

# 五行之土 万变不离其中

在传统中医里，“土”表现的是一种内敛平和、温暖的归属之感，是中心，是内核，象征着人体的消化系统，是它让我们的生命得以在五行元素之间进行转化。Ken Rosen文

## 春

属木，夏属火，秋属金，冬属水。因四季而有四行，在相邻的两个季节转换之时，“土”便应运而生，它的重要性尤其体现在夏末，因为此时，生命要经历由“火”到“金”的急剧转变。“土”为万物之母，其它四种元素皆以之为中心，它无处不在，却又无迹可寻。

在人体所有的生理活动中，消化过程和“土”元素的关系最为密切。它从外部世界获取营养并将其转化为人体所需物质，如骨骼、血液、脂肪，或是肌肉。消化是一种内部的转换过程：摄取，吸收，最后排泄。

而人体器官中与“土”元素最为密切相关的是脾脏和胃。脾脏或胰腺是负责监督整个消化过程的把关者，胃则是一个稍显被动的合作者，它从外部获取食物，然后由胰腺将其转化



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为人体所需营养。

当然，土元素需要一定的能量作为支撑才能有效发挥作用。但这里存在一个适量的问题，因为过多能量的摄入，会导致土元素自身由于受到压制而变弱，从而对消化系统造成不良影响，这是一个恶性循环。

在中医里，通常用锅炖煮食物来比喻消化系统的运作。如果在锅里放入适量的原料，那么整个烹饪过程便易于掌控；而若是加入过多的原料，待到煮沸时，锅里只会变得一团糟，烹饪也只能以失败收场。

“土”本身存有一种随性和开放的特点，对任何东西都抱着跃跃欲试的态度。然而，这种不拒绝和无约束，通常是造成“土”元素无法正确发挥作用的诱因。

例如，若食用过多高热量或是湿气过重的粘稠状食品，会造成消化系统不堪重负，导致消化不良，胀气，甚至消化停滞的状况。

消化道是各种食物和液体的混合物进行

搅拌，移动，消化，吸收过程的必经之地。在这个过程中，你体内的“土”元素会决定哪些东西值得转化成营养成分，哪些是身体不需要而最好排出体外的垃圾。

对我们每个人来说，最值得思考的一个问题则是如何通过朋友，家人，媒体及食物中获取生存的营养。人类的健康与食物和土壤(大地)之间存在着重要关联。

生活质量中的“土”元素状况反映在我们如何选择食物，如何烹饪，如何食用，以及谁共同进餐上。

地球永远是圆的。

“土”是圆满，是中心，是我们内心那份平和的归属感。

## “土”元素之日常生活小贴士

由于没有和“土”元素完全相配的季节，因此，到换季时节注意以下事项是非常重要的。

**食物和饮料：**甜是与“土”元素相关之

味道。湿气对人体有保护和建设作用，但也容易导致充血和肿胀。切记保持平衡。

**方位：**中心是与“土”元素相关之方位。不是东、南、西或北，而是中。《道德经》第五章中写道：“多言数穷，不如守中”。你的“中”在哪里，又是什么呢？

**情感：**担心，焦虑或强迫思维是和“土”元素息息相关的情绪。思虑过重可导致大脑超负荷运作和消化能力减弱。如果你发现自己过多的沉浸于思考中，那么最好通过适量的运动减轻大脑的负担，将注意力转移到身体上。

**活动：**反思是与“土”元素相关的积极情感。要能反思、考量，然后继续前进。要学着洒脱和放手。照顾好自己，然后才能照顾其他人。凡事试着往积极的方面想，懂得平衡。

**色彩：**黄色或橙色为“土”之色彩。金黄的色调给人以舒适与温暖的感觉。

# 湿气，“土”元素的克星

从病理学上讲，湿气通常因为不恰当的选择食物和不良的饮食习惯造成的。

在中医里，湿气一般与“土”元素，甜味及消化系统息息相关。当消化系统负担过重，湿气便会趁虚而入，体重也会开始增加。

湿气是“阴”性病理因素，也是一种恼人的顽疾，因为人体内的湿气通常难以清除殆尽。

然而，如果控制在适当的范围之内，湿气也能对人体起到积极的作用。就像脂肪，湿气也能起到身体屏障的作用，让我们免受疾病侵扰，储藏能量。

**湿气的体现：**

- 体重增加
- 疲劳
- 嗜甜
- 口中味蕾黏着
- 餐后腹满腹胀
- 浮肿，关节疼痛
- 泌尿系统感染
- 四肢麻木
- 阴道感染，如酵母菌，白色念珠菌等
- 身体或头部沉重
- 打鼾，睡眠中出现呼吸暂停现象
- 痰多或者粘液分泌问题

**产生湿气的原因：**

- 吃的过多
- 情绪焦虑
- 缺乏锻炼
- 食用湿气过重的食物

**湿性食物：**

事实上，所有食物都带有一定的湿性，因为

万物都处于连续体的某个位置上，只是相较于其他食物，湿性食物的湿气更重。这些食物一般都比较黏腻，且热量高，如浓汤就比清汤湿性重。

**甜味：**

并不是只有糖才会产生甜味。在中医里，甜味对应于手和口。中文里的“甜”字左部偏旁是个“舌”，其实隐含了“手”和“口”的概念，这种观点认为任何可以含在口中并伴有满足感的东西都是甜性的。甜味也被认为是潮湿的：食物越甜，热量越高，湿气就越重。

- 精制面粉做成的食物，包括烘焙食品，面食和面包
- 奶制品，包括奶酪、冰激凌和牛奶
- 油类和脂肪
- 谷类，如大米，小麦，和燕麦
- 精肉，如牛肉比鲑鱼等鱼肉湿性重
- 卡路里含量高的饮料，如酒类

**减少食量：**在过去的20年里，人们的食量明显增加。当然，这也与肥胖的流行有关。减少平常一天中摄入的食物量，有助于减少湿气。请记住，你的胃只有你的拳头那么大。

**治疗湿气的方法：**

- 通过运动，流汗，促进血液和淋巴循环，以排除湿气。
- 严格限制湿气过重的食物的摄入，1-2个月

后，就会发生变化。

- 避免食用生冷食物，选择吃熟的蔬菜，少吃生菜沙拉。
- 夜间尽量不要进食。
- 在吃如曲奇饼干这类高热量的零食前，问问自己是否必须要吃。
- 富含纤维的食物有助于提供饱腹感，而又不会给身体带来湿气。
- 多喝水，早上起床后喝1-2杯水。
- 多食苦味。苦味有助于减少湿气和热量。
- 食至七分饱即可，已经吃饱的信息在20-30分钟后会传递到大脑。
- 尝试新鲜事物。湿气不仅仅和我们吃的食物相关，也和我们生活方式相关。
- 请记住你的胃是没有牙齿的，因此延长咀嚼的时间可以真正帮助食物的消化，并让人有饱腹感。
- 在每个月的月中2-5天，吃清淡的食物。
- 在春季和秋季制定饮食计划，清理肠胃。

中医里有这样的说法，人体肝气郁结时，就会产生对甜食的渴望

换言之，当你在生活中遭遇了不顺心，就会渴望用甜的东西来填充这种失落和沮丧感。而如果你不断的使用甜的东西来理顺生活中的挫折，随着时间的推移，体内会产生病理湿气。


其实能享受甜食是生活中的一大乐事，只需注意不要过量。有禅语曰：“哀乐相生，百味杂陈，皆为因果，相生相息。”

# EARTH

## Center and Transition

*Earth in Traditional Chinese Medicine is about being at home within ourselves. It is our center, our core, our digestion and that which allows life to transform into the other elements.*

*By Ken Rosen, M.T.C.M*



Earth is usually emphasized at the end of summer as life sharply transitions from summer fire to fall metal, but earth is always part of the cycle between distinct seasons. It is the center around which all the elements turn. Earth is everywhere and nowhere. Earth is the hub element that supports and nourishes us.

Digestion is the bodily process most associated with the earth element. This process takes nourishment from the outside world and transforms it into something useful like bone, blood, fat, or muscle. Digestion is this internal process of extraction, acceptance and elimination.

The spleen and the stomach are the bodily organs associated with the earth element. The spleen or pancreas is responsible for overseeing the whole of the digestive process. The stomach is the passive partner, ready to take in from the outside world and let the spleen energy transform it into nourishment.

There is a vicious cycle with earth and therefore digestion. A certain amount energy is needed for earth energy to operate efficiently. Too much input, and earth energy becomes weak from being overwhelmed.

Chinese Medicine uses the image of cooking pot as a metaphor for the digestive process. If the pot has enough input, then cooking is manageable. If there is too much in the pot, then cooking becomes a messy affair with ingredients boiling over.

The earth appetite is innocent and open,

ready to try anything. Often, this openness, this hunger, is earth's undoing.

If too many calories or damp and doughy foods are eaten then digestion becomes overwhelmed, slow, bloated, and stagnant.

The digestive tract is like a compost pile with food and liquid churning, moving, rotting and ripening as your earth element decides what is worth transforming into nourishment and what is better passed along.

The big question for the earth in us is to think about how we are nourished by friends, family, media, and of course food. There is a vital connection between human health, food and the soil (earth).

Life-quality earth is reflected in how we grow our food, how we cook, how we eat, and whom we eat it with.

Earth is always around.

Earth is balance, center, and the feeling of being at home within ourselves.

### Wellness advice for Daily life for Earth

Because no specific season is truly correlated with earth, it is important to keep this advice during periods of transition as one season



changes into another.

**Food and Beverages** – Sweet is the taste of earth. Dampness can help secure and build, but also congest and tire. Know your balance.

**Direction** – Center is the direction of earth. Not North, East, West or South, but center. Chapter 5 of the Tao Te Ching says: “Many words lead to exhaustion. Better to hold fast to your center.” Where and what is your center?

**Emotion** – Worry, rumination and obsessive thought would be words for the emotions associated with the earth element. Thinking too much can overload the brain and weaken digestion. If you find yourself with too much in your head, the best advice is to do some exercise or activity to get out of your head and more into your body.

**Activity** – Reflection is the positive emo-

tion associated with earth. Being able to reflect, think, and then move on. Being generous would be the best activity advice for earth. Taking care of yourself, so you can care for others. Seek out positive connections and know your balance.

**Color** – Yellow or orange is the color of earth. A golden earth tone that radiates comfort and warmth.

## DAMPNESS – THE REBEL OF THE EARTH ELEMENT

**P**athological Dampness commonly results from poor food choices and eating habits.

In Traditional Chinese Medicine, Dampness is associated with the Earth element, the sweet taste, and the digestive system. When the digestive system gets overloaded or overburdened, dampness and weight gain set in.

Dampness is a Yin pathogenic factor. It is sticky and difficult to get rid of. It is also heavy and dirty.

On the positive side, dampness in moderate amounts comforts us. Like fat, dampness insulates us, protects us, and stores energy.

### Manifestations of Bodily Dampness:

- Extra weight on the body
- Tiredness
- Greasy sweat
- Sticky taste in the mouth
- Fullness and distention after eating
- Swollen, painful joints
- Urinary tract infections
- Numbness in limbs
- Vaginal infections, yeast, Candida
- Heavy feeling in body and/or head
- Snoring, sleep apnea
- Phlegm or mucus problems

### Causes of a Damp Pattern:

- Overeating
- worry
- lack of exercise
- eating overly damp foods.

### Damp foods:

All food is damp. Some foods are damper than others. Everything is on a continuum. Damp food tends to be sticky, cloying, and calorie-rich. A thick soup is damper than a thin soup.

### Sweet taste:

Sweet taste goes way beyond just sugar. In Chinese, the character for sweet shows a hand and mouth. The idea is that anything that can be held in the mouth to give satisfaction is considered sweet. The sweet taste is dampening. The more sweet and calorie-rich, the more dampening.

- Refined flour food including baked goods, pasta, and breads
- Dairy products including cheese, ice cream, and milk
- Oils and fats
- Grains such as rice, wheat, and oats
- Dense meats such as beef are more damp than fish like salmon
- Calorie-rich beverages such as alcohol

Portion Distortion: Portion sizes have increased dramatically in the last 20 years. Of course, this is closely related to the obesity epidemic. Reducing the amount of food you consume during a day helps drain dampness. Remember, your stomach is only the size of about your fist.

### Remedies for Dampness:

- Exercise to burn up dampness! Sweat. Move your blood and lymph to drain damp.
- Restrict your diet from overly damp foods for a period of 1-2 months to promote change.
- Avoid eating cold raw food. Choose steamed vegetables over salads.
- Avoid eating late at night.
- Ask yourself why you want to reach for the cookie.
- Fiber-rich foods help make you feel full, but are not overly damp.
- Drink more water: 1-2 glasses upon rising in the morning.

- More bitter taste. Bitter taste helps dry damp and clear heat.
- Eat until about 70 percent full. Wait 20-30 minutes until your brain gets the message that it is satisfied.
- Try new things. Damp is not only what we put into our mouths, but how we live our lives.
- Chew! Chewing really helps the body digest food and makes you feel fuller sooner. “Your stomach does not have teeth.”
- Eat lightly around the full moon every month for a period of 2-5 days.
- Plan a dietary cleanse in the Fall and Spring regularly.

### TCM old saying: “When the Liver tightens or stagnates, one craves sweet.”

In other words, when you cannot meet life as it meets you then you will crave sweet things to help smooth out your life. If you repeatedly use the sweet taste to smooth out your life's frustrations then this will lead to pathological dampness over time, and possibly complications too.

It is great to be able to enjoy the sweet things in life without constantly overdoing them. One of the Zen sayings is: “Bitter practice makes a sweet mind; sweet practice makes a bitter mind.”

“中，则一切皆轻”：君子居于中；而凡人居于缘，不履足，且达无物。——引自斯蒂芬·米歇尔编译的《道》第二版第34章69页，纽约：企鹅出版社，2009年

*The Master lives at the center; The immature live at the edge of things, unsatisfied, always reaching for what is not.*

Chuang Tzu adapted by Stephen Mitchell in chapter 34 of *The Second Book of the Tao* – “The center is always less than a thought away.”, Penguin Press, New York, 2009