

October 2015 | www.mindbodygreen.com | Paige Bourassa | Eat

Winter's Coming: 5 Foods to Keep You Happy & Healthy This Season

Have you ever noticed how all summer long you crave watermelon and salads — and then winter comes and you can't tear yourself away from the pasta bowl?

No, that's not just about bikini season vs. sweater season. Rather, Mother Nature is in constant harmony with our moods and organ systems, and even has a hand in our cravings.

As the seasons change, we also need to change the way we eat, in order to fuel our bodies and help them adjust to our surroundings.

As an acupuncturist trained in Traditional Chinese Medicine, I know that eating right for the season can boost our Qi — the vital life force that flows through us — and keep us strong and healthy.

So, as we start heading into those colder months — whether that means light hoodies for Californians or parkas and prayers for New Yorkers — here are the five foods you should be eating for optimal health:

1. Garlic and ginger

When it's cold outside your body is working on the double to keep circulating Qi and blood. By eating warming foods, we're able to boost Yang energy, which promotes movement and heat.

Garlic and ginger, powerhouse antioxidants, are great to add to your winter diet since they warm the stomach and spleen, which are responsible for digestion and assimilation of nutrients in Chinese Medicine. So if you find yourself feeling bloated and sluggish after a meal and your belly temperature is neutral or cold to the touch, opt for an extra strong cup of ginger tea or add a bunch of garlic to your next meal.

2. Goji berries

READ MORE AT THE JUICE BAR



October 2015 | www.mindbodygreen.com | Paige Bourassa | Eat

[NOTE: Some sentiments contained within "What We're Reading" articles may not strictly conform with PROJECT: PFC's nutritional outlook. We read articles containing opposing information all the time and derive our nutritional philosophies from the latest science, the opinions of experts worldwide and our anecdotal experiences in the field. We keep an open mind and a strong affinity for fact-based evidence to help make the world of nutrition "Simple Again" for you.]

Winter's Coming: 5 Foods to Keep You Happy & Healthy This Season

Have you ever noticed how all summer long you crave watermelon and salads — and then winter comes and you can't tear yourself away from the pasta bowl?

No, that's not just about bikini season vs. sweater season. Rather, Mother Nature is in constant harmony with our moods and organ systems, and even has a hand in our cravings.

As the seasons change, we also need to change the way we eat, in order to fuel our bodies and help them adjust to our surroundings.

As an acupuncturist trained in Traditional Chinese Medicine, I know that eating right for the season can boost our Qi — the vital life force that flows through us — and keep us strong and healthy.

So, as we start heading into those colder months — whether that means light hoodies for Californians or parkas and prayers for New Yorkers — here are the five foods you should be eating for optimal health:

1. Garlic and ginger

When it's cold outside your body is working on the double to keep circulating Qi and blood. By eating warming foods, we're able to boost Yang energy, which promotes movement and heat.

Garlic and ginger, powerhouse antioxidants, are great to add to your winter diet since they warm the stomach and spleen, which are responsible for digestion and assimilation of nutrients in Chinese Medicine. So if you find yourself feeling bloated and sluggish after a meal, and the temperature of your belly is neutral or cold to the touch, opt for an extra strong cup of ginger tea or add a bunch of garlic to your next meal.

2. Goji berries

Gou Qi Zi, or goji berries as they're more commonly known, are an ancient Chinese herbal remedy used to strengthen your blood. They are highly regarded as a nourishing tonic and have a strengthening effect on the kidneys, which are weakened by lack of sleep, overwork, and cold weather.

Goji berries are also used for their calming effect on the mind, as well as helping with sleep disorders and preventing constipation. Have 1 to 4 tablespoons per day, steep them in hot water to make flavorful tea, or add them to trail mix for a snack.



3. Black wood ear mushrooms

According to Chinese Herbal Food Therapy, black wood ear mushrooms are powerful kidney tonics and are said to invigorate Qi, boost immunity, and help move blood stagnation. Because they act on the kidneys — which in Chinese medicine are the organs associated with fear — they also have a calming effect on the body.

These are used frequently in Chinese Sichuan cooking, and are flavorful additions to any savory meal. Eat them warm and spice them up for added digestive benefits.

4. Meat and bone broths

Although mildly controversial in the current trendy world of veganism, traditional Chinese medicine is heavy on meat eating for sources of warmth and protein, especially in the colder months. Lamb, venison, and chicken are considered the most warming and are best served slow-cooked and not overdone.

But if you don't have time to cook a big meal, bone broths are another excellent way to nourish your liver, kidneys, and blood. They are also great sources of protein and good healing fats. Make a huge pot for the week and sip ½ to 1 cup per day.

5. Sweet potatoes

According to Chinese Medicine, sweet potatoes and many other root vegetables are grounding, energetically warming, and, thankfully, taste so damn good. They boost the Yang energy of the kidneys to help keep us warm in the cold, as well as the Yin energy of the kidneys to moisten and nourish the organs and tissues.

So skip the pasta this season, and instead carb-load with the balanced, slow-burning fuel from a baked sweet potato. Or, add a little cinnamon, almonds, agave, coconut milk, or other toppings to make a healthy winter kidney treat.

CHECK OUT MORE OF WHAT WE'RE READING:



www.facebook.com/ProjectPFC



www.twitter.com/ProjectPFC



www.pinterest.com/ProjectPFC