

# The Joyful Belly

*Better Health through Digestion with an Ayurvedic Diet*

## Quinoa with Mint, Cilantro & Red Onion

Reported by John Joseph Immel, Asheville, NC



Alkalizing Prana Ojas Rajasic

Type: Grains

Meal: Lunch-Dinner

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

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ayurvedic notes

## Spring Waterworks

The songs of the birds, buzzing bees and blossoming daisies in spring tempt us outdoors. The sun warms our skin and creaky bones after a long winter. Coming out of winter, our bodies are making some big changes like shedding winter fat.

The warmer weather indicates to your body that we won't need our extra February insulation, triggering a release the fats into your bloodstream. The fatty, thick, enriched blood bogs your circulatory system and respiratory tract. Enriched blood is called sweet blood in Ayurveda. It causes water retention and mucus congestion. You may notice more saliva this time of year, bad breath, a persistent sore throat, or flu like symptoms. Your lungs may feel heavy and the mind sluggish.

## Spring Allergies: Myth or Fact?

Flowers bloom all summer long, yet in the spring a single grain of pollen triggers a flood of mucus. Pollen in the air is beyond our control. Heavy, fat-enriched blood predisposes us to more mucus production. Reducing fats and heavy foods during the spring can mitigate our response to pollen. Fat metabolism tends to aggravate the liver, increasing inflammation and immune sensitivity. Cilantro calms our immune sensitivity to pollen. It is hypoallergenic and cools the liver.

Mint refreshes the mind, disperses dullness and lifts the fog. It breaks up mucus and fluid stagnation in the lungs, throat and sinuses. Mint and cilantro are both diuretics with the potential to drain excess water via the urinary tract. Raw onions have a cleansing effect on the liver and a laxative effect in the GI. Wild

onions, a common weed, are a great addition to the spring time menu.

### What is a Spring Fever?

"Spring Fever" is the new energy, vitality and vigor we associate with the warmer spring weather. Literally, the fever comes when spring weather warms your blood, dilating blood vessels in the arms and legs. As the sap starts to run in the maple trees, circulation improves to your extremities, effectively ending the season of winter hibernation. The arms enjoy the additional blood, and crave physical activities such as gardening or spring cleaning. Outdoor activities also ignites protein cravings. Quinoa, a grain, can satisfy protein cravings. It is a complete protein often appearing on super-foods lists.

Extra blood in the extremities translates to less blood for digestion. Mint and onion stimulate a waning spring appetite and quinoa is easy to digest. On warm days, a release of fluid buildup from moving blood can cause the hands and feet to swell. As diaphoretics, mint and onion both cause sweating that cleanses the skin and disperses swelling in the hands and feet.

### Contraindications

Raw onions may be too intense and pungent for sensitive digestive tracts. In that case sauté onions until they are translucent. Mint, an inspiring herb, could potentially scatterbrain a Vata person. Mint and cilantro, both diuretics, may be too drying for Vata.

about

A refreshing recipe with mint may be just what your body is asking for to combat spring-time allergies. It's also perfect to whip up for a spring picnic because it's light and won't spoil while you're out enjoying the sunshine.

This dish essentially serves up a mix of grain with fresh, zesty herbs. Inspired by tabbouleh, it substitutes clearing mint for parsley, and light, protein rich quinoa for wheat. Raw onions add crunchy texture. Give this zesty recipe a try, or mix it up a little with your own ingredients and let us know how it goes!

### ingredients

1 c	<u>Cilantro</u>
1 tsp	<u>Salt (Mineral Salt)</u>
1/4 tsp	<u>Black Pepper</u>
0.37 c	<u>Olive Oil</u>
2 lime	<u>Lime</u>
2 tbsps	<u>Mint</u>
1/4 c	<u>Red Onion (raw)</u>
1 c	<u>Quinoa</u>

### Weights & measures



### preparation

Boil quinoa in 2c water 15 minutes or until soft. Do not over stir or over cook, to avoid quinoa turning to mush. Finely chop mint and onions. Gently mix all ingredients together. Serve immediately or chill in refrigerator for 2 hours before serving.

### questions & comments

Are you sure the quinoa should be cooked for 1 1/2 to 2 hours? Mine is usually fully cooked in 15 minutes. Is there a different type of quinoa that I'm not aware of? Just call me "confused". Thanks! Maggie

- *Maggie, Toronto, ON, 10-18-10*

Can't wait to try it. Hubby is still becoming acquainted with quinoa. This may add the additional flavor he needs.

- *j, Bedford, TX, 05-24-11*

Hi Maggie, Quinoa should be cooked for at least 40mins and longer to get it fluffly...even experiment to see how fluffy it gets its even more delicious. Goodluck Cat

- *cat, Sydney, 06-18-11*

Thanks Cat. I have updated the recipe with a shorter cooking time even though it does take 40 minutes to get a fluffy, soft grain.

- *John Joseph Immel, Asheville, NC, 06-29-11*

What about sprouted quinoa?

- *Chana Adar, New york, NY, 07-03-11*

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