

21 Ayurvedic Eating Tips

Note: these tips were originally designed by Dr. John Douillard. John Platt has added additional information and suggestions.

1. Eat your main meal at midday.

Studies suggest digestive strength is greater at midday and weaker at night. Start with a small breakfast that is big enough to get you through to lunch without hunger. *Make lunch your main meal* and have nothing until supper. Make supper as small and as early as possible, but eat enough to get through to breakfast without needing more food. Don't skip breakfast.

2. Be sure the stomach, bladder, and bowels are empty before eating.

Eat only when you are hungry. Eating just two meals a day is fine as long as you remain satisfied throughout the day.

3. Eat predominantly a plant-based, whole food, minimally or completely non-processed diet, and, if needed, small amounts of meat (only a~10% of the diet).

4. Instead of grabbing a snack when craving food between meals, drink water.

Studies suggest many cravings for food are actually just a need for water. Use this tip to avoid snacking between meals.

5. Pre-hydrate your stomach for optimal digestion.

Studies suggest digestive and weight loss benefits from drinking a glass of water 30 minutes before a meal.⁸ This hydrates the bicarbonate acid buffer layer in the stomach, which allows the full production of stomach hydrochloric acid. However, too much water very close to a meal can dilute essential stomach acids needed for digestion.

6. During your meals, sip room temperature or hot water in an amount needed to create a soup-like consistency of the food and water in your stomach. In addition, you can sip hot water from a thermos throughout the day, which has multiple benefits

7. Do not drink iced beverages during meals.

8. Do not eat while upset, angry, or distracted. Eat sitting down in a relaxed, casual manner.

9. Bring everything to the table so you don't need to get up once you start eating.

Whenever possible, designate a server so this is easily accomplished.

10. Say grace or give thanks.

Studies show that a pre-meal ritual actually improves digestion.

11. Clear your mind and look at your food while eating.

12. Eat slowly and chew your food thoroughly. Your food should be more of a liquid consistency before swallowing.

13. No TV, mail, reading, or distractions during your meals.

Enjoy pleasant company and zero business talk (including gossip) while eating your meals.

14. Avoid leftovers.

If you do have leftovers, do not save food for more than 24 hours.

15. Avoid over- or under-cooked food.

Studies suggest over-cooking can be harmful and under-cooking can make it difficult to assimilate certain nutrients.

16. Eat a balanced meal: a plate that is ½ veggies, ¼ starches, and ¼ protein. Add healthy oils in small amounts. Try to use olive oil or coconut oil when possible

17. Try to include all six tastes in each meal: sweet, sour, salt, bitter, pungent, and astringent. Be present.

18. Avoid heavy food at night, such as yogurt or cheese.

These foods are heavy, warming, and best eaten in the middle of the day when your digestion is strongest.

19. Eat more seasonal foods.

20. Eat supper early and maintain a 13-hour fast from supper to breakfast.

Studies show this supports healthy weight loss and blood sugar levels while resetting metabolism. This will also aid in better sleep.

21. Take time after the meal to rest for 5-10 minutes. If possible, rest on your left side and then take a short 10-15 minute walk. Walking inside or even walking in place is okay. Studies show that this improves digestion and balances blood sugar.