



East Village
ACUPUNCTURE
& MASSAGE

Tips for first response to cold/flu symptoms

Got the sniffles and want to nip it in the bud? Here are some tips and a recipe for “Immunity Rice” that can help!

In Chinese medicine we think of colds and flus as “external pathogens” that enter the body through wind in the area of the upper back and neck. It’s the job of the Wei Qi, a type of Qi that circulates close to the surface of our bodies, to protect us and force the invading pathogens out of the pores of our skin. Using warming spices and herbs we can support our Wei Qi by encouraging a gentle sweat. That’s why as a first response to the sniffles we recommend:

- Soaking in a hot bath
- Drinking hot liquids, especially ginger tea
- Eating warming spices and herbs like ginger, garlic and green onion

It’s always a good idea as well to keep the upper back and neck protected from the wind to prevent further invasion of “evil winds” or colds, even in the summer. If the weather is warm use something light weight like a nice summer scarf.

Here is a recipe by Brian for “Immunity Rice” which can be made and eaten at the onset of symptoms of a cold. 

Immunity Rice

This is a rice I make whenever I'm just starting to get sick. It's spicy and warming and not totally un-delicious, although it's certainly more aggressively flavored than anything you would make for simple culinary pleasure. It's warming enough that it should create a bit of a gentle sweat, which should be encouraged by wrapping up in a warm blanket for at least 20 minutes after consumption. This gentle sweating helps the body "push out" the invading pathogen without aggressive measures. While intense exercise or super hot steam rooms will certainly make us sweat, they can exhaust the body and further tax the immune system, so should probably be avoided. A hot bath, however, perhaps accompanied with a hot cup of ginger tea would be a welcome addition.

Ingredients:

- 1 tblsp butter (unsalted) or ghee
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 two-inch piece of fresh ginger, grated or minced
- 1 one-inch piece of fresh turmeric, grated or minced (optional)
- ½ tsp dried ginger
- ½ tsp dried turmeric
- ⅛ tsp or pinch cayenne
- 1 cup long grain white rice (such as basmati or jasmine), thoroughly rinsed and drained
- 1 ¼ cup chicken broth (unsalted), or other broth (unsalted), or water, or combination of broth and water
- ¼ tsp salt or to taste
- 1-2 green onion, green and white parts, thinly sliced

Directions:

- 1) In small saucepan over medium heat melt butter or ghee, add garlic, fresh ginger and fresh turmeric (if using), sauté gently until fragrant ~45 seconds or so
- 2) Add dried ginger, dried turmeric and cayenne, sauté another 15 seconds or so
- 3) Add rice and water, cover, bring to boil. Reduce heat to low, simmer for 17 minutes. Cut heat and let sit covered for another minute before fluffing with a fork
- 4) Mix in green onion before eating, wrap up in a warm blanket after eating and encourage a gentle perspiration for 20 minutes
- 5) Repeat daily as long as you are experiencing symptoms to encourage a swift recovery

Help your Wei Qi help you by using these tips and stay healthy throughout the cold and flu season!