

Winter wellness

TO HELP YOU HANG ON TO YOUR HEALTH THIS WINTER, CHINESE HERBAL MEDICINE OFFERS TIME-HONOURED INSIGHTS THAT CAN ASSIST IN BOOSTING YOUR IMMUNITY, ADDRESS COLD AND FLU SYMPTOMS AND SUPPORT RECOVERY FROM INFECTION

The traditional Chinese view of how the human body works and what causes ill health is quite different to the Western understanding, but is underpinned by thousands of years of empirical evidence and, increasingly, by modern science too!

Central to the Chinese system is the concept of Qi (pronounced 'chee'), the vital energy or life force that flows through channels called meridians in the human body.

In Chinese terms, feeling tired or being susceptible to respiratory infections may mean that you don't have enough Qi, in particular Defensive Qi – a specific form of vital energy that supports the body's resistance to disease.

Defensive Qi is generated within the body and distributed by the lung organ-meridian, which is the system in Chinese medicine that not only controls breathing, but also the voice, sinuses, skin and mucous membranes. Together, the lung organ-meridian and the Defensive Qi are considered responsible for fighting off infection and disease.

To support your Defensive Qi and the health of your lung organ-meridian system this winter, we recommend a four-phase approach that integrates ancient Chinese medicine and the modern science of Western herbalism.



The Chinese herbal approach to health during the colder months

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|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Boost
resistance
(enhance Qi) | Relieve cold
and flu
symptoms | Address cough
and restore
lung function | Support
recovery
(rebuild Qi) |

1. Boost resistance

Build your body's defences against infection with immunity supporting herbal medicines, such as astragalus, ganoderma (reishi) and codonopsis, which augment the Defensive Qi and strengthen the body's resistance mechanisms. Taken throughout winter, these herbs may be especially beneficial for those prone to recurrent sore throats, colds and flu, or those who are run down due to stress.

2. Relieve symptoms

If you do succumb to a cold or flu, a combination of Western and Chinese herbal medicines may help relieve symptoms. Among other herbs, we recommend taking echinacea, honeysuckle, forsythia and andrographis, which are used in Chinese medicine to help fight upper respiratory infections.

3. Address cough and restore lung function

If your cold turns into a cough, Western herbs such as elecampane and white horehound (traditional expectorants), may help relieve bronchial congestion. Consider supplementing these with the Chinese herbs pinellia and aster to help reduce coughing, dissolve phlegm and help maintain healthy lung and respiratory function.

4. Support recovery

Once the acute phase of a respiratory infection is over, we recommend you resume taking resistance-boosting herbs in combination with herbs that support the lung organ-meridian system – especially if you're prone to frequent respiratory infections. Consult your local health food store about the combination of herbal medicines that will work best for you. To learn more, visit fusionhealth.com.au



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