# Introduction to Food Energetics

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# Learning Objectives

- What this class is about:
- Part of Chinese Herbal Medicine (CHM) curriculum
- Food Therapy as an extension of Herbal Med
- Basis in Pattern Diagnosis
- Contemporary dietary conventions

## History of Chinese Dietary Therapy

- Based on the principles of balance and harmony
- Also based on the nature of individual foods
- Fu Shi, one of the great sages of ancient China discovered eight categories of universal energy, which later became known as the Ba Gua or Eight Trigrams this is a further division of the two main categories Yin & Yang
- Shen Nung, who lived after Fu Shi used these principles to develop herbal medicine and essential nutrition
- After Shen Nung came the Yellow Emperor and in was during this period that the Yellow Emperor's Classic of Chinese Medicine was derived – this the foundational text of Chinese Medicine

## **Energetic Properties**

- Chinese Medicine applies the traditional healing properties of food to correct disharmonies within the body
- Chinese Medicine differs from Western nutrition in that it does not talk about the biochemical nature of food.
- Chinese Medicine deals on an energetic level to which balance is the key
- Foods are selected according to their energetic qualities such as warming, cooling, drying or moistening
- By studying an individual's imbalances one would choose the appropriate foods to bring about a balanced state of health
- Foods all have specific qualities inherent within determined by the effect the food has on the body
- The method of preparation either enhances or neutralized the food

#### YIN & YANG

- Yin and Yang exist relative to one another and also in a constant state of change at any given time
- They are not static conditions
- According the theory of Yin and Yang when yin and yang are out of balance disharmonies occur
- Within the body Yin and Yang are often referred to as the body's water and fire
- The application of Chinese Nutrition necessitates determining the body type of an individual – one may be a cold type (more Yin in nature) or a hot type (more Yang in nature) or commonly a mixture

# Yang Type

- Typical symptoms of a hot type or Yang type person
  - Red complexion
  - Easy to sweat
  - Always hot
  - Outgoing personality
  - Loud voice
  - Dy mouth
  - Thirst
  - Affinity for cold liquids
  - Ferocious appetite
  - Constipation
  - Irrititably

#### YIN TYPE

- Typical symptoms of a cold type or Yin Type
  - Paleness
  - Coldness
  - Disdains cold liquids
  - Like warm liquids
  - Low energy
  - Loose stools
  - Sleeps a lot
  - Weak voice
  - Introverted personality
  - Lack of appetite
  - Dizziness
  - Edema

# Counteracting Symptoms

- To bring about balance and counteract symptoms:
  - Hot type persons would use primarily cooling foods such as wheat, mung beans, watermelon, fresh juices, and many many vegetables
  - Cold type persons would use primarily warming foods such as garlic, ginger, onions, black beans, lamb and chicken
  - Hot types avoid hot spicy foods
  - Cold types avoid cold raw foods

# Traditional Chinese View of the Body

- According to TCM, the human being is an intricate whole made up of these essential components:
  - Qi vital energy: Qi is like life force
  - Blood: supplies the nutritive aspect in the body and nourishes Qi
  - Body Fluids: 2 types
    - Jin refined fluids (sweat, tears, tissue fluids)
    - Ye thick lubricating fluids (spinal fluid and synovial fluid)
  - Jing essence of life found in the eggs, sperm, bone marrow and the brain (Sea of Marrow)
  - Shen spirit which gives up intuition, instinct, and the ability to comprehend

# Organs of the Body

- TCM views body organs as couples consisting of a yin and yang organ
- Each pair also has energetic corrolations that we may not necessarily associate with the physical organ
- Each pair of organs is associated with one of the five energies called the Five Elements
- The quality of the element is reflected in its organ pair
  - Wood
  - Fire
  - Earth
  - Metal
  - Water

#### **Wood Element**

- Yin organ: Liver Yang organ: Gall Bladder
- Yin: Liver
  - Houses the Soul
  - Controls the tendons
  - Responsible for the flow of energy
  - Stores blood
  - Manifests externally in the eyes
  - Emotion: Anger, Frustration
- Yang: Gall Bladder
  - Stores and excretes bile
  - Protects nervous system from overreaction
  - Helps normalize a person emotionally
  - Emotion: indecision

#### Fire Element

- Yin: Heart; Pericardium Yang: Small Intestine; San Jiao
- Heart
  - Houses the Shen
  - Governs Blood
  - Externally manifests in the tongue (sensory function: taste)
  - Emotion: joy
- Small Intestine
  - Absorbs fluids
  - **■** Emotion: Discernment
- Pericardium
  - Surrounds and protects the Heart
- San Jiao
  - Commuication between three cavities in the trunk
  - Helps with fluid metabolism

#### Earth Element

- Yin: Spleen Yang: Stomach
- Spleen
  - Transforms and transports food into usable food essence
  - Produces Blood
  - Opens to the mouth
  - Controls the muscles
  - Responsible for keep the blood in the vessels
  - Emotion: worry (excessive thinking)
  - Reference to the Spleen in the Chinese system also includes the pancreas
- Stomach
  - Breaks down and ripens the food
  - Transports downward

#### Metal Element

- Yin: Lung
  Yang: Large Intestine
- Lung
  - Breathing
  - Regulating water metabolism
  - Descend and disperse Qi throughout the body
  - Open out to the nose
  - Control skin, pores and skin hair
  - Emotion: Sadness, Grief
- Large Intestine
  - Excretes wastes from the body
  - Absorb water

#### Water Element

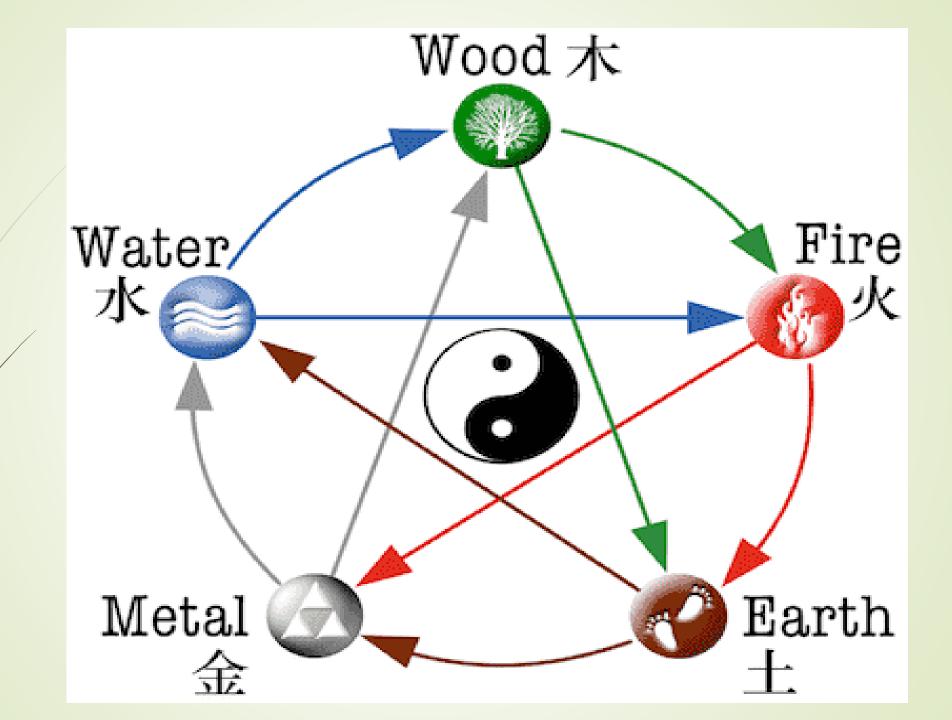
- Yin: Kidneys Yang: Urinary Bladder
- Kidneys
  - Store Jing
  - Responsible for growth, development and reproduction
  - Produce marrow
  - Form brain and spinal cord
  - Open to the ears
  - Balance body fluid metabolism
  - Emotion: Fear
- Urinary Bladder
  - Stores and excretes urine

# Five Element Theory

- Generating Cycle: (circular and repetitive)
  - Rub two pieces of wood together and create fire
  - Fire burns to ash and creates earth
  - From Earth we dig up metal
  - Melt metal to liquid and create water
  - Put a seed in the water and it germinates a tree and creates wood
- Control Cycle
  - The roots of wood invade Earth
  - Take earth and build a dam to control water
  - Water puts out Fire
  - Fire melts down the Metal
  - Metal makes the axe that cuts the wood
- In TCM dietary therapy you can apply these relationships to food colors, elements and corresponding body systems

# Eight Differentiations

- Internal & External
  - Locate the area of the disease
- Deficient & Excess
  - Relative strength of the patient or the disease
- Cold & Hot
  - Gives indications of the nature of the disease
- Yin & Yang
  - Give the overall picture of the condition
- Together these eight differentiations can provide an accurate picture of both the individual being treated and the disease at hand



#### Balanced Health

- When Yin and Yang are in balance, they are parts of an inseparable whole.
- It is only when Yin or Yang are out of balance that their individual qualities become distinguishable.
- Symptoms are a sign of imbalances of
- Yin Yang; a lack of symptoms is a sign of balance of Yin-Yang.

#### Yin & Yang General Pathology

- Yin Excess An excess of Yin overwhelms Yang leading to symptoms of cold, dampness, etc...
- Yang Excess An excess of Yang overwhelms Yin and consumes body fluids leading to symptoms of heat, dryness, etc...
- Yin Deficiency An insufficiency of Yin allows Yang to grow out of proportion. Although there is a normal quantity of Yang, it is relatively excess. This causes symptoms of Heat. This must be treated by nourishing Yin and clearing deficiency Heat. By increasing the Yin, the Yang will naturally come back into balance.
- Yang Deficiency An insufficiency of Yang allows Yin to grow out of proportion. This causes symptoms of Cold and watery symptoms.

# Qi deficiency

- Signs and Symptoms of Qi Deficiency
  - poor digestion.
  - Weakness
  - fatigue
  - bloating.
  - loose stools.
  - low or no appetite
  - anemia.

## Qi deficiency

- Use sweet, acrid, salty tastes, neutral, warm and hot foods and neutral to warming methods of cooking.
  - Oats, millet, short grain rice, long grain rice, spelt, corn
  - Poultry, lamb, beef
  - Trout, salmon, tuna, shellfish
  - Fennel, carrots, leeks
  - Lentils, walnuts, black sesame, hazelnut

# Yang deficiency

- Signs and Symptoms of Yang deficiency
  - Impairment of Yang leads to warming, moving, and containing dysfunction:
  - Pale or withered yellow complexion
  - spiritlessness, lassitude
  - palpitation
  - shortness of breath,
  - cold form, chills in the limbs,
  - spontaneous sweat, pale and enlarged tongue, vacuous, deep, and slow pulse
- Same as Qi deficiency, add more warming methods and foods like raisin, cherry, peach, acrid spices, venison

# Yang Excess

- Signs and Symptoms of Yang Excess
  - Hot all over
  - Thirst; design for cold drinks
  - Constant dry mouth and throat
  - Red face
  - Red tongue with yellow coat
  - Rapid full pulse

### Yang Excess

- Neutral, cool, cold
- Sweet, sour (bitter)
- Wheat, barley
- Apples, pears, citrus, raspberries
- Tomato, spinach, cucumbers, celery

AVOID: hot foods; no meat for 6 weeks

# Blood deficiency

Sweet, sour; warm, neutral or cool

Oats, amaranth, rice

Neutral vegetables - red beets, red cabbage, carrots, spinach

Chicken, liver, beef, veal, lamb

Oysters, mussels, eel, perch

# Blood deficiency

- Signs and Symptoms of Blood Deficiency
  - Paleness of lips, nailbeds, tongue, complexion
  - Thin body
  - Dry hair, skin
  - Trembling or numbness in the arms or hands
  - Dizziness/Light-headed upon standing
  - Muscles strain easily

# **Blood Deficiency**

- Red grapes, longan, plum, apricot, sweet cherries
- Sesame seeds, sunflower seeds
- Red juices, red wine
- Egg yolk

AVOID: hot foods, acrid or bitter tastes

# Yin Deficiency

- Signs and Symptoms of Yin Deficiency
  - 5 palm heat
  - Hot flashes
  - Insomnia
  - Night sweats
  - Vivid dreams or nightmares
  - Dry skin, nails, hair
  - Red tongue tip
  - Thirst with desire for small amounts of liquid

# Yin Deficiency

- Use cooling foods and cooling cooking methods. Sweet, salty and cool or neutral foods to help generate fluids.
- Pork, oysters, octopus, perch, carp
- Refreshing fruits, pears, grapes
- Refreshing vegetables, spinach, tomato, seaweed
- Tofu, soy milk
- Spelt, rice, wheat
- Fruit juice

AVOID: hot foods, acrid or bitter tastes

#### Yin Excess

- Signs and Symptoms of Yin Excess
  - Feeling cold
  - Sharp pain aggravated with pressure
  - Desire for warm drinks
  - Bright or bluish complexion
  - Pale tongue with slimy cold
  - full deep tight pulse

#### Yin Excess

- Moderately warming food & preparation
- Bitter, salty, sweet tastes
- Use foods from Qi Deficiency list
  - Oats, millet, short grain rice, long grain rice, spelt, corn
  - Poultry, lamb, beef
  - Trout, salmon, tuna, shellfish
  - Fennel, carrots, leeks
  - Lentils, walnuts, black sesame, hazelnut

AVOID: Dairy, raw fruit/veg, sweets, eating fast or irregular times, eating late, oils/fats, refrigeration



#### COLD

- Nature and characteristics: Cold is a yin pathogenic factor and has a tendency to damage the "Yang" energy. It is stagnant, and attracts other illnesses.
- Common symptoms of cold: Cold body and limbs, poor blood circulation, pale face, vomiting and diarrhea, cold painful joints, vaginal discharge and feces are thin, menstrual pain and disorder for female.
  - Use warming foods:
  - Spices like chili, ginger, cinnamon, leeks, garlic, cloves, coriander
  - Alcohol (high proof) in small amounts
  - Oats, fennel, lamb, venison

#### **HEAT**

- Nature and characteristics: High in temperature, body can become bloated as gas gets trapped.
- Common symptoms of heat: Heat, thirst, sweating, fatigue, yellow urine, yellow tongue, or sudden fainting.
  - Use cooling foods, bitter and sour flavors
  - Pineapple, tangerine, melon, lemon, kiwi.
  - Dandelion, tomato, cucumber, endive, spinach
  - Salads, mung bean sprouts, yogurt, wheat, barley, black or green tea, mineral water

#### WIND

- Nature and characteristics: Illnesses caused by wind tend to happen fast and rapidly, and symptoms tend to be shifting or changing.
- Common symptoms of wind: Tremor, convulsions, numbness, itchiness, dizziness.
  - Wind Cold: chili, ginger, cinnamon, garlic, green onions
  - Wind Heat: Eggplant, green tea, watermelon, chamomile tea
  - Internal Wind: Eggplant, celery, water chestnut, sunflower seeds, banana, pike, perch, bass, rabbit

#### **DRYNESS**

- Nature and characteristics: Dryness consumes the body fluids and it is especially damaging to the lungs.
- Common symptoms of dryness: Dry tongue, dry skin, dry hair, dry cough with little or no phlegm, less sweat or no sweat, chapped lips and constipation.
  - Cool, sweet foods which moisten dryness
  - Pear, melon, tomato, bananas, grapes, wheat, peanuts, pine nuts, soy, dairy, pork

#### DAMP

- Nature and characteristics: It is heavy and sticky, and stays onto the body for a long time. This is known as stagnation. Dampness makes the body susceptible to many diseases. It easily harms the "Yang" energy.
- Common symptoms of dampness: Head pain, chest tightness, sluggishness, sore or swollen joints, poor flexion and extension of limbs, sticky phlegm, and cloudy urine. Over time, dampness cause the body to be less efficient at removing fluids, leading to water retention and weight gain. The accumulated dampness in the body also congeal into phlegm and become fatty tissues leading to obesity.
  - Use warming, drying foods that transform Damp; bitter, acrid, sweet tastes
  - Millet, rice, amaranth, pear, cherries, grapes, ginger

AVOID: Dairy, sweets, sugar, oils/fats, pork, bananas

#### PHLEGM

- Oily hair and oily skin
- Gassy and bloated stomach/abdomen, fluid retention in body
- Snoring, coughing with or without mucus/phlegm
- Sticky poop, smelly and difficult to flush
- Increasing lack of motivation, doesn't want to talk, fatigued
- Under-eye puffiness,
- Obesity, hard to loose weight or bounce back easily
- Pale face
  - If Heat: Bitter, salty, sweet, cool
  - Endive, dandelion, soy milk, mung beans, radish, pears, grapes, carp, salt, seaweed

AVOID: Dairy, meat alcohol, fats, sweets

- If Cold: Bitter, acrid, warm
- Ginger, leeks, garlic, cardamom, cherries