

A Seasonal Shift for Body, Mind, and Spirit



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The human body is heavily influenced by seasonal, regional, and cosmic rhythms of nature, affecting the expression of body, mind, and Spirit. The turning of the seasons, especially during cycles of chaotic weather patterns and social upheaval, can be challenging to navigate. Developing lifestyle practices that help to manage chronic stress, understanding the nutritional needs of the body, embarking on a wise detoxification plan, and knowing what supplemental tools are available and effective can ease the burden of this turning of the wheel. The following is a list of some healthy habits that can be easily woven into our daily lives, helping to heal and empower us as we travel into the darker months of the year.

Wake Up!

Regardless of the season, waking up at first light encourages the body to align physically and mentally with the current season. Rather than indulge the temptation of the digital meta-verse, try going outside and exposing your eyes to the sky's first light. This is an ancient Ayurvedic practice that allows the sun's quantum light codes to activate our DNA, open the pineal gland, and connect us with the etheric dimensions. This is also a wonderful time of day to meditate as the world is still quiet and the connection to the subconscious is strong. If you struggle with finding an easy-to-use meditation

technique, try the Silva Method to get you on the right track.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X2v5vDKz8yY&list=WL&index=34>

Detox Your Body

The beginning of a seasonal shift can be confusing for the body. This can be clarified by watching the cues from the natural environment, especially the changes in the garden which can help us to bridge the nutritional gap from summer to autumn. There is a natural tendency of letting go of *that which no longer serves* from the previous season to make way for new rhythms and requirements. Upon waking, sip 500ml of warm water with fresh lemon, trace mineral drops, and a pinch of sea salt to help flush the liver, kidneys, bowel, and the lymphatic system. This practice also helps to balance the internal pH of the body and encourages optimal hydration for the day ahead.

You've probably heard the holistic cliché that "we are what we eat", but a lesser understood adage for human health is also, "we are what we don't eliminate". Never before has the human body been expected to deal with the current onslaught of modern toxicity. After years of metabolic processing and the exposure to a multitude of pollutants, the human body becomes sluggish and cannot perform optimally. Seasonal detox regimes, in spring and autumn, are important to help alleviate the burden of accumulated metabolic and environmental waste.

The liver is one of the hardest working organs in the human body and needs seasonal attention. Liver formulations (with or without Milk Thistle) will help to ease organ overwhelm which could lead to hot flashes, angry outbursts, anemia, high triglycerides, and skin eruptions. Ayurvedic liver formulas, without Milk Thistle, often have fewer contraindications and are also effective at helping to revitalize hepatic function.

The often-forgotten lymphatic system runs parallel to the circulatory system (which utilizes pumps), and instead relies on muscular contractions and physical movement to force lymph fluid flow in opposition to gravity. Designed to circulate white blood cells that attack foreign invaders, deliver vital nutrients to internal organs, and to carry away dead materials and toxins for elimination, this system is dependant on optimal hydration and movement. A stagnant lymphatic system can cause thyroid dysfunction, organ cysts, chronic headaches, neck pain, and even inflammatory disorders like arthritis.

Lymphatic tincture formulas utilizing astringent herbs can help to draw out toxins from the organs and the blood stream into the lymph system, then to the liver, and eventually to the kidneys and bowel for elimination. Daily exercise increases lymphatic flow many times over, especially actions like rowing and rebounding. Eliminating histamine and mucus producing dairy products from your diet can drastically improve overall lymphatic health, especially if you suffer from chronic sinusitis, postnasal drip, hay fever, asthma, or autoimmune disorders. As with all medicinal protocols, be sure to check with your qualified healthcare professional before adding herbs and supplements or making drastic changes in your daily diet.

Nourishing Practices

As the northern hemisphere's seasons turn, so too should our food choices shift away from the cool, watery fruits and veggies of high summer to the more grounding cooked foods of harvest time, like stewed apples (high in pectin), baked yams (high in resistant starch), and baked squash (healing for the

gut). Adding fermented foods, like unpasteurized, organic sauerkraut, kimchi, miso, and kefir will help to improve digestion and internal pH creating an environment where beneficial bacteria can thrive. Be sure to purchase these products from the refrigerated section in a health food store to ensure that you are getting living probiotics and enzymes.

Swap out the cold beverages that were refreshing in the hottest months for warm water and herbal teas that strengthen digestion like peppermint and nettle, fennel and fenugreek, dandelion and lemon balm. Increasing soluble fibre (sweet potato, squash, avocado) and insoluble fibre (raw ground chia, raw hemp, and raw ground flax seeds, oat bran, psyllium) will help to absorb mobilized toxins in the bowel and sweep them out of the body. Diets high in fibre (unless you have a bowel disease) are essential prebiotic foods that feed beneficial bacterial colonies and have been scientifically shown to help manage healthy weight, balance moods, and control blood sugar and cholesterol.

Move Your Body!

Choose daily exercises that produce a joyful response like dancing, gardening, hiking, or swimming outdoors; if you are having fun, you are more likely to be dedicated and disciplined. Regular exercise improves immune response and is also the most effective anti-depressant medicine at our disposal. Laughter also has a beneficial affect on mood releasing neuropeptides in the brain that alleviate stress and prevent illness, another reason to make your movement choices fun and exciting. As stated above, the lymphatic system is dependant on daily movement. Sedentary habits can lead to a long and disconcerting list of chronic illnesses, so challenge yourself to move in ways that are enjoyable to you and do not exacerbate pre-existing medical conditions. If you haven't heard of 5 Rhythms Dance meditation yet, check it out here: <https://www.5rhythms.com/gabrielle-roths-5rhythms/why-we-dance-them/>

Know Your Seasonal Supplements

As the days shorten there is also a tendency for us to feel lower emotionally causing motivation to wane. B vitamins are necessary for optimal metabolism of the heavier carb-centric and protein foods of the harvest season and have been scientifically proven to also lift and balance moods. B Vitamin Complex supplements are water-soluble and are metabolized quickly, so look for timed-release or fat-soluble brands, or be sure to take them at both breakfast and lunch (not in the evening).

Holy Basil is a calming adaptogen, a class of medicinal herbs that support optimal adrenal and nervous system function. Also known as Tulsi and the *Queen of Herbs* in India, Holy Basil is effective for managing anxiety, insomnia, indigestion, hysteria, and even to help strengthen feelings of love, compassion, and devotion to spiritual pursuits.

Reishi Mushroom has been used as medicine for millennia and was revered by Chinese Emperors for its immune enhancing and calming benefits. With more than 400 vital nutrients, Reishi's beta-glucans and triterpenoids have been shown to balance blood sugar and blood pressure and may help to prevent many diseases including some types of cancer. Mushrooms are some of the most resilient organisms in the world, creating natural defense mechanisms during their growth stages, which benefit human immune resilience and may even help us to heal weak links in our own DNA.

Get Creative

Add some creativity to your days, especially as they get shorter, and we begin to shift our lives indoors. Singing, playing a musical instrument, painting, cooking, building stuff, or sculpting are effective ways of living out-of-time and fostering a calm nervous system and a stronger brain. Being open to change with a creative and enthusiastic mind-set, and fostering joyful expression every day, will surely help you to build a happy and healthy life regardless of how tumultuous the outside world may be. Most importantly, surround yourself with like-hearted humans that accept you unconditionally, as love truly is what makes the world go round.

Here's to your health!

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Tiffany Brawn is a Registered Holistic Nutritional Counsellor with extensive knowledge in the fields of holistic supplementation, alternative nutrition, herbology, and homeopathy. Born with many ESP sensitivities, Tiffany utilizes her empathic nature to assist those seeking mind, body, Spirit healing.

With the vision of an integrative community healthcare system put forth by Dr. Bill Code and the CHA Board of Directors, Tiffany signed up in January 2022 to help organize and develop the Cowichan Integrative Health Network. It is our collective goal to build a parallel healthcare system that would serve those in our community that seek deep healing, rather than symptom suppression. If you'd like to know more, contact us at: cowichanCHAinitiative@proton.me

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