

Mung Dal Kitchari

Source: The cookbook *Ayurvedic Cooking for Self-Healing* by Usha Lad & Dr. Vasant Lad.

Spring is one of the best times in the year to do a cleanse to prevent imbalances and diseases.

Allowing the digestion a break is important in order to strengthen it, and a simple cleanse can consist of simply eating the same easy digestible food for a few days. This does not mean eating leftovers, on the contrary, make the following recipe each day and enjoy it 2-3 times daily.

Cleansing does not always refer to fasting, especially not in Ayurvedic philosophy - each individual has their own unique needs. There are many types of cleansing and it can be difficult to know which is fitting. This simple cleanse allows you to feel full at each meal (leave 4-6 hours in between meals).

This recipe is tridoshic, which means that it is developed to balance all body types.

If you have special dietary restrictions, please honor that and leave those foods out of the recipe.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup split or whole mung dal (these are a special kind of lentils and available in Asian markets or Indian stores. Whole mung is available in Vitamin Cottage)
- 1 cup Basmati rice
- 1 inch piece of fresh ginger, peeled and chopped fine
- 1 Tbsp shredded, unsweetened coconut
- 1 small handful fresh cilantro leaves
- ½ cup water
- 3 Tbsp Ghee (clarified butter)
- 1½ inch piece of cinnamon bark
- 5 whole cardamom pods
- 5 whole cloves
- 10 black peppercorn
- 3 bay leaves
- ¼ tsp turmeric
- ¼ tsp salt
- 6-8 cups water

Directions:

1. Soak the split mung dal for 3-5 hours in hot water (longer in high altitude)
2. Wash the mung dal and rice until water is clear
3. In a blender, put ginger, coconut, cilantro and ½ cup of water. Blend until liquified
4. Heat a large saucepan on medium heat. Add ghee and let it heat. Then add cinnamon bark, cloves, cardamom pods, peppercorn and bay leaves. Stir for a moment until fragrant
5. Add the blended items to the spices, and then the turmeric, stir for a moment until lightly browned
6. Stir in mung dal and rice and mix well
7. Pour in 6 cups of water, cover and bring to a boil. Let it boil for 5-10 minutes, then turn down the heat to low and cook, lightly covered, until the dal and rice are soft, about 30-45 min. (longer in high altitude and if using whole mung dal). Add more water if needed.