



A Grain of Salt

News About Good Salt, Natural Food and Other Health Related Issues

Summer 2000

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273 Fairway Drive
Asheville, NC 28805

E-mail: topsalt@aol.com
www.celtic-seasalt.com

1-800-TOP SALT
(1-800-867-7258)

**Editors
Philippe & Selina
DeLangre**

**Publication Manager
Sabrina Marie**

Feeding Your Baby



Whole Foods

by Cynthia Lair

When we start a baby on solid food, we are teaching them how to eat with the rest of the family. The foods we choose to serve our child take on the attribute of being “familiar.” This is a golden opportunity to teach your child’s taste buds to perceive whole, fresh food as the norm. Compare the infant who is placed in a highchair at 4pm and fed bland, processed food from a jar with the child who is brought to the table and given an appropriate mashed portion of the baked carrots or quinoa or chickpeas that the parents are eating. Not only is the child in the latter scene being given a more nutritious meal, he is being taught that

he eats what the rest of the family eats; that he is included as part of the family dinner ritual.

There are obvious physical signs of a baby’s readiness for solid foods. These usually don’t occur before 6 months of age and include the ability to sit up unattended and grabbing or reaching for food. Some cultures use the appearance of teeth as a sign for readiness. Many parents aren’t aware that during a baby’s first year, they

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Therapeutic Cooking

with Chinese Herbs

an Interview with Dr. Shamim Daya

By Selina Delangre

Dr. Shamim Daya has long been a friend of The Grain & Salt Society. She has written several articles for *A Grain of Salt* and her video, *Food Therapy*, is available from us. A medical doctor, Dr. Daya became interested in alternative or complimentary medicine when she realized many of her patients were sick because of how they ate. Dr. Daya feels that an understanding of good nutrition is fundamental to health care, though often lacking from health care service. She has complimented her medical education by completing many nutritional courses. Over the course of many years of study, Dr. Daya has come to the conclusion

that “food therapy” can assist the body in regaining a balance which promotes good health and well being. Food Therapy is the therapeutic use of whole foods.

When I visited Shamim last Fall, I was very intrigued by her practice of handing out a basket of Chinese herb packets to all new patients. In this interview, Shamim describes how Chinese herbs can be used in cooking to help re-vitalize the system. However, she maintains that making necessary dietary changes, following the “basics” of food therapy, is of primary importance.

Hello Shamim, thank you for talking with us. How did you begin cooking with Chinese herbs?

I was curious to see how I could take the idea of

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Curry heats winter nights when cold breezes
 blow into your bones, curry
 thaws your insides, reminds you of tropical climes,
 transports you to ancient times.
 Grind your spice seeds and plant the heritage of ancient India
 into your dish. Serve basmati rice alongside,
 Inhale the centuries-old aroma of health and vigor.
 Visit an Indian Market, smell the differences between cultures
 investigate different ingredients – dahls, spices, flours.
 Learning a foreign cuisine
 connects you to the oneness of all people here on Earth.
 ~ excerpt from *Open Sesame Cooking* by Sabrina Marie

I have often wondered how ancient people first began to use spices and herbs. Perhaps the smell of the growing herb, as they brushed by, enticed them. Perhaps gathering spices was an intuitive act, much like gathering berries. Regardless, from each corner of the world, we now have a rich tradition of seasoning food that dates from the beginnings of early civilizations.

Many cultures have used spices both as flavoring and medicine. Ayurveda, an approach to health native to India which is at least 3,000 years old, relies heavily on a variety of spices to balance the properties of foods. In 400 B.C., the Greek physician Hippocrates wrote detailed descriptions of medical treatments which included the use of medicines prepared with spices and herbs. In China, the use of herbs is a traditional practice, beginning as early as 3 BC, that still continues today.

As the early civilizations began trading with each other, spices became a highly valued commodity. The distribution of spices tells the story of voyages of discovery and struggles for power. Prior to the Roman civilization, extensive spice trade routes developed, stretching across the deserts of Southern Asia and the Middle East. During the Renaissance, the demand for spices increased as a middle class that could afford the valuable seasonings grew. Spice trade became a lucrative business and governments became involved. Between the 15th and 17th centuries, Spain, Portugal, England and Holland fought for control of the Indonesian Spice Islands. Searching for a more direct route to the Spice Islands led Christopher Columbus to America.

Up until recently, Americans have not taken full advantage of the variety of spices available. But as we search for healthier ways of seasoning foods, our spice racks are expanding to include the seasonings necessary to prepare Indian curries and Thai food. An extensive spice collection allows a cook to use less fats and heavy dairy products while still preparing distinctive, flavorful foods.

Any part of a plant or vegetable used in smallish amounts to season foods is a spice. Spices include culinary herbs, such as oregano; fruits or berries, such as pepper; roots, such as ginger; seeds, such as coriander; and even plant parts, such as saffron.

(Saffron is the stamen of a certain variety of crocus flower native to India). All herbs are not considered spices. Herbs which add flavor to foods are considered culinary herbs; while herbs with specific therapeutic uses, like St. John's Wort, are considered medicinal herbs. However, the distinction between culinary and medicinal herbs is not a clear one. Mint, for instance, may be used to spice summer salads and sipped as an infusion to calm an upset stomach. In the interview starting on page 1, Dr. Shamim Daya discusses how herbs considered medicinal in China can be used in cooking.

People who are unfamiliar with exotic spices are often timid about exploring the world of spice. Many believe that adding any unknown spice will make the dish fiery hot. However, most spices will not quickly overwhelm a dish when used judiciously, a teaspoon at a time. Another concern is that a spiced meal may be unhealthy and difficult to digest. Of course, each person's biological uniqueness will affect how well they tolerate spices. However, many spices, such as fennel, ginger and cinnamon, can aid in digestion. Spices, used carefully, can add minerals and minor amounts of other nutrients to the diet.

To experiment with spices, taste small pinches of a spice before adding it to the simmering pot. Do not be constrained by how spices are traditionally used. For instance, cinnamon, usually considered a dessert spice, adds a touch of warmth and sweetness to vegetable soups. Try adding coriander and black pepper

to a simple vegetable sauté. Cumin is a great accent for beans and combines well with oregano. If you use spices judiciously, one half teaspoon at a time, you will rarely overwhelm a dish with a spice's flavor. The exceptions are chilies, peppers, and, of course, salt, which can easily be used in quantities too large.

For most dishes, dried spices need to be cooked for 15 to 20 minutes for their flavors to infuse the dish. Fresh herbs and spices will release more delicate flavors more quickly. Best results are usually obtained by adding fresh herbs in the last five minutes of cooking.

From Arabian deserts and sea-born vessels to little glass jars lined on a rack, spices have traveled an interesting journey. Although wars are no longer fought for control of the spice trade, today a controversy of another sort rages. The growing, processing, and packaging of spices is likely to involve the use of chemicals and irradiation. Consumers concerned about the effects of chemicals on the spice and on the environment, are requesting higher quality, organic spices.

Most spices are grown with the use of chemical pesticides and herbicides. Because the harvesting of spices rarely includes rinsing, the chemical residue is concentrated when the spices are dried for packaging. Dried spices are usually irradiated by the highest levels of irradiation allowable by the FDA in order to kill E. coli bacteria and salmonella. Whether or not this level of irradiation is



by Sabrina Marie

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Breast is Best

Breast milk versus cow's milk and formula

By Xandra Williams

To some mothers it is clear that breast is best; to others milk is milk, and

whether it comes from their own breasts, a cow or a "scientifically" prepared formula is of less importance than other considerations such as convenience, lifestyle, their own comfort and preferences and even the advice of well-meaning professionals.

With this in mind, it is worth making a more detailed assessment of the similarities and differences of the three types of milk. Cow's milk, without dilutions or the adding of sugar, is included although few people these days would consider feeding a young baby undiluted cow's milk.

PROTEIN

There is approximately three times as much protein in cow's milk and twice as much in formula as there is in human milk. This is not a benefit, in fact it provides an excessive amount of protein and increases the work the kidneys have to do in breaking down the excess and converting it to urea. It also increases the solute load. A human baby grows at a much slower rate than a calf, and absorbs nitrogenous compounds (such as proteins and their amino acids) at least ten per cent more efficiently.

The high protein content is the main reason that diluting cow's milk is suggested, but then the levels of all other nutrients decrease proportionately. In the past the sole compensation for this has been to increase the carbohydrate content by adding sugar, something that is not in the best interest of the baby, and is damaging to the gut flora.

The quality of the protein is also different. The two major types of protein in milks are the soluble whey proteins and casein. Human milk contains 70-80 per cent of whey proteins and only 20-30 per cent casein, a ratio approaching 4:1. For cow's milk the ratio is the opposite, 1:4, for formula it varies considerably from that of cow's milk to 1.5:1, but not approaching that of human milk. This has a significant effect on digestion and the nature of the baby's stool. The high proportion of whey proteins, compared to casein, in human milk leads to bulkier curd, slower gastric emptying, improved digestion of the casein and a more appropriate stool; in fact, the high casein and low whey protein content of some formulas can lead to bowel blockages and obstruction.

Lactalbumin, one of the proteins present, is in the alpha form in human milk while the beta form, if it is present at all, is in formula. The alpha form inhibits the growth of gut bacteria, particularly those that need iron as part of their nutrient supply.

Bovine protein is fairly readily allergenic and many babies can

thus develop an early allergy or sensitivity to cow's milk. It can also increase the risk of later diabetes.

A minor protein, but one of immense importance to the immune system, is secretory IgA. This is of vital importance in the first fourteen days, and continues in importance for the rest of life (In time the baby will start to make its

own secretory IgA). In the new baby it improves the immune function of the gut, and reduces the risk of local infections and of allergy development. The secretory IgA antibodies (in the breast milk) bind with unwanted bacteria found in the gut, they do so without stimulating inflammatory processes and they prevent the attachment of these pathogens to the GIT mucosa. The absence of IgA from formula can lead to increased risks of vomiting, diarrhoea, eczema and asthma.

Another protein, *lactoferrin*, binds with iron and improves its absorption. It also deprives bacteria of the iron they need for their own development, thus further reducing the risk of infections. *Lysozyme*, an enzyme (and hence a protein) catalyses hydrolysis of beta-1, 4-linkages of N-acetylneuraminic acid in mucopolysaccharides or mucopeptides and destroys the cell walls of many gram positive bacteria. In other words it can help to break down mucus and to prevent infections.

Both lactoferrin and lysozyme are either absent from formulas or, if present, are inactive. Lipase, a fat splitting enzyme present in human milk is also absent from or inactive in formulas. In addition to protein, there are other nitrogenous substances in human milk that are present only in small amounts in formulas, or are missing entirely.

It is not only the total amount and type of protein that is important nutritionally. Proteins are made up of approximately twenty different amino acids, ten of which the baby cannot make for itself, and the relative amounts of these present are important. Of these, human milk contains less lysine, methionine, phenylalanine and valine. It also contains more cysteine, an amino acid that can be made from methionine. Taurine, an amino acid that is used for the synthesis of bile, and carnitine, an amino acid that assures fats are taken into the cells and used appropriately for the production of energy, are present in human milk but not always in formulas. Growth factors and growth hormone are also present in milk but mostly absent from formulas.

FATS

The amount of fats present in human milk is slightly less than that in cow's milk or formulas, but the composition is very different. Human fat consists of more long chain fatty acids, more long chain unsaturated fatty acids, and more of the essential fatty acids, alpha linoleic acid and linolenic acid, and some of their derivatives than does cow's milk. For instance, the relatively high level of linolenic acid leads to better DHA produc-



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Do You Know What's In Your Food?

By Dr. Christine Farlow

Every day we are bombarded with information about food products that are healthy, all natural, have no artificial ingredients, no preservatives, low fat, **no fat**, no cholesterol, sugar free, vitamin fortified and provide 100% of your daily vitamin requirements. Are these foods as healthy as the advertising tries to make us believe they are?

Let's look at the facts. There are more than 3000 different chemicals added to our food. The company that wants to produce the chemicals or use the chemicals in the foods they produce usually does the testing for safety. Safety testing has only been done for individual additives, not for combinations of additives. Nobody knows the effects of the many different additives used in the thousands of different combinations. To make matters worse, because of political pressure, the FDA allows manufacturers to add small amounts of cancer-causing substances to our food. So, not only are many of our foods not healthy, they're unsafe.

The FDA has even approved, as safe, additives it has known to be unsafe. Take, for example, Olestra, the fat substitute which was approved by the FDA over the objections of many leading food scientists. Olestra can cause diarrhea, abdominal cramping and may even contribute to cancer, heart disease and blindness. Foods containing Olestra *must have a warning label* on the package.

Then there's the artificial sweetener aspartame, also known as Nutrasweet. Aspartame was approved and claimed safe by a specially appointed FDA Commissioner *after his own Board of Inquiry that investigated aspartame claimed it unsafe*. Aspartame can cause birth defects, central nervous system disturbances, menstrual difficulties, brain damage in phenylketonurics, seizures, death and a long list of other reactions too numerous to mention. It may cause irreversible health damage over the long term.

Fats are another story. A certain amount of the right kind of fat is necessary for your nervous system, your immune system, the formation of cell membranes, and the absorption of the fat-soluble vitamins. The problem is that over 90% of the food produced today contain hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oil, which contributes to heart disease, elevated cholesterol and triglycerides, non-insulin dependent diabetes and cancer. Research even shows an association between attention deficit disorder and hydrogenated oils.

The next time you grocery shop, look at the label of every item before you buy. Unless you already buy all organic and natu-

Buyer Beware! Even if the label says "all natural ingredients" and "no preservatives," the product could contain harmful additives.

ral foods, almost every item you pick up will contain hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils. Instead, choose products that say no hydrogenated oils. Mix your butter 50:50 with extra virgin olive oil or expeller pressed sunflower oil. Use extra virgin olive oil, expeller cold pressed sunflower oil or flaxseed oil (flaxseed oil should never be heated).

If you're eating more chicken, turkey and fish, because it's healthier, you may be surprised to learn that sliced chicken and turkey from the deli contains nitrites. And nitrites cause cancer. Nitrites are found in almost all processed meats, including luncheon meats, hot dogs, sausages and bacon.

Then there's tuna, a healthy choice if it only contains tuna and water. But, most tuna contains broth or hydrolyzed vegetable protein, which contain MSG. And MSG is not required to be listed on the label because it is an ingredient in the broth, not directly added to the tuna. This is the way food manufacturers hide MSG in the food they

produce. And hidden MSG can be a very serious problem to those who are sensitive to it. MSG can cause a wide variety of symptoms including migraines, numbness and tingling, asthma, seizures, diarrhea, panic attacks and heart problems.

Other sources of hidden MSG include autolyzed yeast, bouillon, stock, malt extract, malt flavoring, barley malt, maltodextrin, natural flavors, pectin, seasonings, carrageenan, soy sauce, soy protein, whey protein, anything enzyme modified, fermented, protein fortified, or ultrapasteurized, fast foods, chips, condiments, salad dressings, lunch meats, sausages and soups. In fact, most processed foods contain MSG according to Kathleen Schwartz of the nonprofit group NoMSG.

So, buyer beware! Even if the label says "all natural ingredients" and "no preservatives," the product could contain harmful additives. So, how do you know which foods are really safe to eat? You need to read the labels and know how to interpret the information on the label.

Here's a few hints on what to eat and what to avoid:

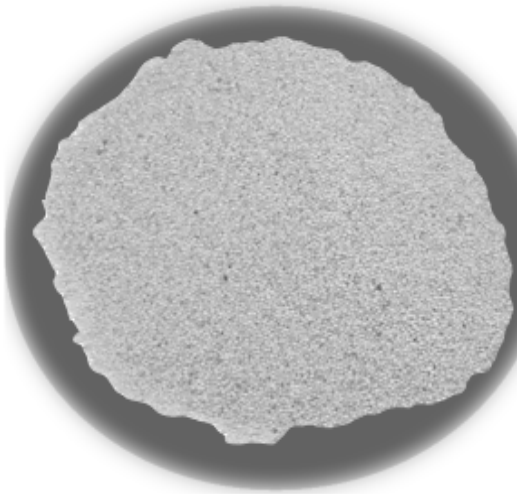
Eat fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, good quality protein and healthy fats.

Avoid these additives:

- ◆ Aspartame or NutraSweet®
- ◆ Saccharin
- ◆ MSG and Free Glutamates
- ◆ Artificial colorings
- ◆ Nitrites and Nitrates
- ◆ Caffeine
- ◆ BHA and BHT
- ◆ Brominated vegetable oil or BVO
- ◆ Olestra® or Olean®
- ◆ Sulfites

A general rule of thumb: If the list of ingredients is long, there are probably a lot of chemical additives in the product, and you're risking your health by eating it. If the list of ingredients is short, it may or may not have harmful additives in it, so you need to read the label carefully before you purchase it. *

*Dr. Christine Farlow is the author of **Food Additives: A Shopper's Guide To What's Safe & What's Not**, available from The Grain & Salt Society, or by contacting KISS For Health Publishing at (760) 735-8101 or kiss4health@netscape.net.*



by Sabrina Marie

“Are you getting enough protein?” If you’re a vegetarian, or if you occasionally eat meatless meals, you’ve probably been asked this question. Protein is definitely an important nutrient – it is involved in most of the processes and functions of the body and it builds and repairs all the body’s tissues.

But protein is not a singular, simple substance, it is a multitude of chemical combinations made primarily of amino acids. There are twenty two different amino acids which can combine in an almost infinite number of arrangements to form the thousands of proteins caused by the body. Of these 20 amino acids, nine are considered “essential,” which means we must get them from our diets. Meat, eggs, fish and dairy products contain all 9 essential amino acids in sufficient amounts and are therefore referred to as *complete proteins*. Grains, beans, nuts, seeds and vegetables contain varying amounts of the nine essential amino acids, so they are considered *incomplete proteins*. Incomplete proteins, such as rice and beans, can compliment each other to form complete proteins.

Because it contains amino acids not usually found in grains, amaranth can be combined with wheat, corn, or brown rice to form a complete protein.

Nutritional scientists once believed that incomplete proteins needed to be combined at the same meal to provide adequate protein. It is now understood that the body stores a pool of amino acids which remain available to compliment the amino acids in recently eaten food. Because all foods contain differing levels of amino acids and the amino acids are stored in the body, people who eat adequate amounts of food rarely suffer from protein deficiencies.

Regardless of the viability of protein from vegetable and grain sources, the issue of complete and digestible proteins continues to inspire differing opinions. In the current nutritional arena, some popular health theorists, such as Dr. Robert Atkins, recommend a high protein diet, while others, such as Dr. Peter D’Adamo, believe different blood types require different types of protein. Of course the vegetable-based diet is also strongly recommended by many, such as Dr. Ornish. I have personally discovered that protein needs can change with different body conditions. Since college, I found a vegetable based diet, complimented with small quantities of dairy and fish, to be completely adequate for my needs. Eight months ago, I became pregnant and discovered that the inclusion of small amounts of animal products helped me to feel more energetic and nourished.

Regardless of your personal preference for animal or vegetable protein, a varied diet benefits all. Eating vegetable-based meals is a simple and safe way to cleanse the intestines of accumulated wastes while still supplying adequate nutrients. As vegetarianism has become more popular, “new” foods have been introduced into the mainstream to aid vegetable-based eating. Foods that were once part of traditional diets are being re-discovered. Amaranth, ancient grain of the Aztecs is one such food.

In 1519, Spanish conquistadors invaded the Aztec civilization in South America. They discovered the Aztecs relied on two grains, maize and amaranth. Maize was sent home to Spain and eventually became a major worldwide crop, while amaranth was all but abandoned. Some historians believe that the Spanish outlawed amaranth because it was used in Aztec religious ceremonies. In the middle of this century, the smallest grain

known to man had almost disappeared. Luckily, amaranth, which measures about 1/32nd of an inch, has been “re-discovered” like the ancient grains quinoa and spelt. This

Vegetable Sources for the 9 Essential Amino Acids

Amino acids are the building blocks of protein. Although there are 22 different amino acids, all but 9 can be manufactured by the body. These amino acids must be eaten regularly. Foods of animal origin, such as meat, fish, eggs and dairy products, are the richest sources. But vegetarians consuming an adequate diet usually have no difficulties meeting their protein needs.

histidine: carrots, celery, soymilk, apples
isoleucine: avocados, olives, coconut, nuts, sunflower seeds, tofu
leucine: avocados, olives, nuts, tofu,
lysine: legumes, amaranth, quinoa beets, parsley, tofu, soymilk
methionine: amaranth, most grains, brazil nuts, filberts, cabbage, kale, tofu
phenylalanine: apples, carrots, nutritional yeast, soymilk, tofu
threonine: alfalfa, green vegetables, nori, lima beans, spirulina, tofu
tryptophan: brussel sprouts, carrots, snap beans, spinach, tofu
valine: apples, almonds, lettuces, squash, tofu

Information compiled using the **The American Vegetarian Cookbook**, by Marilyn Diamond.

is good news to health seekers because amaranth is a particularly nutritious grain and a very useful addition to modern diets.

Amaranth actually includes 60 different species, some of which are considered weeds, only 3 of which actually produce the seeds that are the grain. The green leaves of amaranth are edible, highly nutritious, and eaten throughout the world. If you are a gardener, amaranth is a beautiful plant, 5 to 7 feet tall with deep red flowers.

Although the seed is commonly used as a grain, it is actually a pseudo-cereal. Amaranth grain is not related to any of the commonly used grains, like wheat and corn. This makes amaranth especially appealing to people who have developed food allergies or sensitivities to the commonly over-used grains.

The strongest reason for the renewal of interest in amaranth is that this tiny grain packs an incredible nutritional punch. Ama-

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Therapeutic Cooking

with Chinese Herbs

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food as therapy further. I came across the use of Chinese herbs in cooking when I attended Michael Tierra's ten day residential course on Chinese herbal

medicine. Two days into this course, I found my whole metabolism was changing, I was having 3 regular, easy bowel movements a day, almost after each meal. I found I had a

lot more energy. My whole body seemed to shift into better health in that week to ten days. I became curious about what they were feeding us. I found myself in the kitchen being a nuisance to the cook, asking, "what did you put in there," and "how much of those things did you use."

I came home and tried it for myself and it was a complete disaster. No one had taught me how many and how much and how often and what combinations to use. I shelved the idea for at least 18 months. Eventually, I read about the herbs and asked questions to people who do use them in cooking. Then, I began to experiment. Experimentation is the best way to learn. I encourage my patients to play around and find a combination or a way of cooking that works for them.

Do you consider Chinese herbs food?

No, Chinese herbs are like condiments, similar to salt and pepper and garlic and ginger and turmeric. Using these herbs is no different than using garlic. I do not use these herbs to brew up therapeutic teas. That is a concentrated use of the herbs, best prescribed by a Chinese herbal practitioner. I simply take the concept of spicing food further to encompass a few more herbs that can benefit our health. In cooking, Chinese herbs will impart some medicinal value, but not to the same extent as they would in prescription herbal teas.

Do people with extreme cases, like cancer, need the herbs in a therapeutic concentration, or can you get the same benefits in cooking with the herbs?

Cooking with the herbs is a maintenance therapy. Using Chinese herbs in cooking is a way of helping your body cope with

day to day life. The herbs may help digestive problems improve which will give you more energy. Food therapy can assist your

body to heal itself. If you've got an acute illness of whatever label, then you need therapeutic help from a trained, experienced practitioner.

What are the main Chinese Herbs that you would recommend using in cooking?

There's quite a variety. Some are not unique to the Chinese system, but do contribute to the Chinese way of eating:

♦ **Cinnamon** which is warming and good for the circulation.

♦ **Cardamom** which is also warming and particularly good for the digestive tract, and

♦ **Ginger** which is warming and a stomach tonic.

There are other more specific herbs that people may not have heard of. I consider the three key herbs to be licorice, astragalus and codonopsis.

♦ **Chinese Licorice** is one of the most potent detoxifiers for the whole body.

♦ **Astragalus** is wonderful for boosting the immune system and supporting the kidney and adrenal glands, as is licorice.

♦ **Codonopsis** is particularly helpful to the stomach and spleen organs. It is also from a root.

Those are the three major Chinese herbs that I suggest as a basis. There's also:

♦ **Wild yam**, or dioscorea is an overall energy tonic that regulates menstrual balance and hormones,

strengthens digestion and helps control sugar cravings.

♦ **Dong Quai** is an excellent blood tonic that helps with blood circulation and also helps to regulate the hormones

♦ **Poria** helps with digestion and with stabilizing low blood sugar levels

In addition, I use three Chinese fruits in small quantities:

♦ **Red Jujube Dates** are a nutrient tonic and cleanser than have a calming effect since they are a mild sedative,

♦ **Lycii berries** are an energy and blood tonic which brighten the eyes and improve vision, at the same time, they also have a calming effect. They are rich in protein and nutrients.

♦ **Schizandra** strengthens the tissues, regulates blood sugar and increases the body's ability to handle stress.

Those are the major herbs that I recommend and use. When cooking soups and stews, you can use any four in any combination depending on what you want that meal to provide you.

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How to Make Chinese Herbal Soup

Herbal soups are traditionally made in China on a weekly basis to keep the body and immunity strong and to prevent colds, flus, and other seasonal "bugs." Soups generally contain some form of meat, vegetables, grains and water along with the herbs. Typical herbs used include codonopsis, jujube dates, lycii berries, astragalus, wild yam and dong quai.

1. Place herbs, meat (if desired) and water in a large pot.
2. Bring to boil, then lower heat and cook slowly for 1 hour.
3. Add raw vegetables during the last 10 minutes, or sautéed vegetables (which will provide better flavor) at the end.
4. Add cooked grain.
5. Cook all together another 5-10 minutes before serving.

Amounts: Use 1 ounce herbs to 1 pot soup. Add more or less water accordingly for a thick or watery soup.

Dose: Eat once or twice a week.

Storage: As with all food, it is best to make and eat it fresh rather than refrigerate it.

recipe adapted from
Herbs of Life by Leslie Tierra

Using Chinese herbs in cooking is a way of helping your body cope with day to day life. The herbs may help digestive problems improve which will give you more energy.

Therapeutic Cooking

with Chinese Herbs

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How would you determine what you want the meal to provide you?

Most of the time, people need their meals to provide warmth and energy. From the perspective of the Chinese concept of healthy eating, the role of the stomach is to “ripen and rot” food. In other words, the stomach transforms food into a soft, warm and runny consistency. When we’re stressed out, energy isn’t going to the stomach, energy is primarily wrapped up in coping with our adrenaline overdrive. The stomach is left deprived of energy.

In the Chinese way of eating, you can help the stomach to transform food by eating warm, soft, puréed type foods. For example, in the morning, a Chinese person is likely to eat soup. The soup is so warming that it de-stresses the stomach *and* provides extra energy. In the West, many people commonly feel fatigue after eating. By providing the stomach with food it does not need to transform, you can give it a chance to heal and rest.

The basic way I recommend using these herbs is to put them in stews, casseroles and soups because apart from the berries and the fruits they do need at least 4-6 hours of cooking for the goodness to come out of the roots and barks. They don’t just come out within 20 minutes of cooking.

Don’t the herbs lose their nutrients, like vegetables do, when they are cooked for so long?

No, although many people get confused about this. The idea that nutrients can be lost by cooking is only partly true. A raw carrot, for example, certainly contains the largest amounts of enzymes and nutrients. But, when you juice the carrot, and that juice hits the stomach, your stomach’s job is to warm that carrot up. If you’re already drained of energy, your stomach will not completely warm the carrot, and you’re not going to absorb much of the nutrients in that carrot.

When you steam vegetables, you take the raw edge off the food. You may lose some of the nutrient content, but since the carrots are already warm when they land in your stomach, you are able to better absorb the nutrients. At the end of the day, you’re better off because you’ve absorbed more from the steamed carrots than from raw carrot. Of course, slow cooking vegetables for long periods does deplete them of their nutrients. Remember, you are not just what you eat but more importantly what you absorb.

To help the herbs release their medicinal qualities, I recommend slow cooking. For instance, to make chicken soup, you could put the organic chicken, four of the Chinese herbs, and a base of root vegetables with some water in a slow cooker for 4 to 6 hours. In the last ten minutes, add chopped kale or another green vegetable.

Some of the herbs can be cooked in smaller amounts of time. The licorice, the astragalus, the codonopsis, and the wild yam are “harder” herbs and they need several hours of cooking. I sometimes make stewed apples and pears using the lycii berries and the schizandra fruit and a few sticks of licorice. I boil the licorice in the water for half an hour and then add the apples, pears, lycii berries and shizandra fruit, then cook for 20 minutes longer.

Keep in mind, there are no set rules to cooking with these herbs. One of my patients said that she found using these herbs in the way I suggested a bit tedious. She made a stock by simmering a combination of four

or five herbs in a covered pot for two or three hours and then strained the stock. She used this stock whenever she made foods or gravies for the family. I thought this was a brilliant way to get the Chinese herbs into the family’s diet.

A stock like this will keep three or four days in the fridge, but it would be best to use it all at once or save a bit for the next day. The stock will be most therapeutic when used within a day or two.

Do you think someone could eat a pretty poor diet but still benefit from the Chinese herbs?

Anything is better than nothing in today’s world. I feel that some people can tolerate a lot of abuse on the body and get away with it depending on their constitution. We all have different inherent constitutions that keep us going longer than you would think possible based on how we eat.

Like using supplements, cooking with Chinese herbs can help, but Chinese herbs can’t replace one’s need for restful sleep and Chinese herbs can’t replace a reasonable amount of regular exercise. Everything has its place.

Having been trained medically, I’m aware that good health is a matter of respecting the physiology of the body. The body is designed in a certain way and that is the way it works best. If we don’t respect that, our health declines.

Can someone use too many Chinese herbs at once, or combine them in the wrong way?

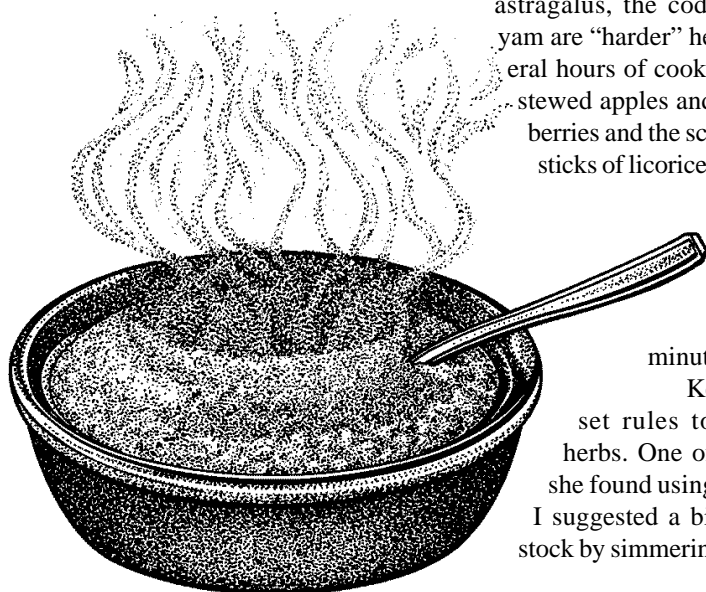
Too much of anything is going to be a problem. I recommend using Chinese herbs in cooking two or three times a week. When cooking with the herbs, we use much smaller quantities than are used therapeutically, so they are really quite safe.

You would never use a whole jar of oregano, you would only use a teaspoon or a tablespoon at the most. It’s the same with these Chinese herbs.

I believe these herbs are safe for any condition, provided you are not using them every day or the same herb every day. To be on the safe side, any one who has particular concerns about a particular condition should consult with a Chinese herbalist.

Are there any precautions that we need to be aware of when we’re using the Chinese herbs?

The one precaution is with licorice, but only when taking large amounts does it pose a problem. Licorice can raise your blood



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Therapeutic Cooking with Chinese Herbs

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pressure. If someone already has high blood pressure, you wouldn't want to use too much licorice. If you are cooking with licorice, it would be difficult to use too much. If you made a tea with licorice and drank several cups in a day, that could raise your blood pressure.

What can you tell our readers about why they would want to cook with a Chinese herb? Are you promoting them primarily as energy boosters, or to build the immune system, or what?

Working as a doctor, most of my days are surrounded by people that are immune compromised, low in energy, fatigued, suffering from cold, dizziness, low blood pressure, low blood sugar, hormonal imbalances, weight problems, skin problems, and digestive problems including bloating, fatigue after eating, and constipation. I find these are most common symptoms in today's world.

I see people that are completely burnt out and totally exhausted and don't know how to recharge their batteries. They live off their adrenaline. Then, they come to their change of life, menopause which affects both men and women, and that's it, that finishes them off. Suddenly they can't cope with anything. In the younger age groups, even as young as teenagers, I have completely exhausted patients who come down with a fever and they've never been right since. In my opinion, all the syndromes are labels. I try to go beyond the label and look at the root of the problem. In most of these cases, the root is that the body is too compromised especially at the level of the gut and cannot function in an efficient manner anymore.

In my practice, I have successfully treated people with these conditions by using food therapy, along with other person-specific treatments. The Chinese herbs, in particular, help to re-establish a balance in the digestive system.

Tell me about the different forms of Chinese herbs: tinctures, capsules, fresh whole herbs, and dried herbs. What's the difference in these forms and which form do you recommend?

For cooking, I use the dried herbs. I

like using the herbs as a food, I like to look at them and judge their quality. It gives me great satisfaction to use the whole herbs because I feel more connected to the herb.

Tinctures and capsules are primarily therapeutic preparations. A Chinese herbal practitioner would prescribe them for you if appropriate. One of my patients started out cooking with the dried herbs and then switched to using the tinctures. He just squirts dropper fulls of these tinctures in his porridge every morning. And he's found that to be beneficial. I think the problem with using the herbs is that it can be cumbersome to pick out pieces of barks and root before serving. I recommend putting the herbs in a cheesecloth sack, and then putting the sack into the soup or stew. Then all you have to do is fish out the bag before serving.

Do you recommend any other books on the subject? Just in case someone wants more details on this subject?

For more information about just the concept of Chinese healthy eating, a great book is *The Tao of Healthy Eating* by Bob Flaws. Flaws explains the basic concepts of healthy eating, including the role of the stomach and the spleen, and the problems that occur in our society today. He speaks of how to respect and help the digestive system. However, he does not discuss the specific herbs and how to use them in cooking.

For a few recipes and information about herbs, a great book is *Herbs of Life* by Leslie Tierra. She provides a few some recipes that explain how to cook porridges, and which herb would achieve what purpose.

My next video on the use of Chinese herbs, together with a recipe booklet, will be available by the end of the year. *

*If you'd like more information about Food Therapy, a longer version of this article is available on our website: www.celtic-seasalt.com. Please see the inside pages for this season's specials, which include an introductory price for our Chinese Herb Sampler. Also available from The Grain & Salt Society are the books: *The Tao of Healthy Eating* and *Herbs of Life*.*

Amaranth: the protein grain

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ranth contains 15 - 18% protein, which is higher than most grains. Protein content in animal products usually exists between 15 and 40%, while the protein content of cereals, beans and peas ranges from 3 to 10%. Amaranth's protein includes lysine and methionine, which are two amino acids not usually found in grains. Because of this, amaranth can form a complete protein when combined with wheat or corn or brown rice. High in iron, calcium, folacin and magnesium, amaranth is often traditionally fed to those recovering from an illness, or pregnant or nursing mothers. In fact, amaranth's iron content is four times the amount found in brown rice and twice the amount found in wheat. Amaranth is 6-10% oil which is unsaturated and high in the essential fatty acid linoleic acid. In addition to its solid nutritional character, cooked amaranth is believed to be highly digestible.

Amaranth has a strong, nutty flavor and glutinous texture which is perhaps best enjoyed in combination with rice or other grains. I like to combine one cup of brown basmati rice with 1/4 cup of amaranth and cook in 2 3/4 cups of water to make a rice dish that has a natural "sauce." Amaranth flour can be used for part of wheat flour requirements. For instance, for a cookie recipe, substitute 1/4 cup of amaranth flour for 1/4 of the total amount of wheat flour. Amaranth flour is most tasty when the seeds are toasted prior to milling. Because of the high oil content of the seed, it is best to mill your own flour.

Amaranth can also be toasted, then added to soups and stews. Its glutinous nature will slightly thicken the stew. Also, amaranth seeds can be popped like popcorn, except the result yields much smaller kernels. Toast a small portion in a heavy skillet over medium flame for a few minutes and the seeds will pop. Toss popped seeds on top salads or soups. *

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www.chetday.com

Breast is Best

Continued from page 3

tion, higher brain (cortex) DHA levels and better developmental status of the infant at eighteen months. These essential fatty acids are essential for normal cell membranes, for the production of compounds called prostaglandins, for normal brain and neurological development and for many other reactions involved in the fine tuning of the way the body functions and develops.

Human milk contains more cholesterol than cow's milk and it is thought that this is important for the development of the brain and nervous system. These relatively high levels are also thought to stimulate the secretion of enzymes that, later in life, lead to normal cholesterol levels.

Cow's milk contains more short and medium chain length fatty acids and these can lead to the formation of calcium soaps in the digestive tract, reducing the availability of calcium for absorption and resulting in fatty stools.

Even the major components act differently. Milk fat consists of up to 98 per cent triglycerides, but these break down to form 2-monglycerides, whereas cow's milk triglycerides break down to form 1-monglycerides which are less readily absorbed.

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are the third group of macronutrients, and here again the composition of the two milks varies. Human milk contains a third more carbohydrate than cow's milk. However, it is not in the form of sucrose (as it is when cow's milk is diluted with sugar) but as lactose. Sucrose is an "empty calorie food" providing nothing but calories (no other nutrients or benefits), and potentially feeding any candida albicans that could be present; while lactose is a substrate or food for lactobacilli in the gastro intestinal tract (GIT), creating an acid environment and encouraging lactobacilli bifidi, a friendly bacteria that further inhibits pathogens or unwanted bacteria. Not only the amount, but also the type of lactose differs, being beta-lactose in humans, which stimulates *bacillus bifidus* and produces the organic acids which benefit the local environment and improve the absorption of phosphorous, calcium and magnesium and produce many of the B vitamins, rather than

the alpha lactose found in cow's milk that does not stimulate the development of friendly bacteria or have such a beneficial effect on nutrient absorption.

The total amount of ash or residue left from cow's milk is three times greater than that from human milk, increasing the solute load for the kidneys to deal with.

Minerals

In general, the content of minerals in human milk is very much less than that of cow's milk – but then the amount and rate of growth is very much greater than that of a baby. In addition, the minerals present in human milk are absorbed very much better than those in either cow's milk or formula.

The ratio of calcium to phosphorous is important. In human milk it is 2:1, whereas in cow's milk the amount of phosphorous is greater, leading to a ratio of 1.3:1. This higher level of phosphorous can lead to calcium loss and a resultant calcium deficiency, even though the actual amount of calcium present in cow's milk is five times that of human milk (keep in mind that the human baby is building a much smaller set of bones than the calf).

The iron level is similar in both types of milk, but is generally higher in formula. However the amount absorbed varies significantly. In human milk there is about 50 per cent absorption, some sources suggest even up to 70 per cent, possibly due to the presence of a compound called inosine 5-mono-phosphate, or possibly to the lactoferrin mentioned above. The baby also relies to some extent on its own liver stores, formed in utero.

Inevitably the nutrient level of mother's milk is dependent on the quality of the mother's nutrition. If the minerals are not present in the food the mother eats, levels in the milk will be lower. The answer here is to improve or supplement the mother's diet, not to switch the infant to a synthesized or processed milk from another species.

There are further benefits of breast feeding which relate to the bonding of mother and child, the hormonal and uterine changes that occur within the mother during breast feeding, the practical advantages of not having to sterilize equipment (breast milk is inherently sterile) and more, but they are

International WellBeing Magazine

This article, "Breast is Best," is reprinted from the International WellBeing Magazine, edition 77, an extraordinary magazine published in Australia. WellBeing is a visionary publication which offers inspiration as well as practical ways to change lives for the better. In our office, we have each been awed by the full color photography and amazed by the depth of each article. Unlike many magazines in the U.S., the articles in this magazine are not product driven. The depth of the research truly informs the reader on each subject. Some people are calling this the "National Geographic" of the alternative health movement. We now have available several collector editions of WellBeing Magazine, check the Product Information Pages for prices. If you're interested in subscribing, please call us.



not the subject of this article.

There are vast differences between the different types of milk. These are hardly surprising when you think deeply about the implications of giving your offspring milk from another species instead of its own. If you are a new mother or a mother to be, and are wondering if the effort of breast feeding is worth it, you will now have a very much better idea of the benefits of doing so and of the possible negative consequences of passing this job on to a cow or a food processing company.*

Feeding Your Baby Whole Foods

Continued from front page

get all the nutrition they need from breastmilk. Don't be in a hurry to start solids. Studies show that allergies in babies and children are exacerbated by exposure to solid foods prior to 4 months of age.

Most of us want to feed our children the best we can offer, but often the line between nutrition education and advertising is often thin or indistinguishable. Americans fork over \$1.25 billion every year buying commercially prepared baby food. Manufacturers of baby food encourage parents to think that their products have special properties that make them appropriate for infants. Millions of advertising dollars are spent perpetuating this myth. It is simply not true.

Have you checked out the taste, texture, look, and smell of commercial baby cereal? Pour some commercial rice cereal in a bowl. What does it look like? It has no smell. The taste is the definitive of bland. The cereal is made from refined rice that has been processed and pre-cooked. Refined grains have nothing to offer but carbohydrates. Whole grains, on the other hand, contain protein, carbohydrates, fat, fiber, vitamins, minerals and LIFE. The germ is still intact. If you put a whole grain in water, it sprouts! If you put commercial baby ce-

real in water, it makes paste. Nutritionally inferior, refined foods contribute to many of today's health problems, including obesity. Why train your baby to want it? By pre-toasting organic whole grains, grinding them in a small electric grinder, and cooking the grains with water, you can create a fresh, delicious, nutrient-dense cereal with taste, texture, and aroma that everyone in the family can grow on (see recipe inset, next page).

What may be tolerated by a mature adult may prove harsh to the immature system of an infant. Congress unanimously passed a Food Quality Protection Act in 1996 that

Refined grains have nothing to offer but carbohydrates. Whole grains, on the other hand, contain protein, carbohydrates, fat, fiber, vitamins, minerals and LIFE.

requires all pesticides to be safe for infants and children. Yet in a recent comprehensive study done by the Environmental Working Group, pesticide levels in the US food supply continue to be at unsafe levels for children aged 6 months to 5 years. (4) According to the report, peaches, apples, pears, grapes and commercial baby foods which use these fruits are the most common sources of unsafe levels of organophosphate pesticides. To protect your child, buy organic baby food; or better yet, make fresh food for your baby from organic grains,

beans, fruits and vegetables.

Iron is a common concern. I have always been curious as to why iron deficiency is common in infants. A deficiency that, according to most sources, can only be reversed or prevented by feeding babies iron-fortified food starting at six months of age. Several factors can lead to an iron deficiency in infants. One is a mother who was anemic during pregnancy. Another is the common practice of cutting the cord too early, before pulsing has ceased. Apparently this decreases the iron stores transferred from the mother. Choosing formula over breastmilk is a factor. Babies can absorb up to 50% of the iron in breastmilk, but only 4% of the iron in fortified formula. If the mother's iron levels are sufficient, a child who is breastfed for 12 months will maintain normal iron status (1). Early introduction of cow's milk will also lead to reduced iron stores. Cow's milk given to a child prior to one year of age can cause occult bleeding in the intestines which will result in an iron deficiency. In a 1996 survey conducted in the US, researchers found that despite recommendations to the contrary, 50% of the infants in the study were getting cow's milk before their first birthday (3).

To address the problem, baby food manufacturers fortify food with electrolytic iron - one of the least absorbable forms of artificial iron. Electrolytic iron is used because it sticks to the flakes of cereal instead of settling to the bottom of the box. Ferrous sulfate, a more absorbable form of iron, can

The Story of Spices

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safe has not yet been shown by high quality, long term studies. However, bacteria are easily controlled by proper cooking and hygienic preparation.

In addition, most spices are sterilized using ethylene oxide (ETO), a colorless flammable gas. Direct exposure to ETO can be reasonably viewed as a carcinogen. ETO is used on spices to destroy the vital functions of microorganisms which may be



pathogenic (disease-causing). This is particularly a concern when spices are imported from countries with questionable sanitation practices. However, since spices are used in small amounts and are usually cooked, incidence of spoilage and illness resulting from spice use is rare, compared to proven risks of ETO.

In our search for high quality spices at The Grain & Salt Society, we discovered Frontier. Frontier does not use ETO or irradiation due to their concern for quality and safety. In order to guarantee quality, they often import numerous samples before finding the raw materials which meet their specifications. Every incoming lot is tested extensively. Microbial testing is used to de-

termine levels of yeast, mold and bacterial pathogens. Frontier also protects the quality of their spices by grinding in-house with cryogenic grinding, keeping the temperatures at zero to minus 70° F. Frontier estimates that cold grinding delivers up to 22% higher levels of active constituents, which means tastier spices.

Even high quality, organic spices do not keep forever. Culinary experts recommend using spices within 6 months to a year. Check the potency of a spice by sniffing, all spices should have distinct and strong aromas. And finally, when using spices, don't forget to add Celtic Sea Salt®. Good salt helps bring out the flavors of spices. Bon Appetit! *

Feeding Your Baby



Whole Foods

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affect the flavor and appearance of the cereal. Manufacturers can produce a more consistent and attractive product with a longer shelf life by adding electrolytic iron. Because of the poor absorbability, your baby will need larger quantities of the iron-fortified food in order to meet requirements for the mineral.

Whole grains, especially the more nutrient-dense grains like quinoa and millet, have naturally occurring iron. If you are breastfeeding your baby, eating a well-balanced diet, and using whole grain cereal for your baby, you should not have to worry about iron. If you would feel safer with an iron-fortified cereal, do it naturally. Toast the grains you use for cereal in a cast iron skillet or add a sprinkle of kelp or dulse (two iron-rich sea vegetables) to your baby's cereal.

The Center for Science in the Public Interest did an evaluation of commercial baby food in 1995. Their published findings recommended the following: "To give your baby the most nutritious and economical food, prepare your own baby food whenever possible. Using a blender or food processor, it is easy to purée most foods." (3) To avoid adding an extra cooking chore, why not do what our foremothers and their foremothers did? Just take part of the fresh, homemade, organic food you are eating and purée some for baby.

Food does not have to be puréed to the silky smoothness of commercial food. A little texture is okay. Stick with simple whole grains, fruits and vegetables for babies 6-10 months of age. Remember to introduce new foods one at a time and wait 4-5 days before introducing another new food. Ground nuts, well-cooked beans and whole grain pastas and breads can be added to the older baby's diet. Since the incidence of dairy allergies in children is high, I would recommend holding off on dairy products for the first year, then serve only high-quality organic dairy products in small amounts.

We have moved away from common sense when it comes to raising children. Our natural inclinations have been replaced with

Whole Grain Baby Cereal

Making your own baby cereal is nutritious, economical and quite delicious. The grains listed below were chosen because they are the least allergenic and the easiest to digest. I don't like calling this "baby cereal" because this cereal is for everyone. Adults and older children can dress up this simple cereal with bananas, date sugar, toasted nuts, sliced apples, milk, maple syrup, blueberries or whatever! Don't forget to buy organic grains.

Choose one:

1 cup short-grain brown rice

1 cup millet

1 cup quinoa

1 cup sweet brown rice

Place grains in a fine strainer; rinse and drain.

Toast grain:

Oven toasting: Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Spread grains on cookie sheet and toast in oven until they give off a nutty aroma (12 - 15 minutes).

Skillet toasting: Place washed grains in large skillet on burner and toast on medium heat, stirring constantly, until grains give off nutty aroma (about 5 - 8 minutes).

Let toasted grains cool and store in sealed container. You can toast a big batch of several different grains at one time and store them in separate jars. This will keep baby and all full of wholesome cereal for many moons.

Grind grain:

For optimum nutrition, grind the grains in a small electric grinder or food processor just prior to using. Once a grain is ground it begins to lose nutritional value within 24-48 hours. Store the whole toasted grains in labeled, sealed containers and grind the amount you need before cooking.

Cook ground grains into cereal:

Baby-size portion of cereal: Mix together 2-3 tablespoons of ground cereal and 1/2-3/4 cups water and a pinch of sea salt in a small pot; bring it to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer, covered, for 5 minutes.

Family-size portion of cereal: For four adult-child-size servings, use 1 cup ground grains, 3-4 cups water and 1 teaspoon salt. Combine cereal, water and salt in a pot; stir with a whisk and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer, covered for 10-12 minutes. A flame-tamer or heat deflector used while simmering will help prevent scorching or sticking.

Preparation time: 8-15 minutes for toasting, 5-12 minutes to cook cereal

Yield: 1 cup toasted grains makes 4 adult-size portions of cereal

a dependence on "experts in the field" who often have commercial interests in their advice. Trust simple whole foods that were grown in the ground, not pabulum produced in a factory. Set the standard for healthy eating in your home by serving your baby fresh, whole food. Teach your children how to grow and maintain a strong, healthy body so they can shine. *

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*Cynthia Lair has been part of the nutrition faculty at Bastyr University, school of natural medicine, since 1994. She is the author of **Feeding the Whole Family: Whole Foods Recipes for Babies, Young Children and Their Parents (Moon Smile Press, 1998), available from The Grain & Salt Society. Visit www.feedingfamily.com for more information.***

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It all started with health! And a man with a passion to help people. When Jacques DeLangre learned about the profound importance of grains and real whole, living salt, he dedicated his life to researching and teaching good health. Jacques founded both Happiness Press and The Grain & Salt Society to share information, ideas and good recipes.

Today, in *A Grain of Salt*, we strive to continue Jacques' legacy: we research issues of health and good food, and share this information with our readers.

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Amaranth and Brown Rice Breakfast Cereal

1 cup short grain brown rice*
1/4 cup organic amaranth*
1/2 tsp Celtic Sea Salt®*
1/2 tsp organic cinnamon*
1/4 cup organic raisins*
toppings:

toasted and chopped almonds*
shredded, unsweetened coconut

1. Toast brown rice in a skillet over a medium flame for about 8 minutes until aromatic. Allow to cool, then roughly grind. Best ground in a Samap hand or electric mill, adjust settings so that kernels just break, but do not become flour. Can also use a food processor.
2. Toast amaranth in a dry skillet over medium heat until grains begin to pop.
3. In a small saucepan, combine 1/2 cup brown rice and 1/4 cup amaranth, add 3 cups of water, Celtic Sea Salt and cinnamon. You may choose to use more amaranth and less brown rice, results are equally good.
4. Bring to a boil, then turn heat down and simmer for 45 minutes to an hour. In the last 30 minutes of cooking, add raisins.
5. Garnish with chopped toasted nuts, coconut, maple syrup, ghee, or eat plain. It's delicious both ways.

* An asterik (*) marks those ingredients available from The Grain & Salt Society.

Vegetable Curry

1 tbs sesame oil*
1/2 onion
1/2 head cauliflower
4 small potatoes
1/4 lb. green beans
2 carrots
2 cloves garlic, minced,
1/2 inch fresh ginger, grated
1/4 cup cashews

1 tsp coriander seeds, **1 1/2 tsp** cumin seeds
1/2 tsp black peppercorns, **1** whole clove
2 tsp mustard seed, **1/2 tsp** tumeric
1 pinch cinnamon* **1/4 tsp** cayenne pepper*
1 tsp Celtic Sea Salt®*, to taste
sprigs fresh cilantro, optional

toasted, unsweetened coconut, optional
1. Chop vegetables into bite-sized chunks.
2. Heat sesame oil over medium flame in a heavy-bottomed skillet. Add onions, sauté for about 3 minutes. Add cauliflower and potatoes, stir well and add 1/4 cup of water, cover, simmer for 10 minutes. Add green beans, carrots, and garlic, more water if needed, cover and simmer for another 10 minutes.

3. In a small dry skillet, dry roast spice seeds, coriander, cumin, peppercorns, clove and mustard seeds. When aromatic, grind with a mortar and pestle or coffee grinder.
4. In a blender, purée cashew pieces with 1 cup of water until creamy.

5. When vegetables are tender, add ground spice seeds, tumeric, cinnamon, cayenne and Celtic Sea Salt. Stir in cashew milk.

6. Garnish with fresh cilantro and toasted coconut and serve over basmati rice.

Recipe from Open Sesame Cooking by Sabrina Marie



The Grain & Salt Society
273 Fairway Drive Asheville, NC 28805

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