

Chinese Food Therapy: Summer



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Contents

Introduction..... 3

Foods You Should be Eating in the Summer..... 4

Recipes..... 5

 Sweet Mung Bean and Barley Soup 5

 Cucumber Salad..... 7

 Honey-Soy Baked Salmon 8

 Optional: Mango Salsa, (Served with the Salmon) 9

 Red Bean Dessert Soup 10

 Optional: Tapioca Pearls 11

About the Author 12

 Bruce Roff L.Ac. 12

Introduction.

According to Chinese Medicine, there are foods that can heal you and foods that can harm you, based on your imbalance or constitutional make up. These foods are classified by their elemental affiliation, temperature, season, flavor, and their balance. As a general rule, always eat foods that are in season, local, and never over eat one flavor.

The Summer season pertains to the Fire element, the most yang season of the year. During this time, we run the risk of dehydration, heat exhaustion, and damaging our digestion by eating foods that are too damp and heavy (ice cream and barbeques).

Foods spoil quickly in the heat, and as our bodies are microcosms of nature, eating foods that are too heavy or greasy have a greater chance to spoil inside us as well. So for the season of Summer we tend to eat smaller meals, more frequently. We eat foods that are local and in season. We avoid dairy and heavier foods when possible, and we try to eat less raw foods. Raw foods increase our temperature according to Chinese medicine, for we need to use extra energy to digest them. This may seem counter intuitive, however; when you do eat raw foods, try to have a little warming spice to balance the meal (ginger with sushi).

Try to avoid cold water, for this too is damaging to the stomach, especially in the summer. There is a reason why cultures of hotter climates eat spicier foods and drink hot tea. Our bodies try to keep an internal temperature of 98.6°. When we ingest foods cooler than that, our body naturally tries to warm up the body. If you drink a hot tea at 100° your body will naturally try to cool itself down.

Our ultimate aim is balance and moderation. By following a healthy diet in accordance to our imbalances and seasons, we may achieve optimal health. Foods for this season are very simple, but again, they should be balanced and support the digestive system and the fluids of the body.

Foods You Should be Eating in the Summer.

- Watermelon
- Cucumber
- Lemons
- Summer Squash
- Mung Beans
- Tea
- Papaya
- Mangoes
- Tomatoes
- Crab
- Clam
- Celery
- Kelp
- Lettuce
- Barley
- Flax Seed
- Peppermint
- Salt
- Almonds
- Basil
- Ginger
- Pork
- String Beans
- Tofu
- Lobster
- Longan
- Coconut
- Vinegar
- Asparagus
- Radish
- Tempeh
- Bananas

Recipes.

Sweet Mung Bean and Barley Soup

Clears Heat and Drains Dampness, Detoxifies and Cleans the Intestines

(4-6 servings)

Ingredients

- 7oz of Mung Beans
- 7oz of Job's Tears Barley
- 8 cups of water
- 2oz of Sugar (preferably Rock Sugar)

Preparation

- Wash Mung Beans and Barley thoroughly.
- Place both ingredients in one pot, and cover with 2-3 inches of water, ensuring both beans and barley are soaked.
- Allow beans to soak overnight.

Cooking Directions

1. Drain the beans and barley and return to the pot.
2. Add 8 cups of water.
3. Bring to a boil.
4. Cook over high heat for 5 minutes.
5. Reduce high heat to medium heat, place lid on pot.
6. Cook for 30 minutes to an hour, until ingredients become soft.



Chinese Food Therapy: Summer

7. Remove lid and add Rock sugar
8. Bring ingredients back to a boil to dissolve the sugar.
9. Remove from heat.
10. Serve hot or cold.

Note

Mung Beans are cooling, and sweet in flavor. They produce fluids, clear Damp-Heat, reduces swelling, and is a diuretic. They cleanse the vascular system, and remove toxins from the body.

Barley is cooling, and sweet and salty in flavor. It strengthens the Spleen and regulates the Stomach. They help reduce accumulations, and edema.

Cucumber Salad

Counteracts Summer Heat

(2 servings)

Ingredients

- 1 Peeled Medium Cucumber
- Salt
- 1 Clove of Garlic, crushed and then minced
- ¼ Cup of Vinegar
- 2 Tablespoons of Dark Sesame Oil
- (Optional) Red Chili Flakes

Cooking Directions

1. Lightly pound the Cucumber's surface to soften.
2. Cut the Cucumber in half, lengthwise.
3. Cut the Cucumber widthwise into thin slices
4. Sprinkle and toss with salt to taste.
5. Combine cucumber, garlic, vinegar, (red chili flakes), and sesame oil in a bowl and mix well.
6. Serve.

Note

Cucumbers are cooling, sweet and down bearing in nature. They are a diuretic, clears toxins from the body, quenches thirst and moistens the body.

Honey-Soy Baked Salmon

Nourishes Yin, Engenders Fluids, and Benefits the Stomach and Spleen

(4 servings)

Ingredients

- 1 minced Scallion
- 2 Tablespoons of low sodium Soy Sauce
- 1 Tablespoon of Olive Oil
- 1 Tablespoon of Rice Vinegar
- 1 Tablespoon of Honey
- 1 Teaspoon of fresh minced Ginger
- 1 lb of skinned, center cut Salmon Fillet
- 1 Teaspoon of toasted Sesame Seeds

Cooking Directions

1. Whisk Scallion, Soy Sauce, Vinegar, Honey, Olive Oil, and Ginger in a medium sized bowl until the honey has dissolved.
2. Place Salmon and 3 Tablespoons of the sauce in a sealable bag, and refrigerate for 15 minutes.
3. Preheat oven to 350°, and line a small baking pan with foil.
4. Place Salmon on the pan with skinned side down.
5. Bake the Salmon for 20 minutes.
6. Drizzle remaining sauce on top and garnish with toasted sesame seeds.

Note

Salmon is neutral in nature, tonifies Qi and blood. Honey tonifies Qi and harmonizes the stomach and spleen. Ginger is warming in nature, the flavor is spicy; it benefits the stomach and spleen.

Optional: Mango Salsa, (Served with the Salmon)

Nourishes Fluids, Benefits the Stomach and Spleen, Tonifies Qi

7 servings

Ingredients

- 1 Diced Mango
- ½ Cup of Chopped Cilantro
- ¼ Cup of Lime Juice (Roughly the juice equivalent to 2 Limes)
- ½ of 1 small Red Onion, Diced
- 1 Diced Avocado
- ¼ Teaspoon of Salt
- 1 Teaspoon of Black Pepper
- 1 Teaspoon of White Wine Vinegar

Cooking Directions

Add all ingredients together in a bowl.

Place in the refrigerator.

Note

Mango tonifies Qi, is cooling nature and sweet in flavor. Black Pepper is warming, promotes sweating, and resolve accumulations and stagnation.

Red Bean Dessert Soup

Clears Heat, Nourishes Yin, Drains Damp

2 Servings

Ingredients

- 1 ½ Cup of Adzuki Beans
- 10 Cups of water
- 1 13.5oz can of Coconut Milk
- 2 Strip of fresh Orange Peel
- ¾ Cup of Sugar
- (Optional) Tapioca Pearls

Cooking Directions

1. Pre-soak Adzuki Beans in the 10 cups of water overnight.
2. Add soaked beans and the 10 cups of water into a large pot.
3. Bring to a boil.
4. Add the 2 strips of orange peel.
5. Cook for 45 minutes on high heat.
6. Add the sugar to the pot.
7. Cook for another 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.
8. Remove tangerine or orange peel from the mixture.
9. Add coconut milk.
10. Add tapioca pearls.
11. Serve hot or cool.

Note

Adzuki beans are neutral temperature, they are sweet and sour flavor. They tonify kidney-adrenal function, clears heat, and drains damp.

Optional: Tapioca Pearls

Ingredients

- 1 Cup Tapioca Flour
- Boiling Water

Cooking Directions

1. Place 1 Cup of Tapioca Flour into a mixing bowl.
2. Add boiling water to the flour, until it is no longer sticky and has the consistency of dough.
3. Form small pearls with the mixture.
4. Cover the small pearls with a damp paper towel for a minimum of 1 hour.
5. Boil the tapioca pearls for 10 minutes.
6. Rinse and store in cold water.

About the Author.

Bruce Roff L.Ac.

Senior SOPHIA Natural Health Center - INM practitioner

Bruce Roff started his journey through natural medicine at the age of 19. His first step was in the direction of massage therapy. He is licensed and has been practicing for 15 years. Bruce has attended the North Jersey Massage Therapy Institute, and the Swedish Institute of Applied Health Sciences. He has taught medical massage and Anatomy and Physiology for the Institute for Therapeutic Massage at the Morristown Hospital and University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ). He is also a 3rd degree Reiki practitioner, certified in Chinese Medical Aromatherapy, and has studied and practiced Medical Qigong.



Bruce has studied Chinese Herbs at TriState College of Acupuncture, and acupuncture at the Swedish Institute of Applied Health Sciences. He has been a practitioner for over 8 years. Bruce has had the privilege of studying acupuncture, medical qigong, and the Chinese theory with Dr. Jeffrey Yuen, an 88th generation Taoist priest, Sat Chuen Hon, Taoist lineage holder of the Dragon Gate School, and Dr. Ling Bin, practitioner of Medical Qigong, Acupuncture and Herbology. Bruce has also studied in Southern China, where he developed his skills in acupuncture and Tui Na.

As a practitioner of Chinese Medicine, Bruce has worked in many high volume clinics and owned and operated a clinic in Chinatown. Blending his knowledge as a medical massage therapist with Chinese medicine has given Bruce an edge over others in his treatment of chronic pain conditions.