

## Ayurvedic Diet Rules for Younger skin

Ageing is a natural process. We can however slow down wrinkles to keep our skin smooth. This can be done from both inside and outside. Ayurvedically speaking outside beauty comes from within. Socrates once said, "You are what you eat". One's diet can make a significant difference to how quickly it ages. Why do we need good nourishment? This is simply because we have skin cells, like other cells in the body that need a constant and suitable supply of nutrients to function properly. Before we go into what is a suitable diet and how to figure out if you have got it right we have to remember and stick to a few rules of eating well.

### 12 ground rules to best digestion:

1. Contrary to some opinion Ayurvedic advice on diets is that they should not be restrictive.
2. Make a few changes at a time. The body struggles if a lot of changes are made at a time. If you feel and look better with the changes there is more chance that you will stick to these changes. Good digestion and assimilation of the food eaten and regular and efficient evacuation are essential. Any food that is not digested properly forms "ama" or waste. This in turn reduces digestion and causes blockages in vital channels. You know when you have ama when you have gas, cloudy urine, and upset stomach or bad breath. This is an indication that your system needs a rest. Skipping a meal or going on a one day detox diet or a fast may be what the body needs to clean and balance.
3. Eat in a relaxed state, quietly.
4. Eat food that has been made with love and when cooking cook with the right intent.
5. Avoid drinking water whilst eating. If you have to sip luke water rather than cold with your meal to help digestion. Avoid drinking too much water whilst eating, as this will dilute the digestive enzymes. Cold water too reduces the effect of the digestive fire (pitta) or enzymes. Spring or mineral water is richer in minerals than tap water. Sipping lemon or lime water or ginger tea helps digestion.
6. Thank God for what you are eating and visualize the food you are eating giving the nutrition to each of your cells.
7. Eat as much as you can carry into your two hands cupped together. Chew the food slowly to become liquefied before digesting.
8. Eat fresh, local food that is in season.
9. Eat a balanced meal- try eating foods from the six tastes-sweet, salty, pungent, sour, bitter and astringent. Ideally eat organic as they are richer in trace minerals and one avoids undesired chemicals that could interfere with body mechanisms. Avoid microwaving food. This disperses energy rather than condenses energy and this weakens the body with time. Foods should look and smell appetizing.
10. Take a short walk after meals.
11. Eat regularly and leave a gap of at least 3 hours between meals
12. Avoid sleep, watching T.V. or strenuous activity straight after eating.

What does a balanced diet mean?

We are intuitively attracted to food by the colour, smell, taste, texture and by the temperature of the food. In Ayurveda a balanced meal would contain foods that are classified either by their qualities or "gunas" or by their taste or "rasas". There are six gunas:

- Heavy
- Dry
- Hot
- Light
- Oily
- Cold

The six rasas are:

- ❑· Sweet
- ❑· Salty
- ❑· Sour
- ❑· Bitter
- ❑· Pungent or spicy
- ❑· Astringent

A balanced meal should be for the healthy individual should have all the above in a meal. For people suffering from ailments or health conditions the advice would be to visit an Ayurvedic Nutrition Advisor. More information is available from the website of our Institute - [www.ayurvedainstitute.org](http://www.ayurvedainstitute.org), or by referring to *The Ayurvedic Cookbook* by Amandea Morningstar.

A meal should have all the six tastes and qualities in them. This is the most satisfying at time of eating. It also helps in reducing the habit of eating between meals. Looking historically a typical Ayurvedic diet that has been the most suitable for a longer life is a diet consisting of:

- ❑· 40-60% whole cereal grains
- ❑· 30-50% fresh fruit and vegetables
- ❑· 10-20% good quality proteins

Compare this with a typical Western meal of a burger and chips. There is almost an opposite proportion of each. The protein tends to 60-70%, cereal 20%-30% and vegetables 20-30%. Is it a surprise that obesity is now a major issue. The occurrence of obesity has increased by five fold since the Second World War and many obesity experts now believe we are seriously at risk of developing an obesity epidemic in the Western world in the next twenty to thirty years. Obesity or being overweight has other psychological problems like a feeling of inferiority, often caused by discrimination. Furthermore, many physical problems are related to obesity, like difficulties in breathing, personal hygiene, pain in the knees and back and skin problems.

People suffering from obesity more frequently have increased blood pressure and diseases related to hardening of the arteries, with clots forming around the heart and brain. Other related problems include type 2 or non-insulin dependent diabetes, gallstones, some forms of cancer, difficulties in mobility and increased risk of mortality. The skin suffers too as it may look prematurely aged with wrinkles.

What should we eat and drink?

To keep your skin young and supple looking there has to be an increase in fresh fruits and vegetables and on unrefined and unprocessed foods. I advocate:

- ❑· A plate of salad with every meal – preferably with at least five different types of vegetables in it.
- ❑· A glass of fresh fruit or vegetable juice daily.
- ❑· Reduced saturated fat
- ❑· A plant based vitamin-mineral supplement such as Coolherbals Advanced Vitamin Mineral and Protein capsules ([www.coolherbals.com](http://www.coolherbals.com)) at a dose of two daily. Research shows that the absorption of plant-based minerals is far superior to chemical based ones.
- ❑· 1.5 litres of water daily if you are a woman and 2l of water if you are a man.

Lifestyle too is important, as is the time of eating. We know that eating some foods is not advisable at certain times of the day. An example of this is eating a heavy supper late at night. Why? This is because like bio-rhythms there are natural times for certain action.

Best time for:

- ❑• Breakfast is 6am to 10am. Breakfast should be light.
- ❑• Lunch is 10am-2pm.
- ❑• Snack or tea time is 2pm-6pm. Having evening meals around 6pm is ideal.
- ❑• Evening snack is 6pm-10pm. Eat something light is all that is advisable. Eat at least two hours before sleeping.

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