

Healthy Meal Plan for All Imbalances

Breakfast: Do not skip breakfast.

- Even if you are not hungry, at least have stewed fruit, for example apples, raisins, figs, pears; or a baked apple. to start your day. This provides easily digestible nutrition and helps increase your appetite for lunch.
- If you are hungry, also have toast or flat bread (such as tortilla) with *ghee* or olive oil, or a bowl of cooked whole-grain cereal.
- If you have a strong appetite and tend to get hungry well before lunchtime, make your cereal with milk or soy milk and add ground nuts for extra protein.

Lunch: Lunch should be your main meal of the day.

- Include 1-2 cups of freshly cooked organic vegetables, cooked whole grains and adequate protein.
- At lunch you may eat a variety of protein-rich foods. Vegetarian sources would include lentils; chickpeas or other legumes; fresh cheese, nuts/seeds, tofu, edamame, or other soy products.
- Nonvegetarian sources would include meat, poultry, fish or seafood.
- At lunch you may also eat curdled foods such as cheese, cottage cheese, or yogurt (which is best taken in the form of *lassi*).
- Your lunch should consist mainly of cooked foods, though you may have a small salad on the side if you wish.

Afternoon Snack: Have fresh fruit, dried fruits, nuts, unleavened crackers, boiled warm milk or soy milk.

Dinner: Favor light, easy-to-digest foods such as cooked grains, cooked vegetables, and soups, including legume soups such as lentils.

- Avoid nonvegetarian foods (i.e., poultry, meat, fish) and cheese at the evening meal.

Bedtime Snack (if hungry): Try warm milk or soy milk boiled with a pinch of cinnamon, cardamom, or ginger, or hot cereal made with plenty of water.

Tips on Food Selection and Preparation for All Dosha Types

General: Cook your own food as often as you can.

- Select fresh, in-season fruits and vegetables and certified organic foods whenever possible.
- Avoid genetically engineered foods, as nature's intelligence has been altered in them at a fundamental level.

Vegetables: Cook in a small amount of water after sautéing with spices and a little olive oil, or steam and then add sautéed spices.

Oils: Use only extra-virgin, cold-pressed, organic oils, since refined oils promote inflammation and are damaging to the body. They often contain trans-fatty acids, pesticides, and other toxic residues from the refining process.

Spices: Spice your food at each meal. This helps your digestion and reduces gas, provides antioxidant support, helps balance your doshas and, of course, makes your food taste delicious.

- After steaming the vegetables, you may add the recommended oil or ghee sautéed with spices.
- To prepare, heat 1 to 2 teaspoons of oil/ghee over medium-low heat.
- First add any seeds (like cumin) and fry gently until golden brown.
- Then add any of the recommended powdered spices.
- Pour this mixture over the vegetables, adding fresh herbs such as parsley or cilantro and salt at the very end.

Sugar and salt: Minimize sugar and salt.

Fruit: Soak dried fruits in water until they are soft. Eat sweet, juicy fruits as between-meal snacks.

Grains: Cook your grains with up to 1 teaspoon of ghee or olive oil per serving to balance their inherently drying effect on the body.

Nuts and seeds: Keep them natural, without added oil or salt.

- Ideally soak overnight in water and eat them, or cook with the softened nuts for better digestion and more balancing effect.
- Alternatively, bake or toast them until lightly browned.

Legumes: Soak the dried beans, peas, or dahl overnight or all day in room-temperature water.

- Pour off the water and use fresh water to cook them in. This makes the beans less gas producing and also saves you cooking time.

Dairy: Milk should be organic and ideally unhomogenized (if you can get it); bring to a boil and drink while still warm or allow to cool to room temperature.

- Add a pinch of cardamom or cinnamon to help digestion and to reduce any tendency for sinus congestion from drinking milk.
- To ensure good digestion of the milk, never drink milk with a full meal, or anything that is salty or sour, including most fruits.
- Generally, it is best to drink milk on its own or with sweet dried fruits (raisins, dates, figs), cereals, breads, or cooked grains.
- Cheese, yogurt (best taken as *lassi*), sour cream, and anything curdled (including soy cheese, rice cheese, and soy yogurt) should be eaten at lunchtime only.
- Curdled foods are too heavy to digest properly in the evening or at breakfast.

Nonvegetarian foods: Items should be freshly cooked, warm, and not processed or fried. These are best taken at lunch and avoided at dinner.