

BY
JULIA
CLARKE

LIVING IN RHYTHM

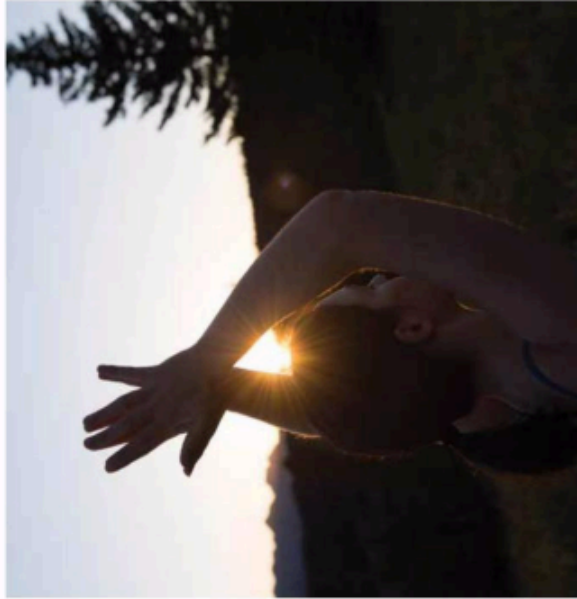
An Ayurvedic prescription for seasonal health

Single digit temperatures, snow storms and decreased daylight falling on Colorado are all good luck charms for the leading ski state in North America. But, just as we're revving up for a season of downhill momentum and festive happy hours, the long nights and short days of the season can sap us of our energy and enthusiasm. It's no secret that the body's inner clock is affected by the rhythms of the year, with

changes in food availability, sun exposure and even amount of precipitation all weighing in on your health and well-being. The modern study of these rhythms, called Chronobiology, dates back to the early 18th century in the scientific world, but yoga's sister science Ayurveda has recognized the influence of seasonality for thousands of years, and in response offers up Rhythmic or seasonal routines, to keep you balanced and healthy twelve months a year!

FALL/EARLY WINTER RX: ROOT DOWN

Known as **Vata Season** in Ayurveda, fall and the first half of winter in Colorado are characterized by increased cold, dryness and wind. When the cold winds prepare the slopes for ski season and the leaves dry up and fall from the Aspen trees, we may respond in kind with dry skin, chapped lips, mental restlessness, and even depletion.



anxiety and insomnia. This season, stay grounded with warmth, oil and rest.

Best foods: Warm, spiced, nourishing meals like grounding root vegetable stews and creamy vegetable soups.

Avoid: Ice water, cold foods, large amounts of raw vegetables.

Yoga: Slow moving Vinyasa, Yin and Restorative Yoga are best. Enjoy tip openers and forward folds.

Exercise: Strength training to fortify the body against depletion, and sustainable cardio like hiking and biking is best. Don't overdo it!

Lifestyle Tip: Incorporate a daily self oil massage with warming sesame oil before a shower to your routine.

LATE WINTER/SPRING RX: LIGHTEN UP!

Known as **Kapha Season** in Ayurveda, the second half of winter and spring reflect the

Avoid: Heavy foods like potatoes, fried foods and red meat, ice cream and cold foods.

Yoga: Dynamic Vinyasa practices with sun salutations, twists and arm balances are best.

Exercise: Run, hike, and bike with friends to break a sweat get your heart rate up!

Lifestyle Tip: Spring is the best time for a seasonal cleanse, removing processed foods, sugar and alcohol from your diet for 10-30 days.

SUMMER RX: CHILL OUT

Come summer, known as **Pitta Season** in Ayurveda, our abundant, intense Colorado sunshine makes for a hot and dry season chock full of heating outdoor activities.

In taking advantage of long days and our elevated energy, we also need to take care to avoid total burnout, competitiveness, frustration boiling over, and even hyperacidity and skin rashes. This season, cool your heels by the river, enjoy nature's bounty at the grocery store, and have fun.

Best foods: Sweet, juicy fruits like peaches and cherries, zucchini and asparagus, whole grains, lean protein, cooling coconut water and peppermint tea.

Avoid: Hot chillies, excess alcohol, cheese and vinegar.

Yoga: Seek out a contemplative Vinyasa practice with heart openers, side bends and ample time for stretching and meditation.

Exercise: Swimming and all water sports are pacifying for the summer heat. Try to hike on shaded trails and bike in the early morning or evening when it's cooler.

Lifestyle: Have fun, but relax! Pitta season is high time for injuries as we push ourselves in the competitiveness of mountain sports. It's ok to stop and smell the roses on the trail!

accumulated cold and heaviness of our long winter. When the light, dry snow turns to a heavy sleet and the ice caps begin to melt into our rivers, our bodies may mirror this great thaw in the form of mucus-laden colds and allergies, brain fog, fatigue, and even weight gain and depression. This season, lighten up with mental stimulation, movement and light, purifying diet.

Best foods: Warm, light, spiced foods like dark leafy greens cooked with ginger, turmeric and cumin, barley, legumes, and small amounts of sprouts and seeds.



JULIA CLARKE is a yoga teacher and Ayurvedic Practitioner from Scotland living in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado. She is the co-founder of Mountain Soul Yoga studio in Edwards, Colorado, and a faculty member for Colorado School of Yoga. She has a Bachelor of Science in Journalism and a Master of Science in Ayurveda and Integrative Medicine. She loves hiking, biking, uphill skiing and traveling the world. www.juliaclearyoga.com