

# 2011 Energy Report

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The purpose of this report is to help you adapt to the seasonal and yearly energy as this will provide you with the best chance for a healthy year. According to the Sages of Chinese medicine, when you adapt to the yearly shifts in energy you avoid illnesses and are set for a long, healthy life.

The problem, as you will soon see, is that this year is unusually complicated. Of course, you have probably already noticed this simply by opening up your local newspaper. Tsunamis, flooding rivers, and tornadoes have spread devastation far and wide. Add to that political fury in the Middle East. Weather and geopolitical forces are good indicators of the energy of the year – and from the daily headlines, you can see things are unusually intense this year.

For those who do not know me, I am an acupuncturist and Chinese herbalist practicing in Rochester, NY. I am also the creator of Qi Infusions (<http://www.qiinfusions.com>), Fu Xi Wen (<http://www.fuxiwen.com>) and Spirit Branch Medicine (<http://www.spiritbranch.com>). I practice a classical form of Chinese medicine that puts a heavy emphasis on the shifting energy patterns associated with planetary movements and their impacts on our energy here on lovely planet earth. I generate this report every year for my patients, friends, family and colleagues to help people stay healthy. An ounce of prevention is definitely worth a pound of cure. No doubt.

Every year one or two planets of the five energetically important planets (Mars, Venus, Mercury, Saturn and Jupiter) drift in their orbits towards our planet. Each planet resonates at a certain frequency associated with the Five Elements of Chinese medicine. When a planet approaches earth, we experience more energy from that planet. When it drifts away, we experience less of that energy than usual. This year, Jupiter is the planet to watch...or it should be. But in reality, this is far from a simple year with simple planetary dynamics. In fact, as I write this, four planets have aligned in relation to the planet earth: Mars, Venus, Mercury, and Jupiter. This spells INTENSE energy. And that is why we are in throws of a crazy year.

Chinese medicine is based on a fundamental particle of the universe known as Qi (pronounced “chee”). Everything is made up of Qi. Qi is like a wheel that keeps spinning around in five distinct resting spots that are known as the Five Elements. Qi is Qi. Energy is energy. But each resting spot as the wheel turns changes how Qi behaves. Fire flows, Earth accumulates, Metal rises to a peak then falls over, Water sinks, and Wood stretches until it starts the cycle over again by flowing into Fire. In other words, one Element becomes the next Element as the Qi wheel turns. This is called the Generating Cycle.

Mars relates to Fire Qi. Jupiter relates to Wood Qi. Mercury relates to Water Qi. Venus relates to Metal Qi. And Saturn relates to Earth Qi. When four planets align, we have energy that builds from one Element to the next very quickly. So, we start with Venus's Metal Qi increasing Mercury's Water Qi expanding Jupiter's Wood Qi which accentuates Mars' Fire Qi. In the end, we have a tremendous amount of Fire Qi. Any energy at its peak moves into the next Element. So, Fire Qi also makes Earth

## Qi.

Usually, in a given year, only one planet is active at any given moment in time. This planet produces what is called “Heavenly Plane” energy. Our planet also cycles through the Five Elements every year. This is called the “Earthly Plane” energy. This year is a Wood Yin Heavenly Plane year and Metal Yin Earthly Plane year based on the Heavenly energy of Jupiter (Wood) and the Earthly energy of Metal for this year. In theory, the dynamics should be pretty simple: Wood Qi plus Metal Qi means Wind – and a lot of it. And, wow has that already been true over and again. But, as I said, this is no simple year. Because we have four planets in alignment, it means everything has been cranked way up. (Think Spinal Tap: “Most dials go to 10 but this one goes to 11!”)

We are already witnessing a violent tornado year and we can also expect as an incredibly active hurricane season. I expect huge hurricanes and many of them. Wind can also relate to emotional volatility. Metal and Wood together also spell frustration and stress. We call this Liver Qi Stagnation. It can even lead to anger (Liver Yang Rising), and in some cases rage (Liver Fire rising). This is a year for crying upset. Wind is also associated with infections. So, this should be an extremely active year for infections with seriously intense fevers especially through the summer. Also, expect phlegmatic coughs to be intense and lingering.

In fact, this is how things are playing out. Metal Qi and Wood Qi are active according to the year's energy. Water Qi sits between them, so, since its neighbors are extremely full, the Water Qi is also filling to capacity. Plus, Mercury is in alignment with Venus and Jupiter which adds even more Water Qi here on planet earth. Ergo, Water Qi, Metal Qi, and Wood Qi are full. But add all the planets together with Mars and the energy keeps cycling into Fire. Fire moves things, especially Water Qi. Fire and Metal together makes extreme conflict. Fire and Water together makes structures that flow. Fire and Wood together makes fiery change. And extreme Fire makes Earth Qi where things don't move, accumulate, and stagnate. Sounds crazy. Sounds like our world right now. There's a lot of commotion going on right now but it also feels like nothing is actually changing.

Following me? If not, now you see why I have been pensively quiet for so many months figuring out this complicated picture. Geo-politically and geothermally we are in a pattern of structures (ie. liquids) overflowing their containment and moving. This is true in regards to tsunamis, flooding rivers, rising water tables, and even seeping water in some people's backyards. It is also true of demonstrators flowing through streets. It is also true of radiation in Japan.

The energetic dynamics of these four planets means all Five Elements are in a state of rising excess not just externally but also in our lives and bodies as well. This is especially true for Metal, Water, Wood, and Fire – with Fire being peak. On paper, this should be a Wood Yin and Metal Yin year, but add planetary movements and we are actually in a Water/Fire year. Water and Fire relate to Yin and Yang respectively. So, we are in a Yin and Yang excess year. Said differently: **everything's in excess!** This won't last all year. But it will last through the entire summer until we reach something called “Late Summer”, a season that only is found in Chinese medicine that relates to around mid-August to Mid-September.

The energy inside and around us is extremely full. Ergo, life feels overfull, beyond capacity. Agendas

are overflowing. Every nook and cranny of the schedule is being squeezed. Life does not have much space for leisure right now and won't through the summer.

In my clinic, I am seeing the kinds of problems I would expect with a Wood Yin year: eye problems, ligament problems, liver organ problems, herniations, infections, and headaches. But I am also seeing plenty of other interesting issues such as bone growths (ie. bunions), complicated rashes, anxiety, tinnitus, and cancers.

Through the entire summer people are going to experience excess rather than deficiency. Pains worse with pressure. Accumulations. Toxicities. Severe traumas. Did I mention this was an intense year?

## **Relief In The Fall? Not So Much**

Then we reach autumn and things change a bit. Mercury and Mars move on by then. The summer Fire Qi diminishes. Fall is the time of Metal Qi. This Metal Qi in a Wood Yin and Metal Yin year means the Metal becomes very strong against the Heavenly Wood Qi which is also very strong. Wind in all its forms will be even more imbalanced then they are right now. As I said, huge hurricanes and many of them are likely. Metal excess generates phlegm. Phlegm and wind together in the body can relate to strokes and seizures. The lungs are likely to be a battle ground of intense energetic dynamics, as is the skin, the nose, and interior linings of organs. Expect a strong flu (and other infection) season this year! In fact, the flu may be unusually dangerous given the planetary intensity cranking everything up a few extra notches while it is gestating in birds and pigs. So, please follow the guidelines below for your best preventative approach.

## ***What Can We Do?***

The purpose of my energy reports is always about this: what can we do to adapt? Adaption is key to avoiding the full fury of these energies. When your diet and behaviors mimic the energies active in the year, these energies impact the health far worse then if one attempts to balance them and keep the energy wheel cycling around the Generating Cycle.

## **Spring and Summer 2011 Strategies**

This is the time of excess in all energies, with Earth Qi the weakest among a family of giants. Here is the best strategy in a nutshell: eat less and do more. Eat less food, because food increases energy and your energy is already full. You probably will also see a reduction in your appetite. Rev up activity to a maximum because you have more energy to burn that otherwise will fill up spaces in the energetic anatomy and lead to problems of excess in the body. Exercise until you sweat and then some. Unfortunately, the nature of the year means schedules are beyond full. So leisure activity is harder to come by. Make sure to fight for it in your schedule. Schedule physical activity in your calendar so it is definitely on your agenda. You may never of had to do that before. But right now you do.

Overall, eat less. But when you do eat, focus on consuming more sweet foods. Sweet foods in Chinese medicine are not the same as refined sugar and baked goods, as these are actually Metal foods. Sweet foods include all fruits, all vegetables, all beans, and all nuts. Here is a complete list of foods good until the end of Summer:

Carrot, Chinese Cabbage, Cabbage, Spinach, Potato, Sweet Potato, Eggplant, Cucumber, Pumpkin, Persimmon, Apple, Banana, Figs, Watermelon, Sugarcane, Water Chestnut, Wheat, Barley, Buckwheat, Glutinous Rice, Non-glutinous Rice, Corn Meal, Black Soya Bean, Soya Bean, Kidney Bean, Mung Bean, Pea, Fava Bean, Sesame, Pine Nut, Chestnut, Peanut, Almond, Chicken, Quail, Goose, Tripe, Lamb, Sheep Milk, Beef, Cow Milk, Rabbit, Frog Meat, Carp, Yellow Croaker, Perch, Anchovy, Eel, Catfish, Freshwater Shrimp, River Snail, Maltose, Beet, Bok Choy, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Corn, Green Bean, Lotus Root, Snow Pea, Squash, Wintermelon, Canteloupe, Coconut, Sweet Rice, White Rice, Rice Bran, Wheat Bran, Wheat Germ, Black Bean, Lentil, Pumpkin Seed, Sunflower Seed, Tofu, Walnut, Barley Malt Syrup, Carob, Blueberry, Pomelo, Amaranth, Brown Rice, Artichoke, Cow Pea, Radish, Kohlrabi, Flax, Linseed, Sourghum, Spelt, Plantain, Swiss Chard, Chickpea, Black Sesame, Herring, Mackerel, Sturgeon, Whitefish, Lima Bean, Aduki Bean, Broad Bean, Green Lentil, Yellow Soy Bean, Hazelnut, Red Lentil, Honey, Molasses, Soy Milk, Turkey, Egg, Caraway, Licorice Root, Olive Oil, Peanut Oil, Sesame Oil, Soy Oil, Amasake, Kuzu, Malt Sugar, Algae, Royal Jelly, Oat, Wheatberry, Cashew

During Spring and Summer eat more raw foods. Most of the time, I counsel people away from salads and other raw foods as being “cold” and sometimes destructive to the Stomach Yang. But this year Fire Qi is excessive in the Spring and Summer. So it will not likely harm the Stomach. And, it will help burn through excessive amounts of energy.

In my energy reports I always tell people what to avoid. This year is almost impossible, as everything but sweet foods fit into the class of excessive Elements. Definitely reduce Fire foods right now. This includes coffee, black tea, chocolate, cinnamon, kale, alfalfa, and rhubarb. I know people will not give up their favorite forms of caffeine. Especially in a busy year we are less inclined to reduce our caffeine sources. But sadly caffeine and Fire Qi are linked. If you have to drink some form of caffeine, go for green tea. You may also be surprised to discover that you go further without caffeine until autumn than you have previously.

But the list doesn't stop there. Also reduce sour foods (lemons and limes), salty foods (pork, sea food, and cheese), and acrid foods (spices of all varieties and extreme sweets).

The best thing to do in terms of lifestyle choices is to plan family time and spend time together in groups. The best sports are team sports. Be social these months. Be together. Energy and emotions may be unusually high with some moments of intense conflict. But it is worth it to keep all Elements high together rather than to let any individual Elements peak without balance.

## **Fall 2011 Strategies**

Once we enter Fall 2011, Metal and Wood Qi are intense but the other planetary energies that have complicated the picture have normalized. The seasonal energy of autumn is Metal Qi, so avoid Metal foods such as spicy foods (hot spicy as well as flavorful spices) as well as baked sweets, ice cream and candies. Also avoid sour foods such as lemons and limes.

Foods to eat at this time are those Fire foods I told you to avoid in the Spring and Summer: coffee, black tea, chocolate, cinnamon, and rhubarb. Also, you can include: alfalfa sprout, kale, watercress, aloe juice, rye, fennugreek seed, and beer (for the adults).

At this point, the best activities are ones involving movement and flow with high stimulation (ie. county fairs and amusement parks) and changing scenery (ie. travel). The best sports at this time involve outdoor running and walking, as these are fiery forms of exercise. This is a good time to travel to new places and have exciting adventures.

## **Winter 2011 Strategies**

In Winter, we again face Water excess compounded by Metal and Wood Excess. But there is no Fire Qi to make it flow. So, it will cause structures to swell and build up. Bureaucracies will bloat. The three energies together strongly reinforce Wood Qi. So, this may be a time of intense anger, activity, growth, transformation, and political uprising.

At this point, recommended foods include a combination of the foods recommended earlier for Spring and Summer as well as for Fall. Again, this will spin the wheel in all Five Elements, which is better than any one building up out of balance from the others.

The best activities for this time are group activities that involve lots of stimulation, joy, and activity. This is a good time for family reunions and travel trips to nostalgic places.

## **Conclusion**

When the Sages talked about adaptation, they never said it was easy. This year is the most complicated I have written about so far – and I have written this report since 2004. Energy is at a wild peak in the sixty year cycle it regularly follows. As such, it will be hard to maintain balance. Eat less and do more. And on top of that, I have these parting words: do your best. We are trying to stay atop a spinning log this year. So, if you fall down, dust yourself off and get right back on. It might be a wild year, but even that is part of the adventure!