

# The Vata Dosha

diet and lifestyle tips to  
pacify vata dosha

## OVERVIEW

The vata dosha is made up of air and ether. The vata dosha is primarily characterized by MOVEMENT. The vata dosha is light, dry, moving, cool, irregular, rough, fine, quick, and formless.

When in balance, people who are primarily vata-type have a lean build, delicate features and an active body. They tend to be quick to learn, have a creative spark, the ability to adapt to change and perceive and differentiate sensations well, and the ability to feel emotions easily.

When out of balance, vata-types can develop dry skin, cracking joints, cold hands and feet, poor circulation, brittle nails, become underweight, constipated, or bloated, develop indigestion, gas, tremors, hair loss, dry eyes, restlessness, or experience missed periods/irregular menstruation. They might have scattered thinking or anxious, overly sensitive, or overly emotional.

To restore balance of vata dosha, you may benefit from the following diet and lifestyle suggestions (even if vata is not your predominant dosha).

## QUALITIES TO FAVOR

To pacify vata dosha, choose foods and activities that are warming, grounding, slow, regular, and moist/oily, as these qualities are opposite of its own.

## VATA SEASON

Vata tends to go out of balance more easily when the climate is cold, dry, and windy.

## QUALITIES TO LIMIT

Limit foods and activities that are cold, dry, and light. For example, limit foods like granola, toast, raw vegetables, salads, or iced drinks.

Limit activities that are fast, unpredictable or irregular like eating on the go, fasting, under-eating, excess cardio, multitasking, talking too much, travel, or irregular meal times.

## VATA SHOPPING LIST

**Vegetables:** avocados, beets, carrots, leeks, mustard greens, well cooked onions, parsnips, acorn squash, winter squash, butternut squash, sweet potatoes, tomatoes *(cooked vegetables are easier to digest, minimize raw vegetables or cruciferous vegetables like broccoli)*

**Fruits:** baked apples, ripe bananas, blackberries, mangoes, ripe strawberries, peaches, pears, persimmons *(ripe and sweeter fruits are best, minimize dried fruits)*

**Grains:** amaranth, cooked oats, quinoa, rice *(limit dry grains like granola or toast)*

**Legumes:** mung beans, tofu *(minimize most beans, beans can be better digested when properly spiced)*

**Meat, Eggs, and Dairy Products:** kefir, yogurt, chicken, turkey, beef, eggs, fish *(most meat typically well tolerated, avoid cold dairy like ice cream or frozen yogurt)*

**Nuts, Oils, and Fats:** almonds, almond butter, ghee, sesame oil *(most natural oils well tolerated)*

**Spices:** ginger, cardamom, basil, cinnamon, clove, cumin, dill, fennel, garlic, mustard, nutmeg, oregano, peppermint, thyme, turmeric *(most spices well tolerated)*

**Extras:** raw honey, maple syrup *(avoid alcohol and caffeine)*

## LIFESTYLE TIPS TO PACIFY VATA

**Daily Rhythm:** maintain a fixed daily schedule, avoid multitasking, sit down to eat, avoid eating on the go, avoid snacking, take moments throughout the day to breathe and slow down

**Exercise:** choose exercise that is strengthening and grounding, like alignment-focused yoga, hiking, or strength training, avoid excessive cardio exercise, avoid exercising outside in cold weather

**Self-Care:** practice self-massage in the morning or evening with warming oil (like sesame oil), drink warm water throughout the day, listen to calming music, take warm baths, practice meditation, stay warm

**Aromatherapy:** warming and grounding oils like frankincense, ginger, sandalwood, and cinnamon

**Colors:** choose warming, grounding colors in your clothing and the objects you highlight in your home (like red, orange, brown, etc.)