

Yoga & nutrition

THE YOGIC DIET



1.a. Search for the following vocabulary in the text and describe what they mean.

to result	<i>to become</i>	vegetarian	<i>a person who does not eat animal meat</i>	infamous	_____
to swear by	_____	farm-raised fish	_____	bland	_____
bear in mind	_____	hormone-free beef	_____	laziness	_____
state of mind	_____	free range chicken	_____	intolerance	_____
one-size-fits-all	_____	organic (fruits)	_____	allergy	_____

The Yogic Diet

There are many theories about the yogic diet. Some swear by a vegetarian or vegan diet, others believe we shouldn't consume meat and dairy. Many nutritionists insist we are ought to only eat organic products like farm-raised fish, hormone-free beef, free range chicken, and organic fruits and vegetables, etc.

The yogic diet is a diet that works for YOUR body. Every body is different. There is no such thing as the perfect diet, but there are some things we should bear in mind when choosing the products, we consume.

Traditionally a yogic diet follows some pretty simple rules.

- A yogic diet **should** be Sattvic
In Ayurvedic philosophy (we will speak about this in the next module) all ingredients we find in nature consist out of three qualities (gunas):

1. Raja - hot, spicy, fast.

Taste: hot, bitter, dry, salty, or spicy

Characteristics: overstimulation of the mind, passion

Examples: chili flakes, onion, garlic, sugar, coffee, hard cheese, eggs

2. Tama - slow, lethargic

Taste: bland, tasteless, chemical

Characteristics: laziness, depression

Examples: mushrooms, meat, alcohol, overripe fruits and vegetables, processed food, leftovers

3. Sattva - purity, harmony, knowledge

Taste: fresh, natural

Characteristics: health, energy, joy, peace, clarity, light

Examples: whole grains, fresh fruit and vegetables, nuts, seeds, legumes, organic animal products, natural sweeteners.

As you **may** understand now, the purest ingredients are found in Sattvic foods. Most yogi(in)s **would** therefore recommend following a Sattvic diet. The Sattvic diet nourishes the body that will result in a calm, purified, peaceful state of mind.

- A yogic diet **ought to** be vegetarian.
Animal products are infamous for multiple reasons. First, the production of these products causes harm to animals and the planet. Second, they are proofed to contain toxics, are bad for our cholesterol, take a long time to digest, have a bad effect on many organs and **may** result in dangerous diseases.
Instead of meat you **could** eat nuts, dairy products, leafy greens, and legumes. These products are full of high-quality protein. They will not pollute the planet, or our organs, are easily digestible, and effectively used by the body.
- A yogic diet **must not** include chemicals and stimulants.
Choose organic when available. Avoid caffeine, tobacco, alcohol, and artificial sweeteners. These substances are not healthy for the body and have a bad effect on the mind, making it hard to stay present.
- A yogic diet **must** contain fresh foods.
Fresh and plant based foods contain prana (life force). Prana is what keeps us energetic, lively and healthy. Therefore we **ought to** eat the freshest products available. Frozen, prepared, packaged and left-over foods **should** be avoided. Non-fresh foods often include a lot of chemicals that are not nutritious, **could** be addictive and **can** result in laziness and depression.

5. Yoga & nutrition

THE YOGIC DIET



- A yogic diet **should** include regular intervals.

Create a routine and eat at regular times. The body has cycles, and functions best when these cycles are even and steady. The same goes for our meal times. Avoid meals two hours before exercise and sleep. Energy for digestion **should not** be used for the purpose of exercise. Proper time for digestion before sleep helps to keep the mind clear.

- Take time to fast.

It is recommended to fast one day each week. A fast **could** be strict, not allowing anything to enter the body. Or, it **can** include water and fruit juices. Whichever you choose, stay aware that the goal of your fast is to purify the body and mind.

- Practice ahimsa.

Ahimsa (non-violence) is the first moral of the Yamas and **can** be applied to the food we choose. Make environmentally-conscious choices that do not harm other people, yourself, animals, or the planet. Select refillable glass bottles instead of plastic, for example.

Remember, every body is different. You **might** be intolerant or allergic to certain nutrients. Neither the yogic diet, nor the yogic philosophy meets the one-size-fits-all method. Small changes in the way you eat and live can have big effects. Keep food choices simple, pure, fresh, and use your best judgment. Choose that what feels good, honest and non-harmful and makes you feel best physically and emotionally. Your inner yogi knows best.

1.b Test your understanding

1. *"In Ayurvedic philosophy all ingredients we find in nature consist out of three qualities (gunas)".*

Which three qualities are these? And how would you describe them in your own words?

Raja: _____

Tama: _____

Sattva: _____

2. Why are we recommended to follow a Sattvic diet?

3. According to you, what is a Sattvic diet?

4. According to the text, we should try to avoid meat. What else could you eat instead?

5. What's the risk of eating frozen, prepared, packaged and left-over foods?

6. According to you, why is it wise to include regular intervals between meals?

7. Fill in the blanks:

Energy for _____ should not be used for the purpose of _____. Proper time for _____ before _____ helps to keep the mind clear.

8. What's the goal of a fast?

9. *"Make environmentally-conscious choices that do not harm other people, animals, or the planet. Select refillable glass bottles instead of plastic, for example".*

Write down more examples of environmentally-conscious choices you make .

5. Yoga & nutrition

THE YOGIC DIET



Modal verbs

- Modals of ability

We use 'can' and 'could' to talk about a skill or ability.

e.g. She **can** speak English very well.
My sister **could** do a headstand when she was younger.
I **can't** practise yoga every day.

- Modals of permission

We use 'can', 'could' and 'may' to ask for and give permission. We also use modal verbs to say something is not allowed.

e.g. **Could** I leave early today, please?
You **may not** make phone calls during class.
Can we postpone the class, please?

- Modals of obligation or advice

We can use 'must', 'should', and 'ought to' to say when something is necessary or unnecessary, or to give advice:

e.g. We **must** arrive to class on time.
You **should** do our homework.
We are **ought to** ask questions when we have them.

- Affirmative: **subject + modal + bare infinitive**
 A **yogic diet should include** plant based products.
- Negative: **subject + modal + not + bare infinitive**
 A **yogic diet mustn't include** chemical products.
- Interrogative: **modal + subject + bare infinitive**
 Could you do a fast each week?

2. Choose the correct option

1. I **should** / **may** make healthier food choices.
2. Instead of meat you **could** / **couldn't** eat nuts, dairy products, leafy greens, and legumes
3. Many nutritionists insist we are **must** / **ought to** only eat organic products
4. As you **should** / **may** understand now, the purest ingredients are found in Sattvic foods
5. Small changes in the way you eat and live **can** / **ought to** have big effects
6. A yogic diet **must** / **must not** include chemicals and stimulants
7. Energy for digestion **should** / **shouldn't** be used for the purpose of exercise.
8. A fast **could** / **must** be strict, not allowing anything to enter the body.
9. Meat has a bad effect on many organs and **must** / **may** result in dangerous diseases.
10. Now you know this, **must** / **should** you change your diet?

3. With a little help from my friends.

Write 5 things you would like to suggest your friends.

e.g. I think everyone **should** be more conscious of what they consume throughout the day.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____