exercises are great for your health – try the 4-4-8 cycle: breath in for a count of 4, hold it for a count of 4 and breath out for a count of 8...but don't count too slowly!

What about Vitamin D?

- Vitamin D is made by our skin when it is exposed to sunlight. It is essential for the health of our bones, immune system and mental health. As we cover up more, we make less Vitamin D so during the cooler months a Vitamin D supplement is necessary.

What emotional factor is autumn related to?

- Autumn is associated with letting go of things so you can prepare for the winter ahead. It's a great time to go through your cupboards and clean out all those things you haven't used in ages. Maybe start with your clothes and get rid of all the summer clothes you didn't wear this year or the winter clothes that no longer fit you.
- During the holiday period we often have disagreements or disappointments. Just as we are letting go of physical things we no longer need, it's a good time to get rid of negative emotions we no longer need. Try to practice forgiveness and compassion even when it's difficult.
- Negative emotions can also include stress so relax: breath, stretch and do gentle exercise - Get a massage to release those tight muscles or spend a morning at the spa bath.

What else is important during autumn?

- Get outside and enjoy the autumn colours – beauty can lift your spirits.
- Be prepared for sudden changes – it can turn cool quickly so keep a jacket handy!

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