

TAKE THE ACID TEST



I have heard that it is better for your health to be more alkaline than acidic, but what exactly does this mean?

In order to burn fat effectively, have a healthy immune system and to repair itself, your body needs an alkaline environment which is a pH balance of about 7 to 7.4. When the pH of your bodily fluids, digestive system and tissues is consistently pushed out of that comfortable neutral zone, health problems can arise. The most common form of pH imbalance is excess acidity.

Research has shown that many diseases thrive in an acidic environment. As an example, osteoporosis may be caused by a chronic intake of acid-forming foods consistently outweighing the intake of alkaline foods. This leads to the bones being forced to give up their alkaline minerals (calcium and magnesium) in order to buffer the excess acid. Also, if cells are not healthy, they are not as effective at absorbing nutrients, eliminating waste products and transferring oxygen within the body. This can result in overall fatigue and a lack of energy. Infectious organisms have a better chance of affecting these cells. So if these mineral losses and metabolic abnormalities continue, the risk of many conditions increase, such as:

- Cancer
- Hormonal imbalance
- Obesity, slow metabolism and inability to lose weight
- Chronic inflammation
- Sensitivities and allergies
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Bladder and kidney conditions
- Weakened immunity
- Premature aging

- Osteoporosis
- Joint pain
- Low energy and chronic fatigue
- Mood swings
- Slow digestion and elimination
- Candida and fungal infections

So what causes excess acidity? Excess body acidity can be caused by poor diet, insufficient exercise, over-exercising (too much cardio contributes to stress) and chronic stress, causing depletion of vital minerals such as potassium, sodium, magnesium and calcium.

How can I find out if my system is alkaline or acidic?

You can test your saliva or urine using litmus paper strips purchased from a health food store or chemist. Test your pH with your saliva (fill your mouth with saliva and spit on the test strip) or urine (collect a small sample of urine and dip the test strip in). Match the strip to the colour on the package. If the pH of your saliva stays between 7-7.4 all day your body is functioning within a healthy range. If your urinary pH fluctuates between 6-6.5 in the morning and 6.5-7 in the evening, your body is within a healthy pH range.

So exactly how do I become more alkaline? Quite easily, just eat more alkaline-producing foods than acid-producing ones, move your body regularly (there is no need to overdo it), and relax whenever you can.

Acid foods are the ones you already know are bad for you - soft drinks, chips, chocolate, sweets, burgers, dairy, also grains, cheese, peanuts, prawns, meat and chicken. See more in the list below.

Alkaline foods are the ones you already know are good for you - fresh foods, leafy green vegetables, salads, nuts, herbs, soybeans, tofu, fruit. See more in the list below.

It can be confusing! There is a difference between acidic foods and acid-forming foods. While some foods may taste acidic, they can actually have an alkalisating effect on the body. What determines the pH nature of the food in the body is the metabolic end products when it is digested and the minerals absorbed into the bloodstream. It can be confusing that a food that tastes very acidic, such as apple cider vinegar or lemon juice, is actually alkaline once your digestive system has had a chance to digest and assimilate it. For example, the citric acid in citrus fruit is metabolised to its alkaline form (citrate).

A food that does not seem at all acidic, such as table sugar, can be highly acidifying inside your body. The confusing food for many people is fruit. The bottom line is that due to the extremely high sugar content, most fruits have an acidifying effect on the body. The fruits that are low in sugar include avocado, lime, lemon, watermelon and tomato. The good news is that if the fruit is eaten whole, in moderation, your body can metabolise it and utilize the nutrients that it contains. However, once you juice the fruit, it has an acidifying effect on the body. So that fresh breakfast orange juice is extremely acid.

The trick is to make sure that your diet is 70% alkaline and 30% acidifying. To become alkaline you simply need to start focusing 70-80% of your diet on the alkaline foods and try to limit the acid foods. Back this up with 2-3 litres of good quality, clean, alkaline water each day and you will soon start to feel fantastic!

Some Simple Suggestions:

- Eat a large amount of alkalisating foods (raw vegetables) at every meal to neutralise any acid residues
- You can lightly steam vegetables but you include a raw vegetable salad.
- Do not completely cut out acid foods. They do provide essential nutrients.
- If you are dealing with serious acid-alkaline imbalances you can go on an all-alkaline diet but for no more than 1-2 weeks

- Never eat meals consisting only of acidifying foods like roast chicken and chips
- Do not combine fruit with other food types
- Low sugar fruit such as limes, lemons, tomatoes and avocados can be combined with any meal
- Melons are digested very quickly and should be eaten alone
- Do not drink water with your meals. Drink it 30 minutes before or 1 hour after the meal.

Alkalising Foods:

Lemons, limes, grapefruit, avocados, tomatoes and bananas
 Almonds and brazil nuts
 Sprouted nuts and seeds
 Vegetables especially greens
 Some dried fruit are mildly alkalising (apricots, bananas, dates and raisins)
 Herbs, spices and sea salt
 Cold-pressed oils (olive oil, avocado oil, flax seed oil, Udo's Oil Blend)
 Fresh raw butter, fresh buttermilk, raw whole milk
 Green drinks
 Almond milk
 Apple cider vinegar

Mildly Acidifying Foods List:

Barley, buckwheat, oats, brown rice, rye, spelt, whole wheat. Sprouting buckwheat will make it alkalising.
 Yeast-free whole grain bread
 Whole eggs
 Plain yoghurt (organic)
 Chicken, lamb, perch, sole, trout
 Lentils, peas, white beans, kidney beans
 Cashews, coconuts, pine nuts, sesame seeds
 Apples, fresh apricots, blueberries, cherries, fresh figs, grapes, mangoes, melons, plums, pomegranates, sweet strawberries, watermelon

Strongly Acidifying Foods :

White rice, white wheat, yeast bread, white bread
 Heated butter, sweetened yoghurt
 Beef, carp, cold cuts or processed meats, herring, lobster, mackerel, pork, salmon
 Chickpeas, peanuts, soybeans
 Hazelnuts, pecans, pistachios, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, walnuts. Sprouting pumpkin or sunflower seeds will make them alkalising.
 Black currents, kiwis, oranges, nectarines, pineapples, raspberries
 Black tea, cocoa, coffee, hot chocolate, milk, soda, carbonated water, whiskey, wine
 Margarine, hydrogenated fats, lard, peanut oil
 Ketchup, mayonnaise, pickles, sugar, vinegars (except apple cider vinegar)
 Sweeteners including agave nectar, yacon syrup

It's about balance

It's important to remember that, like everything in life, it's about balance. You need to eat some acid-forming foods too. For more comprehensive information and a list of alkaline and acid foods, and a few other simple suggestions, find the full article at www.holistichealthmelb.com.au

So why should I care about this stuff?

Have you ever wondered why so many people experience aches and pains and disease as they get older? It has more to do with the accumulation of toxins in their body and lack of movement, than old age. I find it ironic that most people plan for their retirement by contributing to Superannuation, but don't consider educating themselves about health and

making changes to their diet or lifestyle until they begin to experience ill-health or get that dreaded diagnosis from their Doctor. Planning for optimum health so that you can enjoy your Superannuation starts now! Talk to Keren about simple changes that you can make now so that you can enjoy an adventurous, healthy and vibrant old age.