

BENDING WITH THE BREEZE

Integrative Strategies for Wellness Across the Seasons

INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE AT HENNEPIN HEALTHCARE

The Person-Centered and Culturally-Inspired Division of Integrative Health at Hennepin Healthcare is grounded in a multi-disciplinary team dedicated to partnering with patients, community, and each other to nurture healing, uncover root causes of illness, and offer whole-person, customized care to cultivate well-being for everyone.

SUMMER WELLBEING - YANG QI & WATER

Acupuncturist Charlotte Alvarez and Chiropractor Ghazala Usman share their tips on how to stay healthy in the heat

Charlotte - In Chinese Medicine, we nourish human life by living in harmony with the rhythm of the changing seasons, as reflected by our local environment. To boost our own internal **yang qi** - **that bright, vibrant, energetic characteristic of the summer sun**, we can use that stored energy for enjoyment of the great outdoors. Walk around a lake, qigong at dawn, visit a wooded park for hike, go kayaking, ride a bike, play pickleball, golf with friends. In summer, we need slightly less sleep, so **let the morning sun shine in your bedroom window** to wake you naturally. Rise early and go to sleep later. Following the sun helps set circadian rhythms and boosts energy.

One of Chinese medicine's beloved herbs is **cinnamon twig**, which enters the heart, the fire organ that is affiliated with summer. Cinnamon's aromatic, slightly sweet spice warms the body and builds yang energy, circulates the blood, induces therapeutic sweat, and softens the muscles. A little cinnamon during summer helps invigorate us and calms chronic pain.

The taste for summer, and the heart, is bitter. Bitter "drains fire" and clears excess, mucus, dampness, and pathogenic heat from the body. Eating bitter melon, dandelion and other bitter greens support this process. When the body is out of balance in the heat of summer - if we've spent too much time outdoors, are sunburnt, feel sun sick or dehydrated - **cooling foods** are recommended. Helpers include **watermelon, cucumbers, tomatoes, mung beans and chrysanthemum or green tea**. "Cooling" refers to the energetic nature of the foods and the processes they support within the body; it's not the same as food that is served cold.

The rule of thumb for healthful eating in any season is to eat what's in season in your local area. Visit your neighborhood farmer's market, and keep recipes simple. Lighten up, eat fresh. Go outside and appreciate this fleeting season!

Ghazala - After the long winter months in Minnesota, the thing I look forward to the most is getting outside and enjoying the long-awaited warmth with bike rides, long walks, or simply sitting outside and soaking up the sun. In doing this, it is important to remember to stay hydrated so that your body and mind function at their best. Water is necessary for every tissue, cell, and organ in our bodies to function properly. According to the [Mayo Clinic](#), water makes up about 50 percent-to-70 percent of body weight. Therefore, losing even a fraction of water can have a negative effect on our bodies and minds. Water influences critical functions of our health - body temp regulation, detoxification and immune health, memory, alertness, sleep, joint health, and more!

How Much Water Do We Need? Everybody's needs are different and can vary depending on their activity levels as well as the climate. The general recommendation for adults is eight, 8oz glasses per day for a total of 64 oz. everyday. Things to consider:

- Activity/Climate - Replenish if you break a sweat or are out on a warm day.
- Altitude - Being higher in the mountains or in an airplane can lead to dehydration - Important to consider during summer travels.
- Illness - Both vomiting and diarrhea can lead to dehydration.

Tips to Staying Hydrated:

- Drink 8oz of water before going to bed and upon waking up in the morning
- Add a slice of your favorite fruit, vegetable, or herbs for a flavor boost.
- Bring along your favorite water bottle as a reminder to stay hydrated.
- Don't wait until you feel thirsty - by the time you feel thirsty you could have lost 2-3 cups of your total body water composition!

The best thing to do if you are experiencing any symptoms of dehydration (thirst, flushed skin, headache, fatigue, increased body temperature, weakness, dizziness, faster breathing/heart rate, dry mouth, irritability, constipation, nausea, vomiting, dark urine) is to immediately drink some water! Lost nutrients and electrolytes can be restored with **Coconut Water or watermelon**.

Agua de Jamaica

Ingredients:

- 2 quarts water
- ½ - 1 cup sugar (to taste)
- 1 cup dried hibiscus (*flor de jamaica* in Spanish; if you have access to fresh hibiscus, use fresh!)
- ½ stick cinnamon (ideally, Mexican cinnamon - *canela*)
- lime to garnish



Instructions:

- Boil 4 cups water, sugar and cinnamon stick until sugar is dissolved.
- Remove from heat and stir in hibiscus. Cover and let steep 20 min.
- Strain and refrigerate concentrate.
- To serve, add 4 cups water and mix. Pour over ice and serve with a fresh lime wedge.

SUMMER OFFERINGS

Classes

Gentle Yoga for Cancer Care - Every Tues 12-1pm (in-person or zoom)

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) - contact mindfulness@hcmcd.org for details (zoom)

Group Medical Visits

Tame your Pain Beyond Medication - 7/11-8/29, Tues 1:30-3:30pm (in-person)

Rest and Renewal Lifestyle - 7/12-8/30, Wed 1:30-3:30pm (zoom)

Life Beyond Cancer, drop-in - 7/19, 10/18 Wed 8-9:30am (zoom)

Blood Sugar Balance for Diabetes, Heart Disease, & Brain Health - 7/20-9/14, Thurs 10am-12pm (in-person)

Blood Sugar Balance, drop-in - 8/16, 11/15, Wed 8-9:30am (zoom)

Easing Pain Holistically: Muscles & Joints - Thursdays 1:30-3:30pm, 8/3-9/29 (no session week of 8/24) (in-person)

Easing Pain Holistically: Headaches - Wed 10am-12pm, 9/6-10/25 (in-person)

Community Events

Heals on Wheels - community events on **holistic strategies for chronic pain management** at various locations, email catherine.justice@hcmcd.org for more information

Mid-day Mindfulness Practice Breaks Practice Breaks - Thursdays 12-12:30 (zoom) - contact mindfulness@hcmcd.org for details

For More Info on all Summer Offerings, Go To:

www.hennepinhealthcare.org/specialty/integrative-health/



PROVIDER SPOTLIGHT

Get to know Natalie Giacomini, DC

What is your specialty? Chiropractic Care

What do you love most about your job? The long-term relationships I have been able to build with my patients - I have seen some for years and have been able to also treat their friends and family

What do you most enjoy about the summer? Being able to take walks outside without wearing multiple layers of clothes

What is a healthy pleasure of yours? Trying new recipes to expand my food palate.

Hydrating Foods

20% of our fluid intake comes from our food. Foods that promote hydration include:

- Cucumbers
- Celery
- Tomatoes
- Watermelon
- Strawberries
- Grapefruit
- Peppers
- Cauliflower
- Spinach
- Radishes
- Broccoli

The Summer Day

Who made the world?

Who made the swan, and the black bear?

Who made the grasshopper?

This grasshopper, I mean—

the one who has flung herself out of the grass,

the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,

who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down

—

who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.

Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face.

Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.

I don't know exactly what a prayer is.

I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down

into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass,

how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,

which is what I have been doing all day.

Tell me, what else should I have done?

Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?

Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?

—Mary Oliver