

## THE SIX AYURVEDIC TASTES

Instead of looking at the individual components of foods—ie: carbohydrates, protein, fats, and calories—as Western-based nutrition does, Ayurveda identifies six “tastes” of foods: **sweet**, **sour**, **salty**, **bitter**, **pungent**, and **astringent**. Each taste has specific effects on the three doshas (Vata, Pitta, and Kapha). By including all six tastes in each meal we satisfy our nutritional and dietary needs without the need to count calories or consult a manual.

### THE SWEET TASTE :: EARTH + WATER

...is heavy, moist, and cool. This increases Kapha and decreases Vata and Pitta. Examples are nuts, grains, oils, and most dairy.

### THE SOUR TASTE :: FIRE + EARTH

...is heavy, moist, and hot. This increases Pitta and Kapha and decreases Vata. Examples are pickles and fermented foods such as yogurt.

### THE SALTY TASTE :: FIRE + WATER

...is heavy, moist, and hot. This increases Pitta and Kapha and decreases Vata. Examples are sea salt, sea vegetables and seafood.

### THE PUNGENT TASTE :: FIRE + AIR

...is light, dry, and hot. This increases Pitta and Vata and decreases Kapha. Examples are chili peppers, ginger, and black pepper.

### THE ASTRINGENT TASTE :: EARTH + AIR

...is dry and cool. This increases Vata and decreases Pitta and Kapha. Examples are most beans, cranberries, and pomegranates.

### THE BITTER TASTE :: AIR + ETHER

...is light, dry, and cool. This increases Vata and decreases Pitta and Kapha. Examples are leafy greens and herbs such as goldenseal.



## THE KAPHA FOOD PROGRAM

### Qualities to Reduce:

cold, moist, heavy

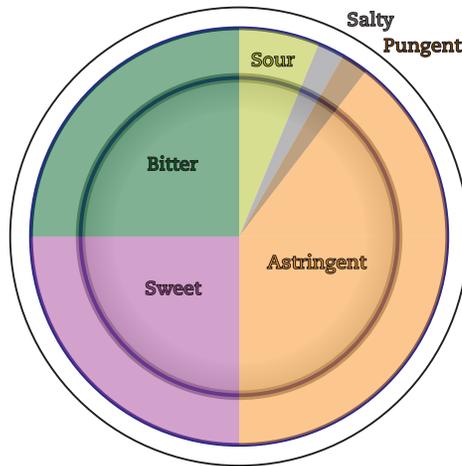
### Best Tastes:

bitter, pungent, astringent

### Most Aggravating Tastes:

sweet, sour, salty

## THE KAPHA DINNER PLATE



## Katrina Johnson

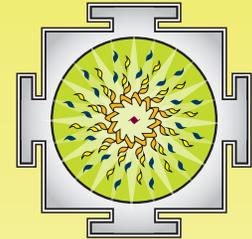
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# Prana mama



## Kapha Food Program

a holistic wellness practice  
steeped in the timeless traditions  
of Ayurveda





# FOOD LIST FOR KAPHA

## GRAINS

Toasted breads are very good, as they are drier.

**Best:**\* amaranth, barley, basmati rice, buckwheat, corn flour, quinoa

**Small Amounts:**\* millet, rye

**Minimize:**\* oats, long and short grain

## DAIRY

It is best to use raw or organic milk. Milk should be taken warm with a small amount of spices such as ginger and cardamom.

**Best:**\* goat milk, skim milk, soy milk

**Small Amounts:**\* none

**Minimize:**\* butter, buttermilk, cheese, cream, cottage cheese, ice cream, kefir, sour cream, yogurt

## SWEETENERS

Overuse of any sweetener will eventually cause an imbalance.

**Best:**\* raw honey only (that is more than six months old)

**Small Amounts:**\* none

**Minimize:**\* fructose, maple syrup, molasses, raw sugar, white and brown sugar

## NUTS AND SEEDS

These should be eaten lightly dry-roasted to assist digestion and be only very lightly salted, if at all. Nut butters, except for peanut, may also be eaten.

**Best:**\* pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds

**Small Amounts:**\* sesame seeds

**Minimize:**\* almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, coconut, filberts, lotus seeds, macadamia nuts, pecans, pistachio, peanuts, walnuts

## CONDIMENTS

Condiments can be used to add one of the tastes to a meal or to balance out any heating or cooling qualities of a dish.

**Best:**\* catsup, vinegar

**Small Amounts:**\* none

**Minimize:**\* mayonnaise, salt

## OILS

Use all oils in small amounts only. Even the best oils, if overused, will aggravate kapha.

**Best:**\* corn, flaxseed, mustard, safflower, soy, sunflower

**Small Amounts:**\* none

**Minimize:**\* almond, avocado, castor, coconut, olive, peanut, sesame

## FRUITS

Dried and astringent fruits are typically best for Kaphas.

**Best:**\* dried fruits as they are not too sweet, apples, cherries, cranberries, grapefruit, pomegranate, prunes, raisins

**Small Amounts:**\* apricots, lemon, lime, papaya, pineapple

**Minimize:**\* sweet fruits, avocado, bananas, berries (raspberry, blackberry, blueberry, strawberry), cantaloupe, coconut, dates, figs, grapes, mango, melons, pineapple, oranges, peaches, pears, persimmons, plums, tangerines, watermelon

## VEGETABLES

Vegetables are best eaten raw during the summer and cooked during the rest of the year as well as during times of digestive difficulty. In general, vegetables are good and even the "Minimize" group, if eaten in small amounts, will cause no harm.

**Best:**\* alfalfa sprouts, artichoke, asparagus, green beans, bell peppers, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, carrots, celery, chilies, cilantro, corn, kale, lettuce, and other leafy greens, mustard greens, onions, parsley, peas, hot peppers, potatoes, radish, seaweed, spinach, rutabagas/turnips

**Small Amounts:**\* mushrooms, tomatoes

**Minimize:**\* beets, cucumber, eggplant, okra, all squash, sweet potatoes, water chestnuts, zucchini

## MEATS

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

**Best:**\* chicken or turkey (dark meat only), fresh water fish, rabbit

**Small Amounts:**\* eggs

**Minimize:**\* beef, duck, lamb, pork, seafood, shellfish, venison

## SPICES

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

**Best:**\* anise, basil, bay leaf, black pepper, calamus, chamomile, caraway, cardamom, catnip, cayenne, cinnamon, cloves, coriander, cumin, dill, fennel, fenugreek, garlic, ginger, horseradish, hyssop, marjoram, mustard, nutmeg, oregano, peppermint, poppy seeds, rosemary, saffron, sage, spearmint, star anise, thyme, turmeric. Hot spices are best. Any spice not listed is probably fine.

**Small Amounts:**\* none

**Minimize:**\* salt

## LEGUMES

Use legumes that have been soaked for as long as possible prior to cooking.

**Best:**\* mung beans, red lentils, soybeans (tofu and soy milk), split peas

**Small Amounts:**\* aduki beans, black gram, black beans, fava beans, kidney beans, lima beans, pinto beans

**Minimize:**\* black lentils, chickpeas

## BEVERAGES

These are best taken at room temperature or warm and never ice cold.

**Best:**\* two glasses of spring water per day in cool weather and three in hot weather unless doing extremely vigorous exercise and sweating. Herb teas (spicy and bitter), cranberry juice, green vegetable juices, wheat grass juice.

**Small Amounts:**\* carbonated mineral water, coffee, tea

**Minimize:**\* apple juice, carrot juice, orange juice, soft drinks



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

\*"Small Amounts" Foods 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. Overreliance on these foods can cause imbalance.

\* "Minimize" Foods should be eaten only on rare occasions, ie: once each month. They can significantly disturb Pitta dosha.