



Diet Guidelines for Liver Qi Stagnation

For there to be health the Qi of the body needs to flow smoothly throughout the body. In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM for short), the organ network that is most affected by the stagnation of Qi is the Liver network.

Stress, irregular eating habits as well as synthetic substances (preservatives, pharmaceuticals, and coloring agents, for example) all interfere with the Liver network's function of maintaining the even flow of Qi.

In general it is best to eat foods that are lightly cooked to ensure that nutrients are preserved and are more readily digested and absorbed. General dietary recommendations include regular eating times, eating moderate amounts and chewing thoroughly to savor flavors. Eating while distracted or emotionally stressed should be avoided.

Meals should consist largely of lightly cooked vegetables, roughly 40% to 60% of your diet. About 30% of the diet should be comprised of complex carbohydrates. Proteins should comprise only about 10% of the diet, with a focus on high quality sources. The diet should also include plenty of fragrant and lightly spiced dishes. Highly processed foods and well as oily and fatty foods should be avoided.

Below is a list of recommended foods. You should not limit your diet to only these foods. Instead follow the guidelines above of the optimum ratios of carbohydrates, vegetables and proteins, and add the recommended foods from the list below within your meals. Where ever possible choose organically grown foods.

Specific foods for Liver Qi Stagnation

onions, garlic, mustard greens, watercress, asparagus, taro root, cabbage, turnip, cauliflower, broccoli, brussel sprouts, beets, jerusalem artichokes, carrots, celery, small amounts of citrus
turmeric, basil, mint, horseradish, pepper, cardamon, cumin, fennel, dill, ginger, small amounts of pickled vegetables.
small quantities of wine, coffee (no more than 1/day)
miso, soy sauce, rose and jasmine flowers
sprouted grains, sourdough breads, extra virgin olive oil, molasses
kumquats, tangerines, grapefruit, water chestnuts

Foods to restrict or avoid

cheese, eggs, cream, ice cream
red meats, nuts, pizzas, lard, shortening, margarine, deep fried foods
chilies, and excessively hot, spicy meals
beer and excessive intoxicants in general, raw vegetable juices, refined sugars
artificial preservatives, artificial colorings

References:

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The Healing Cuisine of China. Zhao & Ellis. Healing Arts Press: Vermont. 1998.

Disclaimer

This factsheet is not intended to diagnose or assess. The information provided is not to be considered a substitute for consultation with a qualified health care practitioner.