

Each food has its own characteristics. In very ancient times Traditional Chinese Medicine practitioners used specific foods to balance the body's yin and yang and to treat disease. The ancient Chinese medicine practitioners discovered that most foods have either cooling or warming characteristics. When you eat cooling foods, they are adding cooling effects to your body and eating warm foods will add warming effects to your body. Therefore, warming and cooling foods can be used to balance the body which may be deficient in yin or yang. Chinese medicine has divided food into three characteristics:

- 1) Cooling foods
- 2) Warming foods
- 3) Balanced, neutral foods (neither cool nor warm)

**1) Effects of cooling foods**

Cooling food has effects of clearing heat and toxins, cooling and calming the blood and nourishing yin. These types of food are suitable for people who have heat constitution of the body. Usually these people have the following symptoms: The body feeling hot, perspiration, thirst, constipation, pungent odourous wind and stools, burning of the anus area after bowl movement, anxiety, red eyes, red face, emotional, head aches, vivid dreams, ulcers in the mouth or tongue, cold sores around the mouth, red tongue with a thick yellow coating on the tongue, rapid pulse, heart burn and dark or yellow urine.

If you have any of the symptoms listed above, the following cooling foods are suitable to be eaten:

Cooling foods

Fruits	Vegetables	Grains, Legumes & Seeds	Meat, Seafood & Dairy	Condiments & Beverages
Apple	Alfalfa sprouts	Barley	Clam	Chrysanthemum Tea
Banana	Asparagus	Buckwheat	Chicken Egg	Green Tea
Grapefruit	Bamboo Shoot	Millet	Crab	Peppermint Tea
Kiwifruit	Celery	Mung Bean	Duck Egg	Salt
Lemon	Chinese Radish	Soy Bean	Rabbit	Sesame oil
Orange	(Daikon)	Tofu	Seaweed	
Pear	Cucumber	Wheat bran		
Persimmon	Eggplant	Whole wheat		
Star Fruit	Green leafy			
Strawberry	vegetables			
Watermelon	Kelp			
	Lettuce			
	Lotus Root			
	Mushroom			
	Spinach			
	Swiss Chard			
	Tomato			

## 2) Effects of warming foods

Warming foods have the effects of raising the yang, energy (qi) of organs and warming and improving the circulation and dispelling the cold. These types of food are suitable for people who are yang deficient. Usually with the following symptoms; cold hand, cold feet, cold body, diarrhea, stomach pains or discomfort after eating or drinking cold things, bloating after eating, lack of energy, sore joints, oedema and fluid retention.

If you have any of the following symptoms listed above, it is suitable to eat more of the following warming foods:

### Warming foods

Fruits	Vegetables	Grains, Legumes & Seeds	Meat, Seafood & Dairy	Condiments & Beverages
Cherry	Chives	Caraway seed	Butter	Basil
Chinese Red	Leek	Chestnut	Chicken	Brown Sugar
Dates	Mustard	Glutinous Rice	Deer (Venison)	Chilli
Coconut meat	greens	Malt	Eel	Cinnamon
Coconut milk	Onion	Pine nut	Goat Milk	Clove
Guava	Pumpkin	Pistachio nut	Ham	Coffee
Hawthorn Fruit	Squash	Walnut	Lamb	Coriander
Longan			Mussel	Fennel seed
Lychee			Prawns (shrimp)	Garlic
Mandarin peel (dried)				Ginger
Mango				Ginseng
Nectarine				Pepper
Peach				Rosemary
Raspberry				Spearmint
				Vinegar

## 3) Foods, which are neither warm nor cold, and are suitable for any type of body;

### Neutral foods

Fruits	Vegetables	Grains, Legumes & Seeds	Meat, Seafood & Dairy	Condiments & Beverages
Apricot	Black fungus	Adzuki Bean	Abalone	Peanut oil
Figs	mushrooms	Almond	Beef	Honey
Goji	Carrot	Black sesame seed	Cow's milk	Saffron
Berries	Chinese cabbage	Black soybean	Duck	Licorice
Grape	Corn	Broad bean	Fish	
Olive	Potato	Kidney bean	Oyster	
Papaya	Pumpkin	Peanut	Pork	
Pineapple	Shiitake mushroom	Peas	Scallop	
Plum	Sweet potato	Rice bran		
	Taro	Rye		
	Turnip	String bean		
	White fungus	Sunflower seed		
		White rice		



The food we eat every day affects our body's balance. In the clinic we find that many diseases are caused, or made worse by eating the wrong foods. Therefore it is important to know your own body's constitution so you can find out what foods are best for you. If you do not know your constitution you can make a visit to an experienced TCM practitioner to find out.

Traditional Chinese medicine also believes that during different seasons we should eat more certain cooling or warming foods which can help to combat the changing weather. As Chinese medicine also considers that the human body and health are associated with the environment, so changes in the weather can affect our body and therefore our health.

For example, in summer, it is very hot and dry, which can cause the body to acquire heat and can dry out our body leading to dry skin, constipation and lack of fluid in the body. Thus if we eat more cooling food, it can balance the body which has been attacked by the hot summer.

Usually we suggest you to eat local seasonal fruit and vegetables, as they are most suitable for the body during a particular season.\*

\* Courtesy of Ping Ming Health