



## Protecting Hormonal Health in Winter

At Laughing Sage Wellness, we've noticed that the winter season is particularly tough on women's health. Women work hard to stay on top of career, community, and family--and try to maintain the same level of productivity throughout the day, month, and year. But maintaining those productivity levels in the winter takes a toll on our health because it works against the cyclical functioning of our bodies.

### Check Your Chart

Women's hormonal function is based on a complex and beautiful circle (not a straight line up the middle of a productivity chart!), connecting our minds and our bodies, in which different glands are more active at different times of the month.

When we ovulate, for example, the active hormones give our minds sharper focus and our bodies more energy to be outgoing and productive. When we menstruate, the active hormones give our minds better reflection and intuition skills and bring our bodies into a state of observation and rest.

When we understand the strengths of each part of our cycle, we can respect them and use them to our best advantage. When we work against our cyclic functioning, we quickly exhaust ourselves and set the stage for hormonal imbalances to arise.

### The Weather Isn't Just Outside

Women are attuned not just to their internal rhythms, but to the rhythm of weather and season. Looking at a whole year, the winter season corresponds to the menstruation phase of a woman's monthly cycle—it's a time for rest and introspection. In warmer weather our energy is high, and we want to be outside having boisterous fun, but in the winter we crave more peace and quiet.

These are normal, healthy messages to receive from your body. Think of the sap pulled deep inside the bare trees, or the animals hibernating during the dark cold months. In the same way, our energy and focus turns inward during the winter. Winter is the time to rest, meditate, reflect, and nurture the seeds of new plans you want to execute in the spring and summer.

### Symptoms of Fighting the Flow

If you tend to work against the winter season because you don't want it to interfere with your obligations—if you stay up late, take on extra tasks for other people, and book all your time with projects and responsibilities—you probably experience winter symptoms like colds and flus, intense cravings, weight gain, difficult periods, and seasonal depression. These health problems arise because your body feels stressed and needs you to slow down.

### Fuel for the Fire

The heart of our work at Laughing Sage Wellness is the medicinal foods we recommend to heal specific hormonal imbalances. In addition to individualized recommendations for each client's condition, we also support all our clients to eat seasonally as a way of tuning in to the cycles and rhythms of their female physiology.

Winter foods grow naturally in cold weather and/or are nutritionally beneficial to the body's specific needs in the winter. These foods also have slightly *contractive* properties to help your body draw its energy down and in, creating internal warmth to support you through the winter. Likewise you should consume hot, well-cooked foods in the winter to warm your body—this is definitely the season to skip the salad!

Winter foods recommended by Laughing Sage Wellness include:

Grains: buckwheat  
Beans: aduki, black, kidney, and pinto  
Vegetables: sea vegetables; mushrooms; burdock, beets, and other root vegetables; hearty greens like kale and mustard greens  
Nuts and Seeds: cranberries and blackberries; chestnuts and walnuts  
Animal Foods: shellfish, duck, ham, pork, eggs (small quantities)  
Seasonings: tamari and miso  
Teas: bancha, kukicha, and other roasted teas

Are You Struggling with a Hormonal Imbalance?

Laughing Sage Wellness offers a revolutionary model of hormonal health support for women. Instead of masking or eliminating women's natural hormonal process with drugs or surgery, Laughing Sage counselors use food medicinally to nurture and balance our clients' hormonal function and to create healing at the root of their hormonal health symptoms. Our holistic health group pairs clients with insightful and compassionate counselors who trained experts in holistic nutrition and women's self-care. To learn more about our counseling programs and events, visit our website at [www.laughingsagewellness.com](http://www.laughingsagewellness.com) or call us at 212-581-0001.