

## AYURVEDA HEALTH CARE CENTER

# **PITTA** FOOD PROGRAM



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### **Basic Principles**

Qualities to reduce: Hot, light, dry Best: Sweet, bitter, astringent Avoid: Pungent (hot), sour, salty

### GRAINS

It is best to eat these as a cooked grain or an unyeasted bread. Small amounts of yeast breads are all right however. Grains should make 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 of-

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Avoid: Buckwheat, corn flour

### DAIRY

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

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

**Small Amounts:** Hard, non-salted cheeses **Avoid:** Buttermilk, salted cheeses, sour cream, kefir, cultured milks, yogurt

### **SWEETENERS**

**Best:** Maltose, maple syrup, rice syrup **Small Amounts:** Dextrose, fructose, honey, table sugar **Avoid:** Molasses, raw sugar

#### OILS

**Best:** Ghee, olive oil **Small Amounts:** Avocado, canola, corn, coconut, soy, sunflower **Avoid:** Almond, castor, flaxseed, margarine, mustard, peanut, safflower, sesame

### 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

**Avoid:** All <u>sour</u> 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, cauli-flower, celery, cilantro, cress, cucumber, green peppers, kale, leafy greens, lettuce, mushrooms, onions (well cooked), peas, pumpkin, seaweed, squash, zucchini **Small Amounts:** Avocado, beets, carrots,

Small Amounts: Avocado, beets, carrots, corn, eggplant, garlic (well cooked), parsley, potatoes, spinach, sweet potatoes, vineripened tomatoes

**Avoid:** Chilies, hot peppers, mustard greens, onion (raw), radishes, tomato paste, tomato sauce and any hot or pungent vegetable

### NUTS AND SEEDS

**Best:** Coconut, sunflower, pumpkin seeds **Small Amounts:** Piňon nuts, sesame seeds **Avoid:** Almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pistachio, peanuts, and any other nut not mentioned

#### MEATS

If you choose to eat meat, limit consumption to 2-3 times per week.

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

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

#### **LEGUMES**

**Best:** Black lentils, chickpeas, mung beans, split peas, soybeans (soy products), tofu **Small Amounts:** Aduki beans, kidney beans, navy beans, pinto beans **Avoid:** Red and yellow lentils

### 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 *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

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

### CONDIMENTS

**Best:** Carob sweetened with the best sweeteners noted above

**Small Amounts:** Mayonnaise, sweet mustards **Avoid:** Chocolate, salt, vinegar

### BEVERAGES

**Best:** Five cups of water per day. Bitter and astringent herb teas such as alfalfa, chicory, dandelion, hibiscus, and strawberry leaf. These can be found in grain beverages such as Sipp, Pero, Inka and Cafix. Milk, wheat grass juice. Try the Pitta tea available at the front desk.

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

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

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← 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.

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★ 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.

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### 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.