



Diet Guidelines for Lung Qi Deficiency

The Lung organ network in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM for short) along with the body's digestive system, is how a person takes in Qi to power our thoughts and actions. A TCM diagnosis of Lung Qi deficiency means that your body's ability to generate and distribute Qi is compromised.

To prevent Qi deficiency it is best to consume fresh foods that are slightly cooked. Food that is lightly prepared helps to ensure that nutrients are preserved and are more readily digested and absorbed. General dietary recommendations to prevent Qi deficiency include eating smaller meals more frequently and enjoying meals by sitting down to relax while you eat and chewing thoroughly to savor flavors.

Meals should consist largely of easily digested complex carbohydrates like grains and starchy root vegetables. 30 - 40% of the diet should be comprised of cooked vegetables and proteins should comprise only 10 - 20% of the diet.

Small amounts of naturally sweet flavors like molasses, dates and rice syrup and more pungent tastes including onion, garlic, turnip, ginger, fennel, cinnamon and nutmeg are also beneficial in strengthening Qi. Overly rich, oily or heavy foods should be avoided because they can overwhelm the digestive system. Cold foods such as raw fruits and vegetables, tofu, and ice cream should also 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. Wherever possible choose organically grown foods.



Specific foods for Lung Qi deficiency

cooked whole grains, glutinous rice, oats, roasted barley, sweet rice, spelt
pumpkin, potatoes, sweet potatoes, taro root, squash, carrots, corn, parsnips,
yams, peas, stewed fruit, onions, leeks, garlic, turnip, shitake mushrooms,
oyster mushrooms, daikon root
chick peas, black beans, walnuts
chicken, Chinese black chicken, beef, lamb, quail, goose, rabbit
mackerel, tuna, anchovy
black pepper, fresh ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, fennel, molasses, rice syrup,
barley malt, dates, figs, honey



Foods to restrict or avoid

salads, raw fruits, citrus, wheat, sprouts, wheat grass, raw vegetables, tomatoes,
spinach, swiss chard
tofu, dairy, nut butters and other high oil foods
overly sweet foods, refined sugars, high doses of vitamin C, seaweeds, chocolate
cold foods like ice cream or smoothies
iced drinks including ice water, strong tea, wine

References:

Clinical Handbook Of Internal Medicine, Vol. 2. MacLean & Lyttleton. University of Western Sydney: Australia. 2002.
Chinese Dietary Therapy. Liu, J. Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1995.
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.