

Recipe for Wellbeing - Health tips for the change of season

By Well-Aware-Ness Yoga Teacher Gabrielle McMahon

The cold and flu season has been upon us for a few months now, however have you noticed that colds and flu's are not restricted to only the winter months, they can take hold of us at any given moment and the change of season can also be a vulnerable time. The weather of late has gone from cold to hot to warm to cold with a downpour of rain and gusty winds, a perfect time for nasty viruses to latch on. It is such a lousy feeling as though you have glass in your throat, the head hurts, the nose drips constantly and you ache from top to toe.

The great news is that we can relieve our symptoms from these nasty viruses and be on the road to recovery with some very simple tips.

Keeping your immune system strong is the essential key for keeping yourself healthy. A sensible lifestyle such as getting enough sleep, exercising regularly and eating well is all part of a healthy lifestyle.

A diet rich in antioxidants such as green leafy vegetables, deep-sea fish, blueberries, filtered water and taking vitamin supplements will strengthen your immune system. And how good is this! Red wine and dark chocolate are also antioxidant foods, however let's be sensible and limit that to 1 standard glass of red wine and 50 grams of dark chocolate daily, and no, you cannot save it up and do it all one sitting, sorry to be the killjoy. Keeping your distance from others when you have a cold or flu is also very wise. Droplets from a person's sneeze can spread over a 2 metre radius. Not very appealing is it? So let's not share! Stay home and rest up!

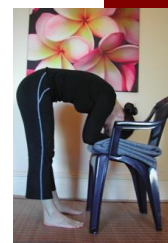
Resting is most important, so I have added some restorative yoga postures that will relieve cold and flu symptoms and they are equally as effective for when you are feeling run down.

Remember to breathe whilst in the following postures, if the mind wanders, always come back to the natural flow of your breath.

Standing Forward Bend ►

Brings energy to the head and respiratory area; helps clear the sinuses

Place a blanket on a chair for extra padding. Stand with your feet hip-width apart and rest your forearms on a chair palms facing down, rest your forehead on the blanket. Hold two to five minutes.



Widespread Forward Bend ◀

Quiets the internal organs; relaxes the mind

Sit on the floor with your sitting bones on the edge of a folded blanket. Straighten your legs out in front of you and then separate them as far as you comfortably can. Rest your upper torso on a bolster or (if you're more stiff) a chair seat. If you are using a chair, you can fold your forearms on the seat for more height and padding. Hold the pose for three to five minutes.



Supported Bound Angle Pose ►

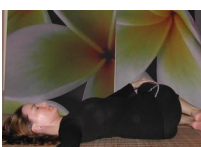
Opens the chest, abdomen, and pelvis; relaxes the nervous system

Sit on the floor, knees bent towards the chest. Bring the soles of your feet together and let your knees open towards the floor. Support the outer thighs with folded blankets at a comfortable height. You can also place sandbags on each inner thigh to deepen relaxation. Release the arms out to the sides and let go of any tension. Relax in the pose for a minimum of five minutes.



Reclining Twist ◀

Releases physical and stress-based tension



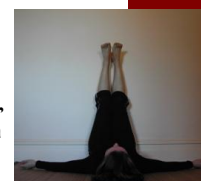
Lie on your back and with an exhalation bend your knees and draw your thighs to your torso. Shift your pelvis slightly to the left and, with another exhalation, swing your legs to the right and down to the floor (if they don't rest comfortably on the floor, support them on a bolster or folded blanket). Turn your upper torso to the left. Rest your right hand on the outer left knee and stretch

your left arm to the side, in line with your shoulders. Look straight up or close your eyes. Relax for three minutes. Repeat on the other side.

Legs Up the Wall Pose ►

Brings energy to the pelvis and opens the chest area to facilitate breathing

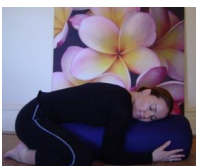
The buttocks and legs are touching the wall, open your arms out to the sides, if you wish you can place a folded blanket at the lower back, depending what is more comfortable for you. If your hamstrings feel tight, try turning the legs slightly in, or move the blanket/bolster further away from the wall. Hold for a minimum of five minutes.



Supported Child Pose ◀

Calms the mind and helps relieve stress and fatigue

Sit on your heels, spread your knees and place a bolster or a few pillows to the centre of your body. Lie your torso over the bolster/pillows and gently hug the bolster/pillows, turn your head to one side and completely let go of any tension being held within the body.



Wishing you wellness & happiness

Gabrielle

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