

Introduction to Ayurveda


Workshop by Kim Geerts



RASA

Origin of Ayurveda

The origin of Ayurveda is considered to be divine. It was given to us by the Hindu God Brahma. Who is known as the creator of the Universe. It is believed that Brahma passed the knowledge on to the sages to support the overall well-being of mankind. The sages passed on the knowledge to their disciples who in their turn handed it over. In the beginning the teachings were only passed on orally, but over time various writings became available to the public as well.

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a yellow shirt and a yellow floral headband, is shown in profile. She is shielding her eyes from the sun with her right hand, looking upwards. The background is a blurred blue sky.

*Find out your mind-body
type and work with it instead
of against it to stay in balance.*

Classical text on Ayurveda

There are four eminent compilations of knowledge in the Hindu tradition of healing which are called the Vedas. In its essence the practice of Ayurveda is based upon these old scriptures. From the Vedas the two main important texts on Ayurveda were derived. The first one is made available around the 6th Century B.C. by Charaka. This easy to understand compilation of traditional medicine is considered to be the foundation of Ayurveda and is

named after its redactor, the Charaka Samhita. Due to his efforts Charaka is often referred to as the father of Ayurveda or father of Indian Medicine. Of equal importance is the work called Susruta Samhita which deals with surgical diseases and diseases of the different organs. Both these legendary compilations are still used by practitioners of traditional medicine today.

Charaka is often referred to as the father of Ayurveda or father of Indian Medicine

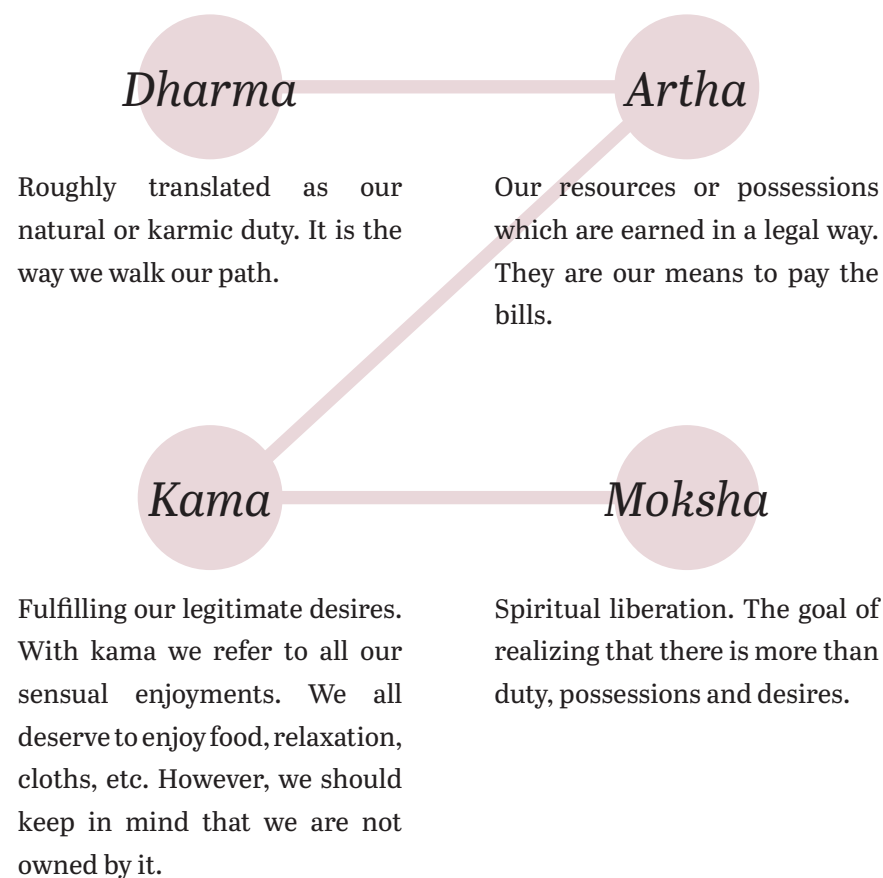
What is Ayurveda?

The word “Ayur” comes from the Sanskrit word “Ayuh” which means life and “Veda” can be translated as wisdom or knowledge. Accordingly, Ayurveda can be translated as the “the science of life” or “the wisdom of living wisely”. It is the first ever recorded system of healing the physical, mental and energetic body. In its essence it is based on each unique individual. Giving you personal tools to live a balanced and fulfilled lifestyle. As a healing tradition, Ayurveda aims to help a healthy person to maintain health and a diseased person to regain health. In order to

heal we should start to know ourselves. Consequently, we could see Ayurveda mainly as a science of self-knowledge. This personalized approach to health helps you to understand your mind-body type (Dosha) which supports you to make the best choices in diet, exercise, yoga practice, supplements and all other aspects of your lifestyle. Finally, it is said that the practice of Ayurveda promotes human happiness, health and creative growth. All of this is to fulfill the four aims of life: Dharma, Artha, Kama & Moksha.

The four aims of life

In Ayurveda we believe that there are four aims in life which - all together - create a full life experience:

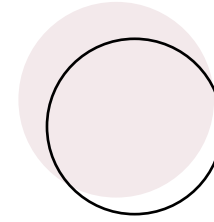


Since we need health to reach spiritual liberation Ayurveda is concerned with healing body, mind and soul.

The 5 elements

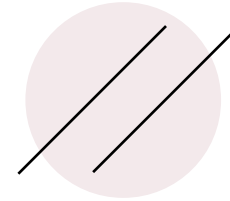
Ayurveda uses five elements, being: Ether (Space), Air, Fire, Water and Earth as a metaphor to explain the entire Universe (meaning: everything inside and around us). As a result, your unique mind-body constitution is build upon these 5 elements and their respective qualities. Depending on your unique mix of these 5 elements your Dosha (or unique mind-body type)

is determined. Knowing yours is very useful as it increases awareness of your natural strengths and challenges. If you know this you may find out what causes certain reactions or tendencies and start to balance them instead of making it worse. This is the first step towards health.



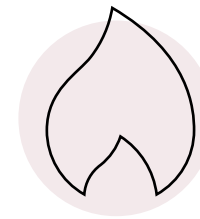
ETHER

Expresses itself in the body for example in the space that the body takes up; the empty spaces in the body; and as communication itself, and as the feeling of freedom and love.



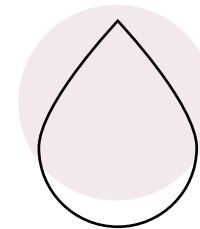
AIR

Expresses itself in the body for example through the air in the cavities as well in the blood (oxygen and CO₂); the carrying of nerve impulses and motor responses; the respiration and circulation; and as the vehicle of communication of feelings and emotions within the organism.



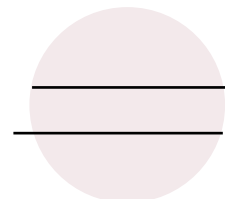
FIRE

Expresses itself in the body for example through the digestive fire (Agni); digestion of sensory input; colors and luster; the ability to see; and the digestion of emotions and thoughts.



WATER

Expresses itself in the body mainly as the liquid medium in which the transforming, metabolic processes can take place, e.g. digestive juices in the digestive tract; the fluids in the tissues and intracellular fluids. It also expresses itself in the body in the form of bodily fluids (water) as present in the blood, lymph, etc. which are needed to lubricate, to bind together, to nourish and give contentment.



EARTH

Expresses itself in the body through everything that is solid: the bones, hair, nails, teeth, muscles, skin, tendons, and the minerals within the tissues. All these take care of the strength, structure, compactness, and mechanical functions of the body, as well as non-physical stability of feelings and thoughts, compassion and nourishing love.



The Doshas: Discover your unique mind-body type

Even though all three Doshas (and therefore all 5 Elements) are present in every person to function Ayurveda has categorized three main constitutions, called Doshas. These constitutions are a combination of two elements that are naturally prone to each other. They are named Vata (Ether & Air), Pitta (Fire & Water) and Kapha (Water & Earth). In total there are seven possible combinations of the Doshas. You may - for example - find out that you have

mostly Pitta qualities and secondary Vata characteristics. In this case you will have a Pitta-Vata constitution and you should therefore (depending on the situation and especially the season you are in) take care of both. Most of us will have one or two Doshas predominant, but there are also a few with a birth constitution where all three Doshas are equal.

Prakruti: Birth constitution

We all possess a unique constitution which determines our body-type, metabolic nature and mental orientation. This is called your birth constitution or Prakruti (which literally means ‘nature’ or ‘source’). Ayurveda says that your Prakruti is mainly due to the combination of your parents’ sperm and ovum, as well as their Dosha predominance at the moment of conception. Besides, the diet and behaviour of the mother before and during pregnancy also plays a big role. No pressure mummies ;-)

Your Prakruti is your own unique DNA, your blueprint of all of the innate tendencies built into your mind-body system, including your physical and emotional characteristics. Knowing your constitution is very useful as it increases awareness of your natural strengths and challenges and this is the first step towards understanding your needs in your yoga practice.

The 20 Gunas: the qualities of the Dosha’s

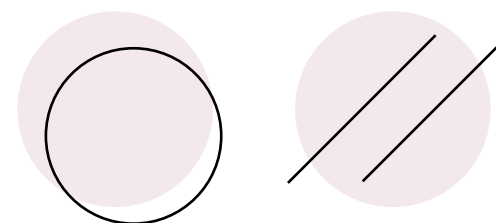
A key concept in Ayurveda is to describe everything inside and around us with different attributes. For this, Ayurveda uses a list of 10 attributes or qualities and their opposite to first explain what is there and (if needed) use the opposite to balance.

ATTRIBUTE		OPPOSITE	
Cold	<i>Shita</i>	Hot	<i>Ushna</i>
Wet / Oaily	<i>Snigdha</i>	Dry	<i>Ruksha</i>
Heavy	<i>Guru</i>	Light	<i>Laghu</i>
Gross	<i>Sthula</i>	Subtle	<i>Sukshma</i>
Dense	<i>Sandra</i>	Flowing	<i>Drava / Shara</i>
Static	<i>Sthira</i>	Mobile	<i>Chala</i>
Dull / Low	<i>Manda</i>	Sharp / High	<i>Tikshna</i>
Soft	<i>Mridu</i>	Hard	<i>Kathina</i>
Smooth	<i>Slakahna</i>	Rough	<i>Khara</i>
Cloudy	<i>Picchila</i>	Clear	<i>Vishada</i>

LIKE INCREASES LIKE

One of the main tools in Ayurveda is the principle of “like increases like”. This means that when one of the Doshas is out of balance you should look at what qualities (Gunas) are out of balance and then bring in the opposite quality (Guna).

Vata Dosha: Ether & Air



The dosha of movement. Vata Dosha is due to the air element responsible for all the movement in our body. Because of this Vata Dosha is referred to as the “King of the Doshas”. Without Vata Dosha (movement), Pitta & Kapha cannot move. Breathing (movement of diaphragm), heart beating, talking, walking (movement of the muscles and limbs), circulation of blood and other bodily fluids, movement of thoughts, elimination of waste and regulation of the immune- and nervous system are all driven by Vata Dosha. A balanced Vata in the body and mind gives us a healthy circulation, strong immune- and nervous system, balanced breath, open mind and supports our elimination of waste materials.

Vata Personality

Vata types move like the wind, love change, and are very impulsive. They will change jobs, friends and actually everything very often. Luckily for them that their dynamic nature provides them with the ability to adapt easily to new situations. This wind element keeps them moving constantly. Sometimes even involuntary movement is there (like overly blinking the eyes or ticks). They have a hard time in quitting down. They love traveling, excitement and new experiences. Besides, they are very quick. Move quick and make things happen very quickly. They walk and talk fast, but get exhausted very quickly also. They are quick to anger but also to forgive. They understand things quickly and forget it as quickly as well. When in balance, they are super creative,

bursting with ideas and inspiration and conduct lively conversations. You could say that it's never a dull moment when a Vata type is around. It are usually people with creative jobs like artists or writers.

Vata types are mostly low in weight with a slender light physical frame. They even struggle to put on weight and find it hard to strengthen their muscles. This can cause the feeling of being ungrounded or light-headed. The lightness also keeps Vata types awake in the night which may result in insomnia. The presences of the space element gives them a sense of clarity and openness. They are not judgemental and very open and curious to others and new situations.

Too much clarity (or space) gives them an empty feeling. As such they have difficulties with being alone. They can even feel spaced-out and due to this excess space have a lack of concentration. The spaciousness gives them the feeling of being empty which will feed anxiety and panic attacks. The cold quality of space and air helps them to stay cool in heated discussions, but may also result in having a cold body. Cold hands and feet. Cold stiff muscles.

When Vata types are out of balance they lose too much weight, experience piercing pains, start to excessively blink with the eyes, get spasms and become nervous with a very overly active mind (starts to overthink everything) which makes it difficult for them to focus.

Their energy burst makes them using more energy than they have which results in burn-outs, the feeling of being overwhelmed and overstimulated by surroundings. Out of balance they get addicted to drama and experience periods of very deep ups and downs.

The combination of ether and air element also creates dryness. Meaning that when Vata types are out of balance the skin, nails and hair become dry. There can even be forms of dehydration, excessive bloating or dry digestion (constipation). The most common diseases for Vata types are related to that dryness and are osteoporosis (brittle and dry bones) and arthritis (achy dry joints).

GUNA	IN BALANCE	OUT OF BALANCE
Dry	Dryness is the opposite of oiliness and stickiness. In the mind this can give an uplifting and present feeling.	In excess, dryness starts to express itself throughout the entire body (skin, nails, hair, bones, connective tissue, eyes & lips), dry creaky joints, vaginal dryness, dry hoarse voice, dryness in the colon resulting in hard stools or constipation. “Dry” emotionally.
Light	Not only a light body, but also a sense of lightness in their being. Going with the flow and loves joking.	Too much lightness causes underweight, trouble with falling asleep and dizziness. Feeling ungrounded which feeds anxiety and panic attacks.
Cold	Easy going and staying “cool” in confrontations. Humor is their key to resolve things.	Cold hands and feet. Cold muscles and joints which creates stiffness. In the mind the coldness may bring fearfulness.
Rough	Adjust easily to sudden changes of plans.	Roughness in the body (brittle skin, nails & lips), curly hair. Roughness in being. Rough high ups and low downs. Longing for change, stimulation and drama. Going from one thing very roughly and quick into the other.
Clear	Clarity in the mind which brings them quick understanding, clear and open communication. Not judgemental (open mind).	Too much clarity (or space) gives an empty feeling. Difficulties with being alone. It also results in forgetting things as quick as they understood it. Too much space may space them out completely. Lack of concentration.

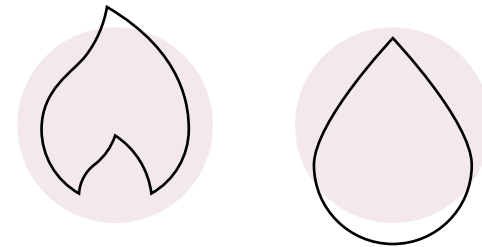
	IN BALANCE	OUT OF BALANCE
Mobile	Healthy ability to multitask. Mobile in a sense of flexibility. Easy adapts in new groups and new situations. Open to new things.	When there is too much movement in the body it may create spasms, nervousness, scattered attention and overly blinking with the eyes. Too fast talking and walking. Always busy with thinking (movement in the mind) which may create worries and doubts. Doing things before thinking (too quick). It also expresses itself in extremes: being either very tall or very small. Drastically different weights in different times of their life.
Subtle	Can read people’s attitude (subtle body language). Ability to feel the subtle body (and certain energies) quicker than the other types.	The ability to feel the subtle movement and energies can in the end lead to nervous disorders like ticks, epileptic or panic attacks. Are easily overstimulated by their surroundings.



AGNI

Agni literally means “Fire” and we use this term (among other things) in Ayurveda as a metaphor to refer to our digestive fire which is the main force behind our digestion. It’s therefore very close related to Pitta Dosha.

Pitta Dosha: Fire & Water



The Dosha of transformation. Due to the fire element Pitta Dosha is mainly responsible for the transformative function in our body and mind. Metaphorically speaking the fire is responsible for cooking the food in our stomach and small intestine. It does this mainly by the secretion of strong fiery acidic liquid or bile. This metabolic function expresses itself mentally by giving us the capacity to digest emotions and thoughts. In addition, the hot quality of fire gives us a nice warm

body temperature and a healthy rosy complexion on the cheeks. Fire (light) is also needed for visual perception (for there to be vision there needs to be light). Besides, Pitta Dosha influences our hunger and thirst and determines the quality of our hormones and skin. A balanced Pitta in the body and mind gives us a healthy appetite and thirst, well balanced production of hormones, sharp intellect, courage, flexibility, a radiant complexion and good eyesight.

Pitta Personality

Pitta types are full of vitality and have a strong intellect and willpower. They are good learners with a good memory. They burst from new creative ideas and are also able to bring those ideas into world. This clarity is not only there when it comes to new ideas, but also in a way of being clear about why they do things. They will not do something without knowing why. There always is a reason or purpose behind it. When they are on something they will finish it in an absolutely organised and perfect manner. Even if this means that they have to cross their own boundaries.

Their digestive fire (agni) and therefore appetite is very strong. Skipping a meal is definitely a no go for them as this will make them “hangry”. They tend to be medium in height and weight, but due to the light quality can have a slender body with strong visible muscles.

Pitta types are often charming and charismatic with a love of attention. They are also good confident speakers and good decision makers – especially when in balance – but when they are not, watch out! They start to judge and comment others constantly.

Are always pointing to someone else for their problems and will never lose an argument. Actually, they will search for an argument or (heated) discussion in which they can become very manipulative and may even lose their temper.

The burning quality of the fire may even cause early balding or thinning of the hair and they turn grey early. Having red fiery hair is also a sign of Pitta Dosha. As is sensitivity, as a result of lightness (which is one of the main characteristics of fire). This sensitivity

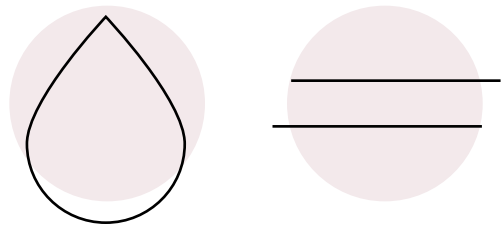
expresses itself not only in the skin (skin rashes, easy sunburned, red skin & acne), but actually in their whole being. Pitta types may act like they are very strong, but deep inside they are very delicate.

The sharpness of the fire can cause a sharp body odor, sharp pains, sharp tongue, sharp penetrating high voice and even a sharp easily irritated mind. The most common health issues for Pitta types are heartburn, high blood pressure, fever and skin diseases.

GUNA	IN BALANCE	OUT OF BALANCE
Hot	Hotness can manifest as a nice warm body temperature and warm rosy complexion. Also, in a sense of a healthy digestive fire (agni). Strong metabolism and appetite.	When there is too much hotness (fire) stools may tend towards diarrhea, too high body temperature (or even fever), headaches / migraines, burning eyes and muscles, inflammations, heartburn and early balding (losing hair). Pitta types can become hot tempered too (fights, argues, etc.).
Sharp	Sharp bright intellect. Ability to have a sharp concentration.	When in excess, a sharp tongue (critical and judgemental, saying unkind things yet being very clever, manipulates), sharp pains (especially in the small intestine), sharp body odor and sharp high voice. The sharpness may express itself as an easy irritable mind.
Oily/ Liquid	Healthy moist and glowing skin and well formed feces.	Overly oily skin (acne) and hair, oily liquid stools, excess liquid sweat and oily (fatty) liver. Quality of being a 'snake oil salesmen' (cheats and betrays to get something for their own benefit).
Light	Lightness in a sense of shining brilliance (radiant look & glow in the eyes). Brilliant in their thinking and doing. Also, light slender body.	Pitta types are very delicate (skin & eyes). Also, delicate in being. Sensitive to what others say and think (but not able to show this / urge to be strong and independent). Sensitive to light especially on the skin (skin rashes / psoriasis / sunburns easily). When they skip a meal they can feel light-headed.
Spreading	Spreading in a sense of having brilliant ideas and also bringing them in action. If in balance, very good leaders.	In excess, urge to spread their name and opinion around (even if not asked for it). Compelling influencers. In the body infections and skin rashes spread very easily.



Kapha Dosha: Water & Earth



The Dosha of stability. Kapha Dosha is due to its cohesive nature responsible for stability and protection in the body. It's holding everything together and provides all the cells with a protective layer. Due to its building nature Kapha is responsible for building and nourishing the bodily tissues (dhātus). Kapha has the same qualities as mud (heavy, sticky, sluggish, cold and thick) which is composed out of water and earth. Because of this it can

be compared to nourishing thick fluid that supports lubrication of our body. It also has a protective quality that protects our heart and lungs and even expresses itself in a protective lining of the stomach. A balanced Kapha in the body and mind gives us well formed lubricated tissues, protection of the cells, strong bones, stability and compassion towards ourselves and others.

Kapha types are very consistent and steady. They have a strong endurance and are naturally calm and loving. They are not so intense as Pitta types or as quick as Vata types, but take their time. Like a diesel engine a Kapha type needs to warm up a bit, but once it gets going it runs steady and reliable. Kapha types are not so concerned with the direction. They just go and will stay on track like a train on rails without constantly thinking “why?”. Once moving they become unstoppable. You can really rely on Kapha types. That's why loyalty is one of their key characteristics and they are comfortable with routine. Kapha types tend to be of stocky build with wide shoulders and hips. They have a smooth, well lubricated oily skin. Thick (often brown) lustrous hair and large soft eyes with often long lashes. They are known to sleep soundly and enjoy a stable appetite and good regular digestion. Not only physically they are strong, but also mentally. They can handle emotions very well and are your best friends as they are always there to give you a hug. They are also very supportive in times of need and are good patient listeners. When Kapha types are in balance they fully love and enjoy life.

However, when out of balance, they can become rigid as a result of excess stability. Physically rigid as they do not want to move any more and become very lazy. But also rigid in their mind. Thinking that their way of thinking is the only way and it takes a lot of time to make them switch thoughts. This rigid attitude may even flip over to greediness. They start to collect material stuff and are not able to share any of it with others. Too much heaviness may result in weight gain, a sluggish digestion and eventually lead to overweight. This heaviness also manifest in the mind as a way of feeling too heavy which can lead to depression. They start to feel “stuck” and are very difficult to get motivated. They have a strong desire to sleep and lay on the couch the whole day. Wet cough, congestion, stagnation and growths such as cysts are all signs that there is excess Kapha in the body. The most common health issues for Kapha types include, heart problems, diabetes, high cholesterol or becoming overweight. Excessive Kapha in the mind can manifest itself as the inability to let go of people and jobs that are no longer nourishing.

Kapha Personality

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GUNA	IN BALANCE	OUT OF BALANCE
Heavy	Manifest as large, strong and grounded physical & emotional body which gives stability.	When too heavy there can be overweight (heavy bones, muscles, etc.). Heavy low voice. Heavy feeling: urge to sleep all the time and heavy mind (depression).
Cold	Cool temperament. Laid-back.	Too much coldness (together with too much liquid) creates clammy cool skin. Cold hands and feet. Mentally, it results in a lack of inspiration.
Dense	Good endurance. Strong well formed muscles and bones. Solid skeletal system. Thick hair.	Density in the body (gains weight easily) and body tends to create growths (such as cysts & melanoma). Dense feeling in the mind (feeling “stuck”). Laziness.
Smooth	Smooth joint function (juicy). Smooth in their being: very loving and smooth towards themselves and others.	Too much smoothness becomes slimy (excess slime & mucus). Prone to congestion and colds. Smooth fatty stools.
Slow	Slow gracious steady pace in walking. Don't rush into things. Calmness. Patience.	Slow digestion (constipation) which results in overweight. Slow movement. Skips exercise. Slow in understanding things.
Stable / Static	Stable mind and body. Someone to lean on as friends and family.	In excess, becomes stubborn & sluggish. Rigidity.
Soft	Soft body. Soft gaze (eyes). Soft heart (emphatic). Supportive.	When too soft there is no courage. Soft flabby skin and soft stools.
Cloudy/Sticky	Nourished bodily tissues.	Sticky stools, cloudy phlegm and suffer from congestion. Sticky slimy personality.
Hard/Gross	Gross body (large frame).	Hard growth such as cysts.



Lifestyle & nutrition

Ayurveda gives you personal tools in all different kind of subjects. First of all there is a huge emphasis on nutrition as in the end we all become what we eat. Meaning that our tissues (blood, lymph, muscle, etc.) are build from the elements we take out of our food. So that is why nutrition is so very important, but often we forget this as we have learned to only look from the outside in this Western society. Am I skinny enough, is my skin okay, is my hair in good condition, etc. Of course these are all nice side effects of good nutrition, but health (at least to me!) has the biggest priority in life. And you know what the best thing is about an Ayurvedic diet? It is not static at all as it changes constantly according to your needs at that particular moment. Meaning there are no hard rules, there

is nothing you have to exclude from your diet forever and you can flow with the seasons. That sounds great isn't it? And if you think about it: why should you follow a new diet of which we do not yet know the results from as this diet is here for over thousands of years and already backed up by scientific proof..?! Okay, so nutrition is one thing to look after.

But there is so much more. Your sleep for example. Huge part of Ayurveda, as it is in this time that our body rejuvenates and repairs itself. We all know that poor sleep among all other things weakens our immune system, reduces concentration and is strongly linked to weight gain. Ayurveda can help you with an healthy sleep routine making your days more joyful.

Ayurveda can also help you by picking the best supportive exercise for you. Again, not dogmatic and static, but an exercise that boosts your energy and improves your mood at that particular moment. If I would go on with all Ayurveda can offer you to live a more balanced life you would probably not even started to read this section as it would have looked endless to you. Anyway, there is one important thing that Ayurveda teaches us that I really need to stipulate here and that is

building new tissues, energy and cell repair. Once foods are broken into small enough parts, your body can absorb and move the nutrients to where they are needed. The waste products of digestion will go into your large intestine and become a stool. Eliminating waste products is very important, because if it stays in your body they will become toxic and cause disease. That is why it is so important that you can poop everyday. Another thing that Ayurveda will help you

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the importance of a healthy digestion. Digestion is important because your body needs nutrients (like proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals) from food and drinks to work properly and stay healthy. It is your digestive system that breaks down food and drinks and takes out smaller molecules which the body uses for

with. Believe me this will make you feel so much lighter! Finally, even though Ayurveda is a contant dance and we need to change our diet constantly depending on our needs of that particular moment I have made three balancing guides which you may want to follow if your Vata, Pitta or Kapha is out of balance.

Balancing Vata Dosha

When Vata is out of balance the Gunas (or qualities) from the Vata-list start to express. Therefore bringing in the opposite will help to stay or bring yourself back into balance.



Foods to balance Vata

Everything that is creamy (almond milk / cow's milk) or comes from the ground (root vegetables) is good for Vata Dosha. Natural sweet foods (like dates, basmati rice and oats) are also a wise choice. Focus on eating warm foods and warm drinks and avoid raw foods and caffeine (coffee, black tea and green tea).

FRUITS	VEGETABLES	GRAINS
dates	beets	oats
raspberries	carrots	quinoa
strawberries	sweet potato	brown rice
grapes	pumpkin	basmati rice
grapefruit	avocado	wheat
mango	cooked onions	couscous
banana	green beans	
peach		

Avoid dried fruits (figs and raisins), melons, cranberries and raw apples.

Avoid cabbage, lettuce broccoli and brussels sprouts.

Avoid granola, barley & corn.

Lifestyle Recommendations

Daily routine: bring routine and structure into your day and stick with it for a while (even in the weekends). This means that you should rise at the same time, do your yoga practice / exercise at the same time, bring routine in your daily tasks, eat at the same time, etc.

Vata needs the most rest of all of the Doshas. Go to bed early (around 21.30/22.00).

Make sure you stay and feel warm. Put on warm clothes in warm fabrics such as wool. Wear more layers on top of each other. Wear wool scarfs and heads. Pay extra attention to keep your lower back and belly (the seat of Vata Dosha) warm.

Listen to soothing and calming music and mantras.

Spoil yourself with a day at the spa. Especially the steamer and infrared cabine are good. Top it off with an relaxation massage with lots of oil.

Slow down everything. Slow movements (walk slow), talk less & slow and eat slower.

Practice yielding and nourishing restorative and yin yoga.

Wear warm colors such as red, orange and yellow.

Start your day with a short meditation. 10 minutes each day will already do a lot for your state of mind.

Reduce anything that is stimulating such as drinking coffee, watching exciting netflix series and reduce time on social media.

Stop multitasking: eating and reading are two different activities.

Oil yourself: give yourself a daily oil massage with warm nourishing and grounding sesame oil. Best is to do it daily, but when there is not enough time do it at least 4-5 times a week.

Put lavender oil drops on your chest (during the day) and on your cushion (during the night).

Nourish & ground your Vata

Bring dairy products into your diet: ghee (clarified butter) to cook, to put in your morning oatmeal & in your warm milk

Hot water bottle to keep your lower back warm during the night

Drink lots of milky creamy drinks (almond milk, full fat cow's milk & golden milk).

Abhyanga (self oil-massage): use sesame oil and add some drops of lavender oil to it

Yin & Restorative Yoga

Balancing Pitta Dosha

When Pitta is out of balance the Gunas (or qualities) from the Pitta-list start to express. Therefore bringing in the opposite will help to stay or bring yourself back into balance.



Balancing Pitta Foods

Decrease pungent (hot/spicy), salty and sour foods such as chillies, pickles, alcohol, fermented foods, dark chocolate and animal products. Increase sweet, cool, refreshing, bitter and astringent foods such as grains and green leafy vegetables. Increase cooling drinks (not cold!) such as aloe vera juice and coconut water. For Pitta the best thing to remember is Green, Green, Green. Green juices, green salads and green soups.

FRUITS	VEGETABLES	GRAINS
grapes	asparagus	couscous
limes	cucumber	basmati rice
cherries	green leafy vegetables	barley
melons	broccoli	millet
pomegranate	lettuce	oats
pineapples	alfalfa sprouts	
mangoes	peas	
	cauliflower	
Avoid grapefruit, berries & apricots.	Avoid avocado, tomatoes, garlic and raw onions.	Avoid rye and brown rice.

Lifestyle Recommendations

Reduced effort: do 80% instead of 100% and leave time to do nothing at all.

Bring in a sense of humility. Drop your skepticism and start making jokes.

Be careful on taking on new things. Pick 4 out of 10 activities to focus on

Have enough sleep. Best is to go to bed by 22.30 and rise at 6 o'clock - but don't be too strict on these times. Actually, see if you can drop the strictness.

Do not take too hot showers. In summertime you may even want to try showering in cold water.

Take care skin by using cooling tonics such as coconut oil or aloe vera gel

Search for shade during summer time. Wear a hat.

Go seeking for water: going for a swim, go to the sea or walking next to a river to bring in coolness

Make sure you nourish yourself wisely to avoid “hangry-ness”. Best is to have your biggest meal at lunch time (when Pitta is high)

Wear cooling light blue, pearl and grey colors ideally in natural cooling fabrics (cotton/linen)

Cleanse & Cool your Pitta

Do not skip meals.

Aloe Vera Juice: detoxes (liver), cools and balances the skin.

Pomegranate Juice: cools and strengthens blood.

Go for a swim with reduced effort.

*Use cooling seasonings like cilantro,
fennel seeds, cardamom & saffron.*

*Wheat grass: cools the fire, detoxes the liver
where Pitta builds up easily.*

Balancing Kapha Dosha

When Kapha is out of balance the Gunas (or qualities) from the Kapha-list start to express. Therefore bringing in the opposite will help to stay or bring yourself back into balance.



Balancing Kapha Foods

Avoid sweet, sour and salty foods such as sugars, yoghurt and chips. Decrease cold, damp and wet foods such as dairy and ice cream. Also, avoid overeating especially during the evening. Try to eat vegetarian as much as possible and favour foods that are light, dry and warm. Avoid dairy products as much as possible.

FRUITS	VEGETABLES	GRAINS
apples	broccoli	barley
pomegranate	cabbage	buckwheat
cranberries	carrot	quinoa
apricots	celery	corn
	garlic & onions	rye
	ginger	amaranth
	kale	millet
	sprouts	

Avoid all fatty and sweet fruits such as banana, dates and mango.

Avoid sweet potatoes, avocado, cucumber & tomatoes.

Avoid oats, rice and wheat

Lifestyle Recommendations

Start your day with an intense heating (yoga) exercise.

Increase giving, sharing and letting go.

Increase heat (sauna or vigorous massage).

Use dry skin brush in the shower to stimulate blood circulation and lymphatic drainage.

Do not sleep in and wake up early.

Seek stimulation: trying new things, drinking stimulants like coffee and black tea, listening to uplifting music, go out, etc.

Only eat when you are hungry. Skipping a meal (especially breakfast) is okay and try not to snack in between meals

Have lunch or brunch around 12/12.30 and go for a walk after

Stimulate & Uplift your Kapha

Ginger tea - to burn excess Kapha.

Use small amount of oils. Use sunflower or olive oil for cooking.

Spice up your life: all spices are good except for salt. Best are stimulating and warming spices such as chilli, cinnamon and cumin.

Dry brushing will help to release stagnant kapha (opens the channels).

Honey-lemon thee: hot water with lemon, honey and a pinch of cayenne is a wonderful drink for Kapha to keep things moving and warm (add the honey when the water is cooled off a little bit (and not while cooking)).

Neti pot: clear the nose (sinuses) and keep your channels and lungs clear.

Fast once in a while. Skipping your breakfast is already a good start.



More information?

If you want to find out more about Ayurveda you can find me on Instagram, e-mail me directly or visit my website.

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