

A Beginning
Exploration into
Ayurveda



FOURTH EDITION

A BEGINNING EXPLORATION INTO AYURVEDA, FOURTH EDITION

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What is Ayurveda?



The Science of Life

Ayurveda, which literally means "the knowledge or science of life," is the traditional holistic healing system of India.

Ayurveda is a system of medicine designed to restore balance to the physical body while supporting the mind so that it is able to change non-productive habits.

Holistic Healing

Ayurveda encompasses a complete approach to the well-being of body–mind–spirit. Ayurveda understands that this trinity is inseparable and can not be treated as isolated aspects. To address one is to address all three.

Both the body and the mind are affected by each other; they are constantly sharing information and influencing each other. The health of the physical

Ayurveda + Yoga

Yoga is a sister science to Ayurveda. Together they work towards increasing vitality through a healthy experience of being in the physical body.

View of Health and Disease

Ayurveda views health and wellness—or their evil twins, disease and illness—as the end result of how we do—or don't—take care of ourselves.

Cycles of Nature

According to Ayurveda, optimal health begins with the prevention of disease. This happens by making choices that support a balanced lifestyle.

We are able to balance your body, mind, and spirit while going beyond symptoms to the root cause of an imbalance.

Ayurveda's practices are profoundly restorative and truly holistic, resulting in restoration, vitality, and longevity.

body is affected by our mental–emotional state just as much as the health of the mind is influenced by the physical body.

- ♦ When we feel balanced, the world is a congenial place, and we are happy.
- ♦ When we are imbalanced (ie: we have a cold or flu), we are miserable and irritable. The world is not our friend.

Ayurveda keeps the body free of imbalance and disease; Yoga keeps the body limber while fostering a nimble and placid mind.

Health and wellness are cumulative efforts. The more often we choose health-supporting practices, the more healthy we are. The more we make unhealthy choices, the less healthy we are.

A balanced lifestyle respects and follows the laws of nature, existing in harmony with daily and seasonal cyclical rhythms.

The difficulty lies in our current culture, which is disconnected from nature's rhythms. We eat foods imported from around the world. The luxury of electricity ensures that we can have light anytime we want it. And on-demand entertainment ensures us an endless stream of enticing distraction from more

the Role of the Senses

We can also develop greater harmony with ourselves and our environment through the use of all five senses (taste, touch, smell, sight, sound).

Perception

We create our state of health every day based upon how we interact with the world around us. Our beliefs, perceptions, thoughts, and feelings ultimately determine our actions. Simply believing

Building Blocks for Health

In Ayurvedic medicine we make use of the five elements and the three doshas as tools for creating and re-establishing health and wellness.

These five elements and three doshas occur in nature, and they influence us in both subtle and profound ways. They are basic building blocks,

Constitution + Body Types

Ayurvedic medicine works with your constitution, aka your proportion of the three doshas. As with your genetic DNA, your Ayurvedic

healthful pursuits.

Eating foods that are in season—along with rising and going to bed with the sun—aligns us with supportive biorhythms. This is such a simple yet profound way to stay in harmony with nature.

Paying attention to the world around us—and how we feel in response—is potent medicine. It's free and equally available to all of us.

that you can change your health for the better creates an environment where that more easily happens.

much like the four protein molecules that make up our DNA.

As simple as they seem, knowledge of the elements and the doshas—as well as their qualities—graces us with a foundation for deeply supporting ourselves in health and wellness.

constitution is distinct and unique to you. It takes into account your physical body as well as your mental-emotional body.

The three doshas combine to form seven distinct types:

- ✦ Vata
- ✦ Pitta
- ✦ Kapha
- ✦ Vata-Pitta (aka Pitta-Vata)
- ✦ Pitta-Kapha (aka Kapha-Pitta)
- ✦ Vata-Kapha (aka Kapha-Vata)
- ✦ Tridoshic (all three)

All of us have all five elements and all three doshas within us. When we talk about a "constitution" or a "doshic type" we mean that a person displays a predominance of one (or more) of the doshas.

These doshas—and constitutions—describe tendencies within each of us for:

- ✦ what foods we like to eat
- ✦ what climate we prefer to live in
- ✦ what types of exercise are best for us
- ✦ optimal times for going to sleep and waking up

Ayurvedic medicine provides time-tested protocols for aligning your inner nature (constitution) with the larger daily and seasonal rhythmic cycles of nature. These include:

- ✦ proper foods and meal-time routines
- ✦ appropriate exercise
- ✦ self-care habits
- ✦ guided cleansing and detoxification
- ✦ restoring balance
- ✦ optimizing digestion



Western Medicine r/t Ayurveda

It is worth mentioning that Western medicine and Ayurveda differ in some important ways.

Western medicine has achieved wonders with technological advancements that make great use of diagnostic equipment. Additionally, Western surgical protocols, techniques, and tools have done much to improve and extend the lives of many people who otherwise would have to simply get by.

Ayurveda, however, has much to offer in the way of disease prevention, individualized treatment plans, appropriate (to the patient) dosing, an approach that takes all aspects of the person into account, and treatment modalities that are in alignment with nature.



Philosophy	Ayurveda	Western Medicine
Human Being Defined As	integrated mind, body, and spirit; energetic understanding of all functions; all individuals are unique; treatments and doses are individualized	physical body only; mechanistic understanding of bodily functions all people are basically the same; one size/dose fits all
Focus of Treatment	treating the imbalance; prevention is key	treating the disease; management of symptoms
Diagnostic Tools	subjective observation; using the five senses & patient input	objective test results; using machines
Treatment Considerations	correct the root cause; takes longer but is more effective; the patient/client is the expert; patient/client participation is key; multiple approaches; ie: diet, lifestyle, herbal formulas, breathwork, bodywork, exercise, etc. natural remedies; botanicals that our bodies are able to digest and have few, if any, negative effects	stop the symptoms; speed is important; the physician is the expert; patient participation is minimized; single approach; ie: pharmaceuticals, surgery; synthetic drugs; have poor or negative interactions in our bodies; have unintended “side effects”
Relationship to Nature	we are a part of nature	we are separate from nature
Triage	good for proactive prevention and first aid	good for emergencies and surgeries
Approach	common-sense	intellectual

The Elements & Their Qualities

the Five Elements

The five elements are the foundation of everything in Ayurvedic medicine, so it's a good idea to understand them.



Ether
element



Air
element



Fire
element



Water
element



Earth
element

- ♦ **ETHER** is empty space, a void.
- ♦ **AIR** introduces the quality of movement.
- ♦ **FIRE** is what gives heat and light.
- ♦ **WATER** moistens.
- ♦ **EARTH** solidifies and stabilizes.

While this concept of the five elements is an abstract, we are able to apply these principles to the physical realm. This is particularly important in relation to the human body since we will be drawing on these concepts to make Ayurveda relevant. Once we understand these basic units of nature—and how they function and influence the functions of our beings—we can more easily implement Ayurveda in our daily lives.

- ♦ **ETHER** is representative of the empty spaces in our body: an empty stomach or bladder, the chambers of the heart, the open areas within bones;
- ♦ **AIR** expresses any type of movement in the body: the conduction of nerve impulses, the pulse of blood in the blood vessels, the movement of thought in the mind;
- ♦ **FIRE** is the process of transformation and metabolism: the digestive system which transforms our foodstuffs into the building blocks needed to build and maintain bodily tissues, the ability of our eyes to interpret the visual field;
- ♦ **WATER** comprises 70% of our body: lymph, mucous, saliva, interstitial and intracellular fluids;
- ♦ **EARTH** refers to the solid masses within our bodies: bones, tendons, and muscles that support us and hold us upright in gravity.

The Qualities of the Elements

The five elements can be defined by ten pairs of qualities. It is through these qualities that we are able to directly understand and make sense of the elements for ourselves.

These ten pairs of qualities are more than simply polar opposites. Each aspect of these pairs of qualities fades out while the other fades in, much in the same way as the yin-yang symbol shows that some yin exists

within yang and vice-versa.

To take the qualities of hot and cold as an example, we see that cold exists at one end of the continuum with hot at the other end. In between cold and hot are many varying degrees of warmth. Think of a thermometer.



Let's take a look at all of the qualities:

hot	<—>	cold
dry	<—>	moist
light	<—>	heavy
subtle	<—>	gross
flowing	<—>	dense
mobile	<—>	static
sharp	<—>	dull
hard	<—>	soft
rough	<—>	smooth
clear	<—>	opaque

Applying the Elements + Qualities

There are two fundamental rules in Ayurveda:

- ✦ Like Increases Like
- ✦ Opposites Reduce each Other

These two rules work hand-in-hand and mean that:

- ✦ more of any element or quality increases that element or quality;
- ✦ the application of an opposing element or quality decreases that element or quality.

A practical example will make this clear:

If you have a sunburn, you feel heat in and see redness on your skin. These qualities represent excessive Fire element. You would never apply more heat to the sunburn as a way to treat it (this would be "Like Increases Like"). Rather, you would oppose the heat with the quality of cold to restore balance and bring healing (ie: "Opposites Reduce Each Other").

This is where the pairs of qualities are useful. If you are too hot, apply cold (ie: use a fan). Conversely, if you are too cold, bring in the quality of warmth (ie: drink some hot tea, put on a sweater, stand in front of a Fire).

This is as complicated as Ayurveda gets. Once you know the quality and/or element that is in excess, you can apply the opposing quality and/or element to restore balance.

the Elements and our Senses

Each element relates to one of the five senses, so we can use our five senses to balance any excessive qualities or elements:

- ♦ **ETHER** relates to sound and the ears
- ♦ **AIR** relates to touch and our skin
- ♦ **FIRE** relates to sight and the eyes
- ♦ **WATER** relates to taste and the mouth (saliva)
- ♦ **EARTH** relates to smell and the nose

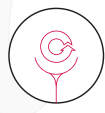
Through the wisdom of Ayurvedic medicine we can use the five senses to restore and maintain balance, ie:



*Ether
element*



*Air
element*



*Fire
element*



*Water
element*



*Earth
element*



- ♦ sound (ie: music) soothes **ETHER**
- ♦ massage soothes **AIR**
- ♦ color and light therapy soothe **FIRE**
- ♦ cooking with herbs and spices soothes **WATER**
- ♦ aromatherapy soothes **EARTH**



The Doshas

the Elements make up the Doshas

The five elements combine to form the three Doshas.



Vata
dosha



Pitta
dosha



Kapha
dosha



Ayurveda works primarily with maintaining and restoring balance of the doshas in each individual.

- ✦ **ETHER** and **AIR** combine to form **VATA DOSHA**.



- ✦ **FIRE** and **WATER** combine to form **PITTA DOSHA**.



- ✦ **EARTH** and **WATER** combine to form **KAPHA DOSHA**.



Vata Dosha

Vata dosha is made up of the Air and Ether elements, so it is like the wind: cold, dry, light, and mobile. Vata is also variable. Vata relates to autumn and winter seasons: cold, windy, drying times of the year. A person with a Vata-predominant constitution will express the qualities of Air and Ether in their physical body and their mind:



Vata
dosha

- | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| ✦ slight physique | ✦ dry wiry hair | ✦ joyful |
| ✦ thin bones | ✦ inspiring | ✦ enthusiastic |
| ✦ prominent joints | ✦ creative/artistic | ✦ energetic |
| ✦ dry skin | ✦ communicative | ✦ flexible |

When Vata is out of balance, the cold, dry, light, and mobile qualities increase and result in:

- | | | | |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| ✦ dry skin | ✦ worry | ✦ gasiness | ✦ fear |
| ✦ constipation | ✦ overwhelm | ✦ weight loss | ✦ low immune |
| ✦ anxiety | ✦ sensitivity | ✦ difficulty sleeping | function |

To restore balance to Vata, we use the qualities of warmth, heavy, moist, and stable. In the diet this happens with deeply nourishing foods such as dairy, meat, whole grains, and cooked vegetables along with delicious warming spices such as cinnamon and cardamom.

Pitta Dosha

Pitta dosha is made up of the Fire and Water elements, so it tends to be very fiery: hot, sharp, and oily. Pitta can also be a perfectionist and a workaholic. Pitta relates to summer time. A Pitta-predominant constitution will physically and mentally express the qualities of Fire and Water:



Pitta
dosha

- ♦ quick mind
- ♦ sharp vision
- ♦ well-defined facial features
- ♦ ambitious
- ♦ strong
- ♦ capable
- ♦ passionate
- ♦ organized
- ♦ fine, oily hair
- ♦ warmth
- ♦ a moderate body

When Pitta is out of balance, the hot quality increases and become excessive, resulting in:

- ♦ diarrhea
- ♦ indigestion
- ♦ inflammation
- ♦ anger
- ♦ intensity
- ♦ critical
- ♦ irritated skin rashes
- ♦ liver weakness
- ♦ resentment
- ♦ jealousy
- ♦ overwork

In order to restore balance to Pitta, we emphasize the quality of cool. A nice cool peppermint tea is usually a good idea along with foods that include coconut, lime, and cilantro. Non-competitive play is also very important for Pittas; they should moderate competitiveness.

Kapha Dosha

Kapha dosha is made up of the Water and Earth elements, and so it is cool, moist, stable, and heavy. Kapha relates to spring: cool and moist, thick and heavy. Allergies and congestion are typical. A Kapha-predominant constitution will physically and mentally express the qualities of Water and Earth:



Kapha
dosha

- ♦ strong bones
- ♦ full features
- ♦ good memory
- ♦ loving
- ♦ compassionate
- ♦ good health
- ♦ lustrous hair
- ♦ supple skin
- ♦ low metabolism
- ♦ large bones
- ♦ a stable nature that handles stress well
- ♦ one who seeks comfort

When Kapha is out of balance, the cool, moist, stable, and heavy qualities increase and become excessive, resulting in:

- ♦ overweight
- ♦ congestion
- ♦ nausea
- ♦ depression
- ♦ difficulty waking up
- ♦ attachment
- ♦ respiratory issues
- ♦ lethargy

To restore balance to Kapha, the qualities of lightness, dryness, mobility, and warmth are recommended. Grains such as quinoa and amaranth are encouraged, as well as hot spices such as cayenne pepper. Spontaneity is also encouraged.

the Doshas & the Body

These three doshas are a part of us. They help to create our life, and they come alive within us.

Just as the five Elements exist in our physical bodies, so, too, do the three Doshas.

We all have Vata, Pitta, and Kapha within us. We need all of them! We need the structure that Kapha provides; we need the Pitta power of transformation, metabolism, and discernment; and we very much use the movement principle of Vata.

Remember that we each have a unique proportion of the doshas that defines us. Some people have more Vata Dosha, others have a greater quantity of Pitta Dosha, and still others have a predominance of Kapha Dosha. Some people are pretty equally two doshas (ie: Vata and Kapha) with a little bit of the third Dosha, and some people have all three Doshas equally represented in their make-up.


the Doshas in a Nutshell

Perhaps you are wondering what these concepts look like in real life.

- A Pitta person is warm most of the time. You know these people; they wear shorts all year long.
- A Vata person enjoys a lot of movement; she is a dancer, runner, swimmer, or cyclist.
- A Kapha person is very content to stay just where he is. Why on earth would he get up out of his overstuffed chair? He is just so comfortable right here...

The chart on the next page gives a nice comparison summary of the three doshas.



VATA 	PITTA 	KAPHA 
THE ELEMENTS THAT MAKE UP THIS DOSHA		
Air + Ether	Fire + Water	Earth + Water
BECAUSE OF THOSE ELEMENTS, EACH DOSHA HAS SPECIFIC QUALITIES:		
<i>cold, dry, light, mobile, variable</i> ... like the autumn wind that dries out and blows the leaves off the trees, wreaking a bit of havoc	<i>hot, oily, sharp, light</i> ... like a Fire that deeply warms and ignites a passion for whatever it comes in contact with	<i>cool, wet, stable, heavy</i> ... like a pristine lake where the squishy bottom and sandy shore provide a place to drop in and feel
TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING CAUSES THE DOSHAS TO BECOME UNBALANCED:		
<i>excessive travel, lack of routine, fear, anxiety, too much change</i> ... too much movement, variety, cold, and/or dryness increase Vata, tipping the apple cart over	<i>heat, intensity, overwork, spicy foods, alcohol, coffee, competitiveness</i> ... too much heat, work, intensity, and/or focus increase Pitta, causing inflammation all around	<i>being stuck, lack of motivation, excess sleep, too little change</i> ... too much of the same old—same old increases Kapha, digging those ruts ever deeper
WHEN THERE IS TOO MUCH OF A DOSHA, IT LOOKS LIKE THIS:		
<i>worry, anxiety, overwhelm, constipation, confusion</i> ... thinking too much, obsessing about stuff, “monkey mind,” being indecisive, having one or more days where you don’t go poop	<i>anger, critical, judgemental, diarrhea, indigestion, inflammation</i> ... irritated skin situations, difficulty digesting a meal, hangry, crabbiness, nothing is “good enough,” having too much poop	<i>nausea, depression, overweight, congestion, attachment</i> ... hay fever and springtime allergies, feeling blue, wanting (and having) *all* of the stuff, a roly-poly body, wanting a nap
TO RESTORE BALANCE TO A DOSHA, EMPHASIZE:		
<i>regular routines, slowing down, moisture, heaviness, warmth</i> ... slow way down, stick to a routine, and eat a nice warm oily soup to stop the madness	<i>cool, avoiding stimulants, calm, play, non-spicy foods</i> ... sip peppermint tea, stroll in nature, and participate (without dominating) to cool things off	<i>lightness, dryness, warmth, movement, spontaneity</i> ... be wild and crazy, be bold, be spontaneous, shake things up—even if just for an afternoon
SO, WHAT IS THIS DOSHA GOOD FOR?		
finding inspiration in the most unlikely places; inspiring others; channelling tremendous creativity; having <i>great</i> enthusiasm	getting stuff done; being efficient; creating order out of chaos; knowing where everything is; having <i>great</i> musculature	maintaining stability; being calm, cool, and collected; making sure everyone is all right; nurturing others; having <i>great</i> skin and hair

The Doshic Types

Let's take a look at the doshic types in more detail.

Vata Body Type

We can see a typical Vata body type in these photos of Woody Allen:

- + thin lips
- + a thin, wiry frame
- + many forehead wrinkles
- + wiry hair
- + a "worried" look
- + narrow face
- + irregularly shaped nose



Pitta Body Type

We can see a typical Pitta body type in these photos of Tom Cruise:

- + moderate body proportions
- + angular features
- + well-developed musculature
- + intense, piercing eyes
- + moderately sized lips
- + an engaging smile
- + straight hair



Kapha Body Type

We can see a typical Kapha body type in these photos of Oprah Winfrey:

- + large, white teeth
- + big eyes
- + widely spaced features
- + wide nose and full lips
- + round face
- + thick hair
- + lustrous skin



The dual- and tri-doshic types are people who have combinations of these single doshic types. Their physical characteristics blend the traits of each type.

Constitution & Imbalance



Prakruti

Now that we have a handle on the elements and the doshas, it's time to put this knowledge to practical use. After all, what good is a conceptual model if you can't do anything with it in your daily life?

One of the tools that Ayurveda uses is the constitution. This is called "Prakruti."

Your Prakruti is expressed physically in your body by your genes and your DNA. Western science and medicine know that we have double-

helix molecules that contain the "codes" for who we are, what we look like, and what we are predisposed to. The Prakruti is the same understanding, but taken from an ancient standpoint.

Your Prakruti determines which self-care routines and practices are in harmony with your nature. It is also an indicator of what has a tendency to pull you out of balance.

a Roadmap

Knowing your constitution or body type is like having a roadmap that guides you in the correct direction of being your best self, allowing you to more easily fulfill your potential and experience more joy.

Knowing your Prakruti also means that you can avert imbalance altogether by avoiding the factors you are constitutionally predisposed to that lead to an imbalanced state in the first place.

the Dosha Quiz

"How do I know my Prakruti?"

You may take the ever-popular Dosha Self Quiz that is on the following page. This quiz is designed to generally determine your particular proportion of the three Doshas.

As you are presented with each category, think about how you compare to other people that you know. For instance, is your body frame long and lean, is it moderate, or is it substantial? Place a mark in the column that feels correct to you. You might even ask someone who knows you for their opinion; sometimes it's tricky to know, for instance, what your neck is like.

Usually one of the three answers will ring true for you; mark it. Sometimes two answers will feel

Have fun!

equally accurate; mark them both. Occasionally all three answers will feel equally correct for you; mark all three. An example here could be "Hair." Many people have hair that exhibits multiple attributes. If you have hair that is wavy and light-colored, you would check the middle and right-side columns.

Please give your answers based on what feels like the most accurate long-term tendency for you. This will give the clearest depiction of who you are at a constitutional level.

At the end of taking the quiz tally up your answers for each column to discover your unique constitution. The relative proportion of the doshas will be your Prakruti.

Once you have completed the Dosha Self-Quiz, ask yourself if your constitution rings true for you. It often does. If so, great! Now you know a little bit more about yourself—or you have received confirmation about yourself, which is just as valuable. You can begin to make choices that will better support you in health and wellness.

If your results seem inaccurate, you might try re-taking the quiz and considering each category and the provided answers more deeply. Make sure to focus on what is the most true for you over the course of your adult life—rather than answering based on multiple temporary states or patterns of imbalance. Try the quiz again, and see what might be revealed.



	✓ Vata	✓ Pitta	✓ Kapha
Body Frame	long and lean	moderate	substantial
Body Weight	tends to be underweight	tends to be moderate	tends to be overweight
Skin	dry, rough, cold, thin	soft, warm, fair-skinned, moles, freckles, flushes easily	oily, thick, cool, pale
Hair	dry, rough, brittle, curly or kinky, coarse, light brown	thin, fine, straight, light-colored, early gray, balding	thick, oily, wavy, dark brown or black
Teeth	irregular, protruding, crooked, thin gums, tendency to tooth decay	regular, moderate, soft gums, yellowish	big, white, strong, healthy
Eyes	small, darting, brown	moderate, sharp, intense, greenish	blue, big, caring, thick eyelashes
Lips	thin	moderate, red	full, pale
Neck	long and thin	moderate	short and thick
Joints	dry, cracking, cold, bony	moderate	well lubricated, large, not visible
Musculature	slight and stiff, tendony	medium, flexible	firm, stout
Appetite	variable, scanty, can miss a meal without noticing it	good, excessive, gets angry if a meal is missed	low but steady
Sweating	variable to none	excessive, odorous	moderate to none, no odor
Sleep	wakes easily, has difficulty falling asleep	falls asleep easily, stays asleep	sleeps long and deep, has difficulty waking up
Physical Activity	fast and very active "Let's go!"	moderate & competitive "Beat ya to it!"	lethargic and slow "Do we have to?"
Dreams	often fearful, flying, running, jumping, dancing	often fiery, passionate, angry, violent	often calm, romantic, water, of relationships
Emotions	unpredictable, anxious, insecure	critical, judgemental, angry, intense	calm, quiet, loving
Memory	recent good, long term poor	sharp	slow but steadfast
Achieving Goals	is easily interrupted & distracted	is focused, driven, production-oriented	works slowly and steadily
Reaction to Stress	excites easily, flies apart in all directions	rises to the challenge	rarely gets stressed; plods along
Totals:	Vata	Pitta	Kapha

Vikruti

Vikruti vs. Prakruti

"Vikruti" translates loosely as "current state." It is the proportion of the Doshas in you as you currently are (as opposed to your constitution). Vikruti is different from Prakruti; Vikruti is generally a temporary state such as an imbalance or even an illness.



the Doshas and Vikruti

Each Dosha has a typical way in which it becomes unbalanced. These tendencies can be heightened by what is happening in the natural world around us.

For example: summertime is a Pitta time of year; we experience great warmth, heat, and light. The days are long. It is very easy for Pittas (already naturally heated) to become overheated in the summer (ie: heat stroke, angry) because of the added seasonal influence. Thus, Pitta becomes a

current state of imbalance or Vikruti.

This same dynamic is true for each of the other doshas. Vatas are seasonally exacerbated in autumn/early winter, and kaphas are aggravated in late winter/early spring.

It is also possible for someone with, say, a Pitta dosha to go out of balance with Vata or Kapha. Depending on your circumstances, anything is possible!

What to do with a Vikruti?

If you find yourself in a state of imbalance, it is to your great advantage to return to balance as soon as possible. Identify which quality is out of balance and use an opposing quality to balance it. If you are too hot, apply cooling strategies. If you are too cold, warm yourself up. If you are dry, hydrate. You get the idea.

The fundamental principles of Ayurveda are so simple, easy, and profound. If you only remember the qualities of the elements and of the doshas, it is relatively easy to stay in balance and to maintain your health and wellness.

Putting it All Together

You now have a lot of information to digest and absorb—and to use! You have used the Dosha Self-Quiz to get a working understanding of your constitution (Prakruti). You have read the profile of your predominant Dosha to learn more about yourself. You can now identify:

- ♦ aspects about yourself
- ♦ (possibly) aspects about your friends and family
- ♦ what keeps you in balance
- ♦ how you typically go out of balance
- ♦ how you can re-establish balance

This is powerful self-knowledge! Remember: this is a 5,000 year old modality. It has been around so long because the principles behind Ayurveda work, plain and simple. We are very fortunate to have such a common-sense modality available to us. It is everyone's birthright to experience health and wellness.

the 80/20 Rule

One of the best things about Ayurveda—from my standpoint—is that it realistically understands that we will not always be able to make "good" choices. Life just plain gets in the way sometimes, and random things happen. So we invoke the 80/20 rule.

Do the best you can (~80% of the time) at

making conscious considered healthful choices, and allow yourself 20% leeway to do otherwise.

Once you are firmly established in your state of balance, you can withstand life's sudden shifts with more ease and grace. You can also forecast times that will be stressful for you, plan and prepare for them, and more easily recover from them.

a Manifesto

My advice to you? Be proactive and responsible in your self-care. Good health occurs in those people who take care of themselves and who make conscious choices that support them in wellness. Poor health happens when we ignore the part of ourselves that knows better (this is called "failure of the intellect"), when we consistently make unwise choices, and when we are exposed to environments that are unhealthful.

There is much in life that is out of our control, so it is important to be as mindful as possible about what is within our control—and to take active responsibility for those areas.

We can carve out little islands of serenity that we can use to nurture our beings and our souls.

- ♦ Being in nature is a very restorative act, even if that means watering the two teeny houseplants you have.
- ♦ Taking a few calming breaths at the beginning of a meal to acknowledge what it took for that food to be available to you is likewise a powerful act.
- ♦ Find work or an activity that is deeply enjoyable to you—and do it.
- ♦ Treasure your loved ones, and waste as little time as possible on those who refuse to honor you.



Experience life with all five of your senses:

- listen to the call of birds
- feast your eyes on cloud formations
- savor the flavors of your food
- deeply inhale the scents of flowers
- luxuriate in the tactile sensations of clean, warm bed sheets (soft flannel for me!)

Also, rejoice in the ability of your body to explore through movement, and take rest when you need it.

There are many additional therapies available to us. Some are useful for everyone; most are appropriate for certain individuals only. You may consult with an Ayurvedic practitioner to learn what might be best for you. After all, this is a modality that specializes in individualized care for individual people. Everything is tailored to the client: food recommendations, methods of cooking those foods, exercise choices, herbal formulas, daily routines, etc. When Ayurveda feels like an appropriate modality for you to implement, you can feel confident that you are doing good work supporting yourself in health and wellness.

Cheers!



About the Ayurvedic Health Center



The Ayurvedic Health Center is a collective of practitioners who come together to support you in your transformational process.

Our wish is that you gently release what no longer serves you on all levels of your body and being. We strive to help you move towards greater health and wellness; to be safe and protected from harm; and to live in, be filled with, and surrounded by love, light, joy, truth, grace, peace, compassion, tolerance, unity, and understanding. We support you to:

- ♦ holistically improve your health and wellness
- ♦ explore your unique body–mind type
- ♦ expand your horizons through the Vedic sciences
- ♦ come into greater alignment with nature
- ♦ integrate your body, mind, and spirit
- ♦ drop into support

Blissful Healing

In order to heal we must find our way into alignment with the rhythms of nature and with our own true inner nature.

- ♦ We remember the appropriate nourishment for our bodily tissues to form and function optimally.
- ♦ We learn to replenish the nectar within us that makes living delicious.
- ♦ We are asked to transform old patterns which have become painful into new rhythms that harmonize.
- ♦ And we gently release the walls around the heart.
- ♦ Our lives expand into a larger sense of Self, and we fulfill our unique purpose here on earth.

We begin to see that we can receive from as well as give back to this miraculous world in a loving reciprocal dance. Ayurveda brings an exquisite, sensuous delight to this process; the bliss it brings beckons us deeper and deeper into our unfolding.

BLISSFUL HEALING is about aligning yourself with the self-care practices that deeply nourish and support you, that are a balm for a too-busy mind, and that give your body a chance to fully exhale.

BLISSFUL HEALING is a process of gradually improving your health and wellness so that your nervous system has time to integrate transformation, your cells can give rise to healthier tissues, and your spirit has time to recall its true purpose.



AyurvedicHealthCenter.com