

YIN DEFICIENCY

General Principles

In treating yin deficiency we recommend foods, which supply concentrated nutrition to maintain or improve tissue integrity, and encourage increased fluid and moisture levels. In general principles the yin nourishing diet is similar to that used to nourish Blood—a higher proportion of protein, a wide range of green leafy and root vegetables and the more nourishing grains such as wheat. In addition, moistening and lubricating elements are useful. The concentrated nutrition and oils in seeds and beans both build and lubricate. Animal proteins are ideal, although excessive amounts or highly concentrated forms such as eggs, cheese and bone marrow, can cause overheating and Phlegm accumulation. It is wise to use mixture of soy and leguminous proteins, and animal proteins.

As with the manufacture of qi and Blood, yin must be extracted from food by the spleen and Stomach. The diet therefore follows the previously mentioned principles for maintaining a healthy Spleen, with the addition of some specific foods.

The foods listed in the beneficial section are suitable for all types of yin deficiency. Those listed under the various subheadings are thought to be especially good for the relevant organ system; however there is a degree of overlap and the distinctions should not be relied upon too much.

Proportions

Complex carbohydrates from a grain or vegetable source, and green leafy vegetables, watery vegetables and fruits should be in about equal proportions.

Protein, seeds, nuts, dairy (10-20%)

Meat Eggs

Vegetables fruits (40%)

Squash Mushrooms Bananas and Avocado

Carbohydrate (40%)

Breads Noodles Corn and Wheat

General Comments

The focus of a yin nourishing diet is towards concentrated nourishment: seeds and beans, seeds and beans, a higher proportion of high quality protein. Use plenty of water in cooking, lots of soups and stews.

Beneficial

Wheat, oats, rice, millet, barley, pork, chicken, duck, pigeon, bone marrow, eggs, butter, milk and cheese in small amounts, yogurt, tofu, tempeh, nuts and seeds, Spanish mackerel, sardine, oyster, mussel, clam, cuttlefish, squid, kelp, spirulina, zucchini, marrow, squash, potato, sweet potato, melon, string bean, beetroot, mushroom, white and black fungus (wood ears), aduki beans, black beans, apple, banana, mulberry, mango, coconut, mung bean, peanut, olive oil, flaxseed oil, almond oil.

Stomach Yin

Slippery elm powder, white wood ears, barley, millet, tofu, mung beans, asparagus, sweet potato, butter, milk, orange, mandarin, lychee, apple, banana, pineapple, plum, pomegranate

Lung Yin

Pears, peach, apple, banana, fig, pawpaw, strawberry, tomato, string bean, seaweed, kelp, white and black fungus (wood ears), spirulina, soy milk, tofu, tempeh, pork, oyster, butter, milk, cheese, pine nuts

Kidney Yin

Pork, pork kidney, duck, millet, barley, tofu, string bean, black bean, black soybean, kidney bean, black sesame seed, black fungus (wood ears)

Restrict or Avoid

Warming, drying, bitter, pungent items: chilies, curry and spices cinnamon, garlic, ginger, onion, shallots (scallion), leeks, basil, clove, wasabi, coffee, lamb prawns (shrimp), veal, pigeon, game bird, vinegar, citrus, pickles, coffee, tea, cigarettes, alcohol, vitamin B, corticosteroids, recreational stimulants (amphetamines, cocaine, ecstasy), non steroidal anti-inflammatory (Stomach yin)

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