

Sweet Simplicity: The Ayurvedic Kitchari Cleanse



Spring is the ideal time for cleansing and rejuvenation. The liver and its complementary organ, the gallbladder, are two organs that are often the primary targets for springtime cleansing and health regimens. Although a spring cleanse can be beneficial for almost anyone, it's particularly important if you are showing signs of a congested liver.

Kitchari (kicharee, kichari or kichidi), also called Indian dahl, is a traditional Indian medicinal meal used to nurse the sick back to health. It's also a mainstay of Indian households and a regular part of their diet. Kitchari makes an ideal spring detox because it's both satisfying and healing. It's also an Ayurvedic Medicine staple and is easily customized to nourish your unique constitution.

Kitchari means 'food of the gods' in Sanskrit. It's a porridge containing fiber, fat, grains, and mild digestive spices. Considered the 'mother of healing' in Ayurveda, it's believed that if you eat only Kitchari for at least three weeks, you will be cured of any disease.

Some signs of a congested liver are:

- Slow digestive function
- Slow Metabolism
- Abdominal bloating
- Indigestion
- Irritable bowel
- Alternating constipation and diarrhea
- Weight gain or difficulty losing weight
- Depressed or mood swings
- Irritability or anger
- Allergies or food and chemical sensitivities
- Blood sugar regulation issues
- Sugar or sweet cravings
- Foggy head
- Fatigue or lethargy
- Malaise or feeling generally unwell
- Frequent headaches
- Immune system issues



HOW TO MAKE KITCHARI

Ingredients

- 1 cup split yellow mung beans
- 2 cups white rice (basmati or jasmine work well)
- 2tsp Ghee (clarified butter) or cold pressed olive oil
- 3/4 tsp of ground coriander
- 3/4 tsp of ground cumin
- 3/4 tsp turmeric
- 3/4 tsp of whole cumin seeds
- 1 lemon or lime
- sea salt
- chile (fresh, dried, or sauce) *eliminate if sensitive to spicy foods

Directions

- 1) Rinse rice and mung beans until water runs clear
- 2) Combine water with rice and beans in large covered pot and bring to a boil
- 3) Reduce heat and simmer until rice and beans become soft and tender
- 4) Combine whole cumin seeds, ground cumin, ground coriander, and turmeric together with ghee or oil in a large saute pan

- 5) Cook over medium heat for a few minutes, or until spices become aromatic
- 6) Stir cooked rice and beans into spice mixture and thoroughly mix
- 7) Cook over medium to medium-low heat until flavors unite.
- 8) Top with salt, cilantro leaves, small amount of chile, and a squeeze of lemon just before serving

This is the time to re-connect with your body; pay attention to and embrace your own unique process of cleansing and clearing toxins. Your body may go through various changes, and you may experience cravings while detoxing. This is normal, and at times, can be challenging, but this will pass as your body continues to heal. However, always consider stopping a cleanse when your body is telling you it's time.

If you find yourself getting bored or needing more, feel free to mix it up by adding any combination of ginger, garlic, or well cooked onions, root vegetables and green vegetables. Everyone's needs are different—this cleanse isn't about sticking to a rigid recipe, but allowing your body to reset its digestive functions and heal from the day-to-day stressors that are imposed on it.



HOW TO INCLUDE KITCHARI IN YOUR CLEANSE

If you are looking for a simple, nourishing and gently cleansing addition to your **Yoga Body Spring Cleanse**, I love simply making a big batch of Kitchari, and eating this at the meals when you are not having your Biotics shakes.

How I personally have done this cleanse is as follows (*use your inner guidance on what feels best for your schedule, level of cleanse experience, level of health, etc.*):

Sample Daily Schedule

Wake up – drink about a quart of warm water (some with lemon) over about a half hour's time as I set my intention and write my gratitude.

Green juice

Exercise - Move, stretch, dance, yoga, meditation

Biotics shake

Go about my morning routine, drinking water and detox tea

Noonish – lunch of Kitchari with greens (asparagus, spinach, cilantro, or any other green that speaks to me)

Go about afternoon activities drinking water and detox tea

Mid-late afternoon – Biotics shake (sometimes I like to add some super greens powder)

Take a relaxation break – do a mini yoga session, take a walk, sauna, bath, etc.

Dinner – Kitchari with greens

That's it!

It's super simple, and once your big pot of kitchari is made, all you need to do is reheat (on the stove, not the microwave), and enjoy!

I generally will do this for at least 5 days of my 10-day cleanse. Sometimes I'll do it for the full 10 days.