

## **Spring (Spring Equinox → Early Summer)**

**Element:** Wood

**Organs:** Liver & Gallbladder

**Goal:** Promote growth, movement, detox, smooth qi flow

**Flavor focus:** Sour (lightly), sweet (natural)

### **Best foods**

- Leafy greens: spinach, bok choy, dandelion greens, mustard greens
- Sprouts: mung bean sprouts, alfalfa sprouts
- Young vegetables: asparagus, celery, green onions
- Sour foods (moderate): lemon, vinegar, hawthorn
- Grains: millet, barley
- Proteins: chicken, eggs, freshwater fish
- Herbs/teas: chrysanthemum tea, peppermint, goji berries

### **Avoid**

- Too greasy, heavy, or spicy foods
  - Excess alcohol (stagnates Liver qi)
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## **Summer (Early Summer → Late Summer)**

**Element:** Fire

**Organs:** Heart & Small Intestine

**Goal:** Clear heat, nourish fluids, support the Heart

**Flavor focus:** Bitter (moderate), sweet

### **Best foods**

- Cooling fruits: watermelon, cucumber, pear, strawberries
- Vegetables: zucchini, tomato, bitter melon, lettuce
- Legumes: mung beans (classic summer food!)
- Grains: rice, barley
- Proteins: tofu, duck, fish
- Herbs/teas: lotus leaf, mung bean soup, chrysanthemum

### **Avoid**

- Excessively spicy or fried foods
- Too much ice-cold food (can damage digestion)

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## **Late Summer (Damp Season)**

**Element:** Earth

**Organs:** Spleen & Stomach

**Goal:** Strengthen digestion, drain dampness

**Flavor focus:** Sweet (natural), bland

### **Best foods**

- Root vegetables: sweet potato, yam, carrot
- Squash: pumpkin, butternut squash
- Grains: rice, millet, oats
- Legumes: adzuki beans, chickpeas
- Fruits (cooked if weak digestion): apple, dates
- Herbs/foods: ginger (small amounts), lotus seed

### **Avoid**

- Excess sugar, dairy, greasy foods
- Too much raw or cold food

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## **Autumn (Late Summer → Early Winter)**

**Element:** Metal

**Organs:** Lungs & Large Intestine

**Goal:** Moisten dryness, support immunity

**Flavor focus:** Pungent (light), sour

### **Best foods**

- Moistening fruits: pear, apple, persimmon
- Vegetables: white radish (daikon), cauliflower, cabbage
- Nuts & seeds: almonds, sesame seeds
- Proteins: chicken, pork, tofu
- Grains: rice, barley
- Herbs/foods: honey, lily bulb, tremella mushroom (snow fungus)

### **Avoid**

- Too much spicy or drying food

- Excess smoking or alcohol (harsh on the Lungs)
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## **Winter (Early Winter → Early Spring)**

**Element:** Water

**Organs:** Kidneys & Bladder

**Goal:** Nourish essence (*jing*), conserve energy, keep warm

**Flavor focus:** Salty (moderate)

### **Best foods**

- Warming soups & stews
- Root vegetables: turnip, carrot, burdock
- Beans: black beans, kidney beans
- Proteins: lamb, beef, bone broth, eggs
- Nuts/seeds: walnuts, chestnuts
- Sea foods: seaweed, shrimp
- Herbs/foods: ginger, cinnamon, dates

### **Avoid**

- Excess cold/raw foods
- Overexertion and late nights (Kidney-depleting)