
spring



energy of the season

Nature explodes with the coming of spring. Winter's yin energy begins to transform, and with the Spring we become more yang in nature. Yang energy is warmer, brighter and more exterior. Dormant bulbs once buried under inches of snow erupt and push up towards the nurturing source of the sun. Tree sap, long stored in the roots, reverses its flow and begins running up to ignite the growth cycle once again. In this season, the movement is upward and outward, just like the new, vital growth.

organs : Liver & Gallbladder

5 elements : wood element

Taste: Sour

Color: Green

Emotion: Anger

Tissues: Tendons, Nails

Sense Organ: Eye

Season: Spring

Environment: Wind

Stage: Birth

Direction: East

Personality: Leader, Hard Worker, Loves a Challenge

When our wood element is healthy: We have clarity of mind and a high power of focus. We have increased ability to achieve our goals.

When our wood element is weak: We lose perspective and become confused. We often become victim of delusion with mental focus turning into obsession. This can lead to impulsiveness, aggressiveness and fits of anger.

foods

Green Foods

Eating green foods will help decongest your liver, promote Qi movement upwards and outward, and bring your body into harmony with the season. Like the green shoots and buds of the plants and trees, spring is associated with the color green.

Green Foods

Consume foods that are rich in chlorophyll (including cereal grasses like wheat or barley grass juice, micro algae like spirulina, blue-green, and chlorella, parsley, kale, swiss chard, and collard greens) in order to accelerate liver rejuvenation.

Sweet, Sour, and Pungent Foods

The emotion of the spring and liver is anger. Sweet foods have calming and cooling properties and can soothe emotions, and they also help to dispel extra accumulated heat from the winter. Sour foods stimulate the tissues to contract and release toxins. Its astringent effect dries and firms. A small amount of the sour flavor is essential for a balanced liver, but be careful not to consume too much or it may cause dryness. Pungent foods help to ease the transition into spring when erratic changes in weather make us susceptible to colds, flus, allergies and acute illness. These foods also have a powerful immune boosting qualities.

Sweet Foods

Apple, Apricot, Banana, Bee Pollen, Beetroot, Bell Pepper (Orange, Red), Blackberry, Blueberry, Broccoli, Carrot, Cashew, Cauliflower, Coconut, Grape, Grapefruit, Honey (Raw), Millet, Mushroom, Onion, Orange, Peanut, Potato, Pumpkin, Raspberry, Rice, Spinach, Sweet Potato, Tomato, Tuna, Turkey

Sour Foods

Blackberry, Blueberry, Cranberry, Grape, Grape Fruit, Kiwi, Lemon, Mango, Orange, Pear, Pineapple, Plum, Raspberry, Rhubarb, Tangerine, Tomato, Yogurt

Pungent foods

Mint, spring onions, ginger, horseradish, chamomile and black pepper.

Cook vegetables for a shorter time but at a higher temperature. This way, the food (especially the interior) is cooked slightly 'al dente'. Think lightly steaming or minimal simmering. A quick, high-temp saute method is also recommended.

seasonal imbalances

Qi Stagnation: Pain, Emotional Imbalances, Feeling of Distention in Abdomen, Depression, Frequent Sighing. Liver congestion occurs when heat, wind, and stagnation persist. Foods that supplement the blood and clear heat and stagnation are helpful to dispel internal heat and soothe nervous irritability

Almond, Basil, Beetroot, Black Pepper, Broccoli, Cabbage, Carrot, Cayenne, Celery, Cinnamon, Dandelion Root, Garlic, Ginger, Honey (Raw), Lemon, Mint, Onion, Orange, Oregano, Plum, Pumpkin, Radish, Tea (Black, Green), Vinegar

Wind: As it rustles the leaves of the trees in nature, wind can also stir things about inside the body. Internally, wind will move things around giving rise to **headaches, wandering pain, migrating (arthritic) joint pain, swelling, spasms, skin rashes, numbness and cramping.** On an emotional level, it can cause **manic depression, nervousness, and emotional turmoil.** Wind is both destabilizing and unpredictable, it can strike quickly and cause superficial symptoms like **watery eyes, runny nose or upper body aches.**

The nape of the neck and the upper-back is an area referred to as the “Wind Gate”, and is the place where all of the Yang channels of the acupuncture meridians intersect. Be sure to protect this area with a scarf or coat, it will help to protect you from both the wind and the cold.

supplements

Allerplex

Supports the body's ability to handle seasonal, environmental, and dietary challenges, manage mucus movement, maintain healthy liver, lung, and respiratory function, and was developed to assist the body in naturally defending itself against seasonal challenges.

Livaplex

Foundational support for the liver. Supports healthy liver and gallbladder function and the body's normal toxin-elimination function. Encourages healthy digestion of fats, bowel function and healthy bile production

Cruciferous Complete or SP Green Food

Promotes healthy liver function, provides antioxidant activity and supports overall cellular health

essential oils

8 Branches Wood essential oil blend is designed for spring. **Chinese Medicine functions:** Tonifies the Qi, promotes energy and vitality, and strengthens the Shen(spirit) **Indications:** Qi deficiency with some Qi stagnation, with fatigue, low stamina, poor mental focus, discouragement, apathy, listlessness, shallow breathing.

Rosemary: yang tonic, move qi and blood, provides clear thought

Geranium: cooling, moist, clears heat & free course QI, reduces irritability and frustration

Sweet Basil: warm, tonify yang, lift spirit, uplift

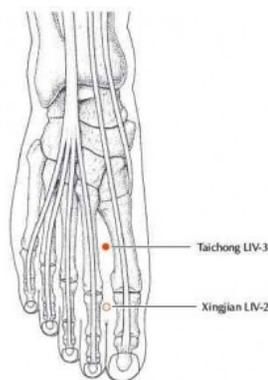
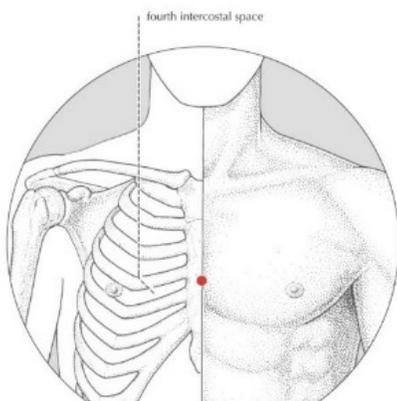
Grapefruit(pink and red): cooling, cleansing, decongesting.

acupressure

Conception Vessel 17: Regulates Qi, Unbinds and Opens the Chest

Liver 3: Spreads Liver Qi, Extinguishes Wind, Promotes Circulation

Auricular (Allergy Points): Alleviate Symptoms Associated with Allergies; Runny/Stuffy Nose, Coughing, Sneezing, and Shortness of Breath



self care

Wake Up and Stretch

Rising earlier and beginning a healthy morning routine of walking or stretching will help alert your brain that it's time to wake up. As you set your internal clock to the sun, you will be better able to use your energy during the day and rest more soundly at night. TCM says liver stores blood during periods of rest and then releases it to the tendons in times of activity, maintaining tendon health and flexibility. Try a gentle routine of yoga or tai chi moves.

Get Outside and Move

The liver is easy to stagnate in the spring. Fresh air, and outdoor activities of all kinds can keep liver Qi flowing. Especially if you have been feeling irritable, find tranquility in nature by taking a hike or walking through a park to smooth out that liver Qi and move stagnation. Spring is the season of activity – break out, loosen up, and move after the restful time of winter. Walk around the block and observe what's popping up in the flowerbeds. Listen to the sounds of spring as birds busily fly overhead foraging for nest material. Remember you are a part of nature and spring is the time to be out to celebrate the new life around you.

Breathe Easy and Stay Allergy Free

Some of our favorite take home habits include cleansing of the sinuses with a neti pot, breathwork, and consuming raw, local honey.

Rest Your Digestion

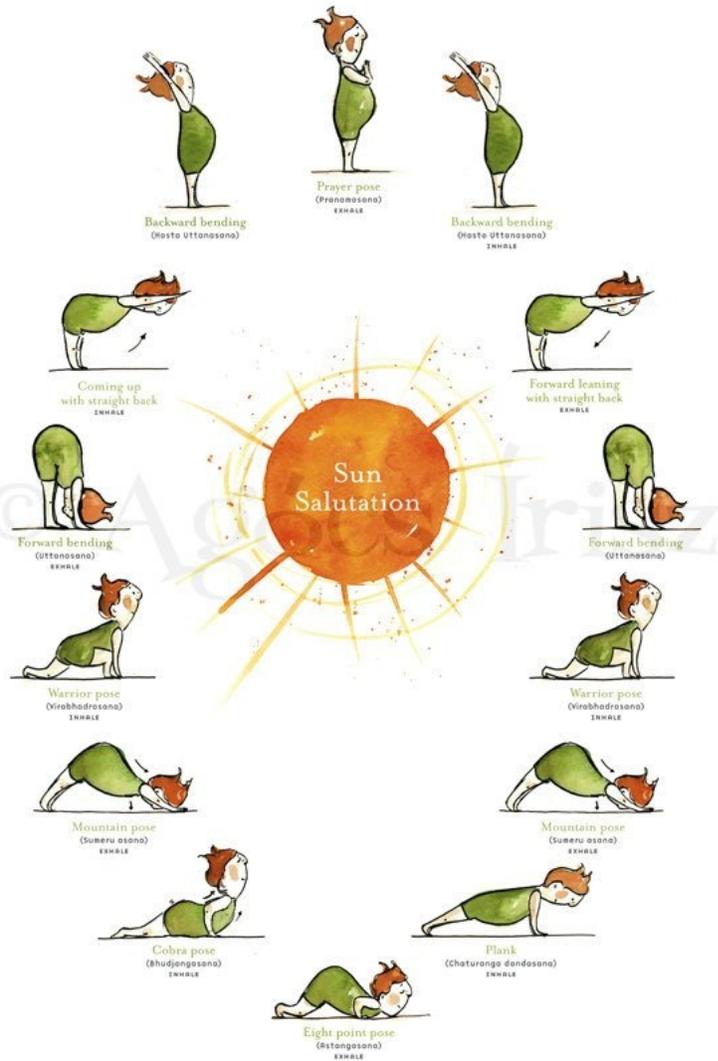
Relieve your liver by consuming less, especially highly processed foods and alcohol, while you increase your intake of lightly steamed vegetables and whole grains. A good way to cleanse and prepare for renewal is by reducing consumption.

Plant Some Seeds

Activities for grounding and nurturing like planting in the spring can have a soothing effect on the mind and help anchor any rising Liver energy.

Protect Your Wind Gate

Wear a scarf when you go outside to protect your neck and upper back. Wind can cause symptoms like watery eyes, runny nose or upper body aches, manic depression, nervousness, and emotional turmoil, headaches, wandering pain, swelling, spasms, skin rashes, numbness and cramping.



recipes

Honey and Lemon Tonic: a liver tonic to encourage detoxification.

Combine *1TbIs of honey + *1/2 fresh-squeezed lemon in a cup of warm water and drink first thing upon waking. This practice will promote better digestion, reduce congestion and has been used for centuries to aid in weight loss and cleansing routines. Apple Cider Vinegar may be used in place of lemon.

Pan Crisped Greens with Eggs and Sweet Potato

- *1 tablespoon organic, extra virgin coconut oil (or olive oil)
- *2 handfuls of chopped organic greens (dandelion greens, kale)
- *2 eggs, preferably organic and free range
- *1 small or 1/2 large organic sweet potato, baked or steamed and then sliced and drizzled with a little coconut oil, if desired
- *coarse sea salt and freshly ground black pepper- to taste *any other seasonings you like ex. a squeeze of fresh lemon juice for the greens, hot sauce, etc- optional

Directions:

1. Heat oil in a cast-iron skillet. When the pan is very hot, add the greens. Cook for several minutes, stirring sporadically, allowing them to crisp in the hot pan.
2. Break the eggs into the pan over the greens and turn the heat to very low. Cover the pan and allow the eggs to cook for 3-5 minutes, until done to your liking.
3. Using a large spatula, transfer the greens with the cooked eggs on top to your plate. Season to taste with salt, pepper, etc., and serve with sliced sweet potato.