

Why raw foods and cold drinks are slowing down your metabolism

Cooling your body down in Chinese Medicine is done with foods that have a **cooling nature** – NOT through frozen or chilled food and drink as we have been made to believe.

The teachings of Chinese Medicine encourage us to **eat in congruence with the seasons** and to be aware of the foods that are naturally provided for us from season to season. In summer we are drawn to **lighter, cooler types** of foods that are more quickly cooked, like steamed vegetables. Varying your food choices according to seasons is a way to keep your body in sync with the natural environment. Eating warmer foods when the weather is cold and foods with cooling properties during the warmer months keeps you healthy and balanced in all seasons.

Many modern food choices would not exist in the absence of fast global transportation and indoor refrigeration. Humans evolved eating what was locally available and in season. Preservation methods evolved but these methods usually involved cooking. The modern grocery store is like having an in season garden all year; watermelons, pineapples, grapes are always available at your local grocery. But, these are foods you might never find growing in your part of the world and consuming them freely will lead to imbalances over time. We must also consider that the modern **man-made refrigerator is a relatively recent invention** and our bodies are **not** designed to consume icy cold foods and drinks.

Refrigerated and raw foods are considered neither healthy nor cooling; in fact, **they cause the stomach to create more heat** in order to break the foods down, which ultimately damages the entire digestive system.

If you imagine your stomach as the pot and your spleen as both the fire under the pot and the distillation mechanism to which this pot is attached, then you can understand that **when you consume cold and raw foods, the spleen and stomach need to exhaust more energy to heat up and digest the contents**. Too much water or cooling foods can douse or injure the fire. For the digestive system to **absorb the nutrients of food, the food needs to ideally be at room temperature** before it can begin breaking it down. Heating the food inside your body **strains your energetic resources**, weakening your energy system over time. Vegetables that are lightly cooked and well cooked grains ensure the digestive system can

instantly begin extracting energy without first having to heat the food to body temperature. Although raw foods contain slightly more enzymes and nutrients, the overall gain is less in the long run as you are losing energy in the internal heating process.

In Chinese Medicine, cold blocks the meridian channels, slows and even congeals blood circulation, and diminishes organ functioning to less than optimal ability.

Spicy food and warm tea is common amongst those living in **hot and humid climates**. The nature of the spicy food is pungent and dispersive in nature relieving the body of heat and damp through the body's **natural cooling off method of sweating**. The hot tea encourages the body to sweat, increasing the heat loss through evaporation from the skin surface.

Hot weather acts as a natural appetite suppressant; spicy food acts as an appetite stimulant. In countries like India where the temperature is hot and humid, spicy foods are perfect.

Here in Melbourne, a moderate amount of spices – chilli peppers, cayenne and ginger can be used to cool the body, however there can be a fine line between cooling the body down and generating internal heat. Our weather tends to be more **hot and dry** and the best foods to consume are those that are **cooling and moistening**. Have a look below at the recommended foods for early and late summer.

Foods that are cooling in nature :

Foods that have cooling properties (Early summer/December)

Apricot, asparagus, avocado, banana
basil, beans green, blueberry, capsicum, celery
cherry, chervil, chives, coriander, currants
cucumber, dill, eggplant, gooseberry, honeydew
lettuce, loganberry, lychee, mango, marjoram,
mint, onion, orange, oregano, nectarine,
passionfruit, pineapple, peach, peas, radish,
raspberry, sage, spring onion
starfruit, strawberry, sweet corn, thyme
tomato, watercress, watermelon
zucchini and zucchini flower

Late summer/February

Apple, avocado, banana, basil, beans borlotti
butter, blackberry, blueberry, boysenberry,
cantaloupe, capsicum, celery, cherry, chilli,
chives, coriander, cucumber, daikon
dill, eggplant, fig, grapes, guava, honeydew,
kiwifruit leek, lemon, lettuce loganberry, lychee
mango, nectarine okra onion, orange, oregano
passionfruit, peach, pear, peas, plum
radish, thyme, tomato, raspberry, rhubarb, sage
spring onion, squash, starfruit, strawberry,
sweet corn, tamarillo, tomato, watermelon,
zucchini

Cooling beverages

Hot teas like mint and chamomile,
marjoram, elderflower, rosehip & hibiscus,
green tea

Herbal Tea's

A hot cup of tea encourages the body to sweat and the more sweat that is produced means the greater rate of heat loss from evaporation from the skin surface and therefore a reduction in one's body temperature.

The benefits of Chinese Herbal Tea are to ensure good health. They help

- Lower cholesterol,
- Lower Blood Pressure
- Regulate blood Glucose
- Relax the nervous system creating a calmer and more relaxed state of mind
- Aid the stomach and digestive problems
- Provide cleansing properties for the body
- Promote energy and wellness
- Natural antioxidants

Rosanna Traditional Chinese Medicine Centre supplies a variety of cooling and fragrant teas to choose from. They are of the world's highest quality and sourced from the most exotic and recognized tea producers.

Dragon's Well (Lung Ching)

Lung Ching is as close to pure freshly cut tealeaves as possible. The young leaves are picked and pan-fried to halt the fermentation process. When added to water the tea transforms into perfectly formed tiny camellia leaves. The taste is fresh, grassy and clean. The liquor is clear and green. Lung Ching is extraordinarily high in antioxidants and naturally low in caffeine. A subtle taste for those who enjoy their tea pure and unadorned.

Pu-Erh & Chrysanthemum

This special blend of Pu-erh with Chrysanthemum flowers is very popular in Hong Kong. It is commonly served in many Chinese restaurants, especially during a Dim Sum meal. Not only is it delicious, but it is considered particularly good for cooling internal heat, as well as being able to aid digestion of oily food. The sweetness of the Chrysanthemum flowers nicely complements the earthy taste of Pu-erh, creating a healthy and soothing tea with a subtle sweet floral fragrance. This tea is highly recommended for those who are new to Pu-erh.

Iron Goddess (Ti Kuanyin)

Ti Kuanyin of Mercy tea is one of the most famous Oolong teas in the world.

Oolongs are semi-fermented teas and there is much skill involved in their preparation and processing. Literally translated, Oolong means Black Dragon and these teas are highly sought after for their depth of flavour, fully developed aroma and digestive properties. Oolong teas are often marketed as weight loss teas, as they aid digestion.

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