

Five Principles of Dietary Healing

Food for Judgment

In acupuncture, health is based on the uninterrupted flow of Life energy, *ch'i*, throughout the body (see *AES #1*). We receive this *ch'i* from both Heaven and Earth, and then transform it into our unique and personal expressions of life. From Heaven we receive Spirit and Destiny by means of which we fulfill ourselves in the human world. From Earth we receive nourishment for this fulfillment through food, the transformation of which is the biological foundation of life as well as Destiny. The property of each food is uniquely based upon its *yin-yang*, Heaven and Earth proportions, according to which it resonates with and forms our body-mind field. Developing Judgment through food selection is an important key to human evolution and success in acupuncture treatment.

Five Principles of Dietary Healing

The following Five Principles of Dietary Healing are not only helpful for deriving the most benefit from acupuncture treatments, but will also enable one to extend these benefits into the future as the practice of these guidelines continues.

1. A Natural Foods Diet

Most of the food available today is chemically grown, processed, and artificially colored, flavored, and textured. Animals are forced to produce many hundreds and even thousands of times beyond their capacity, and food plants are so weak that they are unable to survive without almost total dependence on the chemical industry. This situation is extremely unnatural and unhealthy. It produces abnormal cell growth, unstable emotions, and unreliable judgment. In short, artificial food produces artificial, unhealthy, and unhappy people.

In contrast, Natural Foods are very simple. They come directly from the earth and have not been processed or adulterated in any extreme way. For the most part they look, feel, and taste like they do in their natural state. Examples are the grains, beans, seeds, nuts, and dried fruit that can be scooped directly from the bins at Natural Food Stores, as well as fresh fish, and organic fresh fruits, vegetables and meats.

Many other foods can be considered Natural Foods if their processing has been limited to normal cooking methods, and if they have not been chemically altered. Examples are: whole grain breads, crackers, and pasta; fruit preserves; soy products such as miso, tamari soy sauce, and tofu. When in doubt, read the labels!

2. A Whole Foods Diet

Pure Whole Foods

For thousands of years acupuncturists have observed that the uninterrupted flow of *ch'i* in healthy organisms concentrates in different zones and "parts" of the body in different times of the day and year. So as not to become unbalanced, it is best to relegate such overly "concentrated" food to specific occasions and, instead, eat foods as staples that represent a balance in the life-force.

Primitive societies accomplished balanced eating by consuming "whole" organisms. Hunters and gatherers would typically eat the entire animal from the skin and flesh right down to the organs, bones and even the intestinal flora. Because we no longer hunt or "buy" meat communally, this practice has almost disappeared. No single person or family can eat an entire cow in one or even several sittings! Instead, we buy what we need, which is only a small part of the whole.

With the exception of Blue Green Algae, vegetable foods for human consumption are also not "technically" whole. The vegetables we eat are only "part" of the whole plant. When we eat a carrot, we eat the root and

throw the tops away; when we eat collards, we eat the green leaves and throw the root away etc.. When we eat these "parts" we gain access to their concentrated energetic and healing properties at the expense of becoming unbalanced by not eating a "truly" whole food. The secret of compensating for this shortcoming will be discussed in Part 5 of this article, *A Balanced Diet* and in *AES #7, The Importance of Whole Grains*.

Generally Whole Foods versus Refined Foods

Given the fact that Blue Green Algae is the only truly Whole Food known to man, there is a further distinction between Generally Whole and Refined Foods. Generally Whole Foods are in, or close to, their natural state, whereas Refined Foods have undergone some sort of chemical or high-tech processing.

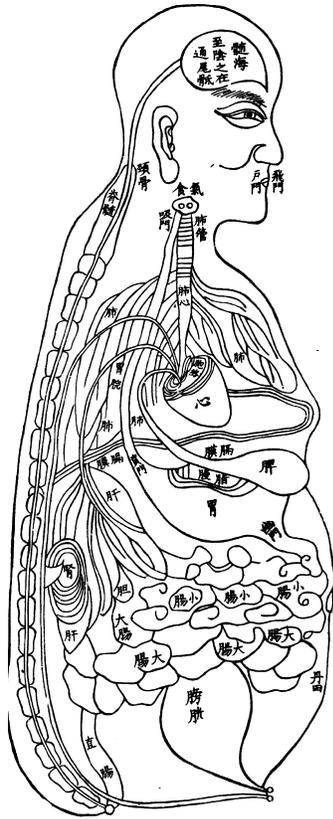
The refining process of many modern foods removes the vital skins, hulls, and brans in order to prolong their shelf-life. Unfortunately, it is these parts that contain the essential nutrients for healthy body tissue including the skin, nerves and bones as well as the function of metabolism itself. These properties within whole foods are in such perfect proportion to one another that artificial supplementation and enrichment cannot begin to compensate for the loss that occurs through refinement. Whole Foods are Natural Foods with all of their parts intact. Examples of Whole Foods are the whole grains such as brown rice and whole wheat, as opposed to white rice and white flour. Also fresh vegetables and most fresh fruits are considered Whole Foods if left unjuiced, unpeeled and are cleaned with a Japanese vegetable brush instead.

Prize-winning Ducks

The best example of the importance of Whole Foods is given by Dr. Bernard Jensen (*The Science and Practice of Iridology*, 1964), one of the forerunners of American natural healing, and developer of the effective and widely used natural diagnostic method of iridology. He tells the story of a patient who came to see him with a long-standing, incurable skin disease that left him red as a beet from head to toe. In friendly conversation, it turned out that the man was a breeder of prize-winning ducks, which won ribbon after ribbon for the sleekness and color of their feathers. Since Jensen was a "food doctor," he, of course, asked the man what he fed the ducks, thinking that what he fed them was cause for their "prize-winning" condition. The answer the man gave was, potato peels.

Out of curiosity, Jensen asked the man what he did with the potatoes. It turned out that, rather than waste the potatoes by throwing them away, the man ate them himself. In this simple confession lay not only the man's cure, but also a major testament to the importance of Whole Foods, as well as the medicinal correlation of food parts to the Five Phases. Jensen prescribed that the man eat the potato peels without the potatoes, and in six months his skin condition cleared up. Energetically, the explanation for such a cure is simply that the potato skins were in direct correspondence to the Metal Phase and its correlation to the skin of animals and human beings (see chart in *AES #4*). This simple idea can be extended to include the skins of other foods as well, including apples, carrots, and cereal grains.

It is well known in Western nutrition that the skins and hulls of fruits, roots, tubers, and grains supply vitamins and minerals in the correct quantity and proportion necessary to metabolize the inner part of these foods. In the same way that it is essential for all the parts to remain connected to the whole for the *ch'i* to flow uninterruptedly in acupuncture, it is also true for proper food selection. According to the concept in Food Energetics called the "Doctrine of Signatures," the area of influence of any particular food on the human body can be determined by analogy through its corresponding function, shape and part. Therefore, the skins of vegetables will affect the skin of the body as well as cell membranes. Since the skin also corresponds to Metal in the Five Phases, they will also have an affect on Judgment.



Energetic View of the Internal Organs

Whole Foods are Staple Foods

Because the practice of relying on Refined Foods tends to emphasize only part of our functioning and development at the expense of the whole, they should not be considered as staples, and should at best be eaten only upon occasion as social, medicinal, or sensorial needs demand. Many people experience well-being only in parts of themselves, while other important parts are suffering. Practicing the principle of Whole Foods helps to alleviate this suffering and helps to produce well-integrated and happy people.

3. A Seasonal and Local Foods Diet

Our diet should be ecologically based as much as possible. The foods which comprise the mainstay of our diet should be grown in the same area in which we live. When we begin to consume food imported from different climatic regions, we begin to lose adaptability to the immediate surroundings. This imbalance often leads to the development of sickness, manifesting either physically, mentally or both. This is especially true in cases where tropical or semi-tropical products (including sugar, pineapples, citrus fruit, bananas, spices, and coffee) are consumed in the temperate climates of North America.

Also, serious sickness can result from the overconsumption of heavy animal food by those in a warmer climate, since this quality of food is more suited to the polar and sub-polar regions. Ideally, foods should be chosen from within a 300 to 500 mile radius of our home area. However, if this is not possible, the next best choice of foods are those produced in areas with climates similar to our own, such as Europe or Japan.

Our diet should reflect seasonal changes. As naturally as the seasons change, our diets should reflect these differences through the selection and preparation of our daily meals. For example, in colder seasons we should choose food more from the categories that concentrate their growth cycles in a downward, centripetal direction such as vegetables that grow on the ground (like winter squash), below the ground (like roots), or whole grains which, as condensations of the entire life energy of the plant, can store this energy easily and for long periods. In colder seasons we should also apply longer cooking times and more salt.

In warmer seasons we should choose food more from the categories that concentrate their growth cycles in an upward, centrifugal direction such as vegetables that grow above the ground and fruits. In warmer seasons we should also apply shorter cooking times and less salt.

As much as possible, we should always try to base our diet on those products, such as cereal grains, beans, sea vegetables and other staples, which are naturally available and storable without refrigeration throughout the year.

4. A Diet That Recognizes Individual Differences

When selecting and preparing foods, individual differences also need to be considered with variations made according to age, sex, amount and type of activity, occupation, original constitution, previous eating patterns, personal desire, and social environment. Consideration of these individual differences is an intuitive process that requires practice based upon informed choice. This type of dietary counseling can be an important part of my healing practice.

5. A Balanced Diet

Within the parameters of a Natural Whole Foods diet there is an immense variety of choice as to both foods and cooking methods. In order to make these choices work, the guidelines of balance are necessary.

For over two thousand years, the Oriental tradition has used the complementary yet opposite categories of *yin* and *yang* to classify foods and provide a balanced guide to selection. Achieving this balanced condition has been the goal of most spiritual teachings throughout the ages, and is reflected in the symbols of many religions such as the Christian cross, the Star of David, and the Chinese *Yin/Yang* Diagram.

Yin-Yang Food Classification

Centrally Balanced:

Whole cereal grains, beans, local vegetables, sea vegetables locally grown seasonal fruits, fish and shell fish, seeds and nuts, non-aromatic and non-stimulant beverages; naturally processed vegetable oils such as sesame and corn; naturally processed seasonings such as miso, tamari soy sauce, unrefined sea salt, etc.

Extremely Yin:

Tropical Fruits (oranges, papayas, bananas, etc.), vegetables such as tomatoes, potatoes, eggplant, etc., which have a tropical or semi-tropical origin, a high potassium content or a strongly acid reaction; milk, yoghurt, butter, and other processed dairy products; spices; alcohol; commercially produced tea and coffee; aromatic stimulant teas and beverages such as mint tea, peppermint tea, etc.

Extremely Yang:

Eggs, meat, poultry, red meat fish, more salty varieties of cheese, table salt (NaCl), etc.

The Principle of a Balanced Diet has always been reflected in the diets of human tradition. Until modern times unrefined, naturally produced whole cereal grains and their products comprised humanity's primary food worldwide, while locally grown seasonal vegetables and their products comprised the most important secondary foods. In order to maintain our health and human evolutionary status, our diets should continue to reflect this traditional pattern by returning our emphasis to these Centrally Balanced Foods, and on the "staff of life"--whole grains.