The Six Ayurvedic Tastes

Instead of looking at the individual components of foods—ie: carbohydrates, protein, fats, and calories—Ayurveda identifies six “tastes” of foods. Each taste has specific effects on the three doshas (Vata, Pitta, and Kapha). By including all six tastes in each meal we satisfy our nutritional and dietary needs without the need to count calories or consult a manual.

Kaphas should focus on eating more of the Pungent, Astringent, and Bitter tastes, ie: leafy greens, lentils, dried beans, pomegranates, potatoes, apples, and all digestive herbs and spices are good choices for you.

The Sweet Taste :: earth + water
…is heavy, moist, and cool. This increases Kapha and decreases Vata and Pitta. Examples are nuts, grains, oils, meats, and most dairy.

The Sour Taste :: fire + earth
…is heavy, moist, and hot. This increases Pitta and Kapha and decreases Vata. Examples are pickles and fermented foods such as yogurt.

The Salty Taste :: fire + water
…is heavy, moist, and hot. This increases Pitta and Kapha and decreases Vata. Examples are sea salt, sea vegetables, and seafood.

The Pungent Taste :: fire + air
…is light, dry, and hot. This increases Pitta and Vata and decreases Kapha. Examples are chili peppers, ginger, and black pepper.

The Astringent Taste :: earth + air
…is dry and cool. This increases Vata and decreases Pitta and Kapha. Examples are most beans, cranberries, and pomegranates.

The Bitter Taste :: air + ether
…is light, dry, and cool. This increases Vata and decreases Pitta and Kapha. Examples are leafy greens and herbs such as goldenseal and turmeric.

Kapha Food Guidelines

Qualities to Reduce: cold, moist, heavy

Tastes to Maximize: bitter, pungent, astringent

Tastes to Minimize: sweet, sour, salty

The Kapha Dinner Plate

Ayurvedic Health Center & Wellness Shop LLC
360-734-2396
http://AyurvedicHealthCenter.com
info@AyurvedicHealthCenter.com
**Kapha Food List**

### Grains
- **Best**: amaranth, barley, basmati rice, buckwheat, corn flour, quinoa
- **Small Amounts**: millet, rye
- **Minimize**: oats, long and short grain rice

### Dairy
- **Best**: goat milk, skim milk, non-GMO soy milk
- **Small Amounts**: none
- **Minimize**: butter, buttermilk, cheese, cream, cottage cheese, ice cream, kefir, sour cream, yogurt

### Sweeteners
- **Best**: raw honey (that is more than six months old)
- **Small Amounts**: none
- **Minimize**: fructose, maple syrup, molasses, raw sugar, white and brown sugar

### Nuts and Seeds
- **Best**: pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds
- **Small Amounts**: sesame seeds
- **Minimize**: almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, coconut, filberts, lotus seeds, macadamia nuts, pecans, pistachio, peanuts, walnuts

### Condiments
- **Best**: catsup, vinegar
- **Small Amounts**: none
- **Minimize**: mayonnaise, salt

### Oils
- Use all oils in small amounts only. Even the best oils, if overused, will aggravate kapha.
  - **Best**: corn, flaxseed, mustard, safflower, soy, sunflower, ghee
  - **Small Amounts**: none
  - **Minimize**: almond, avocado, coconut, olive, peanut, sesame

### Fruits
- Dried and astringent fruits are typically best for Kaphas.
  - **Best**: dried fruits as they are less sweet, apples, cherries, cranberries, grapefruit, pomegranate, prunes, raisins
  - **Small Amounts**: apricots, lemon, lime, papaya, pineapple
  - **Minimize**: sweet fruits, avocado, bananas, berries (raspberry, blackberry, blueberry, strawberry), cantaloupe, coconut, dates, figs, grapes, mango, melons, pineapple, oranges, peaches, pears, persimmons, plums, tangerines, watermelon

### Vegetables
- Vegetables are best eaten raw during the summer and cooked during the rest of the year as well as during times of digestive difficulty. In general, vegetables are good and even the “Minimize” group, if eaten in small amounts, will cause no harm.
  - **Best**: alfalfa sprouts, artichoke, asparagus, green beans, bell peppers, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, carrots, celery, chilies, cilantro, corn, kale, lettuce, and other leafy greens, mustard greens, onions, parsley, peas, hot peppers, potatoes, radish, seaweed, spinach, rutabagas/tunrips
  - **Small Amounts**: mushrooms, tomatoes
  - **Minimize**: beets, cucumber, eggplant, okra, all squash, sweet potatoes, water chestnuts, zucchini

### Meats
- If you choose to eat meat, limit consumption to 2–3 times per week. Meat soups can be particularly nourishing during convalescence. Kapha individuals can thrive as vegetarians.
  - **Best**: chicken or turkey (dark meat only), fresh water fish, rabbit
  - **Small Amounts**: eggs
  - **Minimize**: beef, duck, lamb, pork, seafood, shellfish, venison

### Dairy
- **Best**: goat milk, skim milk, non-GMO soy milk
- **Small Amounts**: none
- **Minimize**: butter, buttermilk, cheese, cream, cottage cheese, ice cream, kefir, sour cream, yogurt

### Sweeteners
- **Best**: raw honey (that is more than six months old)
- **Small Amounts**: none
- **Minimize**: fructose, maple syrup, molasses, raw sugar, white and brown sugar

### Nuts and Seeds
- **Best**: pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds
- **Small Amounts**: sesame seeds
- **Minimize**: almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, coconut, filberts, lotus seeds, macadamia nuts, pecans, pistachio, peanuts, walnuts

### Condiments
- **Best**: catsup, vinegar
- **Small Amounts**: none
- **Minimize**: mayonnaise, salt

---

**Notes:**

- **Best** Foods can be eaten without reservation on a daily basis. These foods are the most ideal ones as they are the most balanced for this dosha. Individuals who are sick should consume only the foods on this list.
- **Small Amounts** Foods can be eaten in small portions fairly often or in larger portions once or twice each week. Eating a wide variety of these foods is better than an abundance of just one. Overreliance on these foods can cause imbalance.
- **Minimize** Foods should be eaten only on rare occasions, ie: once each month. They can significantly disturb the dosha.

### Avoid

- Always avoid these foods: margarine, canola, GMO anything (ie: soy, corn, etc.), agave nectar, high fructose sweeteners, grapeseed oil, soda, CAFO meats