

Earth

Lean pork, jujube, walnuts, wolfberry fruit and glutinous rice



Ingredients:
Lean pork (150g), wolfberry fruits (10g), walnuts (10g), 10 jujubes, glutinous rice (100g) and rice (50g)

Preparation:
1. Wash and chop the lean pork into slices and stir it with soy sauce, sugar, salt and cornstarch evenly.
2. Pan-fry the pork.
3. Cook rice with jujubes, wolfberry fruits, glutinous rice and rice together.
4. Spread the pork on the rice when the water is almost gone, simmer until the rice is done.
5. Put walnut pieces in and stir even.

Benefits:
It helps reinforce energy, benefits spleen, and reinforces liver and kidney.

“Earth” people are granted with the energy from the “earth,” which belongs to *yin* in TCM.

They usually have a round face, yellow skin, broad shoulders, thick back, strong shins and steady steps.

Just like the characteristics of “earth” in Chinese culture, “earth” people are often described as good-tempered, diligent, tolerant and loyal. They are keen on slow and steady pace in everything and lack curiosity.

Thanks to their slow temper, acute severe ailments are less common among “earth” people and they are known to live relatively long lives compared to others.

Excessive dampness is the major health problem for “earth” people.

It usually contributes to slow energy and blood circulation, and results in thick blood and phlegm gathering.

These people may be bothered by a slow metabolism and edema problems.

And due to the close relationship between “earth” and spleen (digestive system), they are usually vulnerable to digestive problems such as poor appetite, stomachache and diarrhea. Problems like gastroptosis may happen in severe cases.

Foods that help regulate

energy and activate blood circulation are recommended to help prevent high blood viscosity.

These foods include dried orange peel, turnip, hawthorn, tomato and fungus.

And damp dispelling foods like *yi mi* (pearl barley), green beans and *bai shu* (bighead atractylodes rhizome) can help protect the spleen.

Helping the spleen while reinforcing the lungs should be the principle of winter reinforcement for “earth” people, according to Dr Tang. Lean pork, jujube, glutinous rice, beef, chicken and black mullet are good choices.

Water

Yin energy is usually surpassing for people of “water.” They usually have dark skin and slim figure, and possibly dark eyes and big ears.

Just like soft and calm water, “water” people are usually introverted and quiet. They often have strong intuition and stay calm during times of crisis.

Yet influenced by excessive *yin* energy, “water” people are often bothered with pathogenic coldness and deficient *yang* energy.

Pathogenic coldness often causes blood and energy stagnation in the body, and thus these people are more easily bothered with problems like pain and numbness in joints, bones and muscles.

Deficient *yang* energy may also arouse problems like fatigue and cold limbs.

Due to the close relationship between water and kidney, these individuals are often vulnerable to kidney (urinary and reproductive system) problems. They may be more easily bothered by edema, infertility and syncope syndrome.

“Warm” foods that



Pig's liver and kidney rice

Ingredients:
Rice (200g), pig's liver (50g), pig's kidney (50g), ginger powder (10g), cooked oil, yellow wine and sugar as needed.

Preparation:
1. Wash and chop the liver and kidney into small pieces
2. Spread cooked oil, yellow wine and sugar on them and stir evenly.
3. Cook rice and spread ginger powder when the water is almost gone.
4. Put the liver and kidney on the rice and simmer with gentle heat until well-cooked.

Benefits:
It helps reinforce kidney and liver and helps relieve sore back and joints as well as frequent dizziness.

reinforce *yang* energy are especially recommended to “water” people to drive away pathogenic coldness and dampness. This includes jujubes, mutton, chestnuts and longan, so as to help prevent and relieve “cold”-related problems like painful or numb joints.

Symptoms like fatigue, sore back, cold limbs and pale tongue usually suggest deficient *yang* energy in the kidney, which is also common among “water” people. Dr Tang recommends liver and kidney reinforcing foods represented by pig's liver and kidney in winter. Other foods with similar functions include lily's root, *sheng di* (root of rehmannia), *shu di huang* (radix rehmanniae preparata), *gou qi* (wolfberry), *sang shen* (mulberry), beef and mutton.

Wood

“Wood” people usually have a slim figure. They are usually outgoing, active and quick thinking, yet they are also suspicious, sensitive and sometimes narrow-minded.

Pathogenic wind is the biggest problem for “wood” people in health maintenance. Therefore, they are more sensitive to allergic ailments that are caused by pathogenic wind. Liver belongs to “wood” and is the most vulnerable organ. As liver in TCM helps adjust moods, stores and regulates blood and aids digestion, damage to the liver may also arouse problems like depression, high blood pressure, stroke and digestive problems.

“Wood” people should remember to avoid allergens especially in spring and autumn. Being exposed to big wind may also aggravate the problem of overactive *yang* energy in the liver and cause problems like high blood pressure



Ling zhi, huang qi, lean pork soup

Ingredients:
Ling zhi (10g), *huang qi* (15g) and lean pork (150g)

Preparation:
1. Chop the lean pork into small pieces.
2. Cook the pork, *huang qi* and *ling zhi* together with water until the pork gets soft
3. Add salt to season.

Benefit:
It helps boost energy, benefits spleen, liver and kidney.

and stroke.

Staying calm, keeping in a good mood and avoiding big wind should be the principle for “wood” people all year around.

And considering liver's importance in digestion,

Dr Tang suggests reinforcing *qi* (energy) and the spleen while benefiting liver. *Ling zhi* (glossy ganoderma), *huang qi* (milk vetch), lean pork, chicken and wolfberry fruits are all recommended.

Ways to see off that cough this winter

IN winter, coughing becomes rife and everyone is at risk, especially children.

A cough can have many root causes such as bacterial or virus infections, asthma, diabetes, air pollution, dry air, temperature difference or loud speaking, just to name a few.

We also know that frequent coughing is a symptom of the presence of a disease. As the classification of a cough is diverse (acute, chronic, dry, productive, day or night cough), the identification of the root cause is often a real challenge to doctors.

In the Western world, coughing is mostly treated with medication that will stop the symptoms quickly without even looking at the underlying causes.

Traditional Chinese medicine, however, examines the body in more detail.

In general, coughing is caused by the imbalance of the body's energy and the abnormal *qi* activity inside the lungs.

What is helpful is that in most cases coughing is not the only symptom of the patient at that time. Accompanying symptoms help TCM practitioners identify the part of the body where the coughing originates.

For example, if coughing is accompanied by nausea, the root cause will often be found in the liver.

Rib pain is also an indicator of the disease being located in the liver area.

If the patient needs to urinate while coughing, the kidneys are the root area.

And the symptoms of a common cold indicate the origin of the coughing in the lungs.

According to this in-depth analysis,

TCM doctors tailor a specific combination of treatments to cure coughing which can include: acupuncture, herbal formulas and specific beneficial nutrition, such as honey, pear, mushrooms and licorice.

Oranges, tangerines and any chicken-based products should be avoided.

Many root causes can be healed by using these TCM treatments so that the patient's cough will be cured permanently.

In the long run, a good diet and a balanced lifestyle will support a healthy throat as well.

(Doris Rathgeber, founder of Body & Soul Medical Clinics)

For more, check www.tcm-shanghai.com.

