

# Wellbeing



*Wellbeing Natural Health*  
704-663-6544

157-C Professional Park Dr, Mooresville, NC 28117  
[www.wellbeingnaturalhealth.com](http://www.wellbeingnaturalhealth.com)

## Seasons Greetings...

As the days grow shorter and the nights grow longer, we say goodbye to warm days and make the gradual transition into winter. With each new season there is both a sense of loss and a feeling of hope as we move forward and face the possibility of new beginnings. The ancient sages of China recognized that these times of transition were great opportunities to improve our health and to become more balanced within our external environment. The shifting weather patterns and shortening hours of sunlight can affect our emotions and our health. Becoming aware of how these changes affect us can help us move through them smoothly.

Autumn is the time of year when things in nature reach their full maturity. This is the time of the harvest, when grains are ripe and ready to be picked. The leaves achieve their most brilliant colors, maple sap flows in abundance, and apples are at their peak of sweetness. However, autumn is also a time of slowing down and turning inward. After nature has reached her peak, she withers externally and

### Inside this Issue

<i>Seasons Greetings</i>	1
<i>Inspiration for Respiration</i>	2
<i>Healthy Snacks for Back Packs</i>	2
<i>Natural Immune Boosters</i>	3
<i>In Gratitude</i>	3
<i>Good News for Acupuncture</i>	4

shifts her focus inward in order to preserve her vitality through the cold, dark months. According to Chinese medicine, this time of year sees a transition from yang to yin. Summer is the peak of yang energy which is external, warming, bright, and active. Yin energy, with its cooling, dark, calming, and internal nature sees its peak in winter. Autumn and spring act as the pivots on which these two opposites revolve.

Our bodies are a microcosm of our environment, following the patterns of nature with an internal shift from yang to yin at this time of year. By making appropriate dietary and lifestyle changes we can remain in balance with our environment, stay healthy, and prevent disease. This newsletter offers some tips on how you and your family can achieve wellbeing this fall. **Cheers!**

*Cristin*

## Inspiration for Respiration

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According to Classical Chinese Medicine (CCM), each season is associated with a specific organ, and autumn happens to be the season of the lungs. The lungs, in CCM, are not only in charge of breathing, but they also rule the skin and the pores. They're in charge of our sense of smell and our ability to sweat, and they play a big role in protecting us from bacteria, viruses, and allergies.

The lungs can be harmed by grief, by dryness, and by wind (these two environmental conditions are also associated with autumn).

During the fall, take good care of your lungs by practicing deep breathing and meditation for at least 5 minutes a day. Inhale deeply, filling the whole abdomen from side to side and back to front, then exhale with the sound "Ssss". This is the sound of the lungs and can be used to strengthen and tone these delicate organs. You should also avoid smoking and being around second hand smoke as much as possible. Smoke draws dryness and heat into the lungs which can injure them and impair their function. Be sure to drink 4-8 cups of warm green, black, or herbal tea a day to counteract the dryness of the season. Also, if you experience grief during the fall, try to maintain a healthy diet and sleep schedule to avoid stressing your body further, and to help you process your emotions in a healthy way.

### Healthy Snacks for Back Packs



We all know a healthy diet contributes to how well a child does in school and in life, but healthy doesn't have to taste awful or be complicated. Try a few of the following ideas this fall and your kids won't even miss sugary cereals, fattening cookies, and salty potato chips! (*Please do not ignore food sensitivities or allergies*)

- **Hummus Dip with carrot sticks**

Combine the following ingredients in a food processor:

- 1 can of organic chickpeas (drained)
- 1 clove of raw garlic, minced
- 3 Tsp olive oil
- ¼ cup sesame tahini
- 2-3 Tsp lemon juice
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- Salt to taste
- Pepper to taste

Blend the ingredients until smooth and serve with whole grain crackers or carrot sticks. You can also sneak some spinach, roasted red peppers, or roasted eggplant into the mix. Play with the recipe to see what suits your family. (Makes 3-5 servings)

- **Power Breakfast Smoothies**  
Blend 2/3 cup vanilla soy or regular yogurt, ½ cup organic frozen blueberries, ½ banana, 1-2T honey, 1-2T almond butter, and 1-1½ cup cold vanilla soy or rice milk. Add 1-2 ice cubes and blend until smooth. (2 servings)
- **Crispy Rice Treats**  
Heat 1 cup brown rice syrup, 2/3 cup peanut butter, dash of vinegar, and dash of vanilla over medium heat until bubbling. Pour over 3 cups crispy rice cereal (in mixing bowl) and blend well with wooden spoon. Pour into oiled pan and flatten with spatula. Let cool, slice, and serve. (8 servings)
- **Healthy Spreads to use as Dips for Veggies or to Layer in Tea Sandwiches:**
  - Hummus
  - Olive Tapenade
  - Roasted red pepper spread
  - Egg salad
  - Herbed Ricotta Cheese
  - Almond butter, with cinnamon and honey
  - Cream cheese or whole yogurt blended with berries
  - Peanut butter with honeyLayer with shredded carrots, thinly sliced cucumbers, raisins, or all-fruit jams.

## Natural Immune Boosters



When seasons change viruses and bacteria thrive. To help fight colds and flu naturally try some of the following remedies:

**Ginger Tea**– great at the first signs of a cold or for upset stomachs.

**Garlic**– fabulous natural antibiotic and anti fungal, especially when eaten raw.

**Shiitake Mushrooms**–stir fried, these mushrooms can be taken for anything from preventing colds to fighting cancer.

**Peppermint Tea**– wonderful for colds where there are sweats or fever.

**Baked Asian Pears**– sprinkled with rock sugar, these are a Chinese cure for sore throat or lung infections.

**Echinacea Tincture or Tea**– this Native American herb has been used for centuries to boost the immune system and to fight colds and flu.

**Green and White Onion**– use as often as possible to strengthen the lungs.



## In Gratitude...

Refer a new patient to me during the months of November and December and receive a thank you gift! My favorite cookbook “**Changing Seasons Macrobiotic Cookbook**” (a \$16.00 value) offers wonderful meal plans that are in sync with nature and will make a wonderful addition to your kitchen. **Thank you!!!**



### Acupuncture in the Treatment of

**Obesity:** Researchers in Turkey have found that acupuncture helps to treat obesity and make weight loss easier. People receiving acupuncture have decreased appetites and increased intestinal motility (i.e. metabolism), and are better able to handle stress.

*Int J Neurosci. 2006 Feb;116(2):165-75. Source: PubMed*

### Traditional Chinese Herbs for Skin

**Care:** Researchers in Taiwan have found that certain Chinese herbs, when applied topically, have an anti-aging effect on the skin. Four herbs in particular (Pharbitis nil, Sophora japonica, Spatholobus suberctus, and Morus alba) were found to inhibit the synthesis of “age” spots and also had potent anti-oxidative activity (protecting the skin from pollution and stress). These herbs show great promise for use in cosmetics and skin care.

*J Ethnopharmacol. 2006 Feb 21; [Epub ahead of print]*

*Source: PubMed*

### Gou Qi Zi, or “Goji Berries” are

**Powerful Protectors:** Researchers in Hong Kong have proven that the Goji Berry, a common Chinese medicinal herb, is a very powerful antioxidant, cellular protectant, and

anti-aging herb extraordinaire. Being one of the few Chinese herbs that actually taste good, dried goji berries (organic) make a great snack or garnish. *Int J Mol Med. 2006 Jun;17(6):1157-61. Source: PubMed*

### Acupuncture for Gastrointestinal Disorders

Duke University Medical Center in Durham, North Carolina is home to a study looking at the effect of acupuncture on gastrointestinal (GI) disorders. For thousands of years, acupuncture has helped to treat many GI disorders such as GERD, IBS, nausea, diarrhea, constipation, and slow emptying of the GI tract. Acupuncture has already been shown to alter acid secretion, regulate GI motility, decrease visceral pain, increase muscle contractions, and relax the bowels. This study at Duke should be able to explain how and why acupuncture helps to treat functional GI disorders, as well as which of these conditions it is most effective in treating.

*J Gastroenterol. 2006 May;41(5):408-17.*

*Source: PubMed*



*Cristin Gregory is the owner of Wellbeing Natural Health. She is a Licensed Acupuncturist and Certified Chinese Herbalist.*

*For more information call  
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