

NUTRITION AND DIET THERAPY

As every body is unique, there will always be variations according to individual needs. A few basic guidelines, however, are appropriate as we seek a way of eating that creates balance and harmony. Frame of mind is of utmost importance at mealtime; relax and slowly chew your food for optimal digestion and assimilation. The dinner table is not the place to discuss the day's problems. Chewing is a major part of digestion. Remember that your stomach does not have teeth. The more you chew the greater the surface area and the easier it is to digest the food. Digestion, particularly of the starches, begins in the mouth due to the enzyme amylase and continues in the stomach, as long as the pH is mildly acidic. Foods that are difficult to masticate, such as sesame, Chia and Flax seeds, should be ground before eating (they can also be soaked overnight then eaten). Do not space meals too far apart or too close together, generally 2 - 5 meals per day are enough. Try to eat in a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere not when you are angry, emotionally "charged", rushed, working, or driving.

There are many ways to prepare foods: raw, sprouting, steaming, stir-frying in water, stewing (light boiling, as in soups), baking or broiling in the oven. Each of these methods has their time and place for each individual person (bio-type). If oil is desired put it on after the food is cooked. Even the best quality oils become hard to digest or even toxic to the body when heated. Foods should be eaten in their wholeness, when possible. Peel fruits or vegetables only if the peel is hard to digest or contaminated with chemical sprays. Search out organically grown foods to avoid the toxic chemical residues of the commercial growing processes. To clean foods thoroughly, wash them in salt water or a diluted solution of hydrogen peroxide. Also avoid irradiated foods and microwave ovens as much as possible.

There are three main thought processes you have to consider with nourishment and food.

1. What, When, and Where you eat
2. How you eat.
3. How you prepare your food.

Remember the most important thing is the actual nourishment you absorb from your food and drink.

1. As a general rule breakfast and lunch should be your largest meals, and should also have a moderate amount of protein, depending on your metabolic and blood type you may need more or less. Breakfast and lunch should provide you with the most energy for the day when you are active. Have a medium dinner for the less active but cellular repairing night, (especially if you're trying to loose weight). Also according to Chinese Medicine Channel Energetics, the Stomach and

Pancreas energy are highest between 7-11 am and lowest between 7-11 pm. The Large Intestine energy is highest between 5-7 am, this is when you would typically have a bowel movement.

2. Chew your food well, at least 20-30 times, depending on the type of food. This will promote saliva production and greatly increase the surface area of the food, which makes digestion much easier and less energy consuming, especially if you tend to get tired after a meal, have digestive problems, or see undigested food in your stool.

3. As every body is unique, there will always be variations in your diet according to your individual needs. Some people need a higher protein and vegetable diet while others need higher complex carbohydrate and vegetable diet. If you know your blood type you will get a paper that shows you the foods that your body/blood type reacts to positively and negatively.

4. Drink very little fluids just before, during and approximately 1 hour after your meals. The excess fluid will slow the digestive process down by diluting the hydrochloric acid and digestive enzymes. Digestion is one of the most energy consuming processes of the body and the excess fluids will make this even worse. This will eventually weaken the whole body by weakening your ability to break down and assimilate your food into the nourishment needed for your daily life. Also the foods you eat should nourish your good flora in the bowels that help you digest your food, make vitamins, and promote a healthy mucosa lining in the bowel. Speaking of good bacteria: Yogurt or Keifer labels must state on the label: "with active yogurt cultures," "living yogurt cultures," or "contains active cultures." If a yogurt label doesn't say this, then assume that the bacteria in that product are dead! Also you can get Sauerkraut that has live cultures.

5. Drink most of your fluids (water) between meals. A good general guideline to determine if you are drinking too much or too little water is to count the number of times you urinate in twenty-four hours. Note the color and clarity of the urine. If you urinate between 4-6 times per day and the urine color is straw yellow or lighter (note: vitamins can make your urine turn bright yellow so don't take that into account) and it is not cloudy, then you are drinking enough fluids. Remember drinking fluids isn't the only way you get water. If you eat any vegetables or fruit they have a lot of fluid. Also all grains and beans are cooked in water and absorb a lot of it in the soaking and cooking process.

6. Try not to snack between meals. Most snacks tend to be junk food and we tend to consume them without thought, or need or even worse, emotionally eat. We usually aren't hungry when we do snack, it is just something to do while we are watching TV, reading, studying or socializing. The emotional foods tend to be sugars or refined carbohydrates, and according to Chinese Medicine, the sweet flavor tends to relax you for a short period of time but the craving can come back even stronger and you end up in a sugar/carb trap.

7. You should stop eating approximately three hours before you go to bed or before 7pm if possible. Do not have a late night snack, as this will start the whole digestive process going again when you should be sleeping. This will inhibit the body's normal functions that only occur at night when we are asleep.

8. You should eat a wide variety of foods for good balance. This does not mean that in one meal you should have three different grains, five different vegetables, legumes/beans, fish, etc. It would be better to have one grain, one legume, and two or three different vegetables at a meal and then at another meal have a different grain or, legume and one or two different vegetables or fish with rice and two or three vegetables. This is what is meant by a wide variety of foods. Another way to do this is to rotate your foods so you don't eat the same thing over and over.

Example: Have 3 different breakfasts, lunches, and dinners that you can rotate through the week.

Breakfast: Quinoa or whole Oat groats with walnuts, almond, sunflower seeds, (pick one) or raisins, apples, cranberries, etc; Eggs with a bagel or toast (organic whole grain), or a omelet with grilled vegetables; a nut butter with a sour apple or celery for the lite breakfast.

9. Foods and drink should rarely, be eaten or drunk cold. This weakens the digestive system due to the excessive energy needed to warm the food or drink before digestion can occur because your enzymes need a certain PH and temperature to function efficiently.

The analogy in Oriental Medicine the stomach is like a stewing pot and the Spleen/Pancreas is the fire below it. If you put cold water into a boiling pot it will stop the boiling and consume much more energy to heat it back up in the process. Since we get our energy by breaking down and assimilating our food, this will only decrease the efficiency of digestion.

Eventually this will weaken the digestive system so that we have chronic digestive disorders that we think are normal because "I always feel this way when I eat" while all that time you have been assimilating less and less from your food and creating an environment more hospitable to pathogens which will again create a greater demand on our system to keep them at bay. This gets even worse when the quality of food also decreases, such as fast foods, rich, fried and sweet food, and even raw foods.

This is why soups and broths are one of the best foods for sick and very weak people. They have already started the "Stewing Pot" before it goes into the stomach, which makes it much easier to digest and assimilate. Even if some of the nutrients are lost, the net effect is increased absorption overall.

10. Have your fruit between meals. If fruit stays in the stomach too long fermentation will begin, causing a fullness sensation and gas, and inhibiting the normal process of digestion. Fruit should be eaten in small amounts because of

the high amount of sugar, (of which most people get more than enough) and the low nutrient value compared to vegetable.

Although this is a "natural" sugar it can still cause a severe fluctuation in blood sugar, especially with people that have borderline hypoglycemia. This quick increase in blood sugar levels from fruit happens because the body system has become inefficient at regulating the blood sugar levels due to excessive intake of refined sugars/carbs in our everyday life, which has made fruit an extreme food when it should be a nourishing and energizing food.

11. Whole vs. Processed: Choose whole foods; that is, foods intact with their bran, germ and fiber. Simple carbohydrates such as white flours, white sugar, etc. are devoid of any real nutritional value beyond simple starches and can cause numerous health problems. This extends beyond grains: raw organic cheeses over-processed cheese; certified organic raw milk over-homogenized and pasteurized milk products; fruit over fruit juices/roles; whole potatoes, grains, hot cereals over their "instant" counterparts.

12. Fresh vs. Frozen vs. Canned: Fresh is the best choice. If you find buying fresh produce is inconvenient, either for reasons of food preparation time or spoilage issues, find a store with a salad bar or deli. Check to see if the produce is organic or preserved with sulfites or other methods to retard browning. Ask the store management for such options if they do not already exist. Frozen products can be a wise choice and are superior to canned products. When buying frozen products, read the labels and choose the product with the lowest sodium content, and avoid any "extra" ingredients.

13. Freshly ground/milled vs. shelf goods. If possible buy grains, nut butters, coffees, herbs, etc. freshly ground. Better yet, buy your own grain mill, coffee mill, nut and seed grinder, mortar and pestle and grind your own. Always refrigerate or freeze and protect from sunlight such items to retard oxidation.

14. Organic vs. sprayed produce: It makes good sense to avoid added herbicides, insecticides, fumigants, artificial dyes and colorings. Organic produce may be more expensive but it is well worth the investment. Try to carefully plan your meals to avoid waste. Take advantage of seasonal crops at their peak when prices are low and quality high. If good quality organic produce is not available to you, ask the management of the store you patronize to supply organic foods. Start your own organic food-buying club or look for one to join.

Winter: Apples Endive Bok Choy Brussels Sprouts Cherimoya Chestnuts Coconuts Dates Grapefruit Kale Leeks Mushrooms Oranges Parsnips Pear Persimmons Pummelo Radicchio Red Currents Rutabagas Sweet Potatoes Tangerines Turnips Winter Squash Yams.

Spring: Apricots Artichokes Asparagus Broccoli Chives Collard Greens English Peas

Fava Beans Fennel Fiddlehead Green Beans Honeydew Mango Morel Mushrooms Mustard Greens Oranges Limes Pea Pods Pineapple Ramps Rhubarb Snow Peas Sorrel Spinach Spring Baby Lettuce Strawberries Sweet Corn Sugar Snap Peas Swiss Chard Vidalia Onions Watercress.

Summer: Apricots Beets Bell Peppers Blackberries Blueberries Boysenberries Cantaloupe Casaba Melon Cherries Crenshaw Melon Cucumbers Eggplant Figs Garlic Grapefruit Grapes Green Beans Green Peas Honeydew Melons Kiwifruit Lima Beans Limes Loganberries Nectarines Okra Peaches Persian Melons Plums Radishes Raspberries Strawberries Sweet Corn Summer Squash.

Fall: Acorn Squash Apples Belgian Endive Bok Choy Broccoli Brussels Sprouts Butternut Squash Cauliflower Celery Root Chayote Squash Cherimoya Coconuts Cranberries Diakon Radish Garlic Ginger Grapes Guava Huckleberries Kohlrabi Kumquats Mushrooms Parsnips Pear Persimmons Pineapple Pomegranate.

All Year Long: Avocados Bananas Cabbage Carrots Celery Lemons Lettuce Onions Papayas Bell Peppers Potatoes.

15. Local vs. imported produce: Imported produces from other states or countries require large amounts of fuel in transport, and pesticides banned as unsafe in the U.S. are often still used abroad.

When in season support your local growers. Farmer's markets are a fun place to shop and meet others who feel the same way you do about fresh food and supporting you local growers.

Find out if your community holds a regular event such as the Thousand Oaks Farmers market in the Oaks Mall parking lot on Thursday 1:30 – 6:00 pm, Agoura Hills Farmers Market on Sunday 9 AM – 2PM at 5835 Kanan Rd, and Westlake Village Farmers Market on Sundays 10 AM – 2 PM at 2797 Agoura Rd).

Plant a garden yourself, whether it's a full garden or just herbs in pots, you can grow something and use it. If you have a full garden, then start a cooperative garden in your neighborhood, or swap bumper crops among your gardening friends.

16. Range-fed animal products vs. factory-raised: Cattle feed lots and poultry farms are undesirable sources for animal products, for humane and health reasons. Chickens that run free and forage for themselves produce better quality eggs than chickens crowded together and fed antibiotics and hormones. The same goes for cattle.

Call your local County Extension, agricultural department at a nearby university, or USDA branch for possible suppliers. Check the farmers' market or local whole foods store. Visit your supplier and ask to see the animals. Novy Ranches, Morris Grass-Fed Beef, Hearst Ranch Grass-Fed Beef or look up www.eatwild.com

17. Whole Grains: Most of the grains should be in their whole form, such as brown rice, barley, millet, buckwheat, triticale, oat grouts, instead of white rice,

pearled barley, etc. Refined breads should be the smallest portions of grains. Whole grain flours are much more nourishing.

The preferred breads are made from sprouted whole grains. These should be the predominant forms of floured products, then whole-unprocessed spaghetti, macaroni, etc.

If you have digestive problems you should soak the grain for 12 hours or over night, then pour out the water and rinse with clean water before cooking, this will also shorten the cooking time. Since sprouted grains can be easier to digest you could continue the rinsing phase for 2-3 more times until the start to sprout. When you cook grains they should be soft, and if there is weakness of the digestive system, then they should be cooked until soupy, and always at low heat, just enough to simmer.

18. Vegetables should be cooked to some extent, (at least 25 to 75% of the time depending on the time of year and the person's overall condition), such as soups, steamed (you can drink the water), baked or stir-fried; preferably in water. The decrease in nourishment of some vegetables from cooking (although some nutrients are increased in some vegetables) is more than made-up by their increased digestibility.

Seaweed is a vegetable that most people don't eat or don't know how to prepare, and is extremely nourishing. You can just soak them and then put in a salad or use them in a soup or added to beans when you cook them to increase the mineral content of the beans.

If you have a juicer you can juice some vegetables two to four times a week. Green leafy vegetables are the most desirable and only organic vegetables should be used. The fiber from them should be used in cooking because the fiber is one of the most important aspects of vegetables, especially as a prebiotic in the intestine.

19. Legumes should be soaked in water for 12 hours, then pour out the water and rinse with clean water and pour out again. Rinse 2 more times within the next 12 hours or until they begin to sprout. This helps reduce the carbohydrate that produces most of the gas, and the vitamin content of the beans can increase in the sprouting process while the carbohydrates are broken down into simpler carbohydrates that are easier to digest and assimilate. The soaking water should be discarded one to two times in the soaking process (preferably to water your plants) and fresh water added. Before cooking, discard the final soaking water and cook until soft. If you have a foam layer, skim it off, this will also decrease the amount of starch that causes gas.

20. Herbs and spices that assist digestion of beans:

Coriander, Cumin, Ginger -- Lentil, Mung, Black, Azuki/Aduki.

Sage, Thyme, Oregano -- Black, Pinto, Lentil, Kidney.

Dill, Basil -- Lentil, Garbanzo, Split Pea.

Fennel, Cumin -- Pinto, Kidney

Mint, Garlic -- Garbanzo, Lentil.

21. All meats, fish, and poultry should be as fresh as possible, without any hormones or antibiotics or heavy metal intoxication (esp fish), and as lean as possible. If you have digestive problems, meat should be cut into small pieces before chewing or pounded before cooking for easier digestion. The best is free range grass-fed beef and buffalo.

22. FISH: Whole fish will not smell "fishy" if it is fresh. Shark and skate are exceptions to this rule, as they naturally have a slight ammonia odor when fresh. The eyes will be clear, not cloudy, and the skin will be moist and shiny but never slimy. The scales should be intact and attached, instead of dry or flaking. Cuts of fish should be moist, with no fishy odor, bruises, odd-colored edges, or spots. Frozen fish is harder to evaluate, unless you notice any discoloration or a strong odor. Look for intact packaging, recent package dates, and a piece of fish that feels frozen solid. Avoid pieces covered with a lot of ice crystals, or rips and holes in the packaging. Shellfish such as Crab and Lobster are best purchased live and cooked to order or as fresh as possible. Shrimp can be frozen, preferably with shells on. Clams, Oysters and Mussels should always be purchased live or as fresh as possible.

23. Fats as a whole should be uncooked polyunsaturated and monosaturated fats along with some saturated fats.

Polyunsaturated Fats: Nuts, seeds, algae, leafy green vegetables, fish (esp cold water fish) and krill.

Monosaturated Fats: Red meat, whole milk products, nuts, olives and avocados

Saturated Fats: Animal fats and their products; butter, ghee, lard, cheese, cream and vegetable products: coconut oil, palm kernel oil, and cocoa butter.

There are 2 Essential Fatty Acids and 2 other very important Fatty Acids that you will want to get in you diet at least a few times a week. We can not make the first two and many people have a poor ability to convert these into EPA and especially DHA.

The first is Alpha-Linolenic Acid (LNA or ALA), and it belongs to the omega-3 family of fatty acids. You can find ALA in Flax Seed, Chia Seed, Hemp Seed, Walnuts, Pumpkin Seeds, Brazil Nuts, Sesame Seeds, Avocado, Soybean Oil, Dark green leafy vegetables such as Kale, Collard Greens, Swiss Chard, Mustard Greens, Purslane.

By by far the highest food source of ALA is flax oil and flex seed then Chia seeds.

These foods are not especially popular in the typical American diet, so it is no wonder that about 95% of the US population is deficient in ALA. This deficiency plays a role in practically all degenerative diseases like heart disease and cancer, arthritis, skin conditions, diabetic neuropathy, immune function, and premenstrual syndrome.

The second is Linoleic Acid (LA) belonging to the omega-6 family of fatty acids. It is found abundantly in soy oil, sunflower seeds, safflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds (tahini), corn oil, and in most nuts.

The typical American diet contains too much LA in comparison to ALA because people consume so much refined vegetable oils made of the above mentioned foods. They not only cook with these oils, but also eat margarine, crackers, cookies, and other processed foods which contain those oils.

The right ratio of linoleic acid versus alpha-linolenic acid in the diet is important. It should be between 4:1 and 1:1, meaning equal amounts of LA and ALA and up to four times as much LA as ALA, while the typically American diet can be as high as 20:1.

Some researchers believe an imbalance may lead to a variety of mental disorders, including hyperactivity, depression, brain allergies, and schizophrenia.

Besides nourishing the brain, neurological, eye and vascular system, another primary function of EFAs is the production of prostaglandins, which regulate body functions such as menstrual cycle, fertility, conception, induce labor, regulate platelets, heart rate, blood pressure, blood clotting, cell wall integrity, increase gastric mucus secretions, decrease gastric acid secretions, help regulate bronchial dilation or constriction, and play a role in immune function by regulating inflammation and encouraging the body to fight infection.

Now the so called non-essential omega-3 fatty acids.

DHA (docosahexaenoic acid) and EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid). The body can convert ALA to EPA, and then EPA to DHA; however some people don't convert ALA to EPA and especially EPA to DHA efficiently so getting these oils in your diet would be a good assurance policy, especially if you are planning on getting pregnant or are currently pregnant.

Infants and children need DHA for proper brain, nervous system and eye development so getting this from their diet can be extremely important. Breast milk will have all the fatty acids needed for healthy growth only if the mother has these in her diet, and the same goes for vitamins and minerals.

Non-essential omega-6 fatty acids include AA (arachidonic acid) and GLA (gamma-linolenic acid) which your body makes from LA (the omega-6 essential fatty acid). GLA is the only one you may want to supplement is easy to get in foods or supplements such as Spirulina, Borage Oil, Evening Primrose, Hemp seed

Oil and Black Currant Oil.

AA is very important for growing babies muscle, brain and nervous system, is easy to get in foods such as Animal Organs, Poultry, Eggs, Meat, Fish and can be converted from Linoleic Acid (LA).

GLA can convert to DGLA and then ProstaglandinPGH₁ which has helps regulate the immune system and has anti-inflammatory properties.

WARNING! Oil pesticides, which are very fat-soluble, tend to be concentrated in oil products. Therefore, it is a good idea to buy organic oils whenever possible. Oils especially high in pesticide residue are soy, corn, cottonseed, and canola. Store oils in the refrigerator, tightly capped away from light. Buy oils in small quantities and use before they become rancid.

All unsaturated fatty acids, polyunsaturated or monounsaturated are subject to oxidation and rancidity, (monounsaturated less so.) Protect your oils from air, light and heat.

Look for oil that is organic and cold pressed, not cold processed or solvent extracted. Ideally, the oil should be in an opaque bottle.

Buy smaller quantities, amounts you can use, before they become rancid.

Keep your oils in the refrigerator.

Avoid frying at high heats, all oils will go bad with high heat.

Use water with oil while sauteing to keep temperature down or just water if you are sauteing vegetables.

Don't use margarine, this is an artificially hydrogenated product with trans-fatty acids.

Butter, Coconut and Olive oil are probably the best oils to cook with.

24. Nuts & Seeds: It is preferred to buy nuts and seeds in the shell if possible and store in cool dark place. When shelled, store in a glass jar in a cool/cold dark place. You could also lightly roast them to improve digestion and storage.

25. Water. Filtered water is superior to tap water. Investigate the various water filtration devices and choose one that makes the most sense for your household. To extend the life of your filter, let tap run a few minutes in the morning or whenever water has been sitting in the pipes a long time before turning on the filter. Collect the run off water for plant watering and dish washing.

26. One's diet should follow the seasons, eating what grows locally. The fruits and vegetables that ripen in the summertime tend to be on the cooling side, because their growth period occurs during the cooler months. In wintertime we will tend towards a warming diet.

27. Glass, stainless steel, or earthenware are the best utensils for cooking. Aluminum and copper are the worst because these metals can easily leach into

the food, and cast iron can leach too much iron into your food if used too much. Don't use non-stick pots or pans!

28. Miscellaneous Foods: Apple Cider vinegar, Anise, Arrowroot, Basil, Carob, Cinnamon, Fennel, Ginger, Honey, Kuzu, Lecithin, Miso, Molasses, Olive, Rice vinegar, Tofu, White fungus, Salt, WATER.

29. If you do drink coffee, buy the best quality organic bean you can find. If you drink decaffeinated, opt for water processed over solvent extracted which may have leftover solvent residue. Consider the country of origin of the bean. Examine the method of brewing as well. French press is better than paper cone filters, and paper filters are better than automatic coffee makers or percolators.

FOOD COMBINATIONS

Below is a strict representation of food combining which is usually not needed for everyone and will be modified for each individual.

Eat protein foods first because they require a lot of stomach acid to digest properly. Any starches eaten first will tend to reduce the amount of stomach acid and thus the digestibility of protein. Examples of protein are all animal products, then the protein/starch foods such as legumes and their products (tempeh, tofu, miso), nuts, and seeds.

Green and non-starchy vegetables combine well with all proteins, fats, and starches.

PROTEINS: Legumes (dried beans, lentils, peas), and their sprouts, seeds, tofu, tempeh, miso, soy sauce; all meats, fish, eggs combine best with green and non-starchy vegetables. An exception is that high-fat proteins also combine with acid fruit. Protein foods are best eaten before starches and fats. At most, eat two proteins per meal.

HIGH-FAT PROTEINS: Nuts, oil-bearing seeds (flax, sesame, etc.), dairy products. Follows the above rules.

FATS & OILS: Avocado, butter, cream, olives, sour cream, oils (olive, sesame, flax, ghee, etc.), combine best with green and non-starchy vegetables, starches, and acid fruit. Eat in small amounts.

STARCHES: All whole grains and their sprouts, including bread, pasta, and sprouted grain flours, beet, carrot, pumpkin, parsnip, potato, sweet potato, winter squash, combine best with green and non-starchy vegetables, and are best eaten after protein foods. At most two starches per meal.

LEAFY GREEN VEGETABLES: Bokchoy, cabbage, chard, beet, collard and mustard

greens, kale, lettuce, parsley, spinach, turnip, watercress, sprouts of alfalfa, cabbage, radish, and mustard seeds; seaweed and micro-algae (spirulina, chlorella, Klamath wild blue-green), wheat and barley grass, combine with all other foods and three acid fruits (lemon, lime, and tomato).

NON-STARCHY VEGETABLES: Cucumber, broccoli, cauliflower, celery, turnip, radish, onion, green bean, sweet corn, sweet pea, zucchini, leek, garlic, eggplant, bell pepper, mushroom, asparagus, summer squash, okra. Combine with all other foods. Underlined foods are mildly starchy.

FRUIT

SWEET: Banana, date, fresh fig, persimmon, raisin, and all dried fruit.

Preferably eaten alone, although can be eaten at end of meal, ideally preceded by a green of lettuce and celery.

Fruit combines with other fruit except sweet and acid fruits do not mix. Melons are best eaten alone. Combine only two or three fruits at once.

SUBACID: Apple, apricot, berries, cherry, grape, mango, nectarine, papaya, peach, pear, plum..

ACID: Currant, grapefruit, kiwi, lemon, lime, orange, pineapple, pomegranate, sour apple, strawberry, tomato.

MELONS: Cantaloupe, casaba, crenshaw, honeydew, and watermelon.

CONCENTRATED SWEETENERS: Honey, maple syrup, rice syrup, barley malt, amasake, dried unrefined cane juice, pure fruit and it's juices, and the herbs stevia and licorice.