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Chinese Food as Medicine

For thousands of years, Chinese have viewed everyday meals as a means to balance, detoxify, and heal the body. Some foods have medicinal properties, some have “yin” or cooling, and some have “yang” or warming properties – to balance the body’s “Qi.”

TO COOL THE BODY

For those with too much Huo Qi, or heat in their bodies, green mung bean soup has been one of the top cooling foods. It is made of green mung beans, lotus seeds, and slabs of traditional sugar. It is one of many foods traditionally used to help clear away acne, detoxify, and decrease heat in the body.

TO TREAT AILMENTS

For those with insomnia, a traditional beverage made of lotus seeds and pitted, dried longan is traditionally steamed in a covered container (tureen) for 2 hours. Both lotus seeds and longan are traditionally thought of as calming the nerves and promoting sleep. Recent scientific studies have shown that lotus seeds promote sleep in laboratory flies.

TO NOURISH AND REPAIR THE BODY

For those that need extra nourishment, because they are weak, etc, another traditional recipe includes steaming black skinned chicken with goji berries, ginger, and Chinese dried yam in a closed container to seal in all the flavor and nutrients. It is considered extremely restorative. Of note, wolfberries or goji are rich in iron, which is necessary for the body to recover from anemia.

Healing for the Chinese takes time, and it isn’t one cup of soup once, but a way of life. In addition, everyone’s body is different. In order to incorporate traditional, balanced Chinese eating with your current lifestyle and medications, please contact Dr. Bonnie Huang Hall.

