

From the Owner of Rhythm of Healing - Creator of the Fall Ayurvedic Cleanse

5 Habits For A Calm & Balanced Fall

Quick and Easy Ayurvedic Strategies
for Fabulous Fall Health



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Introduction

Fall is in the air and it creeps in through open windows at night, cooling off the lingering heat of summer. The colors shift, the leaves crackle and the trees draw their life blood inward. As kids go back to school, parents relish their opportunity to experience peaceful days with fewer activities. As the world grows bigger with the effect of technology it seems ever more important to connect with our communities and act locally. By honoring and aligning with the transition between summer and winter we are able to tune into the silence and engage the winds of change in our lives. During this transition it is important to balance the dry, cold and rough qualities of fall. It is also a time when the veil between dimensions softens. We celebrate such rituals as the Day of the Dead and give thanks for the bounty of summer during Thanksgiving. Use this guide as inspiration be mindful about staying warm, creating routine and, like the trees, protecting your vital fluids this fall. Eventually you will be able to re-imagine your seasonal rituals in a fresh new way.

Our Roadmap



Our day to day activities are governed by habits. Depending on whether these habits are appropriate based on the time, place and circumstance in which we find ourselves we may or may not be supporting our health. The concept that governs whether this interaction between environment and the body is beneficial is “like increases like.” For example, when you are in full sun, your body temperature goes up and when you are in cold water your body temperature goes down. This is an example of the external environment affecting us, but it can also be our internal thoughts or emotions that create change in our body’s or minds. Many of us live relatively insulated lives moving from house to office to car. We are still affected by the qualities of the fall season. Think of the weather, how would you describe it? In general the qualities that embody fall are cool, dry, light, and windy. As like increases like our primary goal is to insulate ourselves against these qualities so they do not increase in excess. We do this by spending more time with friends, staying warm, doing less, eating physically and emotionally nourishing foods, and performing grounding rituals. The five habits for a healthy fall are based around incorporating these suggestions into your life in quick and easy ways that assist you in minimizing the season’s detrimental effects on your physiology. Any constitution can benefit from these recommendations but they are especially

useful if you are a Vata constitution and have a thin frame, quick mind and variable digestion.

Good Eating Habits for Better Fall Digestion

There many habits that can improve our overall digestion, but in order to mitigate the effect of the cool, dry and windy weather we can take specific actions that will provide the most benefit to our digestive system. This is a general approach and may not fully account for the differences in climate across the entire world. For example if you live in Alaska then eating warm soups and stews will support you the most, but if you live in Southern California then soups and salads would be an better choice. Focus on the principles instead of the specific foods suggested.

A fall balancing diet



Have you ever noticed that your body naturally craves salads in the summer, but as the nights cool off you start to gravitate towards foods that are warm, oily, cooked and well spiced? Why do you think that is? Biologically we are programmed to live in accordance with the natural and environmental rhythms and heavier foods, such as healthy oils, nuts and meats give us the nutrients we need to thrive over a long winter. However, it is important to not overeat and to monitor digestion--making sure that these dense foods are properly digested.

The best way to do this is to monitor your tongue upon arising. See the picture below (if they don't gross you out).

Healthy	Medium	Thick
		

Check your tongue in the morning to see if the coating on top is getting thicker, this is an indication that you are not digesting your food and may be accompanied by excessive gas, bloating, or heaviness after eating. If you have any of these symptoms or a medium to thick tongue coating choose lighter fare or eat less throughout the day. Once you have assessed the state of your digestion through your tongue and have determined that you need to improve your eating habits here are some habits you can follow:

1. Drink ginger tea between meals by grating a teaspoon of fresh ginger per cup of tea and drink between meals. You can add a little honey for sweetness. This will gently stimulate digestion and support digestion of heavy foods.
2. Reduce the amount of sweets you eating to less than a couple times a week and choose sweet treats that are warm such as banana bread or carrot cake.
3. Drinking warm almond milk with cardamom an hour after dinner can also keep your body insulated from the windy cold weather outside and help you sleep which will indirectly support your digestive organs.

In addition to these three healthy habits it can be useful to minimize your intake of certain foods in order to improve digestion and remove the coating on your tongue.

1. Reduce your intake of salads and beans that are not adequately spiced and balanced with oil.
2. If you eat cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower and potatoes make sure they are well cooked
3. Ice cream and stimulating beverages like black tea or coffee are more likely to wreak havoc on your system this time of year. Find substitutes such as warm rice pudding (khir) or beverages like dandy blend during this time of year.

Fruits to Favor

- Apples (cooked)
- Bananas
- Dates
- Grapes
- Lemons
- Mangoes
- Oranges
- Prunes (soaked)
- Raisins (soaked)

Vegetables to Favor

- Beets
- Carrots
- Cooked greens
- Onions
- Avocados
- Sweet Potatoes

Grains to Favor

- Amaranth
- Basmati Rice
- Brown Rice
- Oats
- Quinoa
- Spelt

Legumes to Favor

- Kidney Beans
- Tempeh
- Mung Beans
- Black Beans
- Red Lentils

Nuts & Seeds to Favor

- All nuts and seeds are supportive of a balanced Fall

Dairy to Favor

- Butter
- Goat Cheese
- Ghee
- Homemade Kefir
- Warm Milk or Cream
- Fresh Yogurt

Animal Products to Favor (if you eat them)

- Beef
- Buffalo
- Chicken
- Eggs
- Shrimp
- Turkey

Oils to Favor

- Avocado oil
- Ghee (Clarified butter)
- Cold pressed Olive oil
- Almond oil
- Safflower
- Cold pressed Sesame oil

Sweeteners

- Honey
- Stevia leaf
- Maple Syrup
- Molasses
- Rice Syrup
- Coconut sugar

Spices to Favor

- All spices are good for improving your Fall health

Daily Routines to Reduce Anxiety and Fatigue



In order to keep yourself grounded and centered amidst all the activity of fall it is important to establish and maintain consistent daily routines. These routines will help you to stay aware of the changes happening within and will allow you to respond accordingly. Channel the freedom and creativity that you love and cherish into creating more productive routines and rituals to maintain

balance. Here is a sample of daily routines for feeling grounded this fall.

Wake up at the same time each day

As the winds of change are in full effect during the fall it is very important to establish a consistent routine. Optimally waking up at the same time each day without using an alarm clock will set the day off on the right foot. If you have trouble waking up try this. Before bed think to yourself that you will wake up 15 minutes before your alarm is set to go off. Imagine yourself waking up and looking at the clock and having the time be when you are planning to wake up. If you are consistent with this for about 7 days then your biorhythms will acclimate to this and you will be able to wake up before your alarm and not be jarred from sleep. Wake up at the same time at least 5 days a week in order to establish the routine, but realize that every routine requires flexibility so that it does not become mechanical and you can assess its benefits over time.

Establish a rising routine for maintaining hygiene

Everyone will have a different rising routine depending on when they wake up and the amount of time that they have. The suggestions below are a common part on Ayurvedic hygiene for the Fall and can be incorporated into your current morning routine.

1. Upon waking drink at least a glass of warm water
2. Have a bowel movement
3. Take a walk or do some gentle exercise for 15-60 minutes
4. Meditate for at least 20 minutes
5. Do a self massage with warm oil (Abhyanga)

6. Journal or write for 5 minutes or more
7. Put a medicated oil in your nose (nasya)
8. Perform oil pulling with sesame or coconut oil
9. Take a shower
10. Brush your hair 100 times
11. Eat a warm vegetable and protein rich breakfast

Make sure to stay warm and dress adequately

As the mornings and evenings are cooler than the days it can be challenging to choose an outfit that will provide adequate warmth. As much of our heat is lost from our neck and head the easiest way to ensure warmth and to fight infection is to incorporate a scarf into your outfit.

Have lunch at the same time each day

As mentioned earlier routine is the key to staying balanced in the Fall and keeping an accumulation of Vata from occurring. By maintaining consistent mealtimes your body will be able to optimize the hormonal and enzymatic functions that are based on biorhythms. This will improve your digestive capacity. As lunch is considered the most important meal of the day in Ayurveda start with maintaining a consistent lunch and then over time try to make breakfast and dinner at the same time each day give our take about 15-30 minutes.

Sit quietly for 5-15 minutes after a busy day

What is the first thing that you do when you get home from a busy day? Do you take time after work to go to the gym or a yoga class? Bringing your work attitude home with you can cause distress and as our days are usually jam packed in the fall it is important to find a way to incorporate some time for yourself before running from one thing to the next. Optimally this would be a short meditation or breathing exercise in a designated space in your house, but even a walk around the block or a few minutes sitting in the car and breathing can help you clear your mind and set your intentions for relating to those closest to you.

Eat a light meal for dinner

When we overwhelm our digestion then it can affect our mind and lead to overwhelm, anxiety and fatigue. As our body and mind are connected by

focusing on our diet we can create positive effects on the mind. In order to help the digestive system to rest and to use the energy that is normally used for digestion for creating memories and supporting our emotional health it is beneficial to eat a light dinner. Many European countries still do this. The green smoothie used at breakfast can be great for this or have a small sandwich or rice bowl. Don't go back for seconds and skip desert. If you are going to eat desert it is best to have it before lunch.

Go to bed before 10pm

There is so much research relating our mental health to the amount of sleep that we are getting. Anyone who is sleep deprived knows that cognitive and emotional function don't quite work right when we need sleep. Getting adequate rest is important and based on our biorhythms we tend to get a second wind at 10 pm and can stay up much later. By going to bed before 10 we miss the second wind and that increased energy is used on metabolic functions that improve our overall health.

While all of these daily routines are not realistic for everyone look over the list and determine the ones that you are already doing. Consider that a victory and allow that to be the motivation for focusing on another one. Then prioritize the remaining suggestions and tackle them one at a time. For example if you find that you immediately rush into your house chores after returning from work set aside 5 minutes to sit and breath either in your car or in a quiet room. Once you have been consistent with this recommendation for 10 days in a row try another step.

Lifestyle Amendments

In the fall a gardener puts the garden to bed by pulling up the summer vegetables and planting a cover crop to replenish the soil with Nitrogen and other nutrients. Ayurveda is sometimes called the path of oil because oil is used to rejuvenate the system. In Ayurveda, this garden is our body, and nitrogen is oil. Oil therapies replenish our bodies in the same way that a cover crop replenishes the soil. One oil therapy is regular self-massage with warm oil. To do this warm up a couple ounces of sesame or olive oil and create a nurturing environment in the bathroom. Start by placing some oil on the crown of the head and continue applying the oil to the rest of the body. Massage yourself in a way that feels natural to you and spend about 15 minutes anointing your body with oil. Complete the process by taking a warm shower and use soap sparingly. In order to remove the oil from the

hair place shampoo on your dry hair and massage it into a lather, rinsing with water at the end.

Staying Fit

Exercise is an important way to stay healthy as the weather outside gets cooler. The best time for exercise is between 6-10am or pm. Consider slowing down your pace from your summer activities. If you bike, swim, hike, run or do yoga consider decreasing the duration and intensity by up to 50% for the fall. Fall is a time of letting go and this process is supported by taking adequate time to relax.

Create a meditation practice or build on an already existing practice. Set a goal of meditating twice a day for 20 minutes, once in the morning and once upon returning home from your day's work. Before bed consider journaling, recapitulating, or self-reflecting so that you can begin to notice how these new rituals are affecting your body and mind. It is important to carve out more time to simply *relax*, even though you may find it difficult to "do nothing." If you feel your energy waning, try a short afternoon nap. Remember that "less is more" and that multitasking is certain to disperse your energy.

Yoga for the Fall



As the days grow colder and the ends of summer chores continue to mount, use yoga to slow down and restore a sense of grounding and centeredness. A simple, slow sequence of yoga postures done three times a week for 45 minute or an hour can help to balance the mind and body for optimal immunity.

During your practice allow your awareness to deepen into the center of the body and connect with the bones. In order to connect in this way feel how the bones hold you up and provide structure and stability. Experience how the muscles make contact with the bones. Choose to do postures that will generate heat in the legs as these are easy bones to connect with. This will wake them up and allow for a more rooted feeling. By using the legs more you will decrease the use of the upper body which will help to ground you and may also release tension throughout the upper body and shoulders. Be careful not to overdo sun salutations or other postures that embrace the use of the arms; overusing the arms can create nervous tension. Allow the deep breaths that yoga cultivates to follow you throughout the day. As you awaken to new way of practicing yoga, invite in fluidity and grace. Also, to avoid feeling rushed, be sure to allow plenty of time to enjoy your practice.

Herbs to Support Your Fall

There is a host of herbs that can support your system against the impending cold and dryness. Finding the right combination is often more effective than taking everything. There are multiple herbs that can be effective treatments for the conditions listed below, but these are the primary herbs that can be used:

For the Mind

- Anxiety, nervousness- [Arjuna](#)
- Insecurity, restlessness- [Licorice](#)
- Hyperactivity, giddiness- [Vidari](#)
- Interrupted sleep- [Ashwagandha](#)
- Forgetfulness- [Bacopa](#)



More Severe Imbalances

- Chronic insomnia- [I Sleep Soundly](#)
- Mental instability, blackouts- [Mental Clarity](#)
- Severe vata-type depression- [Stress Ease](#)

In the Digestive Tract

- Burps, hiccups, excessive thirst- [Ginger](#)
- Gurgling intestines, gas, bloating- [Fennel](#)
- Constipation, dry feces, hemorrhoids- [Haritaki](#)
- Irregular appetite, mild weight loss- [Coriander](#)
- Pain in the side, pressure under the diaphragm- [Cumin](#)
- A dry taste in the mouth, cravings- [Ginger](#)

More Severe Imbalances

- Hard, dry, dark, small, and bullet-like stools- [Dashamula](#)
- Emaciation, irritable bowel syndrome- [Licorice](#)

In the Circulatory System, Skin, Nails, Scalp & Hair

- Dryness in the skin, lips, or hair, split ends- [Licorice](#)
- Cracking skin, heels, nails or cuticles, and dandruff- [Bhringaraj](#)
- Pallor, lusterless skin- [Ginger](#)
- Poor circulation, cold hands or feet- [Cinnamon](#)

- Insufficient sweat, eczema, and psoriasis- [Manjishta](#)

More Severe Imbalances

- Severe dehydration, brittle nails and hair- [Licorice](#)
- Deformities in the nails, dark discolorations of the skin- [Dashamula](#)
- Collapsed blood vessels, aneurysms, blood clots, and varicose veins- [Arjuna](#)

In the Muscles, Bones, Joints, & Nervous System

- Lack of coordination, weakness- [Bala](#)
- Muscle fatigue, quivering thighs- [Ashwagandha](#)
- Tightness, stiffness, and muscle aches- [Guggulu](#)
- Cracking, popping, or pain in the bones and joints- [Boswellia](#)
- Ticks, tremors, tingling, numbness- [Gotu Kola](#)
- Sciatica, nerve pain, a stiff neck- [Bacopa](#)
- Pain around the pelvic girdle, and vague or generalized pain- Nirgundi

More Severe Imbalances

- Muscle wasting, muscle rigidity, osteoarthritis- [Turmeric](#)
- Rheumatoid arthritis, gout- [Guduchi](#)
- Osteoporosis, scoliosis, kyphosis, lordosis- Red clover
- Prolapsed organs, fibromyalgia, and incontinence- [Amalaki](#)
- Convulsions, seizures, paralysis- [Gotu kola](#)
- Fainting, changes in thyroid function- [Tulsi](#)
- Multiple Sclerosis, and Parkinson's disease- [Kapikacchu](#)



CONCLUSION

The fall can be a remarkable balancing time for us if we are able to take advantage of the Fall's natural rhythms and attune ourselves to nature. In order to do this set realistic goals and approach them meticulously. Return to this document if you are in need of a reminder and fresh inspiration. Be Well!