



## SPRING FOODS: SOUR FLAVOR - SUPPORTS LIVER

Sheryl Sanchez, L.Ac.

| <i>Food</i>         | <i>Energetics</i>                             | <i>Indications</i>   | <i>Health Condition</i>  | <i>Notes</i>  |
|---------------------|---|--|--|---|
| <b>Sour Citrus</b>  |   |  |  |   |
| <b>Lemon/Lime</b>   | Clears Toxins                                 | Anti-bacterial   | Gargle with lemon and water to help a sore throat or early cough.  |   |
|                     | Benefits <i>Liver</i>                         | Regulates <i>Liver Qi</i> (especially Lime)                        |  |   |
|                     | Regulates GB, Stimulates Bile                 |  | Add lemon juice to water when you drink it (squeeze a half lemon). Best to stimulate bile when drank on an empty stomach first thing in the morning. This helps to get the digestive juices flowing. | Some will be concerned about lemon juice wearing down the enamel on your teeth - you are not consuming enough of it to really matter in this regard - unless you already have enamel erosion, or have health conditions which can lead to it such as GERD/heartburn, frequent vomiting such as in bulimia, xerostomia (dry mouth caused by medications or other conditions), etc.<br>General Contraindications - those with heartburn/GERD or high stomach acid or ulcers since lemons and limes are high in citric acid. |
| <b>Grapefruit</b>   | Benefits <i>Liver</i>                         | Aids alcohol intoxication  |  | Grapefruit, especially grapefruit juice, is now known to potentially interact with many pharmaceutical drugs. This interaction is in the intestines and not in the liver.   |
| <b>Kumquats</b>     | Benefits <i>Liver</i>                         |  |  | Eaten whole, the outer sweet peel offsets the <i>sour</i> citrus inside, but it still may be puckering to the taste buds of a neophyte  |
| <b>Other Fruit</b>  |   |  |  |   |
| <b>Goji Berries</b> | Strengthens <i>Liver</i>                      | Regenerates liver cells and inhibits fat cells in the liver        |  | Research has now shown that this fruit is hepatoprotective (a liver protector). It has a very high ORAC value, an antioxidant measurement.  |
|                     | Brightens the Eyes                            | Vision   |  | High in the nutrients beta-carotene and zeaxanthin, both known to support vision health.  |
|                     | Blood Tonic (a Tonic strengthens or tonifies) | Will strengthen, nourish or 'Build the Blood' or a 'Blood Builder' | Besides treating anemia, it can help many health conditions as diverse as weak lower back and knees, premature gray hair, diabetes, night sweats, infertility and chronic dry cough.                 | Research now shows high in immune-stimulating polysaccharides. Available now fresh and moist, so can be eaten in a variety of ways and is a nice addition to many dishes. Traditionally available in Chinese Medicine as a dried fruit, so used in medicinal cooking in soups or congees (traditional rice porridge), or in a tea. See attached "Anti-Aging Brain Mix". <sup>i</sup>  |



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| <b>Other Fruit cont.</b> |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Raspberry</b>         | Strengthens<br><i>Liver</i>                | Detoxifies  |  | Now known to be full of antioxidants such as ellagic acid, which inhibits binding of certain carcinogens to DNA and is potentially anti-cancer. Ellagic acid is also high in pomegranates (another sour fruit).   |
|                          | Regulates the menstrual cycle              | Now know to have an estrogen-like effect                                | In Chinese herbal medicine, both the dried unripe berries and leaves are used for menstrual disorders. |   |
|                          | Brightens Eyes                             | Good for vision   |  | Has flavonoids called anthocyanins. See attached recipe "Raspberry-Lime Aqua Fresca". <sup>ii</sup>   |
| <b>Sour Plum</b>         | Soothes <i>Liver</i><br>Qi                 |   | Will treat emotional repression, pain, nervous disorders, and anxiety (especially purple plums).       | High in antioxidants. In Japanese cuisine, Umeboshi plums are a staple, traditionally made to be salted and pickled. Also available as Ume wine and Ume vinegar. Ume has many medicinal benefits besides liver health, including anti-cancer properties, and helping diabetes and osteoporosis. |
|                          | Benefits <i>Liver</i>                      |   | Will treat liver cirrhosis and diabetes.   | Used in Chinese Medicine also to treat corns and warts topically.   |
| <b>Sour Apple</b>        | Detoxifies<br>Liver, Cleanses<br>the Blood | Removes toxic metals<br>such as lead and mercury                        |  |   |
|                          | Benefits the<br>Eyes                       |   | Can be used for eye inflammation (can use as a poultice).  |   |
|                          | Benefits the <i>GB</i>                     | Pectin removes<br>cholesterol, softens<br>gallstones                    | Gallstones or<br>'gallbladder attack'.   | <i>Sour</i> green apples are best for the <i>GB</i> ! See my blog for handout "Natural Treatments for Gallbladder Attack".  |
| <b>Fermented Foods</b>   |  |   |  |   |
|                          | Benefits<br>Digestion                      | Renews intestinal flora<br>(contains enzymes,<br>prebiotics/probiotics) |  | Considered easier to digest, since fermented foods are 'pre-digested'. Probiotics inhibit pathogens and promote immunity.   |
| <b>Yogurt/Kefir</b>      | Benefits<br>Digestion                      | Contains probiotics   |  | Can be made from substitute 'milks' also (coconut, almond, and soy) if one cannot tolerate dairy.   |



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| <b>Fermented Foods cont.</b> |  |  |                  |  |
| <b>Sauerkraut</b>            | Benefits Digestion                                     | Full of prebiotics/probiotics  |                  |  |
|                              | Detoxifies   |  |                  | High phytonutrient content with anti-cancer benefits (entire cabbage family).  |
|                              | Boosts Immunity  |  |                  | High in vitamins and minerals (entire cabbage family).   |
| <b>Apple Cider Vinegar</b>   | Soothes <i>Liver</i> Qi                                | Helps calm <i>Liver</i> emotions, especially in children                   | Heartburn        | A simple way to add the <i>sour</i> energy of fermentation to your diet is to incorporate vinegars to your cooking and salads. Best unpasteurized and unrefined (found also in brown rice and rice wine vinegars).   |
|                              | Detoxifies <i>Liver</i>                                |  |                  |  |
| <b>Vegetables</b>            |  |  |                  |  |
| <b>Young Spring Greens</b>   | Benefit <i>Liver</i> and <i>GB</i> , Aids in Digestion | Stimulates Bile  |                  | Young spring greens have a natural bitterness (some are <i>bitter</i> and <i>sour</i> ) that stimulates bile which aids in digestion of fats and proteins, so why they benefit the <i>Liver</i> and <i>GB</i> . They are high in vitamin, mineral and fiber content. Additionally, all dark, green leafy vegetables will rejuvenate the Blood and cleanse the <i>Liver</i> . They are high in chlorophyll and are strong 'Blood Builders' (chlorophyll is the 'Blood of plants' and is very similar to our Blood – has magnesium vs. iron). My motto is "Think Chlorophyll' to build the Blood! They are also high in Vitamin K, which is bone-building as well. |
| <b>Dandelion Greens</b>      | Benefits and Detoxifies the <i>Liver</i>               | Will treat any physical liver problem, including hepatitis and cirrhosis   |                  | Actually more <i>bitter</i> than <i>sour</i> , but a very powerful medicinal plant for the <i>Liver</i> . It could be called a "super-weed"! Dandelion greens or leaves are used in other herbal traditions as well, including the root and flowers both (i.e., all are medicinal and edible). Fresh dandelion greens can now be found at local supermarkets and can be easily incorporated into your diet in salads, soups and smoothies. (It does have a bitter taste, so the easiest way to get used to the flavor is to add a small amount to dishes you already eat.)   |
|                              | Stimulates secretion of bile                           | Assists digestion and elimination, Dissolves GB stones (and Kidney stones) |                  |  |



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| <b>Vegetables cont.</b>       |   |  |  |   |
| <b>Dandelion Greens cont.</b> | Eliminates Toxins,<br>Cleanses the Blood                | Anti-bacterial, anti-viral and anti-cancer   | Treats both internal and external infections | <p><u>External</u>: Skin rashes, especially red/fiery, toxic swellings or abscesses, including measles, chicken pox, eczema, poison oak.</p> <p><u>Internal</u>: Intestinal infections, upper respiratory infections (tonsillitis, sore throat), UTIs, etc.</p> <p>One of the active ingredients in infamous Chinese herbal medicine tea or ‘chong ji’: <i>Ban Lan Gen Chong Ji</i> – useful for any infection, but especially great for sore throats or beginning of a common cold or flu.</p> |
|                               | Benefits the Breast                                     | The <i>Liver</i> channel or meridian goes to the Breast  |  | Breast infections, abscesses or lumps, especially those with redness or pain. Can help treat breast cancer also.  |
|                               | Regulates Blood Glucose                                 | Contains the polysaccharide inulin   |  | <p>Properties: More bitter than sour, less bitterness when leaves are young. Traditionally eaten fresh in Europe with olive oil and lemon (a great <i>Liver</i> combo!)</p> <p>See attached recipe “Dandelion Flower Syrup”, from a great book on dandelion<sup>iii</sup> (see book for more recipes).</p>  |
| <b>Watercress</b>             | Detoxifies <i>Liver</i>                                 | Traditional detoxifier of the liver; now known to contain strong anticancer agents, helping in two stages of cell detoxification |  | <p>Now becoming more widely available in supermarkets, this is a nutrient powerhouse! Also becoming widely used in supplement/herbal medicinal formulas (as I predicted it would back in 2014).</p> <p>See attached recipe “Stir-fried Watercress with Almonds and Ginger”.<sup>iv</sup></p>  |
| <b>Arugula</b>                | Brightens Eyes  |  |  | Another <i>bitter</i> salad green widely available now; full of both vitamins and minerals. Contains beta-carotene and Vitamin A, which both benefit vision and eye health.   |
| <b>Endive</b>                 | Detoxifies <i>Liver</i><br>Stimulates secretion of bile |  |  | This is a member of the Chicory family and has many medicinal benefits.   |
|                               | Brightens Eyes  |  |  | Nourishes optic nerves to help prevent macular degeneration, cataracts, and glaucoma.   |



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| <b>Other Vegetables</b> |  |   |  |  |
| <b>Artichoke</b>        | Benefits <i>Liver</i>                                    |   |  | Has strong antioxidant properties and contains silymarin, a bioflavonoid, which research has shown may be helpful against liver toxicity and cancer. Silymarin is considered to be the most active ingredient of milk thistle, which is used in both Western and Chinese herbal medicine for liver health.   |
|                         | Stimulates secretion of bile                             | Assists digestion and elimination, Dissolves GB stones (and Kidney stones)  |  |  |
| <b>Edible Herbs</b>     |  |   |  |  |
| <b>Peppermint</b>       | Soothes <i>Liver</i> Qi                                  | Treats tightness in the chest or flanks (especially due to stress, emotional instability or menstrual disorders). | Anti-spasmodic: IBS, dysmenorrhea (painful menses/ cramping).                                      | In <u>Xiao Yao Wan</u> , an infamous Chinese Medicine PMS formula.   |
|                         | Clears the Head, Brightens the Eyes, Benefits the Throat |   |  | Anti-bacterial: has a floating, upward quality, so used to treat upper respiratory infections especially. Has a cooling nature, so used for common colds and flues that have heat symptoms (for example, sore throat and fever). In <u>Yin Qiao San</u> , an infamous formula for upper respiratory infections with symptoms noted above.  |
|                         | Disperses Turbid Qi from the Abdomen                     |   | For gastrointestinal disorders characterized with abdominal pain or cramping, nausea and vomiting. | One of the ingredients in another infamous Chinese Medicine herbal formula, <u>Curing Pills</u> , for ‘curing’ digestive complaints of all kinds.<br><br>Since it has a cooling nature, it is a great cooling drink for hot summer months (make into an ice tea – add honey and set out in the sun to ‘cook’; add ice later). See also attached recipe for a “Mint Syrup” <sup>vi</sup> (which could be used to add to other herbal teas or desserts.) |

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| <b>Edible Herbs cont.</b> |                   |                    |   |  |
| <b>Hibiscus Flowers</b>   |                   |                    | Modern research has shown it may benefit mild hypertension, has anti-inflammatory properties and also reduces cholesterol. Has the same bioflavonoids as raspberries, so will also benefit the vision | The dried flowers are traditionally used in Mexico (called Jamaica, pronounced (pronounced hi-my-ka) and other Latin American countries as a cooling, sour summer drink (not used in Chinese Medicine). It is consumed in African countries and a few Asian countries as well. It is high in bioflavonoids, Vitamin C and antioxidants. See attached recipe: “Rose Hips Lemonade” (includes both rose hips and hibiscus). <sup>vii</sup> |
| <b>Lemon Balm</b>         | Soothes Liver Qi  | Calms the Nerves   |   | An herb that is sour and spicy both. Use as an herbal tea or when a mild lemon flavor desired in a salad or other dish. Common now in many herbal formulas for calming the mind and nerves.  |
|                           | Detoxifies        | Anti-viral         | Especially for Herpes (all types).  | Used both internally and externally.   |

<sup>i</sup> From *Second Spring*, by Dr. Maoshing Ni, p. 109.

<sup>ii</sup> From *Isabel’s Cantina: Bold Latin Flavors from the new California Kitchen*, by Isabel Cruz, p. 186.

<sup>iii</sup> From *Dandelion Medicine*, by Brigitte Mars, p.65.

<sup>iv</sup> From *The Top 100 Health Tips*, by Charlotte Haigh, p. 40.

<sup>v</sup> From *The Top 100 Health Tips*, p. 40.

<sup>vi</sup> Idea from *Mint*, by Kate Ferry-Swainson, p. 51 (no-cook recipe from Bon Appetit).

<sup>vii</sup> From *Wise Concoctions: natural elixirs and tonics for health and energy*, by Bonnie Trust Dahan, p. 72.