

# Maintain Balance During the Winter Season

By Heidi Nordlund

During winter the earth's energy is withdrawn back into herself. It is a time of rest, storing and preparation - a time of internalization and stillness.

The following are general recommendations to maintain good health during the cold season.

## ENJOY

- **a regular daily routine:** wake up, eat, and go to bed at similar times each day
- **drinking warm water** or herbal teas
- **warm oil massage** before a hot bath (schedule an Ayurvedic consultation with Heidi to know which oil is best suited for your constitution 303-678-7657 / Heidi@NamaskarHealing.com)
- **staying warm inside** reading a good book, meditating, or listening to relaxing music
- **exposure to bright sunshine** during the day
- **a substantial breakfast** such as oatmeal, cornmeal, cream of rice or wheat, barley soup, kitchari, or other type of warm grain cereal. As the nights are long, one tends to feel hungry in the morning
- a diet rich in healthy sweet, sour and salty tastes, heavy, oily and fatty foods such as ghee, sesame oil, soft cheeses or melted hard cheese, wheat unless gluten intolerant, chickpeas and root vegetables such as carrots, parsnips, yams and beets – this is especially important in high altitude
- **lots of warm soups and stews**
- **cooking with digestive spices** such as cumin, ajwain, black pepper, pippali, caraway, saffron, cardamom, cinnamon, fennel, anis, nutmeg, cloves, fresh ginger, dill, turmeric, roasted brown garlic, paprika, hing, marjoram, thyme, oregano, rosemary, parsley and basil
- **eating plenty** -the appetite is usually increased during winter. This is because the cold weather constricts the skin pores and the superficial connective tissue pushing the heat from these tissues into the stomach and therefore increasing the digestive fire (agni)
- **an early dinner** between 5 to 7 pm
- **boiled milk** with a pinch of turmeric, black pepper, cardamom and/or nutmeg with ghee and honey before bedtime
- **rubbing oil on the soles of the feet** and on the head before bed (schedule an Ayurvedic consultation with Heidi to know which oil is best suited for your constitution)
- sleeping with heavy and thick sheets or blankets at night

## AVOID

- **excessive dry, crunchy or light foods** (such as potato chips and salads) as well as excessive pungent, bitter, and astringent tastes (such as coffee, black tea, green grapes, and unripe bananas)
- **cold foods and drinks** (no ice cream or iced drinks!)
- **white sugar and caffeine**
- **eating too little**
- **cold drafts**
- **walking barefoot**
- **naps during the day**
- **stressful factors** such as overwork, long journeys, going to bed late, and watching too much television

## **About winter in Colorado**

While winter in many places is cold, heavy, damp, and cloudy and mainly Kapha provoking\*, winter in Colorado is mainly dominated by Vata dosha\* due to the dry, cold, rough, hard, windy, high altitude and changing nature; one day it is very cold and snowy and next it is sunny and snow is melting.

Kapha does accumulate during winter, yet Vata is built up during fall and is aggravated during winter and thus most important to pacify in the Colorado winter months.

Vata and Kapha share the cold quality, therefore it is of great importance to stay warm throughout the winter season.

People with a particular health issue should follow a regimen appropriate for their prakrti and vikrti.

**\*For more information about vata, pitta, kapha, prakrti and vikrti please visit**

<http://www.namaskarhealing.com/ayurveda>