



Summer

We welcome summer on Tuesday, June 21, 2022. The transition from spring to summer has unique energy shifts. The days grow longer, it becomes warmer and flowers bloom. At this time of year, as nature's energy increases, we find our own energy increasing as we become more expansive and energetic.

Summer is associated with the the Fire element and the heart. The heart is not only responsible for pumping blood throughout the body but also houses our "shen" or spirit. Because the heart is connected with our spirit, summer is the ideal time to mend the heart and release any emotional wounds. Doing so frees up space that we can fill with joy and contentment and ensures that we do not continue to carry the burden of old hurts into the future.

Fire has the power to illuminate our inner being and also our outer world. When the Fire element is balanced and in harmony, the heart is strong and healthy, the spirit is calm and sleep is sound. When the Fire element is out of balance, depression or insomnia may occur. It is especially important to get enough sleep during the summer. Keeping a regular sleep schedule helps keep the heart in balance.

With subtle modifications to our diet and activities we can best align ourselves with the flow of summer. The following are some simple suggestions to help you enjoy a healthy and happy summer.

Rise and Shine

Get up early so that you can benefit from the sun's nourishing rays and energy. Go about your daily activities with joy and laughter – this is how you know the Fire energy is balanced. Use the early morning hours to begin a meditation practice or start a gratitude journal.

Pick Up the Pace

Physical activity keeps blood and oxygen circulating so that nutrients are more able to nourish your body, so stay active. Go for a walk, work in your garden or practice Qigong. Standing or seated Qigong meditation postures are very beneficial at this time of year. Take advantage of the warmer weather and practice Qigong outside in your garden, patio, the beach or a nearby park. This will also allow you to absorb some nature Qi.

Nourish Yourself with Cooling Foods

The ancients used food and its healing properties to strengthen the body. In summer, it's a good idea to introduce some cooling foods into your diet. Nutrition based on the Five Elements Theory classifies food according to its energetic qualities. Food with cool and cold properties can clear heat, reduce toxins, and generate body fluids.

In general, cooling foods tend towards the green end of the spectrum – lettuce, cucumbers, and watercress are some of the coolest. Fish and seafood are also cooling. Here are some food choices to keep you cool and balanced all summer long. They will help your body adjust its temperature and protect you during the long, hot summer days:

Watermelon, Apricot, Cantaloupe, Lemon, Peach, Orange

Asparagus, Sprouts, Bamboo, Bok Choy, Broccoli, Chinese Cabbage, Corn, Cucumber, White Mushroom, Snow Peas, Spinach, Summer Squash, Watercress, Seaweed

Cilantro, Mint, Dill

Stay Hydrated

Keep a bottle of water with you and sip it throughout the day. Add some slices of lemon or cucumber or a sprig of mint for a refreshing change. For variety, you can also drink some cooling teas such as green tea, white tea or mint tea.

Summer Correspondences

Element	Fire
Yin Organ	Heart
Yang Organ	Small Intestine
Sense Organ	Tongue
Taste	Bitter
Color	Red
Sound	Laughing
Emotion	Joy
Direction	South