



### **Autumn Harvest - enhance and support your immune system for winter**

Autumn is here, the days are shorter, the autumn leaves are falling and the air is colder. Just as this signals us to put on warmer clothes it's also time to warm-up from the inside, enhance and support our digestion and immunity for the even colder winter ahead.

The relationship between our digestive and immune systems is important; the digestive tract is subject to invasion by bad bacteria, viruses and other toxins that may enter with food. The immune system works to ensure a healthy environment in the gut where the bad pathogens cannot flourish.

Eating a balanced whole food diet and avoiding processed foods, soft drinks, added sugar and sweeteners will help your immune system to stay strong and fight off any infection.

Soups and casseroles containing quality animal protein and legumes are nourishing at this time; full of hearty ingredients and the longer cooking times make the proteins easier to digest.

Seasonal fruits and vegetables available in autumn are-

- Apples and pears - these make a nourishing dessert stewed with a pinch of cinnamon, or added to porridge for breakfast
- Beetroot
- Broccoli
- Brussel Sprouts
- Carrot
- Citrus - mandarin, oranges and lemons
- Mustard Greens
- Peas
- Sweet Potato
- Pumpkin

### Autumn herbs and spices-

- Ginger
- Garlic
- Chilli
- Cinnamon
- Cardamom
- Turmeric
- Onion
- Oregano
- Thyme
- Parsley
- Coriander
- Sage
- Rosemary

### Other beneficial foods-

- Miso
- Reishi & Shiitake Mushrooms
- Legumes - lentils and beans
- Fermented and probiotic foods - sauerkraut, sourdough, kimchi, kefir and probiotic yoghurt

Another aspect of autumn is dryness, not only in the air but also our skin and hair where no amount of moisturiser seems to help. Work from the inside out by increasing good fats in your diet-

- Avocado
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Nut oils
- Pumpkin seeds
- Sunflower Seeds
- Flax Seeds
- Almonds
- Walnuts
- Oily fish such as salmon and mullet

Protect yourself by wearing a woollen scarf around your neck; in traditional chinese medicine the neck is the most vulnerable area subject to chills. Wearing a woollen beanie will also keep you warm and protect your hair from the drying elements associated with autumn.

Should you feel a chill developing, herbal teas with lemon and manuka honey will help to soothe symptoms. Ginger tea can help to warm from the inside out. Licorice tea can be helpful if there is a dry or productive cough involved. Peppermint tea can also be useful to break up congestion.

Rug up and enjoy a walk in the sun admiring the beautiful colours of autumn; before too long winter will be here.

