



# Introduction to Ayurveda

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# What Is Ayurveda?

- Ayus=Life, Veda=Knowledge
- The “science of life” or “knowledge of life”
- The traditional medicine of India
- A complete holistic healing system-works with chronic and acute illness. Addresses all aspects of the self.
- Based on the principle that our bodies have an amazing capacity to self-heal. Ayurveda optimizes your body’s ability to heal itself.



# Tenets of Ayurveda

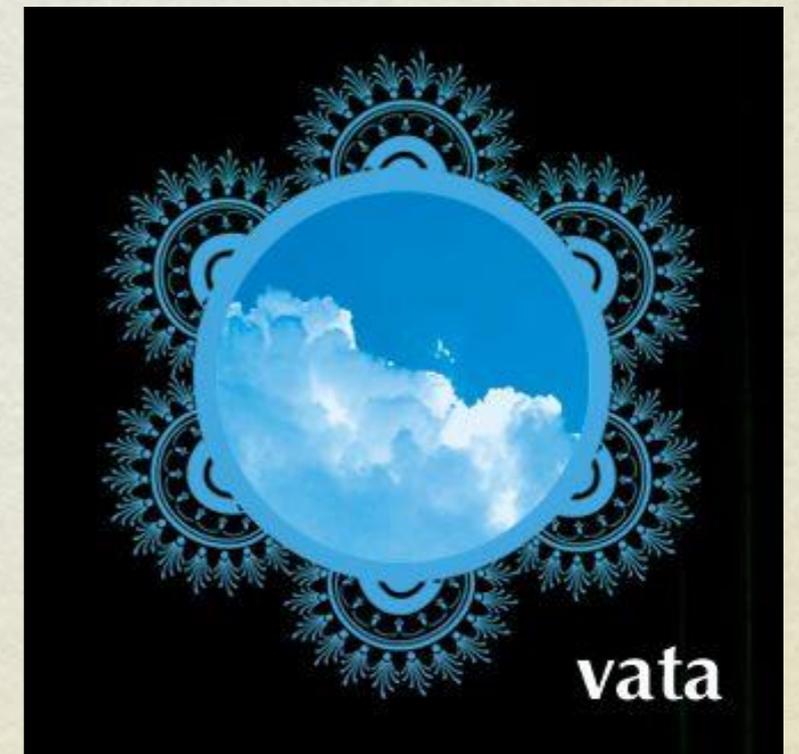
- Everything is right for someone. Nothing is right for everyone. What is medicine for one person, may be poison for another.
- Harmony=Health/ Disharmony=Disease.
- Living out of harmony with the self and with nature leads to health imbalances.
- Everything that we take in through our 5 senses has the ability to heal or harm.





# Dosha: the Three Humors

- The Five Elements Combine to form the three doshas. The doshas are forces unto themselves.
- Water+Earth=Kapha dosha
- Water+Fire=Pitta dosha
- Air+Ether=Vata dosha
- We each possess a unique balance of the doshas. The goal is to be a clear, pure reflection of our true selves.



# Vata Dosha



- Qualities of Air and Ether: light, dry, rough, subtle, erratic.
- Body: light frame; fine features; irregularities: large ears, scoliosis, very tall or very short; unruly hair, dry skin.
- Character traits: quick moving, learns quickly and forgets quickly, drawn to art, travel, spiritual and creative pursuits.
- When balanced: adaptive, effervescent, inspired and inspiring, light-hearted, creative.
- When imbalanced: nervous, erratic, insomnia, excess dryness, unreliable, paranoid, fatigued, self-destructive.

# Pitta Dosha



- Qualities of Fire and Water: oily, liquid, sharp, hot, penetrating, intense.
- Body: medium, athletic build, angular features, intense gaze, rosy complexion.
- Character traits: competitive, logical, organized, perceptive (information, content), driven.
- When balanced: courageous, disciplined, good leader, teacher.
- When imbalanced: angry, judgmental, impatient, rashes, blood and liver issues.

# Kapha Dosha



- Qualities of Earth and Water: heavy, dense, cool, soft, thick, moist, stable
- Body: solid or voluptuous build; thick hair, eyebrows, and eyelashes; strong teeth and nails; soft, rounded features.
- Character traits: Patient, methodical, reliable, empathic, loyal, nurturing, business-minded.
- When balanced: cool-headed, generous, compassionate, unconditional love.
- When imbalanced: lethargic, excess weight and mucous, hoarding, stagnant, complacent.

# The Three Doshas In You

- Take the quiz. Wherever you score highest may give you a hint. However, an Ayurvedic intake is a VERY THOROUGH process. This is just a sneak preview.
- Get into groups of three-four. In your group, who has:
  - The most angular face
  - The most rectangular palm and the longest fingers
  - The largest eyes

# How to Balance Vata Dosha

- Warmth, Oil, Regular Routines
  - get up and go to bed at the same time every day
  - eat meals at regular times
  - focus on warm, moist, cooked foods: oatmeal, stews, roasted root vegetables with plenty of oil, rice pudding
  - do daily Abhyanga: application of warm oil to the entire body

# How to Balance Pitta Dosha

- Cool Down, Relieve mental stress, Non-competitive activities
  - green veggies, green juices, aloe juice, rosewater, raw veggies, cucumber, coconut
- Take mental vacations: unplug, spend time in nature, take a day of rest (vacation without your laptop)!
- Do something just for fun!

# How to Balance Kapha Dosha

- Heat, Spontaneity, Stimulation
- Light, warm, well-spiced food: hot, spicy brothy soups, ginger, black pepper, cayenne, leafy veggies with warming spices (steamed, only small amounts of oil), rice cakes, popcorn (dry, light food)
- Sweat, be active: cardio, dynamic yoga
- Be spontaneous! (or make friends with someone who is spontaneous)

# Good for all!

- Guidelines for Healthy Eating
- *How you eat is as important as what you eat. “It’s not what you eat. It’s what you digest.”*
  - Eat in a peaceful setting without distraction. No phone, computer, or TV.
  - Take three slow breaths before all meals.
  - Chew, chew, chew! Put your fork down between bites.
  - Eat at a moderate pace until 75% full. Pay attention to the burp!
  - Take a mild walk, rest for 10-15 minutes after meals.

# More Lifestyle Tips

- Sleep Hygiene

- No screens after sundown (cut off one hour before bed at latest) i.e. in bed at 10pm, screens off 9pm
- Get up at the same time daily
- Keep your phone away from your bed and silence it
- Try sound and aroma therapy: sounds of nature, white noise machines, diffuse lavender oil (or apply to throat and bottoms of feet)
- Helpful herbs: Valerian, passionflower, kava kava, ashwagandha

# Kitchen Pharmacy

● **Ginger:** Traditionally used to alleviate indigestion, heartburn, constipation.

- Gently stimulates stomach contractions, increases speed of gastric emptying (Palanisamy, 2015).
- Suppresses vomit center in brain (Enders, 2014).
- Excellent anti-inflammatory, effective at reducing joint and premenstrual pain. Study on exercise-induced muscle pain: “2 g daily of ginger powder taken for eleven days significantly reduced pain compared to placebo” (Palanisamy, 2015).
- Ways to use ginger: fresh grate it into your chai (or take plain fresh ginger tea). Use the dry powder for sauteed veggies.



# Kitchen Pharmacy



- **Cinnamon:** Traditionally used as a digestive, anti-microbial, and to increase circulation.
  - Studies have proven it's antibacterial and antifungal properties: cinnamon is shown to be effective at inhibiting the growth of the fungus *Candida albicans* (Palanisamy, 2015).
  - Anti-inflammatory, may help with PCOS, helpful in treating high blood sugar, balancing cholesterol levels, and other metabolic disorders.
  - Add cinnamon to ghee fried apples! Thin slice 1-2 large apples. Fry in 1 tbsp ghee. Add a pinch of cinnamon, black pepper, ginger and cardamom.
  - *Cinnamomum zeylanicum* “true cinnamon” *cinnamomum aromaticum* “cassia” have the same health benefits

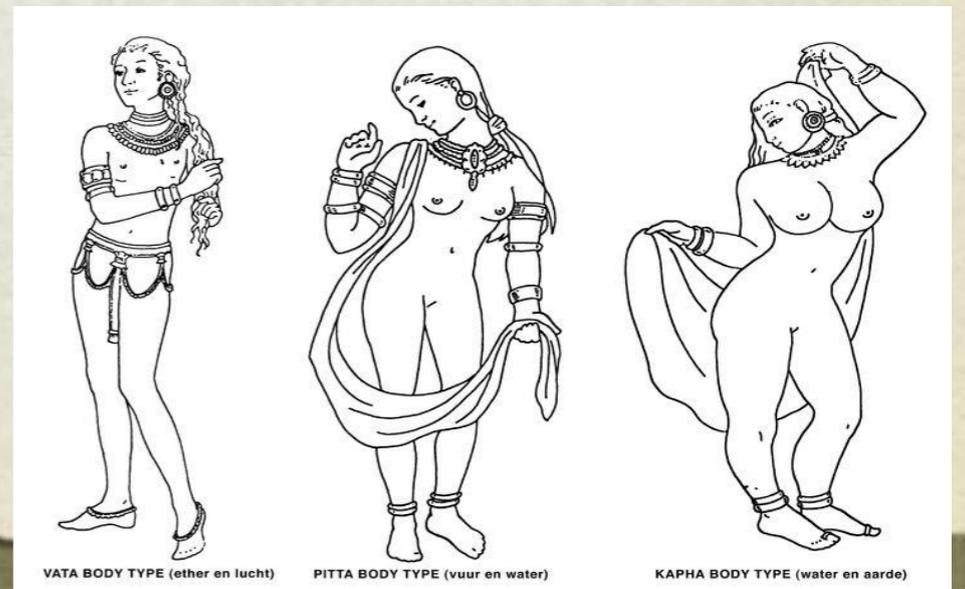
# Kitchen Pharmacy



- **Turmeric:** traditionally used as a blood cleanser. great for gut health and mental health.
  - Shown to be as effective as prescription anti-inflammatories. 1500 mg per day of turmeric extract (1/3 tsp) as effective as 1200 mg ibuprofen at alleviating knee pain (Palanisamy, 2015).
  - Stimulates body's own production of anti-oxidants
  - Studies show it to be an effective cancer fighter: inhibits growth and spread of cancer cells (Palanisamy, 2015)
  - Cook with it! Make golden milk. Fat and black pepper increase turmeric's bio-availability. Supplement: *New Chapter Turmeric Force*

# Prakruti vs. Vikruti

- **Prakruti: what we were born with**
- **Vikruti: what we have done to ourselves**
  - **The two may or may not match.**
  - **Symptoms are indicative of *vikruti***
  - ***Reduce vikruti and get back to your true nature.***



# Elemental Beings

- Who are we? What are we made of?
- How can we feel better, be better, live better?
- “We must ever seek greater life, light, and love because this is the nature of the universe itself.” ~David Frawley

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