

Yogaversity

SESSION THREE

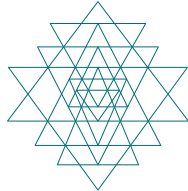
Improving Our Digestion of Foods, Thoughts, & Actions

*Ayurvedic Yoga
Specialist Training*



Training manual by Kathryn Templeton

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Session 3 Goals

1. Learn about the six tastes and proper diet
2. Learn and understand internal and external practices to regulate agni
3. Develop clinical awareness of asana, pranayama, meditation, and diet/lifestyle as it relates to digestion and assimilation.
4. Learn how to make ghee, kitchari, seasonal recipes, and teas. Demonstrations, samples, and recipes are included.



Suggested Additional Reading: Eat, Taste, Heal by Thomas Yarema, Daniel Rhoda, and Jonny Brannigan





What is Ayurvedic Nutrition?

Food is very essential for life. Food is *prana*. Food energizes the mind; it is *sattvic*, *rajasic*, or *tamasic* depending upon the food we consume (and the manner in which we consume it!). Food is for strength, health, and that which our life depends, *agni*. Agni is constantly replenished from the food we eat. In order to maintain “*sama agni*,” eating balanced food is essential. Strength, energy, clarity of mind, radiance of skin, immunity, sharpness of the senses depends on the food we eat.

According to Ayurveda our health depends solely on food. Food is defined in larger terms from the Ayurvedic perspective. Anything we take in to nourish our body and mind and give ourselves energy is *ahara*. Food, water, breath, emotions, information through our sense organs are all related to *ahara*. *Ahara rasa* means nutritive juice, the end product of our digested food. It takes about 12 hours to form and it is considered to be an unstable form of the blood tissue.

Stages of Digestion According to Dosha

The first stage of digestion is the kapha stage of digestion. It occurs in the mouth and stomach and is dominated by the sweet taste. Kapha secretes saliva and alkaline fluids to digest the earth and water elements. This stage of digestion renders the food liquid and homogeneous to be the best fluid possible for our digestive fires. Kapha related issues can start at this stage of digestion too, including nausea, lack of appetite, vomiting of mucus or phlegm. Eating kapha dominate foods such as sweet or salty, heavy or greasy, or foods that cause mucus add to the discomfort.

The second stage of digestion, the pitta stage, occurs in the stomach and small intestine and is dominated by the sour taste and acids in the liver, pancreas, and small intestines (pitta/acid). This helps us digest the fire element, and through this, heat and energy are released, giving our body strength. This is the main stage of digestion in the physical body. Pitta related issues occur, or are often involved in this stage of digestion. Hyperacidity, ulcers, and common heartburn, are all suspects from foods that are too hot, sour, or spicy. Drinking alcohol with our meals might help to create some issues in this stage of digestion.

The third and final stage of digestion occurs in the large intestine and is dominated by the pungent taste and the (wind) gas released in the colon, thus it is called the vata stage of digestion. Air and ether are the elements found within the foods that are absorbed during this stage of digestion. This is when the earth element, which is indigestible, is discarded as feces. The water that is not digested is absorbed and transferred to be eliminated as urine. The impure (foul smelling) air is discarded as waste, and the pure air released in this stage of digestion is offered to support the five forms of vata in the body (the *vayus*). Most vata related issues occur at this stage, such as gas, distention of the belly, and constipation. The foods associated with these issues have dry, light, rough qualities and are often astringent in taste.

The general process of digestion works on the food mass that has been swallowed and liquefied during the kapha stage of digestion. The intelligence of the body separates the nutritive part of the food or *sara* from the waste material (later to be processed in the vata stage of digestion and as one of the *malas*). The pitta stage of digestion is when the five elements are fed and supported by the nutrient mass after it is transferred to the liver where the elemental agnis break down the five elements into the respective elemental tissues for use in our bodies.





The Transition of Taste in the Three Stages of Digestion

The elements in the food are recognized by their tastes. These tastes change as they move through the stages of digestion. The three digestive actions or changes that taste move through are:

1. **Rasa:** The taste on the tongue.
2. **Virya:** The heating or cooling action of the taste as it moves into the second stage of digestion.
3. **Vipaka:** Post-digestive taste related to the third stage of digestion.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Digestive Action</i>	<i>Field of Experience</i>	<i>Field of Action</i>
Rasa	Taste	Tongue; <i>Bodhaka Kapha</i>	<i>Ahara Rasa/Raktu Dhatu</i>
Virya	Heating & Cooling	Stomach, Small Intestine, <i>Jathara Agni</i>	Slow sustained action yields vipaka
Vipaka	Post Digestive	Colon, <i>Bhuta Agni</i> with Agni of the Colon	Action on urine, feces, and sweat
Prabhava	Unique, Special	Works on specific areas of the body	Partially digested substance transforms into cellular material

Rasa (taste)

Rasa is another term for the juice of life, taste, melody, enthusiasm, essence, and plasma. It is the actual taste of the food, the sensation the tongue experiences. Various rasas are used to balance the doshas based on the composition of the food and the composition of the doshas. Rasa relates to our diet/nutrition/cravings and Virya is important in understanding the use of herbs.

Virya (potent energy)

This is the potency of a substance, the vigor, the essence of the herb. There are eight types of virya and two types that have a direct effect on our digestive fire / agni. *shita virya* (cooling) and *usna virya* (heating). Shita virya increases vata and kapha and it decreases pitta. It strengthens *dhatu*s (tissues), stops bowel movements, and lack of sweating increases urination. It weakens agni, tones *dhatu*s, and increases moistness. Usna virya decreases vata and kapha and increases pitta and *raktu dhatu*. Heat depletes the rest of the *dhatu*s and dries stools/urine and increases sweat/thirst.





In digestion the first experience is taste (rasa). Its action is bodhaka kapha, the first stage of digestion, including the digestion of our foods, thoughts, feelings and how we “taste” or experience our life. Then there is heating or cooling energy in the stomach or small intestine. This is virya, which is energy, strength, power, potency, and the active principle. Virya operates through jathara agni and its field of action extends to all the dhatus. Dhatus means tissues, of which there are seven types in the body. When prescribing herbs virya is important; sweet/astringent/bitter herbs are cooling and sour/salty/pungent herbs are heating.

Vipaka (post-digestive effect)

The final post digestive effect of taste occurs in the colon. Vipaka has action on the three malas: urine, feces, and sweat. Its field of action extends to the dhatus and the cells of the body. Vipaka can be observed by its action on both the excreta and dhatus. When a cell is separated from its nutrients it dies. Vipaka transports these products of digestion in ahara rasa for further transformation into living cellular components. *Pilu agni* (the agni in each cell membrane) chooses appropriate molecules for that cell. The same process occurs for each dhatu whereby the Dhatu Agni selects appropriate nutrients from those yielded by vipaka. Vipaka precedes dhatu at the dhatu level and *pilu paka* at the cellular level.

Prabhava (unique, special property)

A prabhava is a special effect which cannot be explained by rasa, virya, or vipaka. Due to unique bhoutic composition. These substances defy rational thinking and go beyond our understanding and logic. Ghee can be used to create a laxative effect or to constipate—how can this one substance do both? Due to the specific, dynamic, hidden action of *shakti*/awareness hidden within the substance, the prabhava. This gives rise to unexpected actions or prabhava. Amalaki fruit is an excellent example of a fruit with prabhava as it has so many effects on the body, most of which are unrelated to the inherent shakti and prana within this auspicious fruit.

During the second stage of digestion tissues build up in the body as the nutrients are assimilated into the five elements. The five elements break down, in the second stage of digestion by the five *bhuta agnis* as follows:

1. Earth Elements

Digested and transformed from food serve to build up the basic bulk of the body.

2. Water Elements

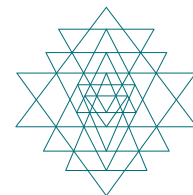
Build up the vital fluids of the body: plasma, blood, and fat tissues.

3. Fire Elements

Build up the enzymes and hemoglobin of the body.

4. Air Elements

Build up the bone tissue and nerve plexuses in the body.





Ayurveda Identifies Six Tastes

Here's How They Relate to the Five Elements and Gunas

<i>Rasa</i>	Mandahu	Amla	Lavana	Tikta	Katu	Kashaya
<i>Taste</i>	Sweet	Sour	Salty	Bitter	Pungent	Astringent
<i>Element</i>	Earth/Water	Fire/Earth	Fire/Water	Air/Ether	Air/Fire	Air/Earth
<i>Guna or Quality</i>	Cold/Heavy Moist/Oily	Hot/Light Moist/Oily	Hot/Heavy Moist/Oily	Cold/Light Dry	Hot/Light Dry	Cold/Heavy Dry

Notice the response to diets with heavy taste influences:

1. Sweet

Sweet foods tend to have a sluggish, under active thyroid. They are kapha increasing and thus building in nature—often the result is weight gain.

2. Sour

Sour foods lead to lung/pulmonary congestion as this taste is related to the middle and lower lobes of the lungs. Notice that when you taste sour you often create saliva, and a wetness in the mouth and lungs.

3. Salty

Salty taste can weaken the kidneys, the organ it is most related to and impacts the most when overused by creating water retention and sometimes high blood pressure.

4. Pungent

Pungent tastes can create increased hunger, along with burning secretions in the stomach that can damage the stomach lining/*kledaka kapha* (due to addiction to spicy foods). This is one cause of gastritis.

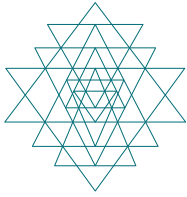
5. Bitter

Bitter is a taste not found much in the American diet. It relates to the pancreas, liver and spleen, and abnormal intake of this taste can weaken these vital organs.

6. Astringent

Astringent tastes, related to the colon, are hallmark causes for constipation and other colon related issues.





Each taste relates to one hour of digestive process. Each taste nourishes the plasma (*rasa dhatu*) during a stage of digestion. The *bodhaka agni* in our mouth allows us to experience taste. There are immediate actions in the body as each taste is related to a specific organ in the body, place on the tongue, and psychological effect.

Foods Related to the Six Tastes and Five Elements

1. Earth

Nuts and seeds, meat, mushrooms, root veggies, beans, many grains including wheat and rice, coconut meat, hard dried fruits, minerals.

2. Water

Dairy products, including milk. juicy fruits, watermelon, peaches, oranges cantaloupe, grapes, coconut water, juicy veggies like cucumbers, zucchini, and tomatoes, salt.

3. Fire

Spices that have impact (hot peppers, black pepper, cinnamon, cloves, ginger, hing, two tamasic roots known as onions and garlic), pineapple, tamarind, cranberries, lemons (all fiery), and let's not forget "fire water" (alcohol) and tobacco.

4. Air

Raw veggies, dried fruits. rough, and gassy foods like; cabbage, broccoli, sprouts. Nightshades including potatoes, tomatoes, eggplants and beans... did I say, beans?! black beans, pinto beans, chickpeas (yes, hummus).

5. Ether

Fresh veggie juice, algae, spirulina, and sprouts. Anesthetic drugs like ether or hallucinogenic drugs such as LSD, alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, narcotic in general, and smoking drugs like tobacco, hash, and peyote.



Image Source: Banyan Botanicals



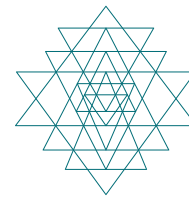


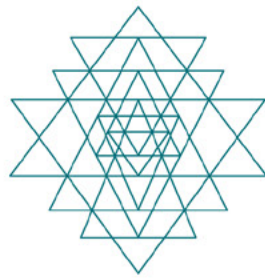
How Imbalance of Six Tastes Affect the Physical Body

<i>Taste</i>	<i>Effects of Excess</i>	<i>Effects of Too Little</i>
Sweet	Obesity, lethargy, allergies, arthritis	Weak tissues, debility
Sour	Sensitive teeth, various infections, burning in muscles, heartburn, ulcers, skin conditions like dermatitis, acne, eczema, boils	Acid imbalance
Salty	Excess thirst and heat, increased blood volume, wrinkles, flabby muscles, baldness, and weak reproductive tissue (<i>sukra dhatu</i>)	Water imbalance
Pungent	Diarrhea, heartburn, weakness, weak reproductive tissue (<i>sukra dhatu</i>), peptic ulcers	Weak digestion, poor circulation, cold extremities
Bitter	Excess dryness in the body, vata diseases, weakens tissues (<i>dhatu</i> s)	Excessive discharge
Astringent	Choking, stiff body, heaviness in chest, obstruction of voice	Accumulation of toxins

Balancing the Doshas with Taste

<i>Dosha</i>	<i>Most Pacifying</i>	<i>Most Aggravating</i>
Vata	Salty	Bitter
Pitta	Bitter	Pungent
Kapha	Pungent	Sweet





Appendix

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All About Food—Kapha Dosha

There are many tools in our AYS tool box that we can use to bring balance to the gunas/attributes of Kapha dosha when those qualities have increased and are manifesting symptoms. Using taste and the alchemy of foods and spices we can employ an important “medicine” for reducing the qualities that have been accumulating and begin to bring Kapha dosha back into balance. Now, do not forget...we have more tools in our tool box; asana, pranayama, meditation, lifestyle, noticing the Ayurvedic clock and Dinacharya. Each yogi responds differently to the recommendations or tools of the HI AYS so allow yourself to build a complete treatment plan using all the options and select the top three for your client to start with and see how they respond.

Kapha's Qualities/Attributes/Gunas

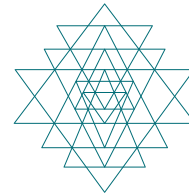
- **Guru:** Heavy
- **Manda:** Slow/dull
- **Shita:** Cold
- **Snigdha or Sneha:** Oily or unctuous
- **Shlakshna:** Smooth
- **Sandra:** Dense or thick/solid
- **Mirdu:** Soft
- **Stira:** Stable/static
- **Sthula:** Gross/big

Tastes that build Kapha

- Sweet
- Sour
- Salty

Tastes that reduce Kapha

- Pungent
- Astringent
- Bitter



Kapha Balancing Teas

Kapha teas should enhance vitality and invigoration while strengthening agni. Consider the following spices for Kapha balancing teas:

1. Ginger kindles the digestive fire.
2. Cloves, black pepper, cardamom, and Allspice warm and stimulate the body and mind.
3. Cinnamon, peppermint and orange peel will stimulate and refresh the mind.





Pungent

The taste of pungent spices and foods are made of mostly the fire element. It has the qualities of fire; sharp, intense, fast acting, spreading quickly to all tissues and a “little goes a long way” or concentrated. Pungent taste is like a laser and acts as such by penetrating, burning, ulcerates, cutting and a quickly stopping action as in cauterizing. Pungent taste thus improves circulation, thins the blood, and increases heart rate... think about biting into that jalapeno pepper... HOT FLASH! To much pungent taste can be harmful as the sharpness and heat could lead to bruises, ulcers, inflammation and rash, even bleeding disorders.

Within the body, pungent taste activates the liver thus expels excess VPK when blood is being cleansed. Because blood flow is one way prana moves in the body, pungent taste both stimulates courage and activation. Even better for Kapha, it offers mental focus and clarity. In the tissues, it softens hard mucus and creates secretions while breaking up and flushing out thick or hardened materials. Pungent taste increases heat and so circulation, metabolism and tissue toxins get burned up! The immune system gets a boost, toxins get cleared out by the body sweating and secretions flushing and flowing. It supports right action of the GI tract and in the lungs. It wakes up the sleepy kapha mind and brings focus to mental activity.

Foods and Spices with Pungent Tastes

- ajwain
- peppers
- allspice
- cayenne
- black pepper
- vinegar
- chilies
- mustard
- most peppers including jalapeno and chilies
- garlic
- hard liquor
- cinnamon
- coriander seed
- chipotle chili
- paprika
- fenugreek
- fresh ginger
- curry leaves and powder
- star anise
- hing
- chives
- tarragon
- saffron
- sage
- thyme
- marjoram
- red pepper flakes
- cumin





Astringent

This taste is made up of Earth and Air. It offers the dry and light gunas to the spices and foods with this taste. Obviously Kapha would benefit from using this taste to balance out it's heavy and wet nature.

The astringent effect is one of causing the body to contract and become lighter. It dries up secretions, causing a tightening effect and absorbs mucus. This taste dehydrates and can help when there is excess saliva or "gooey thoughts" that won't let go! The effect in the mind is to draw together the scattered thoughts with clarity (great for Kapha that gets all cluttered as it holds so many thoughts and won't let any of them go!) and it cools the mind too! This taste also brings things into form; the crunch of the apple, or when making mashed potatoes and they keep sticking together until a lot of moisture is added. So, watch out if constipation occurs, as too much astringent will "bind" and create difficulty swallowing some foods or in evacuation with a tightening and drying of the tissues.

Foods with astringent taste make the mouth feel rough or dry. Astringent taste cleanses the mouth but causes difficulty swallowing. Leafy greens, green bananas and cranberries are astringent. Astringent taste makes an apple crunchy. It makes lentils and peeled potatoes stick to each other.

Foods and Spices with Astringent Tastes

- anise
- basil
- bay leaf
- caraway seeds
- basil
- acorns
- aloe vera juice or gel
- apple
- apricot
- black beans (most beans)
- bean sprouts
- alfalfa sprouts (most all sprouts)
- beet greens
- asparagus
- pomegranate
- black tea and many green teas
- black-eyed peas
- buttermilk
- lamb
- mung beans
- okra
- honey
- kale
- lavender
- lemon
- pears
- rose water
- soy beans
- split peas
- raspberry
- potato
- plantains
- Toor Dal or yellow lentils
- white wine
- turnip
- tempeh
- strawberries
- walnuts





All About Food—Pitta Dosha

Often the gunas (qualities/attributes) of Pitta are the fulcrum that balances Vata and Kapha doshas. This is because both Kapha and Vata share the cold quality and good ol' Pitta is Mr. Heat! It is important to work with Pitta and note the season so that the qualities of that season can be taken into the equation when making a treatment recommendation.

Pitta's Qualities/Attributes/Gunas

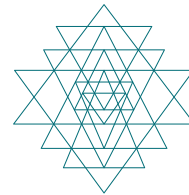
- *Laghu*: Light
- *Ushna*: Hot
- *Sukshma*: Subtle
- *Tikshna*: Sharp or penetrating
- *Pichila*: Slimy, cloudy, or sticky
- *Sparsa*: Spreading
- *Mirdu*: Soft
- *Drava*: Liquid

Tastes that build Pitta

- Sour
- Salty
- Pungent

Tastes that reduce Kapha

- Sweet
- Bitter
- Astringent



Pitta Balancing Teas

The quality of Pitta teas should be cooling, soothing, create comfort. These herbs will leave Pitta refreshed and ready to enjoy life with ease and grace. Consider the following spices for Pitta balancing teas:

1. Fennel, coriander, and spearmint help to create ease in digestion, thoughts and competitive nature.
2. Cooling hibiscus, chamomile, citronella and lemongrass help to create both internal and external harmony.





Sweet

The most popular taste in America is the sweet taste! Why? Well, in ayurveda we know that the sweet taste is what nourishes our vital sap, Ojas. The plasma and blood of the body must have the qualities of the sweet taste to thrive. This is a rare taste in nature and is found in fats, proteins and most recognizable in carbohydrates. The sweet taste creates softness, moisture and stability. As it does with our Ojas, this taste helps us heal as an open wound and offers soothing to sore throats, starved minds and any area of depletion. Yes, but as in all good things... too much is problematic.

Foods and Spices with Sweet Tastes

- cinnamon
- cardamom
- dried ginger
- honey,
- sweet onions
- scallions
- wheat
- rice
- mint
- licorice
- milk,
- coconut
- almonds
- many meats
- almond milk
- banana
- Brown sugar
- butter
- barley,
- avocado
- blackberry
- cooked cabbage
- butternut squash
- corn
- cashews
- carrots
- cranberries
- green mango
- figs
- currants
- cucumber
- ghee
- grapes
- risotto
- strawberries
- sweet peas
- plums
- red onion
- dried prunes,
- pears
- pineapple
- okra
- pecans
- pasta
- paneer
- orange
- yams
- some onions
- watermelon





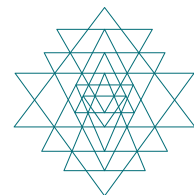
Bitter

The elements of Ether and Air are prominent in this taste. It both cools, expands, creates lightness and cleanses the body. This taste offers our digestion a real boost! The use of bitters has a stimulating effect on our digestive juices and agni. Bitters are drying to the body, cause an increase in metabolism, and scrape fat. This taste helps to purify the body and is a drying agent that dries secretions.

Some consider the bitter taste like poison! They stimulate peristalsis, helping to clear the blood of heat and excess pitta. The bitter taste helps to stimulate metabolism, right flow of prana and breath. This is a taste that was most common in the ancient diet but not often sought after in our daily diets. The use of bitter taste proffers a drying and lightening effect that can deplete the body of its heaviness and often lose weight. This taste moves prana by decreasing the upward motion of prana and thus helps us in times of fever by cooling the body or with toxicity or infection by moving the prana downward and purifying the blood, cooling infection and inflammation and riding the body of the heaviness of the sweet taste. The sense of clarity is enhanced by the building of the Ether element and thus an ability to draw awareness beyond ego can occur.

Foods and Spices with Bitter Tastes

- dark leafy greens like kale
- arugula
- coffee
- orange peel
- aloe vera gel
- bay leaf
- basil
- artichoke hearts,
- dandelions
- dark chocolate
- neem
- Mung Beans
- turmeric
- cilantro
- brussel sprouts
- beets
- broccoli
- cilantro,
- Hing (Asafetida)
- olive oil
- eggplant
- red leaf lettuce
- Romaine Lettuce
- jaggery
- spinach
- parsley
- romaine
- lettuce
- marjoram
- molasses
- rosemary
- rhubarb
- red bell pepper
- curry leaves
- watercress





All About Food—Vata Dosha

The good news about Vata is that it is light, dry and mobile... and yes, that is often the issue too! The elements of Ether and Air combine in this dosha. We have lots of wonderful applications of asana or pranayama and meditation to help direct the movement of prana but we need to address how our digestion can be irregular with an accumulation of Vata's qualities. Vata imbalances tend to create deficiencies. For example, Vata has the quality of dryness and when we are imbalanced in this guna or quality we tend to drink less water, skip meals, eat cold foods, and exercise (move)—all of which create excess dryness. Offering ayurvedic nutritional information such as specific tastes, spices and foods, will help folks with Vata imbalances feel more grounded, warm, lubricated, focused and calm.

Vata's Qualities/Attributes/Gunas

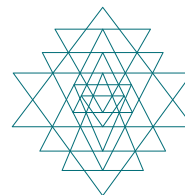
- **Ruksha:** Dry
- **Shita:** Cold
- **Laghu:** Light
- **Khara:** Rough
- **Kathina:** Hard
- **Chala:** Mobile or unstable (irregular)
- **Sukshma:** Subtle
- **Vishada:** Clear or non-slimy

Tastes that build Vata

- Bitter
- Astringent
- Pungent

Tastes that reduce Vata

- Sweet
- Salty
- Sour



Vata Balancing Teas

Help the body and mind to settle down, warm up and relax with Vata-balancing herbs in a warm to hot cup of tea. This is perfect to calm down this dosha! Consider the following spices for Vata balancing teas:

1. Aromatic herbs such as Cinnamon, chicory root, cardamon, nutmeg and ginger, help to warm and focus the mind
2. Licorice offers some weight and moisture...don't forget to add the honey to keep life sweet!





Sour

Generally speaking, the idea of sour foods is not so pleasant. We think of sour foods as fermented foods in ayurvedic medicine and classify them as helpful to increase digestive juices. These fermented foods are often thought of as blood “spoliers” due to the action the bacteria provides in the fermented or sour food. This action heats up the dhatu agni, stimulates the liver function and increases heat in the blood. Too much of these fermented foods can create distended tissues that are “out of shape.” Taking the sour taste in sour or acidic fruits is helpful to digestion as it creates lubrication and form. This effect moistens the mouth, and supports GI tract secretions and improves gastric secretions in the stomach. This moisture pacifies Vata. The mind is pacified by the sour taste as it helps the mind to focus the scattered thoughts of Vata and to increase intensity or desire. Desire is a double-edged sword because when we do not get what we desire we often become “sour” in attitude. Finally our colon, the heart of Vata dosha, benefits from the sour taste as the moisture and warmth supports the proper evacuation of wastes from the bowels with greater ease and regularity.

Foods and Spices with Sour Tastes

- yogurt
- wine
- beer
- pickles
- cloves
- parsley
- rosemary,
- chicory root
- allspices
- ajwain
- bay leaf
- miso soup
- curry leaves
- dill
- marjoram
- turmeric

It is best to use sour fruits to access the benefits from the fire and water elements of the sour taste. The two categories of sour fruits are the acidic and the sub-acidic tastes. These fruits will proffer heat for digestion stability but not enough to heat the blood and cause issues. Two special fruits offer the rare combination of sour and astringent tastes together; pomegranates and cranberries. These two tastes combined create a link to not only our higher mind and a cleaner, less inflamed body, but to our heart being supported. There is a sense of nourishing the heart, home of our “soul, mind and heart” according to Charika Samihita. To enliven and support our heart or mind sour fruits are excellent!

- lime and lemon zest
- lemons
- limes
- grapefruit
- oranges
- peaches
- cherries
- apricots
- cherries
- alcohol
- vinegars in general
- feta and blue cheeses
- sour cream
- kefir
- kombucha
- cranberry juice
- mayonnaise
- cream cheese
- parmesan cheese
- sake
- tamarind
- raisins
- pomegranate
- olives
- molasses
- strawberries
- spinach
- tomato
- merlot wine
- yeast, sauerkraut



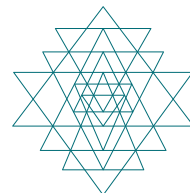


Salty

Enthusiasm in life? Catalyst for full intensity of flavor? Need some stimulation for digestion? Well, you have found the right taste! Salt added to a soup makes it even more yummy! Salt's elemental make up is pure fire with a little moisture on the side! Salt stimulates the nerve tissue, builds up our ability to "keep our moisture locked inside." This taste assures us that we will become moist as thirst is stimulated and so is the need to hold that moisture. Yet, due to its intensity and heat, it is nature is best kept secret to melt excess kapha in the lungs and sinus to help evacuate any build up. Salt can help in evacuation by breaking up hard masses in the digestive tract. Vata people with leaky kidneys sometimes benefit from anti-diuretics, like salt, licorice, and Rehmannia root. By adding in licorice, salt and other roots you can help to rebuild fluids without adding in hard joints and muscle, wrinkles and low libido.

Foods and Spices with Salty Tastes

- Feta and Blue cheese
- balck salt
- ketchup
- miso
- olives
- parmesan
- cheddar
- romano cheese
- seaweed
- mineral salt
- spinach
- tamair
- soy sauce
- almond milk
- flax seed
- hazelnut
- hemp seed
- peanuts
- pecans
- sesame seeds
- tahini
- Brazil nut
- coconut flakes
- walnuts
- red pepper flakes
- fennel seeds
- Red chilies
- jalapenos
- mint
- cayenne pepper
- curry powder





Ayurvedic Recipes

Chai

- 1 C water
 - 1 C milk
 - 1/2 – 1 in piece of ginger peeled and grated
 - 2-4 tsp of black tea depending on strength desired
 - 1-2 tsp of sugar (cane sugar, coconut sugar)
 - pinch of cardamom
1. On high heat, bring water and ginger to a boil.
 2. Boil until ginger is fragrant.
 3. Add black tea, milk, and sugar
 4. Bring mixture to a boil 3 times
 5. After the 2nd boil, add the cardamom
 6. Cover and let sit for a few minutes
 7. Strain into a cup and enjoy!



***Note:** Boiling the milk improves its digestibility. You can substitute a plant-based milk by using 1/4 C water to 1 3/4 C almond milk.*

Kitchari

- 1-2 tbsp ghee
 - 1 C yellow split mung beans, rinsed 3 times/drained
 - 1/2 C white basmati rice, rinsed 3 times/drained
 - 1/2 tsp black mustard seeds
 - 1/2 tsp cumin seeds
 - 1 tsp salt
 - pinch of hing
 - 2 tsp of Vata, Pitta, or Kapha churna
 - 1 1/2 inches of ginger peeled and finely chopped
 - 4-6 cups water
1. Heat ghee in a heavy-bottomed sauce pan.
 2. Fry the mustard and cumin seeds until they pop.
 3. Stir in the mung dal, hing, and salt.
 4. Stir in the rice, churna, and ginger.
 5. Add in water and bring to a boil over high heat.
 6. Turn down and cover
 7. Let simmer until moisture is absorbed.

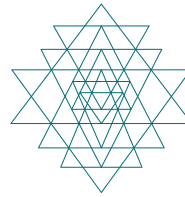


***Note:** For high pitta, you can substitute coriander seeds for mustard seeds and omit ginger. If using Vata churna, you can omit hing.*





***Note:** Two greens recipes follow – either can be used depending on what green is most available and in season.*



Swiss Chard with Fennel & Onions

- 4-6 C swiss chard, washed and chopped
- 1/2-1 tbsp ghee
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1/2-1 tbsp fennel seed
- salt and pepper to taste
- water

1. Heat ghee in a large frying pan.
2. Roast fennel seeds until aroma comes forward.
3. Add onions and sauté until translucent.
4. Add chopped chard and begin to steam.
5. Add some extra water if needed.
6. Continue to toss until cooked down.
7. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Kale & Golden Raisins

- 4-6 C kale, washed and chopped
- 1/2-1 tbsp ghee
- 1 tsp raw sugar (optional)
- 1/2 tbsp Vata churna
- salt to taste
- 2-4 tbsp of golden raisins (optional)

1. Wash and chop greens into ribbons or small chop
2. Remove stems if tough
3. Drain to remove most of the water
4. Heat ghee or oil in pan
5. Add vata churna and fry for 5-10 sec.
6. Add greens and two small pinches of salt.
7. Stir/toss spices and oil into greens.
8. Cover and cook slowly on medium low heat
9. Continue until greens are wilted.
10. Add golden raisins.
11. Adjust salt and add sugar if desired.



***Note:** If adding raisins, soak in hot water for 20 minutes and add when greens are nearly done.*





Lime Ginger Nectar

- 3/4 C ginger juice
- 1 1/2 C lime juice
- 2 1/4 C raw honey
- Reduce portions for a smaller quantity

CCF(G) Tea

- 1 tsp cumin seed
- 1 tsp coriander seed
- 1 tsp fennel seed
- 1 tsp fresh grated ginger for more heat
- 2 C water

Roasted Sweet Potatoes

1. Peel and wash sweet potatoes
2. Chop into 1 in cubes
3. Toss with ghee or olive oil
4. Coat with salt and pepper or salt and one churna
5. Place on a cookie sheet or roasting pan
6. Roast at 400F for 10 min
7. Check for tenderness
8. Toss the potatoes
9. Continue baking for 10 min
10. Repeat 7-9 until tender

Churna Recipes

Vata Churna

- 1 tbsp ground turmeric
- 1 tbsp ground ginger
- 1/2 tbsp ground fenugreek
- 1/2 tbsp ground cumin
- 1/16 tsp hing

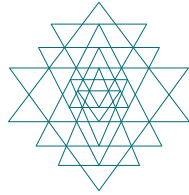
Kapha Churna

- 1 1/2 tbsp turmeric
- 1 tbsp ginger
- 1/2 tbsp cumin
- 1/2 tbsp coriander
- 1/4 tbsp black pepper
- 1/4 tbsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tbsp garlic powder (or fresh garlic)

Pitta Churna

- 1 tbsp coriander
- 1 tbsp turmeric
- 1/2 tbsp fennel
- 1/2 tbsp ginger
- 1/4 tbsp cumin
- 1/4 tbsp cinnamon





Additional Resources

- [Yogic Meal Blessing Article](#)
- [Yogic Meal Blessing Audio](#)
- [Annapurna Stotram Prayer Audio](#)
- [Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra Article](#)
- [Ayurvedic Abbie Podcast: An Ayurvedic Dive Into Digestion](#)
- [Banyan Botanicals Ayurvedic Food Combining Chart](#)

