

MEATS

If you choose to eat meat, limit consumption to 2-3 times per week. Meat soups can be particularly nourishing during convalescence.

Best: Chicken and turkey (dark meat), beef, duck, eggs, freshwater fish, lamb, pork, seafood, venison

Small Amounts: Chicken and turkey (white meat), shellfish

LEGUMES

Best: Mung beans

Small Amounts: Tofu, hummus

Avoid: Aduki beans, black beans, chickpeas, fava beans, kidney beans, lentils, Mexican beans, navy beans, pinto beans, soybeans (except as tofu or soy milk)

SPICES

When spicing, the overall spiciness is more important than individual spices. Even some "Avoid" spices can be used if balanced with other spices on the "Best" list. For vata, food should be spiced moderately and never very hot or bland.

Best: Anise, basil, bay leaf, caraway, cardamom, catnip, cinnamon, clove, cumin, dill, fennel, fenugreek, garlic, ginger (fresh), marjoram, mustard, nutmeg, oregano, pepper, peppermint, poppy seeds, rosemary, spearmint, thyme, turmeric

Small Amounts: Cayenne pepper, cilantro, ginger (dry), horseradish, mustards (very hot), parsley

CONDIMENTS

Best: Mayonnaise, vinegar

Small Amounts: Catsup

Avoid: Carob, chocolate

BEVERAGES

Best: Three or four cups of room temperature or warm water per day. Spicy teas such as chamomile, cinnamon, clove, and ginger.

Small Amounts: Diluted fruit juices

Avoid: All alcohol, black tea, carbonated mineral water, coffee, fruit juices, soft drinks

Foods listed as "**Best**" can be eaten without reservation on a daily basis. Individuals who are sick should consume only those foods on this list. These foods are the most ideal as they are the most balanced for the dosha.

Foods listed as "**Small Amounts**" can be eaten in small portions fairly often or in larger portions once or twice each week. Eating a wide variety of these foods is better than an abundance of just one. Over-reliance upon these foods can cause an imbalance.

Foods listed as "**Avoid**" should be eaten only on rare occasions and can be eaten once each month. They either cause an imbalance in the dosha or very significantly disturb it.

The Six Ayurvedic Tastes

There are six distinct tastes and each, as all of nature, is composed of elements. The overall qualities of the taste will either be harmonious or disharmonious to a doshic imbalance. The tastes form the basis of your food program and your herbal medicines.

SWEET: earth and water Is heavy, moist, and cool and increases Kapha while decreasing Vata and Pitta. Some examples are nuts, grains and most dairy.

SOUR: fire and earth Is heavy, moist, and hot and increases Pitta and Kapha while decreasing Vata. Some examples are fermented foods like yogurt and tempeh.

SALTY: water and fire Is heavy, moist, and hot and increases Pitta and Kapha while decreasing Vata. Some examples are seaweeds and seafood.

PUNGENT: fire and air Is light, dry, and hot and increases Pitta and Vata while decreasing Kapha. Some examples are chili peppers, ginger and black pepper.

ASTRINGENT: earth and air Is dry and cool and neither too heavy nor too light, and increases Vata while decreasing Pitta and Kapha. Some examples are most beans, cranberries, and pomegranates.

BITTER: air and ether Is light, dry, and cool, and increases Vata while decreasing Pitta and Kapha. Some examples are leafy greens and herbs like goldenseal.