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The Lungs



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ORIENTAL MEDICINE



The Lungs

Conventional medical view

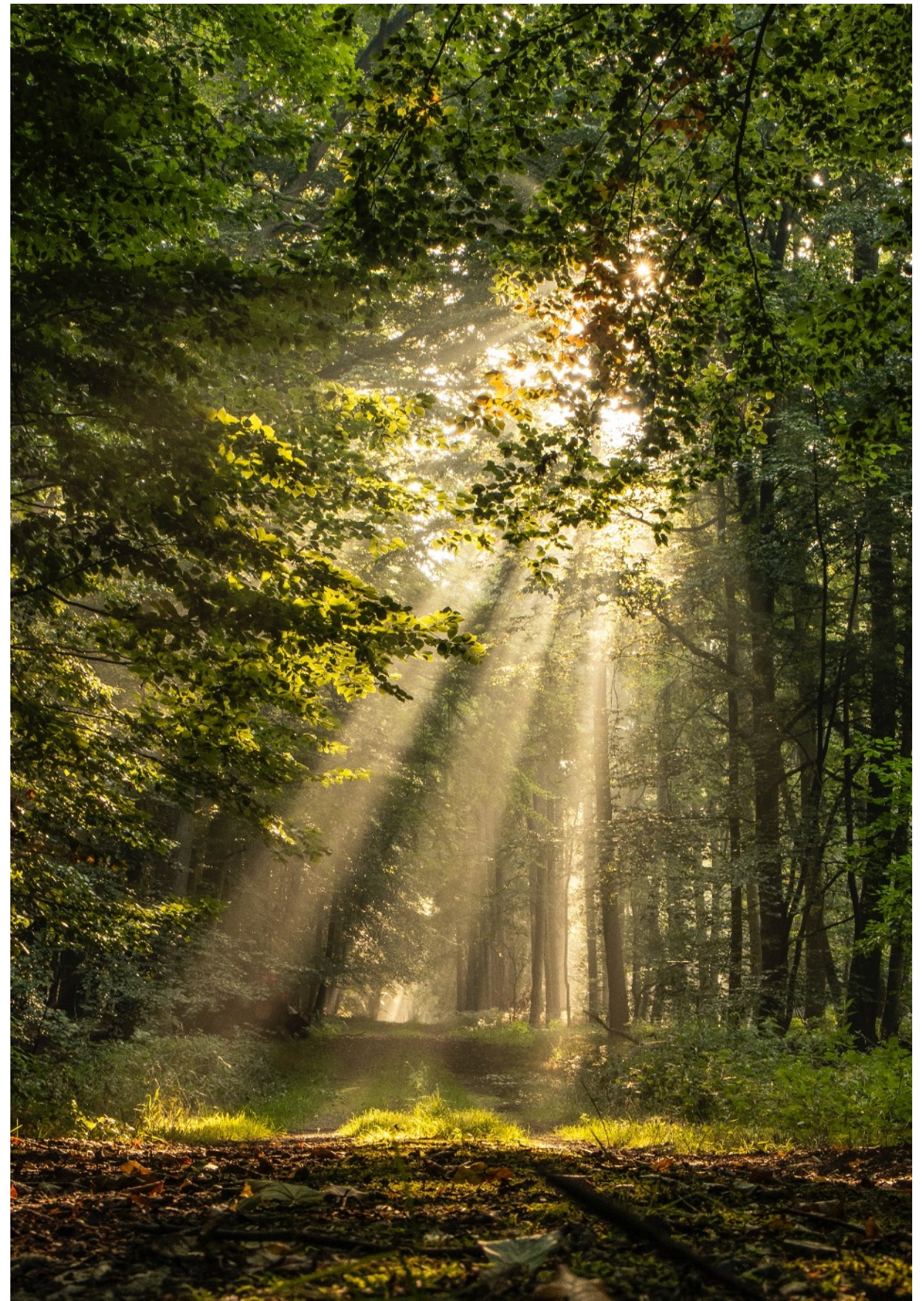
On average we take in about 25,000 breaths a day. The lungs take in oxygen & breath out carbon dioxide. The oxygen is absorbed into our bloodstream, where it is then carried around the body to “fuel” our cells. As our cells work, they produce a waste gas, carbon dioxide, which the lungs expel as we breathe out.

The lungs also filter out unwanted substances from the air and prevent them getting into the bloodstream.

Oriental Perspective

All the organs have a greater role than just the physical as seen from western medicine - There is an energetic role effecting us on a mental, emotional & spiritual level as well. The energetic life force that flows within us is known as **qi**. (Pronounced “Chee”)

Qi is seen to flow within channels throughout the body known as meridians, each one named after the internal physical organ to which it is connected. Qi is the energy that runs through all of us, it is what keeps us warm & every cell in motion - qi is life. It is said we breathe into our lungs “heavenly qi” - then this qi is circulated with our blood to warm & revitalise, power, our whole body. The quality and movement of qi through the body determines our health. The ideal state is one of smooth flow with no imbalances or blockages, which are called stagnation or stagnant qi. If you have stagnation, whether physical, emotional, mental or spiritual, this will eventually manifest as disease.





The role of the lungs

The lungs are more than just the respiratory system.

They belong to the metal element.

The colour is white.

The season is autumn.

Time of day is 3-5am.

The lungs are paired with the colon or large intestine.

Breathing in - Inspiration - on a mental level is about our ability to accept & be open to new experiences, clear thinking & communication, open to new ideas & having a positive self image.

The emotion associated with the lungs is grief or sadness.

Immune system

This is a western concept. But in **Chinese medicine** it is the lungs that are responsible for protecting us from invasion by disease causing factors. The Chinese say we have a protective shield around us - they call this **“Wei qi”** - (like a bubble) - which is our first line of defence.

The lungs are responsible for holding this shield in place against external pathogenic factors such as wind, cold, damp, dryness, heat & bacteria or virus - You may have noticed how easy it is to “catch a cold” after going through one of those X-ray machines at airports? This is because they temporarily take down this shield. The next layer of defence is our skin & membranes. The mucous membranes in the nose, sinus, throat, lungs & gut. The lungs likewise govern these. The skin/ membranes act as a physical barrier further protecting our interior body.





If your lungs are healthy

You will feel full of vitality. You will have a sense of softness and fullness in the chest and a clear, powerful voice. You won't get sick often, your skin will be glossy and your complexion glowing. You will likely present yourself to the world with expansive gestures, a forthright gaze and clear presence. Someone with strong lung energy usually evokes a response of admiration and respect in others. Strong lung qi enables us to be relaxed, emotionally balanced and to deal with the ebb & flow of loss and grief in a healthy way.

Lung imbalance

Physical signs of **Lung imbalance**: Lack of energy, shortness of breath, cough, weak or hoarse voice, bright white complexion, low immunity, daytime sweats, frequent colds, tickly throat, dry mouth, dry or loose stools. Skin is often lacklustre and circulation poor.

Emotionally you may find it hard to let go, replaying past events like a stuck record, you may struggle to cope with sadness & loss, grief can be overwhelming & lead to a long deep depression. There may be a lack of self-esteem, harsh judgment of yourself and others and failure to respect or understand boundaries.

Lung imbalance does not mean lung disease, it is a subtle signal that your body is out of whack, and the strain of that is impacting your lung energy, which may eventually lead to an issue over time. If you look for the subtle signs & address them with simple self help techniques you can prevent a greater problem manifesting later.



Self help techniques:

How to support & rebalance your lungs

- Lungs tend to need more support in Autumn
- Try to go for long walks preferably in nature
- Take deep slow breaths in the fresh air
- Make sure your home is well aired - household air can be polluted by stale air & toxic chemical fumes from household items & cleaners.
- **Prioritise sleep** - to allow your body to maximise rest & rejuvenation. Sleep with a window open to let in fresh air or use an air purifier/filter if windows do not open.
- Use a defuser to **rehydrate the air** if you are in an enclosed central heated space. You can use aromatherapy essences to help purify the air & open the lungs such as eucalyptus, niaouli or lavender.
- Practice the healing sounds (for your lungs this is **Sssssssssssssssssssss.....**)
- Allow space for thinking without an agenda.
- Accept that nobody is perfect



Take up meditation - to calm & train the mind.

- Adopt Adopt breathing exercises to expand the lungs, **yoga, Buteyko breathing.**
- Gently tap with cupped hands or soft fingers/fists the lung area of the chest, especially just under the shoulder where the lung channel emerges (Lung 1) - then continue tapping down the inside of the arm - the pathway of the lung channel. You can then come back up the outside of the arm the colon/ large intestine channel - up onto the shoulder - repeat on the other side. This will stimulate the movement of qi & augment the lungs.
- Drink **Drink plenty of water - stay hydrated.** Lungs like moist air,

More self help techniques:

Support & rebalance your lungs

- Add **white coloured food** to your diet: cauliflower, spring onions, fennel, white mushrooms, Jerusalem artichokes, apples, daikon radish, oats, white rice, white beans, sesame seeds.
- **Pungent foods - spicy & aromatic**, such as horseradish, onion, garlic, rosemary, thyme & mustard - pungent flavours help break up phlegm in the lungs, chest & sinus, circulate qi throughout the body & move dampness.
- If lungs feel dry - try pears (stewed) & tofu.
- Before waiting for someone to bring sniffles into the house - increase the **anti-bacterial/anti-viral herbs** & spices in your diet such as garlic.
- Make elderberry syrup - take daily through autumn/winter to help support your immune system
- Drink ginger, lemon, turmeric, pepper tea - warms "cold" & is anti-inflammatory



Moxibustion on stomach 36

- Learn how to use a **Moxa** stick to boost the "immune" system. **Moxa stomach 36 daily** for a few minutes daily. (See demonstration videos in resources on my webpage: www.nona-taylor.com)
- As the lungs belong to the element metal it is said wearing gold or silver jewellery adds protection
- If you like **gemstones**, try and find one in white, such as clear quartz, White Mother of Pearl, Diamond, White Topaz, White Sapphire or White Moonstone.
- **Amber** was traditionally used to protect the lungs - it warms cold & was often given to children in a necklace to protect against breathing difficulties or asthma.



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**“My wish is to
inspire you to
heal yourself
naturally”**



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