

# One-Day Digestive Reset

Renew Your Digestive Strength

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According to Ayurveda, *agni*—the sacred fire within—is the gatekeeper of good health. Balanced *agni* preserves and restores optimal health and prevents the formation of *ama*—a harmful, sticky sludge made up of poorly digested foods, accumulating wastes, and toxins. On the other hand, impaired *agni* is at the root of every imbalance and disease. Ayurveda recognizes a number of different types of *agni* in the body, but the central digestive fire nourishes and affects *agni* throughout the system.

*Agni* in the digestive tract is simultaneously our first line of defense against ill health and the essential pathway through which nutrients are made available to every tissue in the body. The central digestive fire’s impact on our overall health and well-being is no less influential. In fact, proactively tending to *agni*—which is precisely the idea behind a short digestive reset like this one—is one of the most effective ways to encourage improved health. This short digestive reset is based on observing a monodiet for about a day to rest and rekindle the digestive fire, while encouraging detoxification and healing. If the concept of *agni* is new to you, you might appreciate reading [The Importance of Healthy Digestion: An Ayurvedic Guide to Understanding Agni](#). This resource provides a useful perspective on why strengthening the digestive fire is so beneficial—especially today, when our bodies are being asked to process a seemingly endless barrage environmental toxins, processed foods, unresolved emotions, and psychological stress. A periodic digestive reset can help to clear these accumulations from the system while kindling and balancing *agni*.



# Why This Approach?

There are a lot of different cleansing techniques out there, but many of them require a great deal of planning and a significant time commitment. The truth is that it is often easier to complete a one-day digestive reset than a longer cleanse. In the context of our busy modern lives, this can mean the difference between doing nothing at all, and doing something meaningful to support agni. What's more, you can choose a frequency that works for you and your schedule. Whether you commit to one day each week, month, season, or just commit to engaging this process whenever you feel the need, it can be a powerful tool for improved health. If done regularly, this practice can be transformative.

## You Might Benefit from a Regular Digestive Reset If:

- You struggle with digestive difficulties of any kind.
- You suffer from constipation, loose stools, or irregular bowel movements.
- You have intense cravings for spicy, salty, or sweet foods.
- You frequently lack energy or feel exhausted.
- You suffer from anxiety or stress.
- Your mind feels scattered and you have trouble focusing.
- You tend to feel foggy-headed or lethargic.
- You sense a subtle and undefined malaise; you just don't feel as well as you think you should (or maybe as well as you have in the past).

## Contraindications

As appealing as this approach may be, a digestive reset like this one is not appropriate for anyone who is extremely weak or debilitated at the moment. Pregnant or breastfeeding women should only consider a digestive reset based on a monodiet of kitchari (i.e. fruit and juice fasts would not be appropriate), and they should consult with a health care practitioner before doing a reset on any sort of regular basis.

## Several Different Methods

While a water-only fast might be appropriate for some individuals, it would not be recommended on a general level. For many, a water fast would simply be too extreme and provoking, and could actually cause more harm than good.



## Dietary Choices

We will discuss three different monodiets here. Recommendations are based on your **constitution** and your **current state of balance**. We highly recommend the first option, particularly if you do not have a firm grasp of the unique imbalances at play in your system. It is far more universally appropriate than the others, and will therefore be detailed below more thoroughly than the other options.

### 1. Kitchari

Kitchari is a traditional Ayurvedic stew made from basmati rice and split mung dal. It is very nourishing and substantive, balances vata, pitta, and kapha, and provides powerful support for internal cleansing. It is generally safe for people of all constitutions and imbalances.

### 2. Fruit

Appropriate fruits can be especially light and clarifying, but still provide some substance. A monodiet of fruit counters excesses in the heavy, dull, stable, and cloudy qualities and could be appropriate for individuals with a substantial kapha imbalance, provided they are not also suffering a significant vata imbalance. However, if your appetite is particularly sharp or if you have trouble skipping meals, do not try a monodiet of fruit; kitchari will be preferable. If you think that a monodiet of fruit might be appropriate for you, an Ayurvedic practitioner can help to advise you on personally and seasonally appropriate fruits.

### 3. Juice

A monodiet of juice imparts the lightest, clearest qualities to the system and also helps to counter excesses in the heavy, dull, oily, stable, and cloudy qualities. A monodiet of juice would generally only be appropriate for individuals with a substantial kapha imbalance, without significant vata or pitta influences. If you think that this technique might be appropriate for you, we would highly recommend that you consult with an Ayurvedic practitioner—not only to confirm that a juice monodiet would be appropriate for you, but also to advise you on the best juices for your situation.

## Varying the Length

For those with especially light constitutions and anyone who is underweight, a daytime observance of the monodiet might be sufficient—from the morning until dinner, which could be a fairly normal (though healthy) meal. For everyone else, the monodiet can be observed straight thru until breakfast the following day.

## The Reset Day

Whatever monodiet you choose should be substantive enough that you can maintain your essential responsibilities. Freshly prepared foods are always best, so you'll want to prepare your meals and teas fresh each day—at whatever time works best with your schedule. That said, you can prepare all of your food for the day in the morning, if you like.



## The Diet

- Eat [Kitchari](#) (or your monodiet of choice) for breakfast, lunch, and dinner—allowing at least three hours between meals.
- You can garnish your kitchari with a little melted ghee, fresh cilantro, a squeeze of fresh lemon or lime juice, and salt to taste.
- Try not to eat anything after 7 p.m. the day before your reset.
- Drink at least 8–12 cups of room temperature, warm, or hot fluids to ensure adequate hydration and to help flush toxins from the system.
- Ideally, most of your fluids should be taken between meals.
- Appropriate fluids include water, [CCF Tea](#), [Rehydration Tea](#), and detox teas—drink as much of any of these as you like.

## Routine for the Day

- Rise early enough to give yourself a spacious and relaxed morning.
- Upon waking, scrape your tongue and brush your teeth.
- Sip 8–16 ounces of hot water to cleanse the system and to awaken the digestive capacity.
- Optional: Gentle Exercise such as walking, tai chi, qigong, or gentle yoga. This is not a day to push yourself physically.
- After that, you'll want to have plenty of time to prepare your food and teas for the day.
- Eat your monodiet throughout the day, as much as desired (but do not overeat).
- Optional: about a half hour before bed, take triphala to bolster digestion, elimination, and the body's natural detoxification processes.
  - Steep 1/2 teaspoon [Triphala powder](#) in a cup of freshly boiled water for ten minutes. Cool and drink.
  - Or, take two [Triphala tablets](#) with a glass of warm water.
- Retire for the Night by 10 p.m.
  - Sleep is the body's best time to detox so be sure to get plenty of rest during this process.

## Activity Level

- Keep your activities relatively quiet and mindful, whenever possible.
- Surround yourself with things that you find uplifting and nourishing.
- Minimize stress and exposure to frantic or disturbing environments.
- REST as you need to. You can ensure that the bulk of your energy is devoted to cleansing by minimizing the number of resources that your body allocates elsewhere.

It is not uncommon to experience mild constipation during a cleanse. This brief reset is unlikely to disturb your system. However, if you find that your bowel movements are slowing in frequency or volume, or that your stools are becoming more difficult to pass—either during or after your reset days—please see our resource on how to remedy [Constipation During a Cleanse](#). Healthy elimination is critical to the detoxification process, so it is best to be proactive about relieving any discomfort as soon as you are aware of it.



# A Catalyst for Positive Change

While a single day may seem too short to truly reset agni, periodically dedicating a day to rest and detoxify the digestive tract can ignite dramatic improvements in the strength of agni throughout the system. As we discussed earlier, Ayurveda views balanced agni as the key to optimal health and longevity, so this is no small feat. Over time, this approach can strengthen the digestive capacity, balance elimination, de-escalate cravings, improve energy levels, and contribute to a richer sense of well-being. If you're even a little bit curious about how a one-day digestive reset might feel to your body, it's certainly worth giving it a try. What do you have to lose? It's simple, yes. And sometimes, in today's complicated and busy world, simplicity is just what we need in order to heal.

## Recipes

Remember that whatever monodiet you have chosen to work with, your food will absorb the energy of your mindset and state of being while you are preparing it. You can assist your healing process by bringing good intentions and a sense of presence into your kitchen. For those eating kitchari, the recipe is below. Recipes for several supportive teas are below as well.

### Tridoshic Kitchari

Kitchari is an Ayurvedic stew that is prepared from basmati rice and yellow mung dal. Appropriate vegetables provide texture, flavor, and an important source of fiber. Kitchari is very easy to digest, which makes it a wonderful food for resting the digestive tract and allocating extra energy to the body's natural detoxification processes. The quantities in this recipe provide a good starting point for a day's supply of kitchari. As you learn your preferences and habits, you are welcome to adjust the quantities to better fit your needs.

### Ingredients

- 1 cup [white basmati rice](#)
- 1/2 cup [yellow mung dal](#)
- 2 tablespoons [ghee](#)
- Spices (or 1 tablespoon [Kitchari Spice Mix](#))
  - 1/4 teaspoon black mustard seeds
  - 1/2 teaspoon [cumin seeds](#)
  - 1/2 teaspoon [turmeric powder](#)
  - 1 1/2 teaspoons [coriander powder](#)
  - 1/2 teaspoon [fennel powder](#)
  - 1 pinch hing (asafoetida)
  - 1 teaspoon fresh grated ginger
- 1 teaspoon [natural mineral salt](#)
- 6 cups water
- 2 cups easily digestible vegetables (such as asparagus, carrots, celery, green beans, summer squash, sweet potato, winter squash, or zucchini)



Soak the yellow mung dal overnight (or for at least four hours). Strain the soaking water, combine with the rice and rinse the mixture at least twice, or until the water runs clear, and set aside. In a medium saucepan or soup pot, warm the ghee over medium heat. Add the black mustard seeds, cumin seeds and sauté for a couple of minutes, until the mustard seeds begin to pop. Add the turmeric, coriander, fennel, hing, and fresh ginger (or the kitchari spice mix). Stir briefly, until aromatic. Stir the rice and dal mixture into the spices and sauté for a few moments, stirring constantly. Add the six cups of water, turn heat to high, and bring to a boil. When the soup comes to a boil, stir in the salt, reduce heat, cover, and simmer for about forty minutes. Meanwhile, cut your vegetables into small, bite-sized pieces. About halfway through the kitchari's cooking process, stir in the vegetables and allow the stew to return to a boil. Continue to simmer until the rice, dal, and vegetables are fully cooked. Remove from heat, cool, and serve. Note: some vegetables, such as sweet potatoes and winter squash, might require more cooking time and may be added earlier, if necessary.

Aim to have very little water remaining when finished. The consistency should be that of a vegetable stew as opposed to a broth. While you want the beans, rice, and vegetables to be thoroughly cooked, excess water and over-stirring can cause the ingredients to become thick and gummy. Garnish the kitchari with your choice of fresh cilantro, ghee, lemon or lime juice, and salt to taste. Enjoy!

## Cumin, Coriander, Fennel Tea

### Ingredients

- 1 quart of purified water
- 1 teaspoon whole [cumin seed](#)
- 1 teaspoon whole [coriander seed](#)
- 1 teaspoon whole [fennel seed](#)

Place all the ingredients in a pot, bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for fifteen minutes, or until the seeds begin to sink. Remove from heat and strain. Store the tea in a thermos or in the refrigerator, but do not drink it cooler than room temperature.

## Alakananda Ma's Rehydration Tea

### Ingredients

- 4 1/2 cups pure water
- 2 heaping teaspoons peppermint or fresh mint
- 1 heaping teaspoon [brahmi/gotu kola powder](#)
- 1/4 teaspoon [natural mineral salt](#)
- 1/4 lime (squeezed juice)
- 2 teaspoons turbinado sugar

Boil water. Remove from heat and add herbs, salt, and lime. Steep ten minutes, strain, add turbinado, and drink warm or at room temperature.



# Shopping List

The quantities below represent the approximate amount required for each one-day digestive reset. As you learn your habits and needs with this process, the quantities may need to be adjusted accordingly.

## Herbs & Products

Continuing to take Triphala in between reset days will help to support further detoxification. You are welcome to continue any of the teas in between reset days as well.

- [Triphala powder](#) (1/8 ounce) or [Triphala tablets](#) (two tablets)
- [Tongue Cleaner](#)
- Optional: [Brahmi/Gotu Kola powder](#) for [Alakananda Ma's Rehydration Tea](#) (1/8-1/4 ounce)

## Groceries

- Organic [White Basmati Rice](#) (7 ounces)
- Organic [Yellow Mung Dal](#) (4 ounces)
- Organic [Ghee](#), Clarified Butter—available at most health food stores (2 ounces)
- Vegetables for Kitchari (2 cups total), Your Choice Of:
  - Asparagus
  - Carrots
  - Celery
  - Green Beans
  - Summer Squash
  - Sweet Potato
  - Winter Squash
  - Zucchini
- Spices and Garnishes to Have on Hand
  - Black Mustard seeds
  - Cilantro
  - [Cumin seeds](#), whole
  - [Coriander powder](#)
  - [Coriander seeds](#), whole
  - [Fennel powder](#)
  - [Fennel seeds](#), whole
  - Ginger Root, fresh
  - Hing (Asafoetida)
  - Optional: [Kitchari Spice Mix](#) (replaces some individual spices in kitchari)
  - Lemons
  - Limes



- Mint, fresh or dried Peppermint
- [Natural Mineral Salt](#)
- Turbinado Sugar
- [Turmeric powder](#)

Or, save time and money with one of Banyan's Cleanse Kits:

- [Kitchari Kit](#)
  - Seven-day supply of Organic [Basmati Rice](#)
  - Seven-day supply of Organic [Yellow Mung Dal](#)
  - [Kitchari Spice Mix](#)
  - Organic [Ghee](#)
- [Ayurvedic Cleanse Kit](#)
  - All of the above plus...
  - Organic [Triphala tablets](#)
  - Organic [Sesame Oil](#)
  - Pukka Detox Tea
- [Deluxe Ayurvedic Cleanse Kit](#)
  - All of the above plus...
  - Organic [Chyavanprash](#)
  - Organic [Nasya Oil](#)
  - [Nasal Rinse Cup](#)
  - Stainless steel [Tongue Cleaner](#)

## Additional Resources

For more information on Ayurvedic Cleansing, click here to return to our [Cleansing Department](#).

To explore the Ayurvedic practice of *rasayana* (rejuvenation), please see our [Rejuvenation Department](#).

For more information on agni and why it is so critical to our overall health, you may enjoy our piece on [The Importance of Healthy Digestion](#).

For more on *ama* (a toxic substance that interferes with our well-being), and why it is so detrimental, please see our article on [Ama: the Antithesis of Agni](#).

