

Even though it is technically still autumn in the last few days a winter storm dumped large amounts of snow over two-thirds of the United States. We are also experiencing colder than normal temperatures throughout much of the US as we approach the beginning of winter. The good news is that the H1N1 pandemic seems to be much milder than was expected and the number of cases recently has dropped dramatically. As the holidays approach we need to remember that this is also the cold and flu season. I thought this would be a good time to remind people that effective treatment of colds, influenza, bronchitis, pneumonia, etc. is tied into an understanding of energetics. A hot/damp lung condition should be treated differently than a cold/damp lung condition and, in fact, treating it incorrectly can actually make it worse rather than better. Outlined below are the basic symptoms associated with each pattern to make it easier for you to use the right herbs for each person.

Lung Conditions

Hot/damp: there is usually fever, a profuse yellow, green, or bloody mucus discharge, the person craves cool temperatures and may also exhibit sweating, a painful headache, and a hacking, painful cough.

Cold/damp: the person has chills, a profuse white or clear mucus discharge, they crave warmth, they may experience dull or cloudy thinking, sinus congestion, post nasal drip or mucus rales.

Hot/dry: the person has a fever, sticky hard to expectorate yellow or green mucus, a dry non-productive cough, a sore throat and a desire for fluids and cool temperatures.

Cold/dry: this person probably has chills, thick clear or white hard to expectorate mucus, a dry non-productive cough, a dry mouth and they tend to crave fluids and warmth.

In each of these cases, different herbs are appropriate for treatment.

Some Choices

Herbs for hot/damp conditions are cooling and drying and include White Sage, Usnea, Elecampane, and Horehound.

Herbs for cold/damp conditions are warming and drying and they include Thyme, Ginger, Orange Peel, and Osha.

Herbs for hot/dry conditions are cooling and moistening and include Marshmallow, Slippery Elm, Ophiopogon root, and Solomon's Seal root.

Herbs for cold/dry conditions are warming and moistening and include Licorice, Anemarrhena, Angelica archangelica, and Fenugreek.

We wish you a joyous holiday season and a happy new year!

Sincerely,

David Winston, RH (AHG)

For more information on understanding energetics and which herbs are appropriate, take our three-hour, on-demand seminar *The Ten Tastes: the Energetics of Herbs*.