

*One who is serious, a moderate eater, a renouncer,
and intent on yoga, will be an expert after a year.
On this, there is no doubt.*

**IF YOU WANT TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE,
YOU MUST BE DOING THE LIFE CHANGING THINGS.**

And you will notice a difference within one year if you do.

Next, Svatmarama tells us how the yogis ate. The Pradipika has only 5 verses that define how to eat, and there is some fascinating stuff in there, including subtle ways to think about food choices that you may not have considered.

The 5 verses relating to eating are not about weight loss, although it is possible to lose weight on this "plan." Nutritionally, some of the foods the book turns down are known today to be powerhouses, superfoods. This yoga 'diet' is about energy: calm, cool, sweet energy, and it is idealized, even for Svatmarama.

These practitioners did not have wealth. They lived in empty, secluded huts in the woods, and they were, for the most part, spiritual beggars, whose daily food came to them as religious offerings from other poor people. They ate what they were given. Nonetheless, the principles can be applied to what modern people need to be healthy today. With substitutes and variations that fit (and exist) in our world, we can stay true to the overall principles and find health and happiness in our way of eating.

As you go through the guidelines, list the foods and recipes and goals that come to mind. Then, work through the planner that follows for a 3 week try.

*The yogi should eat food that is desirable, suitable, nutritious,
pleasantly sweet, juicy, contains dairy products,
and fortifies the bodily elements.*

- **Desirable:** Choose foods you like.
- **Suitable:** Is it available, affordable, natural and practical for your lifestyle? Will your family go for it? Is it healthy for your body? What is suitable for you?
- **Nutritious, pleasantly sweet, juicy:** Think fresh, raw, whole. Sweet is pecan vs walnut, cucumber vs arugula. All are healthy; choose the sweetest.
- **Contains dairy products:** For you that might mean nut milks. This was written 600 years ago; please choose what is healthy for you.
- **Fortifies the elements:** What do you want? Foods can help to strengthen bones, lose or gain weight, build immune health, build muscle, improve skin... choose foods that support your goals.

List 3 health/wellness goals you'd like to work on:

Next, do an online search for: Superfoods for _(your issue here)_ and make a list. Choose the ones that best fit all of the criteria above: desirable, suitable, nutritious, pleasantly sweet, juicy. Add your own favorites. Stick to the "sweet" options, but remember "sweet" is not pie.

Your Food List so far:

These are not recommended:

bitter, sour, spicy, and salty tastes; unripe vegetables, fermenting, rotting, oily foods, alcohol, fish, meat, yoghurt, chick peas, oil cake, garlic, onion and so on.

- **Bitter, sour, spicy, and salty tastes:** yes, we love some of these flavors, but the ancient yogis recommended a cooling diet for a more “chill” life. Choosing whole, raw, sweet foods is key. It doesn’t mean no spices, it means go easy.
- **Unripe vegetables, fermenting, rotting, oily foods:** well, that sounds easy. Except for kombuchas, apple cider vinegar, most food in a can, or from a van... Again, focus on whole, fresh, raw.
- **Alcohol, fish, meat:** well, for a few weeks, you know you can. But working on less would be good too. How many meals do you eat in a week? How many could be just as satisfying without meat?
- **Yoghurt, chick peas, oil cakes, garlic, onion, and so on:** evidence is scarce and suspect on the why of these, many are incredibly healthful. Best guess? Some might be harder to digest, cause body odor and gas, or distract the mind. Possibly the author just didn’t like them. If hummus is one of your staples, stick with it. I’m sticking with garlic.

Food List What are some meals you like that can be made without the things on this list that you know are good to avoid? To me, the list seems to be all about avoiding heartburn and indigestion and hangovers.

The most conducive foods for the yogi are: auspicious food, good grains, wheat, rice, barley, milk, ghee, butter, brown sugar, crystallized sugar, honey, dry ginger, cucumbers, 5 greens, mung and such pulses, and pure water.

- **Auspicious Food:** The most auspicious food comes from your garden or your local farmer's market. It is fresh, whole, organic, lovingly grown, and picked this morning. No living thing, plant or animal, died for you to have it.
- **Good grains, wheat, rice, barley, milk, ghee, butter:** Modern foods are produced with chemicals and cruelty. Organic foods raised without cruelty are best. Choose whatever alternative foods your body comfortably digests.
- **Brown sugar, crystallized sugar, honey, dry ginger:** 600 hundred years ago, this meant "jaggery" or pure and candied cane sugar. Moderation is important. Whatever natural sweetener you use, go easy. Dry ginger, or ginger candies, are easy on the the digestion.
- **Cucumbers, 5 greens, mung and such pulses, and pure water:** The 5 greens are unknown ancient Indian greens. Choose spinach, lettuce, kale.... Mung beans and lentils are easily digestible. And unless you harvest rain, "pure" water is difficult. Say a blessing over yours.

Auspicious isn't fancy, it's fresh from the dirt. Sweet, fresh, whole, natural and easy to digest is definitely the overall theme of the Pradipika eating guidelines. The ancient yogis understood that digestion is one of our biggest energy costs, and when we don't waste it there, we'll have loads to spare.

Think about what auspicious food means for you. If you make it with love and mindfulness, many foods can be auspicious, We can't all be farmers, but you don't have to have a green thumb to grow your own sprouts and herbs in the kitchen. What do the local farms in your region grow? What healthy, wonderful foods are being made right in your town?

Food that is reheated, parched, too salty, too sour, or contains too many stale, indigestible ingredients is improper and should be avoided.

This is about leftovers, and processed, packaged, pre-made foods. The more cooked it is, the more dead it is. When you eat it, you are spending energy digesting food that doesn't give anything back. The ancient yogis were all about enlightenment. They were trying to increase their life force energy. Because plants eat light, they are the most desired food. The closer your food is to the living plant, the more energetic value it has. So eating food that is still living - like sprouts - is eating food with the life force still intact. Very auspicious.

To practice this philosophy of eating, we have to get rid of as much of the processed, packaged, fast food, junk food, dead food, leftover food that we can, and eat the most "alive" foods we can, as much as we can.

The hard part is, in the modern world, WE ARE BUSY! And many healthy eaters do a lot of food prep for several days in advance. It makes healthy eating much more efficient. Yet Svati marama is clear - each day your "salad jar" sits waiting for you to eat it, it gets a little more dead.

If you are going to really discover what happens to your body when you feed it the lightest, brightest, most incredibly energetic food, you've got to say goodbye to the food that is dead.

So think about how you will balance this aspect. What things can you prepare in advance that will help you succeed with your goals, that don't add up to "leftovers" and where will you compromise for the most efficient outcome?

Remember, the ancient yogis did nothing but yoga. Make choices that work for you in your life, because stress is just another way to dull your light.

Start with the least healthy things in your life. What can you get rid of? What is the difference between prepared food that makes life work better, and prepared food that just gets you through the moment?

*A moderate diet means eating satisfying,
sweet food to please Shiva,
while leaving the stomach 1/4 empty.*

- **Satisfying and sweet** means enjoy your food. Healthy feels good, and life is meant to be appreciated. Find the best mix for you.
- **Eating to please Shiva** means believing in your power to transform. Eat with wisdom, self-kindness, discipline, and pleasure.
- **Leave the stomach 1/4 empty.** Feeling full is uncomfortable. It causes digestive issues and consumes excessive energy. Think 1/2 food, 1/4 water, 1/4 empty.

So that's the big picture. We are meant to eat the most healthy, whole, vital foods, so that we can grow and thrive and do our good work in the world. When we have abundant, bright, calm, cool, and collected energy, we can do anything. We are meant to enjoy life, and food and physical health are among life's greatest pleasures. The two go hand in hand.

On the following pages, you'll find tips, space for food lists and recipe ideas, and food logs for a three week experiment in eating like an ancient yogi. You'll start to feel brighter within just a few days, and within three weeks, you might find some changes becoming more permanent. Keep going!

**EAT FOR THE RIGHT REASONS:
BECAUSE YOU LOVE YOURSELF,
BECAUSE YOU BELIEVE IN
YOUR OWN POWER TO TRANSFORM.**

Eating the Pradipika Way

See what you've already got at home. Move the things you will not eat to the back and pull your sweet foods forward. Make your shopping list; start planning meals. Remember that "suitable" may change when you get to the grocery store. Price, seasonality and availability make a difference. Focus on the most healthy, 'sweet' foods that you can find, and eat whole, raw, or lightly cooked.

There are 21 meals in a week. Think about how many of them can be meat free, how many can be freshly prepared, how many can be "ideal" and where you'd like freedom to indulge.

Simplifying your first meal by "grazing" might be easiest. Starting with fruit first (3 servings before you eat anything else) is a great way to bring yourself up to 3/4 full, especially with a handful of healthy raw nuts. Drink pure water, or herbal tea, or warm water with honey and lemon, and graze until you become hungry, then have something more substantial. Try to eat all your food within a 12 hour time period to give your digestive system adequate time to fully function. Enjoy!

Grocery List

You've got to enjoy what you eat, or you won't stick to it. List your favorite meals. What fits the Pradipika plan? What can be adapted?

Food Log

	Morning Foods	Mid Day Foods	Evening Foods
Mon			
Tues			
Wed			
Thurs			
Fri			
Sat			
Sun			

	Water	Exercise	Meditation	Pradipika Practices	Sleep
Mon					
Tues					
Wed					
Thurs					
Fri					
Sat					
Sun					

Food Log

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At the end of the first chapter, Svātmaṛama runs through the last few items on his list of edicts on simply *beginning* to live life as a yogi:

Chapter 1, Verse 61

*Don't indulge in fires, women, or travel in the beginning.
For Goraksha says, avoid bad people, fires, women, travel,
early morning baths, fasting, and actions that hurt the body.*

I am a woman, and I love early morning baths, and also travel. But I can easily comply with the rest of these things. What he means is, don't get distracted, take the time to build good habits. That takes only a couple of months to do.

Chapter 1, Verses 64 - 66

*One succeeds in all yogas through energetic practice,
even if one is young, old, very old, sick, or weak.
The practitioner will succeed,
the non practitioner will not.
Success in yoga is not achieved by merely reading books.
Success is neither achieved by wearing the right clothes,
nor by talking about it.
Practice alone brings success.
This is the truth, without a doubt.*