



Diet Guidelines for Liver Yin Deficiency

The Yin of the body is considered in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM for short) as the aspect of the body that nourishes and moistens. A diagnosis of Liver Yin deficiency means that this aspect of the Liver organ network is compromised. To address this, a diet that is nutrient rich and building is recommended.

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 to prevent 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, roughly 40% of your diet. About 40% of the diet should be comprised of cooked vegetables. Proteins should comprise only 10 - 20% of the diet, with a focus on high quality sources. The diet should also include plenty of fluids, especially in the form of soups.

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 Yin deficiency

wheat, oats, rice, millet, barley
aduki beans, black beans, mung beans,
eggs, dairy in moderate amounts, duck & pigeon eggs, yogurt, tempeh, nuts & seeds, tofu, miso, black sesame seeds
pork, chicken, Chinese black boned chicken, duck, pigeon, organic bone marrow, organic beef or pork liver, bird's nest soup
shrimp, catfish, prawns, spanish mackerel, sardines, oysters, mussels, clams, cuttlefish, squid, perch, eel
zucchini, squash, potatoes, sweet potatoes, melons, string beans, beets, mushrooms including wood ears & tremella, tomatoes, spinach, carrots, parsley, molasses
apples, banana, mulberries, mango, coconut, peaches, lychee fruit, grapes, raisins, cherries, plums
olive oil, flaxseed oil, almond oil
vegemite, marmite, kelp, spirulina, wheatgrass



Foods to restrict or avoid

chilies, cinnamon, garlic, ginger, onions, shallots, leeks, basil, cloves, wasabi
coffee, vinegar, pickles, tea
lamb, shrimp, prawns, veal
citrus fruits
cigarettes, alcohol, recreational stimulants

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.