

Winter Tips

Harmony and ease in our bodies, minds, and spirits are dependent upon aligning ourselves with the rhythms and cycles of Mother Nature.

Doshas -Vata, Pitta, and Kapha are the three organizations that govern the unique psychophysiology of the individual. Vata governs the energies of the nervous system, the rhythms of the body, respiration, and all movement. Vata is the Dosha associated with this time of year. When aggravated, Vata needs to be soothed, moistened, stabilized, and nourished.

To help remain warm, relaxed and healthy:

- Start your day with warm lemon water to cleanse your lymph.
- Choose foods that are sweet, sour, salty, oily, moist, warm, and cooked.
- Eat fewer foods that are pungent (spicy), bitter, astringent, light, cold, and dry such as salads, smoothies, cold foods and beverages, chips and salsa.
- Eat slowly, mindfully, and chew well. Digestion begins when food comes in contact with the tongue.
- Add ghee, coconut oil, avocado, sesame oil or olive oil to your grains and soups.
- Use spices to help regulate the digestive fire.
- Follow a regular routine of sleep, exercise, mealtimes and rest. Get up, go to bed, eat, exercise, etc. at the same time each day.
- Exercise in the morning to increase circulation, mood and immunity. The six spinal movements are simple and effective.
- Vata needs fluidity and rhythm. If you have a yoga posture practice include standing, sitting, inversions, twists, backbends, and forward bends practiced in a gentle, rhythmic way. Also include restorative poses.
- Take time on a daily basis to be quiet and still. This helps allow the nervous system to settle and the mind to quiet down. Breathe slowly and quietly in and out through your nose.
- Self massage with warm sesame oil or almond oil to balance your nervous system and detoxify your lymphatic system. Sesame oil needs to be cured which means it's heated in a pan on low to medium heat just until it begins to swirl. This helps to break up the molecular structure so that it is more easily absorbed into the skin. Only sesame oil needs this "curing". I suggest organic, unrefined for medium heat.
- Oil the nose and the ears.
- Companies which offer oils for massage: BanyanBotanicals.com, SaradaAyurveda.com
- Add **Super Washing Soda** by Arm and Hammer to the wash to help remove any oily build up on clothing.
- Milk the lymph glands in the neck: massage the sides of the neck with downward strokes to below the collar bones.
- Keep the head and neck covered.

Some signs of excess vata during the Winter:

Insomnia, stress, anxiety, fear, constipation, dry skin, colds, flus, joint pain

