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Summertime Info and Foods

Heatwave on its way

To help your body adapt to the heat, expose yourself to short times of it when it is not as intense, mornings and early evenings. Allow yourself to slowly acclimate so if you do get caught in some heat against your will your body can handle it. Always have water with you in the summer, and add a pinch of salt to it for electrolytes.

Remember your cooling herbs, flowers such as hibiscus, chamomile, rose, and lavender are delicious infused in water or made into lukewarm teas. The mints are also cooling. Menthol in peppermint and eucalyptol in Eucalyptus essential oils activate cold-sensing nerves in the skin. Floral and citrus essential oils also offer cooling effects.

On super hot days I like to make a spritzer of a floral hydrosol with aloe and essential oils of Spike Lavender, Eucalyptus globulus, distilled lime, and peppermint. I mist this on my skin while I am in the heat.

Foods in the summer

Our body dials down our digestive power in the summer because the digestive juices create heat in the body. On hot days eat lighter foods such as:

- ॐ Favor foods that are cool and liquid
- ॐ Favor foods that are sweet, bitter, and astringent. Minimize foods that create heat in the body (spicy, salty, or sour).
- ॐ Enjoy the foods that are plentiful and LOCALLY being harvested.
- ॐ If you enjoy carbs, summer is the best season to enjoy them. They are easy to digest.

Some specific summer recommendations:

Dairy – Milk, butter, and ghee are cooling and generally better in the summer as long as the dairy is from grass-fed and finished cows that are humanely treated. Reduce yogurt and salty cheese, sour cream, and cultured buttermilk (their sour tastes aggravate summer qualities). Cottage cheese is a better summer cultured alternative.

Sweeteners – Maple syrup is your best option. Honey and molasses are slightly heating. As a reminder; Agave is not a health food! It is mostly high fructose corn syrup.

Oils – Olive and coconut oils are best.

Grains – Wheat, white rice, barley and oats are better summer options. Reduce corn, rye, millet, and brown rice (I'm never a fan of brown rice, [this is why](#).)

Fruits – Favor summer harvested fruits, such as grapes, cherries, berries, peaches, melons, and plums. Tropical fruits of coconuts and pomegranates are cooling and good in the summer. Reduce sour fruits.



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Vegetables – Favor cucumbers, sweet peppers, green leafy lettuce and vegetables, broccoli, cauliflower, celery, okra, beans, green beans, zucchini. Reduce hot peppers, cooked tomatoes, carrots, beets, onions, garlic, radishes, and spinach.

Spices – Coriander, mint, cardamom, and fennel are cooling herbs for summer evening teas. The following spices increase heat and need to be used only in small amounts: ginger, black pepper, fenugreek, and clove. Chili peppers and cayenne can be reduced if you like the heat. Mexican cultures say heat in the summer helps you sweat and cool off, however Ayurveda does not agree, especially for people with a high pitta constitution and recommends avoiding chili peppers and similar spices.

Your lifestyle now in these warm summer months can protect you from colds and flus in the fall and winter. If you want to avoid a bad week of coughing and a stuffy nose in the fall, here are some tips:

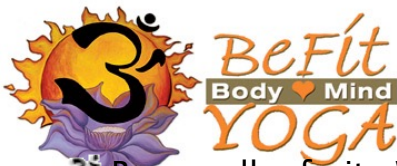
Top Summer Detox Foods and advice to prevent illness year round:

1. Eat dark leafy green vegetables every day, such as salads, micro greens, sprouts or steamed kale. Pile greens into your wraps and sandwiches, burritos, and omelets.
2. Enjoy decadent amounts of berries, such as strawberries, raspberries and blueberries.
3. Sip water throughout the day to stay hydrated.
4. VITAMIN D! Now is the time to soak up Vitamin D for radiant health and disease prevention. Your best source of Vitamin D is sunshine :) We store Vitamin D in our fat cells so we have a supply for the winter months when the sun is not strong enough to provide us with vitamin D. It is important during the summer months to get outside! Fill your body with stores of Vitamin D to last you all winter long (you can always supplement with a trip to Maui in the winter as well ;) Try to get outside in the sun for 15–20 minutes mid-day, just monitor your skin for any signs of pinkness. Avoid sunburns, otherwise soak up the sun safely. Vitamin D is the strongest in the mid-day sun.

Eating more of these foods will also help your skin look radiant and you will have less cravings for foods that don't make you feel good.

When you eat light, juicy, seasonal summer foods, it feeds the intestinal mucosa in your digestive system. Nature provides our body what it needs each season, by eating summer foods in season your gut health will stay clear and healthy. Eating with nature it is not about avoiding certain foods, it is about eating more of the good ones.

A note on FRUIT; fruit has many beneficial nutrients -- so we want to include it in our diet. Many nutritionists are now cautioning against eating too much fruit due to the fructose content (fruit sugars). Whole fruits provide nutrients and fructose, which is NOT High Fructose Corn Syrup (HFCS). Processed foods contain HFCS, the villain, not fruits. Fruits provide us with nutrients and fiber we need for the season. Here are two tips to help you get more nutrition and less sugars from your fruit:



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ॐ Buy smaller fruit. With all our engineering of food, producers have gotten good at making larger fruit. The larger fruit increases the sugar but decreases the skin surface where many of the nutrients are. **We don't need another super size anything.** Pick out smaller fruits and enjoy more nutrition and less sugar with each bit.

ॐ Eat fruit alone or with a light protein source such as yogurt, cottage cheese or nuts. Breakfast is the best meal for fruit. Fruit sugars digest differently than glucose. Fructose has to go to the liver to be processed before we can digest it, combining carby foods with fruits = fat. Fruit sugar will not be quickly used as fuel for the body if it is ingested with other energy sources like carbohydrates. The body will quickly burn the carbs and do its best to store the fructose as fat as part of our survival genetics. Ayurveda suggests fruit be eaten alone, in which case if the fructose is the meal's only nutritional source, it will be used as a fuel and energy supply instead of being stored fat.

Other Summer Tips:

To Stay Cool, Calm and Hydrated

- ॐ Sip room temperature water with mint leaves or cucumber slices in it or drink coconut water to keep cool and hydrated.
- ॐ Drink herbal teas such as mint or hibiscus.

Daily Routines (Dinacharya) for Summer:

- ॐ Self massage with coconut oil
- ॐ When resting lie on your right side, as this will promote breathing through your left nostril which is cooling
- ॐ Avoid excessive activity during midday heat as it can be draining.

Signs of excess internal heat during Summer (aka Pitta imbalance):

- ॐ Irritability and impatience, heartburn, acid reflux, stomach ulcers, sensitivity to heat, lethargy, sarcasm, skin rashes, boils, acne, low blood sugar, difficulty falling asleep.
- ॐ If you experience some of these signs you may have too much internal heat. Follow the above guidelines, and the summer menus more closely or consult with an Ayurvedic Dr.

Pranayama for the Summertime

Cooling pranayamas such as [sitali](#) and [ujjayi](#) are great summer practices along with any slow breathing and [resonance breathing](#) practices.

