A person with long brown hair, wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and black pants, is sitting in a meditative pose on a sandy beach. The person is facing away from the camera, looking out over a large body of water. In the background, there are several buildings, including a prominent one with a red roof and a tower-like structure. The sky is clear and blue. A teal-colored text box is overlaid on the top half of the image.

# YOGA & AYURVEDA WELLNESS GUIDE

FOR SUMMER  
(PITTA) SEASON

Deborah Keene | Ayurveda Yoga Center

This wellness guide is a supplement to the information presented in the *Yoga and Ayurveda Camp for Pitta Season*.

All rights reserved. Please do not copy or reproduce in any form without the written permission of the owner.

Contact:

Ayurveda Yoga Center  
Deborah Keene  
61 Stevens Pond Rd.  
Liberty, Maine 04949

[deborah@ayurvedayogacenter.com](mailto:deborah@ayurvedayogacenter.com)

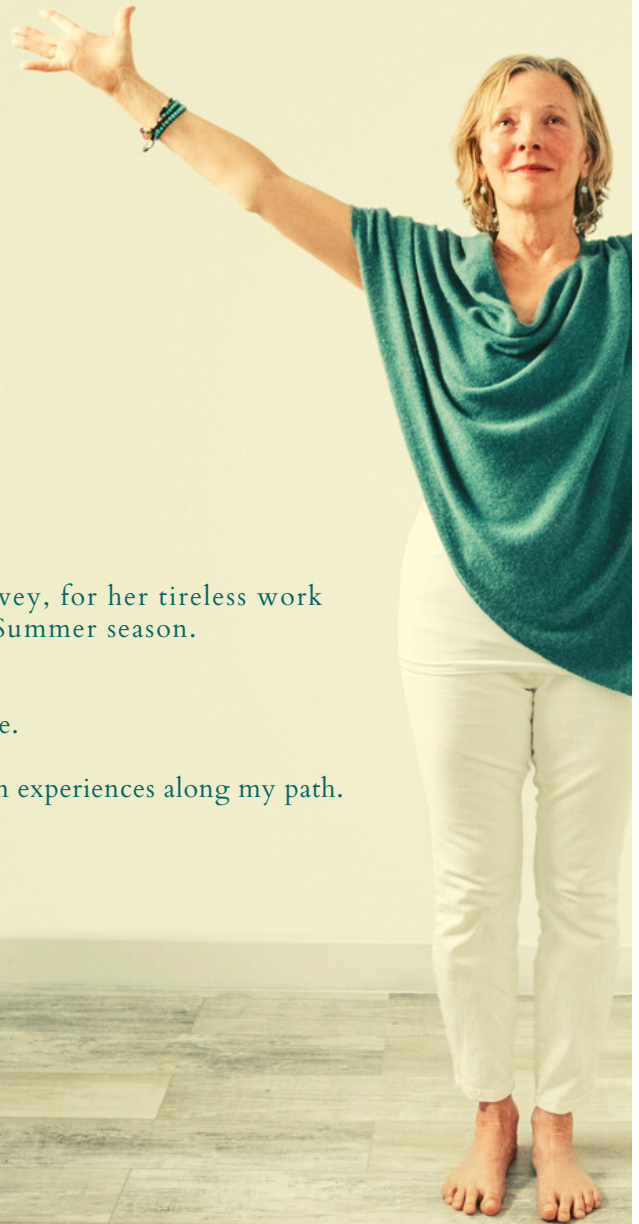
<https://ayurvedayogacenter.com/>



A thousand thanks-yous to my teammate, Sheryl Peavey, for her tireless work and artistic gifts in creating this beautiful guide for Summer season.

This guide is dedicated with love to all beings everywhere.

All of this material I learned from many teachers and from experiences along my path.



# YOGA AND AYURVEDA FOR PITTA SEASON

Ayurveda says look to Mother Nature's cycles and rhythms to guide our daily and seasonal living. Signs and symptoms of health and well-being as well as imbalances are expressions of the way we live day in and day out. We need to understand our own unique make-up so that we will eat and live in ways that serve us best. We also want to modify our choices according to the seasons so that we will be balanced and well at the fundamental level.

I hope this Wellness Guide for the Summer (Pitta) Season serves to support you in your journey.

With love,

*Deborah*

Ayurveda	4
Pitta Dosha	6
Yoga for Pitta	7
General Daily Routine	8
Summer Tips	9
Pitta Food List	12
Recipe	13
Pitta Herbs	14
Resources	20

(c) Deborah Keene  
Ayurveda Yoga Center  
Liberty, Maine





# AYURVEDA

Ayurveda teaches that each of us has a unique mind-body-spirit constitution. When our constitution is in balance we are healthy and well. When out of balance, we can experience a number of conditions which can eventually lead to disease.

Ayurveda looks for the root causes of our conditions and offers natural ways to help restore balance through the use of proper diet, herbs and spices, daily routines, exercise, and natural therapies.

Ayurveda focuses on the *Pillars of Health*: Food, Sleep, Exercise all designed to the unique and specific needs of each individual, their current conditions and the current season.



No medication, no herb, no supplement will replace these pillars when it comes to balancing our bodies and minds although they can help and are often needed. Still, it is the way we live day in and day out that matters the most. This means the food we eat, the company we keep, and the way we live all have a tremendous influence on our minds and bodies.



# SEE THE WORLD FROM AN ANCIENT PERSPECTIVE

## ELEMENTS & DOSHAS

---

Another of Ayurveda's grounding philosophy states that all things in existence are made up of the five elements of ether or space, air, fire, water and earth. These elements are the building blocks for all that is contained within matter including nature herself as well as our physical bodies. They are the reason for our form, how the mind works, the energy we have, and how we move, think, and feel.

All things in life are influenced by the five elements and the qualities associated with them. All living beings are made up of these 5 elements in slightly different proportions. This makes each of us unique with individual needs regarding diet and lifestyle.

The elements have qualities associated with them such as heavy, light, cold, hot, oily, dry, smooth, and rough that Ayurveda looks very closely at when examining imbalances in the body.

The elements with their qualities make up the Doshas -Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. The Doshas are the three metabolic types which govern the unique psychophysiology of the individual. All functions of our minds and bodies are dependent upon the balanced or unbalanced state of the doshas.

# SUMMER PITTA DOSHA

Pitta is a combination of fire and water and means “that which digests things”.

Pitta is related to agni, the digestive fire, and governs metabolism, maintaining the body temperature, and processing on all levels. Pitta is that which transforms things whether it’s turning food into energy and nutrients or transforming thoughts, experiences, and emotions. Our ability to see clearly is dependent upon a healthy digestive process.

- Pittas are of medium build, and in balance are warm, friendly, ambitious, and outgoing.
- Out of balance due to the fiery nature Pitta can become critical, prone to anger, or demanding and experience indigestion, ulcers and skin problems.
- Pittas need moderation and to be mindful of pushing too much and not overheating.
- Keyword: Intense
- Main site in the body: small intestine
- Season: Summer
- Examples: tiger, sun, volcano, rose, Rhetta Butler, chili peppers
- Tastes associated with fire and water – sour, salty, pungent (spicy) may cause imbalances
- Tastes to be emphasized to balance – sweet, bitter, and astringent

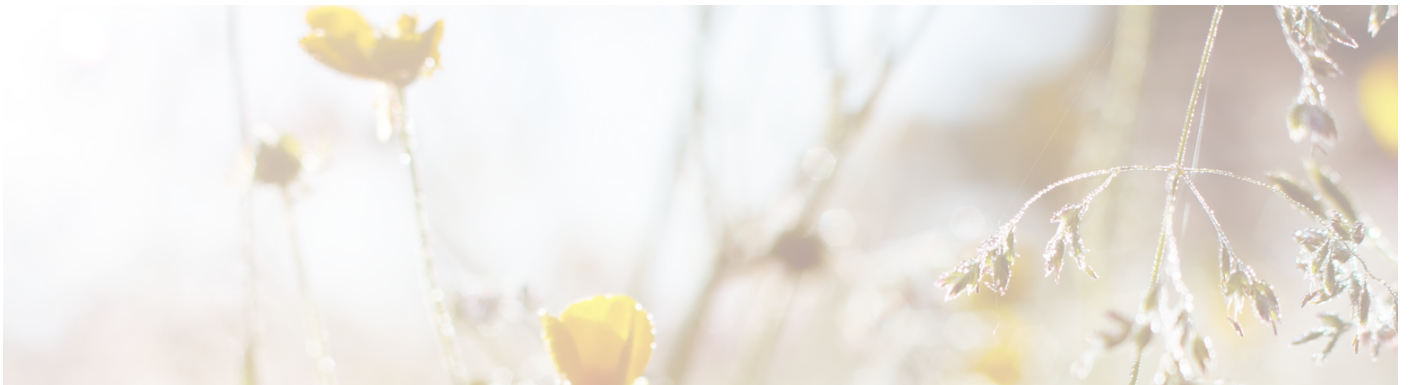




# YOGA FOR PITTA

## Relax, Reduce Agitation, Calm and Cool

- Emphasize- moderate pace, work at 75% capacity, easy flowing manner, work without strain
- Moon Salutation with a soft gaze, and awareness on balancing relaxation with effort
- Standing and sitting poses that focus on legs open out wide to release the inner heat
- Poses to open hips
- Cooling poses including forward bends and lateral bends which reduce excess fire in the mind and belly
- Cooling inversions such as Viparita Karani – legs up the wall pose
- Soft cooling gaze or eyes closed when appropriate
- Focus on exhalation and release as you practice



# GENERAL ROUTINE

- Rise with the sun: preferably by 6:00
- Irrigate your body with a tall glass of water (a squeeze of lemon may be added)
- Go to the bathroom, clean your teeth, scrape your tongue
- Begin the day in a focused way. Our spiritual practices have extra power in the early morning hours.
- Set the intention of how you want your day to play out.
- Read a spiritual quote or reading to help anchor you in that intention.
- Practice yoga, breathing, meditation, take a walk.
- Maintain a consistent daily routine: sleep and wake times, (generally bed by 10:00pm, rise by 6:00am), meal times, exercise, etc.
- Dry brush your body with brush or silk gloves, with strokes moving towards the heart. Massage your body with warm oil: abhyanga – a true elixir
- Eat freshly prepared, organic foods when possible
- Eat less meat
- Breakfast with protein, lunch like a queen, early light dinner
- Avoid overworking; watch for the push
- Turn down the noise in your life: TV, computers, cell phones...

*“Begin each day by placing your mind in your heart so that you can stand in the presence of God all the day long.”*

*-Eastern Orthodox Quote*

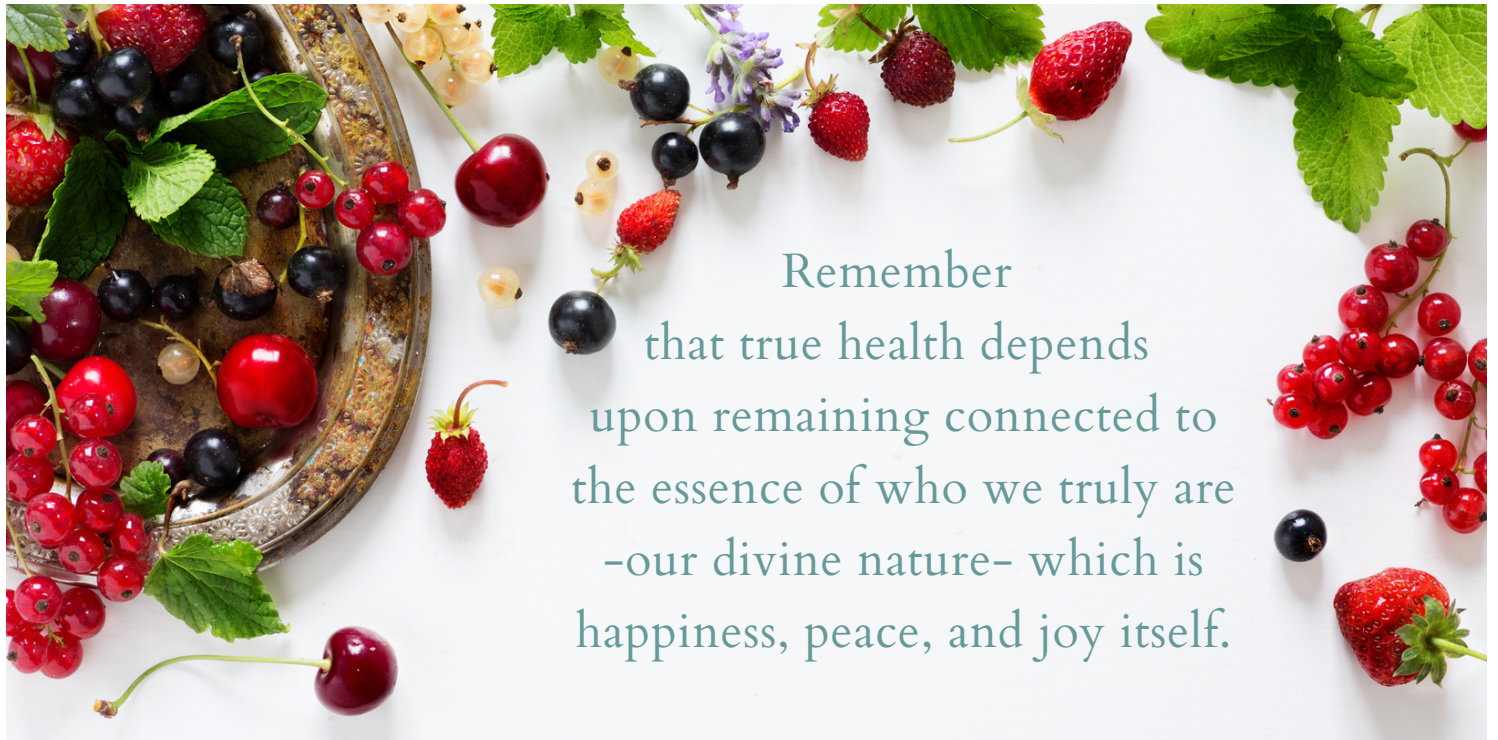


# SUMMER TIPS

**QUALITIES TO EMPHASIZE:  
COOL, CALM, SMOOTH, FLOWING, SOFT,  
GENTLE, STURDY**

During late summer focus on clearing heat and address dry conditions. Watch for signs and symptoms of imbalances: heartburn, acid reflux, skin rashes, diarrhea, sore blood shot eyes, irritability, anger, jealousy, impatience, judgement.

- Favor foods with the sweet, bitter, and astringent tastes.
- Decrease foods with the salty, sour, and pungent tastes.
- Reduce hot spicy foods, alcohol, caffeine, red meat, and fermented foods.
- Drink water throughout the day; stay hydrated!
- Include cooling spices such as cumin, coriander, and fennel for digestion.
- Swim, sit in the moonlight, or walk on early morning grass barefoot.
- Most of all, avoid the hot mid-day sun.



Remember  
that true health depends  
upon remaining connected to  
the essence of who we truly are  
-our divine nature- which is  
happiness, peace, and joy itself.

#### Summer Oils:

- Coconut
- Ghee
- Olive oil
- Sunflower oil
- Butter

#### Foods:

- Green colored veggies
- Berries
- Melons
- Watermelon
- Pomegranates

#### Cooling Herbs:

- Mint
- Cilantro
- Lemon Balm
- Brahmi (gotu kola)
- Amalaki
- Neem
- Licorice
- Dandelion
- Aloe vera
- Rose
- Hibiscus

#### Cooling Scents:

- Rose
- Lavender
- Sandalwood
- Herbs:
- Facial and body spray: distilled water with essential oils of rose, lavender

#### Cooling Colors:

- Light gray
- Blues
- Greens
- Lavender
- Pastels
- White





### Yoga asanas:

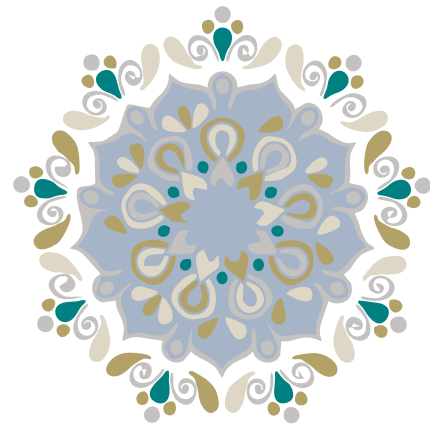
- belly down backbends
- forward bends
- twists,
- wide apart leg poses – standing, sitting, lying down- anything that opens the legs from the mid-line

### Breathing practices:

- complete yogic breath
- sheetali
- alternate nostril

### Listen:

Silence  
Ocean Waves  
Water lapping at the shore  
Running Brook or Fountain



# PITTA FOOD LIST



## VEGETABLES

- Alfalfa Sprouts, Artichokes
- Asparagus, Avocados
- Bean Sprouts, Beet Greens
- Bell Peppers, Bitter Melon
- Broccoli, Cabbage, Cauliflower
- Celery, Chicory, Cilantro
- Collard Greens, Corn, Cucumbers
- Dandelion
- Eggplant, Endive
- Fennel, Green Beans
- Jicama, Kale, Lettuce
- Mushrooms, Mustard Greens
- Okra, Parsley, Peas
- Pumpkin, Radishes (moderation)
- Seaweed, Snow Peas
- Spinach (moderation)
- Squash (Acorn & Winter)
- Sweet Potatoes, Swiss Chard
- Tomatoes (sweet)
- Turnip Greens
- Watercress, Zucchini

- **LEGUMES:** Adzuki, Bean Sprouts, Black Gram, Fava, Garbanzo. Goya, Kidney, Lentils, Lima, Mungs, Split Pea, Tofu
- **SPICES:** Anise, Asafoetida, Chamomile, Coriander, Cumin, Fennel. Peppermint, Saffron, Spearmint
- **DAIRY:** Butter, Cheese (moderation), Cottage Cheese, Ghee, Ice Cream, Milk, Rice/Soy Milk
- **HERB TEAS:** Chicory, Dandelion, Hibiscus, Mint
- **NUTS & SEEDS:** Almonds, Coconut, Flax, Macadamias, Pinon, Pumpkin, Sunflower
- **OILS:** Almond, Avocado, Canola, Coconut, Flax, Olive, Soy, Sunflower, Ghee
- **BEVERAGES:** Water (room temp or cool)
- **SWEETENERS:** Maple Syrup (small amounts). Raw Sugar, Rice Syrup
- **CONDIMENTS:** Carob, Mayonnaise
- **GRAINS:** Barley, Oat, Rice, Rye, Wheat

## FRUITS

- Apples, Apricots, Blueberries, Cantaloupe
- Cherries (ripe), Cranberries, Dates, Dried Fruit, Figs
- Grapes, Guavas, Mangoes, Melon (all), Nectarines
- Oranges (sweet), Papayas (small amounts)
- Peaches (ripe and/or peeled), Pears, Persimmons
- Pineapple (sweet), Plums (ripe), Pomegranates (sour)
- Raspberries, Strawberries, Tangerines (sweet)

## MEATS

- Beef (*\*in moderation*)
- Chicken
- Duck, Eggs (*\*both in moderation*)
- Freshwater Fish
- Lamb (*\*in moderation*)
- Pork
- Shrimp (*\*in moderation*)
- Turkey

# KITCHARI RECIPE

(from *Banyan Botanicals*)

## AYURVEDA'S HEALING MEAL

Kitchari is one of the few foods that provides both nourishment for the body and benefits digestion due to its spice combination. This makes kitchari ideal during stress, illness, change of seasons, and it is the primary food during Ayurvedic internal cleansing.

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup basmati rice
- ½ cup yellow mung dal
- 1 tablespoon Kitchari Spice Mix\*
- 2 tablespoons ghee
- 6 cups water
- 1–2 cups chopped vegetables (optional)

## PREPARATIONS

1. Wash rice and mung dal and soak overnight. Drain soak water.
2. In a medium saucepan warm the ghee. Add the Kitchari Spice Mix and sauté for one to two minutes. Add rice and mung dal and sauté for another couple of minutes. Then add 6 cups of water and bring to a boil.
3. Once the kitchari has come to a boil reduce the heat to medium-low. Cover and cook until it is tender (approx. 30–45 minutes).
4. If you are adding vegetables to your kitchari, add the longer cooking vegetables, such as carrots and beets, halfway through the cooking. Add the vegetables that cook faster, such as leafy greens, near the end.
5. Add more water if needed. Typically, kitchari is the consistency of a vegetable stew as opposed to a broth. A thinner consistency is preferable if your digestion is weak. You will notice that kitchari will thicken when it cools and you may need more water than you originally thought.

*Makes 2 servings*

### GARNISHES

*Try these garnishes for added flavor.*

- Coconut (great for pitta, good for vata, best to avoid for kapha) •
- Cilantro (great for pitta, okay for vata and kapha)
- Lime (great for everyone!) •

### \*KITCHARI SPICE MIX

The following spices may be used in place of Kitchari Spice Mix

- 1 teaspoon black mustard seeds
- 1 teaspoon cumin seed
- 1 small pinch of asafoetida (hing) powder
- 1 teaspoon turmeric powder
- 1 teaspoon coriander powder
- 4 thin slices of fresh ginger root



---

# PITTA HERBS

(FROM BANYANBOTANICALS.COM)

## Amalaki

As one of the three ingredients in Triphala, Amalaki (*Emblica officinalis*) is a potent rejuvenative that nourishes the tissues and gently removes toxins. It is generally taken in place of Triphala by those with excess heat in the digestive tract. Amalaki's cooling action removes excess pitta from the GI tract, supporting a healthy stomach lining and the proper function of digestive acids. It also cleanses the colon, eliminating excess toxins and heat while supporting healthy bowel movements.

Amalaki is a highly concentrated source of antioxidants and is deeply nourishing to the body tissues.

It promotes healthy eyes, bones, blood, teeth, hair and nails, while supporting the proper function of the liver, spleen, pancreas, heart and lungs.\*

Amalaki, a small berry from the Alma tree, protects the inner skin, improves the digestive fire and increases bile flow without aggravating pitta. Aggravated pitta is one of the major causes of excess acid in stomach, which often results in heartburn or acid reflux.



Aggravated pitta is one of the major causes of excess acid in stomach, which often results in heartburn or acid reflux. In addition to protecting the intestinal skin, amalaki also balances the body's fat metabolic pathways, supporting healthy weight, arteries, liver function and cholesterol

- Rasa (taste): sour, sweet, pungent, bitter, astringent
  - Virya (action): cooling
  - Vipaka (post-digestive effect): sweet
  - Doshas (constitutions): Balancing for all doshas, especially pitta.
-

---

## Brahmi

Those familiar with "the doctrine of signatures" may not find it surprising that a plant with a leaf that resembles a cerebellum, would have a special affinity for the brain. Brahmi (*Centella asiatica*) is a renowned mental rejuvenative traditionally used to promote the intellect, enhance mental performance and support proper function of the nervous system.

The leaves are highly sattvic (pure, harmonious) and historically have been eaten by yogis to assist in meditation. Brahmi is said to improve concentration, memory and alertness. It is a natural blood purifier and helps support clear, healthy skin.

Brahmi is also famous for promoting healthy, lustrous hair and is often applied as an oil for this purpose. The herb is cooling and relaxing, making it an excellent tonic for pitta. It also calms vata in the mind and reduces excess kapha in the body. A truly amazing herb that lives up to its name, which means "the energy of universal consciousness".\*

- Rasa (taste): bitter, astringent, sweet
- Virya (action): cooling
- Vipaka (post-digestive effect): sweet
- Doshas (constitutions): Balancing for all doshas



---

## Bhumyamalaki

Bhumyamalaki (*Phyllanthus amarus*) is the classic Ayurvedic herb for the liver. It is very bitter in taste and has an action that is cooling, soothing and cleansing. With its special affinity for the liver, Bhumyamalaki acts to cleanse, detoxify and strengthen this essential organ. It also supports proper function of the gall bladder and promotes healthy skin. An excellent herb for both pitta and kapha, Bhumyamalaki is useful for those with constitutions that would benefit from its dry and light qualities.

- \*Rasa (taste): bitter, astringent, sweet
- Virya (action): cooling
- Vipaka (post-digestive effect): sweet
- Doshas (constitutions): Balancing for Pitta and Kapha, may increase Vata.

## Guduchi

The health promoting powers of Guduchi (*Tinospora cordifolia*) were so respected by the authors of the ancient Ayurvedic texts that they called it 'Amrita' or 'Divine Nectar'. A powerful nutritive tonic, Guduchi is one of the best herbs for balancing vata and pitta. It has the unusual characteristic of being heating while simultaneously removing excess pitta from the body. This heat burns accumulated natural toxins purifying the liver, kidneys, joints and blood. It also helps soothe the skin and promotes a clear, healthy complexion.



As a rejuvenative, Guduchi strengthens the tissues, bolsters immunity and promotes vitality while calming the mind and supporting proper function of the nervous system. It is also traditionally used to promote longevity and to support healthy reproduction.\*

- Rasa (taste): bitter, astringent, sweet, pungent
  - Virya (action): heating
  - Vipaka (post-digestive effect): sweet
  - Doshas (constitutions): Balancing for all doshas, especially for vata and pitta.
-



---

## Hibiscus

Hibiscus (*Hibiscus sabdariffa*) is a beautiful, sacred flower commonly used in devotional ceremonies and to make cooling summer beverages. It helps purify the body both physically and spiritually and is useful in disorders associated with the first and second chakra (Yoga of Herbs).

Hibiscus promotes the healthy growth of hair and a clear complexion. It also supports the proper function of the kidneys and the female reproductive system.

- Rasa (taste): astringent, sweet
- Virya (action): cooling
- Vipaka (post-digestive effect): sweet
- Doshas (constitutions): Balancing for pitta and kapha, may increase vata in excess.

Suggested Use:  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon with warm water, once or twice daily, or as directed by your health practitioner.



## Manjista

Manjista (*Rubia cordifolia*) is the quintessential blood purifier in the Ayurvedic pharmacopeia. It removes excess heat and natural toxins from the blood helping to support healthy skin and a clear complexion. It is one of the best pitta pacifying herbs and is used to support the proper function of the liver and kidneys.

Manjista is also excellent for reducing excess kapha. It helps to maintain clear channels in the body supporting the healthy flow of blood and urine.

- Rasa (taste): bitter, sweet, astringent
  - Virya (action): cooling
  - Vipaka (post-digestive effect): pungent
  - Doshas (constitutions): Balancing for pitta and kapha, may increase vata.
-

---

## Neem

Neem (*Azadirachta indica*) is widely used in Ayurveda because of its effectiveness in dealing with nearly all types of pitta and kapha imbalances. Bitter and very cooling, it is usually combined with other herbs to offset its vata-aggravating qualities.

Neem has traditionally been used to purify the blood, cleanse the liver and support the immune system. It is also commonly used to support healthy skin and to maintain healthy blood glucose levels.

- Rasa (taste): bitter
- Virya (action): cooling
- Vipaka (post-digestive effect): pungent
- Doshas (constitutions): Balancing for pitta and kapha, aggravates vata in excess.



## Shatavari

Shatavari (*Asparagus racemosus*) is a rejuvenating herb that cools the body and strengthens and nourishes the tissues. Traditionally used to maintain the healthy production of female hormones, Shatavari may be translated as "100 spouses," implying its role in promoting fertility and vitality.

As a nutritive tonic it encourages the healthy production of milk in lactating mothers and the healthy production of semen in would be fathers. It is also useful during menopause and for women who have had hysterectomies.

Shatavari supports a healthy immune system and assists in both physical and mental digestion. Its unctuous quality soothes and nurtures membranes of the lungs, stomach, kidneys and reproductive organs.

Sattvic (pure, harmonious) in nature, Shatavari calms the mind and promotes love and devotion.

- Rasa (taste): bitter, sweet
  - Virya (action): cooling
  - Vipaka (post-digestive effect): sweet
  - Doshas (constitutions): Balancing for vata and pitta, may aggravate kapha in excess
-

---

## Fennel

Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*) is an excellent herb for supporting a healthy, comfortable digestive experience. It is especially useful for strengthening the digestive fire without aggravating pitta. The roasted seeds are commonly served post meal in Indian restaurants to support digestion and to freshen the breath.

Fennel combines well with cumin and coriander and makes a great digestive tea. It also soothes the urinary tract and promotes healthy urination. Fennel supports healthy lactation in nursing mothers and is also used to promote menstrual comfort. A tonic for the nervous system, fennel calms the mind and increases clarity of consciousness.

- Rasa (taste): sweet, pungent, bitter
- Virya (action): slightly cooling
- Vipaka (post-digestive effect): sweet
- Doshas (constitutions): Balancing for all doshas.

## Cumin

Cumin (*Cuminum cyminum*) is one of the best herbs for supporting healthy digestion without aggravating pitta. A common household spice, its Sanskrit name literally means 'promoting digestion'. In addition to providing flavor to food, cumin enkindles the digestive fire, promotes healthy absorption and eliminates natural toxins in the GI tract.

Cumin seeds are often chewed after meals and are especially useful for calming excess vata in the lower abdomen and in promoting a comfortable post dining experience.

- Rasa (taste): pungent, bitter
- Virya (action): cooling
- Vipaka (post-digestive effect): pungent
- Doshas (constitutions): Balancing for all doshas.

## Coriander

Coriander (*Coriandrum sativum*) is one of the best herbs for supporting digestion without aggravating pitta. It enkindles the digestive fire while simultaneously cooling and soothing the GI tract. It removes excess heat in the body making it useful in cooling pitta-related imbalances associated with menopause. It also supports proper function of the kidneys and healthy urination.

The seeds combine well with Cumin and Fennel to make an excellent digestive tea.

- Rasa (taste): bitter, pungent, sweet
- Virya (action): cooling
- Vipaka (post-digestive effect): pungent
- Doshas (constitutions): Balancing for all doshas, especially pitta.



# RESOURCES

## Recommended Reading

- A Life of Balance, Complete Guide to Ayurvedic Nutrition & Body Types with Recipes -Maya Tiwari
- Ayurveda, the Science of Self-Healing – Dr. Vasant Lad
- Ayurveda for Women, A Guide to Vitality and Health- Dr. Robert Svoboda
- The Path of Practice, A Woman’s Book of Healing with Food, Breath, and Sound – Maya Tiwari
- Ayurveda- Nature’s Medicine – Dr. David Frawley & Dr. Subhash Ranade
- The 3-Season Diet, Eat the Way Nature Intended: John Douillard

## Cooking

- Eat, Taste, Heal, An Ayurvedic Guidebook and Cookbook for Modern Living – Thomas Yarema, M.D., Daniel Rhoda, D.A.S., chef Johnny Brannigan
- Heaven’s Banquet, The Maharishi Ayurveda Cookbook – Miriam Kasin Hospodar
- The Ayurvedic Cookbook – Amadea Morningstar with Urmila Desai
- Ayurvedic Cooking for Self-Healing – Usha Lad & Dr. Vasant Lad

## Yoga

- The Heart of Yoga, Developing a Personal Practice – T.K.V. Desikachar
- Dr. Yoga, A Complete Program for Discovering the Head-to-Toe Health Benefits of Yoga – Nirmala Heriza
- The Woman’s Book of Yoga and Health – Linda Sparrowe and Patricia Walden
- Relax & Renew – Judith Lasater, PhD.