

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 PITTA FOOD PROGRAM

Qualities to Reduce:

hot, light, dry

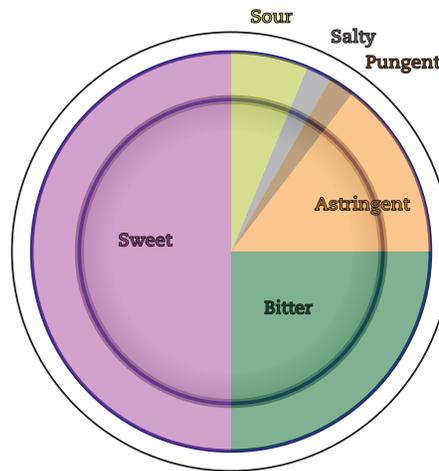
Best Taste:

sweet, bitter, astringent

Most Aggravating Tastes:

salty, pungent, sour

THE PITTA DINNER PLATE



Katrina Johnson

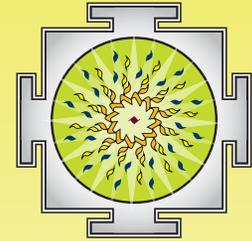
Ayurvedic Health Practitioner

503.718.8211

info@pranamama.biz

pranamama.biz

Prana mama



Pitta Food Program

a holistic wellness practice
steeped in the timeless traditions
of Ayurveda





FOOD LIST FOR PITTA

GRAINS

It is best to eat these as a cooked grain or as an unyeasted bread. Small amounts of yeast breads are all right, however. Grains should make up a large portion of the diet.

Best:* barley, white basmati rice, millet, oats, white rice, wheat, whole wheat

Small Amounts:* brown rice (only in acute pitta conditions, otherwise it can be used often)

Minimize:* buckwheat, corn flour

DAIRY

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

Best:* unsalted butter, cottage cheese, cream cheese, ghee, milk

Small Amounts:* hard, non-salted cheeses

Minimize:* buttermilk, salted cheeses, sour cream, kefir, cultured milks, yogurt

SWEETENERS

Overuse of any sweetener will eventually cause an imbalance.

Best:* maltose, maple syrup, rice syrup

Small Amounts:* dextrose, fructose, honey, table sugar

Minimize:* molasses, raw 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:* coconut, sunflower, pumpkin seeds

Small Amounts:* pinon nuts, sesame seeds

Minimize:* almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pistachio, peanuts, and any other nut not mentioned

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:* carob sweetened with the "Best" sweeteners noted above

Small Amounts:* mayonnaise, sweet mustards

Minimize:* chocolate, salt, vinegar

OILS

Healthy oils are very important and should be used abundantly if the skin is dry. They alleviate dryness and are generally heavy and nourishing.

Best:* Ghee, olive oil

Small Amounts:* avocado, corn, coconut, soy, sunflower

Minimize:* almond, castor, flaxseed, margarine, mustard, peanut, safflower, sesame, canola

FRUITS

Sweet and ripe fruits are best. Avoid sour fruit.

Best:* apples, avocados, blackberries, blueberries, cantaloupe, coconut, cranberries, dates, dried fruit, figs, grapes, lemons, limes, nectarines, pineapple, prunes, raisins, raspberries, strawberries

Small Amounts:* apricots, bananas (very ripe only), cherries, grapefruit, oranges, pineapple

Minimize:* All sour fruits, such as sour oranges (mandarin), sour pineapple, sour plums, papaya, olives, tangerines, and all unripe fruit

VEGETABLES

Vegetables are best eaten fresh. You may eat large amounts. Eat them cooked in the winter or if digestion is weak. Eat them raw in the summer if your digestion is strong. Fresh green vegetable juices are very good. Those with arthritis should avoid all nightshades.

Best:* alfalfa sprouts, artichoke, asparagus, bean sprouts, bell peppers, bitter melon, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, cilantro, cress, cucumber, green peppers, kale, leafy greens, lettuce, mushrooms, onions (well cooked), peas, pumpkin, seaweed, squash, zucchini

Small Amounts:* avocado, beets, carrots, corn, eggplant, garlic (well cooked), parsley, potatoes, spinach, sweet potatoes, vine-ripened tomatoes

Minimize:* chilies, hot peppers, mustard greens, onion (raw), radishes, tomato paste, tomato

MEATS

If you choose to eat meat, limit consumption to 2–3 times per week, and eat it at lunch.

Best:* chicken, egg whites, fresh water fish (trout), turkey

Small Amounts:* beef, duck, egg yolk, lamb, pork, sea fish, venison, any other red meat

Minimize:* none

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 pitta, food should be spiced mild to moderate and never very hot or bland.

Best:* cardamom, catnip, chamomile, coconut, coriander, dill, fennel, lemon verbena, peppermint, saffron, spearmint, turmeric

Small Amounts:* basil, bay leaf, black pepper, caraway, cinnamon, cumin, ginger (fresh), oregano, rosemary, thyme

Minimize:* anise, asafoetida, calamus, Cayenne pepper, cloves, fenugreek, garlic (raw), ginger (dry), horseradish, hyssop, marjoram, mustard seeds, nutmeg, poppy seeds, sage, star anise

LEGUMES

Use legumes that have been soaked for as long as possible prior to cooking. Cook legumes with hing to aid digestion.

Best:* black lentils, chickpeas, mung beans, split peas, soybeans (soy products), tofu

Small Amounts:* aduki beans, kidney beans, navy beans, pinto beans

Minimize:* red and yellow lentils

BEVERAGES

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

Best:* Bitter and astringent herb teas such as alfalfa, chicory, dandelion, hibiscus, and strawberry leaf. Milk, wheat grass juice. Pitta tea.

Small Amounts:* Chai tea or black tea, fruit juice diluted with one-half water

Minimize:* alcohol, carbonated water, coffee, sweet fruit juices, spicy herb teas, soft drinks, tomato juice



*"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.