Foods That Benefit Each Body System

Holistic nutrition takes into account that our emotions affect the function of our organs, in addition to our genetic pre-dispositions. When our organs are not functioning optimally, it is beneficial to eat foods that are known to enhance the function of that organ. On a daily basis, we should eat a variety of foods as this will keep ALL our organs functioning optimally.

In Chinese Medicine, each of the 5 elements has a “yin” and a “yang” organ. The “yin” organ has “female” energy. They are the organs that need to function continuously for our survival; for example, the Heart needs to be functioning all the time or we will die. The “yang” organ has “male” energy and only functions when it is required; for example, the Stomach only functions when we eat.

In other forms of therapy we can see the beneficial effects on our organs. For example, there is “Sound Therapy” and “Light Therapy”. These therapies take into account that certain “sounds” or “colors” are also very therapeutic to the organs and bodily functions. This is why “holistic” practitioners see the benefit of healing the “mind, body, spirit”.

Food And the 5 Elements

Many foods can be more than one element at a time. It is common for some foods to have two simultaneous flavours. For example, the Chinese call vinegar "bitter wine." Vinegar tastes both sour and bitter.

Others can be assigned to different elements based on how they are cooked. For example, raw onion is the metal element because of its pungency whereas cooked onion is very sweet and becomes earthy. Or they may change at different states of growth so that when it is unripe versus when it is ripe. For example, tomatoes when green are quite sour and therefore belong more to the wood element and when they are ripe, belong to the fire element. When they are very sweet, they become earthier.

The style of cooking also influences the five elements. Refer to the chart on the following page to see which type of cooking is beneficial for each element. Although different types of cooking may help to balance each element, it’s more the “ingredients” that are added to the cooking method that is important to consider when looking to balance the 5 elements. For example, a soup will have some “water” energy, but it could also have “wood” energy if you add something like bamboo shoots to it or other foods that have “wood” energy.
Time of Day and Eating

An important thing to consider when eating is that each meridian or organ has a “peak” time of day where it is functioning optimally. Since the “stomach” meridian is at its peak function time from 7-9am, it is important to eat high protein foods in the morning. This is because the stomach secretes hydrochloric acid (HCL) which is needed to break down proteins into smaller molecules called “amino acids”. The cells don’t recognize large protein molecules so if the digestion is compromised, the immune system may trigger “auto-immune” responses.

As you will see in the chart below, the “peak function” time of day for the “small intestine” meridian is from 1-3pm. Since it is in the small intestine that digestive enzymes are secreted from the pancreas, we can see why eating carbohydrates would be easily digested if eaten at lunch time or later. Protein has a longer digestion period. Once the HCL breaks down the protein into amino acids, they enter the small intestine where digestive enzymes further break them down to molecules which the cells can recognize and utilize. There are different types of digestive enzymes. Various types of digestive enzymes break down carbohydrates, proteins or fats. It is a complex process which I will not go into.

Please refer to the chart below to have an idea of the importance of eating according to the “time of day” in addition to eating different types of “cooking” for each season. Keep in mind that combining foods from each “element” is essential for maintaining the constant flow of energy and circulation in the body.

Below is a chart that illustrates some basic concepts from Chinese Medicine. Take note that the “Fire” element actually has 4 organs or body systems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yin Organs</th>
<th>FIRE</th>
<th>EARTH</th>
<th>METAL</th>
<th>WATER</th>
<th>WOOD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heart &amp; Pericardium or “Circulation-Sex”</td>
<td>Spleen</td>
<td>Lungs</td>
<td>Kidneys</td>
<td>Liver</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yang Organs</th>
<th>FIRE</th>
<th>EARTH</th>
<th>METAL</th>
<th>WATER</th>
<th>WOOD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small Intestine &amp; Triple Heater or “Triple Warmer” (Adrenal Glands and Thyroid)</td>
<td>Stomach</td>
<td>Large Intestine</td>
<td>Bladder</td>
<td>Gall Bladder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seasons</th>
<th>FIRE</th>
<th>EARTH</th>
<th>METAL</th>
<th>WATER</th>
<th>WOOD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Tongue</td>
<td>Mouth</td>
<td>Nose</td>
<td>Ears</td>
<td>Eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Summer (Indian Summer)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn</td>
<td>Stomach</td>
<td>Large Intestine</td>
<td>Bladder</td>
<td>Gall Bladder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter</td>
<td>Bladder</td>
<td>Gall Bladder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Gall Bladder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sense Organs</th>
<th>FIRE</th>
<th>EARTH</th>
<th>METAL</th>
<th>WATER</th>
<th>WOOD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tongue</td>
<td>Stomach</td>
<td>Large Intestine</td>
<td>Bladder</td>
<td>Gall Bladder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mouth</td>
<td>Bladder</td>
<td>Gall Bladder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nose</td>
<td>Gall Bladder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ears</td>
<td>Gall Bladder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eyes</td>
<td>Gall Bladder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of Day</td>
<td>Meridian Organ</td>
<td>Function</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **FIRE** | **Heart**: | 11am-1pm  
Circulation-Sex: 7-9pm  
Small Intestine: 1-3pm  
Triple Warmer: 9-11pm |
| | **EARTH** | **Stomach**: 7-9am  
Large Intestine: 9-11am |
| | **METAL** | **Lungs**: 3-5am  
Kidney: 5-7pm  
Large Intestine: 5-7am |
| | **WATER** | **Bladder**: 3-5pm  
Kidney: 5-7pm |
| | **WOOD** | **Liver**: 1-3am  
Gall Bladder: 11pm-1am |

**Specialized Kinesiology meridian muscles** (click each meridian organ to view its related muscles or click here to view the meridian muscles on the Touch for Health website):

- **Heart**: Subscapularis  
  Circulation-Sex: Gluteus Medius, Adductors, Piriformis (sciatic nerve), Gluteus Maximus  
  Small Intestine: Quadriiceps (Jejunum & Ileum), Abdominals – Oblique, Rectus, Transverse (Duodenum)  
  Triple Warmer: Teres Minor (Thyroid), Sartorius (Adrenals), Gracilis (Adrenals), Soleus (Adrenals), Gastrocnemius (Adrenals)
- **Stomach**: Pectoralis Major Clavicular, Anterior Neck Flexors, Brachioradialis, Posterior Neck Extensors, Levator Scapulae  
  Spleen: Latissimus Dorsi (Pancreas), Middle Trapezius (Spleen), Lower Trapezius (Spleen), Opponens Pollicis Longus (Pancreas), Triceps (Pancreas)
- **Lungs**: Anterior Serratus, Deltoids, Coracobrachialis, Diaphragm  
  Kidney: Psoas, Iliacus (associated with transfer of waste from small intestine to large intestine), Upper Trapezius (associated with function of the eyes and ears)  
  Bladder: Peroneus, Sacrospinalis, Anterior Tibial, Posterior Tibial
- **Liver**: Pectoralis Major Sternal (associated with Glaucoma, spots in front of the eyes, and liver conditions), Rhomboids  
  Gallbladder: Anterior Deltoid, Popliteus

**Tissues**
- blood, vessels  
- muscles  
- skin, mucous membranes  
- bones, teeth, bone marrow, nerves  
- tendons, ligaments, sinews (connective tissues)

**Environment (constitution)**
- Heat  
- Dampness  
- Dryness  
- Cold  
- Wind

**Developmental Stages**
- growth  
- transformation, change  
- harvest, decline  
- storage, death  
- birth
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FIRE</th>
<th>EARTH</th>
<th>METAL</th>
<th>WATER</th>
<th>WOOD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Manifests</strong></td>
<td>complexion</td>
<td>lips</td>
<td>body hair, skin</td>
<td>head hair</td>
<td>nails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Colors</strong></td>
<td>red, yellow</td>
<td>white, grey</td>
<td>blue</td>
<td>green</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instinct</strong></td>
<td>Spirit</td>
<td>Conscience</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Will</td>
<td>Emotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sounds</strong></td>
<td>laughing, talkative</td>
<td>singing</td>
<td>crying, weeping, wailing</td>
<td>groaning, complaining</td>
<td>shouting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Odour</strong></td>
<td>scorched (burnt)</td>
<td>fragrant</td>
<td>rotten, rank</td>
<td>putrid (urine)</td>
<td>rancid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emotions</strong></td>
<td>joy, love, hate</td>
<td>anxiety, worry, pensiveness</td>
<td>grief, sadness, sorrow</td>
<td>fear, depression</td>
<td>anger, jealousy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(click here to view all the emotions associated with each organ or meridian)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tastes (Food)</strong></td>
<td>Bitter</td>
<td>Sweet</td>
<td>Pungent</td>
<td>Salty</td>
<td>Sour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foods</strong></td>
<td>arugula, asparagus</td>
<td>root vegetables</td>
<td>ginger, garlic, mustard, raw onion</td>
<td>sea vegetables (kelp, dulse), sea salt</td>
<td>lemon, lime, sauerkraut, vinegars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cooking</strong></td>
<td>Sautéed, Stir Frying, Roasting, Boiling, Composed Foods, Garnishes, Condiments, Finishing Sauces, Julienne Mincing, Dicing</td>
<td>Stewing, Casserole, Mashing, Pureeing, Jams and Jellies, Caramelizing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Direction</strong></td>
<td>south</td>
<td>center</td>
<td>west</td>
<td>north</td>
<td>east</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Energy direction</strong></td>
<td>Outward (dispersing energy of the summer season)</td>
<td>Downward (balance or circling energy of fall season)</td>
<td>Inward (contracting energy of late fall season)</td>
<td>Floating (dormant energy of winter season)</td>
<td>Upward (rising energy of spring season)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Body Types</strong></td>
<td>pointed features</td>
<td>large features</td>
<td>triangular features</td>
<td>round features</td>
<td>tall slender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>small hands</td>
<td>strong legs</td>
<td>strong voice</td>
<td>strong digestion</td>
<td>bones and joints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>quick energetic</td>
<td>calm generous</td>
<td>meticulous, strong willed</td>
<td>loyal, enjoy movement</td>
<td>hard workers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Foods for Constitutional Type

#### Dietary Wisdom According to TCM

The basic principles of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) dietary therapy are relatively simple: Foods are selected to help enhance patient’s overall health based on their patterns of disharmony.

A person should eat those foods which lead the body back to balance and avoid foods that aggravate the person’s imbalance.

- Eat mostly vegetables and grains with small amounts of everything else.
- Eat mostly cooked warm food which is not too sweet and not too greasy or oily.
- Eat moderately and chew well.

Your dietary habits will determine how well you feel, how clearly you think, and how successfully you adapt to your internal and external environments. Familiarize yourself with the pharmaco-dynamics of food chemistry. Learn how to combine foods properly at meals, and apply the Tao of Diet to eat your way to health and happiness.

Taoist diets are formulated in order to achieve an optimum balance between the various types of energy that foods release when digested and metabolized. Thousands of years ago, master healers in China perceived a way to classify foods and diseases according to simple and easily observed patterns.

One eats cooling foods for overheated conditions, and warming foods are best for people who feel too cold. Detoxifying foods are for those who carry excess toxins; building foods are good for deficient persons, and so on.

According to TCM, everyone has a different body constitution. Everyone’s constitution, temperament and health condition changes at different ages.
Classification of Body Constitutions

- **Excess**: A robust person with strong voice and pulses, thick tongue coating, extroverted personality and reddish complexion. This person does best with grains that reduce excess, such as amaranth, rye, whole barley (not pearled), and wild rice.

- **Deficiency**: A frail person with weakness and low energy weak voice and thin or no tongue coating, introverted personality, and sallow or pale complexion. Most grains are appropriate; with rice, wheat, barley (pan-roast before cooking), spelt, well-cooked oats, and quinoa are most beneficial.

- **Heat**: A person feels too hot, thirsts for large amounts of cold liquid, has red signs such as bright- or deep-red tongue, red face or eyes, yellow tongue coating, yellowing and scanty mucus. Use cooling grains: millet, wheat, amaranth, wild rice, blue corn and whole barley.

- **Cold**: A person feels cold, likes warm food and beverages, has pale complexion, dress too warmly for the temperature or climate, is contracted and can’t bend back, or may have pain “frozen” (fixed) in one place. Use warming grains: oats, spelt, sweet rice, quinoa (pronounced keen wa), and basmati rice. Neutral gains are also useful: rice, rye, corn and buckwheat.

- **Damp**: A person feels sluggish and has pathogenic moisture such as edema, obesity, chronic mucus and phlegm problems, cysts, and tumors. The grains which dry dampness are amaranth, buckwheat, unrefined barley, corn, rye, wild rice, basmati rice (in small amounts), and dry roasted oats.

- **Dry**: A thin person with dry mouth, nostrils, lips, skin, and stools. The best grains to use are: wheat, rice, sweet rice, quinoa, millet, barley (pan-roasted), spelt, and well-cooked oats.

- **Wind**: A nervous person with instability and symptoms that move around, come and go such as spasms, cramps, and moving pain. Certain relatively static conditions such as numbness, paralysis, and strokes are also often wind-induced. Grains that help calm wind: quinoa, cooked oats, and wheat; avoid buckwheat.

- **Summer Heat**: A person with high fever, sweating, exhaustion, and fluid depletion. Roasted barley tea or drinks quell the effects of summer heat; brown rice, especially the long-grain variety, helps reduce irritability which often accompanies summer heat.

**The ABC+D Approach to Health & Chinese Medicine**

The ABC+D Approach to Health was developed by Steven Horne, of Tree of Light Publishing. This system is based on the “body systems” of the body:
- Circulatory system  - Intestinal system
- Digestive system  - Nervous system
- Glandular system  - Respiratory system
- Hepatic system  - Structural system
- Immune system  - Urinary system

Click on each body system to read more about it and to see which herbal remedies are most beneficial for it.

Below, I’ve combined the “body systems” with the “5 elements” from Chinese Medicine to show how different foods may benefit each “body system”.

**Note:** The Nervous system helps to control and balance all the other “body systems” which makes it part of ALL the 5 elements. The Nervous system encompasses the following:

- Central Meridian (Yin) – brain
- Governing Meridian (Yang) – spine & nerves

**Fire**

The Circulatory, Glandular and Immune systems are part of the Fire element.

**FIRE Meridian Organs**

**Circulatory system:**

- Heart Meridian (yin)
- Small Intestine Meridian (yang)

**Glandular system:**

- Pericardium/Circulation-Sex Meridian (yin) – Reproductive organs, “Heart” protector
- Triple Warmer/Triple Heater Meridian (yang) – Thyroid and Adrenal Glands

**Immune system:**

- Lymphatic system and lymph nodes
- Thymus gland
- White blood cells
- “Good” bacterial flora in the digestive tract

**FIRE Meridian Healing Foods – BITTER Foods & Herbs**

**Note:** These foods can reduce heat and dry fluids. They most benefit slow, overweight, overheated and aggressive people. The bitter flavor is thought to enter the heart, helping to cool it if it has become overheated.

**Foods that most enhance the Fire element:**

**Grains:** Corn, maize, popcorn, amaranth, quinoa

**Vegetables:** Asparagus, Brussels sprouts, chives, endive, okra, scallions

**Beans and Pulses:** red lentils, chickpeas

**Fruits:** apricot, guava, strawberry, persimmon, peaches, cherries

**Fish:** shrimp, lobster, crab

**Spices:** chilis, curry, and spices in general are considered fire foods

**General list of foods that enhance the Fire element:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alcohol</th>
<th>Cayenne</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alfalfa</td>
<td>Celery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apricots</td>
<td>Chard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arugula</td>
<td>Cherry seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asparagus</td>
<td>Chicory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beer</td>
<td>Chocolate (dark)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell peppers</td>
<td>Citrus peel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bitter gourd</td>
<td>Coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black tea</td>
<td>Collards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broccoli</td>
<td>Corn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brussel sprouts</td>
<td>Cucumber</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
dandelion  mustard greens
dried food  nuts
endive  oils
food that looks like a “heart”  parsley
garlic  peppers
ginger  plums (not too ripe)
ginseng  pumpkin
grapefruit peel  radish leaf
hops  raspberries
hot and spicy foods  rhubarb
hot peppers  romaine lettuce
kale  scallions
kidney beans  sea grass
kohlrabi  seeds
kumquats  strawberries
lamb  sunflower seeds
large leafy plants of summer (often bitter)  tomatoes
leafy green vegetables  venison
lettuce  vinegar
lotus plumule  watercress
most “red” foods  wild cucumber
wine

Earth

The Digestive and Structural systems are part of the Earth element.
**EARTH Meridian Organs**

**Digestive system:**
- Spleen/Pancreas meridian (yin)
- Stomach meridian (yang)

**Structural system:**
- Muscles

**EARTH Meridian Healing Foods – SWEET FOODS & HERBS**

**Note:** These foods slow down acute symptoms and neutralize toxins. They most benefit dry, nervous and weak people and they calm aggression.

The “sweet foods” refers to naturally sweet *fruit and vegetables* rather than sugar or processed foods that actually cause an Earth imbalance. The “naturally sweet” foods will not only satisfy and nourish you but will also improve your energy levels.

**Foods that most enhance the Earth element:**

**Grains:** Millet

**Fruits:** sweet apples, figs, cantaloupe, sweet orange, honeydew, tangelo, raisins, sweet grapes, papaya, dates, tangerine

**Vegetables:** Sweet corn, all squash: (acorn, butternut, Hokkaido, Hubbard, spaghetti, pumpkin) shiitake mushrooms, beets, onions, parsnips, rutabaga, collards, chard, artichoke, sweet peas, and string beans

**Fish:** salmon, tuna, swordfish, sturgeon

**Nuts:** Almonds, pecans, walnuts, sesame seeds, sunflower seeds

**Sweeteners:** agave, maple syrup, rice syrup, barley malt, molasses

**General list of foods that enhance the Earth element:**

“*Root or Ground Vegetables” and all the other types of food that come from the earth:*

beets 

parsnips

carrots 

potatoes
rutabagas  
sweet potatoes  

**Other “sweet” and “starchy” foods:**

abalone  
almonds  
apples  
apricots  
apricot seeds (sweet)  
bamboo shoots  
bananas  
barley  
barley syrup  
bean curd  
beef  
black sesame seeds  
black soybean  
blueberries  
brown sugar  
cabbage  
cantaloupe  
carp (common carp, gold carp, grass carp)  
castor bean  
celery  
cherimoyas  

turnips  
yams  

cherries  
chestnuts  
chicken  
chicken egg (yolk and white)  
chick peas  
Chinese cabbage  
Chinese wax gourd  
chocolate milk  
cinnamon bark  
cinnamon twig  
clam (fresh water)  
coconut  
coffee  
cooked onions  
corn (sweet)  
corn silk  
courgettes  
crab apple  
cucumbers  
dates  
dry mandarin orange peel  
duck
eel  lotus (fruit and seed)
eggplant  malt
figs  maltose
ginseng  mandarin orange
grains  mango
grapes  many orange or yellow foods
grapefruit  maple syrup
grapefruit peel  milk (cow's and human)
guava  milk chocolate
guava leaf  millet (yellow)
hawthorn fruits  molasses
honey  mung bean
horse bean  mushrooms (button and chantarelle)
hyacinth bean  muskmelon
kidney bean  mutton
kohlrabi  oats
kumquat  okra
lamb  olive
lettuce  oranges
licorice  oyster
lily flower  papaya
litchi  peaches
longan  peanuts
longevity fruit  pears
loquat  persimmon
pineapple  squash (winter & summer)
plantain  star anise
plums  star fruit
pork  strawberry
pumpkin  string bean
radish  sugar cane
raspberry  sunflower seed
red small bean or adzuki bean  sweet rice
rice (polished)  sword bean
rice bran  tangerine-orange
rice syrup  taro
rye  tomato
saffron  walnuts
sesame oil  water chestnut
shiitake mushroom  watermelon
shrimp  wheat
soybean oil  wheat bran
spearmint  wine
spinach  yellow soybean

Note: Ripe or sweet fruits and the late summer fruits belong to this earth element.

Metal

The Intestinal, Structural, Respiratory and Immune systems are part of the Metal element.
METAL Meridian Organs

Intestinal and Respiratory systems:

- Lung meridian (yin)
- Large Intestine meridian (yang)

Structural system:

- Skin & mucous membranes

Immune system:

- Mucous membranes
- "Good" bacterial flora in the digestive tract

METAL Meridian Healing Foods – PUNGENT FOODS & HERBS

Note: These foods have a dispersing effect and promote energy circulation. They most benefit sluggish, damp, lethargic and cold people.

*Dairy foods and orange juice should be avoided.

Foods that most enhance the Metal element:

Grain: White, brown, and sweet rice, mochi

Vegetables: cauliflower, cabbage, Chinese cabbage, celery, daikon radish, onions, watercress, mustard and turnip greens, turnips, garlic, cucumber, leeks

Beans and Pulses: white beans

Fruits: Banana, pear, apples

Fish: Bass, snapper, cod, haddock, herring, flounder, sole, halibut

Herbs and Seasonings: dill, fennel, thyme, ginger root, horseradish, cinnamon, cayenne, basil, and rosemary

General list of foods that enhance the Metal element:

- anise
- asparagus
- basil
- black pepper
button mushrooms  fish sauce
    caraway             garlic
    carrots             ginger
    castor bean         grapefruit peel
    cauliflower         green onions
    cayenne             green pepper
    cheese (cheese)     horseradish
    cherry seed         kohlrabi
    chestnuts           kumquat
    Chinese parsley     leaf mustard
    chives              leeks
    chive root          lotus root
    chive seed          marjoram
    cilantro            milk
    cinnamon bark       mustard
    cinnamon twig       mustard greens
    cloves              nutmeg
    cooked grains (brown rice, wheat, rye, barley, oats or spelt)
    coriander           olives
    cottonseed          onions (raw)
    crab apples         parmesan cheese
    cream               parsley
    daikon              pears
    dill                peppermint
    fennel              peppers
                        radish and radish leaf
                        red pepper
rice  taro
rice bran  tarragon
rosemary  tofu
scallions  turnip
soybean oil  walnuts
spearmint  wasabi
star anise  watercress
sweet basil  white pepper
tangarines  wine

**Note:** Small contracted plants also belong to this metal element.

**Water**

The **Urinary, Structural** and **Nervous** systems are part of the **Water** element.

**WATER Meridian Organs**

**Urinary system:**
- Kidney meridian (yin)
- Bladder meridian (yang)

**Structural system:**
- bones, teeth, bone marrow

**Nervous system:**
- nerves

**WATER Meridian Healing Foods – SALTY FOODS & HERBS**

**Note:** These foods have a softening effect and promote moisture and calming of the body. They most benefit thin, dry and nervous people.
Foods that most enhance the Water element:

**Grain:** Barley, buckwheat, black rice

**Vegetables:** Beets, burdock, asparagus

**Beans and Pulses:** Adzuki, black beans, black lentils

**Sea Vegetables:** arame, dulse, Irish moss, kelp, hijiki, nori, wakame, kombu

**Fruits:** blackberries, raspberries, blueberries, purple and black grapes, watermelon, black raspberries

**Fish:** blue fish, caviar, scallops, oysters, clams and mussels

**Nuts:** chestnuts, black sesame seeds

**Condiments and Seasonings:** tamari, shoyu, miso, tekka, gomasio, umeboshi, salt cured pickles (these last two are also sour)

**General list of foods that enhance the Water element:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>adzuki beans</th>
<th>cranberries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>barley</td>
<td>dill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beans</td>
<td>eggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beetroot</td>
<td>fennel seeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blackberries</td>
<td>figs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>black sesame seeds</td>
<td>fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blueberries</td>
<td>garlic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buckwheat</td>
<td>ginger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>caviar and other fish eggs</td>
<td>kale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>celery</td>
<td>kelp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chicken</td>
<td>kidney beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cinnamon</td>
<td>lamb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
lotus seed  seafood
millet  sea salt
mineral Water  sea vegetables (arame, hiziki, kombu, kelp, seaweed, etc...)
miso  seaweed
mung beans  shellfish
nama shoyu  shoyu
nutmeg  soy sauce
olives  tamari
onions  tofu
pork  trout
rice  umeboshi plum
salted meat  walnuts
salty condiments  water
salty pickles  wild rice

**Note:** All foods that come from the sea and the roots of plants belong to this water element. Foods that are purple, black or blue often belong to the water element as well.

**Wood**

The **Hepatic** and **Structural** systems are part of the **Wood** element.

**WOOD Meridian Organs**

**Hepatic system:**

- Liver meridian (yin)
- Gallbladder meridian (yang)
**Structural system:**
- tendons, ligaments, sinews

**WOOD Meridian Healing Foods – SOUR FOODS & HERBS**

**Note:** These foods can obstruct movement and function as astringents. They most benefit changeable, erratic and scattered people.

**Foods that most enhance the Wood element:**

**Grain:** wheat, oats, rye

**Vegetables:** broccoli, parsley, lettuce, kale, collard greens, carrots, alfalfa, beets, leeks, zucchini, shiitake mushrooms, artichokes

**Beans and Pulses:** mung, lima, green lentils

**Fruits:** limes, lemons, grapefruit, green apple, sour cherry, avocado, plums, quince

**General list of foods that enhance the Wood element:**

- adzuki bean
- apples
- apricot
- artichokes
- barley
- beans
- beetroot
- broccoli
- buckwheat
- cabbage
- celery
- chard
- chicken
- citrus fruits
- crab apple
- dandelions
- endive
- fatty fish
- fennel
- grains
- grapefruit
- grapes
Note: The young plants of spring also belong to this wood element. These include sour, green and fast growing plants.

Recipes to Balance Your Meridians

Fire Element Imbalance

The Bitter Taste of Power & Creativity

The Fire element is associated with the bitter taste.

Chilled Pumpkin and Orange Soup

1 onion – sliced thinly
1 pumpkin – cubed
Sea salt
2 tablesp chopped basil
Juice of 2 oranges
1½ litres water

Bring water to boil. Add pumpkin and cook for a few minutes. Add onions & salt. Cook until pumpkin is soft. Add basil. Puree the soup. Adjust seasoning. Add orange juice and let the soup cool before serving.

Polenta with Olives and Asparagus

1 cup polenta
3 cups water
Sea salt
3 whole corn – cut off the cob
4 asparagus - sliced
5 black olives – cut into quarters, pits removed
Cold pressed oil

Bring water to boil. Add corn kernels, asparagus and salt. Cook for a few minutes. Stir in the polenta. Cover the pot and simmer on low heat for about 10 minutes. Stir frequently. Add olives and adjust seasoning. Put mixture into a greased tray and let it cool slightly. Cut polenta into squares and fry or BBQ on both sides until golden brown.
**Earth Element Imbalance**

Sweet Foods For Nourishment & Awareness

The Earth element is associated with sweet flavor.

**Chickpeas and Vegetable Casserole**

1 ½ cups chickpeas – soaked overnight  
1 stick Kombu (from Asian grocers/health food shops)  
1 tablesp cold pressed oil  
1 onion – finely chopped  
1 sweet potato - chopped  
2 carrots - chopped  
¼ pumpkin - chopped  
¼ cauliflower - chopped  
½ cup green beans - chopped  
Sea salt  
Tamari  
3 tablesp dry roasted sunflower seeds  
Water

Cover chickpeas with water. Add kombu & bring to the boil. Cook on medium heat until chickpeas are almost cooked. In another pan, heat oil, saute onion, add other vegetables. Add ¼ cup water, salt and cooked chickpeas. Cover pan with lid and stew until vegetables are soft. Add tamari and sunflower seeds. Serve.

**Crunch Delight**

2 cups sunflower seeds  
1 cup sesame seeds  
1 cup dried apricots & sultanas – chopped (no added sulphites)  
1 cup chopped raw almonds  
1½ cup rice malt

Dry roast (either in oven or in dry pan), sunflower & sesame sees until brown. Mix in dried fruit and rice malt while hot. Put mixture into a greased tray. Allow to cool and chop into small squares when it has set. Store in airtight container away in fridge.

**Metal Element Imbalance**

Pungent Tastes For Vitality & Self Expression
The Metal element is associated with foods that are described as ‘biting, hot, pungent, spicy and aromatic’. This means a diet of tougher veggies and longer, more energetic cooking methods like pressure-cooking and heavier soups, stews and curries.

**Baked Brown Rice**

1 cup brown rice
½ onion
Few fine slivers of ginger
Sliced almonds
2 cups water
Sea salt

Combine all ingredients and place in a casserole dish. Bake at 180 degrees Celsius for 1 hour.

**Oats & Walnut Cookies**

1 cup rolled oats
1 cup wholemeal flour
½ cup chopped walnuts
½ cup raisins
2 table spoons rice malt
1½ cups boiling water
Vanilla
Sea salt
100% fruit unsweetened jam – no sugar or artificial sweeteners

Combine all ingredients, except the jam. Let mixture rest for 1 hour and then form into round cookies. Place on a greased tray. Press a hole in the middle of the cookie and fill with jam. Bake at 160 degrees Celsius for approx 30 mins. Allow to cool.

**Water Element Imbalance**

The Salty Taste of Drive & Will Power

The Water element is associated with heat and salt. Long cooked stews, thick soups and heavier grains with sea salt feed your body and help address a Water element imbalance.

**Kidney Bean Stew**

1 cup kidney beans soaked overnight
1 onion – chopped
1 cup carrots – chopped
4 cloves garlic
1 teasp mustard seeds
1 teasp cumin seeds
4 cardamom pods
Black pepper
Sea salt
4 cups water

Add beans, onion, carrots, garlic and mustard seeds to water. Bring to boil and simmer for 3 hours. Season with salt and pepper. Serve garnished with chopped chives or shallots.

**Rice and Buckwheat Loaf**

1 cup brown rice
1 cup buckwheat
2 cups of chopped vegies – celery, pumpkin, green beans
1 onion – finely chopped
Tamari
Sea salt
1 tablesp basil – finely chopped
1 tablesp cold pressed oil
4 cups water

Add rice and salt to 2 cups of water. Bring to boil and simmer on low heat for about 1 hour. In a separate pan, saute onion, buckwheat and vegetables in hot oil. Add 2 cups water & salt and cook on a low heat until soft. Remove any remaining liquid. Combine this mixture with cooked rice, basil and tamari. Put mixture into a greased loaf tin and bake at 170 degrees Celsius for about 20 minutes.

**Wood Element Imbalance**

The Sour Taste For Vision & Order

The taste for the Wood element is sour.

**Buckwheat Pancakes**

½ cup buckwheat flour
½ cup wholemeal flour
Sea salt
Water
Cold pressed oil
Mix dry ingredients. Add enough water to make a smooth batter. Let mixture rest for 1 hour. Heat up a little oil in a non-stick frying pan. Put in small amount of pancake mixture and brown on both sides. Serve with scrambled eggs and green salad.

**Watercress Soup**

1 bunch watercress - chopped
1 bunch bok choy - chopped
2 pieces wakame
Sea salt
¼ soy milk
1½ litre water

Bring water to boil. Add watercress and bok choy to water. After a few minutes add salt and wakame. Simmer for 8 minutes. Add soy milk. Puree mixture, adjust seasoning and serve.

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