

Theory on Proper Diet and Nutrition

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Chinese Medicine works by restoring balance and maintaining a free flow of energy (or “qi”, pronounced “chee”) throughout your body to keep you healthy and free from disease. We need qi for all functions of our body to occur. We produce qi through deep breathing and proper digestion. Anything that interferes with digestion will interfere with the production and movement of qi which we can also call our metabolism. When foods are difficult to digest, they stay too long in your digestive tract resulting in stagnation or “dampness”. This dampness inhibits the free flow of qi leading to all kinds of health problems. The most common “damp” causing foods are raw foods, sugar, wheat and dairy.

A strong digestion needs “fire” or heat in the small intestine. Overconsumption of the cold and damp causing foods listed above puts out this fire. We end up with a decreased efficiency in our digestion and a sluggish metabolism. The food is not broken down properly and rots giving off toxins. The toxins are viewed by our body as foreign so our immune system overworks. Symptoms of an overactive immune system include flu like symptoms, swelling, stiffness, body aches, fatigue, skin rashes and weight gain. Following **The Diet** gets your fire going again so your body can heal and function optimally.

The Basics: *Follow these practices for at least one month to refuel your digestive fire*

1. Include liberal amounts of nutritious food from a wide variety of sources.
2. Avoid cold and raw foods and iced beverages.
3. Avoid wheat, dairy and unfermented soy products.
4. Avoid ALL sugars and artificial sweeteners including stevia.
5. Avoid all "Junk Food" (prepackaged foods with preservatives, artificial colors and flavors).

Foods to Fuel Your Fire

(Think of Stir Fry, Soups and Crock-Pot meals)

Cooked Vegetables Asparagus, beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, cucumber, eggplant, green pepper, greens, spinach, collards, kale, garlic, lettuce onions, parsley, radishes soybeans, string beans, tomatoes, turnips, okra and beans of any kind. Any other vegetable is fine as well.

Whole Grains: Oats, barley, quinoa, rice

Meats: Chicken, turkey, beef, lean cuts, veal, pork, lamb, wild game, shrimp, crab, lobster, tuna, salmon, mackerel, cod, sardines, eggs and other fresh or frozen fish *that is not breaded*. (Eggs are okay too!)

Beverages: Water and unsweetened herb teas, room temperature or warmer. Try Rice, Almond or Goat's Milk as a substitute for Dairy Products.

Foods that put out Your Fire

Sugar and Sugar Containing Foods: Quick acting carbohydrates including sucrose, high fructose corn syrup, glucose, mannitol, sorbitol, galatose, honey, molasses, maple syrup, maple sugar and date sugar.

Packaged and Processed Foods: Canned, bottled, boxed foods usually contain refined sugar products and other refined ingredients.

Breads: Pastries and “raised” or yeast based bakery goods. Avoid all yeast based breads. *Look for Ezekiel Bread and gluten free products instead.*

Dairy: Cow’s milk, moldy cheeses: Roquefort, Gorgonzola and Stilton, malt products such as malted milk drinks, cereals and candies.

Try goat’s milk instead. Almond and rice milks are okay too, but watch for sugar.

Meats: Processed and smoked meats and fish including sausage, hot dogs and corned beef or pastrami and pickled tongue.

Fruits: Melons including watermelon, honeydew, and especially cantaloupe. Dried or canned fruits such as raisins or apricots dates, prunes, figs and pineapple. Some dark berries and apples are okay.

Fruit Juices and Sodas: Canned, bottled, frozen including orange, grape, apple, tomato, and pineapple and all sodas.

Nuts: As we age whole, nuts can become difficult to digest. It may be beneficial to switch to nut butters.

Alcoholic Beverages: Wine, beer, whiskey, brandy, gin, rum, vodka, and other fermented liquors and beverages such as cider and root beer.

Condiments: Ketchup, Worcestershire, Accent (mono-sodium glutamate) steak sauces, barbecue sauces, shrimp sauces, soy sauce.

Also avoid leftovers: Molds grow in leftover foods unless it is properly refrigerated. Freezing is better.

Additional instructions for Gallbladder issues

- No fried foods
- No greasy foods
- No rich foods (cheese, creams, sauces)
- Drink 4 oz apple juice before meals. Drink hot water (with or without lemon) after meals.

Modifications for Blood Sugar issues

- Limit carbohydrates to 100 grams or less per day
- Do not eat more than 30 grams of carbohydrates in one meal
- Eat a fat or protein with each meal and snack
- Include extra virgin coconut oil with/between meals to keep blood sugar level