## The Paula Lloyd Therapy Centre

## General Ideas for an Ayurvedic diet

Nobody can change one's diet overnight; it takes time and initially also some effort to find new recipes and experiment with foods that might be unfamiliar. However, every effort made is rewarded by a faster rate of healing.

The best way to start is by finding alternative ingredients within the recipes that you already know. For example, replacing wheat pasta with pasta made from spelt or kamut. They are both ancient varieties of wheat with less and easier to digest types of gluten. Try also pasta or noodles made from rice or buckwheat. Serve pasta with a vegan pesto sauce or make a white sauce using soya cream, almond or coconut milk, and add a lighter, fresh cheese such as feta or goat's cheese.

Soya, almond and coconut milk make excellent replacements for cow's milk or yoghurt in recipes. Almond milk is made by putting about ten blanched almonds in a blender with a cup of water and blending it into a 'milk'. You can also buy blanched almond paste (similar to peanut butter). Add two teaspoons into the dish of vegetables you are cooking, stirring in some water or soya milk. In all Indian stores and most good supermarkets you can buy coconut milk in cartons, or coconut cream in a hard block, which you shred and add with a little liquid, either water or soya milk, just before the dish is cooked.

Instead of a tomato sauce, take re peppers and either blend them directly into a paste and then cook them, or roast them first in the oven before blending. This makes an excellent sauce to accompany a dish, or it can be used a base for other dishes. Carrot juice is likewise an alternative to add to vegetable stew or curry.

Follow the '*Mung* Soup Recipe' to make other *dhal*/soups with yellow split *mung* beans, yellow split peas, green lentils, *tur dhal* or *aduki* beans. Experiment with different spices such as black cumin, ground black cardamom, kokum etc. Remember to add a little asafoetida (available in Indian stores) whenever you cook anything gas producing like beans, pulses,legumes etc.

Cook soups with vegetables such as pumpkin, carrot and coriander, swede, spinach and nutmeg, leek and potatoes. make a large pot, eating some for supper and taking the remainder to work in a Thermos flask. Eat with rice or oatcakes.

When cooking rice add a handful of quinoa or amaranth to give more texture and a nutty flavour. Both grains are easy to digest and extremely high in calcium and magnesium. (Both grains cook in about 7-10 minutes, not in 35 minutes as is often written on the packet!) Amaranth can also be added into porridge by soaking overnight with some raisins etc. (see recipe)

Cook sweet or savoury pancakes using rice flour or *Doves* gluten-free flour instead of wheat flour. This flour also works well in all sweet or savoury cakes. However, when using it to substitute self-raising flour, baking powder must be added. In recipes containing couscous, try millet or buckwheat instead. Rice flour that is finely ground will also make excellent chapatis, however you need to add *ghee* to the dough and into the pan.

Try rye or spelt bread instead of wheat bread, but preferably toast it to stop the yeast fermentation process that is still slightly active and to make the bread lighter, thereby aided digestion.

Cook risottos using soya or almond milk as a base. Create your own vegetable shepherd's pie: mashed sweet potatoes, yams or parsnips mixed with *ghee*, salt and pepper to make the topping.

Cut a butternut squash in half, gouge out the seeds and place 4-5 unsulphured apricots and a little water into each hole where the seeds were. Place in an ovenproof dish, cover and bake in the oven (180°C) for 45 minutes, adding water onto the apricots when necessary to prevent from burning.

Cut any vegetables of your choice (such as carrots, peppers, courgettes, parsnips etc.) into large chunks and place in an ovenproof dish with about 1cm depth of pure, fresh apple juice. Cook in the oven  $(150^{\circ}\text{C})$  for about half an hour until the vegetables are soft and sweet.

If you have a fetish for peanut butter try sunflower seed spread instead. It tastes remarkably similar!

As a sweetener, try *jaggery* (available in Indian stores) or *rapadura* (found in good health food shops), which are both solidified sugar cane juice, a natural sweetener, that can be used in baking, cooking and in tea etc.

Cook fruits such as apples or pears into a stew or make dried fruits into compote. Cut dried fruits such as apricots, figs, prunes, blueberries, pears, apple rings etc. into chunks, place them into a pan with some water, bring to the boil and simmer for a few minutes. Turn off the heat, place a lid on the pad and leave to cool. Keep in the fridge and add a few spoonfuls each day into your porridge.

Make fresh fruit juices or try fruit 'milk' shakes using rice or oat milk.

Experiment, Have fun and enjoy the fruits of your efforts.