

**The following foods help to calm the Nervous System or “Vata”
 They can be eaten liberally**

Grain	White & brown basmati rice Wheat [unless gluten sensitive] Amaranth [ancient form of wheat] Barley Oats Quinoa
Legumes	Mung beans Aduki beans Split yellow pea Split red pea Urad dal. <i>All these should be cooked to a soft consistency.</i>
Fruits	<i>Sweet and sour tastes like;</i> Grapes Lemons Pears Bananas Sweet oranges Dates Figs Apples (preferably cooked) Avocados Berries (strawberry, blueberry, gooseberry, raspberry etc) Raisins (small amount)

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Sweet Vegetables	Sweet potato Sweet corn Pumpkin Zucchini Carrots Green beans Green chillies Beetroot Cauliflower [small amounts] Leeks Asparagus Coriander (cilantro) Fennel Garlic Okra Parsnips Radishes [preferably cooked]
Spices	<i>Avoid using hot pungent, drying spices. Use fresh spices like;</i> Ginger root Coriander (cilantro) Cumin Coriander seeds Fennel seeds Turmeric Asafoetida (hing) available from Indian shops
Dairy	Fresh, whole milk (unhomogenized) Ghee (purified butter) Butter in small amounts

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Meats	<i>White meat like;</i> Chicken Fish Turkey (baked or grilled) Chicken broth
Nuts	<i>A small amount of;</i> Almonds Pecans Sesame seeds
Oils	Ghee (purified butter) Sesame (small amounts) Olive (small amounts)
Summary Have these tastes	Salty (helps the body build tissue, adrenals use a lot of salts to cope with stress) Sour Sweet e.g. carrot, sweet potato, sweet corn, fruit
Summary Have these food qualities	Warming foods Slightly oily Slightly heavy foods

**Foods that aggravate the Nervous system “Vata”
 Avoid in large amounts**

Fruit	Durian [too pungent]
Vegetables	Lettuce Cabbage Cauliflower Broccoli Sprouts Salads Green leafy vegetables Brussel sprouts Bitter vegetables Hollow vegetables with tiny seeds (except for peppers) If joint problems no deadly nightshade plants; Potato Eggplant Rhubarb Tomato
Cold drinks	Avoid taking iced drinks frequently. Drink water at room temperature or warmer Drink a cup of hot (filtered) water 3 times a day
Cold food	No cold foods out of the fridge Tofu
Raw foods	Lettuce (all types) Raw carrot Cucumber Tomato
Avoid all dry, rough, stale foods	Biscuits Crackers Bread older than 1 day Toast

**Foods that aggravate the Nervous system “Vata”
 Avoid in large amounts**

Avoid anything light, airy or dried	Crisps Toast Crackers
Dried foods	Dried beans Dry compact legumes e.g. split peas, mung beans
Summary Avoid these tastes	Pungent (strong odour e.g. brussel sprouts, garlic, tarragon) Bitter (lettuce, bok choy, celery) Astringent (shrinking e.g. lettuce, cucumber, celery, potato)
Summary Avoid these food qualities	Light (need more substantial nurturing foods) Cold (tofu, salads, coconut) Dry (all meals need to be slightly oily, helps the skin)

Vata lifestyle factors to avoid or minimise if possible

Being under **stress** and reacting to stress with anxiety.

Physical **exhaustion**. Excessive exercising. Marathons.

Mental **strain**, overwork, intense studying, exams.

Avoid excessive **addictive patterns** e.g. smoking, drinking alcohol, recreational drugs etc

Sudden **change** in life circumstances affects Vata (e.g. death of someone close, separation, divorce, changing jobs or moving house.)

Suffering emotionally from **fear, fright and anxiety**.

Changes in seasons

Cold, dry, windy weather (Autumn/winter)

Lack of **sleep**. Going to bed late regularly.

Travelling long distances regularly i.e. flying, long car, bus and train journeys.

Stringent diets e.g. vegan and salicylate diets for long periods of time.

Fasting

Habitually **skipping meals**.

**If you have been diagnosed as having a ‘Vata’ problem then your Nervous system has been under stress for too long
 You will have one or more of the following symptoms**

Digestion Especially when stressed	Bloating Wind, flatulence Gurgling Constipation (alternates with diarrhoea) IBS
Mental or emotional symptoms Especially when stressed	Often anxious or worried Sensitive Over reactive Changeable moods Phobias Depression (reactive)
Sleep Especially when stressed	Poor sleep Anxious or fearful dreams Waking during the night Difficulty getting back to sleep Light sleep, wake easily or often
Females	Menstrual disorders, Infertility
Miscellaneous	Lower back pain not caused by injury Weight loss
Headaches	Tension and Stress headaches Headaches that move around the head Changeable in intensity or position of headache