

Vata-Pitta Dietary Guidelines and Food Chart

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By knowing your specific Ayurvedic constitution (i.e. [Vata](#), [Pitta](#), [Kapha](#)) you can discover the best diet and lifestyle practices that will keep you healthy and in-balance. However, this is not always a black or white situation. In fact, there are countless grey areas that come up, making it much more difficult to decipher which recommendations to follow. If you have found that you reside with a predominance of both Vata and Pitta. . . or you are a Vata type with a Pitta imbalance. . . or a Pitta type with a Vata imbalance, keep reading to discover some of the foods and dietary guidelines that will help to bring balance to both “opposing” doshas.

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When looking to bring balance to both Vata and Pitta, there are many foods that will work to pacify both [doshas](#). Since Vata and Pitta are both light and mobile (pitta is actually “spreading”), many foods, drinks, and spices that are considered heavy and grounding will be healing for both dosha types. Pitta and Vata are calmed by the sweet taste, so welcoming healthy sweets in the diet will also be of benefit. Since Vata is cold by nature and Pitta hot, avoiding excessively cold or heating foods will be necessary while favoring more neutral or warming options instead.

Vata-Pitta Dietary Guidelines

Dietary Do's

- In general, you will want to follow a stricter [Pitta-reducing diet](#) in the hotter months of the late spring, summer, and early fall and a stricter [Vata-reducing diet](#) in cool-cold months of fall and winter.
- Eat on a healthy meal schedule: 6-8am – nourishing breakfast upon awakening; 11am-1pm – hearty, healthy lunch; 6-7pm – small to medium-size dinner, light but fulfilling.
- Take a small, simple, healthy snack in between meals (e.g. piece of fruit; cup of plain yogurt with maple syrup; small [wholegrain muffin](#)) – [read more on healthy snacking here!](#)



- Favor sweet, juicy fruits such as ripe mango, ripe peaches, soaked raisins, dates, avocados, coconut, fresh figs, pears, ripe apricots, watermelon, and sweet plums.
- Favor well-cooked or steamed veggies such as beets (in fall or winter), carrots, okra, zucchini, yellow squash, winter squash (in fall or winter), sweet potatoes, asparagus, and sweet peas. Raw cucumber is alright in the summertime.
- Favor whole grains such as basmati rice, red rice, quinoa, buckwheat, whole wheat, spelt, and oats.
- Favor digestive spices that are not heating such as fresh ginger, turmeric, fennel, coriander, cilantro, parsley, cardamom, and cumin.
- Favor lime over lemon, avoid all other citrus.
- The best oils will be ghee, olive oil, sunflower oil, avocado oil, and coconut oil.
- Fermented foods should be limited to [homemade kefir](#) or yogurt.
- When all else fails, find tridoshic foods, spices, drinks, and recipes for fool-proof options!




Dietary Don'ts

- Avoid all raw and cold foods (may be acceptable in the summer season in small amounts).
- Avoid dry, rough, old, and stale foods.
- Avoid hot, spicy foods.
- Avoid heating spices such as cayenne pepper, dry ginger, and chili powder. Black pepper is alright in small amounts.
- Avoid highly acidic and inflammatory foods.
- Avoid nightshades such as tomatoes, white potatoes, peppers, and eggplant.
- Avoid fermented foods except [homemade kefir](#) or yogurt.
- Avoid refined sugar, refined grains, processed food, additives, dyes, caffeine, alcohol, and tobacco.
- Avoid improper food combinations ([read more here](#)).
- Avoid skipping meals or waiting too long to eat.

While adopting some of these beneficial dietary guidelines, you should also become familiar with the best foods to consume and which foods to limit or avoid. Please remember however, that these food charts are not all set in stone. If you love a food on the no-no list, you can likely enjoy it on occasion, especially if you are feeling in-balance. You can often “cheat” (with awareness and moderation) depending on the season and the context as well. For example, raw salad is said to be forbidden, however, if you are craving a cold, raw salad on a 90 degree summer day and you are not suffering from a severe Vata imbalance (insomnia, panic attacks, severe anxiety, sever gas and bloating, etc), then eating a salad dressed with olive oil, avocado, and lime juice would be totally acceptable. This same salad in the fall or wintertime, however, should definitely be avoided. Therefore, use this chart as a guide and learn where you are able to intelligently play around on occasion.

VATA-PITTA DIET CHART

FOOD TYPE	FAVOR	LIMIT
FRUITS 	Most sweet, ripe, juicy fruits; stewed apples (with ghee and cardamom), applesauce, avocado, sweet berries (avoid sour), coconut, fresh dates, fresh figs, red grapes, limes, pears, ripe-sweet mangoes (avoid sour or green), melons, sweet-ripe peaches, sweet-ripe plums, soaked prunes, soaked dates, soaked figs, soaked raisins	All dried fruits, all sour fruits, unripened fruit, all citrus (except lime), raw apples, cranberries, kiwi, tamarind, green mango, green grapes, dry figs, persimmons, dry prunes, dry raisins
VEGGIES 	Most well-cooked or steamed veggies; asparagus, beets, cooked broccoli, carrots, cilantro, cucumber in moderation (raw is alright in summer), cooked cauliflower, fennel, green beans, green onion, leeks, okra, sweet or yellow onion (cooked), parsnip, peas, sweet potato, pumpkin, winter and summer squash, zucchini, cooked kale (in moderation), cooked spinach (in moderation)	All frozen or raw veggies; raw salads, bitter melon, raw broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, raw cauliflower, celery, corn, raw leafy greens, kohlrabi, mushrooms, olives; nightshades including tomato, white potato, peppers, and eggplant; radish, turnips, wheatgrass, sprouts, garlic
GRAINS	Amaranth, buckwheat, cooked oats (steel cut oats are best), quinoa, brown rice, well-cooked millet (made with ghee, oil, or milk only), sprouted wheat bread, 100% whole wheat (in moderation), spelt	All refined grains, all uncooked or dry grains, bread with yeast, dry cereal, corn, couscous, crackers, granola, dry millet, muesli, oat bran, dry oats, rice cakes, rye, dry toast, wheat bran

<p>DAIRY</p> 	<p>Organic and whole fat milk (heated and spiced), buttermilk, cheese in moderation (soft or homemade paneer is best), ghee, unsalted butter, homemade yogurt, homemade kefir, lassi (not mango lassi)</p>	<p>Cold milk, powdered milk; hard, aged cheese; cheese in excess, ice cream, sour cream, store bought yogurt, salted butter</p>
<p>LEGUMES</p>	<p>Red lentils, mung beans, mung dal</p> <p>*All legumes should be soaked overnight to help the digestion</p>	<p>Adzuki beans, black beans, black-eyed peas, chickpeas, kidney beans, brown lentils, lima beans, miso, navy beans, split peas, pinto beans, soybeans, soy flour, soy powder, tempeh</p>
<p>NUTS AND SEEDS</p> 	<p>Raw and unsalted best; almonds (soaked and skins removed), coconut, soaked chia seed, ground flax seed, pumpkin seeds, hemp seeds, sunflower seeds</p>	<p>Popcorn, peanuts, almonds with peel, cashews, walnuts (alright in moderation), sesame seeds (alright in moderation), brazil nuts, hazel nuts; all roasted and salted nuts or seeds</p>
<p>OILS</p>	<p>Ghee, olive oil, sunflower oil, flaxseed oil, coconut oil, sweet almond oil (in moderation), avocado oil</p>	<p>Sesame oil, peanut oil, vegetable oil, canola oil, corn oil, safflower oil, mustard oil</p>
<p>SPICES</p> 	<p>Cooling to warming spices; cumin, coriander, fennel, turmeric, fresh ginger, pippali, cardamom, cloves, mint, basil, parsley, cilantro</p>	<p>Heating spices; cayenne, cinnamon (in moderation alright), oregano, dry ginger, fenugreek, garlic, mustard seeds, rosemary, thyme</p>
<p>SWEETENERS</p>	<p>Fruit juice concentrates, coconut sugar, date sugar, dates, honey (raw and in moderation), jaggery (in moderation), maple syrup, sucanat, turbinado</p>	<p>Agave, white sugar, refined sugars, honey that has been heated</p>