

Food Compatibility According to Ayurveda

Divya Alter for Ayurveda in the Kitchen
July 31, 2021



Class Overview

1. categories and examples of food incompatibility

2. practice identifying them in recipes and menus

3. the harmful effects of eating them

4. how we can transition to eating more compatible foods

Food for Thought

Think about incompatible foods that you've eaten since early childhood and the possible consequences they might have on you today.

Definition of Incompatible Food Combinations (*Viruddha-ahara*)

Viruddha: opposite, that which is against to, contradictory to the body tissues, causing some pathology inside the body



Ahara: something we bring into our body, food

Incompatible Foods

Viruddha-ahara

Categories of Food Incompatibility

1. Place, geographical location (<i>Desha</i>)	7. Preparation (<i>Samskara</i>)	13. Contra-Indications (<i>Upachara</i>)
2. Time of day, season (<i>Kala</i>)	8. Potency (<i>Virya</i>)	14. Cooking (<i>Paka</i>)
3. Digestive fire, portion (<i>Agni</i>)	9. Bowels (<i>Koshtha</i>)	15. Combination (<i>Samyoga</i>)
4. Dose, proportion (<i>Matra</i>)	10. Health Condition (<i>Avastha</i>)	16. Palatability (<i>Hridya</i>)
5. Suitability (<i>Satmya</i>)	11. Order (<i>Krama</i>): of eating dishes within a meal, and of daily tasks in relation to eating	17. Extremes of Attributes (<i>Sampat</i>)
6. Dosha (<i>Dosha</i>)	12. Temperature Shock (<i>Parihara</i>)	18. Proper Knowledge of Use (<i>Vidhi</i>)

Suitability (*Satmya*)

Satmya: a substance or a habit conducive to one's health (and useful for the body/tissues)

Okasatmya (aka *abhyasa-saatmya*): adaptation/habituation; that which we practice or eat regularly, since birth

Foods may not be compatible (nor good for the body), but with regular consumption since early childhood, such foods become somewhat conducive or less harmful to our health.

Always adapt a diet or a treatment to a person's *Satmya*. Failure to adapt will result in a failure of treatment.



Breakout Session:

food incompatibility in your life

3 groups: take 8 minutes to...

- Discuss three categories of food incompatibility and provide examples from your personal experience

Feel free to refer to:

- the descriptions in *What to Eat for How You Feel* (pages 37-38)
- the Categories of Food Incompatibility chart
- Choose a spokesperson who will share the highlights of your discussion with the whole class (in 3 minutes or less)

Discussion on Good & Bad Food Combinations



Clinical condition examples from bad food combinations



Milk with Meat →
Psoriasis



Meat with sour foods and salty
foods → Skin inflammation/rash

Milk with Meat →
Elephant Skin



Identify Improper Food Compatibility in a Recipe



EGGNOG

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 eggs, separated
- 1/4 cup sugar, divided
- 4 ounces rum,
bourbon or brandy
- 10 ounces whole milk
- 4 ounces heavy cream
- Garnish: grated nutmeg

Low-Cal Fettuccine Alfredo

- ❑ 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- ❑ 1 clove garlic, minced
- ❑ 1 teaspoon grated lemon zest
- ❑ 2 teaspoons all-purpose flour
- ❑ 1 cup low-fat (2%) milk
- ❑ Kosher salt
- ❑ 2 tablespoons Neufchâtel or low-fat cream cheese
- ❑ 3/4 cup grated parmesan cheese, plus more for topping
- ❑ 3 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- ❑ 12 ounces fresh fettuccine
- ❑ Freshly ground pepper

Discussion Points:



<https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/food-network-kitchen/low-cal-fettuccine-alfredo-recipe-2118317>



Cumulative Harmful Effects of Incompatible Foods

- Long-term dosha imbalance (vitiates or suppresses the doshas)
- Accumulation of ama and ama-visha toxins
- Chronic digestive disorders
- Other diseases (inflammation, arthritis, etc.)
- Food allergies



Varying Effects of Incompatible Foods

People with the following conditions/situations experience **the most harmful reactions** to incompatible foods:

- chronic illness
- inflammation
- slow metabolism
- chronic pain
- weak digestion
- digestive disorders
- convalescing
- old age
- sedentary lifestyle

People with the following conditions/situations experience **the least harmful reactions** to incompatible foods:

- exercise regularly (*vyayama*)
- have good internal oilation (*snigdha*)
- robust metabolism/immunity (*bala-shalinam*)
- strong digestion (*deeptagni*)
- consumed such foods from birth (*satmya*); eats culture-based food for a particular habitat
- young age (*vayastha*)
- takes incompatible foods in small quantity (*alpam cha bhojanam*)
- cooks with spices

Tips for Making the Best of Eating Incompatible Foods

- Make them the exception, not the rule--eat them occasionally
- Cook them with spices to support digestion
 - use Superspice Masala when you cannot cook it yourself
- Sip on a pungent digestive tea after an incompatible meal
- Make the incompatible foods the smallest portion of your meal



How to Transition to Eating More Compatible Foods

Day/Week/ Month	Decrease the Unhealthy Habit by	Increase the Healthy Habit by
1	25%	25%
2, 3	50%	50%
4, 5, 6	75%	75%
7	100%	100%

Source: Anna raksha Ashtanga Hridayam Su. 7.48, 50

[A quick change in habits causes an imbalance to the doshas, which makes it difficult to sustain the habit over a long period of time.] A slow and steady change of habits allows the doshas to gradually restore their balance. In this way, one will be able to sustain the new healthy habit, and thus maintain one's dosha balance over the long term.

Review

Ayurveda recognizes 18 categories of food incompatibility.

The incompatible foods you've regularly eaten since early childhood will have less harmful effects on you.

Frequently eating incompatible foods has immediate and long-term effects on our digestion and overall health.

For those who are sick or have weakened digestion, it is especially important to follow Ayurveda's food compatibility guidelines.

Review

Many modern recipes and menus incorporate incompatible foods; however, many of them can be Ayurvedized for optimal digestion and health.

Eating compatible foods 100 percent of the time is nearly impossible.

A gradual change in eating compatible foods is more sustainable and balancing than a quick change.

“Always postpone a bad habit, and never delay a good one.”

-Vaidya Kameshwar Mishra (Vaidya RK Mishra's father)

Food For Thought

What incompatible foods have you eaten since early childhood?

What are some possible consequences they might have on you today?



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