

Blood depletion

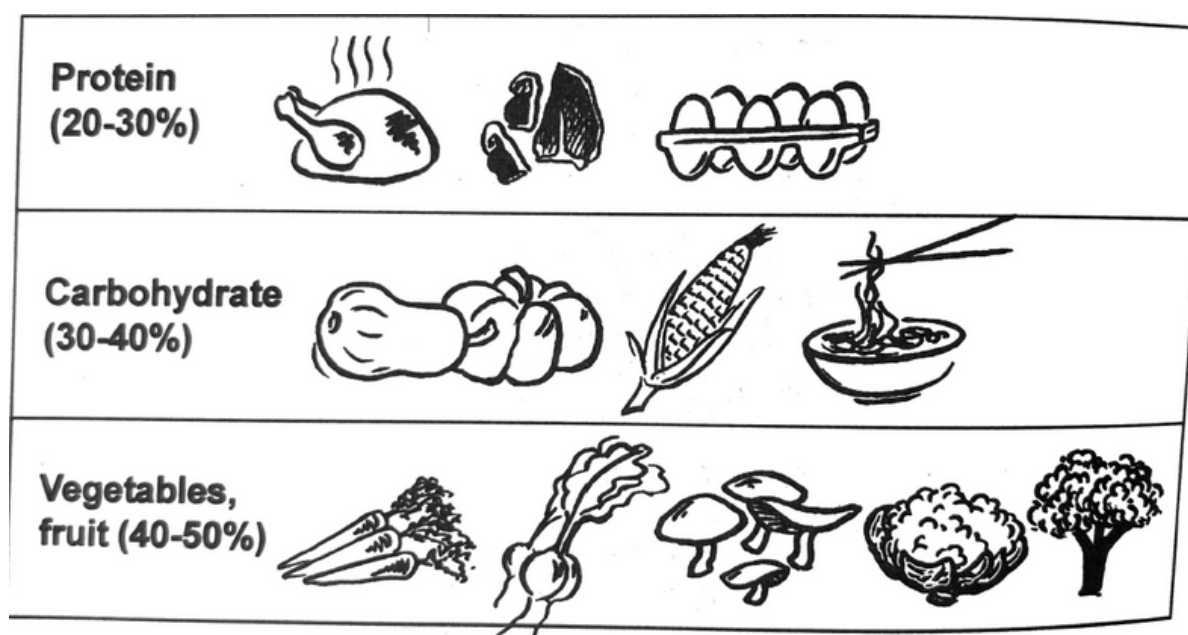
Building Blood requires specific nutrients that generate Blood, and adequate absorption of those nutrients. Absorption of nutrients is maximised by encouraging healthy Spleen Qi. So the principles for good Spleen such as chewing often, cooking food apply to building Blood.

In addition, Blood building requires a greater protein intake. The best source of this is animal proteins, in particular chicken. It is possible to build Blood on a vegetarian diet but it takes longer. The old saying is "40 parts Qi to make 1 part Blood". The best Blood building foods are ones that have concentrated *jing* such as bone broths. If animal products are not suitable then supplementation is required.

Green leafy vegetables, that are high in chlorophyll are especially beneficial, because they not only contain iron but other components that assist in the absorption and utilisation of iron.

Blood quality is also directly affected by the level of additives in food, especially hormones, and excessive sugar and salt. Meat should be organic or at least chemical free. Where this is not possible, it is better to have some lesser quality meats than none at all. When liver is used it must be organic as the liver concentrates additives in the animal feed.

Portions



General principles

Same basic approach as for Spleen *Qi* deficiency (as the Spleen produces Blood), iron and protein rich food, folic acid and vitamin B12. In strict vegetarian diets, B12 might need to be supplemented in tablet form.

Beneficial

High quality protein, meat (especially chicken meat and soup, beef and pork, liver and port trotter), pigeon, oyster, mussel, shark, eel, stocks and broths, bone marrow, eggs, legumes, black bean, green leafy vegetables, wheatgrass, spinach, carrots, beetroot, parsley, molasses, fermented bean products, miso, tempeh, seaweed, spirulina, black sesame seed, lychee, coconut, rice, stout, Guinness, vegemite, marmite.

For Liver Blood depletion - add goji berries, excellent cooked with chicken or in rice porridge (congee)

Restrict or avoid

Cold natured, uncooked and raw food: salads, raw fruits (whole and juiced, especially citrus), wheat, sprouts and cereal grasses, raw vegetables, tomato, spinach, Swiss chard, tofu, millet, seaweeds, salt, too many sweet foods and concentrated sweeteners, brown rice. antibiotics, vitamin C (over 1-2 grams per day), beer, try and stay away from bitter, sour, salty and pungent/hot foods, refined sugars, chemical additives and hormones.

Reference: MacLean, W. (2021). Clinical Handbook of Internal Medicine: The Treatment of Disease with Traditional Chinese Medicine: Vol 2: Spleen and Stomach (1st ed.). University of Western Sydney.