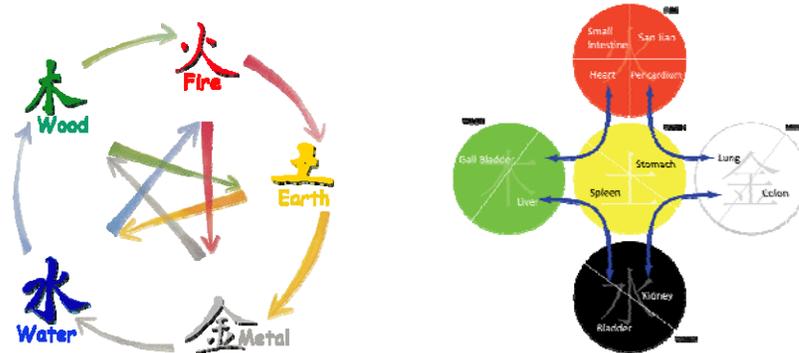


Healing with Foods: Earth – Grounding with the Spleen

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The mysterious forces of the Earth create moisture in the Heaven and fertile soil upon the Earth; they create the flesh within the body and the stomach (and Spleen-Pancreas). They create the yellow color and give the voice the ability to sing, they create the mouth (and sense of taste), the sweet flavor and the emotions of anxiety and worry. –Inner Classic

To attune with these seasons, choose some foods for each meal that are harmonizing and represent the center – mildly sweet foods, yellow or golden foods, round foods, and/or foods known to harmonize the center. Foods should be prepared simply, with a minimum of seasonings and a mild taste. Avoid complicated dishes and combinations of foods. Moderation should also guide other aspects of food preparation including cooking time, methods and temperature.



There are two theories with where the Earth element fits in with the seasons. One theory is that it corresponds to “Late Summer” or “Indian Summer”, thereby creating a small period of 2 weeks more or less that transitions from the building Yang energy from Spring/Wood to Summer/Fire into the building Yin energy of Fall/Metal and Winter/Water. The other theory is that it represents the transition time in between each of the seasons where the Yang subsides into Yin of the current season, sort of like a wave rising reaching its maximum and then diminishing into Earth before rising again in the next element.

In either case, the Earth element is defined as below:

Yin Organ	Spleen	Yang Organ	Stomach
Congenital	Trust	Acquired	Worry
Nurtures	Lungs	Controls	Water
Element	Earth	Color	Yellow (Huang)
Orifice	Mouth	Finger	Thumb (Neutral)
Spirit	Yi	Sound	Who

The Earth element in charge of “transforming” food. The qi and other essences extracted from digestion are used by the body to create wei qi energy (immunity), vitality, warmth and formation of the tissues and mental functions.

Balanced Spleen-Pancreas: generally hard-working, practical, and responsible. They like to nurture themselves and others and are strong, active and stable. They have endurance and good appetites and digestion; their limbs have strength; they tend to be orderly and careful, and often excel at some creative activity. They have fertile imaginations.

Signs of imbalances in the Spleen-Pancreas: chronic tiredness, physical and mental stagnation, compulsive or “stuck” behavior, weak digestion, nausea, poor appetite, dull sense of taste, abdominal bloating, loose stools. Blood-sugar imbalances such as diabetes, hypoglycemia. Sallow or pale complexions, overweight or underweight.

Deficiencies of the Spleen-Pancreas are quite common in our modern age mostly due to malnutrition. Malnutrition includes inadequate consumption of vitamins, minerals and nutrients commonly obtainable from whole foods. Diets that include high quantities of refined ingredients (bleached flour and refined bleached sugar, as well as highly processed foods) will lead to an overall Spleen Qi deficiency, manifesting as weakness and tiredness. Spleen-Pancreas Qi is also in charge of holding the organs in place. When the qi is weak, the organs will have a tendency to prolapse. (uterine, rectal/hemorrhoids, kidneys, stomach)

Eating habits which injure the Spleen-Pancreas include

- Eating too much refined or processed food
- Rotten, stale, parasite infested or chemically treated foods
- Late-night eating
- Over-eating
- Under-eating; as in starvation, uncontrolled fasting, inconsistent or sporadic meal times

The Spleen-Pancreas relates closely to the sweet flavor so honeys, molasses, cherries and dates will help restore moisture to a dry or deficient Spleen.

However, sweets are to be avoided in when the Spleen is in excess. A Spleen or digestive tract is in excess when edema, cysts, tumors or cancers appear. As well as an overgrowth of yeasts, viruses, bacteria, or parasites. Symptoms are swelling of the joints, stiffness in the joints, difficult movement, a noticeable heavy or sinking feeling in the belly towards the feet, bloated abdomen, diarrhea, and a thick coating on the tongue. Diabetes as well.

Foods to Nourish the Earth Element

Whole Foods!
Rice, Barley, Oats
Quinoa
Spelt
Squash
Carrot
Rutabaga
Parsnip
Turnip
Garbanzo beans
Black beans

Peas
Sweet potato
Yam
Pumpkin
Mildly Sweet foods
Rye
Amaranth
Corn
Aduki
Chlorophyll rich foods –spirulina,
microalgae

GINGER PUMPKIN BISQUE

2 tablespoons olive oil
3/4 cup chopped shallots
1/2 cup chopped onion
2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
4 cups chicken broth
1/2 cup apple cider
1 (15- or 16-ounce) can pumpkin
1/3 cup pure maple syrup

2 bay leaves
1/4 teaspoon dried thyme, crushed
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
1/2 cup half-and-half or whipping cream
1/2 teaspoon vanilla
Whipping cream (optional)
Fresh thyme (optional)

In a 3-quart saucepan heat oil over medium heat. Add the shallots, onion, and ginger; cook until tender. Stir in the flour. Carefully add the chicken broth and cider all at once. Cook and stir over medium heat until thickened and bubbly. Stir in the pumpkin, maple syrup, bay leaves, dried thyme, cinnamon, pepper, and cloves. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Simmer, covered, for 20 minutes.

Remove from heat. Discard bay leaves. Cool slightly. Pour one-fourth to one-third of mixture into a blender container or food processor bowl. Cover and blend or process until smooth. Pour into a bowl. Repeat with remaining mixture until all is processed. Return the mixture to the saucepan. Stir in the 1 cup half-and-half or whipping cream and the vanilla. Heat through, but do not boil. Ladle into soup bowls. If desired, swirl a little whipping cream into each serving; garnish with fresh thyme. Makes 8 to 10 servings.

Bean and Sesame Seed Spread (Hummus)

1 cn (15-oz) garbanzo beans (chickpeas);
drained (reserve liquid)
1/2 c Sesame seed
1 Clove garlic; cut into halves

3 tb Lemon juice
1 ts Salt
Snipped parsley
Pocket bread; crackers or vegetable dippers

Place reserved bean liquid, the sesame seed and garlic in blender container. Cover and blend on high speed until mixed. Add beans, lemon juice and salt; cover and blend on high speed, stopping blender to scrapes sides if necessary, until of uniform consistency. Garnish with parsley. Serve as spread or dip with wedges of pita bread. Yield: 2 c. spread.