

Think of your digestive system as a fire that cooks your food to break it down into smaller bits your body can use. Chinese medicine says that **warm, lightly-cooked foods** are easier to digest and better for you. Cold foods or raw foods like salads strain your digestive fire because your body has to work that much harder to heat up the food and begin the digestive process. Dr. Smith may have told you to avoid ice water and cold drinks for the same reason. **Warm water and warm/hot caffeine-free teas** are much better to support your digestion than iced drinks. Occasionally a cold drink is ok--especially when the weather is warmer--but not as a general rule. Also as a general rule, things at the edges of the grocery store are better for you than things in the middle of the grocery store: try to stick to the edges, but bypass the pastry shop ☺.

**In general it is important to:**

- Sit down to eat
- Chew food well
- Pay attention to eating; turn off the television; get away from the work desk
- Eat organically and locally
- Eat seasonally
- Do not skip meals

**Foods to Avoid or Limit**

- Dairy
- Highly processed foods (stuff that comes in a box)
- Cold drinks
- Fruit juice
- Processed foods
- Refined flour (Ex. pastries, pasta, breads)
- Cold, raw foods (including raw salads and smoothies)
- Peanuts and peanut butters
- Bananas (OK but not every day)
- Avocado (OK but not every day)
- Deep fried foods
- Coffee
- Alcohol
- Refined sugar and sugar substitutes

**Foods to Add**

- Lots and lots of organic, lightly-cooked vegetables
- Brown rice, barley, amaranth, rye, oats
- Legumes, kidney beans, adzuki beans, lentils
- Small amount of lean organic meat, poultry, and fish
- Small amounts of whole fruits
- Lemon
- Sesame seeds, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds
- Seaweed, kelp
- Green tea, jasmine tea, raspberry leaf tea or other decaffeinated teas