

HIBISKISS
Ayurveda Basics
ĀYURVEDA

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WHAT IS AYURVEDA?

Ayurveda, a sister science of yoga, is a traditional Indian system of medicine (dating beyond 5000 years) focusing on preventative healthcare, detoxification and longevity. Native to India, Ayurveda means, Ayu – “life” and Veda – “knowledge or science”, so it can be interpreted as the “science of life”. Ayurveda is mankind’s oldest healing system, using foods, herbs, oils, stones, yoga and meditation to maintain doshic balance. Ayurveda brings the body, mind and spirit into balance so you may live in harmony with your true nature.

PRINCIPLES OF AYURVEDA



Each of us is made up of a combination of the earth elements: ether (space), air, fire, water and earth. Our individual bodily make-up, or constitution, when honored allows us to live in harmony and serenity. The five earth elements then pair-up into three combinations (known as doshas – Vata, Pitta & Kapha) to form the primary forces of nature.

Each of us carry our own unique dosha that is established at time of birth. This is known as our prakriti. Our current constitution, known as our vikriti, has the ability to change while prakriti does not. Life influences (such as diet, environmental factors, lifestyle, etc.) cause vikriti to move out of balance from our prakriti, shifting us out of harmony. In excess this can lead to disease. Ayurveda strives to keep us in a state of balance and out of a state of stress.

PRAKRUTI VS VIKRUTI

PRAKRUTI

Determined at time of birth.

Influenced by the mothers and fathers prakruti & vikruti, as well as current doshic influences.

Our prakruti is our original and true nature, which, if maintained, puts us in balance and helps us achieve ultimate happiness and wellness.

VIKRUTI

Determined by current doshic circumstances and lifestyle.

Can be in line with our prakruti, or can be in an altered state, causing us to be out of balance from our true nature.

Ayurveda assists in bringing vikruti back into harmony with our prakruti (original nature).

THE 3 DOSHAS

VATA

PITTA

KAPHA

Ayurveda states that each of us is born with a unique combination of elemental energies, called doshas. Our dosha is derived from a combination of the five great elements: ether, air, fire, water and earth. The doshic combination we are born with (our prakruti) stays with us throughout our lifetime, while our current state of being (vikruti) may be swayed away from our original nature by outside factors.

All of us embody all three doshas, while maintaining a dominant (or dual-dominant) dosha. Keeping our original doshic nature in balance allows us to experience life in a harmonious state. The three doshas are Vata, Pitta and Kapha.

VATA



ETHER & AIR

The three dominant qualities of Vata are light, cold and dry. Vata dominant individuals have thin frames and small or narrow features. They are creative, spontaneous and enjoy change and movement. Vata individuals have little or a light appetite.

When Vata is out of balance it may produce anxiety, fear, insomnia, and irregular digestion.

Vata is balanced using warm, wet and heavy elements.

PITTA



FIRE & WATER

The three dominant qualities of Pitta are light, hot and oily. Pitta dominant individuals have a medium build, proportionate facial features and sparkling or intense eyes. They are orderly, intense and focused. Pitta individuals have a sharp appetite and can be irritable when hungry.

When Pitta is out of balance it can lead to anger, resentment, inflammation and ulcers.

Pitta is balanced through cooling, relaxing and nurturing methods.

KAPHA



WATER & EARTH

The three dominant qualities of Kapha are heavy, cold and oily. Kapha dominant individuals have a large build with full, soft features. They are relaxed, patient and conservative. Kapha individuals have stable and regular digestion, but can be prone to emotional or “boredom” eating.

When Kapha is out of balance it can cause attachment, lethargy, depression and congestion.

Kapha is balanced by energizing, mobilizing and stimulating means.

HOW CAN AYURVEDA BENEFIT ME?

To bring us back into balance is to find health and happiness. Doshic balance can be maintained through our daily routines and rituals, including yoga. Ayurveda can be used in conjunction with western medicine for anyone who is interested in finding balance using natural remedies, honoring our original one-of-a-kind nature.

Practicing yoga specific to your dosha is one element to assist in bringing your vikruti into balance with your prakruti, aiding in overall wellness.

AYURVEDIC CONSIDERATIONS

SEASON	TIME OF DAY	STAGE OF LIFE
Vata: autumn/early winter	Kapha 1: 6:00am-10:00am	Kapha: birth-puberty
Pitta: summer	Pitta 1: 10:00am-2:00pm	Pitta: puberty-menopause/mature adult
Kapha: winter/early spring	Vata 1: 2:00pm-6:00pm	
	Kapha 2: 6:00pm-10:00pm	Kapha: menopause/mature adult- death
	Pitta 2: 10:00pm-2:00am	
	Kapha 2: 2:00am-6:00am	

AYURVEDIC SUNDIAL

KAPHA 1 (6:00AM/SUNRISE – 10:00AM):

Kapha begins to gather energy as the sun rises. This is the time for elimination, meditation, pranayama, light physical movement such as hatha yoga, first food intake, and cleansing rituals including garshana and abhyanga.

PITTA 1 (10:00AM – 2:00PM):

Agni (digestive fire) is at its peak. This is the time of day for the largest meal to be taken, work to be pursued and energy to be focused into daily productivity.

VATA 1 (2:00PM – 6:00PM):

Metal activity is at its highest. This is the ideal time for social interaction, as well as the final light meal of the day.

AYURVEDIC SUNDIAL

KAPHA 2 (6:00PM – 10:00PM):

Energy begins to slow down during Kapha 2 time of day. This is the time to turn inward, unwind and reflect. The last time to exercise should be done at the start of Kapha 2 time, followed by relaxing activities such as reading and writing. Sleep should begin before this time has come to a close.

PITTA 2 (10:00PM – 2:00AM):

The internal cleansing process is in full action. Restoration and deep sleep commence.

VATA 2 (2:00AM – 6:00AM):

Sleep becomes lighter as the elimination process starts. This is the time to awaken and begin morning meditation/spiritual rituals.

Dincharya: The Daily Ayurvedic Routine

Awake with the sun: During Vata time; start the morning off with gratitude by pausing to send loving energy into the universe. Give thanks and welcome the blessings of the day yet to come.

Empty bladder

Cleanse face, eyes, ears and mouth with cool water: Reduces Pitta excess that has built up during the night. Senses will become open and receptive.

Brush teeth/scrape tongue: Check the tongue to observe ama (waste) collected throughout the night. Using a tongue cleaner starting in the back of the mouth pulling to the tip of the tongue. Brush teeth using an herbal, natural toothpaste.

Sip warm water with Lemon: Cleanses the GI tract and removes ama (waste) from the digestive & elimination systems.



Dincharya: The Daily Ayurvedic Routine

Empty bowels

Engage in Garshana (dry brushing) and Abhyanga (body oil massage)

Shower/cleanse in body temperature water:
Making sure not to shock the body in too hot or too cold temperatures, use an all natural body wash as to not strip your skin of their natural oils.

Swab nostrils: Using a q-tip, dip in rosewater hydrosol and swab nostrils; follow with dipping a new q-tip into nasya oil or sesame oil and repeat swabbing nostrils. Use a neti pot as needed for present irritants.

Morning sadhana: Morning Yoga practice; Surya Namaskar (Sun Salutations).

Pranayama: Morning breath work.





Meditation

Mantra: Set an intention for your day.

Morning meal: Breakfast should be taken at first point of hunger. Should be consumed in silence to break your overnight fast.

Daily work/tasks/activity: During this time of day complete the tasks that require the most focus.

Mid-day meal: Lunch should be the largest meal of the day when agni (digestive fire) is highest (10am-2pm). To aid in digestion, lay on the left side of the body following your meal.

Social interaction: Vata time of day (2pm-6pm) is best to gather with friends and loved ones.

Evening meal: Dinner should be light and served at the next point of hunger. Eat just enough to bring you until bedtime, but not right before going to sleep – should be at least 2 hours prior to your slumber.





Dincharya: The Daily Ayurvedic Routine

Let everything go: Take an inventory of your day followed by relaxing activities (warm bath, reading/writing, stretching); light some natural candles with calming aromas.

Pranayama & Meditation

Oil feet: Using sesame oil (or any grounding oils), wipe off excess oil and wear socks if desired.

Nightly Slumber: Laying in the manner appropriate for your dosha – Vata on back, Pitta on right side, Kapha on left side.



GARSHANA: DRY BRUSH BODY MASSAGE

Your skin happens to be the largest organ of the body and a means to eliminate toxins.

Benefits include:

- Exfoliated and opened pores
- Circulated blood flow
- Assists in lymphatic drainage
- Smooths out cellulite deposits
- Pushes toxins out of the body
- Awakens internal organs
- Removes dead skin cells
- Oxygenates tissues and cells

To give a dry-brush body massage:

Using a comfortable amount of pressure, take a brush, loofa or washcloth and stroke the skin in a circular motion. Start at your feet, with strokes made towards the heart. Cover the entire body (excluding your face) followed by applying your Abhyanga oil and morning shower.

A clear glass bottle with a stopper, filled with a golden-yellow oil. The bottle is set against a background of soft-focus white and pink flowers. The lighting is bright and natural, highlighting the texture of the glass and the clarity of the oil.

ABHYANGA: BODY OIL MASSAGE

Abhyanga uses a blend of herbs and essential oils to cover the body and penetrate the pores of the skin to move deep into the tissues and organs of the individual. Taking time to anoint the body with oil allows for compassion and care to the self, as well regulates the flow of energy (prana) throughout the body.

To give yourself an Abhyanga oil massage:

Before your morning shower (and after your Garshana massage), warming your oil if so desired – for better penetration into the pores, begin to massage oil into the skin starting with your legs, working towards the heart. You may wish to include positive affirmations as a part of your ritual, showing gratitude for your human vessel. Allow for the oil to seep into the pores, approximately 15 minutes, before washing away any excess oil (without stripping the skin).



Conclusion

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Including Ayurvedic principles into your daily routine promotes balance and health.

We are all divine beings. Using the tools and the awareness of Ayurveda, we can navigate through life's influential factors while maintaining a state of bliss.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti