

## **Acid – Alkali Balance in the Foods and health**

The human body is slightly alkaline at a pH of 7.4. The body tissues must stay alkaline for a proper function and good health. The foods can alter the pH value of the body based on what type of residue (metabolic waste) a particular food leaves in the body. If one eats food that leaves an acidic residue, it makes the body more acidic and the urine more acidic (a good example being meat and dairy). Excreting acids in urine is one of the main ways the body regulates blood pH. When there is too much acidic waste in the body from meat and dairy-rich diets; it causes bone loss and osteoporosis. It also makes the body vulnerable to disease and inflammation. Therefore, by choosing more alkaline foods, one can alkalize the body and improve health. That is the traditional 3000-year-old concept firmly established in the Ayurvedic as well as Allopathic principles of health.

Keeping the body alkaline within the normal range requires that the alkaline and acidic foods get consumed in the ratio of 4:1. That means alkaline and neutral foods four times the amount of acidic foods. Following is the list of acid versus alkaline and neutral foods:

- The acidic foods include all animal products, and the factory-made food products – Meats, Poultry, Dairy, Eggs, Bread, Refined sugar, Coffee, Refined wheat flour, and Alcohol. The long-stored spice seed (coriander, cumin, garam masala) powders also get acidic over time because the omega3 oils in spice seeds become rancid and oxidized. For this reason, the spices should be freshly ground, stored in the glass jars for no more than a month.
- Neutral Foods include – Natural plant-based fats and Starches.
- Alkaline Foods include – Food of plant origins such as fruits, nuts, legumes, some lentils (especially moong and smooth), and vegetables except for tomatoes and its sauces, onion, and garlic. The lentils and beans cooked with acidic food items – tomato, onion, and sour foods can create stomach acidity, especially if eaten at night. For those who have acid reflux disease or those with a sensitive stomach, it is preferable to consume easy to digest Moong dal at night and all other lentils and legumes during the day.