



Foods That Heal Cooking to Reduce Illness

Your Health is in Your Hands - VI

**Dr. Manthena
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Rajarshi....!

Among the precious sons bestowed by Nature, he is the most blessed. A Rajarshi (A king elevated to the stature of a sage) who offers a daily oblation to the philosophy of Nature itself. Like a sage walking beside us, he is the fragrant jewel that spreads the perfume of human evolution, blossoming under Nature's grace. He is the gardener who tends to the way of natural living, sowing its seeds and nurturing it with care.

Under his guidance, the "Natural Way of Life" is growing as Nature's beloved child on the banks of the Krishna River. He is the chief architect of the Ashram, envisioned so that all people may follow Nature's laws and live in good health under the watchful gaze of Goddess Kanaka Durga of Vijayawada.

With affection and reverence, I dedicate this garland of books, *Your Health is in Your Hands*, to the virtuous couple — our spiritual companions, pure-hearted and gracious — Sri Gokaraju Gangaraju and Smt. Laila Gangaraju.

Your loving well-wisher

Manthena Satyanarayana Raju

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1. What Was the Experiment I Conducted?

In 1985, with the intention of improving my health, I joined a nature-based ashram for two months. For the first two days, I was kept on complete fasting, and food was introduced only after that. The meals consisted of two rotis along with a bland vegetable preparation — a mixture of ten different vegetables boiled together, the water drained, and nothing else added to it. When I first saw that curry, my appetite vanished completely. I could not swallow it; I spat it out and threw the entire portion away, eating only plain rotis smeared with honey. For four or five days, I continued doing the same at both meals.

Even crows and dogs would come near that curry and walk away without touching it, repelled by its smell. Unable to tolerate hunger, I slowly trained myself to eat that bland food. After eating it continuously for two months, my health improved remarkably. However, once I returned home, my cravings resurfaced and I began eating everything again. As a result, the health I had gained slipped away once more. Unable to endure those sufferings, I fasted again and returned to bland food for a few more months, after which I regained good health.

Yet eating bland food for months brought its own struggle. My mouth felt tasteless, boredom set in, and there was the same vegetable curry every day, twice a day. The same taste endlessly — how long could one eat like this? That mental anguish stayed with me. Until 1993, I alternated between periods of bland food and periods of indulgent, flavorful food, experiencing both health and illness repeatedly. Through this, I came to understand clearly that our health truly lies in our own hands.

In 1987, I completely gave up non-vegetarian food. In 1994, cravings surged again, and for about twenty days I ate everything — including meat, pickles, and sweets. This left me completely bedridden. As the saying goes, “growth

and destruction go hand in hand"; those twenty days of indulgence changed my life forever. To recover from the problems that followed, I fasted at home for eight days and resolved the issue.

At that point, a strong determination arose within me — why should we be unable to live without salt, spices, oil, and ghee? I decided firmly to eat without touching them at all. For two or three months, I ate only bland food. During that time, a thought occurred to me: if we could prepare curries, stir-fries, gravies, and soups — without salt, oil, or spices — wouldn't it still be possible to eat with satisfaction?

Earlier, while studying away from home for six or seven years, I had cooked for myself regularly. That familiarity with cooking proved to be a blessing. Since I had seen that illness did not arise in the absence of salt, oil, and strong flavors, I became determined to create new kinds of tasty dishes without them. From that moment onward, I began experimenting extensively in my own kitchen, combining ingredients that offered taste without harm. After five or six months of persistent effort, fortune smiled upon me — the dishes began to taste genuinely good.

I found that I could prepare everything others ate — stir-fries, pickles, curries, gravies, sweets, savories, and tiffins — all without salt, oil, or spices. There was no longer any need to abandon food altogether. These dishes were tasty, harmless, and suitable for everyone. Illnesses reduced completely, and health flourished.

This led to a deep wish within me: if others could also prepare and eat the foods I had created for my own health, then they too could attain the health I had gained. I continued experimenting further and succeeded in making pulaos, sambar, papads, vadis, snacks, and more. From 1994 until today, I have consistently followed this discipline, eating strictly without salt and oil, exactly as I had resolved.

For the past ten years, through speeches and books, I have been explaining why these foods are essential for health, what harms arise from strong flavors, what alternatives exist, how to prepare these dishes, and what benefits they

bring. Even today, many thousands of people are eating these foods as I described and are able to reduce their illnesses at home without the need for medicines. With the hope that this opportunity reaches all of you as well, and with the intention of sharing these details, this small effort has been made. I sincerely hope you will receive it.

2. Why Do We Need Taste?

Classical science speaks of ṣadruchulu — the six tastes — which include astringent and bitter. In everyday cooking, however, we rarely use astringency or bitterness. Here, let us talk about the tastes that we commonly use in cooking. Across the world, whatever the cuisine or method of cooking, the tastes that people actually use come down to seven: salt, oil, ghee, sweetness, sourness, pungency, and spices. Of these seven, one is the mother and the remaining are its children. You already know who the mother is — it is salt, and the others are its offspring.

Now think carefully: are these seven tastes needed by the body, by the tongue, or by both? For whose sake are we really using them? After cooking, women traditionally taste the food by placing a little on their right hand and ask, “Tongue, are all the tastes balanced, or do you need something more?” The tongue replies, “I need a little more salt.” Salt is added, and the question is asked again. “Now it’s perfect,” says the tongue. No one ever asks the body whether it needs more taste or less. Every single day, it is the tongue that keeps demanding these tastes.

That is why tastes are not something the body asks for — they are demanded only by the tongue. The seven tastes we eat do not stay with the tongue for long. In a short while, the tongue wipes them all away and sits as though nothing ever touched it. But those same tastes go on to trouble the stomach and intestines, spread from there to every organ, accumulate within them, and cause continuous distress. The tongue enjoys the taste, but the body is forced to suffer the consequences.

In truth, the body does not need any taste at all. Because of these tastes, the body develops thousands of diseases. Yet, to this day, the tongue itself has never fallen ill. It deceives the body and escapes comfortably. That is why we should neither obey the tongue blindly nor eat merely for its pleasure. This is

why our elders said that if one conquers the tongue (jihva), one can conquer the world.

For the sake of a tongue no bigger than a finger, these seven tastes end up destroying a body as large as a mountain. Where taste resides, disease follows. If troubling the tiny tongue helps protect the vast body, there is no harm in doing so. Remove these seven tastes, discipline the tongue, and protect the body — health will come searching for you on its own.

These seven tastes are like the seven musical notes. From seven notes, hundreds of melodies are born. In the same way, from seven tastes, thousands of diseases arise. If you wish to remain free from disease, give up these seven tastes and safeguard your body.

3. Why Must Tastes Be Completely Given Up?

Because we consume tastes, people of all ages — irrespective of how young or old they are — are developing various kinds of diseases. To get rid of these illnesses, we turn to different medical systems and keep taking the medicines they prescribe. Yet, diseases do not disappear completely, and new ones keep emerging. Over time, even the medicines people take begin to lose their effectiveness. When this started happening, doctors reflected deeply and identified where the real fault lay.

They realized that as long as people continued to consume tastes heavily while taking medicines, the medicines would not give proper results. Once doctors understood that reducing tastes led to a reduction in disease, they began advising patients to cut down on tastes. As a result, medicines started working better and diseases began to remain under control. This has now become the standard practice. Everyone knows that tastes are responsible for causing diseases, which is why doctors ask us to reduce them.

If blood pressure rises, we are told to reduce salt. If diabetes develops, we are told to stop sugar. If fat and cholesterol increase, we are advised to avoid oil and ghee. If gas trouble occurs, sour foods are restricted. If burning sensations arise, spices and chillies are stopped. This is what everyone is told. Even homoeopathic and Ayurvedic doctors advise reducing or avoiding tastes while giving their medicines. In our attempt to recover from illness, we do two things: one, we take medicines; two, we reduce tastes by following dietary restrictions. Because of these two together, medicines seem to work and diseases reduce to some extent.

But have you ever thought about which of these two is actually doing how much of the work? At least now, think about it. Take the example of blood pressure. We take BP medicine and eat less salt, and the BP remains under

control. Is it under control because of the medicine, or because we reduced salt? Let us examine this closely.

If someone continues taking BP medicine but does not reduce salt at all — eating normally with pickles and all — what happens to BP? It rises and goes out of control. Even increasing the dose of medicine does not help much. This shows that reducing salt works like half the medicine in keeping BP under control. In other words, dietary restriction is doing half the job. Now, try the opposite. Reduce salt completely but stop the BP medicine. What happens? BP rises again. This shows that the medicine is also doing the other half of the job.

So, to control BP, medicine contributes about half, and reducing salt contributes the other half. This is something everyone already knows. What we must now understand is this: if reducing salt brings down half the disease, it means there is a very close relationship between salt and BP. So think — what would happen if salt were stopped completely? When eating salt increases BP, and reducing salt reduces BP, then stopping salt entirely should eliminate BP altogether. Logically, this is how it should work.

Have you ever tried this experiment? Most likely, you have not — because we do not truly want to get rid of diseases completely. If we genuinely wanted that, such a thought would have occurred to us long ago. I did exactly this experiment. When salt is stopped completely, BP returns to normal within 10 to 15 days, making it possible to stop the medicine. When the disease itself disappears, what need is there for medicine?

When each taste is given up completely, hundreds of diseases disappear entirely. No doctor ever tells a patient, “Eat plenty of tastes and take my medicine.” Everyone gives medicines and asks patients to reduce tastes. I am saying — stop them completely. From reducing to stopping is only a small step.

Here, consider completely giving up tastes as the medicine itself. Any specialist doctor will advise you to reduce one particular taste depending on the organ they are treating. But I ask you to give up all seven tastes entirely,

because health comes only when every part of the body is healthy. For all parts to heal, all tastes must be abandoned. Even if you do not have diseases now, it is wise to stop tastes beforehand so that diseases never arise in the future.

Do not panic thinking, “Oh! Give up everything?” If you eat food loaded with tastes, you may not know what happens to diseases, but at least you feel the satisfaction of taste. If you give up tastes completely, there will be no diseases and no medicines — instead, you will experience the taste of health. If you only reduce tastes, diseases will not go away fully, medicines will not stop, and you will not even enjoy taste properly. In the end, you will live discouraged — with neither health nor taste, and with diseases still lingering.

Why invite such trouble at all? Would it not be better to give up all seven tastes completely and be done with it?

4. The Harm Caused by Each Taste

If we want to protect this body from the onslaught of tastes, we must completely give them up. To give them up, we must first understand what harm they cause. Let us first learn about them and then gradually make the effort to abandon them.

1. Spiciness (Chilli Heat)

The substances we use for spiciness are red chilli powder, dried red chillies, and green chillies. Most people first either reduce or completely stop spicy food, believing that spiciness is bad for health. In reality, among the seven tastes, spiciness is the one that does not cause harm to the body. Completely giving it up does not bring any special health benefit, and consuming it does not cause harm either. Let us understand which of these three forms is better.

Compared to red chilli powder and dried red chillies, green chilli is far better. This is because green chilli has only about 50 percent pungency. When it ripens into a red chilli, the pungency increases to around 75 percent, and when that ripened chilli is dried, the pungency becomes 100 percent. Moreover, dried red chillies and red chilli powder do not digest well in the intestines and cause some irritation, whereas green chillies digest completely. Therefore, green chillies can be freely used every day in cooking.

Green chilli is so well-suited to the body that, if taken in excess, it signals at the mouth while eating that it is too much, and while leaving the body, it gently signals its exit near the anus as a mild burning sensation. It does not accumulate in the body. Stomach burning has no connection with green chilli. When green chilli is used in cooking, saliva in the mouth and mucus in the intestines are secreted well. Even if used slightly in excess, it does no harm. If green chilli gives a mild sting to the tongue, that very sting keeps the tongue quiet, preventing it from complaining about reduced tastes. If you want to discipline the tongue, use green chilli firmly.

2. Sourness

For sourness, we use tamarind. We buy enough tamarind for the year and add it daily to our curries. Tamarind is not food — it is medicine. It is a laxative. Nature gave it to us to relieve constipation. Can medicines be used every day? Food should be eaten daily; medicines should be used only when a problem arises. Just as scratching is needed only when there is itching — and scratching without itching causes irritation — using tamarind daily causes similar harm to the body.

The harms caused by tamarind include the following:

1. The intestines become dependent on it, and bowel movement no longer functions naturally.
2. Daily excessive stimulation of the intestines gradually reduces their natural movement, leading to constipation.
3. The protective mucus lining of the intestines gets eroded by the sourness.
4. When tamarind is added to dishes, other tastes like salt, chilli, and spices are used in double the quantity compared to normal cooking.
5. Because sourness is sharp, people eat more rice but less vegetables, leading to hard stools.
6. In sour gravies where salt is used excessively, eating dishes like brinjal, pumpkin, or yam gravies leads to increased pain and irritation.

Our ancestors used tamarind strictly as a laxative. For people suffering from constipation, they would give tamarind water at night and put them to sleep. Later, tamarind water was boiled down into a medicinal decoction and given with plain rice at night, without any other dishes, so that the intestines would be cleansed by morning. Today, we use that same tamarind decoction daily as a curry base. Do not damage the digestive system by misusing tamarind. There are much better substances to provide sourness in cooking — let us learn about them and use them.

3. Sweetness

For sweetness, we use jaggery and sugar. Both are made from sugarcane. You can eat sugarcane or drink sugarcane juice in any amount without harm,

but the jaggery and sugar manufactured from sugarcane cause damage. Sugarcane juice has to be boiled for nearly six hours to make jaggery solidify. During this prolonged boiling, all beneficial properties are destroyed. As for sugar, its harms are countless.

To convert black sugarcane juice into white sugar, many chemicals and substances are added — all of them toxic. That is why white sugar is called “white poison.” We have made this poison a daily necessity and even place sugar sweets in the mouth as a symbol of auspiciousness. People feed each other this poison in the form of sweets. Our elders offered fruits on auspicious occasions, but with our so-called modern intelligence, we have replaced them with sugar-based sweets.

Let us look at the harms caused by sugar:

1. Teeth that do not wear down even after chewing tons of food, and that do not decay even when buried in soil, are easily eroded and destroyed by sugar.
2. Sugar accumulates between teeth, feeds harmful microbes, loosens teeth, and causes them to fall out.
3. Sugar sweets produce acids that increase burning sensations and trigger intestinal inflammation and ulcers. Science itself classifies sugar as an acid-forming food.
4. Excessive mucus and phlegm are produced, leading to cough, cold, and asthma.
5. The liver can produce harmful cholesterol even from sugar.
6. Body weight increases rapidly.
7. Sugar becomes ideal food for harmful microbes in the intestines.
8. Throat infections occur frequently.

Therefore, consuming sugar and jaggery as food is a mistake. If we want sweets, nature provides harmless sources of sweetness. With their help, we can prepare sweets and live without harm.

4. Oil

The body needs fats to survive, but it does not need oil. Oil-yielding seeds are good for health, but oil itself is not. That is why if you drink even a little oil, the body immediately rejects it through vomiting or diarrhea. We keep debating which oil is healthy and see advertisements claiming “our oil is best.” Will any creature willingly drink oil if you offer it? Yet we humans consume oil in tins and tins.

Even if we use so-called cholesterol-free or fat-free oils, the liver can still convert them into harmful cholesterol. Heating any substance to 60–70 degrees destroys it quickly, eliminating 70–80 percent of its nutrients. Oil needs to reach 300 degrees to boil. If food is fried in oil heated to such extremes, what nutrition can possibly remain? Even if oil-fried food caused no benefit, we would still be fortunate if it caused no harm — but we use oil daily in everything.

Families easily consume 7–8 kilograms of oil per month. Even our ancestors, who used much less oil, were not free from heart disease. That is why cardiologists advise using no more than one spoon. They do not say “stop completely” because they fear patients may stop visiting them altogether. It is better for us to understand this ourselves and be cautious.

The harms caused by oil include:

1. Food cooked with oil takes twice as long to digest, which is why oil-rich foods suppress appetite.
2. Oil puts extreme strain on digestion. That is why foods like puris, dosas, vadas, and pulao may taste good while eating but leave heaviness, discomfort, and regret afterward.
3. The liver struggles to process oil and mix it into the blood, leading to fatty liver, liver enlargement, hardening, and lumps.
4. Cholesterol derived from oil accumulates in blood vessels, causing blockages, heart disease, and strokes.
5. 100 grams of oil contains 900 kilocalories. If a person consuming oil does not engage in hard physical work that produces sweat, this energy turns into fat and causes obesity.

6. Oil increases acid production in the stomach, leading to burning sensations and ulcers, even when the stomach is empty.

Given these harms, it is best to give up oil completely as a preventive measure. Instead, eating oil-yielding seeds provides nutrition without damage and is beneficial to health.

5. Ghee

Ghee is often said to be healthy and to prevent aging. Vitamin E, which delays aging, is abundantly present in sprouted seeds — there is no need to consume ghee and invite heart disease. Like oil, ghee causes significant harm and should be completely avoided. All the harms listed above apply equally to ghee. If something provides taste but causes harm, a wise person should stay away from it. Therefore, let us completely give up oil and ghee and use harmless alternatives in cooking that provide taste without damage.

6. Spices

When people speak of spices, they usually mention cloves, cinnamon, garlic, ginger, and coriander. Then what about cumin, mustard seeds, pepper, turmeric, ajwain, dry ginger, asafoetida, and similar items? These are often called seasoning ingredients, but in truth, they all belong to the same category — spices.

Ask women why they use these daily in cooking, and the answer is always the same: they add flavor and make the dish aromatic. What we do not understand is why these substances exist in nature. All of them belong to one category — they are natural medicines with medicinal properties. They are remedies provided by nature to protect the body when problems arise.

Our ancestors understood this secret. When there was cough, they used pepper; for stomach pain, asafoetida; to kill worms and harmful microbes in the intestines, turmeric; for loss of appetite, ginger juice; for gas and bloating, cardamom; for poor digestion, coriander; and to prevent joint problems, mustard. They used them as medicines, administered according to need. Gradually, they began mixing them into food during illness so that they could

be consumed unnoticed. Over time, this practice turned into daily usage in cooking.

Today, health is completely forgotten, and spices are poured in by the kilogram purely for taste. Using disease-curing medicines when there is no disease damages the body. The nerves and intestines are unnecessarily stimulated, leading to excessive chemical reactions within the body. People who consume spices daily often find that other medicines work only in very high doses. Excessive thoughts, increased cravings, and loss of mental control are also caused by regular use of spices in food.

Our ancestors used these as medicines and relied on other substances for aroma and flavor in cooking. We will learn about those alternatives. All these are secondary tastes. The harm caused by these tastes is far less than the harm caused by the “mother” taste — salt. Therefore, let us now try to understand salt in greater detail.

5. Salt Is Our Real Rust

For us to live healthily, the body certainly needs salt. But that salt must come naturally through food — it should not be something we add from outside. In everything we eat — leafy greens, vegetables, fruits, grains, tubers, and the like — salt is present naturally in sufficient quantity. There is no food in nature that is completely without salt. Whatever food a living being eats, the salt required by its body is supplied through that food itself. That is why no other living creature seeks or consumes salt separately from outside. The salt obtained naturally from food is enough for their life. It is enough for us too.

As civilization advanced, humans developed the habit of adding salt to everything — for preserving food and for enhancing taste. In this way, we have become accustomed to consuming about 10 to 20 grams of salt every day. Scientists have determined that the natural amount of salt the human body actually uses each day is only about 280 milligrams — that is, barely a quarter of a gram. This quantity is easily obtained from the food we eat, whether it is cooked or eaten raw. Salt does not get destroyed by cooking.

When leafy vegetables are cooked, only a very small amount of added salt is enough for taste, whereas when lentils (Dals) are cooked, more salt is usually added. This is because leafy vegetables naturally contain more salt, while lentils contain less in comparison. The excess salt that we have been eating every day since birth is unable to leave the body. It accumulates inside and slowly begins to corrode cells and organs in various ways, just like rust. Since other living beings do not consume added salt, their bodies do not rust, and therefore they do not suffer from diseases. We alone, by consuming salt knowingly, are bringing complete harm upon ourselves.

Our ancestors, who discovered salt, also understood its harmful nature long ago and warned people to live cautiously with it. They called salt “Shani” (a harbinger of suffering) and also associated it with misfortune. They said that eating salt leads to debt and hardship. Salt was never given directly into

another person's hand, and even if offered, it was not readily accepted. When a daughter was sent to her marital home, everything would be given — except salt. Salt was given a lowly status and kept hidden away in a corner of the courtyard. Long ago, it was said that those who keep salt at a distance live healthy lives.

Yogis and sages lived happily without consuming salt. Mahatma Gandhi gave up salt completely to restore his health. Vinoba Bhave also did not consume salt. Both of them stated that after giving up salt, they were able to live happily without illness. Wherever salt comes into contact — whether with an object or a vehicle — it causes destruction. Salt eats away iron, breaks down walls, corrodes plastic, and even disintegrates earthen pots. If kept in a steel vessel, it eventually creates holes in it. When such a destructive substance is eaten for the sake of taste and stored within the body, is it any surprise that it begins to eat us from within? It destroys the body.

No other taste has such destructive power. Salt is, in truth, a poison for us. If this fact is truly understood, it becomes a great blessing for health.

6. What Is the Alternative for Each Taste?

We have now understood the harm caused by the seven tastes. Even though food becomes tasty when these tastes are added, health deteriorates. Therefore, instead of these tastes, we can use other ingredients that provide a similar sense of taste and prepare food in a healthier way. Through television and weekly magazines, people are taught only how to make food that is more flavorful and disease-causing, but no one teaches how to cook food that reduces illness. In earlier times, mothers knew three kinds of cooking depending on the situation — everyday food for health, special diet food when illness occurred, and tasty food for festivals and auspicious occasions. Today, women mostly learn and prepare only taste-oriented food for every occasion. Not knowing how to cook health-giving food causes great harm to the entire family. That is why whole families are ending up in hospitals.

If women hold in their hands the knowledge of cooking food that gives health to everyone, they can make the entire society healthy. That is why it is most beneficial for women to learn these methods of cooking. If, instead of salt and oil, women can introduce alternative ingredients and transform daily cooking, the entire family can become healthy at home itself. There is nothing that women cannot achieve if they decide to do so. These dishes can create taste even when nothing seems to be present. If you do not eat these foods yourself and cook them only for others in the house, they will not turn out tasty. First, women must change and learn to prepare these dishes in a tasty way — after that, it becomes easy for everyone else to change. Now let us understand what can be used as a substitute for each taste.

1. Spiciness: Instead of red chili powder and dried chilies, green chilies can be used freely. Use green chilies more than before. When this is done, the dish will not feel as though it lacks salt.

2. Sourness: Instead of tamarind pulp, one can use tender tamarind, tamarind leaves, raw mango, native tomatoes, gooseberries, wood apples, and lemons. If sourness is used generously from these sources, food can be eaten easily without feeling the absence of salt.

3. Sweetness: Instead of sugar and jaggery, honey and dates can be used. Wherever sugar is used, honey may be substituted, and wherever jaggery is used, dates can be used instead.

4. Oil: Instead of oil, oil-giving seeds and powders made from those seeds can be used. Roasted groundnuts can be powdered and stored, and roasted sesame seeds can be powdered and stored separately in containers. Sprinkling these daily on vegetables gives excellent taste. Grated coconut can be used generously in all dishes — coconut adds richness and pleasant flavor.

5. Ghee: Instead of ghee, thick milk and thick curd can be used freely.

6. Spices: Cumin seeds, coriander seeds, mustard seeds, pepper, cloves, cinnamon, poppy seeds, garlic, and similar items should be avoided. Instead, roasted black gram and roasted Bengal gram can be powdered and stored in a container and used — this gives a pleasant aroma. Roasted black gram and Bengal gram can also be used as tempering ingredients. Big onions (water onions) may be used. For aroma, curry leaves, coriander leaves, and mint can be used freely.

7. Salt: One might think rock salt is an alternative for salt, but that is a mistake. No substitute is needed for salt, because salt exists naturally in every food item. It is present in all vegetables, green chilies, sour ingredients, sweet ingredients, milk, curd, and everything else. Salt alone exists in all foods, whereas the other six tastes appear only in certain items. As you continue eating this way, within a few months your tongue will begin to recognize the natural salt present in foods. Vegetables that naturally contain more salt — such as spinach, amaranth, gongura, beetroot, and others — can be added to every dish or their juice can be mixed in, so the food does not feel salt-less.

Adding slightly sour curd to some dishes or chutneys also prevents the feeling that salt is missing.

By using the natural salt present in foods, the body utilizes it and provides good health. Cooking with these kinds of ingredients may feel new for the first 10 to 20 days, but after that it will come naturally to you. You will be able to eat more pleasantly than with previous cooking methods. Try it.

7. How Should Different Dishes Be Prepared?

Although many people wish to eat food without salt and oil as we suggest, they hesitate to follow this discipline because they do not know how to cook vegetables in this way. Even when women know a little, they often lack the confidence to cook and serve such food, and so they step back from following these dietary rules. If you ask anyone, nearly 90 percent will say, "We are drinking five liters of water as you said, eating sprouts, and replacing dinner with fruits, but we are still adding a little salt." Some men attend my talks and begin enthusiastically, wanting to follow everything. The women at home do not attend these talks, and they do not fully understand what is being said. That is where the real problem begins.

It would be very good if both husband and wife understand and practice this method together. No matter how willing a man may be, he can eat only what is cooked and served at home. With the good intention that both men and women should be able to cook easily in this way and eat without having to plead with anyone, I am explaining the methods of preparing vegetables here.

Generally, in daily cooking we prepare varieties such as dry vegetable curries, stews, stir-fries, lentils, and pickles. If we can cook at least one type, or preferably two types, of vegetables each day, we can adapt to this style of cooking quickly without boredom. Now let us understand how to prepare each type of dish.

Dry Vegetable Curries

Vegetables such as ridge gourd, bottle gourd, snake gourd, ivy gourd, brinjal, raw banana, leafy greens, cluster beans, and similar items can be prepared as dry curries.

Method:

Cut the vegetables into small pieces. Prepare appropriate quantities of chopped onion and green chili as well. Mix everything together and place it on the stove over a low flame, making sure to cover the vessel with a lid. The moisture present in the vegetables will slowly turn into steam and cook them gently. If the vegetable has very little water content, a small amount of water may be added. When the vegetables are about three-fourths cooked, add sufficient milk and cover again.

On a separate stove, dry-roast one spoon of black gram, two spoons of Bengal gram, and a little curry leaf in a pan without oil and keep it aside. Once the curry is fully cooked, add this tempering to it. Sprinkle two or three spoons of groundnut powder or grated coconut over the curry, mix once, add coriander leaves, and remove from the stove.

If milk is unavailable or not preferred, skip the milk and instead add sufficient tomato pieces to the curry at the same stage and let it cook. Then follow the rest of the method as described above. If eating only one curry per meal, about half a kilogram of vegetables per person is sufficient, including onions. Groundnut powder can be prepared once a week and stored in a container. Adding a little roasted black gram and Bengal gram while making the powder improves the taste.

Instead of cooking with only one vegetable, two or three vegetables can also be combined. Those who lack time can prepare vegetable pieces as described, cook them in a pressure cooker, and after removing them, add tempering and powder and eat with rice. If excess water remains after pressure cooking, that liquid can be separated, seasoned lightly, and consumed as a thin soup with lemon juice. This way, vitamins are preserved.

Stew-Type Vegetables (Pulusu)

Vegetables such as ridge gourd, bottle gourd, cucumber, raw banana, bitter gourd, and okra are suitable for stews. Drumstick pieces, when available in season, add excellent flavor and should definitely be used. Tomatoes are essential for stew-type dishes. If tomatoes are unavailable, boiled and

mashed tender tamarind or raw tamarind pulp may be used. A combination of boiled tomato pulp and these substitutes enhances taste further.

As an example, the method for preparing bottle gourd stew is explained below. Other stews can be prepared similarly.

Method:

Peel the bottle gourd and cut it into fairly large stew-sized pieces. Slit green chilies lengthwise. For one kilogram of bottle gourd pieces, boil and cool half a kilogram of tomatoes along with two chopped onions, then grind them into a paste. You may also add pieces of drumstick, okra, or brinjal along with the bottle gourd.

Place all the vegetable pieces in a spacious vessel, add a little water, cover with a lid, and cook on a low flame. After about fifteen minutes, check whether the vegetables are cooked. Add more water if required. Now add five or six spoons of honey over the vegetables and let them cook for five minutes. Then pour the prepared tomato paste or mango pulp or raw tamarind pulp mixed with about one glass of water. Stir well from all sides with a ladle and let the stew boil well for ten to fifteen minutes. A slightly thick consistency tastes better than a very thin one.

Before removing from the stove, add four spoons of groundnut powder and plenty of coriander leaves, mix once, and remove. Prepare tempering by dry-roasting one spoon of black gram, one spoon of Bengal gram, and curry leaves, and add it to the stew. Dates may be used instead of honey for sweetness. Remove the seeds from dates, mash them, soak in hot water, and use the resulting paste. Dates are economical and give excellent taste; ten to twelve dates are sufficient for one kilogram of vegetables.

Lentil Dishes (Dal Dishes)

Vegetables such as cucumber, tomato, and all types of leafy greens are especially suitable for lentil preparations. Cucumber lentils, tomato lentils, and leafy green lentils can be made separately, or cucumber and tomato can be

combined. Leafy greens may be combined — four or five types together with some tomatoes — or prepared individually.

For lentils to taste good without salt, the quantity of vegetables or greens should be more, and the quantity of lentils should be less. After cooking, the dish should visibly contain more vegetables than lentils. Tomatoes are essential for flavor. If tomatoes are unavailable, raw mango pieces or boiled raw tamarind pulp should be used. If none of these are available, squeeze generous lemon juice while eating.

If four or five people in the household follow this method, a lentil dish along with a chutney or stew as a second dish makes for a very satisfying meal. Those who eat sprouts daily need lentil dishes only once or twice a week. Men often find lentil dishes particularly easy and time-efficient to cook.

Method:

Take one teacup of lentils and add enough water to submerge them in a pressure cooker vessel. Chop at least half a kilogram of two types of vegetables or leafy greens, add five or six green chilies and one chopped onion, and place everything into the lentil vessel. Cover and cook this vessel along with rice in the pressure cooker.

Dry-roast one spoon of black gram, one spoon of Bengal gram, and curry leaves without oil, then add this tempering to the cooked lentils and mix well.

Stir-Fries

Vegetables such as carrot, beetroot, cabbage, okra, ivy gourd, snake gourd, cluster beans, broad beans, bitter gourd, and potato can be prepared as stir-fries. If dry curries become monotonous, stir-fries can be prepared once a week. A non-stick pan works best for this.

Method:

Cut the chosen vegetable into very small pieces. Place them in a thick vessel with four or five slit green chilies, add a little water, cover, and cook on a low

flame until the vegetables are just firm and not overcooked. Ensure no water remains.

In a non-stick pan, dry-roast two spoons of black gram and two spoons of Bengal gram. Then add two spoons of milk cream, mix once, and add the cooked vegetable pieces. Stir-fry for about ten minutes until dry. Sprinkle grated fresh coconut and coriander leaves and remove from the stove. The cream skimmed from household milk is sufficient. This tempering is recommended only for stir-fries, not for other dishes. Bitter gourd and okra benefit from being briefly boiled in thin buttermilk before stir-frying. Groundnut and black gram powder may also be sprinkled along with coconut.

Chutneys

Simple chutneys can be made using combinations such as cucumber and tomato, tomato and coriander, coconut and raw mango, brinjal and tomato, ivy gourd and tomato, and gongura with sesame powder.

Tempering Ingredients:

Black gram, Bengal gram, groundnuts, curry leaves. Tomatoes are generally required for most chutneys. Raw mango or raw tamarind may be used seasonally for sourness instead of tomatoes.

Example — Cucumber and Tomato Chutney:

Chop one large cucumber, seven or eight green chilies, and a quarter kilogram of tomatoes. Cook them on a low flame, adding a little water if necessary. Dry-roast two spoons of black gram, four spoons of Bengal gram, and a few groundnuts, grind them, then add the cooked vegetables and coriander leaves and grind coarsely. Add lemon juice before eating.

Brinjal, ivy gourd, and tomato chutneys can be prepared in the same way.

Coconut and Mango Chutney:

Grind coconut pieces, raw mango pieces, and green chilies without adding water. Add tempering of black gram, Bengal gram, and curry leaves. One

coconut is sufficient for one mango.

Gongura Chutney:

Cook gongura leaves and green chilies, then grind them into a paste. Mix sesame powder and add chopped raw onion before eating.

Vegetables such as snake gourd, beetroot, and cabbage can also be finely chopped, cooked lightly with green chilies, tempered as described, cooled, mixed with curd, and garnished with coriander to make curd chutneys.

Leafy greens should ideally be used daily. Those who do not eat onions can prepare all dishes without them using the same methods. To avoid the feeling of missing salt in dry curries, beetroot juice or spinach may be added. These recipes are explained briefly to help avoid daily confusion and difficulty in cooking.

Detailed instructions for preparing tiffins, sweets, pulaos, halvas, and many other dishes using this method are available in my book Food – Thought. Those who wish to follow this system fully and eliminate illness should study that book and practice all varieties of cooking. Initially, the food may not feel very tasty and cooking may seem difficult, but gradually, with practice, you will be able to cook delicious food. Make a sincere effort for good health.

8. How Should These Dishes Be Eaten?

Anyone suffering from any illness can eat these dishes to reduce their ailments. Likewise, even those who have no illness can eat these dishes as a preventive measure so that diseases do not arise in the future. In the beginning, these dishes may feel somewhat uncomfortable. The tongue does not accept them immediately. The taste buds on the tongue die and regenerate approximately once every ten days. During the first ten days, they resist because of the habit of eating salted food earlier. After ten days, the new taste cells that develop from eating these salt-free dishes find these foods flavorful. Therefore, even if there is some difficulty for ten to fifteen days, be patient for the sake of your health and make an effort to eat this way.

When people first learn habits such as smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol, or using intoxicants, they endure discomfort and unpleasantness and still persist until they become accustomed to them. Compared to that, eating these dishes — which give great comfort to life — is not such a difficult task. Before starting these dishes, for ten to fifteen days drink five liters of water daily, drink fruit juices whenever possible, eat sprouted seeds, and consume fruits in good quantity. By doing this, the body will not feel weak. Those who build this habit can eat these dishes without experiencing fatigue.

Do not attempt to eat these dishes with white rice. They will feel extremely bland and difficult to eat, and weakness will be more pronounced. It is better to eat them with unpolished rice, cracked wheat rice, or wheat flour rotis (phulkas). Those who need to reduce excess weight or diabetes may eat with three or four phulkas. Those who do not have proper teeth can eat with wheat rice. People who do hard physical work, those who are thin, and those in their prime years may eat with unpolished rice. Serve more vegetables. The more vegetables you eat, the less bland the food will feel, and it is healthier.

At lunchtime, cook leafy vegetables every day. For beginners, leafy vegetables are easier to eat. Those who eat rotis should prepare more dry curries and stir-fries. Whenever you eat salt-free dishes, keep two or three lemon wedges on your plate and squeeze a little at a time while eating. Lemon juice prevents the feeling of missing salt. If you eat spicy food, you will not notice blandness or the absence of salt. Raw onion pieces may also be chewed.

If any curry does not feel tasty at any time, do not throw it away. Adding a little curd or honey makes it easier to eat. Use curd freely. While eating, keep the curries hot; warm food is much easier and tastier to eat. Beginners can eat these curries for both meals without feeling weak. Make a sincere effort to eat well.

9. These Words Are for Your Own Good

Many people, with the intention of improving their health, have been practicing drinking plenty of water, eating fruits, drinking juices, and consuming sprouted seeds for a long time and are experiencing good results. However, these practices alone do not completely eliminate all diseases. Each of these practices has its own benefits, and they do contribute positively. But until the tastes that damage health are completely given up, many diseases will not reduce without medicines. When we say to eat salt-free food, it does not mean merely avoiding salt in buttermilk rice. It means completely eliminating salt from curries as well and starting to cook and eat food exactly in the manner we have explained.

Those who have illnesses should strictly follow this method until their diseases are completely reduced — approximately for two to three months. Wherever you go, eat curd rice if needed, but do not break the discipline. Keep all seven tastes completely away and follow the dietary rules with strict regularity. People suffering from BP, diabetes, heart disease, and other chronic ailments will gain proper understanding by thoroughly reading the books I have written, such as *Health Is Happiness*, *Diabetes*, and the cooking books. These books explain in detail which diseases require which dietary practices and at what times. They also provide solutions to the small difficulties that may arise while practicing these methods.

Before starting these dietary practices, those who are on medication should first undergo blood tests and other relevant tests. People taking medicines should get BP, sugar levels, and similar parameters checked every five to six days, consult doctors regularly, and reduce medicines only on medical advice. Acting on one's own judgment can be harmful. Until the condition is fully corrected, tests should be done regularly and medicines should be gradually discontinued under medical supervision. It is not good to abruptly stop all

medicines and start this diet suddenly, nor is it good to continue medicines normally while following this diet without adjustments.

After you achieve complete results and all diseases are gone, if you return to eating regular food every day, the diseases will return immediately. In such cases, you will have to restart medicines or consult doctors again. Once full health is achieved, eating regular food occasionally during festivals or auspicious occasions for a single day and then returning to your regular diet will not cause harm.

Note: It is not possible to include all details in these small books. Therefore, those with chronic illnesses and those who are using medicines should read my other writings in detail and then practice this method systematically. These words are shared with the intention that your diseases reduce without causing you any difficulty. Follow the method carefully and attain complete health.

10. Benefits of These Foods

The fact that I have been eating this food for the past ten years, deriving excellent taste from it, experiencing a taste far greater than flavor itself — the taste of health — and being able to travel continuously for an entire month, working more than 18 hours a day without even a single day of exhaustion, is entirely due to these foods. If someone like me, who had numerous health problems, could regain such good health through this method, it gives me firm confidence that everyone else can attain even better health than I did.

Over these ten years, thousands of people have eaten this food to address their health problems and shared their results. The outcomes have been astonishing. Diseases that doctors had declared incurable have reduced, often to the point of surprising the very doctors themselves. These include:

1. The belief that diabetes can never be cured is false. Through this food, diabetes reduces to the extent that those who were taking tablets no longer need them within 30 to 40 days. Even after eating fruits of all kinds, diabetes does not return.
2. Blood pressure, no matter how long it has existed, reduces completely and remains normal without the need for medicines. For those who do not have BP, eating this food ensures that it never develops in their lifetime.
3. Excess body weight reduces very easily. People are losing 7 to 8 kilograms within a month.
4. Those who have suffered from joint pains for five to six years, experience complete relief within three to four months and are able to climb hills again. For those with more advanced conditions, recovery takes longer.
5. Even asthma present from birth reduces in 95 percent of people within 10 to 15 days, without the need for medicines.
6. Allergies that have existed for many years and have not reduced despite extensive medication are completely resolved within one to two months. Food allergies, dust allergies, skin allergies, cold allergies, object-related allergies, clothing allergies — all types are reducing rapidly.

7. Skin diseases, which generally do not resolve regardless of duration, including stubborn chronic skin conditions, are reducing within five to six months to one year.
8. Nasal congestion, chronic sneezing, and sinus issues that have persisted for years and did not resolve even after surgeries are improving.
9. In people with heart disease, improvements are so significant that doctors themselves are able to reduce 70 to 80 percent of medications.
10. Digestive system disorders and liver diseases resolve easily, because this food contains no salt, oil, or ghee, allowing these organs to function without strain.
11. Within five to six months, you develop complete confidence that no disease will come to you in your lifetime.
12. The body feels light and comfortable throughout the entire day. Even after eating a full meal, digestion happens quickly, and soon it feels as though nothing was eaten at all.
13. The body becomes completely clean internally and remains free from unpleasant odors.
14. As this is a fully sattvic diet, anger, irritation, and tension reduce; intoxication-like heaviness disappears; sleep requirements reduce; and both body and mind feel as if they are floating in air. As stated in the Bhagavad Gita, this is food that does not produce thirst.
15. This method instills firm belief in everyone that our health truly lies in our own hands. The only delay now is in your decision to embrace it.