

# 5 Flavors – Elements in Eastern Medicine

A critical aspect of the energetics of food is the five flavors, pungent, sweet, bitter, sour, and salty. Occasionally food is assigned a specific flavor property that might not correspond to the actual taste. Flavors are given to designate and reflect the properties of food, not just taste. There are also many foods that have more than one flavor correlated with them and are generally only used when both flavors are needed.

The flavors—pungent and sweet—are *Yang*, as they tend to be warming and direct energy outward and higher in the body. The other three flavors—sour, bitter, and salty—are *yin*, as they are cooling and direct energy lower and inward.

These flavors can directly affect the internal organs in accordance with Traditional Chinese Medicine theory.

