

## DAMPNESS AND PHLEGM

### General Principles

To treat Dampness and Phlegm, with diet two aspects must be considered. Firstly, foods, which create Dampness and Phlegm, such as dairy, processed carbohydrates, sweets and rich or overly supplementing foods, should be avoided. Secondly, a diet which supports peak Spleen and Stomach function must be adhered to.

Where complete removal of offending foods is too restrictive, certain modifications and combination can be made. Specifically, bitter, pungent or drying foods can be added to rich or cloying foods to prevent Dampness from forming. Common examples of this approach include combining meats with mustard, horseradish or bitter and pungent vegetables such as turnips and pumpkin, using pungent tipping on pasta (made with plenty of onions and garlic, or pesto) combining in cheese and chutney, sipping wine with meat meals green tea with fried food, and selecting bitter ales. With a little thought, it is actually quite easy to modify a typical western diet so that it is less deleterious and damp generating.

### Proportions

Carbohydrates should be used moderately as they tend to be sweet, and an excessive amount can create or aggravate Dampness. In general, between 30-40% of the dietary bulk can be composed of carbohydrates, the best sources are the more drying varieties – rice, rye, barley, millet and oats.

Vegetables, with a mixture of sweet, bitter and pungent varieties, can make up 40-50% of the diet. The remainder can be a small amount of high quality animal protein, around 10% is right. Soy proteins, especially tofu, can be too cooling and moistening when used in excessive amounts. Nuts and seeds should be avoided.

### General Comments

The General principles and foods that apply to maintaining healthy Spleen qi are also applicable.

**Yes:** Emphasis bitter and pungent flavors; all food cooked and warm; low intake of fats and oils, dairy and sugar; eat less at each sitting

**No:** late night meals, deep-fried and junk food.

### Beneficial

Buckwheat, barley, corn, rye, sourdough bread, caraway rye, pumpernickel, dry roasted oats, lettuce, celery, pumpkin, onion, shallot, garlic, turnip, watercress, aduki bean, broad bean, radish, extra virgin olive oil, mustard, horseradish, quail, clam, lean meat, white and black pepper, clove, cardamom, nutmeg, dill seed, coriander, oregano, thyme, basil, fresh ginger, Sparingly: sweet potato, yams, kumera, potato, red and green tea

### Lung, Sinuses

Radish, daikon, turnip, onion, shallot, garlic, mustard greens, horseradish, ginger, fenugreek, fennel, cayenne, watercress

### Urinary Bladder

Aduki bean, fennel seed, ginger, fenugreek, peas

### Restrict or Avoid

Wheat, ice cream and dairy products (except raw goat's milk and yogurt), sugar and concentrated sweeteners, fatty meat (especially pork and duck), eggs, tofu, tempeh, soy milk, lard, butter, margarine, chocolate, nuts and seeds (especially peanuts), avocado, raw and dried fruit (especially banana and tropical fruits), salt, vinegar and beer.

\*The above information is taken from the Clinical Handbook of Internal Medicine by Will Maclean and Jane Lyttleton