

Vata- Kapha Comprehensive Purification Diet

THIS DIET IS TO BE FOLLOWED FOR THE NEXT 3-4 WEEKS.

Balancing the Doshas

The purpose of this diet is twofold. First, this diet will help to balance the functioning of all three doshas, with an emphasis on the doshas **VATA and KAPHA**.

Strengthening digestion

Secondly, this diet will enable the body to recover balanced digestive capability. This allows the body to better digest the foods you eat, as well as begin to metabolize and eliminate deposits of wastes and impurities that may be lodged deep in the tissues. These wastes and toxins are called “ama” in Ayurvedic terminology, and are considered to be a major contributing factor in many illnesses.

Eliminating Ama

Ama is formed when the food we eat is not properly digested; i.e. it is not fully broken down into the finest molecules of protein, carbohydrate and fat. Rather, these large, complex molecules may be absorbed from the gut into the bloodstream and circulate into the tissues, getting lodged in the tiny capillaries, or in the spaces between or within cells or cell membranes. These tiny blockages build up over time and can cause impaired cellular activity, slowed metabolism and weight gain, reduced circulation, stiffness, aging and if the immune system becomes involved, inflammation and pain may result (such as in arthritis and various autoimmune diseases.)

Promoting Ojas

This dietary program, with the help of the accompanying herbal program, will allow your body to begin to digest food more completely. Following the program usually results not only in improved digestive symptoms, but also in better energy, greater mental clarity, better sleep, greater sense of well being, improved symptoms in other health areas and weight loss if needed. This is the result of proper and complete digestion of the food, which Ayurveda describes results in the formation of “ojas”, the most refined product of digestion. Ojas supports youthfulness, immunity, strength and stamina, and the experience of bliss in the mind-body system.

Subjective Experiences

In the first week, you may not feel better yet, and in fact may feel some fatigue, transient digestive symptoms, or moodiness as impurities and wastes begin to be eliminated from your system. Keep in mind that this is a healing and recovery process, and that takes some energy from the body initially. Usually by the end of the second week, individuals begin to feel the benefits of the cleansing process, with increase in lightness, energy, clarity and well being. **If you are uncomfortable at any time during this program, or have questions about the program, please contact your health practitioner.**

I. MAIN PRINCIPLES OF THIS BALANCING DIET

In order to eliminate ama and prevent its further accumulation:

1. Food must be freshly prepared, preferably in your own home.
2. Do not use frozen or canned foods. Do not microwave your food or drinks.
3. Do not consume any leftovers (i.e. food that has been cooked and then refrigerated. This includes most deli foods, such as pasta salad, potato salad, etc.)
4. Use organically grown foods as much as possible.

II. ITEMS TO AVOID:

Please do not use any of the following at any time during this 3-4 week program:

- No red meat (beef, pork, lamb, etc.)
- No oily or heavy food preparations such as fried foods, cream sauces or heavy desserts.

Vegetables

- No raw vegetables or salads.

Spices

- No hot spices such as chilies, hot peppers or jalepeno.

Carbohydrates

- No pizza, bread (made with yeast, sourdough or baking soda/powder), cookies, candy, chocolate, cocoa, pastries or baked goods.

Dairy

- No curdled milk products such as yogurt (except lassi,) cheese, cottage cheese or sour cream.
- No butter, cream, ice cream, frozen yogurt or any other frozen desserts.

Fruits

- No jam or dried fruits except soaked figs.

Drinks

- No cold water or ice.
- No soft drinks or carbonated beverages or carbonated water.
- No alcohol.
- No caffeinated drinks (coffee, tea or colas.)
- No bottled, packaged, reconstituted or canned fruit or vegetable juices.
- You may juice your own fresh vegetable or fruit juices at home. Use the fruits or vegetables recommended in your diet program. **Fresh homemade juices are highly recommended** for their purifying and nourishing effects. **Drink on empty stomach** in the early morning or late afternoon for best results.

Condiments

- No vinegar or vinegar-containing substances such as catsup, mustard, pickles, olives, relishes, etc.

General

- Avoid exposure to cold, such as cold baths or showers, drafts, and sudden changes in temperature.
- Limit exercise to light activities such as easy walking, light weights stretching, yoga, etc.

III. MAINTENANCE PHASE

The following list highlights the most important principles of the Comprehensive Purification Diet for you to continue after the initial 3 to 4 weeks. This will help maintain and further enhance the good results you have experienced so far:

GENERAL POINTS

1. Eat mainly fresh, warm foods. Avoid leftovers, canned, bottled, and processed foods.
2. Prepare your food at home as much as possible. Limit restaurant meals to once or twice a week.
3. Your diet should mainly consist of cooked vegetables, grains, legumes, fruits, nuts, seeds and wholesome fresh ingredients.
4. Avoid cheese and red meat. Strictly avoid cheese and other curdled products such as sour cream, yogurt and cottage cheese in the evening.
5. Eat your main meal at noon and a lighter meal in the evening- by 7:30 PM.
6. Avoid alcohol, caffeine, and sugar-based products (cakes, cookies, etc.) except small servings as an occasional “treat” if you strongly desire them.
7. Also continue to avoid red meat, cheese, store-bought yogurt, cold drinks, leftovers, ice cream, and frozen yogurt.
8. If at some point you begin to lose the benefits gained on the initial phase of the diet, it is recommended to return to it for one week or longer to promote the natural healing and re-balancing of your body.

BALANCING POINTS FOR VATA and KAPHA

Key Points: Exercise; Legumes; Vegetarian diet; Early to rise

1. Eat a Kapha pacifying diet, high in legumes such as lentils and dahls.
2. Eat proportionately more quantity of vegetables and less quantity of grains.
3. Get a lot of exercise. This is critical for you to attain and maintain a healthy weight and metabolism.
4. Minimize fats and sugars in your diet.
5. Favor warm, cooked fresh foods. Avoid cold drinks and iced desserts.
6. Minimize dairy products. Low-fat milk boiled with a pinch of ginger or turmeric is fine.
7. A vegetarian diet will be very helpful to you in maintaining a healthy weight and good digestion. Avoid strictly red meat and cheese.
8. Getting up by 6 AM will be very helpful for promoting good energy and motivation during the day.
9. Stay active and be with people. Do not entertain or “brood” over negative events or situations. Make “let go and move on” be your motto. Choose to be your cheerful self.
10. Practice the Transcendental Meditation Program for more resistance to stress and to enliven your body’s healing response. Over 500 published scientific studies on the TM Program document many health benefits.

SAMPLE MENU FOR COMPREHENSIVE PURIFICATION DIET- VATA and KAPHA

Here is a sample menu plan for your individualized diet program. Following this menu is a list of foods from which to choose specific food items and details regarding ideal preparation and selection from the grocery store.

Breakfast

Begin the day with a sweet apple or pear cooked in water with raisins and a pinch of cinnamon. (This enhances ojas, supports good digestion and elimination, and is light and refreshing.)

If still hungry, choose from the following for a second course:

1. Toasted chapati (or other flatbread) spread with:
 - a. Raw honey and cinnamon
 - b. Fresh homemade pesto (made of grated fresh garlic cloves, fresh basil, olive oil, chopped pecan or walnuts, Vata or Kapha Churna. **(Vata or Kapha Spice Mix)**)
 - c. Olive oil with Vata or Kapha Churna **(Vata or Kapha Spice Mix)**
2. Barley soup (cook 1/2 cup barley in 3-4 cups water for about 30 minutes.) Add spices and fresh green herbs (see spice list next page) near end of cooking.
3. Kanji drink
 - Kanji Recipe:
Boil one handful of rinsed basmati rice in 3 qts. of water for about 1 hour.
Spice with 1/2 tsp. rock salt, pinch of black pepper, 1 tsp. grated fresh ginger.
Then cook a little more (10 minutes.)
Strain it and drink the liquid portion.
Both kanji and cracked wheat broth can be kept warm in a thermos and drunk between meals if hungry.
4. Steamed cous cous with olive oil and vata churnam **(Vata Spice Mix)**

Lunch

Vegetables

- Choose 1-3 vegetables from your list and steam. Then drizzle with spices sautéed in 1-2 tsp. of your recommended oil
- Also have one cup of steamed green leafy vegetables either at lunch or at dinner (ideally pureed with a small amount of hot water to help release the nutrients)

Grains

- Choose a grain from your list and boil it in water. (Boil approximately 1/3 cup grain per person in twice as much water until cooked.)

High Protein Food

- Select 1-2 high protein items from your list.
- Lassi: as recommended below
- Chapati: toasted and spread with ghee (alternative: olive oil) if desired.

Late Afternoon Snack

Choose one only.

- Raisins
- Handful of sweet dark or red grapes or freshly squeezed juice of grapes
- Kanji drink (see recipe above)
- Toasted chapati with olive oil and vata churna

Dinner

Vegetables

- Same as lunch,
- but avoid (1) any cabbage-type vegetables and (2) any root vegetables (i.e. beets, potatoes, sweet potatoes, etc.)

Grains

- 1 serving of toasted flatbread

High Protein Food

- soupy dahl or lentil soup

Dessert

- Cooked fruit OR fruit crisp (homemade) OR fresh or dried fruits

Drinks

The following drinks aid digestion and help clear ama from the body. They also help to eliminate cravings. The grain-based drinks are very nourishing and help curb excess hunger.

•Lassi

Lassi should be made from homemade yogurt made the night before and not refrigerated.

Dilute 1 part yogurt with 4 parts water.

Lassi should be digestive or plain. (see attached recipes.)

- Drink hot or warm water throughout the day. Ideally, boil spring water for 10 minutes in the morning and keep it in a thermos. Drink at least 2-3 sips, or more according to thirst, about every half-hour.
- Grain beverage: Cook a handful of rinsed cracked wheat or basmati rice in 3 qts. of water 1 hour or more until it is very well cooked. Strain it and drink the liquid portion during the day between meals as often as you like.

FOOD ITEMS FOR COMPREHENSIVE PURIFICATION DIET-VATA and KAPHA

Vegetables

- Steam or cook in a small amount of water. Spice your vegetables at each meal to enhance digestion and assimilation. See instructions below.
- **Favor:** Asparagus, zucchini, fennel, broccoli, artichokes, cucumber, yellow squash, okra, red or green chard.
- All others are acceptable *except* for tomatoes, spinach, eggplant, potatoes, beets, sweet potato and other root vegetables.
- **Include** one cup of green, leafy cooked vegetables every day.
- **Strictly avoid** salads, raw vegetables (except freshly juiced,) potatoes, cauliflower, brussel sprouts.

6.40

Grains

- All grains should be cooked in water during this time, which makes them lighter and easier to digest. Processing grains by baking with yeast, baking soda or other leavening agents makes the grain heavier and more difficult to digest.
- Barley, millet, buckwheat, rye, oats, kashi, couscous, bulgur wheat and quinoa are best.
 - *Have rice and pasta no more than 1-2 times per week. Favor pasta made of quinoa (available in most health food stores and some grocery stores,) or whole wheat, and use only Basmati, Jasmine or Texmati rice*
- Whole wheat or spelt chapatis or tortillas and crackers made without yeast or baking soda are acceptable. Toast or dry fry chapatis or tortillas on a skillet before eating

High Protein Foods

- Legumes: Favor lentils and dahls. All dried beans and peas are acceptable. Avoid any legumes that give you digestive symptoms such as flatulence upon eating.
- Soy: Avoid processed soy products such as tofu, tempeh, textured soy protein, soy dogs and burgers, etc.
- soy milk (only if you normally include it in your diet); boil with cinnamon or ginger and drink while still warm
- Nuts/seeds: Unprocessed, without added oil or salt. No nut butters at this time.
 - a. modest portions of sunflower, sesame and pumpkin seeds, pecans and walnuts
 - b. Nuts are inherently kapha increasing, so they should be consumed in small amounts only.
- Non-vegetarian: chicken (Have only if strongly desired. A vegetarian diet is recommended during this time. Servings should be freshly cooked, warm and not processed.)
- *Kitcheri*: Recipe: 2 parts mung dahl and 1 part barley, well-cooked in a large amount (about 8 parts) of water to form a soupy consistency. For about four servings, use 1/2 cup dahl and 1/4 cup barley in 4 cups water.

Oils

- All oils are inherently kapha increasing and should be used sparingly.
 - Use sesame oil or olive oil
- Important:** Use only extra virgin, cold pressed, **organic** oils, since refined oils are damaging to the body. (They contain trans fatty acids and other toxic residues from the refining process.)

Dairy Products

- Please refer to the handout entitled “*About Milk*” for a detailed explanation of the proper use of dairy products.
- Milk: organic skim milk; boil with a pinch of ginger, cardamom or turmeric and drink warm

Fruits

- Fresh Fruits: Apples, pears, persimmon, papaya, sweet grapes, plums, kiwi, apricot, sweet oranges, guava, pomegranate, cranberries.
- Dry fruits: Raisins, prunes, figs. (Soak in water overnight or until soft before eating.)

Spices

- Spice your food at each meal. This helps the digestive process and, of course, adds flavor.
- All spices and fresh green herbs except salt. Favor especially ginger, cumin, black pepper, mustard seeds, oregano, sage, thyme, mint, basil, turmeric, cinnamon and cloves.
- Vata and Kapha Churna (**Vata and Kapha Spice Mix**)
- Salt: Use sparingly. Preferably use rock salt, such as the brand “Real Salt.”
- **To spice your vegetables:** After steaming the vegetables, you may add a mixture of 1-2 teaspoons of the prescribed oil sautéed with spices. To prepare, heat 1-2 tsp. oil/ghee over medium low heat. First add any seeds (like cumin) and fry gently until golden brown, then add any of the powdered spices listed above. Pour this mixture over the vegetables, adding fresh herbs such as parsley or cilantro at the very end.

Sugar

- Minimize sugars.
- You may use rock sugar or raw honey in small quantity. (Rock sugar is available in Indian grocery stores.)
- Do not cook with honey or heat honey above 120 degrees.