

canada's fashion magazine

spring/summer 2001

FLARE

Diet

pregnancy

noshing by dosha



Eating a balanced diet for two—the Ayurvedic way *By Dana Tye*

What's your dosha?

1. Your pregnant body most resembles...

- a) slim-hipped, but unmistakably round-with-child, Jada Pinkett Smith.
- b) Madonna's motherly, yet muscular, curves.
- c) voluptuous, Venus-like mom Kate Winslet.

2. Your favourite thing to wear while pregnant is...

- a) only the most fashionable garb straight off the (pregnancy) runways.
- b) an Armani linen suit with Prada pumps.
- c) an Au Coton oversized tee with Gap track pants

3. At worst, being pregnant makes you feel...

- a) overfed and sensitive to cold.
- b) all hot and bothered.
- c) sleepy and slow.

4. That pregnant glow adorns skin that is already...

- a) dry as talcum powder and naturally brown in summer.
- b) flushed, freckle-filled and pimply as a preteen.
- c) so oily that you shine like a radiant mother-to-be.

And you are?

If you chose mostly As, your vata energy rules; if mostly Bs, pitta energy holds sway; if mostly Cs, you're pure kapha, explains Toronto Ayurvedic practitioner Andrea Olivera. If it's a tie between, for example, Bs and Cs, you're a pitta-kapha combo.

VATA Most women have an overabundance of vata, or nervous energy, during pregnancy, creating a yen for sweet, bread-like foods, grains, pastas and french fries. Overindulgence makes you feel bloated, and exotic or spicy foods may cause heartburn. Since you're more prone to nausea than other dosha types, snack on homemade granola or granola bars. Avoid cauliflower, cabbage and broccoli, which cause gas. "Eat three regular meals or six small ones, with a glass of warm water before each meal to improve digestion," advises Olivera.

PITTA Your fiery energy desires raw, high-protein foods, such as sushi or tofu, and juicy fruits such as mangos, pineapple and watermelon. Strong spices, such as basil, rosemary and thyme, will overheat your digestive system. Soothe it by chewing raw, fresh coriander. Avoid greasy, spicy food, which can cause diarrhea or skin rashes, and ice-cold drinks, "which can cause a sore throat," cautions Olivera.

KAPHA During pregnancy, you'll really crave large quantities of heavy, hot and spicy foods while spurning juicy, fresh fruits and vegetables. "Avoid greasy, fatty foods, since kaphas are apt to gain weight," Olivera warns. "Watch out for melons, yogurt, sesame products, cheese, ice cream and chocolate, especially after sunset, when digestive fire is low." For Ayurvedic recipes, go to www.chopra.com or read *Ayurvedic Cooking for Westerners* (Lotus Light), by Amadea Morningstar. **■**

Working at a truck stop 240 km from the Arctic Circle, mom-to-be

Leanne Backer switched from eating prefab food to being a veggie purist when she realized everything she

ate might affect her son's well-being. Fresh vegetarian food was hard to come by in Coldfoot, Alaska, but that didn't stop the 24-year-old short-order cook from importing tofu by the caseload while she flipped greasy burgers for her customers.

Intuitively, Backer knew then what India's Ayurvedic practitioners have been saying for 5,000 years: diet during pregnancy profoundly affects Mom's and baby's health. According to Ayurvedic principles, every woman, depending on her physiology and personality, has a blend of three subtle energies, or doshas, called vata, pitta and kapha. One or two doshas may dominate, although all three need to be in balance for good health.

If you know your predominant dosha, you can alter your diet to curb specific pregnancy problems, including crazy cravings, heartburn, nausea, indigestion and skin rashes, explains Backer, now executive chef for the Chopra Center for Well Being in La Jolla, Calif., which offers an Ayurvedic course for pregnant couples that includes diet.