

Balancing Act

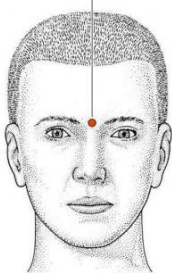


The Awakening Balance Acupuncture Quarterly Newsletter



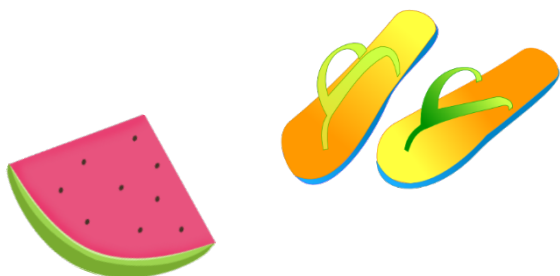
Element: **Fire** Color: **Red** Nature: **Yang** Organs: **Heart, Small Intestine** Emotion: **Joy**

Yintang (M-HN-3)



Featured Seasonal Acupuncture Point: Yintang (The Third Eye Point)

Acupuncture has been found to be helpful with all types of emotional and mental disorders, from stress and anxiety to schizophrenia. Often used for such treatments is Yintang, a point located between the eyebrows – sometimes referred to as "the third eye." The Chinese translation for the acupuncture point, Yintang, is "hall of impression". "Hall" is defined as a corridor or passageway, or the large entrance room of a house. An "impression" is defined as a strong effect produced on the intellect, emotions, or conscience. Thus, Yintang is the entrance or passageway to the mind. "Hall of impression" is an appropriate name for this powerful point, which is used to calm the mind, enhance one's ability to focus, soothe emotions, promote sleep, and relieve depression.



The Fire Element

Summer is the season of yang, a time when the body undergoes vigorous metabolic (body energy) processes. Several thousand years ago, The Medical Classic of the Yellow Emperor put forth the principle that one should utilize and enjoy the yang energy in spring and summer, while protecting the yin energy.

TCM teaches us that summer belongs to fire, one of the five elements. Fire is symbolic of maximum activity or greatest yang, which means that it is a time of heat, outgoingness, and moving outward in nature and in our lives. In human anatomy, the fire element rules the heart, mind, and spirit. Thus, top priority should be given to the heart, mind, and spirit for staying healthy in summer.

Live Life to the Fullest

The heart's main function is to pump oxygen-rich blood through the body. In Chinese medicine, mental activity is associated with the heart and therefore our memory, thought processes, emotional well-being, and consciousness are also attributed to the heart and fire element. This is a time to nourish and pacify our spirits, and to realize our life's greatest potential as we pursue finding the joys in the hot summer days and warm summer nights.

When the fire element is in balance, the heart is strong and healthy, the mind is calm and sleep is sound.

When the fire element is imbalanced, we may either lack joy and experience depression or have an excess of joy and move maniacally with anger, anxiety, and urgency. Indicators of an imbalance in the fire element include agitation, nervousness, heartburn, and insomnia.

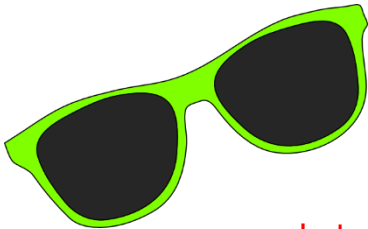
Tips for Summer Health

To prevent summer ills and remain in harmony with the environment of summer, ancient Chinese physicians advised waking earlier in the morning, going to bed later in the evening, resting at midday, drinking plenty of fluids, adding bitter flavors to your diet, and refraining from anger; keep calm and even-tempered.

In summer, indigestion can easily occur, so a light and less-greasy diet is strongly recommended. It is the perfect season to introduce some cool, yin foods into your diet. Chinese nutrition classifies food according to its energetic qualities of temperature, taste, and ability to moisten and strengthen the body. 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 and all grow abundantly in the summer season – lettuce, cucumbers, and watercress are some of the coolest, however most fruits and vegetables are cooling due to their high fiber, balanced carbohydrate and water nature. Fish and seafood are also cooling, while most meats are warming. Some suggestions to keep you cool and balanced all summer long are 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, Mung beans, Cilantro, Mint, and Dill.

Other tips to keep in mind are to keep a pitcher of water with slices of lemon and cucumber with you and sip it throughout the day. Eat in moderation as over consumption of any food, even cooling foods, can lead to indigestion, sluggishness and possibly diarrhea. Do not leave your food out for too long as the hot weather tends to increase food spoilage. Stay away from dairy, heavy, greasy, and fried foods.



Late Summer and the Transition to the Earth Element

Next is the fifth season, Late Summer. It is the shortest of the seasons, lasting maybe four to six weeks. It is that pause between the rising Elements of Wood and Fire and the descending Elements, Metal and Water. It is the energy of Earth - Mother Earth. Like a mother who nourishes her young, this is the time of harvest before the leaves dry out and fall.

Late Summer is time of harvest, a time of plenty, of reaping what we have worked for throughout the year. The joy of this season is the harvest, the collection and culmination, the direct repayment or exchange and realization of the transformative energies of the previous season. If our Earth is of good quality, like quality soil, we will have the ability to produce good products that are nourishing.

The Earth is about our feelings of stability and having an abundance of compassion and care, helping others feel safe and protected, and giving them space to grow.

You can always notice when Late Summer arrives because people usually say with sadness that Summer is over but it is exactly the same temperature! The high of Summer has given way to the pause of Late Summer.

The Stomach, which is the "Official of Rotting and Ripening" impacts our ability to take things in, to nurture ourselves, to feel full and satisfied with the fruits of our harvest and then transform that nourishment we have received by giving to others. Here the feelings of neediness, loneliness and emptiness reside when out of balance. The Spleen - "The Official of Distribution" enables us to move Qi to each cell as it needs, to know that sustenance will be where we need it. When out of balance it can lead to over-worrying and over concern.