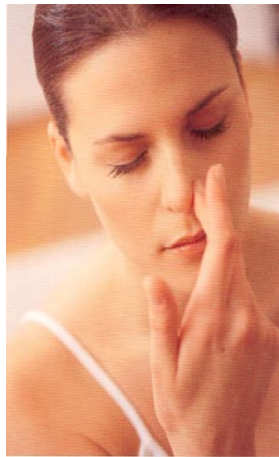


Everyday Ayurveda



A Practical Guide to Healthy Living

Danny Cavanagh & Carol Willis

*Discover the ancient Ayurvedic secrets of balancing the mind and body
for health, happiness and fulfilment*



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The Practical Guide to Healthy Living

Danny Cavanagh & Carol Willis

*He whose happiness is within,
whose contentment is within,
whose light is all within,
that yogi, being one with Brahman,
attains eternal freedom in divine consciousness*

~ Bhagavad-Gita ~

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About the Authors



Danny Cavanagh and Carol Willis began their study of Ayurveda in the late 1980s and trained as Ayurvedic Panchakarma Technicians at the Maharishi University of Valkenburg in Holland in 1993. Since that time they have also studied with the renowned Dr Vacant Lad at the Ayurvedic Institute in New Mexico and Dr David Frawley and Atreya Smith at the American and European Institute of Ayurveda. The subjects they have studied include pulse reading, Ayurvedic herbology, Ayurvedic diet and nutrition and Marma therapy. They gave up their careers as Nature Reserve Warden and Photographer respectively and decided to dedicate their lives to passing on this ancient knowledge of rejuvenation and revitalisation to others.

They have run many centres across the UK and have treated thousands of clients, including many high-profile celebrities and members of the royal family. In their role as both massage therapists and personal development/stress management counsellors they have witnessed extraordinary improvements in the quality of life of many of their guests due to the power of the programs they administer.

Presently they run a very exclusive Panchakarma detox and stress management service in Staffordshire where they take one client at a time and gently guide them in the Ayurvedic way of living harmoniously with their environment. Each client receives instruction in meditation, yoga and exercise and advice on diet and nutrition but the highlight of each day is often the luxurious two-hour massage and detoxification therapy they receive. Danny and Carol also offer business clients a detox retreat program in a beautiful setting in the Peak District as, amongst other things, the knowledge of body-types is an invaluable aid to understanding their colleagues' innate strengths, weaknesses and behaviour. Learning in a group is an excellent team building exercise and helps forge and strengthen business relationships. As if their schedule isn't busy enough, they also occasionally administer Ayurvedic detox and education retreats in Europe and the USA, travelling with their team of Ayurvedic massage technicians and custom-built treatment equipment to their client's homes, albeit usually very large homes.

Primarily, they consider themselves facilitators and maintain that, whilst they may help carry out the various massage and counselling therapies, it is the client who ultimately allows the changes to their health, emotions, behaviour and healing to take place. They are committed to spreading the knowledge of Ayurveda and spend much of their time acting as an advice service to both clients and public alike.

Introduction

This book has been compiled to provide a practical help guide to those interested in following a healthy Ayurvedic lifestyle. With complementary therapies and esoteric philosophies becoming much more widely accepted and available in the west many people are interested in finding out more. However, whilst there is a wealth of information in the public domain, there is little in the way of sound, practical advice available to the lay person, especially in the field of Ayurveda. We hope this book will address some of these shortfalls and provide a practical basis for self-improvement.

As an all encompassing holistic health-care system, the science of Ayurveda can be viewed as an umbrella discipline or ‘mother’ of many modern-day alternative therapies. Having been a successful primary health-care modality for millions of people for many thousands of years it’s translation as ‘the knowledge of life’ is most apt. The oldest written records originate in India and date back over 2000 years and its recommendations and advice for healthy living are as relevant today they ever were – and probably even more so.

An important aspect of Ayurveda lies in its ability to understand and describe the subtle energies and intelligence flowing through our bodies. Ayurvedic doctors skilled in the ancient practice of pulse reading are able to accurately diagnose imbalances in an individual on a mental, physical, emotional and spiritual level. This allows them to prescribe very effective herbal and behavioural remedies. Unfortunately, as this skill is traditionally passed down verbally from one generation of Vaidyas (Ayurvedic doctors) to the next, much of this art has been lost and it is now rarely taught in Ayurvedic colleges and universities. It is not a subject we will address in this book but it is well worth finding an Ayurvedic practitioner that is skilled in this field if you have severe chronic health problems.

However, the Ayurvedic texts contain a treasure trove of knowledge based on its profound understanding of the deeper workings of nature and the rhythms and cycles that govern all life on earth. This knowledge is practical, easy to understand and is suitable for anyone interested in improving their physical, mental and spiritual health. It is our aim to faithfully present this knowledge in clear, easy-to-follow steps which you can slowly introduce into your life if you have choose to take responsibility for your own health and well-being and are willing to dedicate a little time and effort.

In the first chapter you will learn how to ascertain your unique Ayurvedic body-type. You will also learn how to recognise imbalances in your body-type when you stray from your natural way of being and, most importantly, how you can rectify them through diet and lifestyle adaptations. If we insist in following inappropriate diets or lifestyles for prolonged periods of time our body begins to malfunction and slowly but surely deteriorates. As toxins build up in the mind and body we become prone to persistent aches and pains and feelings of unease, anxiety or depression. If these signs and symptoms of ‘dis-ease’ are left unchecked we eventually begin to show signs of premature aging and suffer from more chronic conditions. By following the guidelines for your particular body-type or imbalance the immune, digestive, endocrine and nervous system will be gently and naturally brought back into balance and good health and a calm, focused mind will ensue.

Firstly you should identify your body-type - the body-type questionnaire will help you do this. A visit to an Ayurvedic consultant trained in pulse reading will help ensure a more accurate assessment but as these are still few and far between in the west the questionnaire is the next best alternative. Once you have ascertained your psycho-physiological make-up it is then a simple matter of following the general guidelines for your specific doshic make-up (body-type). However, you may need to adapt this slightly

to take account of the time of year and the imbalances that are present in your physiology. If you're one of the lucky few who are relatively well balanced you'll probably find you are naturally following some of these practices already.

It is worth bearing in mind that maintaining good digestion and ensuring a clean, fully-functioning colon are the key to physical health, mental well-being, spiritual harmony and the absence of 'dis-ease'. Eating the right foods to balance your body-type is the key to proper digestion. Different body-types require very different foods but once you know your Ayurvedic body-type you can tailor the foods you eat on a regular basis to help keep the mind and body functioning properly and operating in perfect balance. The key is moderation and maintaining an adequate supply of the foods that are good for you and reducing those that aren't so good. Also, the secret of attaining your perfect weight isn't necessarily totally dependant on regulating the amount you eat or the number of calories you consume, but more often the choice of foods you eat, the times at which they are eaten and the manner in which they are eaten.

In chapter two we introduce you to the natural cycles of nature and describe methods that can be utilised for to keep your physiology in alignment with these ever-changing patterns of energy. Although we can't see these energy cycles we can feel their varying 'flavours' as day turns to night or summer turns to winter. We can also witness the unpleasant effects of falling out of alignment with these cycles but, conversely, can also enjoy the pleasure of keeping in tune with the rhythm of these energy flows. The exercise and yoga routines will keep the body supple and free of toxins, while the breathing exercises and meditation will help balance the mind. A balanced mind creates calmness, health and vitality.

Lifestyle and behaviour play another key role in maintaining balance and harmony in your mind and body and again different body-types require slightly different approaches. However, the exercise and yoga routines we've included in this book can be followed by just about anyone and will have a beneficial effect on the health and wellbeing of everyone who is motivated to putting in a little practice each day. You should consult your GP before undertaking any physical exercise if you have, or have had, any medical problems or feel unwell or unfit. As yoga is very popular nowadays it should be relatively easy to find a competent Yoga instructor in your local area who can advise you further and tailor your practice to suit your level of health, suppleness and fitness. However, always remember that yoga is not about pushing, straining and contorting the body un-naturally – each posture should be eased into slowly, gracefully and gently, leaving the body feeling refreshed and invigorated – not worn out and aching. The adage, 'no pain, no gain' has no place in the Ayurvedic Yoga system.

Following our instructions for balancing the breath (pranayama) and settling the mind (meditation) are powerful ways to begin to experience profound levels of inner peace and harmony in a very short space of time. These techniques are now widely accepted as scientifically valid ways to improve health and reduce stress on a deep psychological level. Many large corporations, especially in the USA and Japan, have trained their key staff in these skills to help them cope with the ever-increasing pressures of the modern-day work environment whilst also improving their competitive edge and resourcefulness. Of course there are side-effects – reduced weight, stronger digestion, increased immunity and a peaceful, relaxed mind.

In chapter three we introduce the concept of 'the detox'. From an Ayurvedic standpoint the digestive tract is often the primary source of illness and keeping it balanced and fully-functioning is of utmost importance. Eating the right foods for your body-type with reference to the seasons is the first place to start. However, especially in the west and especially in today's fast-paced society, getting adequate nutrition at the right time of day and in the right environment can be very difficult. To compound this, the food we eat is often refined, processed and lacking in the essential nutrients we need to maintain, let alone improve, our bodies. A 'detox' is designed to gently remove impurities from the body in a way that works in harmony with it. Detoxing should be an enjoyable experience that should leave the body feeling light, vibrant and full of energy – 'no pain, no gain' has no part in Ayurveda. Struggle, strain and

un-natural diets will only imbalance the body further and should be avoided. Detox programs are best done under the supervision of a qualified nutritionist but there is no harm in trying them yourself as long as you stop as soon as you begin to experience any unpleasant 'detoxing symptoms' (headaches, nausea etc).

We've also included an overview of some of the therapies that may be administered during Panchakarma (an Ayurveda detox program). Ayurveda employs a wide range of powerful massage techniques to help rectify imbalances within the physiology, many involving two technicians working in harmony on either side of the body. Most Ayurvedic massages are luxuriously relaxing, to soothe the body and calm the mind, while others are more stimulating, to energise the body and mobilise impurities. Treatment plans are usually individually tailored, so whether you need to relax the mind or purify and revitalise the whole body a suitable treatment package will be prescribed to help bring the body back into balance. However, on a daily basis you can also carry out your own 'mini-massage' – it is simple to do and highly effective in delaying the signs of aging, toning the skin and helping strengthen the immune system. This section will also help you understand the benefits of improving your digestion and keeping your bowels cleansed and healthy for optimum assimilation of nutrients.

As well as herbal oil massages, Panchakarma detox programs also utilise bastis; herbal oil enemas, which scientific studies have shown to increase the effective elimination of impurities by up to sixty percent. They are an essential component if you wish to lose weight, improve complexion or remove long-standing aches and pains from the muscles and joints. If you desire a flatter belly and a healthy glow these are the key to success.

Chapter four contains a glossary of both Ayurvedic and western terminology used to describe the properties of herb and essential oils. It also includes a list of herbal formulas and the conditions they can be used for. Chapter five is dedicated to practical therapies and techniques you can do at home. There is information on nasal cleansing, to unblock the sinuses, and advice on how to cope with allergies. There is also information on joint problems and how they can be rectified, as well as some valuable information and remedies for female related problems.

Chapter six gives practical advice for balancing the mind and resolving emotional conflicts. We've also included a section on Thought Field Therapy, a powerful technique developed by Dr. Roger Challahan, a clinical psychologist from the USA. By utilising this technique you can learn how to 'tap' some powerful meridian points that can relieve some of life's most stubborn obstacles to growth and development such as phobias and fears.

We have included a chapter on mantra chanting for you to experiment with. Many of our clients have had extraordinary results by introducing some of these mantras into their daily lives. We have also included a section of our favourite recipes to give you some idea of the types of meals you can prepare using ayurvedic principles. Each recipe provides a foundation on which you can experiment and adapt to your own particular tastes. Many of these recipes are tri-doshic and therefore suitable for all body-types; especially with the addition of churnas (herb and spice combinations).

Finally, we've included a selection of famous quotes and sayings in which we hope you'll find elements of truth or inspiration relative to your own life path. We trust they will help motivate you move forward on your journey towards a more fulfilling, more healthy, more joyous life.

The 'Resources' section, in the appendices, contains the website addresses for obtaining some of the products, herbs, oils and supplements mentioned in this guide.

Chapter 1

Ayurvedic body-types & nutrition

~ how to live in tune with our constitution & eat a healthy diet ~



Change is not something that we should fear.
Rather, it is something that we should welcome.
For without change, nothing in this world would ever grow or blossom,
and no one in this world would ever move forward
to become the person they're meant to be.

~ anon ~

The Body-Type Questionnaire

The body-type questionnaire that follows should be filled in to help ascertain your predominant Ayurvedic dosha or body-type. Tick any attributes, abilities, conditions and states of mind or afflictions that apply to you. If you are unsure about any of the questions you may wish to consult a friend who knows you well and can perhaps be more objective. In reality the questionnaire is more likely to reveal the particular doshas that are out of balance within your physiology. This is especially so if the bottom half of the Vata, Pitta or Kapha questionnaire pages are ticked in preference to, or as well as, the top half. For a more thorough understanding of your body-type it is best to consult an Ayurvedic practitioner who will also read your pulse.

The questionnaire will also help you understand the traits and physical and mental characteristics of each body-type. Each of us has a unique body-type, usually with one type (dosha) very prominent and one close behind. Thus, a person with many Vata traits (lots of boxes ticked), fewer Pitta traits (less boxes ticked) and very few Kapha traits (few boxes ticked) would be deemed a Vata/Pitta body-type. In this example it could also be that the Vata traits show up mainly in the physical characteristics of the person (right side of page) and the Pitta traits show up mainly in the mental or emotion side of the person (left side of page). Each and every one of us has characteristics of all three doshas in our physiology but one or two of the doshas usually show up more predominantly.

Vata is composed of the elements of ether and air and governs the principle of movement and communication in our physiology. Pitta is composed of the elements of fire and water and governs the principle of energy and transformation in our physiology. It allows us to digest, absorb and assimilate food, liquid and ideas. Kapha is composed of the elements of water and earth and governs the principle of cohesion or structure. It is the 'glue' that holds or binds our physiology together.

It is our unique combination and percentage of each dosha; vata, pitta and kapha, that governs how we interact with the rest of the relative universe. Our unique body-type gives us absolute individuality and once we intimately understand, not only our own but other peoples, body-types we naturally behave more tolerantly and become more gentle, more forgiving and less critical both of ourselves and others. With this understanding comes not only the will and courage to adapt to our own strengths and weaknesses but the ability to keep them in balance and functioning optimally.

Once you have filled in the body-type questionnaire and ascertained your unique Ayurvedic body-type you can then follow the recommendations that follow to help stay balanced and healthy. If you have ticked many of the boxes on the lower part of the vata, pitta or kapha questionnaire pages this indicates an imbalance in that particular dosha. Even if this is not your predominant dosha (most ticks) you should nevertheless balance this dosha first by following the recommendations for balancing that dosha.

Vata body type

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Enthusiastic | <input type="checkbox"/> | Tall |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Outgoing | <input type="checkbox"/> | Short |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Creative | <input type="checkbox"/> | Light weight |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Vibrant | <input type="checkbox"/> | Small/thin boned |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Imaginative | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hard to gain weight |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Flexible/adaptable | <input type="checkbox"/> | Underweight |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Sensitive | <input type="checkbox"/> | Dark/dull skin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Spontaneous | <input type="checkbox"/> | Dry/thin skin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Sociable | <input type="checkbox"/> | Dry/thin hair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Excitable | <input type="checkbox"/> | Dark hair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Active | <input type="checkbox"/> | Small eyes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Learn quickly | <input type="checkbox"/> | Thin eyebrows |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Talkative | <input type="checkbox"/> | Thin/small mouth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Speak quickly | <input type="checkbox"/> | Small teeth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Restless | <input type="checkbox"/> | Irregular teeth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Anxious | <input type="checkbox"/> | Small hands/feet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Worried | <input type="checkbox"/> | Brittle/rough nails |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Fearful | <input type="checkbox"/> | Stiff joints |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Indecisive | <input type="checkbox"/> | Poor circulation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Over-exert | <input type="checkbox"/> | Cold hands/feet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Poor memory | <input type="checkbox"/> | Feel cold easily |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Absent-minded | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sweat very little |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Easily fatigued | <input type="checkbox"/> | Chapped skin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Emotional | <input type="checkbox"/> | Irregular meal times |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mood swings | <input type="checkbox"/> | Low thirst |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Forgetful | <input type="checkbox"/> | Constipation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Poor endurance | <input type="checkbox"/> | Flatulence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Unsettled sleep | <input type="checkbox"/> | Lower back problems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Frequent dreams | <input type="checkbox"/> | Headaches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Disturbing dreams | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sharp pains |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Short sleep | <input type="checkbox"/> | Cramps |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Fast walker | <input type="checkbox"/> | Frequent PMT |

Total:

Total:

Vata (air) qualities:

Light, clear, moving, cold, rough, course, brittle, small

Locations in body:

Colon, bladder, kidneys, bones, legs, feet, rectum

Functions:

Movement, communication, transportation, thought, circulation, respiration, elimination

Pitta body type

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Efficient | <input type="checkbox"/> | Medium build |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Precise | <input type="checkbox"/> | Medium weight |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Orderly | <input type="checkbox"/> | Strong appetite |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Strong intellect | <input type="checkbox"/> | Strong thirst |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Strong-minded | <input type="checkbox"/> | Large eater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Enjoy challenges | <input type="checkbox"/> | Gain/lose weight easily |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Courageous | <input type="checkbox"/> | Thin, fine, straight hair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Perfectionist | <input type="checkbox"/> | Ginger, blond or sandy hair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Good leader | <input type="checkbox"/> | Balding or early greying hair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Organised | <input type="checkbox"/> | Ruddy, rosy skin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Cheerful | <input type="checkbox"/> | Warm, slightly oily skin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Energetic | <input type="checkbox"/> | Many moles/freckles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Enterprising | <input type="checkbox"/> | Good circulation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Conscientious | <input type="checkbox"/> | Warm hands and feet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Determined | <input type="checkbox"/> | Neat, well proportioned teeth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Hard working | <input type="checkbox"/> | Burn easily in sun |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Generous | <input type="checkbox"/> | Prone to acne |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Content | <input type="checkbox"/> | Overheat easily |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Motivated | <input type="checkbox"/> | Prone to fevers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Ambitious | <input type="checkbox"/> | Heartburn/acid stomach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Anger easily | <input type="checkbox"/> | Diarrhoea |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Irritable | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sweat profusely |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Intolerant | <input type="checkbox"/> | Eye complaints |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Forceful | <input type="checkbox"/> | Red, flushed complexion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Stubborn | <input type="checkbox"/> | Prone to ulcers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Impatient | <input type="checkbox"/> | Excessive hunger/thirst |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Demanding | <input type="checkbox"/> | Inflammation in skin & eyes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Critical | <input type="checkbox"/> | Bad breath |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Domineering | <input type="checkbox"/> | Heart problems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Obsessive | <input type="checkbox"/> | Prone to rashes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Aggressive | <input type="checkbox"/> | Difficulty skipping meals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Competitive | <input type="checkbox"/> | Eyestrain |

Total:

Total:

Pitta (fire) qualities: Hot, sharp, fluid, slightly oily, sour, pungent, acidic, light
Locations in body: Stomach, eyes, small intestines, sweat, plasma, lymph, blood
Functions: Transformation, heat production, digestion, metabolism

Kapha body type

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calm | <input type="checkbox"/> Strong body |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stable | <input type="checkbox"/> Firm body |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Even-tempered | <input type="checkbox"/> Strong immune system |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patient | <input type="checkbox"/> Slow digestion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Affectionate | <input type="checkbox"/> Meals easily skipped |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slow to anger | <input type="checkbox"/> Large, round face |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unflappable/tranquil | <input type="checkbox"/> Large, thick lips |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compassionate | <input type="checkbox"/> Large, round, white eyes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very caring | <input type="checkbox"/> Thick, bushy eyebrows |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very tolerant | <input type="checkbox"/> Large hands and feet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very forgiving | <input type="checkbox"/> Thick boned |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very loving | <input type="checkbox"/> Thick skin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very kind | <input type="checkbox"/> Cold, oily skin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very considerate | <input type="checkbox"/> Large, white teeth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home-loving | <input type="checkbox"/> Thick and wavy hair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High pain threshold | <input type="checkbox"/> Pale complexion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservative | <input type="checkbox"/> Soft, smooth skin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Possessiveness | <input type="checkbox"/> Suffer in cold, damp weather |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hoarder | <input type="checkbox"/> Prone to excess weight |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Suffer from boredom | <input type="checkbox"/> Hard to lose weight |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Suffer from deep depressions | <input type="checkbox"/> Easily gain weight |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sleep excessively | <input type="checkbox"/> Lethargic on waking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lethargic | <input type="checkbox"/> Need lots of sleep |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lazy | <input type="checkbox"/> Sleep during day |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overly complacent | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack energy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slow to get going in morning | <input type="checkbox"/> Prone to chest colds/flu |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emotions hidden away | <input type="checkbox"/> Sinus/lung congestion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greedy | <input type="checkbox"/> Prone to asthma/bronchitis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inflexible | <input type="checkbox"/> Prone to allergies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Procrastinator | <input type="checkbox"/> Prone to swelling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dullness | <input type="checkbox"/> Joint/muscle stiffness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self-pity | <input type="checkbox"/> Indigestion |

Total:

Total:

Kapha (earth) qualities:

Slow, steady, stable, sweet, soft, sticky, cold, heavy, dull

Locations in body:

Chest, neck, head, joints, stomach, small intestines

Functions:

Structure, cohesion, lubrication

Understanding Vata, Pitta & Kapha

Vata, pitta and Kapha are known as doshas in Ayurveda; they are the underlying principles that govern the nature, transformation and structure of the physical universe. Each dosha is composed of two of the five elements (ether, air, fire, water and earth) and it is the specific combination of these elements that determines each dosha's characteristic qualities and ultimately their overall effect in nature. Every object in the natural world is composed of the elements of vata, pitta and kapha and it is the relative proportion of each dosha or element that determines its uniqueness and differentiates it from another objects.

Vata is composed of the elements of air and space and its qualities are light, subtle, moving, cold, dry, hard and rough. Vata governs movement in the mind and body. Pitta is composed of the elements of fire and water and its qualities are hot, acidic, sour and sharp. Pitta governs transformation in the mind and body, whether it's the digestion, assimilation and metabolism of food and water into energy or the digestion and assimilation of thoughts and ideas into actions. Kapha is composed of the elements of earth and water and its qualities are heavy, cold, slow, binding, sticky and smooth. Kapha is responsible for the density and structure of our body.

A person with a predominance of Vata dosha walks more quickly, has a lighter build and has colder and dryer skin than someone with a predominance of Pitta or Kapha dosha in their constitution. Vata-type people also tend to have very quick, agile minds and can be very creative. However, if their constitution goes out of balance through excessive movement or irregularity they can suffer from feelings of restlessness, boredom, fear, stress and anxiety. This may manifest in the body as poor circulation, cold hands and feet, constipation and dry skin.

A person with more Pitta in their constitution has a hotter, fierier, more dynamic personality. They have lots of energy, high ambitions, sharp intellects and good leadership qualities. However, if they go out of balance and their innate 'fire' becomes too high they can quickly become angry, stressed and frustrated. They generally have a strong digestive fire and immune system but when they slip out of balance they can develop rashes, ulcers, acid stomachs and heart problems.

A person with a predominance of Kapha dosha in their constitution is generally slower, heavier, calmer and more grounded than either Pitta or Vata. They are caring, loving, forgiving individuals with a placid, easy-going nature. They have strong, solid bodies but can suffer from weight gain, lethargy and heaviness when they are out of balance.

With an understanding of the qualities inherent in the elements that combine to make up the three doshas we are able to keep the doshas in balance in our own bodies and thereby remain healthy, happy and free from dis-ease. Any excessive increase in any of the qualities present in our doshic make-up will tend to aggravate that dosha and will lead to imbalance. To decrease a quality we need to increase its opposite quality. Thus, if we are a predominantly Vata body-type and we become excessively cold or are exposed to noisy, busy environments with excess movement we will soon become imbalanced and un-grounded. If we immediately introduce the opposite qualities of warmth or calmness and quietness we will soon bring ourselves back into a grounded, more balanced state. Similarly, for a Pitta person, who has a predominance of heat, the opposing quality of coldness will bring them back into balance. A Kapha person, who has a predominance of heaviness, will be balanced by the opposing quality of lightness.

I hope the next piece 'The dosha family go shopping' will help you to understand how extreme Vata, Pitta and Kapha body-type people conduct their lives!

The Dosha family go shopping

Characters: Mr Kapha Dosha, Mrs Pitta Dosha, Master Vata Dosha

It's a lovely sunny morning in the beautiful village of Toadbury where the Dosha family are beginning to go about their daily business. Mr Kapha Dosha has volunteered to do the shopping whilst Mrs Pitta Dosha tidies the house ready for the arrival of their friends later that day. Master Vata Dosha isn't quite sure what he's going to do on this particular day but he's rather tired as he's spent most of the night worrying about the gig he's managed to pull off at the Three Shires Inn later that evening. He's busy tuning his guitar but his mind just won't settle and he's afraid that his debut at this important venue will be a complete flop.

In typical Kapha fashion Mr Dosha has woken late again and is still eating his breakfast at 10am. He listens patiently to his wife as she rapidly reels off the shopping list – he's a little distracted by their cat, Pretty Polly, who's in the garden trying to stalk a beady-eyed Blackbird. However, he nods politely and is thankful she's written it all down as usual. He agrees to be back by 11'o' clock at the latest but hasn't any idea what the time is anyway as he's misplaced his watch again for the fourth time in a week. As he steps out of the house he's pleasantly amused by the duelling duo again – the cat is now looking rather angry and slightly embarrassed as the Blackbird she's just attempted to pounce upon has decided to put an end to the silly game. She'd cautiously manoeuvred into her final approach and was all ready to pounce, confident of a delicious reward. However, the Blackbird was keenly aware of the cat's presence and at the last moment had nonchalantly flown to the top of the garage roof, sung a melodious wee tune and then swooped so low over Pretty Polly that she has to duck for cover and almost fell in the goldfish pond in the process.

Mr Kapha laughs heartily and takes a seat by the garden shed to lap up some of the morning sun. He listens to the Robins and Linnets, gazes at the Swallows and Swifts catching flies above him and sighs deeply as aromas from the honey-scented roses gently drift over on the light, warm breeze. He feels a deep gratitude and contentment and gradually dozes off in the sun blissfully unaware of his angry wife approaching. She strides purposefully towards him, her ginger hair flowing wildly behind her. He wakes abruptly, senses the urgency in her angry reproach as he remembers his shopping duty and makes his way to the car. He settles into the car seat, adjusting it slightly to accommodate his somewhat corpulent build, puts on some music and slowly backs the car into the street. As he lazily makes his way to the shops his mind is still in the garden, soaking up the sun and smelling the fresh roses. He finds a convenient parking space, realises he's forgotten the shopping list and strolls to the precinct via his favourite park with the large pink and red Rhododendrons and majestic Cedar trees.

He can't resist the sweet, homely smells of the bakery and stops off to buy some doughnuts. He ambles into the supermarket and is immediately tempted by the fascinating array of meats and cheeses at the deli counter. He chooses a few and tries to remember what Mrs Pitta Dosha had on her shopping list. He wishes he'd remembered it – she'd typed it out very neatly and even arranged it in order of the rows in the store. However, he does the best he can and makes his way home laden with all manner of 'goodies' he feels will please his guests.

His wife has finished all the housework in record time and has even tidied his office and trimmed the bushes in the front garden. However, she's none too pleased at his late return and can't imagine why on earth it's taken three hours to do a tiny bit of shopping and how in the Lord's name he could lose the car in such a small town. On finding he's forgotten to buy almost half the groceries on her list she flies off

into a rage again and slams the door so hard that even the windows in the garden shed rattle a little. She screeches tyres as she zooms out onto the street and is at the shops in ten minutes flat. She parks neatly near the entrance of the supermarket, clears sweet packets and chocolate wrappers out of the car into a nearby rubbish-bin and hurries to the isles. She methodically marches down one isle after another, rapidly ticking off all the items on her list. She jumps the queue at the fast checkout, packs the food in the boot of the car and charges off to the printers to collect some business cards she ordered several weeks before. On her way home she gets the car washed at the local garage, selects some choice flowers to brighten the living room from the tree nursery and calls in at the hairdressers to check her appointment for later that day. She's home within an hour and quickly unpacks the car before making a quick salad for lunch.

Meanwhile Master Vata Doshha has been searching his chaotic room for the song sheets he's been working on for weeks. He finally finds it half-hidden, torn and crumbled under a tee-shirt amongst all the dirty jeans and piles of books by the bathroom door. He's still undecided as to the most appropriate order of play and is completely at a loss regarding whether or not to start with his own song. He's been told repeatedly that it's very good but he thinks that perhaps another song – one that everybody will almost certainly love and be able to identify with would be better. In the frantic flurry of searching he's managed to knock over his guitar and broken a couple of strings which has stressed him even further as he's forgotten to buy any spares.

He asks his Dad if he can borrow the car, half hears the answer and rushes out of the front door. He jumps in the car, knocks the side mirror in passing and then realises he hasn't got any car-keys. He grabs them from the sideboard and hurries out of the house again and then almost runs over the cat as he backs the car out of the driveway. Finally, he stalls the engine as he hits the kerbs on the other side of the road. His erratic driving warrants the attention of a few rather more cautious drivers and their 'honking' and hand-signals agitates him even further.

Once in town he parks haphazardly near the music store and forgets to lock the car. Once in the shop he grabs the guitar strings he needs and then quickly dashes back to the car for his wallet. He fiddles with the remote key fob and is more than a little confused when he finds the car is now locked but presses the remote control once again and unlocks it. In his haste he bangs the car mirror back into place but scuffs his new suede shoes on the kerb as he narrowly misses knocking over a postman.

On his way home he realises he's forgotten to pick up the hair gel he'd intended to buy and turns the car round. His usual supplier is completely out so he's heads to the next village which is also where his friend Joe lives. After picking up some gel and shampoo he heads to Joe's but then realises Joe needs the song sheets which are back at home. He turns round and heads home only to realise that he's almost out of fuel and needs to make a detour to find a garage. He finally arrives home; flies upstairs, grabs the song-sheets and heads back to Joe's. Joe's not in and he's forgotten to bring his mobile and as Joe's number is on the mobile he has no way of finding out where he is. He decides to drive home again and try again later. As he pulls into the driveway he recognises Joe's car and suddenly remembers he had arranged to meet him at 2pm. He scratches the door of his Dad's car on the wall as he gets out and apologises profusely to his friend for being late.

Joe has brought a new tape and it plays soothingly in the background, his mother has made him his favourite cup of Chamomile tea and his father has finally got round to typing out his song sheets and determined the right order of play. His mind settles and he relaxes briefly. His mother takes a relaxingly cool shower, makes herself some peppermint tea and then practices some yoga and meditation for twenty minutes. His father, after much procrastination, goes to their gym in the basement and plays some Wagner while he exercises for half an hour. By four pm all is settled and peaceful at the Doshha household and order is restored once again.

Vata Dosha

Vata governs all movement in the mind and body. It controls the flow of blood, the elimination of waste products, the act of breathing and the movement of thoughts in the mind. It is considered the leader of the three doshas (energies or energetic principles in the body) as Pitta and Kapha cannot move or exist without it. It is therefore imperative that Vata is brought back into balance whenever it is disturbed.

You need to balance the movement of Vata if many of the following conditions are present:

- Your skin or hair is dry, rough and thin.
- You feel cold easily or have poor circulation with cold hands and feet.
- You are chronically underweight and find it difficult to gain weight.
- Your mind is constantly anxious, restless and agitated and you are prone to worry and fear.
- You experience constipation or have frequent flatulence.
- You suffer from insomnia or have unsettled sleep and disturbing dreams.
- You suffer from vaginal dryness or menstrual cramps and PMT.
- You have spells of forgetfulness and absent mindedness.
- You experience discomfort or stiffness in the joints or lower back pain.
- You easily become fatigued and have poor endurance.
-

Tips for balancing Vata:

- Follow a Vata balancing diet favouring cooked foods rather than raw foods and salads.
- Go to bed early bedtime and have lots of rest.
- Diffuse calming and grounding aromatic oils or incense into your home and office. Orange, geranium, lavender, basil, spruce & fir are excellent in this regard.
- Maintain a regular daily routine by integrating the 'Daily Routine' (see later section).
- Give yourself an Abhyanga massage using warm sesame oil each morning.
- Ensure you have regular, daily elimination. Triphala herbal formula helps in this regard.
- Stay warm, especially in cold, windy weather.
- Take gentle walks in the countryside to calm and balance the mind.
- Wear calm, soothing colours such as pastels, green or brown.
- Do not overexert and rest whenever the body becomes tired or over stimulated
- Relax often by practicing meditation, pranayama, Yoga or Tai Chi.
- Chant 'Ram' (pronounced 'rarm') 108 times each day.
- Read light, humorous, feel-good novels and turn the television off one hour before bed.
- Take up walking, fishing, bird-watching or gardening for general relaxation.
- Take up writing, drawing, painting or acting to balance your creative energies.
- Avoid excessive talking and try to have a day of silence each week.
- Wrap up warm and keep dry in the winter - cover your head on cold, windy days.
- Avoid loud, noisy environments
- Rest for short periods throughout the day
- Avoid excessive use of VDU displays

The Vata balancing diet

- Favour warm, hearty, nourishing foods with added butter/oil – favour salty, sour and sweet tastes.
- Try and reduce light, dry, cold foods and pungent, bitter and astringent tastes
- Hot, milky, creamy cereals (wheat, oatmeal or rice), soups and stews are all very good for pacifying Vata.
- All dairy products are good (ideally organic and unpasturised) – milk should always be boiled first.
- Oils are good but favour ghee, coconut oil, olive oil, Udo’s oil, flax/pumpkin oil and sesame oil.
- Reduce your intake of light, dry, cold foods such as crackers, nuts, seeds and salads.
- Take nuts and seeds in small quantities only – they are best freshly ground with oil added.
- Reduce the intake of all bean products except tofu, mung beans, mung dhal and red lentils.
- The best grains are rice and wheat but you can take barley, corn, millet, buckwheat, rye and oats in moderation.
- Favour stewed and well ripened, sweet or sour fruits but reduce the intake of dry or light fruits such as apples, pears, pomegranates, cranberries, and dried fruits (if uncooked). Dried fruits are good if they are cooked after soaking overnight.
- Sweeteners are good (in moderation), especially jaggary, honey, maple syrup and algarve.
- Vegetables should be cooked and not raw. Peas, green leafy vegetables, broccoli, cauliflower, celery, zucchini and potatoes are acceptable in moderate quantities if they are cooked, especially with Ghee or oil and Vata reducing spices but it is best to avoid sprouts and cabbage.
- Hot, nourishing desserts such as apple pie help pacify Vata.
- Eat a substantial breakfast to help improve energy levels throughout the day.
- Herbal teas (camomile, fennel, basil) with a few digestive biscuits are good for Vata energy slumps.
- Avoid stimulants such as coffee and alcohol.
- Sip hot water throughout the day to flush out impurities and balance Vata.
- Warm milk flavoured with ghee, cardamom, cinnamon and nutmeg is excellent before bed.

Vegetables		Fruits		Herbs/Spices	
FAVOUR	REDUCE	FAVOUR	REDUCE	FAVOUR	REDUCE
Asparagus	Broccoli	Apricots	Dried fruit	Basil	Coriander seed
Leeks	Brussels sprouts	Avocados	Un-ripened fruit	Black pepper	Fenugreek
Artichoke	Cabbage	Bananas	Apples	Cardamom	Parsley
Okra	Cauliflower	Berries	Pears	Cinnamon	Saffron
Beetroot	Celery	Cherries	Pomegranates	Clove	Turmeric
Parsnip	Mushrooms	Raisins	Prunes	Cumin	
Olives	Peas	Pineapple	Watermelon	Fennel	
Corn	Peppers	Rhubarb		Ginger	
Butternut squash	Tomatoes	Plums		Liquorice	
Green beans		Peaches		Marjoram	
Peppers		Oranges		Mustard seeds	
Radishes		Lemons		Nutmeg	
Carrots		Grapes		Oregano	
Courgettes		Kiwi		Sage	
Cucumber		Dates		Thyme	
Green beans		Figs			
Leeks		Mangoes			
Pumpkin		Melons			
Sweet potatoes		Papayas			
Turnip		Peaches			
		Plums			

Pitta Dosh

Pitta dosha is made up of the elements of fire and water through which it manifests the qualities of pungent, hot, penetrating, oily, sharp, liquid, spreading and sour. Its primary function is transformation and is the force of metabolic activity in the body associated with the endocrine function, digestion, body temperature, visual perception, hunger, thirst, and skin quality. In Western terms we can categorise the activities of pitta in terms of amino acids, enzymes, bile, hydrochloric acid and hormones. This explains the seemingly contradictory combination of fire and water to form pitta. Pitta exists as water or oil in the body, thus preserving the tissues from the destructive aspect of fire. It resides in the eyes, blood, sweat glands and lymph but its primary site is in the small intestine. Mentally it plays a role in understanding, in digesting sensory impressions.

You need to balance the heat of pitta if many of the following conditions are present:

- Your skin is overly oily and prone to acne.
- You are prone to rashes, fevers or inflammatory skin conditions
- You have excessive hunger or thirst.
- You sweat profusely and have overly hot hands and feet.
- You suffer from infections, excess acidity, ulcers and heart problems.
- You are overly aggressive and prone to anger and frustration.
- You experience loose or hot, watery stools and diarrhoea-type elimination.
- You tend to be overly critical, domineering, obsessive or controlling in nature.
- You experience frequent eyestrain or tension headaches.
- You are going prematurely grey or balding.

Tips for balancing Pitta:

- Follow a Pitta balancing diet and avoid overly hot, spicy or sour foods.
- Avoid very heating substances such as red meat, alcohol and tobacco.
- Avoid excessive fasting and try to eat when you are hungry. Don't skip meals; especially lunch.
- Exercise moderately (short runs or swims) and only when the weather or climate is cool.
- Walk regularly in nature; especially by the sea. Walking in the moonlight is also very beneficial.
- Especially avoid prolonged exercise in very hot climates or environments.
- Keep your head and skin protected and refrain from sunbathing when the sun is hot.
- Reduce your exposure to hot environments such as saunas and steam rooms.
- Cultivate peaceful emotions and spend more time with people who love and fully accept you.
- Avoid and angry or stressed people and try not to argue – aim to agree more often!
- Take the time to be sweet and sociable and find the time to chat, laugh and play.
- Practice moderation and find time for enjoying leisure activities and appreciating natural beauty.
- Avoid overly competitive sports, deadlines and confrontation in general.
- Practice meditation, cooling forms of pranayama and gentle yoga postures.
- Avoid watching too much television and excessive use of computers.
- Massage the head with coconut oil at night.
- Wear cooling colours – blue, purple, green and avoid wearing red colours.
- Drink pomegranate juice or eat pomegranate seeds. Its astringent and bitter quality helps balance pitta, cleanses the liver and blood and works as an excellent heart tonic.
- Drink 30mls of Aloe Vera each morning.

The Pitta balancing diet

- Generally favour warm or cool and refreshing foods with the tastes of sweet, bitter and astringent such as; asparagus, lettuce, broccoli, cucumber, raita, mung dhal, summer squashes, courgettes, cilantro, coconut, cucumber, lime and green salads.
- Avoid very oily, salty, sour, fermented or pungent foods and spices such as chillies, alcohol, pickles, vinegar, hard or pungent cheeses, citrus fruits, sour cream, yoghurt, tomatoes, garlic, onions and chillies as they will aggravate the acid and pitta in the intestines and blood.
- Enjoy sweet, juicy seasonal fruits such as peaches, figs and berries.
- Avoid red meat and favour chicken or fish.
- Most vegetables, beans and lentils are good unless they are cooked with too much oil.
- Favour wheat, basmati rice, oats and barley and take corn, millet and rye in moderation.
- Drink cooling herbal teas such as peppermint, spearmint, rose, coriander or liquorice.
- Ghee is cooling and can be used for cooking and spreading on toast. Coconut oil can also be used for cooking whilst Udo's oil, flax oil or pumpkin oil can be used for salad dressings.
- A nourishing breakfast to balance pitta could include cereal, toast and apple juice.
- Japanese and Chinese type foods and salads are generally good for pitta digestion.
- Always avoid over-eating, especially in the evening.

Vegetables		Fruits		Herbs/Spices	
FAVOUR	REDUCE	FAVOUR	REDUCE	FAVOUR	REDUCE
Asparagus	Carrots	Apples	Apricots	Cardamom	Barbecue Sauce
Broccoli	Garlic	Avocados	Bananas	Coriander	Ketchup
Brussels sprouts	Onions	Sweet Cherries	Berries	Cinnamon	Mustard
Cabbage	Radishes	Coconut	Sour cherries	Dill	Pickles
Cauliflower	Spinach	Figs	Cranberries	Fennel	Salt
Celery	Tomatoes	Grapes	Grapefruit	Fenugreek	Sour dressings
Courgettes		Lime	Papayas	Mint	Spicy dressings
Cucumber		Mangoes	Peaches	Saffron	Vinegar
Green beans		Pears		Turmeric	
Leeks		Pineapple			
Lettuce		Plums			
Peas		Prunes			
Potatoes		Raisins			
Peppers					
Summer squash					

Kapha Dosha

Kapha governs all structure and lubrication or fluid balance in the mind and body. It controls weight, growth, lubrication for the joints and lungs, and formation of all the seven tissues (lymph, blood, fat, muscles, bones, bone marrow or nervous tissue and reproductive tissues).

You need to balance the heat of Kapha if many of the following conditions are present:

- You gain weight easily and find it very hard to lose weight.
- You tend to be overweight.
- You often feel dull, bored and lethargic.
- You lack energy and feel lazy or complacent.
- You experience sinus problems
- You have frequent and prolonged chest colds and flu.
- You suffer from congestive problems
- You suffer from asthma or bronchitis.
- You need lots of rest and sleep long hours.
- You wake up feeling heavy and un-refreshed.
- You find that you are possessive, greedy and over-attached.
- You feel discomfort in cold, damp weather.
- You experience bloating or water retention.
- Your digestion is slow and heavy even when you have only eaten a small meal.
- Your joints and muscles feel stiff and heavy, especially in the morning.

Tips for balancing Kapha:

- Follow a Kapha balancing diet with plenty of spices and pungent, bitter and astringent tastes.
- Skip breakfast if you don't feel hungry.
- Partake in some vigorous exercise each day – running, cycling, tennis, squash or rugby.
- Stay warm in cold, damp weather.
- Be early to bed and early to rise.
- Take time to enjoy warm showers.
- Have a vigorous, dry massage each morning.
- Wear bright colours – orange, yellow, red.
- Decorate your house in warm, bright, vibrant colours.
- Enjoy the sun and spend more time outdoors.
- Partake in exciting activities or adventure holidays.
- Take time out to have fun and meet new people.
- Seek out variety, embrace new experiences and take up a hobby.
- Use stimulating essential oils and incense with warming aromas such as pine, eucalyptus, clove, orange, basil & sage.

The Kapha balancing diet

- Favour warm to hot foods that are light and dry in quality. They should be cooked with minimal fat and water and be predominantly pungent, bitter and astringent in taste.
- Spicy Indian or Mexican food is good for Kapha as long as not too much oil is used in cooking.
- Avoid heavy, oily and cold foods and foods that have predominantly sweet, sour and salty tastes.
- Drink 1 litre of hot water with lemon and/or ginger daily. Have barley tea or post-digestive tea after main meals to cleanse the tissues, improve digestion, give energy and reduce hunger.
- Favour baked, grilled or sautéed food in preference to boiled, deep-fried or steamed food.
- Occasional have small side salads and raw foods to help tone the digestive tract.
- Avoid fried foods and cold cereals at breakfast – stewed fruit or toast with honey is much better.
- Favour barley, buckwheat, quinoa, amaranth, corn, millet and rye and limit oats, rice and wheat. Dry roasting grains in ghee before cooking helps make them lighter on the digestion.
- Increase your intake of vegetables but exclude mashed potatoes, turnips and parsnips.
- Lighter fruits, such as apples and pears are better for Kapha. Reduce heavy or sour fruits, such as oranges, bananas, pineapples, figs, dates, avocados, coconuts and melons.
- Honey is excellent for reducing Kapha but generally reduce other sugar products.
- Spices are all fine but reduce salt as it helps retain water and increases Kapha.
- Limit your intake of milk, butter, ice-cream, biscuits, cakes, chocolate, deep-fried food, white sugar, aspartame, tinned beans, fizzy drinks, yeasted bread, confectionary, sweet fruits, red meat, potatoes, hard or aged cheeses, salt and alcohol.
- Avoid low-fat products as these are highly processed and usually high in sugar.
- Have rice cakes, rye bread, chapattis and corn bread rather than yeast-risen bread.
- Pumpkin and sunflower seeds, almonds and walnuts are good but they should be lightly roasted and then ground before eating.
- Most beans are good as long as they are well cooked.

Vegetables		Fruits		Herbs/Spices	
FAVOUR	REDUCE	FAVOUR	REDUCE	FAVOUR	REDUCE
Asparagus	Butternut squash	Apples	Avocados	Most herbs &	Sugar
Aubergine	Cucumbers	Apricots	Bananas	spices esp.	Aspartame
Broccoli	Courgettes	Berries	Coconut	Black pepper	Tamarind
Brussels sprouts	Olives	Cherries	Dates	Cayenne pepper	Ketchup
Bean sprouts	Potato (mashed)	Cranberries	Figs	Cinnamon	Lime Pickle
Cabbage	Sweet potatoes	Grapefruit	Grapes	Coriander	Mango chutney
Carrots	Tomatoes	Mangoes	Mangoes	Cumin	Mayonnaise
Cauliflower	Turnips	Papaya	Melons	Ginger	Pickles
Celery (raw)		Peaches	Oranges	Fenugreek	Salt
Chicory		Pears	Peaches	Hing	Soy sauce
Corn		Prunes	Pineapple	Liquorice	Yoghurt
Green beans		Pomegranates	Plums	Nutmeg	
Fennel		Raisins		Peppermint	
Lettuce		Watermelon		Turmeric	
Peas					
Peppers					
Potatoes (roast)					
Radish/Spinach					
Swiss Chard					

More on balancing kapha to reduce excess weight

By balancing the kapha energetic principle in our body we will not only reduce excess fat and water but will also increase energy levels, enable the endocrine and digestive system to function better, and create a more youthful appearance. The key factor is to balance digestion as this will help to reduce cravings and normalise appetite.

A Kapha-related weight imbalance is due to a lack of digestive fire (low agni) and low metabolic rate so even though we may eat very small amounts of food, we still tend to gain weight. With this type of imbalance digestive impurities are being created, fat tissue is accumulating in the body and the formation of bone tissue is slowed down due to accumulation of fat tissue. The solution is to increase the metabolic rate and burn up the impurities.

When excess weight accumulates, it blocks nutrient circulation and can aggravate Pitta. This results in excess acid, excess thirst, irritability and an intense appetite for sweet, heavy, cooling foods — the very kind of foods that cause us to gain weight to begin with. The solution is to drink herbalised water containing small amounts of fenugreek, coriander and fennel throughout the day. Fenugreek burns fat and helps absorption, coriander eliminates toxins, and fennel helps with digestion. To make the water, boil one litre of water and pour into a thermos. Add half a teaspoon of ground fenugreek, half a teaspoon of whole coriander seeds and half a teaspoon of fennel seeds. Drink throughout the day. A mixture of one part ground turmeric, two parts ground cumin, three parts ground coriander and four parts ground fennel should be added to vegetables or legumes during cooking to help balance digestion, assimilation and stomach acid.

Exercise is one of the main activities that will help to burn ama and increases circulation and metabolism so an hour of walking, dancing, swimming or light weight training each day will help enormously. Emotional stress is another key factor in kapha imbalances and weight gain and can manifest as eating when you are not hungry or looking for something sweet to pacify a bad mood. Walking in nature, meditation, yoga and pranayama will all help with this situation as will massage and herbalised steam therapies.

Patience is also one of the key factors when attempting to balance Kapha. Kapha moves slowly so follow as many of the recommendations as you can and be confident that your body will gradually respond. Some people respond almost immediately but others may not see drastic changes for many months. However, once the blockages are cleared and the digestion is strong the weight will begin to fall away naturally and quite rapidly. This is not designed to be a fast method to shed pounds but a holistic approach from which you will see satisfying results gradually. Once you have built up your digestive fire and the metabolic processes are balanced, your diet can be more flexible.

On the following page is a list of the most important recommendations for balancing kapha and shedding excess weight. Some of the terms and procedures may be unfamiliar at this point but they will all be explained later in the book.

Recommendations for losing weight

- Follow a 'Kapha reducing' diet.
- Arise around dawn (5-6am) as this increases energy levels and helps reduce ama or toxins.
- Drink a cup of hot water with a slice of lemon on rising in the morning to cleanse the digestive tract of metabolic waste products.
- Massage your head vigorously with coconut oil each morning to sharpen the senses and nourish and strengthen your hair.
- Skin-brush your body each morning to improve blood circulation and help eliminate toxins.
- Massage under your rib cage with a little sesame oil to help improve digestion.
- Practice 'Belly Breath' (see 'pranayama' section).
- Practice fast pranayama 'huh-huh-huh' and chi-uh-ha' sounds (see section on 'healing sounds') to increase energy levels, balance the mind, tone the belly and improve digestion.
- Exercise (jog, swim or cycle) and practice some yoga each morning and evening.
- Practice meditation (20 mins am and pm) to improve mental clarity and increase energy levels.
- Have a ten-minute steam-inhalation session once or twice a week with eucalyptus essential oil. Boil some water and place in a sink or bowl, add a drop of oil, place a towel over your head and gently breathe in the steam. This especially good if you have blocked sinuses or respiratory allergies.
- Use a Neti Pot* with tepid saline water each morning (see section on 'using a Neti pot'). This is also good for reducing congestion in the head and sinuses.
- Use Nasya drops* (two in each nostril) each morning to ease sinus congestion, help prevent colds and heighten dull senses.
- Do not skip meals and eat only when hungry. Eat your largest meal at mid-day and only have a light, easily digestible supper (soup etc). Do not eat after 7pm.
- Take ginger pickle (see recipe section) before each main meal to improve digestion.
- Drink fresh, organic, homemade carrot (10oz), beetroot (3oz) and cucumber (3oz) juice (total of 16oz) with 1-2 tsp Udo's oil for breakfast. Alternative juices include: carrot (10oz) and spinach (6oz) or carrot (11oz) and cabbage (5oz). These can also be taken mid-morning and/or mid-afternoon.
- Decrease your intake of heavy, saturated fats but increase your intake of healthy fats such as flax, hemp, pumpkin or Udo's oil (1-2 tsp daily). This will help reduce food cravings, lower cholesterol and regulate the appetite. Use these oils on vegetables and salads and as salad dressings. However, do not use for cooking or frying but favour minimal amounts of ghee or coconut oil instead.
- Avoid commercial protein powder drinks. Instead eat live protein filled with the intelligence of nature from almonds, walnuts, sunflower seeds, flax seeds, sesame seeds and pumpkin seeds. These should be soaked overnight and ground just before eating (use an equal mix and take two teaspoons per day..
- Have a fluid day each week (see 'mini detox' section – this can be a juice fast or a soup fast). You can follow the rounding program described later in this book for extra benefits.
- Follow a 3-5 day 'Master Cleanse' (see relevant section later in book) every few months.
- Take Triphala tablets* (2-3) before bedtime to cleanse the digestive tract.
- Alternatively take Guggul Plus* to help reduce cholesterol and excess weight and Punarnava Plus* to help with water retention.
- Take Chywanaprash* (a.k.a. Amrit Kalash) twice a day as an immune system booster. It is very high in vitamin C and other anti-oxidants.

* see resources section at end of book (Pukka herbs)

A balanced diet & the six tastes

SWEET	Sugar, milk, butter, ghee, sweet fruit, bread, pasta, grains
SOUR	Yoghurt, lemon, vinegar, wine, soy sauce, grapefruit, aged cheese
SALT	Salt (also in vegetables; especially celery and seaweeds)
PUNGENT	Hot, spicy foods such as pepper, ginger, garlic, cayenne, chilli
BITTER	Leafy greens, olives, turmeric, horseradish, turmeric, fenugreek, nettle, lettuce, aloe
ASTRINGENT	Beans, lentils, dhal, honey, rhubarb, apples, leafy greens, pomegranate, sprouts

The tongue has taste buds which register all the above six tastes. If the body receives all these tastes in each meal it feels satisfied and will not overeat or feel hungry again soon after eating. However, there are far more taste buds that register the sweet as opposed to astringent or sour taste. This is because we do not require equal amounts of each taste. There are more 'sweet' taste buds because this is the taste we require the most of; sweet tasting foods, such as rice and milk, are nourishing and give us protein, energy and vitality. They are heavy and grounding and are required by Vata types much more than Kapha types.

Bitter tasting foods supply many vitamins, enzymes and minerals. They are also detoxifying, reduce water retention and are good as tonics for the liver and blood. Most are cleansing and help take away burning and itching sensations. In excess they can aggravate vata and dehydrate the body. Astringent tasting foods are also diuretic and blood purifiers. They help balance pitta and kapha but in excess can create gas and constipation. Spices are certainly a quick, convenient and flavourful way of incorporating the more unusual bitter and astringent tastes. Salt helps the body retain water and maintains substance and grounding, whilst pungent and sour tasting foods burn up toxins and stimulate the digestion.

As different body-types require different quantities of each taste we must allow our own innate intelligence to determine what combinations it requires in terms of optimum nutrition, especially since this may change on a daily and/or seasonal basis. Our limited modern model of nutrition is continually being updated and adapted as we discover new groups of molecules (such as vitamins, minerals enzymes and proteins) that our body requires to function optimally. It then struggles to determine the appropriate amount of each vitamin, mineral, enzyme or protein our bodies require and in what combinations they should be taken in. The debate will probably go on forever as there are so many variables to consider. However, Ayurveda has a simple solution – simply accept that our own body knows intuitively and instinctively just what it needs at any particular moment. It relays its message through our desire for particular taste combinations and we should follow those impulses for maximum health. Of course, to be sure that these signals are getting through we need to remain relaxed, balanced and fully aware. The life-style recommendations in this book are designed to facilitate this process.

To summarise: the only effective way to reduce the amount of food you eat and to cut down on unhealthy cravings is to include all six tastes in every meal. Furthermore, these six tastes are not required in equal amounts but should be combined in proportions to suit your particular body type.

Vata body-types: Generally require more sweet, sour and salty tastes especially in winter or if stressed. Meals should also be heavy, warm, oily and nourishing (soups and stews are good).

Pitta body-types: Generally require more sweet, bitter and astringent tastes especially in summer. Food should also be slightly heavy and oily and small cold dishes may be included.

Kapha body-types: Generally require more bitter, astringent and pungent tastes, especially in spring or if feeling heavy, lethargic or dull minded. Food should also be light, dry and warm to aid digestion and heavy, oily foods and dairy products should be excluded.

Improving digestion & maintaining health

In the west the majority of people suffer from everyday digestion problems such as gas, bloating, stomach pain, constipation, heartburn, and fatigue after eating. Ayurveda provides simple solutions to these common complaints by considering not only what we eat but how we consume our meals.

To ensure food is properly digested, assimilated and metabolised by the body it is important to follow these guidelines:

- Eat at the times when the body has the necessary enzymes available to cope with the digestion of food. The peak time for enzymatic production is mid-day and this is the time to eat the largest meal of the day. By ensuring that the heaviest foods and largest quantities are eaten at this time, the bodily tissues are able to fully utilise the nutritional value of foods consumed. This helps reduce the amount of food required by the body and reduces food cravings between meals. It also goes a long way to helping reduce weight and maintaining hormone balance. The evening meal should be light as the body produces far less enzymes to help digest food at this period of the day. You should aim to eat at least three hours before going to bed and this should therefore be between 5-7pm.

Have you ever gone out for a late dinner and found that it was a strain to wake up the next morning or that it was difficult to be efficient during the following day? These are often the side effects of improperly digested food. The best way to avoid these problems is to follow nature's prescription of suitable times to eat. When the sun is strongest the digestive fire is also strongest. Agni is associated with the Sun. This is one of the ways ayurveda seeks to connect our mind and body with the environment. As the sun goes down so does our agni. Late night meals interfere with sleep and after 10:00 p.m. the body is working to burn off toxins and continue to digest food from the day. If you eat after 10:00 p.m., the food may cause toxins to accumulate in the system, and as a result the next day you wake up tired. If you are not able to wake up fresh and clear, then it is important to analyze the quantity of food and the time of night you are eating dinner.

- Each meal should be taken in a peaceful, pleasant environment and should not be consumed when irritated, angry or stressed as this hinders the digestive process and leads to bloating, gas and the build-up of toxins in the gut. Excessive talk or a noisy environment hinders the digestion and leads to undigested food remaining in the body causing wind and bloating. Watching television or reading during eating can also have similar effects. Our bodies need an uplifting and settled environment in order to process and absorb the nutrients from our meals. If that is not available then we should at least be sitting down to eat - not standing, walking or driving. The act of eating is life-giving. The process of eating, according to ayurveda, is something reverent and important for the development of consciousness as well as our physical health. When we sit down to eat our stomach is in a relaxed posture and our awareness is on the taste, texture, and smell of the food. This will greatly improve the digestion.
- Whilst it is important to drink between 1-2 litres of water per day, liquid should not be consumed half an hour before or one hour after eating as this ensures that the digestive enzymes responsible for digesting food aren't diluted by excessive water intake. It is, however, useful to sip small amounts of hot water with a meal as this aids the digestive process. Ayurveda recommends taking a small cup of 'Post-digestive' tea (see 'herbal teas') to help with the digestive process. Hot water with fresh ginger, lemon, fennel seeds or mint leaves should be sipped throughout the day.
- The next ayurvedic recommendation also addresses agni. Ayurveda recommends avoiding cold drinks at meals and ice cold foods in general. This is like putting cold water on the burning logs. Iced water,

normally served at restaurants, extinguishes the digestive fire. Even juice or milk right out of the refrigerator is too cold for the digestion. Juice should be taken at room temperature and water without ice. Once you get into this habit of drinking beverages at room temperature you will notice a dramatic improvement in your digestion and the way your body feels while eating and after the meal. Cold drinks and foods mixed with warm cooked foods can cause stomach cramps, bloating and general discomfort in the stomach area. If you have a pitta imbalance you can take cool drinks in-between meals. Cold or frozen foods are not recommended for pitta either because even though they may temporarily cool down the heat, the agni is still being over stimulated and the imbalance will continue. Try slightly cool drinks made with rose water, or milk blended with dates or fresh mangos.

- Avoid caffeine, alcohol and carbonated soft drinks and switch to life-giving, vitality-boosting beverages. Water, that most basic yet most overlooked elixir of life, helps to rehydrate the system and flushes toxins from the body. Water that has been boiled and cooled has the added healing element of fire in it. Adding herbs and spices suited to your physiology or designed to correct a specific imbalance can enhance the healing quality of the water you drink. At bedtime, drink a cup of warm milk (boil and cool it for added digestibility) blended with a spoonful of ghee, a pinch of ginger, a pinch of cardamom and a pinch of nutmeg will aid sleep.
- Cut down on sugar, wheat, coffee, tea, alcohol and red meat as these hinder the digestive process, leach nutrients and water from the body or block the uptake of nutrients from food. This is especially so with sugar as this 'feeds' the 'bad' bacteria in the gut and helps them multiply – this leads to candida, bloating, wind and indigestion.
- Another way to improve the digestion is to stimulate the agni or digestive fire before we begin eating. Weak digestive agni may result in fatigue after eating so Ayurveda recommends eating a one inch piece of fresh ginger with a few drops of lemon juice and a few pinches of salt on it before a full meal. This starts to activate the salivary glands, producing the necessary enzymes so that the nutrients in the food are easily absorbed by the body. See 'Ginger Pickle' recipe.

Balancing your digestive agni is a key principle in Ayurvedic medicine. That's why ayurveda recommends a number of general practices for better digestion. Digestive agni can be compared to a burning fire. If the flame is very low than it will take a long time to cook the food. In the same way if the fire is too big it can burn the food. If we put a huge log on a low fire it will extinguish it. Our digestive fires should be balanced so that we can digest our meals efficiently and smoothly.

- Ideally, each main meal should provide the six tastes of bitter, sweet, pungent, astringent, sour and salty. This ensures the nutritional requirements of the body are met and reduces the need for snacking and over-eating. Specific mixtures of herbs or 'churna's' may be added during cooking or sprinkled over food to ensure a balance of the six tastes in each meal (see 'churna' recipes). Spices not only add flavour and aroma; they also bring therapeutic value to the meal. They help boost natural immunity, and most of them boost the digestion so that the body is better able to absorb and assimilate the nutrients from the foods you eat.
- Start the day with a stewed apple and raisins as this is light, warm and nourishing and breaks the fast of the night slowly. The digestive system needs warm, nourishing foods in the morning to stimulate it, but not too much. The digestive fire is just waking up, and will be at full capacity when the sun is high in the sky, at noon. Heavier proteins and larger amounts of food are best digested later in the day. A stewed apple also helps your elimination system, because it is easy to digest and contains lots of fibre. It also contains vitamins, trace minerals, and antioxidants. This is also a good recommendation for weight loss as anything that is light on the digestion, and adds nutrients rather than empty calories, helps burn body fat.

- It is important not to eat if there is no hunger/appetite present. Often the feeling of ‘needing something’ to eat is really a need for liquid intake – try and listen to the body’s signals. Often the body needs smaller, easily digestible soups and fruit/vegetable juices rather than a ‘full-blown’ meal, to gain energy and vitality.
- Eat slowly and always chew your food well - many digestive enzymes are added from the salivary glands and these are stimulated by the action of the jaw. Food that enters the stomach should be ‘soup like’ as the stomach has no teeth to do this for you.
- At the end of a meal it is beneficial to wait for five minutes before taking seconds or a desert as this gives the body time to register fullness and to indicate whether it requires more. You should leave the table feeling light, refreshed and energetic. If you feel heavy and tired after eating this is an indication that you have eaten too much or that the food you ate was nutritionally poor. Allow five to ten minutes before leaving the table and then take a short walk for ten to fifteen minutes to aid the digestive process.
- Food consumed should always be of the highest quality. Fresh, organic food is best and all refined, processed food is best avoided. Colour, taste and presentation are as important as nutritional content as the pleasure we get from smelling, seeing and tasting food determines the abundance of enzymes necessary for proper digestion.
- If raw foods are eaten these should be taken at the beginning of the meal and always in small quantities (less than one third of the total meal content). Whilst raw food contains an abundance of vitamins and enzymes the body finds it harder to break these down than cooked food and this can lead to severe digestive problems, especially if the body is already under stress and the digestion is working less than optimally. The best cooking method is to lightly steam vegetables as this ensures minimal loss of enzymes and maximum retention of nutrients.
- According to Ayurveda sweet, fruit deserts should be taken at the beginning of a meal rather than at the end. Sweet tastes satisfy hunger and quench the appetite and therefore reduce the need for large amounts of food. Fruit that is left sitting behind the main meal waiting to be digested (up to six hours) can ferment and produce large amounts of gas and bloating. This destroys the ‘good’ digestive flora and encourages the production of ‘bad’ digestive flora/bacteria.
- To properly digest a meal the stomach should be no more than a third full. A third should contain food, a third the liquid you have been consuming before the meal and a third air or space. This allows the digestive juices to fully break down the food contained there.
- Another ayurvedic tip for digestion is to drink a fresh yogurt drink called Lassie either during or after the meal. This drink consists of 1/4 cup fresh homemade yogurt, 1 cup room temperature water and sugar to taste. Blend it for one minute in the blender. Lassie is light and contains lactobacilli, necessary bacteria that lubricate the intestines to help digestion go smoothly. Lassie drinks help to reduce gas and bloating. They also taste delicious and can make a meal more satisfying and nutritious. See ‘lassie’ recipes.
- Adequate intake of essential fatty acids (omega 3,6,9) will help reduce cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity. These can be found in fresh deep-sea fish such as mackerel, sardines and salmon and in many freshly-ground nuts and seeds. However, the best way to ensure an adequate intake is by adding oil to your food. Olive oil is good but flax oil, pumpkin oil and borage oil are better. Better still is a specially formulated blend called ‘Udo’s oil’ (see ‘Savant’ in the resources section) which contains all the essential fatty acids or omegas in their ideal ratios for optimum health and nutrition.

- Fruits and vegetables contain lots of phyto-nutrients, and a variety of senses-pleasing colours, tastes and textures. Ayurveda has always recommended eating lots of fruits and vegetables, not only for their nutritional value, but also because they are natural internal cleansers. Modern research concurs that fruits and vegetables are powerful disease-prevention foods - in fact, it is now recommended that you eat nine servings of antioxidant-rich fruits and vegetables a day to prevent cancer and other free radical induced diseases.
- Eat naturally intelligent foods. Almost three-quarters of the products sold in supermarkets contain genetically modified ingredients and many of the chemicals and pesticides used in growing foods have been linked to numerous diseases. Processed foods, genetically modified foods, and foods to which additives or artificial preservatives have been added are no longer alive with the intelligence of nature. According to ayurveda, the human physiology is a reflection of the laws of the universe, and the more in tune our lives are with nature, the healthier we are likely to be. Our digestive system is designed to process foods that are closest to nature - whole grains, pulses, fruits and vegetables. Help your digestion function optimally by choosing organic foods whenever possible - your health is worth the extra cost.
- Cook your food correctly. The purpose of ayurvedic cooking is to combine the intelligence of the spices, the intelligence of vegetables and the intelligence of the fat - all the different enzymes and energetics - in a way that is not confusing for your body's intelligence to break down and incorporate. Ayurvedic cooking methods are easy on the digestive system. You can prepare ayurvedic vegetables in one of two ways. The first way is to steam the vegetables and then add the spices which have been sautéed in ghee, coconut oil or olive oil. The second way is to sauté the spices in ghee, coconut oil or olive oil and to then add the vegetables and sauté for a few minutes. Cover and cook at low temperature. If you are making a curry (vegetables with sauce), add a small amount of water to finish cooking the vegetables
- Give your digestive system a break. According to ayurveda, the build up of ama or toxins in the physiology is the root cause of most disorders. That's why ayurveda recommends internal cleansing at the change of each season for optimal health. During internal cleansing, eat light yet nourishing foods such as mung bean soup or kicharee and drink lots of warm water or 'Detox Tea' through the day. See 'teas' in recipe section. Fresh, sweet juicy fruits are excellent cleansers. Periodic internal cleansing gets rid of accumulated junk from inside the body and boosts the digestion for the next season.
- Triphala is an excellent aid to elimination and purification and will help strengthen and purify the digestive/immune system. It is best taken in the late evening. A herbal paste called Chywanaprash is also excellent in this regard.
- Water is essential for good, digestion, ridding the body of toxins, maintaining immunity and healthy skin. When the water is herbalised it has an even stronger, more beneficial action.
For kapha types: To a thermos of boiled water, add 2 thin slices of fresh ginger root, 2 basil leaves, 2 whole cloves, 1/2 teaspoon of whole cumin seeds and 2 pinches licorice powder. Sip hot, during and after meals.
For pitta types: 2 pinches of Indian sarsaparilla powder, 1/4 teaspoon cumin seeds, 2 pinches of licorice powder, 1/2 teaspoon fennel seeds and 1/2 teaspoon of coriander seeds. Drink at body temperature throughout the day, alternating with plain boiled water.
For vata types: 1/2 teaspoon whole cumin seeds, 1/2 teaspoon whole coriander seeds, 1/2 teaspoon fennel seeds, 3 pinches of ashwagandha root powder and 1 pinch whole root licorice powder. Drink warm.

- Exercise each day as your body craves routine. If you exercise at fifty percent capacity at the same time every day, eat at the same time and sleep at the same time, your body will respond with better digestion, better sleep and overall better immunity. Yoga, walking, cycling, dancing and swimming are all excellent in this regard. The way to tell if you are exerting more than fifty percent capacity and starting to exceed your capacity is if sweat starts to form on your nose, forehead or under the arms. Another sign is if you can no longer breathe through the nose. Breathing through the nose is recommended for ayurvedic exercise. If you start to need to gulp air through the mouth, it's time to slow down or stop. If you follow this one guideline, you will always feel energized by exercise instead of exhausted. Each day, you will find that your capacity increases and that you can exercise more intensely or for a longer duration. Very naturally you will be able to handle more exercise without ever straining.
- The practices of meditation, chanting and pranayama will also help balance the mind, subtly tone the body, improve digestion and massively reduce stress.
- Retiring to bed early and waking early is necessary for the maintenance of hormone balance in the mind and body – this creates happiness and a stress-free mind; the prerequisite of proper digestion.
- Better relationships are formed when the mind and body are in harmony. The beauty of Ayurveda is that it takes into account all areas of life. While you may think that your problems with relationships start with the other person, the fact remains that you can change only yourself. Most relationships go wrong when the people involved start blaming each other. If you stop and look within, you will surely find that blame doesn't always lie with the other person. At the basis of all relationships is the human heart. The heart is the seat of Sadhaka Pitta, the sub-dosha of Pitta concerned with emotions. To use modern terminology, Sadhaka Agni is related to the neuro-hormones that are located in the brain and all over the body, including the heart. The neuro-hormones located in the heart send signals to the brain to register depression or happiness, depending on how the individual processes an experience.

It is important to understand and thereby respect the special psycho-emotional makeup of others. Rather than blame others for reacting differently than we do, it's better to develop understanding and tolerance, based on the knowledge of Ayurvedic mind-body types. If you are feeling irritated with someone, it's best to look to your own physiology rather than blame him or her. Once we start to live more in harmony with nature we are naturally more tolerant and forgiving. Good digestion not only positively effects our physical health but our mental and emotional health as well but. This also works the other way round; better relationships create better digestion, better health and a happier life.

Other nutritional considerations

Water

Water is essential to life. It has many healing properties and contributes up to 70% of our body weight. It keeps the skin soft, supple and free of wrinkles, removes inorganic mineral deposits, flushes out toxins, prevents constipation, protects against viruses/infections and helps remove cholesterol and excess fat. The type of water we drink today, and the insufficient amounts consumed, contribute to arteriosclerosis, illness and premature aging. Unfortunately tap water often contains the residues or homeopathic concentrations of modern drugs and hormones which are not removed during the filtration process at sewage plants. It may also contain toxic chemicals such as chlorine and fluoride. Even today's naturally distilled water, rain, is often polluted by our industrial technology. Bottled water, water filters water purifiers, water coolers, water softeners, reverse osmosis systems and water distillers may help rectify this situation. However, whilst distilled water contains only pure H²O - water that is free from harmful inorganic compounds, toxic chemicals, bacteria and viruses - the electricity and heat used to produce it may reduce its 'life-energy' or prana.

We should ideally drink between 1 - 2 litres per day depending on our body-type. Just as we use hot water to soften and dissolve impurities and fat from our dishes, pots and pans so too should we use it to detoxify our body. Cold water hardens and congeals fat in our body whilst hot water softens and dissolves fat. Cold water slows down our digestive capabilities and hinders digestion whilst hot water speeds up our metabolism and helps the digestive process. Body or room temperature water is relatively neutral and preferable to cold water consumption. Water combined with tea or coffee acts as a diuretic and should be followed by an equal amount of plain water to prevent dehydration. Adding a slice of lemon or ginger to our hot water can help the cleansing process and further improve digestion.

Table Salt (sodium chloride)

Table salt is subject to very high temperatures during the refining process which hardens the grains and allows them to flow more easily - it also renders them virtually insoluble in water and difficult for the body to metabolise. This can cause water-logging of our tissues, increased blood pressure and encrustation of the arteries, veins and capillaries. We should therefore reduce the use of refined table salt and favour natural salts such as unrefined sea salt, black or rock salt instead. Kelp and other seaweeds are also excellent sources of organic sodium as are many vegetables; celery being especially good.

Meat Products

Meat is often high in saturated fats and cholesterol, both of which may contribute to clogging of the arteries. It can also contain dangerous microbes such as salmonella and E.coli, as well as many residual antibiotics and steroids. Red meat in particular is very heating to the body and very difficult to digest. It is best to obtain our protein from grains, cereals, soya products, pulses, lentils, nuts and seeds. However, if meat forms a large part of your diet; eat organic, favour chicken and fish and ensure an adequate supply of fresh fruit, pure water and vegetables.

Processing and Refining Foods

These modern techniques reduce the nutritional value of foodstuffs by as much as 95%. Many have sugar or salt added to improve taste or prolong shelf life, while others contain inorganic minerals, flavouring and synthetic additives. The body cannot utilise these harmful substances and wastes a great deal of energy in its attempt to expel them from our body. Consuming vast quantities of these products inevitably leads to ill health and premature aging as the body builds up toxic substances it has failed to eliminate.

Carbohydrates, Oils and Fats

These play an essential role in our body and are responsible for our energy levels, tissue repair, hormone production and vitamin assimilation. Fast releasing carbohydrates such as refined white sugar are best avoided

while slow releasing carbohydrates found in whole-grains, fruit and vegetables are vital for proper cell-to-cell communication and tissue functioning. Oils high in linoleic acid and/or alpha-linoleic acid are essential to the body. Hemp, Flax, Pumpkin, Walnut, Udo's and Soya bean oil are excellent with Sunflower, Safflower, Sesame, Rice Bran and Evening Primrose coming a close second. Again, the refining and processing of these oils destroys their life-enhancing properties and renders them harmful to the body. It is best to try and obtain organic, unrefined, cold-pressed oils whenever possible and to remember that only small quantities are required by the body each day for optimum health and vitality.

Vitamins and minerals

Whilst the body requires an abundant supply of vitamins and minerals it is generally accepted that the soil our food is grown in is no longer as effective in supplying these nutrients as it once was. Our soils are over-used and crop rotation has become a thing of the past so nutrients are taken out but not returned.

Non-organic produce is further disadvantaged by the fact that the pesticides, fungicides and insecticides, used to help increase production, prevent the plants from producing many of the nutrients in the quantities that we require for good health. Fertilisers may be added to the soil but these again are mainly inorganic and do not possess the wide spectrum of minerals required for good health – if certain minerals are not put back into the soil the plant will no longer possess them in its make-up and we will therefore no longer have them in our diets.

However, supplementing our diet with vitamin and mineral supplements may have limited effect and may even be detrimental to our health. Firstly, most supplements are inorganic and have been synthetically produced in a laboratory – this means that they will lack the essential 'life-energy' that we only receive from 'live' plants and our body may have limited capacity to use the lifeless nutrients contained within them. Many people have reported that some supplements they have taken come straight out the other end with the manufacturer's details still visible on the tablet! Secondly, it is practically impossible to replicate nature and finding the right 'blend' of nutrients to ensure that they go to the right place in the right amounts and produce right effects is nigh on impossible too. Thirdly, we all have different body-types and therefore different vitamin/mineral requirements so no one pill will suit all people. What may be beneficial for one person may be detrimental to the next and cause further toxicity in the body.

The only way to really guarantee we ingest all the nutrients we need in their correct form, combination and quantity is to eat the correct foods, ie; fresh, organic produce. If we were to eat the recommended five servings of organic fruit, vegetables and grains per day and vary the type of produce we choose each day this would go most of the way towards ensuring better health. If we were also to choose foods suitable for our body type this would help still further. If we were to increase the amount of fruit and vegetables we ate each day by supplementing our diet with freshly prepared vegetable juices, which are very easy to digest, we would be eating as healthily as is possible in today's world.

Leafy Greens

Dark leafy green vegetables such as collard greens, spinach, swiss chard, mustard greens, bok choy greens, sorrel, turnip greens and many varieties of kale are considered a particularly nutritious class of vegetables. They contain important minerals such as calcium, magnesium, iron, potassium, vitamin A, vitamin K, vitamin B1 and vitamin B2. Ayurveda recommends that we have some leafy greens each day to help meet the nutritional requirements for optimal health.

Leafy greens help replenish liquid in the body and refresh and purify the subtle channels called shrotas. They also supply prana or life energy that provides sustenance to mind and body. They help balance pitta and kapha. People who need to balance vata should eat them prepared with ghee or olive oil and vata balancing spices. They are very beneficial for people suffering from skin problems as they are cooling, gently purifying and nourishing for the skin. Due to the high mineral content of calcium and vitamin A, leafy greens are highly beneficial for reproductive health and menopause. They contain antioxidants that help to prevent aging and disease.

There are different methods of cooking leafy greens. Some are tender and cook very quickly whilst others, such as kale, may need cooking longer. It is best to keep the leaf part whole when cooking. However, if there are tough stems, such as on collard greens and kale, then it is best to slice the stem into bite size pieces. The tough stem should be cooked until tender or it may cause abdominal discomfort.

Genetic engineering

This technology involves inserting genetic material from animals, insects, virus's and other organisms into the DNA of food products such as corn, soybeans, and tomatoes. From an Ayurvedic perspective nature's innate organizing power or intelligence is woven into the DNA and determines the characteristics of different species. By splicing foreign genetic material into the DNA of a plant, the plant's fundamental connection with the wholeness of life is damaged. This damage gets passed on to us at the dinner table.

The ayurvedic texts define the source of all disease and suffering as pragyaparadh, or "the mistake of the intellect." This occurs when individuals (or even single cells) "forget" their connections with the wholeness of life and believe themselves to be isolated entities. Creating, and then eating, genetically engineered foods exposes us to pragyaparadh.

We are all threads in the fabric of creation, say ancient ayurvedic texts. To believe ourselves to be the weavers, capable of successfully manipulating nature's intelligence, is a symptom of pragyaparadh and this assumption reveals our ultimate naiveté. The genetic program of a living organism is vastly more powerful and more complex than limited human intelligence.

Therefore, consuming genetically food exposes us to unknown forces that may seriously damage the fine tuning and functioning of our physiology and cause long-tem chronic health problems.

The adverse effects of eating microwaved food

Microwave cooking is one of the most important causes of ill health but has largely been ignored by the public due to its speed and convenience. Russian research concerning adverse neurological effects of altered magnetic states of microwaved foods caused the Russian government to outlaw all food microwave apparatus in 1976 (this law was unfortunately lifted after Perestroika).

Another study reported in the US journal Paediatrics (vol. 89, no. 4, April 1992) showed depletion of antibodies and breakdown of enzymes when breast milk is microwaved. The US Food and Drug Association also found a problem with the release of potentially toxic molecules into the food from packaging designed to help brown food during microwaving.

Microwaves also tend to heat foods unevenly, indicating that some of the food is not sufficiently heated to kill all the bacteria or parasites that might be present. This uneven heating also creates hot spots in food that may release synthetic oestrogens found in certain plastics. But even when using only glass (Pyrex) containers, low levels of radiation escaping from the ovens may be harmful.

Two researchers, Dr. Bernard H. Blanc and Dr. Hans Hertel, confirmed that microwave cooking significantly changes food nutrients and has a detrimental effect on the human body. Their research revealed the following about microwaved food:

- The body cannot recognise and consequently not metabolize radiolytic byproducts (isomers) created in microwaved food. These by-products accumulate in the body.
- Male and female hormone production is altered by continually eating microwaved food.
- Minerals, vitamins and nutrients are quantitatively reduced and qualitatively altered, so that the body gets little or no benefit, and absorbs these altered compounds that cannot be broken down.

- The minerals in vegetables are altered into cancerous free-radicals.
- Microwaved food causes stomach and intestinal tumours as well as cancerous cells in the blood.
- The prolonged eating of microwaved food causes increase of low-density lipoprotein cholesterol.
- Continually eating food processed in a microwave oven gradually causes brain damage by de-polarising or de-magnetising brain tissue.
- Continual ingestion of microwaved food causes immune system deficiencies through lymph gland and blood serum alterations (increase of white and decrease of red blood cells).
- Eating microwaved food causes loss of memory and concentration, emotional instability and a decrease of intelligence.

Microwaved blood kills patient

In 1991, there was a lawsuit in Oklahoma concerning the hospital use of a microwave oven to warm blood needed in a transfusion. The case involved a hip surgery patient, Norma Levitt, who died from a simple blood transfusion. It seems the nurse had warmed the blood in a microwave oven. This tragedy makes it very apparent that there's much more to "heating" with microwaves than we've been led to believe. Blood for transfusions is routinely warmed, but not in microwave ovens. In the case of Mrs. Levitt, the microwaving altered the blood and it killed her. It's very obvious that this form of microwave radiation "heating" does something to the substances it heats. It's also becoming quite apparent that people who process food in a microwave oven are also ingesting these "unknowns". Because the body is electrochemical in nature, any force that disrupts or changes human electrochemical events will affect the physiology of the body.

Also, from an Ayurvedic perspective, food cooked in this unnatural way lacks prana or 'life-energy' and has little usefulness as part of a healthy balanced diet. However, whichever way you look at it, there appears to be very serious concerns regarding the safety of eating food cooked in micro-waved ovens and therefore subject to high frequency, alternating current electromagnetic waves. Should you be the owner of such a dangerous gadget we recommend that you give it to the nice men at the recycling centre and don't just give it to someone else!

Summary of healthy dietary principles - all body-types -

- Eat only when you are hungry (sometimes only a drink is required to satisfy a craving).
- Eat breakfast to help prevent a mid-morning energy slump (especially Vata types).
- Drink a glass of fresh, organic fruit/vegetable juice each day (esp; carrot, apple and spinach).
- Don't mix fruit and vegetables juices apart from carrot and apple.
- Eat the largest meal at mid-day – this is when the digestive fire is at its strongest.
- Take 'Ginger Pickle' (see recipe section) half an hour before each meal.
- Sit down whilst eating and put your full attention on the food being eaten - do not divide the mind and weaken the digestive juices by excessive talking, reading or watching television. Always be conscious of the taste of food and the act of eating and try and eat in a settled, peaceful environment.
- Eat only food that is attractive, wholesome, aromatic and tasty - this ensures proper digestion.
- Eat fresh, organic food whenever possible and always avoid processed and refined products.
- Try to avoid lifeless, nutrient-poor food such as micro-waved, pre-cooked, left-over or canned.
- Favour unprocessed, unrefined oils such as Udo's, flax, pumpkin, ghee and olive oil.
- Use honey, maple syrup, fructose, algarve and stevia extract for sweetening.
- Reduce the use of refined sugar, salt, white flour, hard cheese and processed or micro-waved food.
- Try and avoid tea, coffee, alcohol, pastries and meat. If you do eat meat try and choose white meat or fish in preference to red meat as they are easier to digest.
- Use soya, rice, almond, hazelnut or oat milk as a substitute for pasteurised cow's milk.
- Sip hot water during a meal but refrain from taking any liquids for up to half an hour before and after food. This ensures that the stomach's digestive enzymes do not become diluted.
- Drink one to two litres of mineral/distilled water or herbal teas daily. Ginger, lemon, peppermint, fennel, coriander and the digestive teas (see recipe section) are good.
- Drink hot water with fresh lemon or fresh ginger to reduce weight and/or eliminate toxins/impurities.
- Eat fruit separately from main meals to prevent fermentation in the gut.
- If you are a Pitta type, or even a Kapha type with good digestion, you can include a small salad and dressing before your main mid-day meal in the summertime.
- Always chew your food thoroughly – this stimulates the salivary glands and also ensures food reaches the stomach in a pre-digested, liquid form that is easier to digest and assimilate.
- Avoid over-eating – rest and relax for a few minutes before taking a second helping.
- The amount of chewed food that will fit into your cupped hands is equal to the size of a third of your stomach. Your digestion system works at its best when your stomach contains one third food, one third liquid and one third space at the end of a main meal.
- Leave the table feeling sated but not heavy and bloated – energy levels should feel replenished.
- Take a short stroll after a large meal, and then a short rest afterwards if desired
- If you are a Vata type and experience flagging energy during late afternoon, stop and have a small snack or fruit juice.
- Eat at least three hours before bed and only have a light meal of cereal, toast or soup.
- Vata types benefit from milky bedtime drink with added ghee, cinnamon, nutmeg and raisins.
- Aloe vera juice is good for everyone but it is especially beneficial for those suffering from pitta imbalances. It is good for digestion, cleansing and elimination. Take about 30mls of the juice each day.
- Turmeric is both bitter and astringent and is a blood purifier and antioxidant. One teaspoon cooked with your meals is an excellent way to increase antioxidant intake. Vata people should use half this amount as it can sometimes be too drying and depleting for them.

The day starts the night before.

An early night ensures deep, refreshing sleep.

Deep, refreshing sleep ensures one wakes early - rested and revitalised.

Waking early - rested and revitalised - ensures time for massage, yoga and meditation.

Massage, yoga and meditation ensure the mind and body are awake and alive.

Mind and body - fully awake and alive - ensure a happy countenance.

A happy countenance ensures a stress-free mind.

A stress-free mind creates a positive mind.

A stress-free, positive mind imparts love and peace to those around.

An atmosphere of love and peace creates a wave of harmony throughout the room.

A wave of harmony throughout the room creates a wave of harmony throughout the house.

A wave of harmony throughout the house creates a wave of harmony throughout the city.

A wave of harmony throughout the city creates a wave of harmony throughout the country.

A wave of harmony throughout the country creates a wave of harmony throughout the world.

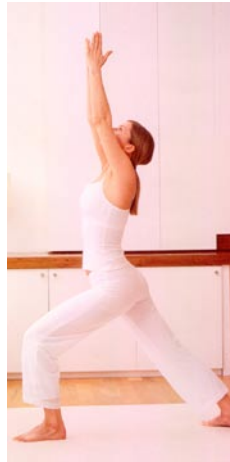
The peace and harmony of every individual in every town, in every city, in every country is in your power and their happiness rests in your arms. If you are fully awake in the present moment, having learnt from and let go of the past, the future will take care of itself. You simply need to bathe in the joy of being fully alive in every present waking moment.

And the real beauty is – you can start today.

Chapter 2

Daily routines, exercise & yoga

~ how to stay fit & supple & delay the process of aging ~



Whenever the wavering and unsteady heart wanders away,
then so often let him subdue it and bring it back to the control of the soul;
For supreme happiness comes to the yogi whose heart is at rest,
in whom passion is tranquilised, who is one with Brahma, and free from sin.

The Yogi thus uniting his soul, who has ceased from sin,
enjoys easily the boundless happiness of union with Brahma.

~ Bhagavad Gita ~

(Ch6:v26-29)

Dinacharya

- living in harmony with nature's rhythms -

Dinacharya, the Sanskrit word for daily routine, is a simple and effective way to balance the body. Our daily activities have a profound effect on our health and a routine, practiced daily, is stronger medicine than an occasional remedy. Dinacharya establishes healthful habits through attunement of the body to the natural cycles of the day. The three doshas, vata, pitta and kapha, each have their own periods of time within a twenty-four hour day in which their energies predominate. By establishing a routine that “goes with the flow ” of these elemental energies, we are able to more easily support the body 's natural rhythms and healing potential.

Waking

The first Vata period of the day ends around dawn with the first rays of sunlight. At this time of day Vata qualities are at their strongest and if we arise between 4–6am we will imbibe the positive qualities of alertness, vibrancy, enthusiasm, energy, clarity, strengthened intuition and motivation. It is the most sattvic, peaceful, and still time of day and is an ideal time for spiritual practice. If there are time constraints we can simply take a few deep breaths and adopt an attitude of gratitude for waking up to an exciting new day.

Elimination

Our bladder and colon should be emptied upon rising. To facilitate this practice we can drink a glass or two of warm water with a slice of lemon added. This helps rehydrate the tissues, flush toxins that have accumulated overnight, enkindles agni or digestive fire and stimulates peristalsis.

Cleansing the senses

Ayurveda recommends purifying the senses each day in preparation for taking in all the rich, new experiences that life has to offer. Refresh and energise the mind by splashing the face and eyes with cool or luke-warm water. Gently wash the ears and apply a thin coat of sesame oil to the inside of the ear with your little finger. Use a neti pot with saline solution to cleanse the nasal passages. Brush the teeth. Scrape the tongue using a tongue cleaner to remove any coating. Notice your tongue each morning. A thick coating is indicative of ama, or toxins in the digestive tract. Scraping the tongue helps to purify your sense of taste and benefits the internal organs. Finally, gargle with warm water, or salt water and turmeric to help purify and strengthen the voice and keep the gums, mouth and throat healthy.

Abhyanga

According to Ayurveda, abhyanga, or oil massage is an essential component of dinacharya. This practice nourishes and strengthens the body, encourages regular sleep patterns, stimulates internal organs, enhances blood circulation and can significantly reduce vata.

Bathe

After you have massaged your entire body, enjoy a warm bath or shower using a minimal amount of mild soap. Towel dry with a towel you do not mind collecting oil with.

Clothing

Always wear clean clothing, preferably made from natural fibres such as cotton, wool, linen or silk. Ayurveda discourages wearing used clothing, particularly other peoples' shoes, because of the polluted subtle energies which they collect.

Take your herbs

Taking herbs at the same time each day will enhance their medicinal effect. Herbs taken on an empty stomach have the most potent action in the body.

Mild exercise

Daily exercise increases circulation and oxygenation of the tissues, strengthens agni, tones the body, reduces fat and enhances vitality. Determine the best time to exercise and what form of exercise to practice with consideration to your prakriti (constitutional type) and the effects of the seasons. For example, in the fall, a vata person should exercise during the kapha time of day, to take advantage of kapha's grounding and stable qualities. Choose an activity that is soothing to the nervous system like yoga or tai chi.

Meditation

Just as we cleanse our bodies each day, we must also cleanse our minds of accumulated thoughts that no longer serve us. Be still. Direct your attention inward. Notice your breath. Practice pranayama. Meditate for twenty minutes or simply invite calm and relaxation into the body if time is limited. This practice acts as a protective shield to the destabilizing influences of the external environment.

Aerobic exercise

The next morning period is Kapha which has the qualities of heaviness, slowness and stability – the later a person awakes after dawn the more of these qualities he imbibes within his physiology and carries with him for the rest of the day. Kapha time (especially between 7am and 10am) is the best time for more physical exercise, such as jogging, swimming or cycling.

Work and lunch

10am to 2pm, when pitta predominates, is the most productive time for work, especially for problem solving or completing tasks that requires your full attention and focus. It is also the time when the sun is at its peak and when the digestive fire or agni is at its strongest. It is therefore the ideal time to eat the largest meal of the day. Eating at this time will allow efficient and maximum digestion, assimilation and metabolism. Proper absorption of minerals, vitamins, proteins and carbohydrates will result in efficient energy production and feelings of strength and alertness. It follows that there will also be less desire for snacking and overeating if the diet contains adequate nutrition and the ability to properly assimilate it. A short, leisurely stroll shortly after lunch will also aid digestion.

Creative work

Vata comes around again during the afternoon. This is a good time for mental agility and creative work. Vata types may experience a drop in energy at this time and a small snack is valuable for them.

Evening meal

Only light meals should be eaten in the evenings (toast, rice, semolina, milk drinks, noodles, soup etc). It is important to have allowed enough time for your previous meal to have been digested thoroughly (generally 4 hours) but should ideally be taken before sundown and at least three hours before bedtime.

Relaxation

The next Kapha period begins in the early evening. The heavy, slow, stable qualities of this dosha increase as the evening progresses and reach their peak a couple of hours before midnight. In order to imbibe these qualities and ensure a sound, heavy, undisturbed and restful sleep one should be in bed before this period ends. Evening is a kapha energy period and is a time to relax, engage in pleasant conversation with family or friends, read light novels or play gentle, soothing music. It is a time to unwind from the stimulation and activity of the day. About half an hour before bedtime is the perfect time to take Triphala tea to gentle tone and balance to the digestive tract.

Bathing

Ayurveda sees bathing as a therapeutic activity and the evening is a good time to partake in this therapy. A leisurely bath relaxes tense muscles, irons out a creased brow, opens clogged pores, restores moisture to the tissues, and adds a healing dimension to your day. It enhances physical energy levels and improves mental

clarity. It helps remove sweat, dirt and environmental toxins from the skin. It helps relax the mind and balance the emotions.

Ideally begin with a full-body warm oil massage. Then bathe, using water that is neither too hot nor too cold. Apply a cleanser to your skin gently. Do not bathe in a hurry. Take your time and try to relax so that both mind and body benefit from the bath. Use gentle aromatherapy oils such as lavender, sandalwood, patchouli or orange (do not use harsh or artificial fragrances that strip moisture from the skin and damage the delicate wisdom that facilitates the reflection of the inner glow, called prabha in ayurveda). The ancient ayurvedic texts also recommend adding rose petals, milk, honey, and turmeric to your bath. After you towel off, spritz your body with rose water.

Sleep

Finally, the next active Pitta period runs from 10pm until about 2am. If one is not asleep during this period the body begins to wake up and one attains a second wind around 11pm, which may have you up until 1am! Sleep is then impaired and the elimination of impurities and toxins within the body suffers greatly. Being in bed by 10pm will ensure 6-7 hours of refreshing, detoxifying sleep that will leave you revitalised and re-energised. It is a good practice to apply oil to the scalp and the soles of the feet before bed to calm the nervous system and promote sound sleep.

This Pitta period is also a second 'digestive phase' but it is not intended for digesting large quantities of food or heavy foodstuffs. The metabolism work differently than at midday and is far less efficient in terms of breaking down the contents of the stomach and intestines. It will try to digest them as well as possible but usually leaves the process incomplete leading to a further build up of undigested food or 'Ama' (hence the very furry, white tongue in the morning after a late night of alcohol and heavy food). This is why the evening meal should be light and easily digestible.

Following dinacharya is a way to bring more awareness to all of the habits and choices we make throughout the day. Conscious awareness in our daily lives enables us to be whole and healthy beings, bringing us closer to our true selves. Living in harmony with the cycles of nature is not only the path to health, but to true freedom.

Seasonal Rhythms

As the day goes through a cycle of Vata, Pitta and Kapha so does the year.

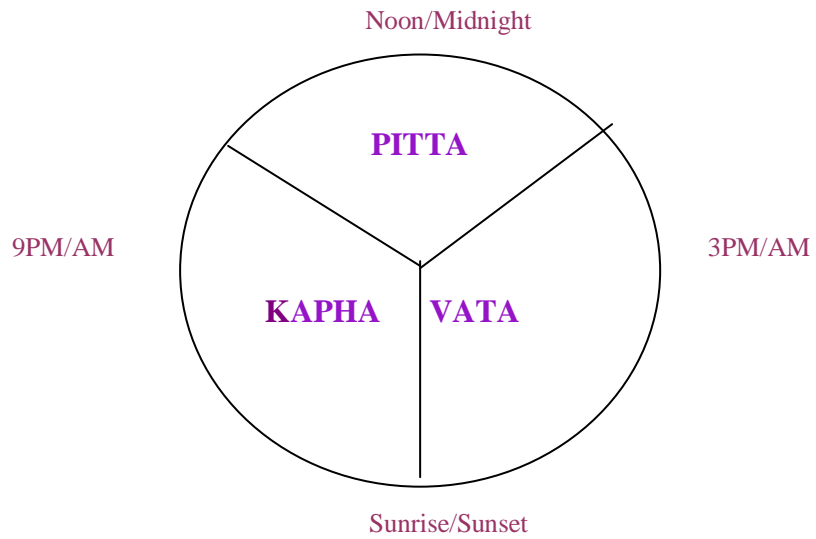
The qualities of Vata are cold and moving (wind) and these qualities are prevalent in the winter. Vata-types especially must try to follow a Vata pacifying routine and diet at this time of year to prevent Vata dosha from drifting out of balance. When the cool, dry winds begin to blow it can sometimes be difficult to maintain a peaceful, grounded state of being. Having a routine to follow restores balance throughout the day, everyday, safeguarding against the anxiety and stress associated with increased vata.

Summer is hot, just like Pitta dosha, and those prone to Pitta-type imbalances should keep cool and follow a Pitta pacifying routine and diet.

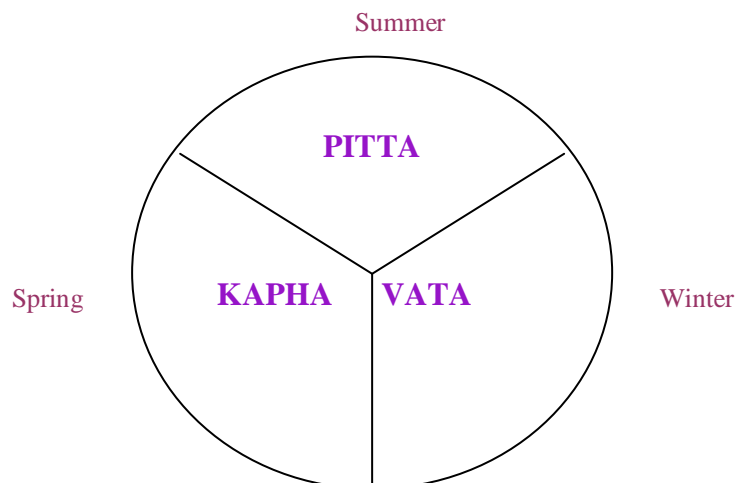
Spring (and to some extent autumn) can be cold and damp exhibiting the qualities of Kapha. Kapha-types should follow a Kapha pacifying diet and routine to keep their bodies in balance and free from the usual complaints of flu, cold and blocked sinuses.

Natures natural cycles

Times of the day



Seasons of the year



The ideal daily routine summary

(Following this routine ensures a smooth, harmonious, energetic, stress-free day)

Morning (Kapha period)

- Arise around dawn (end of vata period)
- Drink hot water and evacuate bladder/bowels
- Clean teeth/scrape tongue
- Oil massage
- Exercise (esp. Kapha-types)
- Warm or cool shower
- Sun-salute & yoga asanas
- Pranayama – breathing exercise
- Meditation
- Breakfast

Midday (Pitta period)

- Lunch – largest meal of day
- Short walk
- Brief rest

Afternoon (Vata period)

- Good for creative work
- Light snack for Vata-types

Evening (Kapha period)

- Yoga asanas
- Pranayama
- Meditation
- Light supper
- Relaxing activity
- Early to bed (Kapha time)

Night (pitta/vata period)

- Sleep

Abhyanga oil massage

Abhyanga is the anointing of the body with warm, medicated oil. For thousands of years, people have used abhyanga to improve sleep, calm the nervous system and increase longevity. Abhyanga helps the skin release toxins and also facilitates the trans-dermal absorption of nutrients and healing properties from the herbs and oils used in massage. It is used as a medicine for certain disorders.

There are seven layers of tissue in the body (called dhatus) and each successive layer is more concentrated and life-giving. For oil to reach the deepest layers it must be massaged into the body for about fifteen-minutes. The benefits of Abhyanga as outlined in the Vedic texts (Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita and Ashtanga Hrdayam) are as follows:

- Recharges and rejuvenates mind and body.
- Delays the aging process and promotes longevity.
- Produces greater vitality, energy, stamina and physical endurance.
- Lubricates the joints and promotes flexibility.
- Increase muscle strength and firmness.
- Nourishes, tones and purifies the skin.
- Enhances complexion and lustre of skin (more radiant/ attractive, softer/smooth).
- Stimulates the circulation and prevents impurities from accumulating in the body resulting in greater resistance to illness and faster recovery from trauma, injury or disease.
- Pacifies the doshas (especially vata & pitta).
- Dissolves accumulated stress or toxins from the mind and body (stress causes skin to age prematurely).
- Increases mental alertness.
- Calms the nerves and balances mind and emotions.
- Improves elimination of impurities from the body.
- Allows more refreshing, deeper sleep.
- Reduces bacterial infections.
- Nourishes the seven different types of body tissue and the seven layers of the skin.
- Applying oil to the scalp makes the hair grow luxuriantly, thick, soft and glossy; it also soothes and invigorates the sense organs and removes facial wrinkles.
- Applying oil to the ears rectifies disorders of the ear which are due to increased vata; it also improves stiffness in the neck and jaw.
- Applying oil to the feet alleviates stiffness, roughness and fatigue whilst also strengthening and firming them. It also enhances vision, pacifies vata, reduces sciatica symptoms and tones local veins and ligaments.

Self-massage is ideally undertaken each morning but early evenings are also very effective. Try to avoid massaging immediately after a large meal so as not to interfere with digestion.

Sesame oil is the best oil to use on the body while coconut oil (good for delaying greying and receding of hair) is best used on the head and face. The ripening process detailed below enhances the healing/medicinal properties of sesame oil:

How to cure your oil for maximum therapeutic results:

Place the required quantity of oil into a heavy bottomed saucepan and heat on medium setting until the oil has reached 100 degrees centigrade (use a liquid thermometer to gauge this). Alternatively, if you don't have a thermometer, simply add one or two drops of water to the oil before heating. Always use a medium heat and never leave the room while oil is heating, as it is highly inflammable.

As the oil heats a crackling sound is heard - this is the water boiling off. When the crackling stops the oil has reached the correct temperature. Allow the oil to cool. It is now ripened and can be stored in a suitable container for up to one month. Re-ripen if stored for longer.

How to carry out your own Ayurvedic oil massage:

Carry out your daily oil massage in a warm, comfortable room and heat the oil to body temperature before applying to the body (either place a small amount of oil in a small stainless steel bowl and warm over a candle burner or place the glass/plastic oil container in a bowl of hot water for a few minutes before use).

Start by using coconut oil on the face and scalp, paying particular attention to the ears. Slow, gentle strokes are preferable. Sesame oil is used for the rest of the body. Start with the arms, paying particular attention to the hands and fingers. Next massage the front of the body with slow, gentle strokes over the abdomen. The back is somewhat more awkward but do what you can reach – use the backs of your hands to cover more area. Massage the buttocks and legs finishing with the feet (give a little extra time and attention here).

As a rule, circular massage strokes are used over joints and long sweeping movements along the arm/leg bones. Five or ten circles/long strokes per area should be given depending on the time available. For even greater therapeutic effects a few drops of essential oil may be added to your massage oil. We recommend no more than 10 drops of lavender, cedarwood, sandalwood, patchouli, ylang ylang or frankincense per 100ml of massage oil.

It is beneficial to keep the oil on the skin for at least twenty minutes before showering. Water should be warm rather than hot and soap should be used sparingly to allow a residue of oil to remain on the skin.

Sesame oil's highly medicinal, therapeutic effects are probably due to its high linoleic content which has anti-bacterial, anti-inflammatory, anti-carcinogenic and antioxidant properties. However, if you find sesame oil too heating coconut oil, olive oil or sunflower can be applied instead.

“The body of one who uses oil massage regularly does not become affected much even if subjected to accidental injuries, or strenuous work. By using oil massage daily, a person is endowed with pleasant touch, trimmed body parts and becomes strong, charming and least affected by old age.”

Charaka Samhita Vol. 1, V: 88-89

Daily massage plan

The ideal early morning (5-6am) routine includes:

- Drinking hot water
- Emptying bowels/bladder
- Cleaning teeth/scraping tongue
- Skin brushing (upward strokes)
- Massaging the body with sesame oil and the head with coconut oil (can be after shower/bath)
- Taking a shower/bath (with warm water and a vegetable-based soap)

However, if time is limited or you'd like some variation on this routine a massage plan that runs over the course of one week is suggested below. This can be adapted to your needs and varied each week. Massaging after your bath or shower is also acceptable if it is more convenient or preferable. If you massage after your shower make sure you use a special towel to take off excess oil. This towel will need to be boil-washed to remove all the oil.

- Drink hot water, empty bowels/bladder, clean teeth/scrape tongue **Monday**
- Shower
- Skin brush

- Drink hot water, empty bowels/bladder, clean teeth/scrape tongue **Tuesday**
- Massage body with sesame oil and head with coconut oil
- Bath with essential oil (lavender, sandalwood or ylang ylang)

- Drink hot water, empty bowels/bladder, clean teeth/scrape tongue **Wednesday**
- Massage head with coconut oil and feet with sesame oil
- Shower
- Skin brush

- Drink hot water, empty bowels/bladder, clean teeth/scrape tongue **Thursday**
- Massage body with sesame oil and head with coconut oil
- Shower

- Drink hot water, empty bowels/bladder, clean teeth/scrape tongue **Friday**
- Bath with essential oil (lavender, sandalwood or ylang ylang)
- Skin brush

- Drink hot water, empty bowels/bladder, clean teeth/scrape tongue **Saturday**
- Massage body with sesame oil and head with coconut oil
- Shower

- Drink hot water, empty bowels/bladder, clean teeth/scrape tongue **Sunday**
- Skin brush
- Massage body with sesame oil and head with coconut oil
- Shower

You may also gargle and massage inside of nostrils with sesame oil as this helps combat colds/flu and other viral/bacterial infections. Please note: Tongue scraping should be done with a steel, silver or gold tongue-scraper – four or five runs gently over the tongue should be enough to remove any ama (undigested food/bacteria). This procedure helps improve digestion, freshens the breath and removes impurities from the body.

So-hum meditation

The mind naturally and effortlessly transcends everyday worries and concerns when it is given the opportunity but with the hectic lives we lead today this rarely happens. Perhaps in odd moments, while we're taking a break in a quiet park or have witnessed a beautiful sunset, a momentary peace and calmness suddenly descends, leaving us feeling refreshed and alert; bathed in a bubble of stillness and silence. This fleeting occurrence takes us by surprise but reminds us of the joy of life and the possibilities it could hold if only we could learn to enjoy it.

What does not seem to be widely known is that this state is easily and effortlessly achieved through a few minutes' practice of an amazingly simple but effective technique known as meditation. It can be taught in a few minutes, can be practiced by anyone and will work anywhere.

With the help of a subtle sound or mantra the mind can effortlessly transcend to this silent state of heightened awareness and rest within minutes. What's more, the practice of this very simple technique helps build a solid foundation for the mind, allowing it to effortlessly remain calm in the most stressful and demanding situations. Meditation allows the mind to see more clearly and work more efficiently and effectively for prolonged periods of time without becoming unduly tired or strained. Thus we can truly "do less and accomplish more".

It's our birthright to enjoy a healthy, stress-free life and this can be achieved by allowing the mind to rest and recharge at regular intervals with a few minutes meditation; a technique which produces levels of rest and relaxation many times more effective than sleep.

Progressively, over the centuries, this natural mind-relaxing procedure has been complicated, mystified and watered down. By many it is seen as a battle to conquer the mind and senses and thus best left to the spiritual aspirant who has the time and will to perfect his/her technique. Meditation should be neither a process of deep concentration nor one of intense contemplation – it is simply an effortless way of allowing the mind to transcend to deep levels of relaxation very quickly, easily and effortlessly.

Meditation is simply a matter of being taught how to use specific internal sounds correctly so that they act as vehicles for the mind to experience progressively more subtle values of those sounds. Eventually, one effortlessly reaches the silent field of all possibilities where thoughts, words or sounds originate.

The practice described here involves simply sitting quietly in a calm and peaceful environment and observing the gentle inflow and outflow of one's breath. This quickly relaxes the mind and harmonises the nervous system. However, this is only achieved if one's thoughts are allowed to flow unhindered with no judgment or forcing away of thoughts. Thoughts cannot be stopped and all attempts at trying to do so will produce strain – just pay no attention to them and let them go.

Vedic Meditation instructions

- Allow yourself 15-20 minutes of undisturbed silence in a calm, peaceful environment.
- Start by sitting comfortably and relaxing with the eyes closed for a few minutes.
- Have the intention to meditate – this means putting aside any ideas of using the time allocated to simply rest, sleep or mull things over.
- Now slowly, innocently and effortlessly become aware of your breath.
- Notice the gentle sound of ‘so’ on each in breath and the sound of ‘hum’ on each out breath.
- Do not deliberately mentally repeat the sound – just allow it to be there in your awareness – it should almost seem to repeat itself - just observe it and allow it to become naturally independent of the breath - allow it to become fainter and fainter, quieter and quieter, more and more distant until it almost fades away. Allow it to eventually fade away.
- As it fades away the mind settles down, relaxes and occasionally transcends – often stresses are released as this happens. Stresses are released on the back of thoughts – thus, as you release stress you will have thoughts. The more powerful the stress being released the more powerful and absorbing the thoughts will be that surface in your awareness.
- As soon as you become aware of thoughts other than the mantra (‘so-hum’) gently ‘favour’ the mantra again – i.e, gently, innocently and effortlessly go back to witnessing the mantra. The bigger the stress being released the more your mind will present you with thoughts – just innocently and effortlessly let them go rather than staying with them and turn your awareness back towards the mantra (so – hum) instead.
- It is important to realise that it is rare to meditate without lots of thoughts also being present. This is a sign of correct meditation. Meditation releases stress – hence thoughts will frequently arise.
- Meditation is only experienced as ‘difficult’ or ‘boring’ when we start straining to ‘hold’ the mantra in our awareness and ‘try’ to ‘focus’ or ‘concentrate’ on keeping the mantra present in our mind and ‘keeping’ or ‘forcing’ other thoughts out. Thoughts are part of meditation – thoughts are good – thoughts are stresses disappearing forever.
- Meditation is not about concentrating, focusing, contemplating or forcing the mind. Meditation is about gently, innocently and effortlessly ‘favouring’ a sound (mantra) – it is about quietly witnessing and allowing thoughts to flow unhindered and then effortlessly coming back to the sound (mantra) when other thoughts have taken its place.
- After 15-20 minutes stop ‘favouring’ the mantra and sit quietly with the eyes still closed for 2-3 minutes. This allows the mind and body to fully integrate and process the experience to gain maximum benefits.
- If there have been many thoughts during the meditation, rest for longer (up to ten minutes) as it is a sign that you have released lots of stresses and need longer to integrate the experience.
- Practice for 15-20 minutes twice a day. Dawn and dusk are the best times as the mind and body are more alert and relaxed. Avoid practicing immediately after a large meal or before bedtime (it wakes you up!).
- Try and practice at the same times each day so that the mind already comes prepared. Have the intention to meditate and then allow a few minutes for the mantra to appear of its own accord – if it doesn’t spontaneously appear then quietly and innocently introduce it as a ‘vague’, distant idea. It may or may not follow the breath and it is unimportant whether it does or not – some people find it easier if it does and some don’t. Don’t worry about how often the sound disappears and other thoughts arise; just simply bring the mantra back again as quietly as possible.

Pranayama

Through the practice of pranayama (a controlled breathing exercise) we bring conscious awareness to the breath, uniting mind and body in a present moment experience. Through this awareness, and with a little practice, we learn how to access our inner wisdom and increase our Prana, the omnipresent life force, that determines the amount of energy, clarity and joy we have in our lives.

Pranayama is best practiced in the early morning when the mind is clear and free from the experiences of the day. Also, practiced after yoga asana, it can be the perfect transition into meditation. This is also a useful and simple tool to bring us into balance before an exam, meeting or presentation. Just a few minutes can bring us back to our centre, easing anxiety and nervous tension.

Alternate Nostril Breathing (Vata Pranayama): Nadi Shodhana, or alternate nostril breathing, is a type of pranayama that balances the right and left hemispheres of the brain and has a calming effect on the nervous system while creating a more alert mind. It cleanses the channels of the subtle energy body by removing energetic blockages along the nadis (channels) that correspond to the nerve ganglia on either side of the spinal cord. It is extremely centering, making it one of the best practices for vata dosha.

Begin by sitting comfortably on a cushion, folded blanket or in a chair, keeping the head and spine upright. Bring awareness to your breathing process, noticing the quality and length of each inhalation and exhalation. Breathe deep into your abdomen and keep the body relaxed.

Position the right hand (you may choose to alternate with each practice) in vishnu mudra by folding the index finger and third finger inwards to lightly touch at the base of the thumb. Your little finger rests by the side of the ring finger. You will alternately use your thumb to close your right nostril and your ring and little fingers, working as one, to close your left. Rest your left hand comfortably in your lap. The breath should never feel forced.

Instructions: Breathe in gently keeping the breath relaxed, subtle and light. Block the right nostril with the thumb of the right hand and breathe out through the left nostril. Breathe in gently through the left nostril and then block the left nostril with the fourth finger and breathe out through the right nostril. Breathe in through the right nostril, block the right nostril and breathe out through the left nostril. Continue for five minutes and finish by breathing in through the right nostril. If you are left-handed you will reverse these finger positions (thumb blocks left nostril and fourth finger blocks right nostril). Always breathe in and out gently; do not force the breath and do not hold the breath. Breathe naturally and try to sit upright and in a relaxed and comfortable position. Envision the breath as a light thread of silk, lengthening effortlessly with each inhalation and exhalation. Practice for five to ten minutes.

Rest after your practice and notice how you are feeling. Once comfortable with this practice, you can begin mentally counting to four on your inhalation, pause at the space between the breath and then count to four as you exhale, so that the length of your inhalation and exhalation are equal.

There are many variations of alternate nostril breathing. These advanced practices involve increased ratios of inhalation to exhalation, longer duration, and the incorporation of breath retention. It is best to practice these under the guidance of a yoga teacher or therapist. They are intended as developmental stages to work through incrementally as the body gradually adjusts to the increased flow of prana. As with any subtle energy practice which activates prana, it is best to start slowly and steadily incorporate it into your daily practice. A shorter practice on a consistent basis will bring more benefit to the body than a longer practice every now and again.

Here are some variations that will help with specific dosha imbalances within the physiology:

Left Nostril Breathing (Pitta Pranayama): This breathing exercise helps cool the mind and body and is excellent for Pitta imbalances. If the left nostril is blocked the body often feels overheated (a Pitta imbalance).

Instructions: Block your right nostril with your thumb (fourth finger if left-handed) and inhale gently through the left nostril. Block your left nostril with your fourth finger (thumb if left-handed) and breathe out through your right nostril. Repeat for five to ten minutes, finishing by breathing out through your right nostril

Right Nostril Breathing (Kapha Pranayama): Helps warm the body and is excellent for Kapha imbalances. If the right nostril is blocked the body often feels cold.

Instructions: Block your left nostril with your fourth finger (thumb if left-handed) and inhale gently through the right nostril. Block your right nostril with your thumb (fourth finger if left-handed) and breathe out through your left nostril. Repeat for five minutes, finishing by breathing out through your left nostril

Fast Pranayama: This practice speed up metabolism and helps with weight loss. It can also be practiced for 20-30 seconds before 'alternate nostril breathing'.

Instructions: Repeatedly exhale quickly and forcefully through both nostrils. You will find that you naturally inhale after each out breath. Repeat this for about one minute and then rest for one minute. Repeat up to five times. You may find that the body heats up and begins to perspire slightly indicating that energy is flowing and circulation is improving.

Hissing Breath: This is good for cleansing and detoxifying the lungs and improving lung capacity.

Instructions: Take two deep abdominal breathes. On the next out-breath, breathe out through your teeth to make a 'hissing' sound. As you do so lean forward so that your head comes towards your knees. At the end out your out-breath immediately breathe in through your nose quite rapidly as you come up to an upright position again. Once your lungs are three-quarters full and you are in an upright position hold your breath for as long as is comfortable. Now repeat the process six more times.

Kapalabhati: This is also good for cleansing and detoxifying the lungs and improving lung capacity.

Instructions: Take two deep abdominal breathes. Now breathe in to three-quarters capacity. On the next out-breath, breathe out forcefully twenty times by repeatedly contracting the abdominal muscles. Now take two deep abdominal breathes and on the third, breathe in to three-quarters capacity and retain the breath for thirty seconds. Repeat this three more times. As you become more accomplished you can increase the number of 'abdominal pumpings' - up to forty and maybe even sixty. You will also find that you will naturally be able to hold the breath for longer - perhaps even up to two minutes duration.

Belly Breath: This is good for toning the abdomen, improving peristalsis and helping with weight loss.

Instructions: In a standing position bend your knees and rest your hands on the top of the knees - breathe out fully (hold the breath) and then contract abdomen up into diaphragm/rib cage - hold for as long as is comfortable. Exhale. Repeat this exercise several times. Alternatively you can repeatedly contract the abdomen into diaphragm during the holding of the out-breath.

Exercise

Exercise is an important part of the ayurvedic routine as it helps rid the body of heaviness and stiffness through the burning of ama or toxins. It creates greater flexibility, lightness, energy and stamina. It also pacifies all three doshas, creates balance, enhances digestion, improves immunity, dissolves impurities in the tissues, banishes fatigue, stops early aging and retards weight gain.

However, too much exercise can be damaging, causing fatigue, lack of glow in the skin and face, pitta and vata aggravation and strain on the respiratory and cardiovascular systems. It can also create excess free radicals which damage the body and have been linked to over eighty percent of degenerative disease as well as premature aging. Ayurveda therefore recommends that no more than fifty percent of total capacity is utilised, with individual capacity depending on daily fluctuations of energy, change of the seasons, age, and body type.

Vata types needs the least exercise, so lighter activities such as walking are best. Pitta types need moderate amounts with swimming and skiing being good, whilst Kapha types need more intense exercise - jogging and aerobics are good to help them stay in balance. Do more exercise in winter and spring and do less in hot weather as this will create fatigue, especially in pitta body types.

Always start out slowly and only gradually increase the intensity and duration of exercise. Stop when you note signs of overexertion. You know when you're doing the right amount of exercise if you feel energized and calm afterwards. If you feel strained and exhausted, you're doing too much. You can continue to exercise until you notice one of the following two signs of overexertion:

1. Difficulty in breathing through the nose. If you have to open your mouth to gulp in air, that's a sign that your heart is overexerted, the circulation system is taxed and the coordination of heart and lungs is disturbed. You should stop immediately.
2. Sweating on the forehead or the tip of nose. Sweating elsewhere in the body is fine but when you notice sweat in these two places it's a sign that you are overexerted and should stop.

Yoga asanas are the ideal form of exercise for all body types and ages, because they balance the three doshas, tone the muscles, and rejuvenate all the organs in the body. Practicing pranayama is also a good way to increase endurance. An abhyanga oil massage before exercise will tone the muscles, get the blood circulating and prevent injury or strain

Exercise every day as part of your regular daily routine. If possible exercise in the morning before 10am as your body has more strength, stamina, and coordination during the kapha time of day. Exercising at this time also energizes you and prepares you for the day ahead. Exercising in the late evening or towards bedtime is not recommended as it can elevate body temperatures and disrupt sleep rhythms. A light walk or yoga in the evening is fine. Also avoid exercise from 10am to 2pm, the pitta time of day, when the digestive fire is strong – this should be reserved for eating the main meal of the day.

It's not a good idea to exercise on a full stomach - wait about two hours after eating a large meal. However, if your stomach is empty and you are very hungry, have a light snack of fruit juice, cooked apples or some kind of light soup before exercising.

It is important to breath through the nose at all time during exercise as this uses the whole of the lungs and not just the upper portions. If you are breathing through the mouth you are over-exerting.

If you were at the zoo and a tiger escaped from its pen you would most likely take a quick upper-chest “gasp” emergency breath. This breath would trigger a fight-or-flight response in your nervous system as the upper lobes of the lungs are primarily innervated by the sympathetic nervous system. The kind of “gasp” mouth breathing, much like a hyperventilation breathing pattern, is a normal breathing response to extreme stress. Unfortunately this how most people breathe during exercise and this triggers the same neurological response.

In contrast, the nerves that would calm, rejuvenate and regenerate the body are in the lower lobes of the lungs along with the majority of the blood supply. The problem is that most people never breathe into these lower parasympathetic dominant lobes. They therefore create a minor but constant emergency situation which creates stress hormones and releases excess toxins into the body.

Thus, we can see that exercise can act as a double-edged sword, where it can either incur stress or remove stress, depending on the quality of the breath. The best way to consistently breathe into the lower lobes of the lungs is by nasal breathing. The nose is intricately designed to filter, moisten and rarefy the air we take in and drive it into the small and distal alveoli of the lungs. It is when these distal lobes are fully perfused with air that the body produces a neurological state of composure even while under extreme stress

If you are unfit or aren't used to exercise first go for a short walk before attempting anything more physical. For the first ten minutes breath in and out deeply through your nose as you walk fairly slowly. This ensures you are exercising your lungs. Be vigilant and make sure that each breath is deeper, longer and slower than the one before – however, the emphasis should always be on comfort rather than style. It is this experience of comfort that you will eventually take you to higher levels of exertion. If you feel relaxed and comfortable, begin to walk faster but be sure to maintain the same rhythm of the breath you established at the beginning.

At some point you will notice it becoming more difficult to get the air in through the nose and an ensuing urge to take a mouth breath. When your exercise forces you to take your first mouth breathe, you have just forced the body into an emergency breathing response to maintain that faster pace. Immediately slow down and recapture the original deep, long and slow rhythm of the breath. Once it is re-established, try to walk faster again, telling your body you want more performance. When the breathing gets laboured and you open your mouth again, slow down once more. Constantly tell your body that you want more performance but that you don't want to create an emergency response. Soon your body will accommodate a higher level of a natural and more permanent fitness.

Because of the years of lower rib cage constriction you will more than likely find this difficult at first. But, what you couldn't do the first day, you will find yourself effortlessly doing within two or three weeks, whilst comfortably breathing through your nose. When this happens your rib cage is effectively and efficiently massaging your heart and lungs up to 28,000 times a day. When this starts happening, a natural calming influence stays with you all day while you deal with all kinds of extreme stressors. Exercise has now become one of the your most important health-enhancing tools.

Tips for enjoying exercise

Comfort: If your breath becomes laboured, your heart beats uncomfortably fast or you begin to ache or to get a stitch you are not within a zone of comfort and should slow down or stop and rest.

Undivided Attention: Experience the body and respond to its signals. Do not watch TV or listen to music but allow the mind to be completely attuned and connected to the body.

Body Type: Vata types should participate in calming activities such as walking, gymnastics, aerobics, dance, cycling, yoga or Tai Chi. Pitta types can cope with more vigorous exercise such as jogging, tennis, swimming, skiing, weight lifting and rowing but should be careful not to become too competitive or overheated. Kapha types need fast, vigorous exercise to counteract their more lethargic physiologies and are better suited to sports such as football, running, weight lifting, rugby and hockey.

Warm up: Ensure you begin any training by first loosening the joints and muscles with a few gentle exercises, sun-salute (Suryanamaskara) and yoga.

Massage: Applying oils before and after a workout is most beneficial. Vata-types should apply sesame or almond oil with lavender before a workout and sesame or almond oil with marjoram after a workout; Pitta-types should apply sesame or coconut oil with lemon before a workout and coconut oil with camomile afterwards while Kapha-types should apply olive or sesame oil with eucalyptus before and sesame or olive oil with rosemary after. A mix of 20:1 base oil to essential oil works well.

Breathing: Always breathe through the nose as this uses the lower portion of the lungs where maximum energy is exchanged. This allows proper mind-body coordination by calming the body, slowing the heart rate and reducing the flow of adrenalin.

Stress Check: If on waking your resting heart rate is ten beats above or below normal you should rest or at least only take very moderate exercise that day. This often indicates that the body is under stress, possibly from a virus or bacteria, and the body will need its energy resources that day to combat this stress.

Optimum Exercise Heart Rate (OEHR): 220 minus your age plus resting heart rate divided by two. Resting heart rate should be ascertained on waking in the morning.

Three Phase Workout:

Resting Phase (10 min.): Do not allow heart rate to increase above OEHR minus 30.

Listening Phase (15 min): Increase pace but do not allow heart rate to increase above OEHR. Ensure heart rate, breath rate, mental awareness and physical form are comfortable, balanced and correct.

Performance phase (10-30 min): Allow your pace to sit around the OEHR and experience comfort, balance, rest and euphoria. If at any time you feel uncomfortable, stressed or tired go back to the Resting or Listening Phase and build up again more slowly.

Daily exercise plan

The ideal morning exercise/relaxation routine includes:

- Sun Salute (4-6 rounds) 5-10 minutes
- Short walk or run (1-2 mile) 15-30 minutes
- Yoga Asanas 10-20 minutes
- Pranayama & Meditation 20-30 minutes

When time is limited you can vary this routine. Here is an example to get you started.

- Yoga exercises 6 minutes **Monday**
- Sun Salute (3 rounds) 3 minutes
- Pranayama 5 minutes
- Meditation 20 minutes

- Yoga exercises 6 minutes **Tuesday**
- Short walk or run (2 mile) 30 minutes
- Sun Salute (2 rounds) 2 minutes
- Pranayama 2 minutes
- Meditation 20 minutes

- Sun Salute (4 rounds) 4 minutes **Wednesday**
- Yoga Asanas 15 minutes
- Pranayama 5 minutes
- Meditation 20 minutes

- Yoga exercises 6 minutes **Thursday**
- Sun Salute (6 rounds) 6 minutes
- Pranayama 2 minutes
- Meditation 20 minutes

- Yoga exercises 6 minutes **Friday**
- Short walk or run (1 mile) 15 minutes
- Sun Salute (3 rounds) 3 minutes
- Pranayama 5 minutes
- Meditation 20 minutes

- Sun Salute (4 rounds) 4 minutes **Saturday**
- Yoga Asanas 15 minutes
- Pranayama 5 minutes
- Meditation 20 minutes

- Yoga exercises 6 minutes **Sunday**
- Sun Salute (2 rounds) 2 minutes
- Pranayama 2 minutes
- Meditation 20 minutes

Weight bearing exercise, tai chi and chi Kung can also be incorporated if these interest you.

Ayurvedic 'warm-up' exercises

This gentle sequence of warm-up exercises stimulates the cardiovascular system allowing greater oxygen and nutrient exchange within the body. It also promotes the elimination of impurities by increasing the flow of lymph through the muscles and lymphatic system. Repeat each of the movements five times and repeat on both sides of the body or in a clockwise and then an anticlockwise direction.

- Head: Roll clockwise, roll anticlockwise.
- Head: Turn to left, turn to right.
- Head: Bend back, bend forward.
- Eyes: Roll clockwise, roll anticlockwise.
- Arms: Swing in a circle backwards, swing in a circle forwards.
- Shoulders: Rotate backwards, rotate forwards.
- Shoulders: With elbows bent and at shoulder height and swing backward.
- Shoulders: With arms outstretched swing backwards.
- Elbows: Keeping upper arm still circle forearms from elbow joint.
- Wrists: Rotate clockwise, rotate anticlockwise.
- Wrists: With forearm still move wrist from side to side.
- Wrists: With forearm still move up and down.
- Hands: With forearm still shake the hands, then flick (as though flicking off water).
- Torso: Raise arms to shoulder height and use them to swing torso from left to right
- Waist: Facing forward bend left from waist, right arm moves over head.
- Waist: Bend from waist and then rotate the torso around the waist.
- Waist: Forward bend, backward bend.
- Hips: Keeping upper body and legs relatively still rotate in a large circles.
- Tailbone: Rotate in small circles.
- Legs: Kicks.
- Legs: Lift the knee so thighs are parallel with floor - swing lower leg side to side.
- Knees: Lift the knee so thighs are parallel with floor - circle lower leg from knee.
- Knees: Kick buttock with heel.
- Knees: Hold the foot with one hand and pull against buttock.
- Ankles: Lift foot off the floor, keep the leg still and circle foot from ankles.
- Ankles: Keeping leg still move foot side to side from ankles and then shake.
- Feet: Stand on tiptoes several times.
- Squat: First on ball of foot and then with feet flat.
- Stand: Have feet flat on the floor; lock the knees loosely backwards; move the hips forward; tuck the stomach in; bring the chest forward; take the shoulders back; keep the neck straight – now relax in this posture and be still – observe the breath gently flowing through the body for one minute before lying down.

Relaxing

- Lie on your back, cover yourself with a blanket and relax - breathe in and slowly allow the out-breath to flow gently down the body and out through the feet.
- Rest your attention on each part of the body in turn, starting with the head and neck, and check for any discomfort – breathe into these areas and allow them to relax before continuing.
- Starting at the head, allow each part of the body to relax, feel warm, soft and heavy. Use the breath to allow each area to melt and flow into the floor beneath.

Yoga Postures

Forward Bend

Stretch your hands above your head and bend forward from the waist. Rest your hands on the floor (or ankles or lower leg if they won't reach the floor). Flatten and lengthen the back towards the buttocks. The knees may be slightly bent but the back should be as straight as possible. Allow the head to be relaxed with the crown towards the floor. Breathe into the stretch and relax the shoulders and neck on each out-breath.



Hip Stretch

Step forwards by about three feet with the left foot. Keep your front knee at right angles to the body and flex the hips downward towards the floor. Rest your hands on your knee, have your elbows out to the sides and the shoulders back. Relax further into the posture on each out-breath. Remember to keep the elbows and shoulders relaxed and the neck and back straight. Repeat with the right leg back.

Warrior Pose

Step forwards by about four feet with the left foot. Keep your front knee at right angles to the body and flex the hips downward towards the floor so that the back knee rests on the floor. Link the thumbs and stretch your arms above the head. Keep the shoulders back and remember to keep them relaxed. Relax further into the posture on each out-breath. Repeat with the right leg back.



Triangle Pose

Have the feet three to four feet apart. Turn the right foot outwards by 90 degrees and the other leg by 45 degrees. Keep facing forwards and bend from the waist side-wards towards the right side - do not lean forward. Place the right hand on the floor or hold the ankle and stretch the left arm towards the ceiling. Turn the neck to look towards the left hand. Repeat on other side of body.

Knee Triangle Pose

Have the feet about four feet apart. Turn the foot of the leg you are bending outwards by 90 degrees and the back foot by 15 degrees. Bend the right knee and rest the right hand on the ground (or have your elbow on the knee) - do not bend forwards. Stretch the top arm upwards and look towards the top hand. Repeat on the other side of the body.



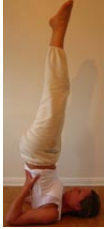
Knee Pulls

Bend one leg and grasp with both hands - pull towards the body. Repeat several times with alternating legs. You can now pull on both knees together while relaxing the buttocks towards the floor.

Half Shoulder Stand

Lie on your back and gently raise your hips off the floor and raise your legs. Support your waist by placing your hands on your hips. Keep the elbows close in to the body. Hold this position for one minute. Keep the shoulders relaxed and breathe through the nose in a relaxed fashion. If this is comfortable you can now attempt the full Shoulder Stand.





Shoulder Stand

From the half shoulder stand raise your hand further up the back. Keep the elbows close in to the body and support the body by pressing the hands against the middle back. Keep the back and legs straight and extended, locking the chin against the chest. If there is any discomfort in the neck come down immediately. Always come down with full support of the arms - lower yourself slowly and gently.



Plough Pose

From the Shoulder Stand take the legs back over the head and rest the feet on the floor. Extend the arms behind you, lock the fingers – you may then twist the hands so that the palms face away. Always come down with full support of the arms - lower yourself slowly and gently.

Locust

Raise both feet by six inches keeping the heels together. Now raise your chest, lift the arms upwards and then link the thumbs together. You may hold this posture for as long as is comfortable.



Bow

Lift the chest, bend the knees and grab the leg above the ankles. Stretch the chest upwards and pull the legs towards your shoulders. As you gently breathe you will rock backwards and forwards. Do not attempt this posture if you have any back problems.

Cobra Pose

Lift the chest off the floor and support the upper body with the arms – do not push with the arms if you have any kind of back problem or if the lower back is overly stiff.



Sitting Forward Bend

Extend both legs and stretch the toes towards you. Bend forwards from the hips/waist - rest your hands near the ankles and relax the lower back. Avoid overly bending the upper back, relax the elbows and shoulders and breathe easily.

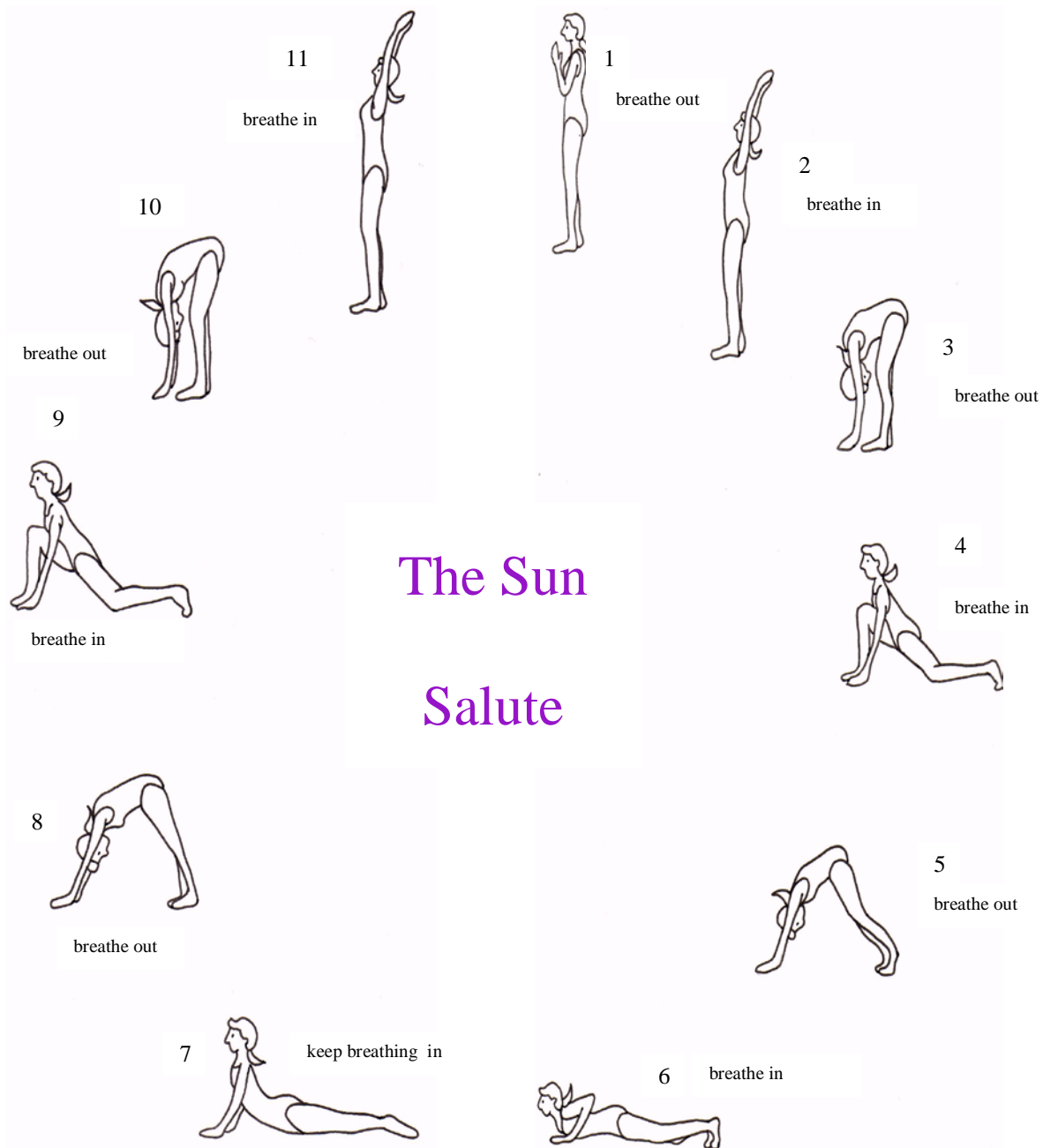
Twist

Bend one leg and place the foot by the outside of the opposite knee. Twist from the waist, keeping the back straight, and place the supporting hand flat on floor near the hips. The elbow of the other arm helps support the twist by resting on the bent knee. Do not twist too far and come out slowly and gently. Repeat on other side.



Rest

Always finish your yoga practice with ten minutes of rest. Lie on your back and relax your lower back, legs, hips and shoulders. Have your legs two feet apart and allow the feet fall outwards. Have your palms facing upwards with your hands about twelve inches from the body. Breathe easily into the lower abdomen and relax.



The Sun Salute

Instructions

1. Stand with the palms together in front of the chest
2. Breathe in while stretching the arms over the head (arch the back slightly)
3. Breathe out while bending forward from the hips
4. Breathe in while taking the right foot backwards and dropping the knee to the floor
5. Breathe out while taking the left foot backwards and lifting the hips towards the ceiling
6. Start breathing in whilst dropping the knees and chest to the floor
7. Continue breathing in as you drop the hips and straighten the arms to arch the lower back
8. Breathe out and take the hips back up towards the ceiling
9. Breathe in and bring the right foot forward (place between hands) and drop the hips
10. Breathe out and bring the left foot forward to join the right foot (forward bend)
11. Breathe in and come up into a slight back bend
12. Breathe out as you come into an upright position with the palms together in front of the chest.

You have now completed half a round – to complete the sun salute repeat the same sequence but this time take the left foot back in position 4 and bring forward in position 9. You can do up to six rounds. Practice slowly if you are a Vata type, moderately slowly if you are a pitta type and relatively fast if you are a kapha body-type.

Guidelines for practicing yoga

- Try to practice yoga in a warm, clean and quiet environment.
- Burn some incense to induce a meditative mood.
- Give yourself plenty of time.
- Do not practice on a full stomach but eat a light snack if feeling hungry.
- Start with a short warm-up exercise routine.
- Practice a few cycles of the Sun Salute.
- Never strain or over-exert – breathing should be light and gentle throughout.
- Ease into postures slowly and gently.
- Hold each posture easily for up to two minutes if this feels comfortable and is relaxing.
- Always stretch within your own capacity – feel the stretch, ease back slightly and then use the out-breath to gently relax further into the stretch –work within your comfort zone.
- Never force a stretch beyond comfort level – forcing is not yoga.
- Remember to breathe – do not hold the breath.
- Breathe out as you bend forwards or restrict the chest area and breathe in when you come out of a position or expand the chest area.
- Allow your attention to rest on the area of the body being stretched and allow it to relax further into the stretch on each out-breath.
- Become one with the body and feel it relaxing – yoga then becomes a form of meditation.
- The pleasant sensation of stretching and that of pain are very different – do not hold a position if bordering on painful. Pain felt after coming out of a position indicates over-stretching and is not conducive to progress.
- If pain does occur, stop practicing, lie on your back and rest your awareness on the painful sensation – breathe into this area and allow the sensation to dissolve and dissipate.
- If certain positions are uncomfortable at a particular time of day etc miss them out of your routine – try them again when you feel able.
- If you attend regular yoga classes and learn positions you'd like to add to your daily routine feel free to add them but always remember that a stretch in one direction should be followed by a stretch in the opposite direction.
- After finishing your yoga practice lie on your back for a few minutes and relax.
- Gentle breathing exercise (pranayama) and meditation may be practiced after a yoga session.

Above all yoga should be fun

ENJOY

Yoga Nidra

Yoga Nidra means 'yogic sleep'. It is a state of conscious deep sleep. You leave the waking state, go past the dreaming state, and enter a deep sleep, yet remain fully alert, aware and awake. It is a kind of 'psychic sleep' produced by a systematic method of inducing complete physical, mental and emotional relaxation, while maintaining awareness at the deeper levels. It is a prolonged suspension between wakefulness and sleep. It induces a higher state of consciousness - a wakeful state of deep introversion or an inner awareness. It is a movement of consciousness rather than a deliberate auto-suggestion. You cannot relax by trying to relax - you need to feel relaxed. After relaxing your body and calming your mind you can plant a few intentions, sankalpas, or assertions in your subconscious before detaching your mind and experiencing the final stage of deep relaxation.

There is a close relationship between the body and the brain. Various centres in the brain control modify, and affect all our bodily functions. In fact, there is a centre in the brain for every act, whether wilful or reflex, physical or mental. Experimental data have identified many such specific centres. Stimulation of these centres leads to appropriate actions, be they motor, sensory, emotive or cognitive. Thus we have a holographic representation of the body on the brain with the left half of the body being represented in right half of the brain and the right half of the body being represented in left half of the brain.

In Yoga Nidra we make the brain centres active by focusing awareness on the parts of the body in a specific sequence. Thus, we try to stimulate various parts of the brain by focusing the awareness on the corresponding parts of the body. Awareness can be defined as adopting an attitude of witness towards physical or mental actions of the body.

From the Yogic viewpoint the body and the mind (together with the emotions) are so interrelated that they are actually inseparable. The mind is not simply the thinking process relegated to the brain but is the sum total of the intelligence which permeates every atom of the physical and subtle organisms. Whatever affects the body must influence the mind and vice-versa. Since the mind is present throughout the body and permeates its every atom, the Yoga techniques which we perform to stretch, strengthen and otherwise improve and develop the body must have a correspondingly profound effect on the mind and the emotions

As we become more familiar with the practice of meditation and begin to perceive the more subtle levels of our thought process we also become faintly aware of the junction point between relative thought and transcendental awareness. It is from this threshold of conscious awareness that Yoga Nidra functions and it is from this field that we are able to carry faint, positive intentions deep into our sub-conscious mind.

Whilst this ancient technique has been part of the Tantric Yoga tradition for thousands of years there are now many derivations of it in our western world. Most follow a fairly standard pattern of procedures, starting with an awareness of the breath, progressive relaxation, introducing a subtle intention and then a 'rotation of consciousness' which involves rapidly placing awareness of various parts of the body in a specific sequence.

Yoga Nidra is primarily a technique of subtle intention and directed awareness. We have a very faint intention and then we very innocently direct that intention with our subtle awareness. The more innocently, faintly and subtly we are able to do this the more powerful the results. It is a case of 'do less and accomplish more' – the less we try, and the less we allow our minds get in the way of our actions, the easier it becomes to accomplish any difficult task.

Our minds are very good at getting in the way of our intentions and often over-ride our intuition which is never wrong and always works for our highest good. We have almost become brainwashed or conditioned into believing that the harder we try, the more likely we are to accomplish the desired results. However, this is

usually our downfall and often leads to the accumulation of stress, and ultimately failure to achieve our goals in life. Meditation and Yoga Nidra are both techniques that re-condition and retrain our minds to function on more subtle and powerful levels – they re-educate the mind and remind it how to function properly. We so easily forget that some of the most amazing things we do take no effort whatsoever. Take the simple act of moving the arm above the head – we just do it – we have the intention and the arm moves into exactly the position we decided it should move. We do not have to think the thought over and over again until the arm finally moves by sheer will power – it just moves in an instant.

Think the word ‘one’ for the briefest of milliseconds and then spend a few minutes faintly observing how the word remains in the awareness long after you’ve thought the word. A part of you recognises that even when the word appears to have drifted away completely, it could almost still be there in some dim and distant awareness. Try the same exercise with ‘orange’ – see an orange in your mind’s eye and notice how the image stays ‘in the mind’s eye’ long after you stopped the intention of visualising an orange. This is the same level and ease at which the ‘mantra’ in meditation and the various body-parts in Yoga Nidra are thought – there is no focus, no concentration and no will power involved. The mind is taken out of the equation and the sub-conscious or intuitional mind takes over.

As a further example try this little task. Imagine that you are strolling along a country path. It suddenly becomes very rough and you end up jumping from rock to rock. At one point you realise that the next jump will take you across a deep cavern, one hundred feet deep with wild, swirling rapids below. Suddenly, actions that had been automatic now become conscious. The rational, intellectual, thinking mind takes over – it over-rides the sub-conscious mind which was allowing the body to respond automatically, adjusting each step to land in exactly the right place for ease and safety. You stop dead in your tracks – the mind’s saying, ‘it’s a long way down, you could get hurt if you misjudge the next step, turn back, it’s not safe to continue’. However, if our ‘conditioned, brainwashed’ mind hadn’t taken over we would have just stepped over it, as it was no wider and no harder to step over than any of the other gaps you’d just crossed.

Similarly, imagine walking down the same country track and then coming across an electric fence that bars your way. There’s a sign on it saying ‘beware; electric fence – do not touch’. However, it’s still in the process of being erected and isn’t yet attached to any electrical source so you could just climb under or over it. However, your rational mind is telling you ‘don’t touch it, go round’. A part of you knows you don’t need to do that and is aware that even if the fence was connected to a power source and switched on, it wouldn’t hurt much anyway. However, you just can’t bring yourself to touch the fence even though you know it’s not electrified. An almost physical barrier is created which will not allow the hand to move anywhere near the fence – the hand has surrendered its power to the control of the limited rational, intellectual mind and over-ridden the higher-functioning, the sub-conscious or intuitional mind.

Meditation and Yoga Nidra are simple techniques that strengthen the mind and help it to remain centred and grounded in situations such as these. Obviously, these are both extreme situations that most of us don’t normally find ourselves in but they hopefully illustrate the point fairly well. Less dramatic situations which we may find ourselves in, or may be able to relate to more easily, could be: panicky feelings before interviews, auditions or public-speaking; having to apologise or retract our words; picking up a spider or other animal; eating certain foods or drinking herbal substances we know to be extremely sour or bitter.

Yoga Nidra helps re-educate and strengthen the mind and allows us switch off our lower, limiting conditioned reflexes in situations such as these. It allows us to act instantaneously and appropriately without the need to weigh up and evaluate every possible outcome. When we are able to do this naturally our lives become peaceful and fulfilling and our mind and body remain vital and healthy. We then begin to function at that powerful level on the very threshold of consciousness where all desires are spontaneously fulfilled.

One of the main practices involved during Yoga Nidra is called ‘rotation of awareness’ during which the mind quickly observes different parts of the body. From neuro-physiology we know that each part of the body has a

different control centre in the brain —curiously, small ones such as the fingers or armpits claim a large brain area. The movement of awareness through different parts of the body not only relaxes them, but also clears nerve pathways to the brain.

Another aspect of Yoga Nidra involves alternating opposite awareness of sensations such as heat and cold, heaviness and lightness. This aspect helps to improve the body's ability to regain balance and brings the related involuntary functions under conscious control. Visualization is a method of consciously using a symbol or image as a catalyst to provoke a reaction in the unconscious mind. But since no time is given for the conscious mind to react, the mind remains detached and the ego becomes temporarily inactive. This phase helps to resolve suppressed conflicts, desires, memories and *sanskaras* (karmic tendencies).

The Practice of Yoga Nidra

Practice 10-20 minutes of Yoga asanas.

Practice 10-20 minutes of meditation.

Lie comfortably on your back with your eyes closed, feet apart and palms up. Cover yourself with a blanket to keep warm.

First you will consciously tense and then relax each area of the body starting with the feet and legs. Lift the right leg about four inches off the floor. Stretch the toes away from the body and then stretch them towards the head. Clench the toes tightly. Tense the whole foot and leg and then it relax completely and drop to the floor. Repeat this with the other leg. Lift the right arm about four inches from the floor, clench the fists and then stretch the fingers. Tense the hand and arm together and then let it relax completely and drop to the floor. Repeat this with the other arm. Lift and tense the abdomen and then let it completely relax. Lift and tense the chest and then let it completely relax. Make a tight face as though you are sucking on a lemon and then let it completely relax. Open the eyes and mouth as wide as possible and stick your tongue out fully. Now relax the face completely.

Now you are going to subconsciously relax each part of the body in turn starting with the feet. Repeat each of these phases to yourself as you move around the body. Start with the feet. "I relax my feet, I relax my feet, I relax my feet" "my feet are relaxing," "my feet are completely relaxed."

Use these same phrases as you move to the calves, knees, thighs, buttocks, lower back, upper back, whole back, shoulders, hands, forearms, elbows, upper arms, head, scalp, brain, eyes, cheeks, chin, abdomen, diaphragm, intestines, liver, kidneys, pancreas, heart, lungs and whole body.

Now start with the number twenty eight and say, "twenty eight, my whole body is relaxing," "twenty seven, my whole body is relaxing more," "twenty six, my whole body is relaxing even more," "twenty five, my whole body is relaxing more," twenty four, my whole body is relaxing more." Keep counting and repeating similar phrases until you reach number one. If you lose count start again at number twenty eight.

Next you silently repeat a *sankalpa*, or resolve regarding your higher aims in life. It should be a short, clear and precise statement, phrased in positive language and in the present tense. For example, your resolve could be: "I am taking full care of my family," "I am awakening my spiritual potential," "I am successful in my all undertakings," "I am in perfect health," "I am a positive help in the spiritual progress of others." Be aware that as the resolve becomes embedded deep in the subconscious it is bound to bear fruit in the fullness of time. Repeat your resolve mentally three times with feeling and awareness.

Now begin the rotation of awareness. Visualize the part of the body mentioned by the instructor; it can be a teacher or a tape-recorder or even your memory once you are familiar with the process. You should not move any part of your body; it must remain completely passive and relaxed. Quickly shift your awareness from body

part to body part corresponding with the instructions from your teacher. You should not imagine the next body part before your teacher mentions it. Remain alert, but do not concentrate. The mind must be allowed to quickly, silently and innocently move from body part to body part with no anxiety or expectation.

This is the sequence:

Become aware of the right side of the body. Take your awareness quickly to the right hand thumb, index finger, middle finger, ring finger, little finger, palm, back of the hand, wrist, arm, elbow, shoulder, armpit, waist, hip, thigh, kneecap, calf muscle, ankle, heel, sole of the foot, the top of the foot, big toe, second toe, third toe, fourth toe, little toe, all the toes.

Now repeat the previous step but this time with the left side.

Bring the awareness to the lower back, middle back, upper back. Become aware of the shoulder blades, the buttocks, the spine, the whole back together. Now go to the top of the head, the forehead, temples, the eyebrows, the space between the eyebrows, eyelids, eyes, ears, cheeks, nose, the tip of the nose, lips, chin, throat, right chest, left chest, navel, abdomen... the whole front. The whole of the right leg, the left leg, both legs together. The whole of the right arm, the left arm, both arms. The whole body

Throughout this entire process you should have the resolve not to sleep. Say to yourself: "I am fully awake, I am practicing Yoga Nidra".

After rotation of consciousness comes awareness of breath. Become aware of your breath, either at the nostrils, throat passage, lung area or abdomen and gently observe how naturally the breath flows in and out with no conscious effort from yourself. Simply allow yourself to be "breathed". Focusing the attention on the act of breathing completes physical relaxation and concentrates the mind. It also allows the sense centres to withdraw from their objects of sensations.

Now concentrate on your body, as if seeing it from the outside. Look at your body lying on the floor as an object, a reflection in an imaginary mirror. Just innocently observe and watch; do not judge.

Now imagine a deep, dark well. Look into it. There is a bucket on a chain. Lower it into the well. It moves into the darkness of the well. You cannot see it. Now pull the bucket up, out of the darkness, into the light. Now ask yourself: "What am I thinking?" Do not deliberately think, but just become aware of the thought process arising, become an observer, a witness to the natural, spontaneous movement of the mind. Now ask yourself "who am I". Do not try to answer this question; do not allow the intellect or ego to interfere. Just ask the question, let it go and allow the mind to remain alert and clear.

Next comes relaxation at the level of feelings and emotions. Here we become aware of intense physical and emotional feelings and their opposites such as hot and cold, light and heavy, pain and pleasure, joy and sorrow.

First imagine your body is made of light, silky cotton. Your body feels as though it floats above the floor. Now allow it to be heavy as though it is made of lead.

Now imagine you lie on a beach under the hot sun - awaken the sensation of heat. The whole body is hot. Now imagine you are in a pool of cold, cold ice - experience bitter cold in the body. The body shivers.

Try to remember an experience of pain, mental or physical - relive it, make it vivid. Don't dwell on the image for long, don't try and judge or analyse it. Now try to remember an experience of a feeling of pleasure—relive it, make it vivid but don't try and judge or analyse it.

The last phase of Yoga Nidra relates to mental relaxation and involves a rapid visualization of nature images and abstract symbols. This practice helps to develop self-awareness and concentration. Be relaxed and innocent and

try to visualize the images on the level of feeling, awareness and emotion. Let each image appear like a slide on your mental screen.

Now begin. Flickering candle... flickering candle... tall palm tree, a car moving on the road, yellow clouds, blue clouds, starlit night, full moon, standing dog, reposing cat, moving elephant, racing horse, rising sun behind the mountains, setting sun behind the mountains, setting sun behind the ocean, ocean with waves, a big lake with crystal clear water, blue lotus, white lotus, pink lotus, a boat sailing on the water—see the ripples, chimney smoke rising from an old house, the dawn of the day, a yogi in deep meditation.

Now ask yourself again “who am I”. Do not try to answer this question; do not allow the intellect or ego to interfere. Just ask the question, let it go and allow the mind to remain alert and clear. Become a witness of your awareness - not the body, not the senses, not the mind; nothing but awareness. Become aware that you are observing yourself. Look within and try to be aware of the one who is looking.

Now take your awareness to the space above the eyebrows – the third eye, the centre of intuition. Imagine a flaming golden, sparkling, shimmering light. Breathe in that golden light and allow it to fill your head, your lungs, your abdomen, your whole body and the space around your body. Take a few minutes just to experience, appreciate and absorb that pure energy which now fills your whole being.

Now start with the number one and say, “one, my whole body is becoming more awake,” “two, my whole body is becoming even more awake,” “three, my whole body is even more awake,” “four, my whole body is awakening more,” five, my whole body is becoming even more widely awake.” Keep counting and repeating similar phrases until you reach number twenty eight. If you lose count start again at number one.

Now finally repeat once again the resolve or *sankalpa* that you thought at the beginning of your practice. You are consciously directing the unconscious mind regarding your true goal in life. This time the unconscious is very receptive and will therefore accept the suggestion from the conscious mind with more intensity. In due course, depending upon the sincerity and regularity of the practice, the resolve bears fruit in life.

Relax all efforts, draw your mind outside and become aware of your breathing. Become aware of your surroundings, the room you are in. Lie quietly for some time and keep your eyes closed. Now start moving your fingers and toes and stretch your body gently. When you are sure that you are wide awake, sit up slowly and open your eyes.

Summary of healthy lifestyle principles - all body-types -

- Retire to bed before 10m as the deepest rest is acquired in the hours before midnight.
- Arise in the Vata period before dawn as this helps ensure maximum mental and physical energy throughout the day.
- Oil massage each morning to tone the skin and muscles.
- Exercise for at least 20-30 minutes each day – a short walk is ideal.
- Practice pranayama to calm the mind, purify the lungs and tone the abdomen.
- Practice gentle yoga exercises to rid the body of toxins and maintain the immune system.
- Practice meditation for twenty minutes each morning and late afternoon.
- Spend time walking in nature and exploring new places to renew the senses and inspire the mind.
- Read inspiring books and cut down on television.
- Burn essential oils in aroma burners to uplift and calm the mind.
- Have some quiet time to yourself each day to rest, relax and reduce stress.
- Maintain the company of like-minded people.
- Be gentle, kind and considerate to yourself and others.
- Try and reduce contact with stressful people and environments.
- Take pride in your work – always give your best.
- Have a ‘Mini Detox’ each month and undertake a ‘Panchakarma Detox’ twice a year (see detox section)

Chapter 3

Ayurvedic detox programs

~ to maintain the digestive system in a state of balance and harmony ~



The thing we fear the most is not that we will shrivel up and become insignificant little people.
The thing we fear the most is that we could become as big and grand as we are capable of becoming.

~ Nelson Mandela ~

Introduction

Every day billions of atoms and molecules are effortlessly replaced and in less than a year we literally have a completely new body. We therefore have the ability to reverse some of the damage we may have caused due to our bad habits, lifestyle choices and poor diet. We can interrupt the process of neglect and decay and replace unhealthy molecules, cells and energy patterns with healthy, life-sustaining new ones.

Once we begin to relax our mind, control our emotions and cleanse our body; especially the gastro-intestinal tract - we begin to experience better health. The colon is intimately connected to all the tissues and organs of the body. This is why the simple process of cleansing the colon can so dramatically affect the whole body and relieve so many of our health issues in such a short period of time.

Poor lifestyle and dietary choices cause the vital systems of our bodies to become energetically imbalanced, our enzymatic activity to decrease and our digestive capacity to be impaired. As a consequence, the food we eat, however wholesome, is no longer able to provide the tissues with the nutrients they need to repair and maintain themselves and our immune system, nervous system and endocrine system all begin to malfunction.

In the short term this may simply result in excess fat, heart irregularities, liver problems, constipation and indigestion. However, as more toxic material accumulates, especially on the intestinal wall, malabsorption increases and assimilation and metabolism of nutrients to our cells and deeper tissues are hindered still further. The long term result is chronic illness, low energy, low self-esteem and a disturbed mind. Fortunately Ayurveda has many solutions to these problems; the main one being Panchakarma therapy.

How we accumulate toxins in the body

Our bodies are in a constant state of repair and renewal. During this process we naturally produce metabolic waste which must be eliminated effectively in order to stay healthy. We are also exposed to bacteria, viruses and other pathogens on a daily basis. As long as our immune and digestive system is strong, healthy and balanced it is easily able to cope with this onslaught without any adverse reactions or illnesses.

However, if we constantly eat devitalised, refined and processed food; breathe polluted air; drink impure liquids; take pharmaceutical drugs; entertain negative thoughts; fail to exercise; work too hard; suffer from stress; sleep excessively; go to bed late; wake late; eat at the wrong time of day and eat foods inappropriate for our body-type, toxins can build up to levels that the body is unable to cope with adequately. We then become tired and depressed and begin to suffer from ill health.

As the toxins (*ama*) build up they begin to solidify and crystallise and interfere with the functioning of the tissues. Eventually they cause hardening of the joints, muscles and bones, blocking of the arteries and impairment of the digestive process. Chronic constipation, indigestion, bloating, bad breath, excess weight, water retention, fatty deposits, cysts, cellulite, anxiety, heaviness, tiredness, pain in the lower back and joints, persistent headaches, varicose veins and other more serious complaints also begin to manifest.

The white coating on the tongue each morning gives a good indication of the amount of mental stress and physical toxicity in our tissues. If our digestion is strong and the body is healthy this toxic residue (*ama*) doesn't appear - a newborn baby's tongue is pink and lacks the white, toxic coating of many adults today.

Ama is essentially undigested food and the coating on the tongue becomes especially thick and profuse if the colon is functioning poorly. It usually becomes even more noticeable after eating and/or drinking late in the

evening. At this time of day the body is unable to digest large quantities of food and undigested residues are left permeating the bodily tissues. This is one of the main reasons muscles can feel stiff, sore, tired and heavy in the morning; the muscle fibres are literally tangled or 'glued' together by thick, sticky mucus or *ama* (the same as the coating on the tongue) and they can no longer glide smoothly and freely over each other.

As soon as we become aware of dis-harmony in the body, whether it be tiredness, stress, negativity, anger, anxiousness, depression or physical symptoms such as nausea, skin rashes, pain or stiffness, we should quickly try and redress the balance by reducing the amount of toxins entering the body whilst also reducing the toxins stored in the body. This can only be achieved by changing our diet and lifestyle, increasing our digestive capacity, cleansing our colon and detoxifying our bodily tissues. Just changing our diet or taking a few herbal remedies will be unsuccessful, or at least limited in its affect, if we do not also cleanse the body at the same time.

Once the digestive system has been purified, balanced and strengthened, the ingestion of pure, unrefined foods and the taking of herbal teas and remedies will start to have the desired affect on the areas of the body we specifically wish to improve. Our ultimate goal should be to create constant energy, vitality, lightness, love, compassion and joy which are our inherent birthright and allow us to act efficiently, effectively and appropriately at all times; they are also the true measure of a healthy mind and body.

To summarise by way of an analogy; perhaps one of the best ways to understand the effects or consequences of toxins in the body is by viewing it in a similar way to a rain barrel. The barrel collects rainwater and as long as some of the water is drawn off regularly it will never overflow and damage the area surrounding it. If we view the human body in a similar way; as long as we don't ingest and fill the tissues with too many toxins, we can flush them from our body before any long-term damage occurs to our vital organs. Furthermore, we are also able to increase the size of the barrel itself through the practice of some of Ayurveda's more subtle healing modalities such as rejuvenation (*rasayana*) therapy, gem therapy, colour therapy, mantra therapy, yoga practice, breathing techniques (*pranayama*) and meditation.

On the other hand, if we constantly ingest toxic material over a prolonged period of time the body finally reaches a point where it is no longer able to process and eliminate them properly and they begin to damage our tissues and organs. Our health suffers and we become prone to diseases of the mind and body - the barrel is now overflowing. The longer we ignore the signs and symptoms and refuse to change our ways, the greater the likelihood of a serious chronic problem developing and the harder it becomes to regain control over the problem.

Twice yearly courses of panchakarma treatments of ten to fourteen days duration help maintain the body in peak condition – they keep the barrel from overflowing. However, once a chronic ailment had become established it may be necessary to undertake a Panchakarma program for up to two months duration before the damage is undone

Background to panchakarma

Panchakarma is the Sanskrit term for detox or purification and translates as the five (*pancha*) actions (*karma*) necessary to cleanse the body of accumulated waste material.

It is a special branch of Ayurveda, an ancient Indian system of medicine, which has been in practice for thousands of years for the purpose of both enhancing health and well-being and rectifying long-standing, chronic diseases. It rejuvenates and revitalises the mind and body and systematically strengthens and balances all the bodies' major tissues and organs using a wide spectrum of therapeutic measures.

The modern trend is to detox the body with herbal concoctions, coffee enemas and colonic irrigation. However, these methods are often only partially successful as they fail to treat the body in an integrated way and only target limited organs of the body. They tend to help with the elimination of water-based toxins only and leave the more resistant, and potentially disease causing, oil-based toxins behind.

Panchakarma treatment however, is unique in its ability to effectively eliminate both water-based and oil-based toxins from the body and in doing so helps to rejuvenate and revitalise the whole body. Through a series of therapeutic procedures that are tailored to the client's individual constitution or imbalance (*prakruti*) it systematically helps release, melt, loosen, mobilise and eliminate toxins and impurities from all the bodily issues.

Once our tissues have been cleansed and our digestive fire has been strengthened, the food and herbs we eat are then capable of being effectively metabolised by the body. Improvement in health is then possible.

The benefits of Panchakarma

- Cleanses the digestive tract
- Increases energy and vitality
- Balances the mind
- Strengthens the immune system
- Reduces stress and anxiety
- Improves digestion, assimilation
- Eliminates disease-causing free-radicals
- Strengthens the endocrine system
- Creates clarity of mind
- Releases negative emotions
- Reduces mental 'chatter'
- Increases muscle strength and tone
- Strengthens and regenerates bone tissue
- Balances the nervous system
- Decreases cholesterol
- Unblocks arteries
- Balances high and low blood pressure
- Eliminates toxins and metabolic waste
- Detoxifies the liver and blood
- Increases health and happiness
- Improves complexion and skin tone

For a detox to be totally successful we must first rest the mind and the digestive system as these are our two most energy-demanding activities. This allows us to maximize the amount of potential energy available for cleansing, re-balancing and strengthening the body. The next step is to gently move waste products and toxins (*ama*) from where they are lodged in the deeper structures of the body and to eliminate them either through the nose and mouth (through *nasya* & *vamana* therapy), the gastro-intestinal tract (through enema or *basti* therapy) or through the pores of the skin (through heating or sweating therapy - *svedana*). Finally, we then need to nourish and strengthen the body. To safely and comfortably flush toxins and impurities from the body requires several important stages.

The seven stages of a panchakarma detox rejuvenation program

Stage one – palliation (*shamana*)

In order to rebalance the mind and body with these powerfully relaxing and luxurious panchakarma therapies the digestive system needs to be functioning properly and the tissues need to be cleansed of accumulated metabolic waste (*ama*). This is achieved by following a light, easily digestible diet for a period of at least one week before the main treatment program begins. Herbal digestive stimulants are usually given to enhance this process and to spark the digestive fire (*agni*). This pre-detox diet necessitates avoiding heavy foods such as meat and dairy and eating only light food such as rice, vegetables and lentils (*dhal*). Light exercise, walking in the fresh air, meditation and yoga are also indicated. Contra-indications during the seven stages of the Panchakarma program include: anger, excessive talking, shouting, travelling, sleeping during day, sitting too long, over-eating, eating before previous meal is digested, unwholesome diet, coitus, excessive exercise, sun bathing, swimming, extreme heat, extreme cold, windy weather, cold baths and cold drinks.

Stage two – pre-treatment (*purvakarma*)

Purvakarma involves ingesting a fatty agent (*snehana*) such as ghee (clarified butter) for several days in order to gradually penetrate all seven bodily tissues and release their stored toxins.

Day 1: Cleanses the colon of *ama* and *mala* (waste)

Day 2: Balances and nourishes the *vata* areas of the body and calms the mind

Day 3: Balances and nourishes the *pitta* areas, especially the blood (*rakta*) and lymph (*rasa*)

Day 4: Draws toxins from the *kapha* areas of the body, especially the muscle tissue (*mamsa*)

Day 5: Draws toxins from the *kapha* areas of the body especially the adipose/fat tissue (*meda*)

Day 6: Draws toxins from bone tissue and balances *vata* (*asthi*)

Day 7: Draws toxins from the bone marrow and nerve tissue and balances *vata* (*majja*)

Day 8: Draws toxins from the reproductive tissue (semen/ovum - *shukra*)

The *snehana* substance is taken early in the morning and replaces breakfast. We then eat only when this has been fully digested – this may be anything from six to twelve hours depending on the amount consumed. During this phase of the detox it is important for us to eat only when we are properly hungry – often we experience a ‘false’ hunger which can be eased by sipping hot water.

Meanwhile, eating a light diet, low in fat and calories helps break down and release stored body fat and also allows impurities within the fat cells to become more concentrated. Because the ingested ghee that is circulating in the bloodstream is free of toxins and impurities it exerts an osmotic pressure and draws the toxins from the tissue cells and carries them to the liver and intestines. Light, herbalised oil massage, hot baths and steam or sweating therapy (*svedana*) during this time help increase blood flow and allow toxins to be released and directed towards the liver and small intestine more effectively. These preparatory measures, whilst ensuring that the body's channels are open so that toxins can move out, also ensure that nutritive substances can move into the tissues (*dhatu*s). The body is now soft, smooth, light and fluid and adequately prepared for *virechana*, the next stage of the Panchakarma procedure.

Note on ghee: this highly nutritious a food source contains an excellent balance of health giving fatty acids. It is very low in polyunsaturated fat, moderate in monounsaturated fat and is also a good source of vitamins A, D, E, and K. It has anti-carcinogenic and antioxidant properties due to its linoleic acid content.

Stage three - purgation (*virechana*)

Virechana is an orally administered, herb-induced purgative treatment that moves acidic secretions and impurities (*ama*) from the *pitta* regions (mainly the blood, liver, gall-bladder and small intestines) to the rectum. There are many herbs that may be used for this treatment but castor oil is often the purgative of choice as it is relatively mild and produces the desired affect in most healthy adults. Any physical or mental activity, which would draw energy away from the gastrointestinal tract, is contraindicated during this process as this severely limits its cleansing effects.

It is usually administered very early in the morning, or during *pitta* time when *pitta*-related *ama* naturally accumulates in the *pitta* regions. If *virechana* is administered in the late evening, it is taken two to three hours after a light meal. The meal should be relatively hot, spicy and sour tasting as these tastes help promote *pitta*-related secretions. By late evening the meal will have reached the small intestine and will therefore allow the herbal stimulus to exert its cleansing influence on the *pitta* organs and tissues.

After ingesting the purgative there follows a series of three to fifteen loose bowel movements a few hours later. The number of movements varies depending on the client's Ayurvedic constitution and the amount of *ama* present in the *pitta* region of the body. The fecal matter is usually fairly solid at first, but progressively softens until it is entirely liquid. Mild cramping or burning sensations occasionally occur due to *pitta*-related *ama* being expelled. This can be counteracted by ingesting a small amount of ghee.

If there are less than three or four bowel movements this indicates that *ama* was not fully eliminated from the small intestine and *virechana* therapy needs repeating. If cleansing is incomplete there may sometimes be feelings of bloating or hardness in the abdomen, itching on the skin, a metallic taste in the mouth, or nausea in the stomach due to the retention of gas, feces, toxins and waste products in the small intestines. Ginger tea will help reduce these sensations as will a warm hot-water bottle over the abdomen. Once the bowel movements become completely liquid they may contain some mucus. This indicates that the small intestine has been emptied and mucus from the stomach and the *kapha* areas of the body is starting to come out. Once all the *ama*, waste material and toxins have been expelled from the small intestine the purging process ceases and the urge to evacuate naturally subsides. The body now feels stronger, clearer and revitalized.

Following completion of *virechana* chamomile or licorice tea is drunk to soothe the intestinal tract and rest is taken in a warm, relaxed environment. Exercise and sexual activity is contra-indicated and a light diet of rice water and rice and lentil soup is followed for several days or until full digestive strength returns. It is very important at this stage not to eat or drink anything cold as this will shrink the bodily channels, aggravate *vata* and tax an already weakened digestive fire.

After a successful *virechana* digestion improves, appetite increases, abdominal bloating and heaviness disappear, the mind feels calm and clear, skin inflammation clears and the body feels clean, strong and vital. *Virechana* therapy promotes metabolism and assimilation by enkindling the digestive fires of all the tissues (*dhatu*s) whilst simultaneously cleansing waste products and burning *ama*. It is excellent for all *pitta*-related disorders such as malabsorption, acne, dermatitis, psoriasis, eczema, leprosy, leukoderma, hyperacidity, colitis, urticaria, hemorrhoids, headaches, migraine and allergies. It also reduces excessive body heat and acidity, deeply cleanses the blood, liver and bile, promotes clarity of mind, sharpens the sense organs, strengthens and rejuvenates bodily tissues and improves digestion. It is excellent for persons suffering from gout, fever, skin diseases, hematemesis, hemorrhoids, anemia, worms, headaches, chest pains, burning eyes, cataracts, asthma, jaundice, epilepsy, ascitis, lactation, disorders of the bones and joints and gynecological disorders.

Stage four – graduated diet (*samsarjana krama*)

Virechana treatment temporarily lowers the digestive fire as *ama* is drawn back into the digestive tract and then expelled from the body. As weak digestion creates the potential for disease to arise in the first place, it is of utmost importance that digestion is strengthened at the conclusion of *virechana*.

In order to re-establish full digestive capacity and prevent the formation of new *ama* the diet following *virechana* must be very light to begin with, and only very gradually increase in heaviness over the following few days. Only if this procedure is followed properly will digestive strength be maximized, food and medicine properly digested, absorbed and assimilated and immunity from disease be accomplished.

The diet following *virechana* therefore starts with one or two very easily digested meals of rice water (*Peya*). This is followed by one or two meals of a slightly thicker gruel or watery rice soup called *Vilepi*. Finally a thicker soup of rice, lentils, herbs and spices is taken. A little ghee, black salt and jaggary is added to the first few preparations with fresh ginger, turmeric, cumin, coriander and fennel added in the later preparations to enkindle the digestive fire.

The final preparation of rice and lentils is called *Kichari* and this diet is adhered to throughout the whole course of Panchakarma treatments. *Kichari* is very nourishing, easy to digest, provides complete and balanced nutrition, and is suitable for all types of constitution as it balances all three *doshas*. It strengthens all seven tissues (*dhatu*s) and aids the detoxification process. It is therefore also recommended during any period of illness, detoxification or rejuvenation process. The length of time spent on this diet depends on digestive capacity and is usually determined by the inherent Ayurvedic constitution.

The strength of our appetite is of key importance during this process. Only if it is strong are we ready to eat, as a strong appetite is our body's signal that digestion, assimilation and elimination are working well. Those of a *pitta* constitution may find their digestion is back to full strength after only three light meals, while a person of a *kapha* constitution may find their digestion isn't back to full strength until after ten light meals have been taken. Drinking freshly grated, ginger root tea and cumin seeds will also help restore the appetite.

When a graduating diet is followed in this way after *virechana* the digestive fire (*agni*) is slowly built up, enabling it to become strong and powerful. The process is similar to the steps necessary to build a bonfire. It is started using paper, dried grass and twigs and only when it is burning brightly are larger pieces of wood added. It is then gradually built up using progressively larger pieces of wood. Once the fire is burning at full strength it will burn, and reduce to fine ashes, almost anything that is added to it.

Once our appetite it is back to normal we should ensure that we follow the usual Ayurvedic recommendations for maintaining a strong and healthy digestion. This includes; eating only when hungry, eating until sated and not until the stomach feels full and heavy, eating the largest meal at mid-day, eating a light meal in the early evening, avoiding snacking between meals, not drinking cold drinks (especially with meals), eating in a calm environment, avoiding heavy, fried foods and fasting for a day once or twice a month.

Stage five: enema (*basti*) therapy

Virechana is followed by *basti* which is the main treatment for nourishing and balancing *vata* and also for flushing impurities from the colon. This is a very powerful therapy and Ayurvedic texts state that over 50% of diseases can be resolved by this procedure alone. During *basti*, herbal preparations are administered into the colon via the rectum. However, unlike modern enema therapies, its effect is nutritive and energy balancing rather than simply cleansing. Due to the preparatory treatments given beforehand, *basti* indirectly affects all the other bodily organs and tissues, as the colon is linked to and nourishes, supports and sustains all areas of the body.

The colon is not only the main organ concerned with the absorption of nutrients and the elimination of waste material but it is also the main seat of *vata*, the primary energy that governs all physiological activities in the body. When *vata* is functioning normally its movement facilitates the removal of impurities, toxins and waste matter from the tissues and helps eliminate them from the body. By balancing the energy of *vata* through *basti* we are able to control the onset of disease as we prevent toxins (*ama*) from being carried from the gastrointestinal tract into the deeper tissues where they can generate disease.

Basti therapy is used to treat *vata* disorders such as osteoporosis, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, muscular-dystrophy, constipation, low back pain, sciatica, rheumatism, arthritis, gout, epilepsy and mental fatigue.

The first *basti* to be administered is the Anuwasan or oil based enema. It is nourishing and balancing to *vata* and also lubricates, nourishes and strengthens the tissues (*dhatu*s) of the body. As this is a relatively small enema (*matra basti*) it is often retained in the body for over three hours and people with particularly dry colons will often absorb much of the oil. They are usually administered before and after the eliminating *basti*s (*niruha* or *shodhana*) as they counteract the more depleting nature of this powerful purification therapy. Oil based *basti*s are good for treating problems relating to muscles, bone, bone marrow and nerve tissue and are often prescribed for chronic neuromuscular disorders.

The second *basti* administered during a *Panchakarma* detox is an eliminating water-based enema called a *shodhana* or *niruha basti*. This is a cleansing enema containing ghee, sesame oil, honey, black salt, licorice, fennel and *Dashamula*. It removes toxins (*ama*) that have been drawn into the colon from all the tissues and organs of the body during the pre-treatment procedures. This enema is sometimes retained in the colon for over thirty minutes. During this time some of the herbs and oils are absorbed by the colon and serve to purify, nourish, repair and strengthen the entire body whilst the bulk of the decoction is expelled along with metabolic waste, fecal matter and accumulated toxins. Each day the cleansing process reaches progressively deeper levels of the physiology, clearing the energetic pathways of *vata*, *pitta* and *kapha* and nourishing and purifying the seven tissues (*dhatu*s).

1 st <i>basti</i> :	Cleanses the colon of metabolic toxins, impurities (<i>ama</i>) and waste products (<i>mala</i>).
2 nd <i>basti</i> :	Balances, cleanses and nourishes the <i>vata</i> areas of the body resulting in mental clarity and calmness.
3 rd <i>basti</i> :	Draws <i>ama</i> from the <i>pitta</i> areas of the body, especially the lymph (<i>rasa</i>) and blood (<i>rakta</i>) tissues. There is greater strength and vitality as <i>rasa</i> is purified and improved skin tone and colour as <i>rakta</i> is purified.
4 th <i>basti</i> :	Draws toxins from the <i>kapha</i> areas of the body, especially the muscle tissue (<i>mamsa</i>).
5 th <i>basti</i> :	Draws toxins from the <i>kapha</i> areas of the body especially the adipose/fat tissue (<i>meda</i>).
6 th <i>basti</i> :	Draws toxins from bone tissue and balances <i>vata</i> (<i>asthi</i>).
7 th <i>basti</i> :	Draws toxins from the bone marrow and nerve tissue (<i>meda</i>).
8 th <i>basti</i> :	Draws toxins from the reproductive tissue (<i>shukra</i>).

Stage six – rejuvenation therapy (*rasayana*)

After the main *Panchakarma* therapies rejuvenating herbal preparations are prescribed to strengthen the immune system and increase vitality in the mind and body. *Rasayana* herbs are often nourishing herbs rather than cleansing herbs and can be difficult to digest if the body is suffering from an overload of toxins or if the digestion is weak. Thus, the best time to take these powerful herbal formulas is after a course of *Panchakarma* treatments when the body has been cleansed and the digestion is functioning optimally. They are then able to be fully digested, assimilated and metabolized and able to exert their full potential. *Rasayana* formulas may be taken for several months and the specific formulas chosen will depend on your predominant Ayurvedic body-type or the energy, tissue, system or organ of the body that needs to be strengthened and balanced.

There are many traditional *rasayanas*; some nourish the tissues, some are rejuvenating, some strengthen the immune system, some increase strength, vitality and stamina, some balance the nervous system and some strengthen the reproductive system. The most common *rasayana* herbs include:

- *Ashwagandha* which pacifies and balances *vata*
- *Amalaki* which improves clarity of mind while also balancing both *pitta* and *vata*
- *Brahmi* and *Manjistha* which pacify *pitta*
- Turmeric for purifying the blood, eliminating excess mucus and soothing sore throats
- Ginger, black pepper and *Pippali* which improve the digestion and pacify *kapha*
- Aloe Vera which cleanses the liver and blood and is good for balancing *pitta*
- Licorice for balancing *Vata*
- Peppermint for balancing *Pitta and Kapha*
- Cinnamon, cayenne, ginger and clove for removing *ama*

However, one of the most truly magnificent *Rasayanas* is *Chywanaprash* or *Amrit Kalash* which has been used in India as an elixir of life for thousands of years. Scientific studies have now shown that this amazing formula has very powerful antioxidants properties and the ability to arrest and improve many of our modern day diseases such as cancer and auto-immune disorders. *Chywanaprash* is meticulously prepared with up to fifty different herbal compounds and has one of the highest concentrations of vitamin C in any natural product. It balances all three doshas and can be taken on a daily basis to strengthen the physiology and protect the immune system.

Stage seven – post treatment

After undergoing Panchakarma treatments it is imperative that we graduate slowly back to a 'normal' lifestyle; hopefully with some healthy additions. This ensures that the delicate state of the nervous system at this time is not over-stimulated, the tissues are able to re-build themselves properly and energy levels rise sufficiently to cope with the increase in metabolism necessary for everyday activities. Failing to do this can lead to a drain in energy levels and an increased strain on the immune system – and we end up feeling worse than we did before.

It is also important that we follow the 'Ideal Daily Routine' of waking, sleeping, eating at the proper times, consuming the right foods for our body-type and integrating exercise, yoga, massage, herbal teas and meditation into our daily program. If we finish a ten or fourteen-day detox and then jump straight on the plane or into a stressful office or domestic situation we halt the delicate process of renewal and revitalization before it has had chance to fully carry out its re-integration phase. We then wonder why we feel so tired and become prone to colds and flu more easily, rather than feel energized and healthy. Once we fully understand the profound power of Ayurveda, and especially panchakarma, we take the time to complete the process fully and thereby transform our physiological and psychological resources into storehouses of immense strength and resilience.

Ideally, after panchakarma, we should take at least a week to progress slowly back into our normal daily routine before we face the world head on again, just the same as we would take a little time to adjust to the day ahead after waking from a deep sleep or when coming out of a profoundly peaceful meditation. For panchakarma to be successful we need time to assimilate the benefits and regain our energy levels – we should avoid undue mental and physical stress, late nights, excessive travel, strenuous exercise, prolonged sunbathing, cold water, cold or rainy weather and sexual activity for at least a week following the last treatment. If these guidelines are diligently applied we support and enhance the effects of the panchakarma therapies and assist the body in concentrating its energy on complete rejuvenation and revitalisation.

We should also follow a light, nutritious, vegetarian diet of pulses, grains, fruits and vegetables to ensure that digestive system is restored to maximum efficiency and able to eliminate toxins from the body. Once the digestion is working at full strength the food we eat will be properly digested, assimilated and metabolised. This will ensure that metabolic toxins, *ama* and fat are not deposited within the body. We can then be confident that we are doing our best to remain relatively free from future disease or illness and will be better equipped to enjoy life to the full with optimal health, joy and vitality.

Finally it should be noted that while *Panchakarma* may be very successful in alleviating symptoms of disease, its real goal is to eliminate their cause. An absence of symptoms does not necessarily indicate a complete cure - symptoms of disease can often be eliminated or subdued but a complete cure often takes much longer. It is generally accepted that if a person's disease has been slowly manifesting over a number of years it will take at least the same amount of time to completely reverse the damage done and obtain complete relief. To effect real long-lasting change the person must also review and alter diet, lifestyle, stress levels and negative mental attitudes, behaviour and emotions in order to eradicate the core and true cause of his illness.

Foods to avoid on a panchakarma detox



It is important to avoid the following foods, drinks and condiments during the detox program. They have the potential to jeopardise your health when your digestive system is undergoing detoxification. They are hard for the body to digest when the system is attempting to flush out toxins (metabolic waste).

Bottled drinks	Frozen food	Refined food
Canned drinks	Left-over food	Tinned food
Confectionary	Microwaved food	Uncooked food
Deep-fried food	Processed food	Yeast products
Alcohol	Coffee	Pasteurised juices
Carbonated drinks	Milk	Tea
Citrus	Seafood	Un-ground seeds
Dairy	Sour fruit	Very hot spices
Fish	Salads	Soya/tofu
Meat	Whole nuts	Yoghurt
Avocado	Lettuce	Olives
Bananas	Garlic	Onions/leeks
Brussels sprouts	Horseradish	Potatoes
Cabbage	Hot peppers	Parsnips
Cauliflower	Melons	Turnips
Chillies	Mushrooms	Tomatoes
Ketchup	Tamarind sauce	Salt (in excess)
Mayonnaise	Salad cream	Pickles
Soya sauce	Sugar	Vinegar
Brown rice	Pasta	Bread

Pre & post-treatment meal routines

Pre – detox recommendations: twelve days before a panchakarma detox it is beneficial to start graduating towards a light diet as this gives the digestive system a rest and starts the process of cleansing the body of toxins and accumulated metabolic waste. This helps maximise and enhance the detoxification procedures.

Breakfast:	Porridge oats with hot milk	Days 1 - 3
	Toast with ghee & honey	Days 4- 6
	Stewed apples & dates	Days 7 - 9
	Vegetable juice (carrot, apple & ginger etc)	Days 10 - 12
Drinks (am):	Ginger tea, lemon tea or vata tea	Every day
Lunch:	Trikatu (two tablets) or ‘ginger pickle’ (see recipes)	Every day
	Any grain, vegetables and sauce with small side salad	Days 1 - 6
	Any grain, vegetables and sauce	Days 7 - 12
Drinks (pm):	Post-digestive tea, fennel tea, vata tea, ginger tea	Every day
Evening meal:	Red lentil soup with herbs & vegetables	Days 1 - 8
	Mung dhal soup with herbs & vegetables	Days 9 - 12
Drinks (ev):	Almond energy, rajas cup, vata tea	Every day
Before bed:	Triphala (two tablets)	For one month

Post – detox recommendations: twelve days after a panchakarma detox it is beneficial to start graduating towards a more normal and heavier, nourishing diet as this kick starts the digestion again and helps maximise and enhance the detoxification procedures.

Breakfast:	Vegetable juice (carrot, apple & ginger etc)	Days 1 - 3
	Stewed apples & dates	Days 4- 6
	Toast with ghee & honey	Days 7 - 9
	Porridge oats with hot milk	Days 10 - 12
Drinks (am):	Ginger tea, lemon tea or vata tea	Every day
Lunch:	Trikatu (two tablets) or ‘ginger pickle’ (see recipes)	Every day
	Any grain, vegetables and sauce	Days 1 - 6
	Any grain, vegetables and sauce with small side salad	Days 7 - 12
Drinks (pm):	Post-digestive tea, fennel tea, vata tea, ginger tea	Every day
Evening meal:	Mung dhal soup with herbs & vegetables	Days 1 - 8
	Red lentil soup with herbs & vegetables	Days 9 - 12
Drinks (ev):	Almond energy, rajas cup, vata tea	Every day
Before bed:	Triphala (two tablets)	For one month

Castor oil

Castor oil, also known as Eranda, is extracted from the castor plant (*ricinus communus*) and is native to Africa and India. It is an ancient medicinal herb and is classified in Ayurveda as sweet and astringent with anti-rheumatic, analgesic and anti-inflammatory properties. It pacifies *vata*, liquefies excess *kapha* and alleviates *pitta* problems. Applied externally it easily penetrates, cools and softens the skin, supporting growth and strengthening underlying connective tissue. Taken internally, it is purgative, demulcent, anti-flatulent, emetic, mildly expectorant, strengthening and rejuvenative. It pacifies all seven dhatus and promotes metabolism and assimilation by enkindling the digestive fires of all the tissues whilst simultaneously cleansing waste products or burning ama. It should not be used in cases of diverticulitis, ulcerative colitis, diarrhoea, Crohn's disease and pregnancy.

Castor oil is vata and pitta pacifying and thus helps improve the condition and strength of nerve tissue. It increases intellect, promotes clarity of mind and induces calmness while also acting as a topical analgesic for neuralgia and sciatica. One or two drops placed in the eyes at night will help with conjunctivitis and sties.

Castor oil applied to the skin is rejuvenating and helps heal bruises. A paste made from castor oil and baking soda is good for moles and warts and a castor oil, ghee and neem powder mix (ratio of 4:4:1) helps with cases of eczema, fungal infection and herpes zoster. It improves complexion by pacifying *pitta dosha* and, used during massage, is excellent for gout, lumbago, stiffness, aches and strains. As a remedy for hiccups an equal mix of honey and castor oil is made and ¼ teaspoon taken every 15 seconds for two to three minutes. Castor oil packs or compresses on the abdomen will help tone and strengthen the colon and reduce soreness or swelling and promote menstrual flow. Castor oil mixed with flax oil and mustard oil may be used to massage mastic tissue to reduce fibrocystic accumulations. Castor oil massaged into the perineum is good for prostate or cervical problems.

Ingesting castor oil after childbirth facilitates the production of breast milk. For problems relating to the joints taking two teaspoons of Castor oil with ginger tea at night will help release toxins and promote strength and flexibility. It will help remove ama and improve the functioning of the colon and, as it is through this organ that the minerals vital to the nourishment of bone tissue (*asthi dhatu*) are absorbed, it will help rectify disorders related to the skeletal system.

To improve digestion, maintain a healthy colon and maximize the assimilation and metabolism of nutrients to the tissues it is recommended that, once every three months, the colon is cleansed using a strong purgative – castor oil fulfils this role. It clears accumulated mucus, waste and toxins from the intestinal tract by promoting strong peristaltic movements followed by a series of loose bowel movements over the next few hours.

Instructions for taking castor oil:

- Warm 30mls of castor oil (by immersing the container in hot water or by placing on a radiator).
- Take a hot bath at 7am – make sure the head is kept cool.
- Drink the castor oil and then suck on a piece of orange, lemon or lime to prevent nausea and take away any lingering taste. Drink plenty of ginger tea until you have the urge to eliminate.
- Elimination will usually happen in 1-4 hours (usually 3-10 movements). Stop taking liquids for the next hour.
- Do not eat until you feel hunger and then have a watery rice soup only for the first meal. The evening meal should be a thicker rice soup and the meals on the following day should be dhal soup (kicharee).

Ghee

Ghee is cow's butter from which the water and milk solids have been removed and can be used for frying herbs, sautéing vegetables and spreading on toast. Ghee is oilier than butter and very health promoting; it has a long shelf life and a beautiful flavour. It pacifies all three *doshas*, strengthens and protects bodily tissue, improves memory, increases mental clarity, promotes stamina, stimulates digestion, produces a healthy complexion and aids rejuvenation and longevity. If taken in moderation (1-2 tsp) with each meal it enhances the digestive process but over two tablespoons per day, especially for a Kapha body type, will clog the system and subdue the digestive fire. In Ayurveda it is often used as a vehicle to carry herbs into the body; it enhances the absorption of beneficial chemicals and antioxidants into the lipid-permeable cell membranes. Applied to the eyes, especially during the Ayurvedic treatment of Netra Tarpana, it can help rectify many eye problems and on burns it helps cool, heal and repair damaged tissue.

Over the past few decades we have been led to believe that all fats are detrimental to health and that they all promote fat production and weight gain. Scientific research has shown that some fatty acids are in fact very beneficial for the body while others are absolutely essential. Fats can be saturated or unsaturated. Saturated fats contain either long-chain or short-chain fatty acids. Long-chain fatty acids may not be totally digested and metabolised by the body and frequent digestion of products which contain them, primarily meat and dairy may, in the long term, lead to excess acidity in the body which can result in cancer, arthritis, rheumatism and thrombosis. However, short-chain fatty acids are digested, assimilated, absorbed, and metabolised very easily and help the body release energy.

Similarly, unsaturated fatty acids, are either monounsaturated or polyunsaturated. Monounsaturated fats are very healthy while the polyunsaturated are not. This is due to the kind of chemical bonds these fats form - monounsaturated fats form single bonds and polyunsaturated fats form multiple bonds and this is where oxidation takes place during heating or processing causing the fat to become toxic. Foods fried in polyunsaturated fatty acids (sunflower, cornflower etc) become oxidized and toxic; they lose electrons (free radicals) and change the chemical structure of the oil. These free radicals are believed to be the primary cause of most cancers and chronic diseases prevalent in the world today. As the majority of vegetable oils contain predominantly polyunsaturated fatty acids it is not advisable to use them for cooking. Sesame oil, ghee and coconut are an exception as they contain powerful antioxidants and doesn't become toxic on heating.

Margarine is particularly unhealthy as it is hydrogenated and contains a large percentage of trans-fatty acids. These acids, which are chemically altered during processing, are synthetic; they do not occur in a natural form and are therefore unrecognisable to the body. They have been shown to be associated with heart disease and to increase low-density lipoprotein (the bad cholesterol) just as saturated fats do. However, predominantly monounsaturated fatty acids, such as olive oil, mustard oil, canola oil, and rapeseed oil are associated with the prevention of many diseases including heart disease and cancer. Ghee contains 25% monounsaturated fatty acids and only 5% polyunsaturated fatty acids. It contains saturated fats but most of these are short-chain fatty acids with only 10% long-chain fatty acids. As a healthy diet requires and a consumption of both saturated and unsaturated fatty acids, ghee is excellent as part of our daily diet as it contains around 65% saturated fats, most of which are short-chain fatty acids. Ghee is a good source of vitamins A, D, E, and K whilst also having anti-carcinogenic and antioxidant properties perhaps due to its linoleic acid content.

Instructions for ingesting ghee as part of a Panchakarma detox (only if instructed by your Ayurvedic practitioner):

- Take a hot bath at 7am.
- Melt the ghee (30mls etc) by placing on a radiator or in hot water until fully liquid.
- Drink the ghee and then suck on an orange segment to take away the residual taste if desired.
- If you feel very nauseous or have very loose bowel movements soon after taking the ghee do not take the next day's ghee and have a day of rest instead.
- Drink fennel, vata or barley tea to enhance the detoxification process and ease any feelings of discomfort.

Maintaining good health

After Panchakarma therapy our digestion is stronger, the mind is less tired and stressed, the immune system is better able to cope with the demands placed on it and our energy levels are increased. However, if we wish to maintain this more healthy and vibrant state we should adapt our diet and lifestyle accordingly. Below are some of the best ways to maintain the benefits of your panchakarma detox and enhance your long-term health:

- Eat your main meal at midday when the digestion is strong and enzymatic activity is high. This will ensure that you obtain maximum nutritional value from the food you ingest.
- Eat organic, wholesome food which is high in nutritional value and energy.
- Eat lightly in the evening so that you are able to process and eliminate toxins during the night.
- Drink sufficient quantities of water, especially hot water, to aid digestion and lubricate the body.
- Take herbal digestives, rejuvenative herbal formulas, ghee and Omega oils as part of your daily diet.
- Reduce the use of refined white sugar, salt and white flour.
- Eat less hard cheese, red meat, confectionary, processed food, refined food and micro-waved food.
- Reduce the intake of tea, coffee and alcohol.
- Leave at least three hours between meals to allow proper and complete digestion of the previous meal.
- Meditate twice a day to increase mental clarity and balance the nervous system.
- Practice yoga asanas to calm the mind and improve strength, suppleness and flexibility.
- Exercise daily to increase circulation, help assimilate nutrients and eliminate metabolic waste products.
- Oil massage each morning to pacify *vata*, balance the nervous system and remove waste products, *ama* and impurities that have accumulated during the previous day.
- Do not sleep in the daytime as this causes the body to store toxins and become stiff and sluggish.
- Do not eat within three hours of retiring to bed or sleep will be unsettled and digestion impaired.
- Be in bed before 10pm as this allows the mind and body to be purified, renewed, revitalised and repaired during the *pitta* time of night (10pm to 2am).
- Awake at dawn (*vata* time) to imbibe the vibrant and vital energy that is prevalent at this special time.
- Try not to wake or get up after dawn as this will allow the influence of *kapha* to take hold and cause tiredness and sluggishness later in the day. Whilst sleep is the body's greatest healer, if it is of a low quality due to ignoring these natural rhythms and sleeping outside of these hours, the lack of proper sleep will eventually lead to low energy levels and a build up of *ama* in the physiology.
- Spend time each day walking in nature and enjoying the countryside. The life energy or *prana* emitted by the natural environment renews the energy depleted by our urban environment.
- Have some quiet time to yourself each day to settle the mind and balance the nervous system.
- Maintain the company of like-minded people and reduce contact with stressful people.

As negative thought patterns, especially fear, guilt and anger, are the primary cause of disease and stress we should try and reduce their hold on us by following as many of the above recommendations as we are capable of. Some may seem easy to implement and these should be the ones we start with first. Once we have fully integrated them into our daily routine and are reaping their benefits we will then have the strength and courage to implement others. Thus, as time goes by, our lives become healthier and happier and we begin to experience and enjoy the beauty around us.

Panchakarma therapies

During the various stages of a Panchakarma detox a variety of treatments will be given. They involve the application of warm, herbalised oil through the medium of massage. Many of the massage therapies last over an hour and are harmoniously administered by two therapists working in tandem, one on either side of the body. The aromatic oils help loosen and dislodge toxins and impurities stored within the deeper tissues. Massage therapies may be followed by a second treatment; either svedana - a herbal steam therapy which dilates bodily channels and mobilises impurities trapped within them - or Shirodhara which relaxes the mind and pacifies the energy of *vata* dosha.

The primary oil used in the massage treatment is Sesame oil which has been shown to have powerful anti-carcinogenic, anti-melanoma and antioxidant effects. Its potency is increased by a special 'curing' process and by infusing the oil with a decoction of Ayurvedic herbs. The type of massage selected and the depth and speed of the massage depends on your Ayurvedic constitution (*prakruti*) or imbalance.

Abhyanga: A full body massage usually administered by two technicians working in perfect synchrony on either side of your body. Warm, herbalised sesame oil is lovingly and soothingly applied in a continuous flowing sequence to relax and balance the physiology. The oil penetrates the pores of the skin and subcutaneous adipose tissues and loosens impurities and toxins which have accumulated there. The massage may last for over an hour depending on the speed and depth chosen to suit your Ayurvedic body-type.

Other benefits:

- Balances all three *doshas*; *vata*, *pitta* and *kapha*
- Promote flexibility and suppleness
- Increases strength, energy and vitality
- Improves the quality of sleep
- Increases softness and lustre of the skin
- Reduces the signs of aging (rejuvenating)
- Decreases stress, anxiety and fear and balances the mind and emotions

Shiro Abhyanga: A head, face, shoulder and upper back massage which is often given before Abhyanga. Coconut oil is used on the head as it cools and softens the skin and is strengthening and nourishing to the hair.

Other benefits:

- Balances all three *doshas*; *vata*, *pitta* and *kapha*
- Calms the mind
- Improves the quality of sleep
- Helps alleviate disorders of the nervous system

Vishesh: An invigorating sports-type massage with firm, kneading actions to help promote the release of deep-seated imbalances, toxins and impurities. It is especially helpful for soothing sore, tired or aching muscles.

Other benefits:

- Balances all three *doshas*; *vata*, *pitta* and *kapha*
- Promotes weight loss
- Relaxes the mind
- Lubricates and increases flexibility in the joints

Pizzichilli: A unique relaxation experience – two therapists slowly and gently massage and bathe the body in gallons of warm aromatic sesame oil for up to one hour. Aches and pains, cares and worries are effortlessly released in a continuous flow of liquid golden nectar.

Other benefits:

- Pacifies *vata*
- Lubricates and thereby alleviates pain and promotes flexibility in the joints
- Alleviates pain and soothes tired, aching or sore muscles
- Moisturises and softens the skin

Udvaartana: A fast, vigorous massage with a coarse herbal paste of barley and chickpea flour. It enlivens and energises the body helping promote better digestion, healthier skin and firmer muscle tone.

Other benefits:

- Reduces excess *ama*
- Pacifies *Kapha*
- Increases circulation to the subcutaneous tissues
- Defoliates and cleanses the skin
- Breaks down fatty deposits and cellulite and helps with weight loss

Shirodhara: This amazingly relaxing therapy gently releases stress and tension from the mind and body; it often accompanies Abhyanga or Vishesh. A steady stream of warm, aromatic oil flows rhythmically across the forehead calming the mind and soothing the nervous system.

Other benefits:

- Balances *vata*
- Promotes deep relaxation
- Harmonises the hormonal system
- Relaxes the nervous system
- Improves complexion
- Improves memory
- Good for headaches, migraine, insomnia and mental stress
- Good for high blood pressure, restlessness and anxiety

Svedana: A herbal steam treatment allowing the body to perspire while the head is kept cool.

Benefits:

- Releases toxins and cleanses the skin
- Softens, soothes and moisturises the skin
- Increases circulation and improves complexion
- Soothes painful, stiff, sore and aching muscles and joints
- Softens and dilates bodily channels (*shrotas*) and increases circulation
- Liquefies impurities hidden in minute channels
- Reduces chest and sinus congestion
- Helps with weight loss and is balancing for *Vata* and *Kapha*
- Good for constipation, earache, headache, asthma, cough, sciatica, dyspnoea, heaviness and neck pain
- Stimulates, lightens and invigorates the body through perspiration
- Reduces stress and improves sleep patterns

Marma: This is a blissful healing and energy balancing therapy which works by stimulating the 108 *marma* (energy points) on the body.

Benefits:

- Helps resolve emotional imbalances
- Increased calmness and clarity in the mind
- Increases confidence and feelings of self-worth
- Balances the nervous system

Netra Tarpana: This is a cleansing, soothing and cooling treatment for the eyes using warm, herbalised ghee to gently bathe the eyes for five to ten minutes. It pacifies *pitta* and reduces heat, itching, tiredness, graininess and heaviness.

Other benefits:

- Nourishes the nervous system
- Removes impurities from the eyes
- Strengthens the eyes and improves sight
- Effective for 60% of eye-related problems including burning, dryness, itching and eyestrain

Kati Basti: Warm, herbalised oil is contained in a dough ring on the lower back for up to 30 minutes.

Benefits:

- Balances *vata*
- Helps relieve spinal problems
- Helps joint problems
- Improves the digestion
- Calms the mind and relieves restlessness

Nasya therapy (*shirovirechana*): Herbalised powders, oils and herbs are administered via the nostrils to stimulate the secretion of mucus and thereby dissolve and loosen mucus lodged in the nasal and sinus passages. A vigorous head massage, herbalised steam inhalation and warm towels are applied to the head and face prior to this treatment. It is often given before or after the main detox therapy and is usually administered in the morning (*kapha* time) as this is when *kapha*-related impurities (mucus) are naturally moved from the deeper tissues and organs to the stomach and sinuses.

Benefits:

- Increases oxygenation to the brain and eliminates impurities from the head and chest area
- Removes *ama* and toxins from the nose, sinuses, ears and eyes
- Cleanses the *shrotas* (channels) in the head and improves the functioning of the senses
- Improve brain function and heightens sensory perception
- Good for: dry nasal passages, sinus congestion, cold, sinusitis, allergies, headaches, migraine, epilepsy, mental retardation, dry, itchy or watery eyes, conjunctivitis, glaucoma, hearing loss, tinnitus, and loss of smell.

The seven *dhatu*s (bodily tissues)

Whilst imbalances in the doshas (*vata*, *pitta* and *kapha*) are the cause of disease the *dhatu*s are the sites of disease. Our tissues are produced from the food we eat - the waste material or by-product is expelled as feces and urine. Each tissue develops from the previous one in a progressive cycle from gross to subtle. Thus, from the grossest tissue, *rasa* (lymph or plasma) the second tissue, *rakta* (blood), is formed and from *rakta*, *mamsa* (muscle) is formed. From *mamsa*, *meda* (fat/adipose tissue) is formed, from *meda*, *asthi* (bone) is formed, from *asthi*, *majji* (bone marrow or nerve tissue) is formed and from *majji*, *shukra* (reproductive tissue) is formed. This process is similar to the production of cream from milk, butter from cream and ghee from butter – the special cooking of one leads to the formation of the other.

Thus, from the basic plasma of the body, *rasa* (lymph), all the other tissues of the body are produced – each is produced from the proper digestion of the other and problems in any one tissue tend to cause problems in the rest. Also, the more subtle tissues support the grosser tissues and store their concentrated energy. Thus blood is concentrated plasma, muscle is concentrated blood and fat is concentrated muscle. The grosser tissues (plasma, blood and muscle) are larger in quantity as only a portion of each is converted into the next more subtle tissue, with reproductive tissue being the subtlest and most concentrated and enduring. It takes thirty-five days for the food we eat to work its way through the seven tissues to become reproductive tissue. As reproductive tissue is the essence of our life-energy and upholds all the other tissues we need to be extra careful that this tissue doesn't become depleted.

Plasma (*rasa*): This tissue is composed mainly of water and is that which all the other tissues of the body are suspended. When properly maintained it helps nourish all the other tissues in the body, providing adequate hydration and electrolyte balance. It is the container for *kapha* in the body and its main sites are the skin, heart, blood vessels, lymphatic system and mucus membranes. When there is an excess of plasma, *kapha* increases and we become prone to accumulations of saliva and phlegm, loss of appetite, nausea, congestion, cysts and benign tumours. When plasma is deficient we are more prone to rough skin, cracked, dry lips, dehydration, lethargy, tremors, palpitations, pain and feelings of emptiness. If we maintain plasma in an optimal state we have a healthy, glowing complexion with soft, smooth skin and luxurious, shining hair. Balanced plasma tissue creates vitality, stamina, compassion, contentment, pleasure and a happy disposition generally. It can be strengthened by drinking adequate amounts of liquid, especially fruit and vegetable juices and in particular lemon and lime juice with a little salt. Organic dairy products and particularly organic, unpasturised milk is also good.

Blood (*rakta*): This tissue is composed of fire and water and provides oxygen to the tissue cells. It is the container for *pitta* in the body. Excess blood creates skin diseases, abscesses, fevers, inflammation, bleeding disorders, enlarged liver and spleen, hypertension, jaundice, weak digestion and burning or redness in the eyes, skin and urine. Deficient states cause pallor, low blood pressure, rough, dry skin and desire for cold, sour food. In its optimal state it gives rise to a healthy glowing complexion and warm skin, clearness in the eyes, vitality, love, faith and a passion for life. It can be strengthened through eating iron-rich foods such as black grapes, molasses, carrots and beetroot.

Muscle (*mamsa*): This is a heavy, predominately *kapha* tissue and makes up much of the bulk of the body – it is composed primarily of the earth element and serves to bind it together whilst giving it strength for action. In excess it creates swelling or tumours in the muscles, heaviness and swelling in the glands, obesity, enlarged liver, irritability and anger. It can also impair sexual vitality and cause fibroids and miscarriage in women. When deficient it creates emaciation, fatigue, lack of co-ordination, fear, insecurity and unhappiness. In its optimal state we have good muscle development and co-ordination, mental and physical strength, courage, confidence, openness, forgiveness and integrity. Muscle is fortified with proteins from grains, beans, nuts and meat.

Fat (*meda*): This is another kapha tissue which is composed mainly of water but is more refined type than plasma. It serves to lubricate the body (especially the muscles and tendons) and creates a feeling of being protected or 'cared for' – obesity is often the result of feeling unloved or uncared for; fat acts as a psychological barrier or protection instead. In excess it also leads to fatigue, asthma, sexual debility, extreme thirst, hypertension, diabetes, sagging breasts, belly and thighs and lack of mobility. Emotionally it will lead to greed and attachment. Deficient states lead to brittle or weak hair, teeth, nails and bones, emaciation, enlarged spleen, cracking of the joints, tired eyes and general lethargy. Balanced fat tissue creates ideal body weight, mild oiliness of skin, hair and muscles, a melodious voice, joy, humour and a loving, affectionate nature. It is kept in balance through judicious use of dairy products but more importantly through using ghee and organic, unrefined vegetable oils such as sesame, flax, sunflower, hemp and pumpkin oil.

Bone (*asthi*): This tissue is composed mainly of earth and air. It functions to support and uphold the other tissues – it gives them firmness and a strong foundation. Bone is the container for *vata* in the body – it resides in the bone spaces. In excess it can create bone spurs, extra teeth, pain in the joints, arthritis, bone cancer, gigantism, fear, anxiety and fatigue. When deficient it can create dwarfism, poor bone and teeth formation, low energy, falling of hair and teeth and looseness in the joints. When in balance it gives stability, confidence, patience, security and stamina. It also gives strong, white teeth, a tall, strong frame with large joints and flexibility in movement of limbs. It is maintained through eating foods with high proportions of calcium, iron and zinc.

Bone marrow and nerve tissue (*majja*): This kapha tissue has an element of earth but is mainly composed of a refined or subtle form of water, which has the power to convey nerve impulses. It provides for the secretion of synovial fluid and for the lubrication of eyes, stool and skin. An excess of this tissue leads to heaviness in the eyes and limbs whilst a deficiency creates weakness or porosity of bones and pain in the joints. There can be dizziness and spots before the eyes, darkness around the eyes, sexual debility and feelings of anxiety and emptiness. When in balance, we have a sense of fulfillment and compassion in life, the mind is clear, sharp and sensitive, memory is strong and the senses are acute and perceptive. Also, the eyes are large and clear, the joints are strong, pain threshold is high and speech is strong. It is best maintained through the oils of butter, ghee, nuts and seeds.

Reproductive tissue (*shukra*): This is again a kapha tissue and is the essential or causal form of water – it has the power to create new life. In excess we are prone to anger and unhealthy sexual desires, semen stones, inflammation of the prostate and cysts in the ovaries and uterus. A deficiency leads to lack of vigour, lack of sexual desire, impotence, dry mouth, lower back pain, lack of vaginal lubrication and slow, difficult ejaculation. Emotionally there can be fear, anxiety and a lack of love and compassion. When in balance the eyes are clear, the hair is lustrous and strong, sexual organs are well formed, the body is attractive and we exude a loving, charming, compassionate nature. This tissue is maintained through taking milk, raw sugar, ghee, nuts, seeds and eggs.

Panchakarma - FAQ

Why do I need to eat a light vegetarian diet during my detox?

A light vegetarian diet allows your body to detox more efficiently and effectively. Your digestive system uses a large amount of energy when it has heavy foods to break down and digest. If less energy is spent on digesting food there is more energy available to release metabolic wastes and toxins from your body. Animal products are very difficult to digest and are therefore strictly contra-indicated during a detox.

Why is it important to also follow a light diet before and after my detox?

A light diet before a detox helps prepare the body for the elimination of impurities. It ensures the body has energy available to thoroughly detox the body, which naturally begins clearing our waste products once conditions are favourable. It also ensures that the detox progresses smoothly and effectively without shocking the body and causing a 'healing crisis' (a reaction to excessive toxins being released into the bloodstream and causing the liver to struggle to eliminate them properly). After a detox a light diet is important because it helps the digestive system gain strength and efficiency as it gradually increases its digestive capacity.

Why are rice and dhal so beneficial during a detox?

Rice and dhal are light and nutritious and are very easily digested. They take only small amounts of energy to be metabolised which allows your body to have the energy it requires to detox efficiently and effectively.

Why do I need to take ghee during the Panchakarma detox?

Ghee is similar in quality to the fat in your body. However, it has one the main difference; it has no toxins or impurities stored in it. As toxins gradually build up in your fat tissues they become increasingly more likely to cause chronic health conditions. However, the ghee circulating in your bloodstream during the early stages of the detox gradually draws them out ready for elimination.

Won't the ghee raise cholesterol and make me fat?

No, quite the contrary. Taken in small amounts, especially as part of a panchakarma detox procedure, it will help reduce the 'bad' fat stored in your body and will therefore lead to weight loss rather than weight gain.

Why is ghee taken very early in the morning?

During the early morning your metabolism is very slow and sluggish so the ghee is digested very slowly. It stays circulating in the bloodstream for longer than it normally would and is therefore able to absorb toxins from the fat in your deeper tissues.

Why do I need to take castor oil during the Panchakarma detox?

Castor oil has a stimulating or 'contracting' effect on the colon and helps induce peristalsis – it therefore helps eliminate the toxins and metabolic wastes that have been drawn from the deeper tissues by the action of the ghee. It also cools and purifies the blood and liver and helps eliminate excess Pitta (heat or acidity) from the body.

Why do I need to take Trikatu or Ginger Pickle before meals?

Trikatu and Ginger pickle are digestive aids that promote the production of digestive enzymes in your stomach – they enkindle the agni (digestive fire) and ensure that the food you consume is fully digested. Trikatu is also very effective for burning ama (metabolic waste and toxins) which is the prime cause of all disease.

Why do I need to take Triphala at bedtime?

Triphala is an Ayurvedic herbal formula composed of three fruits (Haritaki, Bibhitaki and Amalaki). Together they help tone and strengthen your digestive tract and promote regular and complete evacuation of the bowels. They also help increase the digestion, absorption and assimilation of nutrients from the food you consume.

Why is it important to drink hot water during a detox?

Hot water in your body acts in a similar way to hot water applied to your greasy pots and pans – it helps loosen and dissolve the dirt or impurities and melts the fatty deposits. When it is combined with digestive herbs and fresh lemon juice it has an even stronger action. However, cold water will cause the fat in your body to congeal and harden and will therefore result in a lowering of your digestive power, increased deposits of fat in your body and excess weight.

Why are bastis (enemas) so important to the success of the Panchakarma detox?

The ancient Ayurvedic texts state that bastis or herbal enemas account for over 50% of the overall effectiveness of the whole Panchakarma detox procedure. They nourish the colon and deeper tissues (bone and nerves) and help eliminate toxins and metabolic wastes from the body. They not only release toxins from, but also penetrate and nourish, the lymph, blood, muscle, fat, bone, nerve and reproductive tissue. They cleanse and strengthen the entire endocrine, digestive and immune system and thereby cut off disease at its source.

What is Rasayana therapy?

Rasayana therapy is undertaken after your Panchakarma detox treatments to rejuvenate the whole body. After your tissues and digestive tract have been cleansed your physiology is in a more pure and receptive state for herbal preparations to nourish and strengthen your deeper tissues and organs. There are many Rasayana formulas but three of the most common are Ashwagandha, Shatavari and Chywanaprash and these are often recommended after a course of detox treatments.

What is the purpose of the Ayurvedic massage therapies?

Their primary purpose is to nourish and cleanse the deeper tissues through the application of specialised herbs and oils. Base oils, such as sesame, coconut, sunflower and olive oil, act as carriers for herbs which have been infused into them. These herbs target specific dhatus or tissues and rebalance Vata, Pitta and kapha, the energetic aspect of the body. The lighter, gentler massage therapies help balance the mind and nervous system whilst the deeper, more vigorous massage therapies serve to stimulate the mind and release deeper-seated toxins and impurities. However, the body will only release deeper-seated toxins once it is in a relaxed state and this is accomplished through the lighter massage therapies.

Why can't Ayurvedic massage therapies be administered in the evening?

Massage therapies are contra-indicated in the evening because your body is in a very sensitive, vulnerable and delicate stage at this time of day – this is especially so if you are undergoing intensive detox treatments. During daylight hours massage therapy facilitates the generation and release of energy into your body. However, massage administered in the evening causes energy to be lost from your body – it depletes your body of vital nutrients and lowers the immune system. Furthermore, if massage therapy is administered after eating, or before eating, your evening meal it will interfere with your digestive system and will cause ama (metabolic waste) and toxins to be created. The person carrying out your massage therapy also suffers in a similar way. Their digestive system will be compromised and they will suffer from a lack of energy and a build up of toxins the following day. This will adversely affect the success of your detox treatments as your own energy will be drained as a result.

Why can't I have massage treatments during the morning of my castor oil detox?

Massage therapy administered during the hours following purgation therapy with castor oil are contra-indicated because they will interfere with the detoxing that the castor oil has induced in your tissues. The detox process carries on for many hours, even after elimination has ceased, and it should be allowed to come to its natural conclusion for maximum benefits. Also, the digestive fire is very weak at this time and even though the oil is applied to the skin, it penetrates to the deeper tissues and needs to be digested.

Why should I refrain from mental or physical activity (including sex) during my detox?

The more energy your body has at its disposal the more effective it is at flushing out waste materials from your tissues. Your metabolic rate is reduced during the detox as the action of the ghee, castor oil and basti therapies lower your agni or digestive 'fire'. Your body is in a sensitive state during detoxing so mental and physical stimulation will result in energy being drawn away from the digestive system and will therefore reduce the effectiveness of the detox.

Other Detox Options - Introduction

The purpose of an Ayurvedic detox is to naturally and gently purify, rejuvenate and revitalise the body through the removal of toxins, impurities and metabolic waste (Ama). Ama is undigested food and if this toxic residue is left in the body it interferes with the functioning of the tissues and leads to imbalance, illness and disease. This creates fatty deposits, water retention, excess weight, painful joints and cellulite.

The goal of an Ayurvedic detox is to systematically release, melt, loosen, mobilise and eliminate these impurities from the body before they build-up and create more serious complaints in the areas they have lodged.

A detox creates balance in the body whilst also nourishing and cleansing the intestinal tract. This results in more available energy for strengthening the immune system and maintaining the body in a state of relaxation, health and vitality.

The detox diets on the following pages can be safely followed by most people. However, diabetics and people with sugar intolerances should consult a qualified medical practitioner before undertaking the 'Lemon Detox'. The diets can be tailored to your own preferences and time constraints – just choose a diet you feel comfortable with and try it for a few days. It is always advisable to start slow and build up.

It is best to start with the one or two days on the Mini Detox first. If this is comfortable, and leaves you feeling refreshed and energetic, build up to four or five days the next month. If you are happy on this diet try introducing the Dhal Detox for a couple of days the next month and on the following month try a five-day Combination Detox. The options are endless but we've given you a few ideas in the 'Recommended Options' page.

Mini Detox



The 'Mini Detox' is a light vegetarian diet and can be followed for one or two days each week to allow the body to detox and flush out toxins and metabolic wastes which have accumulated in the blood, tissues and organs.

Morning

7.00am: Lemon tea
 8.00am: Carrot & apple juice
 Stewed fruit
 9.00am: Ginger tea
 10.30am: Vata or Pitta tea
 12.30pm: Trikatu tablets (2) or Ginger Pickle
 1.00pm: Lunch

Afternoon

3.00pm: Carrot & grape juice
 4.00pm: Vata or Pitta tea
 6.30pm: Trikatu tablets (2) or Ginger Pickle
 7.00pm: Evening meal
 8.30pm: Vata tea
 9.00pm: Bedtime tea (1 cup)
 Triphala tablets (x2)

Lunch

Vegetables: Asparagus, Butternut squash, Carrots, Celery, Eggplant, Fennel, Green beans, Mangetout, Red pepper, Yellow Pepper, Spinach, Sweet Potato, Zucchini
 (choose three veg types)
Grain: Basmati rice, Buckwheat, Quinoa, Barley or Bulgarwheat
Sauce: Make by liquidising part of dhal or vegetable soup
Condiments: Vata or Pitta churna, rock salt and black pepper may be added after serving (to taste)
Drink: Digestive herbal tea

Evening Meal

Soup Dhal or vegetable soup (butternut squash, asparagus, zucchini etc)
Condiments: Vata or Pitta churna, rock salt and black pepper may be added after serving (to taste)
Drink: Digestive herbal tea

Dhal Detox



This is more intense form of the Mini Detox and can be followed for two to three days each month. This light diet allows the body to flush out toxins and metabolic wastes even more efficiently and effectively because less energy is used for digesting heavier food and more energy is available for detoxing.

This detox can be greatly enhanced by also following the 'ideal daily routine' – arise at dawn, massage and then practice yoga and meditation. Yoga and meditation can also be practiced in the late afternoon. Try to rest or have a light workload on the days you are detoxing and retire to bed before 10pm.

Morning		Afternoon	
7.00am:	Lemon tea	3.00pm:	Carrot & grape juice
8.00am:	Carrot & apple juice	4.00pm:	Vata or Pitta tea
9.00am:	Ginger tea	6.30pm:	Trikatu tablets (2) or Ginger Pickle
10.30am:	Vata or Pitta tea	7.00pm:	Evening meal of dhal soup
12.30pm:	Trikatu tablets (2) or Ginger Pickle	8.30pm:	Vata tea
1.00pm:	Lunch of dhal soup	9.00pm:	Bedtime tea (1 cup)
			Triphala tablets (x2)

Lunch

Soup:	Dhal soup (with pureed butternut squash or asparagus)
Condiments:	Vata or Pitta churna, rock salt and black pepper may be added after serving (to taste)
Drink:	Digestive herbal tea

Evening Meal

Soup:	Dhal soup
Condiments:	Vata or Pitta churna, rock salt and black pepper may be added after serving (to taste)
Drink:	Digestive herbal tea

Taking ghee: (this is an optional extra and should only be added to your detox routine if prescribed by your Ayurvedic practitioner).

- Measure out 25mls ghee, 35mls ghee and 50mls ghee into separate pots (order ghee at www.maharishi.co.uk).
- Day 1: take 25mls of melted ghee. Day 2: take 35mls of melted ghee. Day 3: take 45mls of melted ghee.
- Melt the ghee on a radiator or place jar in hot water until fully melted. Take at 6am each morning. Suck on an orange segment to take away taste if desired.
- Drink ginger, fennel or barley tea to ease any feelings of nausea if necessary.

Lemon Detox



This is a purely liquid diet and is excellent for cleansing the kidneys and digestive system, eliminating waste and hardened material in the joints and muscles, relieving pressure and irritation in the nerves, arteries and blood vessels, keeping the skin soft, elastic and youthful, promoting weight loss and relieving constipation. It can be undertaken for one to five days every three or four months. The Lemon Detox is very easy to digest which is why it is so effective as part of a detox and weight loss program. It provides ample nutrition (vitamins and enzymes etc.) to keep the mind and body in peak condition with enough energy to maintain a normal daily routine.

Lemon Detox Tea

Squeeze half a lemon into a 10oz. glass and add one or two tablespoons of maple syrup and 1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper. Top up glass with hot water and drink each time you feel hungry.

Instructions

For two days before you intend undertaking the 'Lemon Detox' avoid alcohol, tea, coffee, meat and dairy products. On the day before the 'Lemon Detox' follow the 'Mini Detox' or 'Dhal Detox'. During the 'Lemon Detox' diet drink the tea whenever you feel hungry (up to ten times a day if necessary). You may also drink plain hot water or Vata tea throughout the day to aid the cleansing process. On the day after the 'Lemon Detox' follow the 'Mini Detox' or 'Dhal Detox' for one or two days.

Daily Routine

8.00am:	Lemon Detox Tea	3.00pm	Lemon Detox Tea
9.00am:	Vata tea	4.00pm	Vata tea
10.00am:	Lemon Detox Tea	5.00pm	Lemon Detox Tea
11.00am:	Vata tea	6.00pm	Vata tea
12.00pm:	Lemon Detox Tea	7.00pm	Lemon Detox Tea
1.00pm:	Vata Tea	8.00pm	Vata tea
2.00pm:	Lemon Detox Tea	9.00pm	Triphala tablets (2-4)

Combination Detox



This is a more intense and deeper detox which combines the Mini Detox, the Dhal Detox and the Lemon Detox. It can be undertaken for five to ten days every three to six months.

5-day Combination Detox

- Day 1: Follow Mini Detox
- Day 2: Follow Dhal Detox
- Day 3: Follow Lemon Detox
- Day 4: Follow Dhal Detox
- Day 5: Follow Mini Detox

10-day Combination Detox

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Day 1: Follow Mini Detox | Day 6: Follow Lemon Detox |
| Day 2: Follow Mini Detox | Day 7: Follow Dhal Detox |
| Day 3: Follow Dhal Detox | Day 8: Follow Dhal Detox |
| Day 4: Follow Dhal Detox | Day 9: Follow Mini Detox |
| Day 5: Follow Lemon Detox | Day 10: Follow Mini Detox |

Recommended Detox Options

Weekly Detox

Option	Detox type	Duration
1.	Mini Detox	1 day
2.	Dhal Detox	1 day
3.	Lemon Detox	1 day

Follow one of these detox options each week

Monthly Detox

Option	Detox type	Duration
1.	Mini Detox	3 days
2.	Dhal Detox	3 days
3.	Lemon Detox	3 days

Follow one of these detox options each month

Three Month Detox

Option	Detox type	Duration
1.	Mini Detox	5 days
2.	Dhal Detox	5 days
3.	Lemon Detox	5 days
4.	Combination Detox	5 days

Follow one of these detox options every three months

Six Month Detox

Option	Detox type	Duration
1.	Mini Detox	7 days
2.	Dhal Detox	7 days
3.	Lemon Detox	7 days
4.	Combination Detox	10 days
5.	Panchakarma Detox	10 days

Follow one of these detox options every six months

Healthy drinks

If you wish to follow a healthy daily routine of liquid intake throughout the year the recommendation below may be followed. However, it is best to consult an Ayurvedic practitioner who will be able to tailor it to your own specific body type or imbalance and also to the season of the year.

Time	Activity	Drink	Cups
Morning			
6-7am	On waking	Lemon Tea	1-2
7-8am	Before breakfast	Carrot & apple juice	1-2
8-9am	After breakfast	Ginger or mint tea	
	1-2		
9-12pm	During the morning	Rajas Cup with Almond Energy Kapha or Pitta tea	1-2 1-2
Lunch			
1-2pm	After lunchtime meal	Digest tea or Pitta tea	1
Afternoon			
2-6pm	In the afternoons	Rajas Cup with Almond Energy Vata tea Carrot & apple juice	1-2 1-2 1-2
Evening			
6-7pm	After evening meal	Digest tea	1
7-10pm	In the evening	Slumber Time tea Vata tea Rajas Cup (made with milk)	1 1 1



Most of the herbs and teas mentioned in this pack can be purchased from either:
www.maharishi.co.uk (UK)
www.mapi.com (USA)

Chapter 4

Ayurvedic herbs & oils

~ a glossary of terms & home remedies for health & longevity ~



"When you plant lettuce, if it does not grow well, you don't blame the lettuce.

You look for reasons it is not doing well. It may need fertilizer, or more water, or less sun.

You never blame the lettuce. Yet if we have problems with our friends or family, we blame the other person.

But if we know how to take care of them, they will grow well, like the lettuce.

Blaming has no positive effect at all, nor does trying to persuade using reason and argument.

That is my experience. No blame, no reasoning, no argument, just understanding.

If you understand, and you show that you understand, you can love, and the situation will change."

~ Thich Nhat Hanh ~

(Vietnamese Zen Master)

Classification of herbs used in Ayurveda

Herbs used in Ayurveda are classified according to their taste (rasa), their energetic effect (virya), their post-digestive effect (vipaka) and their post-digestive effect (prabhava). The initial taste (rasa) indicates the properties it possesses and the therapeutic effects it will have. Thus, a bitter, astringent taste will have a very different action on the body than a sweet, sour taste or a spicy, pungent taste.

Sweet taste is composed of earth and water and is represented in sugars and starches. It balances vata and pitta, increases ojas and promotes growth in the body. It nourishes and revitalises the body and creates contentment in the mind. It is found in almonds, dates, raisins, honey, fennel, licorice, sesame seeds, marshmallow and slippery elm.

Sour taste is composed of earth and fire and is present in fermented or acidic substances. It is heating and increases digestive power by enkindling agni, the digestive fire. It balances vata, enlivens the mind, increases strength, reduces bloating and gas and promotes salivation. Typically sour substances are lemon, lime, raspberry and alcohol.

Salty taste is composed of water and fire and is present in salty substances and alkalis. It balances vata, increases agni, acts as a sedative and laxative and promotes salivation. Salt is found in kelp, seaweed, celery, Irish moss, sea salt and rock salt.

Pungent taste is composed of fire and air and is present in most spicy, acrid or aromatic substances. It stimulates the digestion, increases appetite, acts as an expectorant, increases circulation, promotes clarity of mind, kills worms, alleviates kapha, reduces weight, clears obstructions, opens vessels and relieves blood stagnation. Pungent herbs and spices include; asafoetida, basil, black pepper, cardamom, cayenne, cinnamon, cloves, coriander, cumin, eucalyptus, garlic, ginger, horseradish, mustard, onions, oregano, peppermint, rosemary, sage and thyme.

Bitter taste is composed of air and ether and balances pitta and kapha. It is detoxifying, antibacterial and anti-inflammatory. It also cleanses the blood and liver, stimulates the digestive fire and scrapes away fat. It is present in bitter herbs and foods such as aloe, dandelion, echinacea, rhubarb, yarrow and yellow dock.

Astringent taste is composed of earth and air and is present in food and herbs of a constricting nature. It balances pitta and kapha, stops diarrhoea, stops bleeding, heals wounds, stops sweating and is anti-inflammatory. Astringent substances include black tea, beans, mullein, pomegranate, raspberry leaves and witch hazel.

Virya is the energy or potency of a herb or spice and can be heating or cooling. It indicates the effect the substance will have on pitta dosha. Sweet, astringent and bitter tastes are cooling whilst salt, sour and pungent are heating. Heating herbs increase pitta but reduce vata and kapha. They create sweating and increase the digestive fire. Cooling herbs reduce Pitta but increase vata and kapha. For pitta they are refreshing and help cleanse the blood as well as calm the mind.

Vipaka is the post-digestive effect the herb or spice will have on the body. Sweet and salty tastes have a sweet or moistening post-digestive effect; sour has a sour or heating post-digestive effect and pungent, astringent and bitter have a pungent or drying post-digestive effect. Sweet tastes are digested during the first (kapha) stage of digestion; in the mouth and stomach. Sour or acidic tastes are digested during the second (pitta) phase of digestion; in the stomach and small intestine. Pungent tastes are digested during the third (vata) phase of digestion; in the colon.

Thus, we can determine the long-term effect a herb will have on the body. Sweet vipaka will increase kapha and reduce vata and pitta; pungent will increase vata and pitta and reduce kapha; sour will increase pitta and kapha and reduce vata.

Prabhava is a term used to describe herbs and spices that have a 'special' potency or effect that is unique to it and does not always correspond to the rasa, virya or vipaka. Thus, a plant may be classified as 'heating' according to virya but is generally known to be very effective during high fever.

In the west herbalists have classified herbs according to their action on the body:

Alterative: These purify the blood and balance pitta and are mostly cooling and bitter. Typical cooling alterative herbs include: aloe vera, burdock, dandelion, echinacea, manjishta, neem, red clover, sandalwood and yellow dock. Hot, pungent alteratives may also be used if there is an ama condition present. Typical herbs include: black pepper, cayenne, cinnamon, garlic and myrrh.

Anti-parasitical: These destroy worms, bacteria, fungi, yeast infections and ama and are mainly bitter or pungent. Typical herbs include: ajwan, asafoetida, cayenne, black pepper, cloves, garlic, pomegranate, pumpkin seeds, thyme and wormwood.

Aphrodisiacs: These are strengthening, invigorating and rejuvenating to the reproductive system and help nourish all bodily tissues. They also increase the mental energy and improve nerve function. They include; angelica, asafoetida, ashwagandha, asparagus, cloves, fenugreek, garlic, ginseng, gokshura, hibiscus, pippali, rose, saffron, shatavari and wild yam.

Astringent: These are drying and moisture preserving and have a contracting, condensing and compacting effect on the tissues. Astringent herbs can be classified as haemostatic (stop bleeding), anti-diarrhoea and vulnerary (heal wounds). Common haemostatic herbs include: hibiscus, manjishta, marshmallow, nettle, plantain, raspberry, saffron, self-heal, turmeric and yarrow. Common anti-diarrhoea herbs include: blackberry, comfrey, plantain, raspberry and yellow dock. Others, of a more warming nature and more balancing to vata and the digestive system include: black pepper, ginger, haritaki and nutmeg and poppy seeds. Buttermilk and yoghurt may also be used. Vulnerary herbs include: aloe vera, chickweed, comfrey, honey, marshmallow, plantain, self-heal, slippery elm and turmeric. Comfrey, marshmallow, plantain, self-heal and yarrow are haemostatic, anti-diarrhoea and vulnerary.

Bitter tonic: These are cold, dry, catabolic herbs that stimulate the digestion, reduce heat and clear ama and toxins from the body; especially the blood and liver – they are usually given in relatively small quantities to people suffering from pitta related problems. Many are anti-tumor, anti-bacterial, anti-viral, and anti-parasitical. They include aloe vera, goldenseal, gentian, kutki and neem.

Carminative: These herbs reduce bloating and gas, promote peristalsis and settle the digestion. They work mainly on vata in the digestive tract and help to increase the digestive fire or agni. Typical herbs include: ajwan, asafoetida, basil, bay leaves, calamus, cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, garlic, ginger, nutmeg, oregano, thyme and turmeric. Carminative herbs with a cooling nature are less likely to produce aggravate pitta and include: chamomile, coriander, cumin, dill, fennel, lime, musta, peppermint and wintergreen.

Diaphoretic: These are mostly heating herbs that increase circulation and perspiration. They are good for the initial stages of colds, fevers and flu as they eliminate toxins from the periphery of the body. They help cleanse the subtle channels and capillaries of the body including the lymphatic system, lungs, respiratory system, sinuses and plasma. Cooling diaphoretics also help cleanse the liver and blood. Heating diaphoretics include: angelica, basil, camphor, cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, eucalyptus, ginger, sage and thyme. Cooling diaphoretics include: burdock, chamomile, coriander, horsetail, peppermint and yarrow.

Diuretic: These promote urination and reduce water and toxicity in the body through increasing the action of the kidneys and urinary bladder. They are kapha or pitta reducing herbs and are bitter, astringent or pungent in taste. In regard to pitta they dispel damp heat, cool and purify the blood, reduce acidity, control diarrhoea and dysentery and help in conditions related to the liver and gall bladder. Cooling diuretic include: asparagus, barley, burdock, coriander, dandelion, fennel, gokshura, horsetail, marshmallow, plantain, punarnava and parsley. Heating diuretics include: ajwan, cinnamon, garlic, mustard and parsley.

Emmenagogues: These are pitta balancing herbs that promote the flow of blood and are indicated for problems related to the female reproductive system, especially the menstrual cycle. Cooling emmenagogues include: chamomile, hibiscus, manjishta, musta, raspberry, rose and yarrow. Heating emmenagogues are indicated when causes are more of a vata nature and include: angelica, asafoetida, cinnamon, ginger, myrrh, parsley and turmeric.

Expectorants: These promote the flow of phlegm and mucus from the lungs, nasal passages and stomach and are therefore indicated for colds, flu, cough, asthma, bronchitis and digestive complaints relating to mucus. They mainly help reduce kapha through their drying, warming nature and include herbs such as: calamus, cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, eucalyptus, ginger, pippali and thyme.

Demulcent: These herbs are mucilaginous and alleviate dryness. They are softening, strengthening, nutritive and anti-inflammatory and help feed the mucus membranes and connective tissue to heal wounds, sores and ulcers. They can also act as moistening expectorants in cases of dry cough. Herbs include: bamboo, chickweed, comfrey root, flaxseed, licorice, marshmallow and slippery elm.

Laxative: These are used in cases of constipation and toxins in the colon as they promote bowel movement and peristalsis. Purgatives have a stronger action and are generally cold and bitter; they may cause diarrhoea and gripping and include: aloe vera powder, castor oil, rhubarb and senna. Milder laxatives are used in more general vata conditions and include: bran, flaxseed, ghee, licorice, prunes, psyllium seeds, raisins, shatavari, warm milk and yellow dock.

Nervines: These act upon the nervous system. They either stimulate or sedate the mind and have an anti-spasmodic effect on muscle tissue. They can help with menstrual cramps, headaches, muscle tremors, nerve pain, lumbago and sciatica. Heating nervines pacify vata and kapha dosha and include: asafoetida, basil, calamus, camphor, eucalyptus, garlic, guggul, myrrh, nutmeg, poppy seeds, sage and valerian. Cooling nervines help pacify pitta dosha and include: bhringaraj, chamomile, gotu kola, hops, jatamansi, mullein, peppermint, sandalwood, St. John's Wort and wild yam.

Stimulants: These are herbs that promote digestion by stimulating agni, the digestive fire. They are mainly heating and pungent and are the best herbs to increase appetite and digest ama or toxins. They increase energy, stimulate the senses and generally increase pitta and decrease kapha. In excess they can disturb vata. Stimulating herbs include: ajwan, asafoetida, black pepper, cayenne, cinnamon, cloves, garlic, ginger, horseradish, mustard and pippali.

Nutritive tonics: They nourish the body and increase body mass and are usually sweet, heavy, oily, mucilaginous and kapha increasing. They can increase ama and reduce the digestive fire and are often combined with more stimulating herbs to counteract this in certain conditions. Nutritive tonics include: almonds, amalaki, angelica, bala, coconut, comfrey root, dates, flaxseeds, ginseng, honey, Irish moss, licorice, jaggary, marshmallow, milk, raisins, sesame seeds, shatavari, slippery elm and wild yam.

Rejuvenative tonics: These are some of the most important herbs or Rasayanas in Ayurveda and are said to increase the subtle qualities of the mind and body, bringing longevity, renewal and revitalisation. They increase the subtle essence of life in the body, ojas and bring clarity to the mind and strength to the body. Rasayanas for vata include: ashwagandha, bala, bhringaraj, calamus, chywanaprash, guggul, haritaki and triphala. Rasayanas for pitta include: aloe vera, amalaki, brahmi, gotu kola, guduchi, saffron and shatavari. Rasayanas for kapha include: bibhitaki, guggul, pippali and triphala.

When an Ayurvedic practitioner has a client with a particular complaint he will aim to determine the underlying cause of the problem and not focus primarily of the disease itself. He will establish which dosha has gone out of balance and then suggest lifestyle and dietary changes to help bring the offending dosha back into balance. He may also suggest ingesting herbal formulas to speed the process along and his choices will be based on the energetic qualities of the herbs used. Thus, if the underlying dosha that is causing the problem is vata, which has the qualities of bitter, light, cold and dry, he may prescribe herbs that have opposite qualities to this; sweet, heavy, warming and moistening. He will also take into account whether heating or cooling herbs (vipaka) are more appropriate and also whether there are any herbs with special properties (prabhava) which may be indicated.

It is usual for an Ayurvedic herbal formula to have many different herbs in it, each creating a particular effect and complementing or balancing one another. If a herb is specifically known to treat the particular condition (prabhava) this will form a relatively large part of the herbal formula. Other herbs will be added to treat the imbalanced dosha, whilst others may be added to treat the tissues (dhatus) and channels (shrotas) involved. The state of the digestive fire (agni) and the amount of toxicity (ama) in the body will also be given due consideration and the necessary herbs added. Thus, some traditional herbal formulas have as many as fifty herbs in them. The vehicle that is used as a carrier for the herbs is also very important so hot water or milk may be use to target vata, aloe vera to target pitta and honey to target kapha. The time of day the herbs are taken affects the manner in which the body will respond as a herbal formula may act on one particular tissue or dosha at 6am and another at 6pm. Also, herbs taken before a meal may have a very different action on the physiology if taken during or after a meal.

Ayurvedic herbs

(a small selection of commonly used herbs and some of their benefits)

It should be noted that no herb or oil should be taken or applied without first consulting with a qualified herbal practitioner, especially in pregnancy or if taking any kind of medication.

Aloe Vera (*aloe barbadensis*): Contains high concentrations of vitamins, minerals, amino acids, enzymes and natural sugars. It is good for the digestion, liver, blood, reproductive system and as a laxative. As a gel it is excellent mixed with ghee for burns and piles. Also helps with constipation, obesity, inflammatory skin conditions and conjunctivitis.

Andrographis (King of the bitters; *Andrographis paniculata*): It stimulates the immune system and is good for influenza, sore throat, gastrointestinal parasites and infections, urinary infections, respiratory infections, inflamed skin conditions, sores and eczema. It is also good for increasing bile flow and clearing liver infections and inflammation. Balances: Pitta and Kapha.

Asafoetida (Hing; *Ferula asafoetida*): Good for digestion and cleansing of digestive tract; it dispels gas and improves the intestinal flora. It is also useful for cramps, flatulence, constipation, arthritis, rheumatism, colic pain and asthma. Balances: Vata and Kapha.

Amalaki (Indian Gooseberry; *Embllica officinalis*): Good for constipation, ulcers, gastritis, colitis, hepatitis and haemorrhoids. It is a great antioxidant and helps lower cholesterol and heal damaged arteries. It is also good for diabetes, anaemia, hair loss/greying and general weakness. Balances: Pitta and Vata.

Ashwagandha (Winter Cherry, Indian Ginseng; *Withania somnifera*): The Ginseng of India with powerful rejuvenating and revitalising properties. It is calming and promotes sound sleep while being good for overwork, stress, insomnia, anxiety, ADHD, multiple sclerosis, emaciation, skin problems, rheumatism/arthritis, anaemia, infertility, fatigue, breathing difficulties, hay fever, allergic rhinitis, convalescence and nervous exhaustion. It improves greying hair, increases vitamin C and calcium levels, strengthens muscles and acts as a pain killer and anti-inflammatory for painful or swollen joints. It also helps relieve impotence, increases sperm count and is a tonic for the uterine muscles. Can also be used for dysmenorrhoea and infertility. Balances: Vata, Pitta and Kapha

Bibhitaki (*Terminalia Belerica*): A powerful Rejuvenative. It helps with liver and heart disease and also improves the voice, vision and promotes the growth of hair. It balances Kapha.

Bhringaraj (*Eclipta alba*): This rejuvenating herb is excellent for greying and/or balding hair, strengthening bones, teeth and hair and improving sight, hearing and memory. It is the best medicine for cirrhosis and the liver in general as well as being a good brain tonic and sleep-inducer. It is good for the complexion and when applied externally it helps reduce inflammation and draw out impurities from the skin. Balances: Vata, Pitta and Kapha.

Burdock (*Arctium lappa*): A blood cleanser, digestive stimulant and good for skin problems.

Chywanaprash A truly magnificent Rasayana or 'super food' which nourishes and strengthens both the mind and body. It has been taken as an 'elixir of life' for thousands of years and is now proving to be one of the strongest antioxidants known to man with the ability to arrest and improve many of our modern day diseases such as cancer and many auto-immune disorders. It is meticulously prepared with up to fifty different herbal compounds and has one of the highest concentrations of vitamin C of any natural product. It balances all three doshas and can be taken on a daily basis to strengthen the physiology and protect the immune system.

Devils Claw (*Harpagophytum procumbens*): Good for arthritis, rheumatism, gout and tendon damage.

Echinacea (*Echinasea purpuria*): It cleanses the blood and lymph and destroys ama. It is good for lung problems, colds, flu, wound healing, skin complaints and viral/bacterial infections.

Gingko (*Gingko biloba*): An anti-oxidant and good for circulation, heart problems, memory loss, asthma, bronchitis, tinnitus and vertigo.

Ginseng (*Panax ginseng*): A general tonic for increasing energy levels and promoting weight loss and tissue growth.

Ginger Root (*Zingiber officinalis*): Helps relieve nausea, travel sickness, headaches, coughs, colds, menstrual cramping, poor digestion and poor circulation. It is toxin-digesting and anti-inflammatory for arthritic conditions, clears phlegm in the lungs, increases digestive enzymes, and is effective for gas, griping and *E.coli* or *Shigella bacillus* conditions. Balances: Vata and Kapha

Gotu Kola (Indian Pennywort or Brahmi; *Centella asiatica*, *Hydrcotyle asiatica*, *Bacoppa monniera*): A brain tonic and best taken with honey to reduce stress, insomnia, ADHD and anxiety whilst improving memory and mental abilities. It detoxifies the liver and blood, reduces tumours, improves energy levels and strengthens the kidneys. It also helps with Alzheimer's, acne, urticaria, eczema, arthritis, gout, wounds and skin inflammation. Balances: Vata and Pitta

Green Tea (*Camelia sinensis*): A very effective antioxidant – 200 times more powerful than vitamin E in neutralising free-radicals that attack lipids.

Guggul (Indian Bedellium, *Commiphora mukul*): Good for skin/tissue regeneration and reducing fat/toxins. It is often used to help arthritis. Balances: Vata, Pitta and Kapha

Haritaka (*Terminalia chebula*): A classic brain, nerve, digestive and energy tonic. It also helps regulate the colon and is good for both constipation and diarrhoea. Haritaka is the basis for Triphala. Balances: Vata, Pitta and Kapha

Liquorice Root (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*): Relieves coughs, sore throats, respiratory problems; abdominal pain and hyperacidity.

Neem (*Azadiracta indica*): A powerful anti-bacterial herb and blood purifier and good for many skin complaints (especially inflammation, eczema, psoriasis, urticaria and acne). In the gastrointestinal tract it helps with hyperacidity, ulcers, colitis, crohn's disease, candida, fistulas and haemorrhoids. It can also help reduce inflammation in joints and muscles and regulate blood sugar levels in diabetes. It reduces fever and can also be used as a mouthwash for toothache and gingivitis. Balances: Pitta and Kapha

Passiflora (*Passiflora incarnata*): Promotes relaxation and helps with insomnia, agitation, anxiety, nervousness and stress.

Psyllium Husks Roughage for improving digestion, relieving constipation and cleansing the colon.

Sarsaparilla (*Smilax ornate*): Good for skin problems, digestion/ appetite, flatulence, gout, arthritis, rheumatism and nervous disorders.

Shatavari (*Asparagus racemosus*): A particularly rejuvenating herb for the female reproductive system as it cleanses the blood and increases fertility. It is good to take during the menopause, as a menstrual regulator and for impotence, dysmenorrhoea, menorrhagia, diarrhoea, stomach ulcers, hyperacidity, cancer and chronic fever. It is also good and for soothing inflammation of the mucus membranes and is useful in colitis, crohn's disease, hyperacidity, ulcers and gastritis. Balances: Vata and Pitta

Slippery Elm (*Ulmus fulva*): Reduces inflammation and is good for lung problems and ulcers.

Spirulina: A very high protein sea-plant that is excellent for weight loss, detoxification and reducing appetite.

St John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*): Calms the nervous system and is beneficial for the treatment of mild depression and insomnia.

Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*): Used as an anti-inflammatory and circulatory stimulant. It improves skin conditions such as acne, rashes, dermatitis, eczema, urticaria and psoriasis; relieves pain and has anti-oxidant, anti-carcinogenic, anti-tumour, anti-bacterial, anti-biotic, anti-microbial, anti-viral, carminative and immuno-stimulant properties. It is good for asthma, allergies, burns, diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, osteoporosis, obesity, digestive disorders, gallstones, liver disorders, tumours, reducing cholesterol, thinning the blood, cancer and ulcers. It also helps with uterine cysts and fibroids, endometriosis, dysmenorrhoea, amenorrhoea and leucorrhoea. Balances: Vata, Pitta and Kapha

Trikatu A powerful tonic for improving digestion and relieving constipation. It is prepared by mixing ground ginger, black pepper and cayenne pepper (one pinch of each) in a little honey (one teaspoon). It balances Kapha.

Valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*): Good for nervous disorders such as tension and anxiety. It is also good for insomnia, fainting and menstrual cramps.

Wild Yam (*Dioscorea villosa*): Helps with hormonal imbalances, period pains, menopause, colic, joint inflammation, flatulence and liver cleansing.

Triphala

Triphala formula contains Amalaki, Haritaki and Bibhitaki is considered a 'tri-doshic rasayana' – it is one of the most popular Ayurvedic herbal remedies as it helps rectify constipation and bowel irregularity but is also something of a universal panacea for a wide range of complaints.

It helps cleanse the blood and detoxify the liver as it possesses bitter anthroquinones which help stimulate bile flow and peristalsis. It is a powerful tonic as it is high in vitamin C, linoleic oil, phospholipids and other important nutrients. It is rich in antioxidants that fight free radicals and has anti-viral (HIV, AIDS, herpes etc) and anti-bacterial properties. It tonifies and protects the heart whilst also lowering blood pressure and reducing fat and cholesterol. It helps with the digestion and assimilation of food, improves blood circulation and has anti-inflammatory properties. It revitalises the whole body by removing toxins, gas and distension whilst nourishing the nervous system. It is good for anemia, fatigue, candida, cancer, allergies, constipation, diarrhoea, yeast infections, indigestion and skin disorders. It can be used for all eye diseases including conjunctivitis, progressive myopia, glaucoma and cataracts.

Traditionally triphala is taken as a churna or powder as the taste on the tongue is important to its action. Two or three grams of the powder can be taken daily with warm water for health maintenance (alternatively, 1g can be taken three times a day between meals). Larger doses are more laxative whilst smaller doses are more gradually blood purifying. The dose taken should be increased or decreased according to the response of the bowels.

Aloe Vera

Known to herbalists and medical folklorists for centuries as the "medical plant" or "the potted physician", this cactus-like plant whose name means "shining bitter substance," was widely regarded as a master healing plant. In recent decades medical research has confirmed that Aloe Vera is a truly amazing plant with an incredible array of medicinal healing properties.

Applied to wounds, aloe gel is a mild anaesthetic, relieving itching, swelling, and pain. It is also antibacterial and anti fungal, increases blood flow to wounded areas and stimulates fibroblasts, the skin cells responsible for wound healing. It also helps relieve burns and psoriasis. It is effective for treating inflammatory bowel disease, detoxifying the bowel, neutralising stomach acidity, relieving constipation and healing gastric ulcers. It has also been shown to reduce blood sugar in diabetics.

Aloe can help prevent arthritis and reduce the inflammation in joints already affected by arthritis. It can also inhibit the autoimmune reaction associated with certain forms of arthritis, in which the body attacks its own tissues.

Aloe could also provide nutritional support for HIV patients as it has properties which reduce occurrences of opportunistic infections, thrush, fatigue and diarrhoea. Research indicates that aloe helps stimulate the body's immune system, particularly the T4 helper cells - white blood cells that activate the immune response to infection. An extract of mannose, one of the sugars in aloe, has been shown to inhibit HIV-1 (the virus associated with AIDS).

Aloe has been found to significantly suppress the growth of cancer cells. It has been shown to help turn on the immune system by activating macrophages (white blood cells which "swallow" antigens), causing the release of immune-activating (and anticancer) substances such as interferons, interleukins, and tumour necrosis factor. In addition, aloe seems to also promote the growth of normal (non-cancerous) cells.

Herbal formulas for common ailments

It should be noted that no herb or oil should be taken or applied without first consulting with a qualified herbal practitioner, especially in pregnancy or if taking any kind of medication. This glossary lists a range of common ailments and the combination of Pukka Herbs remedies (www.pukkaherbs.com) that can help best to restore the body to health.

Condition	Treatment Strategy	Action
Acne	Neem & Sarsaparilla formula Triphala plus Neem tincture Aloe Vera juice Aloe gel (external) Neem & Sandalwood cream (external)	Cleanses blood Detoxifies the bowel
Arthritis	Turmeric & Boswellia formula Triphala plus Turmeric tincture Mahanarayan oil (external)	Anti-inflammatory Clears toxins
Asthma - child	Chywanaprash Turmeric tincture Revitalizing tea	Tonifies lungs Stops inflammation and phlegm
Asthma - adult	Licorice & Ginger formula Chywanaprash Asafoetida formula Triphala plus bowel Revitalising tea Mahanarayan oil	Reduces wheezing Tones lungs Antispasmodic Gently regulates the
Back pain	Turmeric tincture Ashwagandha tincture Ashwagandha plus Mahanarayan oil (External)	Stops pain Strengthens spine
Candida	Neem capsule or tincture Asafoetida plus Shatavari plus Triphala plus Detox tea	Kills candida Reduces gas and bloating Clears discharges Regulates bowel Stops bloating
Catarrh	Trikatu Licorice & Ginger formula Nasya nasal oil Revitalising tea	Reduces mucus Clears sinuses
Cellulite	Guggul plus Gotu Kola tincture Mahanarayan oil Shatavari Plus	Reduces fat Specific for cellulite Benefits female health
Cholesterol	Guggul plus Turmeric tincture Aloe vera juice Hemp seed oil Revitalising tea	Reduces cholesterol Reduces cholesterol Reduces LDL and congestion
Chronic Fatigue	Ashwagandha plus Shatavari plus Triphala plus Asafoetida plus Amla & Peppermint formula Chywanaprash	Tonifies – men Tonifies – women When there is constipation Bloating Diarrhoea Boosts immunity
Cold Sores	Andrographis & Holy Basil formula Neem cream	Anti viral

Colds	<p>Trikatu Licorice & Ginger formula Andrographis & Holy Basil formula Nasya nasal oil Revitalising tea</p>	<p>Reduces mucus Recovery from colds and coughs) Reduces infection Clears the nose</p>
Constipation	<p>Triphala plus Triphala Asafoetida plus Chywanaprash Hemp seed oil Aloe vera juice</p>	<p>Evacuates bowel Regulates bowel Bloating and gas Lubricates dryness</p>
Cough	<p>Licorice & Ginger formula Trikatu Soothing tea Chywanaprash Bhringaraj oil</p>	<p>Nourishes lungs and stops coughing Clears phlegm Clears phlegm and soothes throat</p>
Cystitis	<p>Gokshura & Shatavari formula Neem capsules Detox tea</p>	<p>Regulates urinary system Clears infection Eases urination</p>
Dermatitis	<p>Neem & Sarsaparilla formula Neem tincture Guduchi plus Triphala plus Aloe vera juice Neem cream Aloe vera gel Hemp seed oil Bhringaraj oil, Neem oil (external)</p>	<p>Cleans skin Reduces inflammation Clears the liver Clears constipation Anti-inflammatory</p>
Diarrhoea	<p>Amla & Peppermint formula Asafoetida plus Detox tea</p>	<p>Stops cramps Stops cramps</p>
Digestive Problems	<p>Trikatu Asafoetida plus Amla & Peppermint formula Aloe vera juice Detox tea</p>	<p>Stimulates digestive enzymes Erratic appetite with gas Acidity Stops bloating</p>
Eczema	<p>Neem & Sarsaparilla formula Guduchi plus Triphala plus Neem cream Aloe vera juice Aloe gel Peppermint water spray Hemp seed oil Brahmi oil, Bhringaraj oil</p>	<p>Stops inflammation Reduces toxins in liver Clears bowel Stops infections Clears toxins, anti-inflammatory Reduces inflammation Stops itching Anti-inflammatory</p>
Fatigue	<p>Ashwagandha plus Shatavari plus Triphala plus Chywanaprash</p>	<p>Male energy Female energy Clears stagnation</p>
Fertility	<p>Shatavari plus Ashwagandha plus Triphala plus Rose water Chywanaprash Ashwagandha oil</p>	<p>Boosts fertility in women Boosts fertility in men Clears congestion Nourishes uterus</p>
Flatulence	<p>Asafoetida plus Triphala plus Ashwagandha and Gotu kola formula</p>	<p>Stops flatulence Regulates the bowel Reduces stress on the bowel</p>

Glandular Fever	Ashwagandha Plus Andrographis & Holy Basil formula Chywanaprash	For strengthening For clearing the virus
Hair Loss	Amla & Peppermint formula Bhringraj oil Coconut oil	Nourishes hair
Halitosis	Triphala plus Asafoetida plus Amla & Peppermint formula Aloe vera juice Peppermint water spray	To clear congestion To regulate appetite To regulate appetite Regulates bowel
Hay fever	Peppermint & Pippali formula Trikatu Aloe vera juice Rose water eye drops Nasya oil	Reduces inflammation and irritation Anti-histamine, reduces secretions Protects liver Stops itching and soothes inflammation
Heartburn	Amla & Peppermint formula Aloe vera juice Rosewater Ashwagandha & Gotu Kola formula Refreshing tea	Stops acid Cools stomach Antacid Reduces stress reduces burning
Heart Conditions	Arjuna & Hawthorn formula Turmeric tincture Amla tincture Hemp seed oil Love tea	Strengthens heart Increases circulation Strengthens heart Reduces LDL and congestion Soothes heart
Hypertension	Punarnava plus Aloe vera Triphala plus Ashwagandha & Valerian formula Soothing tea	Clear fluids and regulates BP Stops inflammation Reduces congestion Reduces stress
IBS	Triphala plus Asafoetida plus Amla & Peppermint formula Ashwagandha & Valerian formula Aloe vera juice Refreshing tea	With constipation With gas and cramps With diarrhoea and irritation For stress Cleans bowel and stops irritation
Men's Health	Ashwagandha plus Guduchi plus Aloe vera juice Chywanaprash	Tones reproductive system Detox for liver Clears liver and heart
Menopause	Shatavari plus Shatavari Aloe vera juice Rose water spray Refreshing tea Chywanaprash	Stops sweats, mood swings Balances hormones Stops flushes For hot flushes Reduces heat
Migraine	Guduchi plus Amla & Peppermint formula Ashwagandha & Valerian formula Refreshing tea Aloe vera juice, Brahmi oil	Helps to clean liver Prevents irritating acid Calms stress
Mouth Ulcers	Neem tincture Andrographis & Holy Basil formula Amla & Peppermint formula Aloe juice Refreshing tea	Reduces inflammation Boosts immunity Reduces inflammation Heals ulcers

Osteoporosis	Ashwagandha plus Shatavari plus Turmeric & Boswellia formula Chywanaprash	Tonifies skeletal system Regulates oestrogen/progesterone balance Increase blood flow to bones
Painful Periods	Shatavari plus Turmeric tincture Aloe vera juice Triphala plus Soothing tea	Stops spasms Reduces inflammatory prostaglandins Clears congestion If associated with constipation For painful periods
Piles	Triphala plus Gotu Kola & Turmeric formula Guduchi plus Aloe vera juice	Gives soft stool Reduces venous congestion Regulates portal vein
Pregnancy	Shatavari Rose water spray	Increases lactation Uplifts mood
Prostatitis	Gokshura & Shatavari formula Detox tea	Eases urination, reduces blockages
Psoriasis	Neem & Sarsaparilla formula Triphala plus Aloe Vera juice Neem cream Aloe gel Hemp seed oil Brahmi oil, Neem oil (external)	Clear lesions Clears bowel Protect liver Reduces inflammation
Sinus	Trikatu Licorice & Ginger formula Nasya nasal oil Revitalising tea	Opens sinuses Prevents blockage Stops congestion
Sleep	Ashwagandha & Valerian formula Sedative	
Stress	Ashwagandha & Gotu Kola formula Ashwagandha & Valerian formula Brahmi plus Brahmi oil	Day stress Night stress For concentration
Thyroid	Guggul plus	Regulates thyroid
Travel Sickness	Asafoetida plus Ashwagandha & Gotu Kola formula Trikatu	Settles digestion Relaxant Regulates appetite
Varicose Veins	Gotu Kola & Turmeric formula Turmeric	Increases venous return Increases circulation
Weight Loss	Guggul plus Punarnava plus	Reduces cholesterol and weight Clears fluids
Women's Health	Shatavari plus Shatavari Aloe Vera juice Aloe gel Rose water spray	Nourishes reproductive system Balances hormones

* Reproduced with the kind permission of Sebastian Pole of Pukka Herbs (see resources).

A guide to using aromatic essential oils

Essential oils are an aromatic constituent of many plants, flowers and shrubs and have powerful healing properties if distilled and applied correctly. Only organic, grade A (clinic/therapeutic grade) oils with ISO/AFNOR certification should be used if you wish to ensure that the oils you purchase will be safe and have the desired therapeutic effect. If essential oils meet the above criteria then many may be safely used to flavour beverages or food, added to base oils for massage, mixed with bathwater, evaporated in aroma burners, applied topically to the body and inhaled from diffusers.

To prepare a herbal tea, add one or two drops of essential oil to a one-litre thermos flask. Be sure to only use oils that are recommended for oral consumption. When using essential oils on the skin it is best to mix them with a base oil such as sesame or almond in order to prevent possible skin irritations or sensitivity and also to increase their therapeutic value (a mix of 20:1 base oil to essential oil is ideal). If used neat on the skin it is important to test on the back of the hand first to check for skin sensitivity. Do not use undiluted anywhere on the skin if a reaction occurs.

Serious complaints and imbalances in the body have often taken many months or even years to manifest as physical symptoms. Essential oils can help heal the underlying problem and can thereby reduce or eliminate the outward symptoms. However, this healing and balancing process may take weeks or even months depending on the severity of the problem being tackled so patience and perseverance are vital. Prescribed drugs may well clear up outward symptoms of a disease very quickly but they are generally toxic to the body and can further weaken an already compromised immune system. Furthermore, they don't often address the underlying problem but simply suppress the condition and drive it even deeper into the tissues. As with any medical condition, the disease, illness or complaint is both a warning sign that you are treating the body incorrectly and also the body's way of releasing toxins or impurities. If you suppress that process with drugs you have a short-term gain but a dangerous long-term loss because the real problem hasn't been addressed and dealt with.

The causes of specific ailments or conditions are manifold but are often a combination of wrong diet, wrong lifestyle, stress and lack of exercise. Eating well-balanced, freshly cooked, nutritious meals, reducing stress levels and exercising regularly go a long way to preventing the onset of disease processes. However, the judicious use of essential oils will undoubtedly help with any complaints or conditions you may be suffering from. However, herb and oils are powerful remedies and should only be taken or applied after first consulting with a qualified herbal practitioner, especially in pregnancy or if taking any kind of medication.

Commonly used essential oils:

Basil: Use for migraines, mental fatigue, scanty periods, relaxing muscles, insect bites and chest infections. Apply diluted to the temples, crown, forehead, heart and navel. May be added to food and water. Balances Vata and Kapha.

Cedarwood

Good for combating hair loss, insomnia, skin problems, nervous tension and anxiety, dandruff, cystitis and fluid retention. Apply diluted to problem areas. Balances Vata.

Cinnamon

Use for improving circulation, coughs, exhaustion, digestion, rheumatism and warts.

Apply diluted to the feet, ankles and wrists. May be added to food and water. Balances Pitta.

Clove: Good for fighting infectious diseases, intestinal parasites, respiratory infections, pain, toothache, scabies, infected wounds, warts, mouth/skin sores, skin cancer/disease, dermatitis, rheumatism, arthritis, cystitis, diarrhoea, acne, halitosis, headaches, nausea, insect bites and neuritis. Use diluted with sesame oil as a mouth gargle and apply diluted to problem areas. Balances Vata & Kapha.

Eucalyptus globules: An excellent oil for: healing wounds; using as an insect repellent; for asthma, coughs, diabetes, herpes, hypoglycaemia, lung problems, headaches, aches/pains, arthritis, burns, ulcers and general sores. Apply diluted on location and use for steam inhalation. May be added to food and water. Balances Kapha.

Fennel: Very good for improving the digestion. Also use for cystitis, nausea, menstrual pains, spasms, gout, constipation, hormone balancing, internal cleansing and respiratory complaints. Apply diluted to problem areas. May be added to food and water. Balances Vata, Pitta & Kapha.

Frankincense: Use for asthma, depression, ulcers, stress, allergies, insect bites, bronchitis, cancer, respiratory infections, headaches, herpes, high blood pressure, inflammation, stress, warts. Apply diluted to problem areas. Balances Vata.

Ginger: Good for motion sickness, arthritis/rheumatism, digestion, alcoholism, appetite, respiratory problems, coughs, nausea, sprains, sinusitis and sore throats. Apply diluted to problem areas. May be added to food and water. Balances Vata & Kapha.

Lavender: Strong antiseptic and good for burns, wounds, skin care, nervous disorders, sunburn, allergies, headaches, indigestion, insomnia, high blood pressure, nausea, menstrual pains, scarring, arthritis/rheumatism, asthma, insect bites, infections, hives and depression. Apply diluted to problem areas. May be added to food/water. Balances Vata & Pitta.

Lemon: Use for skin care, warts, varicose veins, throat infections, asthma, bleeding, herpes, anaemia, lowering blood pressure, improving digestion, healthy nails, improving memory, boosting immune functioning and respiratory problems. Apply to problem areas diluted with sesame oil or as a floral spray mixed with peppermint. May be added to food and water. Balances Pitta.

Nutmeg: Good for fighting fatigue and increasing energy levels, improving appetite/digestion, gallstones, halitosis, rheumatism, nausea, pain, frigidity, impotence, menstrual pains and bacterial infections. Apply diluted to problem areas. May be added to food and water. Balances Vata & Kapha.

Peppermint: Good for the liver strengthening cleansing, improving digestion, nausea, respiratory problems, improving concentration, itchy skin, asthma, candida, diarrhoea, heartburn, halitosis, haemorrhoids, menstrual pains, headaches, motion sickness, tumours, shock, throat infections, varicose veins, skin problems, arthritis/rheumatism and toothache. Apply diluted to the stomach, feet, temples and tongue (for increased concentration, alertness and memory). May be added to food and water. Balances Pitta.

Pine: Good for respiratory problems, as an antiseptic, muscles/joint problems, infections, fatigue, asthma, lungs, diabetes, sinusitis, rheumatoid arthritis, coughs, cuts, lice, sores, stress and increasing blood pressure. Dilute to avoid skin irritation and avoid low cost adulterated oils. Do not use if epileptic, under doctor supervision or have high blood pressure. Apply diluted to problem areas or use for steam inhalation. Balances Kapha.

Rosemary: Use for improving concentration, arthritis/rheumatism, liver cleansing, menstrual pains, asthma, digestive problems, breathing difficulties and nervous tension. May be used for steam inhalations or applied diluted to problem areas. May be added to food and water. Balances Kapha.

Sandalwood: Good for nervous disorders, circulation problems, insomnia, enhancing meditation, infections, depression and skin problems. Apply diluted to problem areas. Balances Pitta.

Spruce: Use for athlete's foot, fungal infections, respiratory problems, arthritis/rheumatism, painful joints, nervous disorders, hormonal imbalances and respiratory problems. Apply diluted to problem areas. Balances Vata, Pitta and Kapha.

Tea-Tree: Use for athlete's foot, fungal infections, respiratory infections, bronchitis, gum disease, rash, sore throat, sunburn, tonsillitis, vaginal thrush, acne, burns, candida, cold sores, warts, wounds. Apply diluted to problem areas. Balances Pitta.

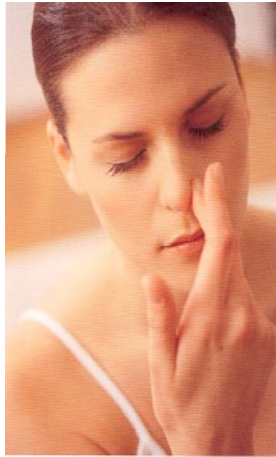
Please note:

'The Essential Oils Desk Reference' published by Essential Science Publishing
(www.espublishing.com) is an excellent guide to using essential oils.

Chapter 5

Practical therapies & advice

~ keeping the body healthy & balanced ~



The secret of making something work in your lives is,
first of all, the deep desire to make it work.

Then the faith and belief that it can work.

Then hold that clear definite vision in your consciousness,

and see it working out step by step

without one thought of doubt or disbelief.

~ Eileen Caddy ~

Nasya home treatment

Nasya is the nasal administration of medicinal herbs, decoctions and oils to alleviate complaints that occur above the clavicle. This therapy is most commonly indicated for dry nasal passages, hoarseness of voice, stiffness in the head, neck and jaw area, headaches and certain eye and ear problems. It relieves mental and emotional stress, anxiety, fear and negativity.

The nose is the doorway to the brain, mind and consciousness. Prana, the vital life force, enters our bodies through the breath. Lubrication of the nasal passages with medicated oil provides subtle moisture to the air we breathe and affects the higher cerebral faculties and sensory organs. It promotes clarity of perception, intuition and stimulates memory. It also enhances cerebral circulation and restores prana or life energy to the senses.

This self-treatment can be undertaken weekly (from one to three days duration) if you frequently suffer from mild headaches, congestion or blocked sinuses. However, it is contra-indicated during colds/flu, high fever, pregnancy and menstruation and should only be used under medical supervision if highly congested.

You will need: MP16 (nasal oil)*
MA634 or eucalyptus oil (inhalation oils)*
Sesame oil*
Box of large tissues
Salt water
Hot water bottle
Steam bowl
Boiling water
Bath towel
Hand towel x 2
1 dropper (for applying oil into nose)

* available form MAP (see resources section)

Instructions:

1. Vigorously massage the head with warm sesame oil for 5 minutes.
2. Fill a large bowl with hot water and add 1-2 drops of eucalyptus or MP634 oil.
3. Place a towel over the head and bowl to keep the steam in and gently inhale the steam.
4. Continue for 5-10 minutes - add more hot water and/or inhalation oil if required.
5. Fill a large bowl hot water. Fold a hand towel four times (lengthways) and place in boiling hot water – make sure the ends are not placed in water. Hold the ends of the towel and wring out the hot water.
6. Open up the towel and shake briefly to cool it down to a comfortable temperature for placing on the skin.
7. Fold in half, lengthways. Lie down on bed and wrap the hot towel around the head, avoiding the eyes.
8. Repeat two more times.
9. Remove the towel and dry the face thoroughly.
10. Lie on a bed with the head hanging over the end and apply one drop (from dropper) of MP16 or ‘Shakti’ (see recipe below) into each nostril.
11. Pinch both nostrils, start to inhale and immediately remove fingers to allow for a deep inhalation – repeat several times to allow substance to penetrate sinus cavities.
12. Massage the forehead, above and below the eyebrows, on the sides of the nose and under the cheekbones.
13. Cough up and spit out any mucus that forms in the throat – blow your nose if necessary and do not suppress sneezing (have your tissues handy).

14. If there is a burning sensation in the throat gargle with salt water and tilt head further back next time you insert the nasya substance.
15. Repeat steps 10 – 13 but with two drops of oil. You may increase to three, four and eventually five drops if this feels comfortable (or until there is some mucus discharge).
16. Never continue if the nose becomes completely blocked, a headache develops or you experience other unpleasant effects.
17. Finish by gargling with salt water and then keep head warm and dry for rest of the day.

Alternative nasya treatments:

If you do not have the time do the full Nasya therapy you may simply lie on the bed with your head tilted back and follow the instructions for inserting the nasya drops. This is obviously less effective but still very beneficial. This may be done daily when there is congestion and weekly as a preventative measure.

Another method of administration of nasya oil, when lying down is not convenient, is to simply place a drop of nasya oil on the little finger and gently insert it into the nostril and inhale fairly forcefully. Next, gently massage the inner walls of the nasal passage. Alternate left and right nostrils until each nostril has received a total of three applications of oil. The lubrication and gentle massage helps to alleviate stress and release any tension in the tissues. This may be done daily as a preventative treatment.

It is not recommended to use nasya oil immediately following the neti pot wash, especially if these therapies are new to you – alternate days may be better. By taking just five minutes a day to incorporate this simple treatment into your daily ayurvedic regime, you can enjoy the many healing benefits of the full nasya therapy.

Recipe for Shakti:

On a low heat slowly warm 15mls of sesame oil in a small pan with ¼ level tsp ground ginger, ¼ level tsp ground black pepper and ¼ level tsp ground clove. Remove from heat before it starts to smoke (about one minute) – cool for 30secs – reapply to heat for 10 secs – cool again for 30 seconds – heat again for 10 seconds and then allow to cool to body temperature. If the oil starts to smoke or burn at any stage throw the mixture away and start again. Strain the mixture through a muslin cloth, allow to cool and then place in a small glass bottle (with dropper top). The bottle and mixture can be warmed slightly (to body temperature) in hot water just before use.

Skin brushing, tongue scraping & sinus cleansing

The following procedures are also important as part of a daily detox – skin brushing helps detoxify, tone and improve the skin, tongue scraping helps detoxify the body in general and a nasal wash cleans the sinus and helps prevent colds and congestion.

Skin Brushing (for Kapha): Skin brushes can be purchased from most chemists. Each morning, either before or after bathing/showering, brush the skin for 2-5 minutes. Brush upwards towards the heart and use circular motions on the joints and long strokes on the arms and legs. Work up the body starting with the feet and legs. The hands and arms come next followed by the back and sides. The back can be best scrubbed using a long-handled brush (use circular motions on the lower back). Now massage the abdomen using slow circular motions and up and down motions on the sternum. When you first begin skin brushing the bristles may feel very rough – the body soon gets used to this and after a few days you'll really begin to enjoy this pleasant invigorating experience. The bristles naturally soften after a few massage sessions but you can run the brush under hot water if you really want a softer feel.

Tongue Scraping: Use a stainless steel or silver scraper and gently remove the white coating from the tongue each morning before you clean your teeth. This white coating is 'ama' or undigested food and it often the cause of bad breath. Once these toxic substances have been removed the breath improves and feels fresher, the taste buds come to life and the digestion benefits from not having to cope with as much bacterial/toxic waste.

Gargling: Gargling with a small amount of sesame oil and coating the inside of the nostrils with a smear of oil with your little finger helps prevent viruses and bacteria from entering the body. It is a great preventative measure against colds and flu.

Nasal cleansing: Regular use of a Neti Pot cleanses the sinuses of old congested mucus and dirt and enables the breath to flow more freely through both nostrils. It is therefore an invaluable aid to yoga, pranayama and meditation and also in helping prevent allergies, asthma, colds and flu. To use, mix ¼ tsp of non-iodized salt with lukewarm water in your Neti Pot. Bring the spout to your nose, bend forward over the sink or bath with the head tilted to one side and slightly forward. As water begins to flow through into the upper nostril, make slight adjustments to the head and Neti Pot position until water flows out of the other nostril. If the water enters your throat, instead of out of the other nostril, simply make further alterations to the position of your head and Neti pot until it flows properly. Repeat for the other nostril. It helps to start by cleansing the nostril on the side that feels freer and less blocked with mucus.

After cleansing the nostrils blow the nose freely through both nostrils to clear the nose of excess water and mucus. Don't close off one nostril when doing this as this may allow water to enter the ear channels. This is unlikely to happen but should this or any other problems occur during this process, kneel down and bring your forehead to the floor. Raise the hips above the level of the head and blow freely through both nostrils as before - it may help to turn the head to either side when doing this.

A second technique to try, once proficiency is gained in the above method, is to direct water from the nose and out through the mouth. As in the previous method, make slight adjustments with the head and Neti pot until water flows into the mouth – then spit it out.

Benefits of nasal rinse:

- Removes mucus and pollution from nasal passages and sinuses
- Daily use relieves allergies, colds and sinusitis
- Cooling and soothing to the mind
- Helps prevent respiratory tract diseases
- Beneficial in the treatment of headaches and migraines
- Alleviates anxiety, anger and depression
- Removes drowsiness, making the head and sense organs feel light and smooth



Meir Schneider and the 'Bates Method'

Meir Schneider was born with cataracts and by the time his eyes were operated on, at the age of four, his brain had lost the opportunity to develop the ability to see. He had already developed nystagmus, which is involuntary movement of the eyes, glaucoma, which is high pressure in the eyeball, and cross-eyes. The surgery, and the four operations that were done later, scarred his lenses to the extent that light could hardly penetrate through them. By the age of 7 he was declared legally blind for life, and for the next ten years did all his reading in Braille. Today he can even read the small print on his unrestricted driver's licence. Meir broke boundaries and proved that eyes cannot only get worse, as is the common belief, but can also improve.

At the age of 17 Meir was introduced to vision improvement exercises, a method developed by Dr. William Bates over 100 years ago. In his studies of visual function, Bates observed how people behaved visually when they see perfectly and based on these observations, he developed a series of exercises to mimic optimal visual behaviour. He also learned how people create refractive errors - nearsightedness (myopia) far-sightedness (hyperopia), middle-age farsightedness (presbyopia), and astigmatism. In every case of refractive error he found "a strain of the mind" that was held in the body, the face, and especially the eyes. This anxiety, he found, was relived and relayed continuously along the body's neural pathways. To relieve chronic tension in the eyes, as in the rest of the body, Bates hypothesized, one must learn to use them properly and to relax them often; every Bates exercise is a relaxation technique.

Probably Bates' greatest gift was his ability to view medicine in a different light. Organs that could be seen as mechanical objects: the eye as a camera or the heart as a pump, could also be viewed holistically, as parts of an interdependent system. The body could be seen as intrinsically passive, and so requiring health care (drugs, surgery, corrective lenses) or as living tissue, with a built-in consciousness and a capacity for learning. Bates favoured the latter view.

It was already known in Bates' time that the tissue of the retina, the back of the eye where light falls on photosensitive cells, is brain tissue. The parts of the brain associated with vision are as much a part of the visual apparatus as the eyes are. In fact the brain is the dominant part of the visual system and Bates reasoned that seeing is psychological behaviour, which can be done well or done poorly. "We see very largely with the mind," he wrote, "and only partly with the eyes". Vision depends on the mind's interpretation of the impression on the retina. What we see is not that retinal impression but our own interpretation of it. But when, as a coping response that has become habitual, the mind refuses to let the eye see properly, a deliberate act of imagination can help.

Thus, Bates would invite patients to appreciate and visualize the forms and blackness of letters on an eye chart until the patients would at last give themselves permission to relax and see the letters. With the help of a retinoscope, which allows the user to determine the degree of visual clarity and nature of the subject's refractive error, Bates checked hundreds of thousands of eyes and the results surprised him. He found that normal 20/20 vision wasn't constant and none of the eyes he examined had perfect vision around the clock. Normally sighted eyes drifted off to moments of farsightedness, nearsightedness, and astigmatism, and then picked up again to 20/20. Bad vision got worse, got a little better, and even had flashes of perfect vision. Temporary anxieties often produced refractive error.

Bates had been taught that in daytime, full colour vision is sharpest in a small area in the centre of the retina called the macula, especially in the tiny centre of the macula, the fovea. The macula is sculpted into a parabolic receiver - like an antenna dish, but for light - with the fovea at the pit. Vision at the fovea is 20/20; 10 degrees off centre, it is 20/4000, within the realm of legal blindness. The correctly functioning eye sees the small detail it is focusing on best - a characteristic called central fixation. To see many details equally well, a correctly functioning eye will flit rapidly from one sharply realized detail to another; Bates called it shifting. Good daytime vision is passive and effortless, consisting of automatic and continual central fixation and shifting. The poorly functioning eye overstrains and then numbs the macula until it has lost central fixation.

The exercises that he devised release the tension from over-strained eyes and help regain central fixation ability.

There are now Meir Schneider centres teaching 'The Bates Technique' all around the world.

Eye exercises

Sleep in the dark: Curtains should shut out streetlights; the eyes get full rest only in darkness.

Palming: Rub your hands together, close your eyes and gently cover them with your hands so you block out all light but without pressing on the eye. Breathe easily and picture a black object – imagine this object on a black background and then paint the world black. Do this whenever the eyes need relaxing.

Peripheral vision: Take a black piece of paper four inches square and stick it between your eyebrows so you can't see in front of you. Sit in a dark room and rapidly move two flashlights out to either side of you while looking straight ahead. As your peripheral vision improves, increase the challenge by moving the flashlights further back. Alternatively you may do this exercise in normal light and substitute wagging movements of the fingers for the movement of the flashlights. This exercise will improve your peripheral vision and train both eyes to work together.

Shifting: Look at a picture on the wall in a relaxed way and move your attention from one small detail to another. Then close your eyes and visualize what you have just seen. Repeat. The same brain cells work for visualizing as for seeing and this exercise helps retrain them and strengthens the macula.

Blinking: Sit easily, breathing gently and blink rapidly one hundred times - then close the eyes and visualize blinking a hundred times. Repeat. This massages and cleanses the eyes. In times of stress, just when blinking and relaxed breathing would be most useful, we are most likely to suspend these essential functions.

Focusing: Place the index finger 6 inches in front of the eyes and, for approx 30 seconds, alternate your focus from your finger to an object on the horizon. This should be simple and smooth with no strain or discomfort. The speed of alternating may increase as strength of eye muscles improve.

Far-Reading: Place some reading material on a wall, relax, breathe easily and read from a distance that is comfortable – increase the distance gradually each day (read for 30 seconds).

Near-Reading: Relax, breathe gently and place reading material at the nearest distance that is comfortable to read from. Decrease distance very gradually each day (read for 30 seconds).

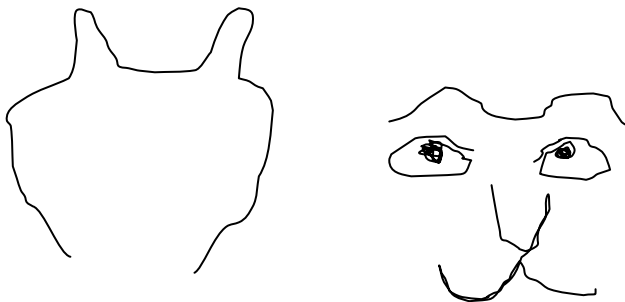
Colours: With eyes CLOSED look towards sun (or full spectrum light) for 30 seconds and then turn away. Watch the colours in a relaxed and gentle way – massage eyes – watch colours again (for as long as is comfortable). Repeat.

Eye positioning: Hold eyes in a relaxed fashion for 30 seconds in each direction - look up-left; look down-left; look up-right; look down-right; look through third eye/centre of eyebrows; focus on tip of nose; imagine looking at tongue. Do not strain and look for as long as is comfortable. Increase time each day if comfortable (30 secs max.).

Tramlines: Draw a circle with tramlines and place on a wall in front of you. Now circle the eyes clockwise round the train-line for 30 seconds. Repeat in an anti-clockwise direction.

Dotting: Draw a circle and randomly place a few dots within the circle. Place the paper on a wall in front of you. Now allow the eyes to randomly follow the dots in no particular sequence as in dot-to-dot. Now do this with the eyes closed.

The cat: Bring the face of the cat and the body of the cat together by altering focus – go half cross eyes but while looking at cat in a relaxed fashion. Don't try too hard or strain – be relaxed and breath normally – this may take time to master.



Caring for the eyes

Netra program

This program can be undertaken two or three times each year. It is especially beneficial for Pitta types who are more prone to eye complaints and is indicated for eyes that are frequently tired, hot, achy or gritty. Outside of this program, the application of ghee to the eyes should not be practiced for more than two or three days consecutively, as this can allow the eyes to become lazy and may prevent them from producing their own lubrication.

Instructions:

Melt a small amount of ghee in your palms and apply to eye area (with eyes closed). Open eyes slowly and blink a few times so that ghee bathes the eyes.

Week one	Practice every night before bed
Week two	Practice every other night before bed (ie; three times during week)
Week three	Practice every third night before bed (ie; twice during week)
Week four	Practice four days after last application
Week five	Practice five days after last application
Week six	Practice six days after last application
Week seven	Practice seven days after last application

The idea is to gradually reduce the number of times each week that you practice this procedure. Thus, in the first week you are placing ghee in the eyes every night and by week seven you are only placing ghee in the eyes once during the week.

‘The Willis technique’

If your eyesight has become less focused when reading, or even if you use reading glasses for close up work, this simple exercise will help retrain your eyes to relax and focus again.

Practice ‘palming’ (see eye exercises).

Open a book with relatively large print.

Slowly and easily (without straining to see individual words) scan the page.

After a while the odd word may jump out and be clearly visible.

At this stage stop scanning and read the page.

If you get a headache stop reading, close your eyes and practice palming for a couple of minutes and then try again.

Don’t worry if words don’t jump out at first, just persevere with this daily practice each day and eventually they will. The key is patience and a relaxed mind.

Balancing the female cycle

Everyday women of all ages experience a need for relief from pre-menstrual, menstrual, pre-menopausal and menopausal symptoms. Conditions such as mood swings, cramps, excessive bleeding, irregular cycles, hot flashes, and seemingly insatiable cravings affect hundreds of thousands of women.

Ayurvedic therapy is not based purely on the removal of symptoms; rather, it empowers the body to heal itself. In this regard treatment identifies and addresses the initial cause of PMS. The root cause of most cases of PMS begins early in the lifestyle of a menstruating young woman.

Charaka and the other Ayurvedic authorities state that the suppression of natural urges, stress, excessive sex and excessive physical exercise, along with an improper diet and lifestyle, are major contributors to the cause of female reproductive disorders. There is a general consensus among Ayurvedic physicians as to why the excessive amount of female disorders plague the West and not the East, and it has much to do with honouring the cycle itself. In India, the menstrual cycle is a highly respected cycle that is an expression of the female connectedness to the cycles of the moon. This lunar cycle regulates the tides, migrations, mating times and the twenty-eight day cycle of menstruation.

Menses is a time when the female body provides extra energy to insure an effective and complete flushing of waste products. It is a natural time of cleansing and rejuvenation, traditionally accompanied by a time of rest or light duty. In traditional cultures there were extended families that supported women during their monthly cycle and through menstruation. Whilst, in the West, this is rarely the case it does not mean that the modern working women cannot respect this time of the month by reducing stress and opting for a lighter work load. Ignoring this cycle is often at the root of the premenstrual syndrome. If there is some desire to rest during menstruation and this is not provided, then symptoms of some sort are sure to come about. Ayurvedic doctors generally recognise that the menstrual cycle and monthly cleansing is one of the factors that lead to the generally longer life span of women compared to men.

The simple dietary and lifestyle adjustments recommended below can help offer relief from common premenstrual and menstrual syndromes, and facilitate a smooth transition into menopause. A healthy cycle will also naturally enhance fertility.

General recommendations:

- Maintain a proper balance of rest and activity throughout the month. Rest during the period and practice meditation, pranayama, yoga and exercise.
- Take 2 tbsp of pure aloe vera juice after meals twice a day, but not during or within 3 days of the end of the menstrual flow.
- Perform a daily self-massage with warm sesame oil followed by a hot bath or shower. Pitta types should use warm coconut oil followed by a warm shower.
- Each day for seven days before the period begins do a self-massage, followed by a hot bath. Massage the abdomen in a clockwise motion during the bath.
- On the seventh day before your period, follow your self-massage and bath with laxative therapy: On an empty stomach, take 30mls of castor oil mixed with ½ cup of apple or carrot juice. Do not eat until the majority of the laxative action has occurred (3 to 5 hours). Usually, this procedure results in 2 to 5 bowel movements. You may repeat this monthly for up to 6 months.
- Eliminate caffeine as this can have a dramatic effect in women with fibrocystic breast disease.
- Reduce or eliminate alcohol as this will reduce bloating and water retention in most women.

- If you have pitta or kapha symptoms cut back on salt, sour foods and dairy products as this will also help reduce bloating and water retention.
- Eat stewed apples if you wish to relieve constipation.
- Drink sweet ginger tea to help regulate disturbed or absent menses. Use raw honey or raw cane sugar.
- Add saffron to meals to help regulate the menstrual cycle, relieve dysmenorrhoea and PMS, and promote fertility. Saffron is also a digestive aid and also helps relieve respiratory congestion.
- Herbs that are known to reduce symptoms associated with premenstrual syndrome, infertility, menopause and irregular or painful menstrual cycles include: Ashoka which is astringent, sedative, haemostatic, and it is particularly good for those with an uncomfortably profuse menstrual flow; Shatavari which is a nutritive tonic and anti-spasmodic – it also contains glucosides which are a food precursor of estrogen. It helps bring on menses when one is experiencing amenorrhea (absence of periods); It is also commonly used for dysmenorrhoea (painful periods); Punarnava which rejuvenates the endometrium and enhances the tone of the uterus. It has been traditionally used for endometriosis and fibroid tumours.

Treatment of Vata Type PMS:

Symptoms of vata imbalance, as they manifest in relation to the menstrual cycle include: nervous tension, mood swings, anxiety/depression; insomnia; forgetfulness/confusion; constipation; light amount of flow; menstrual pain/cramps/backache; extended length of period with dark, clotted flow; irregularity of periods or flow.

- Follow a Vata pacifying diet.
- Chew fennel seeds after each meal to prevent gas and gallbladder congestion.
- Drink fennel and licorice tea to help relieve PMS and regulate menstruation.
- Take 1 tsp of castor oil every night for one month. Take less if there is a laxative effect.
- If you usually have a light amount of flow; menstrual pain/cramps/backache; extended length of period with dark, clotted flow; irregularity of periods or flow combine 2 parts shatavari, 2 parts musta, 1 part licorice, 1 part punarnava. Mix 1 tsp of this combination with sugar and ghee and take 3x a day.
- If you often have nervous tension, mood swings, anxiety/depression, insomnia, forgetfulness/confusion, and/or constipation, combine equal pts: brahmi, jatamamsi, ashwagandha, guduchi. Mix 1 tsp of this combination with water and take 3x a day.
- For pain experienced during the period, application of heat externally to the lower abdomen is advised. This may be accomplished by massaging warm ripened sesame oil on the abdomen followed by the application of a hot water bottle directly to the oiled skin.

Treatment of Pitta type PMS:

Symptoms of pitta imbalance, as they manifest in relation to the menstrual cycle include: irritability/anger; increased appetite; headache (especially migraine); excessive body heat or sweating; diarrhoea or increased bowel movements; skin rashes/acne; excessive menstrual bleeding; increased frequency of periods; bright red flow.

- Follow a Pitta-pacifying diet.
- Take 10mls ghee (clarified butter) with ten raisins daily.
- Drink fennel and/or coriander tea during the day.
- Take 2 parts shatavari, 1 part Ashoka, 1 part turmeric, 1 part brahmi. Take 1 tsp with water three times a day.
- To decrease pitta and vata, take manjistha (1-2g) three times a day after meals.

- Exercise moderately but avoid overheating.
- Apply coconut oil to the head and feet at bedtime for more restful sleep and headache prevention.
- Apply ghee to the nostrils for one week before the period.
- Avoid overheating, hot water on the head, and over-exposure to sunlight.
- When irritable or out of sorts it is important to ensure that you are getting adequate rest.
- Be sure not to take long hot showers or hot baths during your heavy flow days as these tend to increase flow. Take a short shower or sponge bath instead.

Treatment of Kapha type PMS:

Symptoms of Kapha imbalance as they manifest in relation to the menstrual cycle include: weight gain; fluid retention; breast enlargement; abdominal bloating; acne; menstrual stiffness in back and joints; pale, mucousy menstrual flow.

- Follow a Kapha-pacifying diet.
- Avoid overeating, especially at night and do not eat when you are not hungry.
- A primarily vegetarian diet is highly recommended.
- Include ginger in your daily diet: take a pinch of fresh ginger root with a few drops of lemon juice before each meal. Spice food with turmeric, ginger, black pepper, and cinnamon.
- Take a herbal mixture of equal parts: shatavari, ashwagandha, trikatu. Mix with honey into a paste and take 1 tsp three times a day. Also take 1 tsp Dashmula in 2 cups water and boil down to ½ cup; drink ½ cup two times a day. Dashmula is a Ayurvedic formula containing ten roots.
- If you are prone to sluggishness, prepare a calamus nasya: combine ½ teaspoon calamus with 1 ounce sesame oil. Place 10-15 drops into each nostril, three times a day.
- It is especially important to get daily exercise. A brisk walk for 30 minutes is the minimum exercise required. Perform deep nasal breathing during exercise.
- Do not sleep during the day unless illness or unusual circumstances cause exhaustion. Always try to avoid sleeping within 2 hours after a meal.

How to keep your joints healthy

To understand how to maintain proper health and function of the joints, we first need to look at their anatomy and physiology. Joints hold the bones together and are designed to provide movement within the skeletal system. The main function of bone is support, while the joints allow a certain amount of flexibility and to our structure. The synovial joints, where the ends of bone are connected by a joint cavity or capsule containing synovial fluid, allow freedom and fluidity in the articulation of our movements.

The supportive tissues; ligaments, tendons, and connective tissue, are kapha dosha, while the joint cavity or space where the bones meet is an element ruled by vata dosha. The joint capsule provides a container for the slippery synovial fluid, again a kapha substance that lubricates the ends of the bone surfaces and also accommodates a tough, protective covering into which the ligaments and tendons can insert themselves. It is through the ligaments that nerve impulses are transmitted to the muscles signalling movement, a function of vata dosha.

Healthy joint tissue and function are crucial to how we move and express ourselves through our bodies. According to ayurveda, vitiated or disturbed vata dosha can create imbalance within the joints resulting in pain and discomfort. Most commonly affected joints are knees, ankles, elbows, wrists, fingers and toes. When there is an imbalance in the joints, it is important to discern whether or not the imbalance exists with or without ama, a sticky toxic substance. A simple test can be done with organic sesame oil. Massage the oil into the joint. If the symptoms are aggravated, then there is ama present, a condition known as amavata. If the symptoms are alleviated by the oil massage, or stay the same, then the treatment will begin with the removal of the causative factors and balancing vata dosha.

The dryness of vata can deplete the lubricating qualities of kapha and joint surfaces can become rough and brittle. Common symptoms of vata imbalance in the joints are dryness, popping and cracking, and muscle tics and spasms. Some common causative factors are jogging, jumping, excessive exercise, injury, consuming too many dry foods, living in a cold, dry climate and irregular eating habits and lifestyle. Entering the vata season of life of fifty years and older will also increase vata dosha throughout the body. Particularly during the vata season of autumn and winter, when the temperature becomes cold and the wind begins to blow, symptoms may become aggravated. Ayurveda offers simple guidelines and herbal remedies for supporting healthy function of the joints.

A few lifestyle therapies for balancing excess vata in the joints are:

- Maintain a regular schedule, sleeping and waking at the same time each day.
- Abhyanga, self-oil massage every evening. Choose organic sesame or vata massage oil.
- Massage medicinal Mahanarayan oil locally into sore, stiff joints.
- Follow vata pacifying diet, taking meals at regular times each day.
- Practice gentle yoga.

In a condition of amavata, ama is carried by misdirected or vitiated vata into general circulation throughout the body. When it interacts with the kapha in the joint spaces, the synovial fluid loses its' highly viscous quality and changes into a sticky toxic substance. It can begin to block vital channels throughout the body that carry nutrients to the tissues and cause dysfunction within the joint. The immune system can begin to attack the ama stored in the joints causing an inflammation of the joint lining. Inflamed tissue can result in symptoms of excess heat, redness, pain, stiffness, and swelling. Acute inflammation, if left untreated, can cause damage or injury to the joint and bone tissue resulting in a chronic condition. Untreated chronic inflammation can lead to degenerative disease, such as rheumatoid arthritis. Ama can be clotted together with dead cells which the immune system sweeps up. Because it can also be so deeply embedded within healthy tissue, the immune cells can become confused by the similarity to that which it has been scavenging, unable to properly identify the toxic invader from the healthy tissue; an "autoimmune" reaction.

The primary causes for accumulation of ama are improper diet, excessive exercise, exhaustion due to overwork, extreme worry, and the use of alcohol. It commonly occurs in cold, damp climates. For the condition of amavata, removing the causative factors and eliminating ama from the body are paramount. Treatment to balance the doshas and rejuvenate the joint and bone tissue ensues.

Here are some additional lifestyle guidelines to help reduce ama and restore balance:

- Favour warm, nourishing, easy to digest meals such as Kichari (rice and lentil soup).
- Include ghee or flax seed oil in your diet as both are nourishing and anti-inflammatory.
- Avoid white sugar and alcohol.
- Use unprocessed, raw honey (uncooked) to help gently scrape away ama.
- Avoid dairy, particularly ice cream and cheese.
- Apply castor oil to sore joints and then apply a heating pad to help reduce inflammation and scrape ama.
- Keep the colon clean and empty bowels regularly each day.
- Sip hot water and tea made from dry ginger root (or ginger tea bags).
- Practice deep, abdominal breathing exercises (pranayama) to gently help to move toxins from the body.
- Meditate daily for clarity.
- Address any psychological disturbances or unresolved emotions.

Herbs traditionally used to help increase the body's digestive fire and enable cleansing and expulsion of ama, while reducing inflammation and rejuvenating the joints include:

- Guggulu – an anti-inflammatory with strong purifying and rejuvenating properties. Indicated for arthritis, rheumatism, gout, lumbago, disorders of the nervous, respiratory, digestive and circulatory systems.
- Guduchi - a broad spectrum pitta-reducing herb that destroys toxins and strengthens immunity.
- Triphala - Amalaki, Bibhitaki, and Haritaki - the three fruits for detoxifying and tonifying the body.
- Vidanga - a powerful herb which destroys ama (toxins).
- Ashwagandha - an adaptogenic rejuvenative herb with anti-inflammatory properties.
- Gokshura - an anti-inflammatory and rejuvenative.
- Turmeric - an anti-bacterial and powerful blood purifier with anti-inflammatory properties.
- Trikatu (ginger, black pepper and pippali) – a powerful digestive aids that increases agni (digestive fire), helps burn ama and promotes circulation.

How to cope with allergies

Allergies, whether from food, pollen, dust, mould, or dander, are typically a form of hypersensitivity reaction. The underlying causes of allergic symptoms are rarely from the allergens themselves, making proper Ayurvedic diagnosis essential. A main causative factor of allergies is a by-product of improperly digested food. This toxic substance, called ama, is manufactured in the digestive system and is absorbed into the circulatory system. Once systemic, ama can block and clog the channels of circulation.

The removal of ama in the circulatory system will often play a primary role in the management of immediate allergic hypersensitivity. Depending on body type, the underlying cause of allergic hypersensitivities will vary. It should be understood that mental and emotional stresses are also common contributing factors in a hypersensitive allergic response.

Ayurveda compares the body to a field and allergens to seeds; if the land is not fertile, then any seeds that are sown will not sprout. The fertilizer is a toxic residue called ama - a sticky substance formed in the digestive system from food that has been incompletely processed. It lowers natural immunity and increases receptivity to allergens. This toxic by-product migrates to the body's points of weakness, creating a vicious cycle by lowering resistance even more.

Allergies to pollen and other plant materials also involve an imbalance of the Kapha dosha, which controls the lungs, sinuses, and fluid balance in the body. When Kapha is out of balance, exposure to allergens stimulates symptoms like watery eyes, sneezing, coughing and fatigue.

Kapha's strongest influence is during peak allergy season, March-June. The presence of ama can weaken the thymus gland or spleen; both of which contribute to the body's immune system and trigger allergic reactions. However, eating more of certain foods and herbs can help remove ama, bring balance to Kapha, and thus hold allergies at bay.

The first step is to minimize chilled foods and high-fat dishes (such as cheese, yogurt and meat) and replace them with warm, freshly cooked foods, including plenty of asparagus and broccoli, both of which support the immune system. Then integrate the herbs turmeric and tulsi (or holy basil) into your diet.

Turmeric activates the liver and strengthens the blood to help remove ama, and research shows that turmeric's active ingredient, curcumin, has an anti-allergic effect. You can sprinkle a mixture of ground turmeric, cumin, coriander, bay leaf, and cinnamon in your food. You can also bring a cup of milk to the boil, remove it from the heat, add a bay leaf and a pinch each of turmeric and cinnamon and then drink it warm.

Holy basil strengthens the immune system, reduces ama, and helps remove environmental pollution from the body. For an effective anti-allergy tea, bring a pint of water to a boil, remove from the heat, and for five minutes steep five holy basil leaves, two pinches licorice, one bay leaf, a pinch of cinnamon, and a pinch of cardamom.

You may also want to try this Ama-Reducing Program for one month:

- Sip plain hot water every half-hour
- Drink eight to ten glasses of warm lemon water each day
- Avoid dairy and wheat and favour fruits and vegetables
- Eat a big, relaxing meal at lunchtime and a lighter meal of soup for dinner
- Exercise for at least half an hour each day
- Retire to bed by 10:00 pm
- Waking up with the sun

If you are suffering from rhinitis or excess dryness, this is a Vata cause and would most likely respond well to the Vata treatments. If you are suffering from sinusitis, internal heat, or excessive irritability or anger, you may benefit from using the Pitta treatments. If you are suffering from congestion or fatigue, the best option may be to select Kapha treatments.

Vata causes: The vata body type is susceptible to various hypersensitivity reactions. In the case of allergic rhinitis, a vata imbalance will cause excessive dryness in the body. When this dryness finds its way to the respiratory system and sinuses, the protective mucous lining will dry up. This natural protection acts as a filter, temperature buffer, and first

line of allergic immunity. When this layer of mucous dries up, the airborne allergens of dust, pollen, and pollution act as irritants in the sinuses, evoking an immediate hypersensitivity response. The body's natural response to these irritants is to lay down mucous as a means of protection. The dryness alone will also trigger the body to produce mucous, making allergic symptoms a common vata condition. In this instance, allergic symptoms can be chronic and constant due to a deep mucosal dryness rather than a particular allergen. The vata body type is also particularly sensitive to lifestyle and daily routine. Most importantly with regard to allergens, the vata type must take the proper time to eat a large lunch in a relaxed atmosphere without the distractions of television, magazines, or phone calls. Such distractions aggravate the vata aspects of digestion, producing ama and hypersensitivity reactions.

Vata treatments:

- Nasya: sniff sesame oil deeply into both nostrils two to three times a day
- Triphala: take ½ teaspoon per day on an empty stomach
- Ginger root tea: take three to four cups per day; also; also chew small pieces as a lozenge

Pitta causes: The pitta type will be subject to an accumulation of heat in the body and blood. The heat is produced as a result of a physiological hyper-metabolic state needed to burn off the excess ama in the blood. This heat, as does all heat, will rise up in the body into the head and neck. When this heat rises up into the sinuses, the effect is one of dryness along with the accumulation of impurities (ama) in the blood. The result of the dryness aggravates vata as we mentioned previously, and the excess blood ama aggravates pitta. The sinuses respond by acting as organs of excretion rather than secretion producing an allergic response. The treatment for pitta-based allergic response is twofold. The blood must be purified with pitta-pacifying herbs and the dryness must be dealt with, as in the case of vata.

Pitta treatments:

- Take ½ teaspoon of cumin seed as a lozenge during the day
- Triphala: take ½ teaspoon twice a day on an empty stomach
- Nasya: sniff coconut oil deeply into both nostrils two to three times a day
- Turmeric powder: take ½ teaspoon with ¼ cup warm milk, three times a day after meals
- Neem leaf tea: drink 3-4 cups per day as a detoxifier

Kapha causes: The kapha body type is classically the most susceptible to allergies and kapha imbalances and is often mislabeled the causative factor in most allergic conditions. It is the nature of kapha to produce and hold onto more water, congestion and ama however, and the treatment of kapha in all allergies is a common mistake. The symptoms of most allergic responses are kapha in nature with the production of congestion, fatigue, and malaise; but the CAUSE of these kapha symptoms may be vata, pitta, or kapha. This diagnosis is crucial. It is, however, very common for the cause and symptoms of an allergic response to be kapha in nature. In this regard, the treatment is straightforward with the focus on pacifying kapha with bitter, astringent, and pungent herbs and spices, in order to remove excess mucous. Allergy treatments can become more complicated when multiple causes are present. Imbalances in vata and kapha, for example, can easily create chronic allergic symptoms. Treatment for each are opposite in nature, and care must be given to balance both kapha and vata at the same time.

Kapha treatments:

- Trikatu: take ¼ teaspoon with raw honey before each meal
- Sitopladi: take ½ teaspoon with raw honey three times a day on an empty stomach
- Licorice: take ½ teaspoon with warm water after meals
- Maintain a liquid diet one day per week, as ama-reducing therapy. This diet generally consists of eating vegetables and fruits which have been put through a blender and liquefied. Meals can be taken at room temperature, warm or hot. The liquid diet is normally part of an Ayurvedic cleansing program; putting foods through a blender prior to ingestion puts less strain on the digestive system.

Stress free vacations

(a few tips to help you enjoy holiday travel)

- Plan well ahead to avoid panicking and rushing about arranging last minute details.
- Consciously make an effort to enjoy the journey to your chosen destination and take pride in the preparations – preparations are a chance to find out about new places and new ways to travel while delays during travel are opportunities to meet new people and catch up on some reading.
- Leave yourself time to wind down from work before you go away – take time to pack and relax for a few days before you depart.
- Once you leave work, put the phone on answer, delegate and trust other people to make decisions and advance things on your behalf and, above all, don't be tempted to phone in to check on how things are going. Tell work colleagues not to ring you at home or on holiday – it's your rest and re-cooperation time.
- Make sure you've got enough foreign currency – get it before you go to avoid rushing about at the airport or trying to find somewhere to exchange money at your destination. Have your money, credit cards, passport, travel ticket, accommodation details and other crucial paperwork and telephone numbers somewhere together where you won't forget them.
- Rest, relax, exercise, eat healthily and meditate regularly during the week before you go away. You'll be able to settle into the vacation and enjoy it all the more if you're already rested and fully prepared before you go.
- Make sure your diet is as healthy as possible in the weeks before you go away – this ensures maximum immunity, settled digestion and loads of energy and vitality stored up to allow your holiday to be fully enjoyed. The most important thing is to avoid any processed or refined foods (very few nutrients and lots of toxins for the body to deal with). Avoid refined sugar (in most processed/refined/packaged foods), reduce salt (except Vata types), avoid white/brown bread and white pasta/rice (except basmati), avoid margarine (stick to butter, ghee or olive oil) and cut down on red meat and cold milk.
- Favour organic produce for maximum nutrition and energy (you'll eat less and they'll be more tasty). Favour fresh fruit and vegetables, whole grains (rice, buckwheat, barley, millet, quinoa etc), homemade fruit/veg juices and small tasty salads. Reduce tea/coffee and alcohol and favour herbal teas and hot water with lemon or ginger.
- Maximize the use of 'superfoods' such as wheatgrass (fresh or powdered), spirulina, chlorella, kelp, milk thistle, ginseng, ground sunflower/ pumpkin/linseed and almonds.
- Set off for the airport with loads of time to spare. Take plenty of reading material to occupy your time if you are delayed in airports etc. Enjoy the delays and don't get angry or frustrated – use the time to your benefit – read, talk, eat early etc.
- Once on holiday drink plenty of water (not ice-cold as this destroys your power of digestion and can lead to stomach upsets). Eat only when hungry and avoid eating past the feeling of comfort – put less on your plate and wait five minutes before taking seconds – usually you don't need any after that.
- Pitta types should avoid too much sun and keep cool – plenty of water and a good sun cream. Coconut oil or ghee/aloe vera with lavender oil helps soothe and re-moisturise the skin.

Tips for air travel

Jet lag and travel sickness are due to a Vata imbalance caused by excess movement and can be reduced or avoided by following the recommendations below:

Before you fly:

- Ensure adequate rest and a good nights sleep the night before travel.
- Exercise, practice yoga, pranayama and meditation on the morning before travel.
- Take ginger pickle before main meals in the week preceding travel.
- Avoid cabbage, Brussels spouts, beans and other vata increasing foods for 24 hrs before you travel.
- Massage sesame oil into the nostrils immediately before the flight.
- Apply lavender or sandalwood essential oil to temples, ears and forehead.

During the flight:

- Sip hot water with ginger and lemon or peppermint.
- Meditate for twenty minutes soon after take off and then again after every two hours flight time.
- Apply lavender oil to handkerchief and sniff periodically.
- Avoid drinking alcoholic and cold drinks before and during travel.
- Read a light novel rather than taxing the brain with work-related or hard-to-follow literature.
- Listen to soothing music.
- Take 'No Jet Lag' tablets (www.wellness-shop.co.uk) and 'Jet Ease' tablets (www.garden.co.uk).

After the flight:

- Walk in nature and undertake some light exercise.
- Practice yoga, balanced breathing (pranayama) and meditate in the early evening.
- Have an early night.

During the holiday:

- Drink plenty of hot water (with lemon or fennel seeds) to maintain healthy, balanced digestion.
- Practice yoga, pranayama and meditation each morning and evening.
- Be sensible with the amount of time spent in the sun (cover up between 11am and 3pm).
- Apply coconut oil to enhance your tan, prevent burning and help keep the skin moisturised.
- Aloe Vera (or ghee) with a little lavender oil for sunburn.

Before the return flight: See 'before you fly'

Chapter 6

Balancing the mind & emotions

~ for peace and happiness & a calm and contented mind ~



“Life without goodness; good thoughts, good actions and good words
is like the sky in the night without the moon or stars.
It is like a wheel without a hub or spokes.
No one can push a boulder away while standing on it
- no one can be free from anxiety while all the entrances
through which it sneaks in are open.”

~ Atharva Veda ~

How to be happy & peaceful!

The ancient Vedic texts of Indian philosophy abound with prescriptions for lasting peace and happiness. The pages that follow synthesis a little of their teachings.

- Past experiences, good or bad, are our greatest teachers; in fact they are our only teachers. Brooding over past events and worrying about the future fills our minds with toxic waste; it is a useless pastime and drains our mental power. How we develop and refine our mind determines our success, fulfilment and happiness in life.
- During every waking moment we have a choice; either stand back and quietly contemplate how to react appropriately to any given situation or to allow our lower instincts; our robotic, mechanistic instincts, to take over, without any thought or concern for the consequences of our actions. We always have the power to determine which attitude to adopt – we can either look at any negative or stressful situation as a crisis, a nightmare, a seemingly insurmountable problem or as simply an opportunity to learn and grow; it all depends on our chosen interpretation of the situation.
- We all have the capacity to allow ourselves to see the cup as half full or half empty – it is simply our response to events and situations that determines which it is to be. If we have the resourcefulness to cultivate inward calm, by controlling our negative thought patterns, the outer world responds accordingly. All that is required to create a peaceful, harmonious outer experience is a bed-rock of inner peace and calm.
- There are no mistakes or truly negative experiences in the relative world; it is just as it should be. To savour the very best of life we must have savoured it's opposite to know it for what it is. How can we truly experience pure joy and exuberance unless we know and have experienced its exact opposite?
- Once we stop judging people, situations and circumstances as good or bad, positive or negative, we can simply and passively experience them, learn from them, grow through them and become stronger, mentally and physically.
- We need to remember that more often than not as one door closes another one opens. Without closing the first door the other is unable to open – it is the letting go that enables the other to begin to manifest. If we wish to create a new reality we must first create new thoughts, for the foundation of our relative experience begins in the mind. It is our ideas about something that causes the outer reality and not the other way round.
- The trick is to imagine, as vividly as possible, the outer experience or event we would like to create and then to allow the universe to take care of the details. If we cultivate an attitude of total expectancy, and allow dormant forces of true knowledge to awaken within us, we will be ready to clearly perceive the opportunities that present themselves. We will be able to react appropriately and decisively to them and thus ensure their positive outcome. We must consciously and perpetually replace all negative thoughts with positive and uplifting thoughts. We must remember that if we are able to allow negative thoughts to dominate our thinking we can also allow ourselves to be dominated by positive thoughts; it is our divine birthright.
- A weak mind leads to weak thoughts and actions. However, a strong and positive mind ensures success in the outer world and becomes a true measure of our success in cultivating inner peace and harmony. Everything in life is first created first in the mind and then in our outer reality. If we take responsibility for our own thoughts, turning negative into positive, the world around us responds in a positive way. Inner peace and happiness is always rewarded with a delightful outer experience. It is never the other way round.
- The richness and quality of life is a reflection of the richness and quality of our thoughts so if we truly wish to have a wonderful and meaningful life on this planet we need to ensure we cultivate peaceful, meaningful thoughts. If we patiently expect a positive outcome we will surely receive it but only if we prepare our mind

first. We must believe that if we can think or dream of anything at all it is because we truly have the capacity to realise it on an outward level.

- Our minds have immeasurable power and can literally materialize anything we desire so long as we remain patiently focused on what it is we wish to have. Thus, we need to discover, through relaxed contemplation, what it is we truly want from our lives and then we must direct all of our attention towards it. If we can direct our intention and attention to our innermost desires, in a relaxed and concentrated manner, they will begin to manifest with ease.
- If we delay the process of cultivating our minds because we're too busy pursuing other goals we're never going to achieve true peace and happiness. If we have a leaky pipe in our home and we delay fixing it, the house may eventually flood and the small problem becomes a hundred times worse. Or, if we do not take the time to backup our computer files each week, we may eventually lose them all and have to start from scratch when it crashes due to a virus or hardware malfunction. Similarly, each day we delay refining our minds and pursuing our innermost desires, we push our peace and happiness further and further away.
- Tiredness and lack of motivation also result when we fail to follow our inner dreams and desires. Once we are living and following our greatest dreams fatigue becomes a thing of the past, for every action then becomes a source of fulfilment and joy. This brings sharpness, clarity and motivation to our lives. Tiredness is our support for showing us what is not meant to be done by us, whilst energy and motivation shows us where we are ultimately meant to direct our energies for lasting success and happiness.
- If we become accustomed to leading perpetually hectic, frantic lives we miss out on the pure joy of living and eventually become uncomfortable in peaceful, harmonious surroundings and being with relaxed, happy people. More disturbing still is the fact that we also become uncomfortable when our own minds transcend towards peace and stillness. True peace and stillness becomes foreign to us and we consciously or unconsciously try to avoid it. If we do not learn to control our mind at the earliest opportunity it begins to control us and we become a slave to its unruly, desire-ridden nature. If we cultivate inner silence and stillness, in mind and body, we will see it reflected in our outward life; we will begin to notice it in our surroundings and the people we meet each and every day.
- The way we see and believe life will unfold, is the way it will unfold for us, so we must practice the art of 'seeing in our minds eye' the way we wish to have these situations and events unfold. If we cannot see the target we will never be able to hit it; we need to form a clear mental image of the outcome and the clearer the mental image the more effective will be the outcome. By seeing the outcome in the present, rather than in the dim and distant future, allows the results to come more quickly; imagine the success you desire has already occurred and that you are already reaping the rewards. Also, by writing down our goals we bring them to life simply through the act of committing them to paper. This act allows clarity of purpose and we then begin to consciously and subconsciously notice or seek out opportunities that allow them to develop. We must not let doubts or negative thoughts get in the way – we must get into the habit of replacing them with more positive thoughts the moment they arise. If we ponder on negative situations for long enough we allow them to start manifesting –as we have begin the process of creating them.
- One way of speeding along the process of achieving our dreams and desires is to help others achieve theirs. The more we are in the field of success and achievement the more its energy is drawn to us and the faster our dreams can manifest into reality. By acknowledging another's purpose in life we also acknowledge our own. A life without purpose ceases to have any meaning and eventually withers away but a life lived with purpose grows and evolves in leaps and bounds. If we confidently work towards our goals and ambitions and aspire to do only things we really love to do, we will achieve lasting peace and happiness.
- The key to a joyous and happy life is to quietly contemplate our dharma or 'life-purpose' and, having discovered where our heart lies, applying our unique skills and talents towards achieving our purpose. We

must let go of any disappointments or setbacks along the way and rejoice in every tiny success we achieve. Therein we find the objective of life itself and begin to experience profound fulfilment and happiness.

- There are no limits in life other than the ones we set our self. We can change negative thought patterns and bad habits in an instant if we so desire. As long as we consciously direct our energy and motivation towards the goal we have set ourselves we can easily replace any negative thoughts and bad habits for with more life-sustaining ones. However, we should never do anything just because we have to; we should act from our sense of knowingness and righteousness. If it is the right thing to do we should do it without any hesitation whatsoever, acting from our divine intuition; our heart centre.
- There is no situation that is inherently painful or pleasant outside of our perception of it. They are both conditioned responses based on past experiences. When we begin to realise this we move into a new arena of life; an arena of choice. Just because we experienced something a certain way in the past does not mean it will occur in exactly the same way again. If we react to a given situation with anger or fear it is because we are basing our reasoning on past experiences; and past events do not usually pan out exactly the same way twice. In this circumstance we suffer from false thinking and act from a position of ignorance; we fall prey to a conditioned response. We should aim to cultivate an attitude of non-attachment towards outer events and thereby prevent ourselves falling into the trap of fear and ignorance.
- Rest, play and relaxation are as important to a successful and fulfilling life as anything we can ever do or say. The amount of success we achieve in outer lives is in direct proportion to the level of peace and contentment we cultivate in our hearts and minds. Without lightness of spirit, love of life, appreciation of silence and mental clarity all our actions become ineffective and energy-depleting. The healthier our physical body and the more our minds are rested, the more strength and energy we have to direct into the outer world.
- If we don't recognize the value of rest, relaxation, meditation and prayer we cannot hope to achieve anything of any significance in our outer world. We may achieve great power and riches but it will have been at the cost of our inner strength, peace of mind and happiness. We must therefore take great care of our inner core; the bedrock of our existence, so that we have great strength and resilience to direct our energy into the world around us. A man who is rested and relaxed can direct twice as much energy to his home and work environment, and can therefore achieve success in half the time and with half the energy it takes a man who is frantically busy and stressed all day long.
- Everything in our relative world must have its equal and opposite and this is no different when it comes to our minds. The deeper the mind is able to dive into silence on a regular basis, the higher, and faster and longer our mental faculties work. There are many ways of doing this including gentle exercise, yoga, breath awareness, dance, music, prayer, solitude and walking in nature on a daily basis. However, the most powerful way to still the mind and release energy is meditation, which should be practiced for at least twenty minutes twice a day to be most effective.
- For the mind to be stilled easily the body needs to be healthy and this means good, wholesome fuel in terms of food and drink. The more fresh and natural our food the more energy our body has at its disposal; we are no more than the fuel (food) we put into ourselves. If our food is poor, our body and mind are weak. If our mind and body are weak our thoughts are also weak. If our thoughts are weak our choices become poor, weak and confused. Weak choices lead to poor decisions and consequently to poor, ineffective actions. Poor, ineffective actions do not achieve success and we end up tired, stressed, unfulfilled and unhappy. Therefore, the foundation of our existence is the food we choose to eat and the lifestyle we chose to lead. The choices we make in this area ultimately determine our success or failure in life.
- If we choose to eat meat we dull our mind, as meat is a heavy food and hard for the body to digest. The digestive system uses most energy, and if it has to digest heavy foods, it leaves very little energy for our mental faculties. It also builds up heat in the mind and body, leading to anger and violence and also to inflammatory conditions such as gout and arthritis. However, eating fresh organic fruit, vegetables grains and

pulses create energy, ojas and vitality – these types of food increase our prana or life energy and help us ward off stress. Old age and disease.

- Simply by allowing time to reflect on our lives, and contemplating where it may be improved, is to start a process whereby we may begin to discover joy in our lives again. The only way to improve our lives is to be able to notice and acknowledge what we did wrong yesterday and then to make a commitment not to fall into the same trap twice. As we continue with this process our judgment becomes refined and our lives become more successful.
- As we begin to make positive changes we should remain alert to the consequences of these changes so that we know we're on the right track. We may perhaps notice that on the days when we go to bed early, and consequently arise much earlier in the morning, we have more energy and are happier throughout the day. We may also notice that when we go to bed earlier we actually need less sleep. We may perhaps notice that when we take the time to stroll in the countryside we feel much better, and are more caring and friendly to those around us. We may also notice that when we are able to get some rays of sunshine on our skin each day, our bodies feel healthier and more alive. We may notice we have more energy and the mind feels sharper when we don't eat meat, or that when we have a light meal in the evening we sleep better and wake more refreshed. Perhaps we notice that a little laughter each morning, or playing with our children, releases 'feel-good' hormones in the mind and body and then allows us greater clarity and enjoyment of the rest of the day.
- As we begin to notice that as we change our thought patterns our outlook on life becomes positive and our self-image improves. As we clear away the clutter from the mind we uncover the true meaning of our lives and begin to prioritise those things that matter and reprioritise those things that don't. Life slowly begins to become more peaceful, less stressed and more fulfilling.
- As we begin this process of renewal and rejuvenation of the mind our fear of failure also becomes less and less and stops draining our energy. Indeed, we finally realise that there is no real failure in life, only opportunities to learn and grow and become stronger in the process. As our energy increases, our willpower also increases, and we begin to find we are falling off the path of happiness and contentment less often. We may also find that we are more able to cope with the consequences when we do. This knowledge and strength gives us a great sense of freedom and feelings of inner power that allows us to stick to our new way of being more easily.
- As we begin to be more self-referral and less ego based we become more self-controlled and more able to hold back when a situation demands it. A once angry response to a situation now becomes calmer and allows for more constructive ideas on how to resolve the particular situation. As we begin to achieve small victories over our restless minds we allow larger victories to be achieved in our outer world. We begin to understand that ninety-nine percent of our success comes from using just one percent of our minds capacity and that ninety-nine percent of our thought is pure junk anyway and serves only to interfere with the truth of any given situation.
- If we can learn to laugh at our ourselves every once in a while, and not take life so seriously, we begin to notice that we are already surrounded by beauty and joy, and that our searching for happiness in the outer world was in vain; it was right here in front of us all the while. As we begin to see the world in a different light and start to pay less attention to our doubts and fears we realise that failure is impossible. As long as we work steadily and consciously towards achieving our objectives, success is assured and our desires are fulfilled.
- However, our happiness is just the journey on which we travel through life; it is not the final destination. When we allow ourselves to stop and savour each and every moment, pure joy becomes our everlasting reality. When we stop chasing the desire for success and achievement in the outer world we begin to find it is already present in our quiet inner world. As we start to live more and more in the present moment we realise that happiness and joy were always with us. We then become a source of pleasure and joy to ourselves and to those around us.

Key points for cultivating mental peace

- Remember to gently turn your mind away from negative/stressful thoughts and to place your attention on the area of the body where this negativity appears to be felt. Rest your attention on this area for a while, breathe into it and as the feeling fades, turn the mind to healthier, happier thoughts.
- Remember that fear, worry and anxiety are the largest drain on the body's energy levels and a major cause of illness and disease.
- Try to live in the present; enjoying and savouring each precious moment. Regret, or reminiscence of past events, drain your energy and hinder your enjoyment and appreciation of the present. Accept what has been, what is and what may be, and enjoy each moment - for it comes only once.
- Trust in nature and have faith that the future will work out fine when unhindered by stress and negative thought patterns.
- Use positive language in verbal and mental communication with yourself and others. Try not to use words such as, *I can't, I should and I need* and replace them with words such as; *I can, I will, I must or I choose*. These words have more power of conviction and are more likely to be acted upon
- Boost your confidence, self-worth and self-esteem by listing all the things you like about yourself, the things that make you unique and all the things you are good at.
- Remember that it is only through self-confidence, happiness and inner harmony that you may pass joy and happiness to those around you. Love and peace can only spread through the world, affecting each and every living thing when we are happy and loving within ourselves.
- Help yourself to help others by radiating love, peace, honesty, understanding and calmness. Notice the beauty and gentle sounds of nature and spend time appreciating the rising or setting sun.
- Be non-judgemental and graciously accept the way things are. Remind yourself often for it is the only way to truly begin to learn how to change oneself. Practice acceptance and silently allow life to unfold naturally and effortlessly, accepting things as they are and not as you wish they were.
- Learn to trust and act on your intuition, trying not to let the mind hinder your self-referral process with fear, doubt or anxiety. Casually witness the choices you make each day and ask yourself what the consequences of making this or that particular choice might be. Will acting on the choice you make bring fulfilment and happiness towards yourself and those affected by making that choice?
- Having now begun to accept the challenges life throws your way and also having begun to trust and act upon your intuition in response to them, it's now time to also take responsibility for your actions. This means not blaming anyone or anything for the situations you find yourself in and realising that each and every situation presented is an opportunity in disguise. It is an opportunity to observe, listen and learn and transform it into a great benefit.
- Relinquish the need to defend a point of view. Try not to feel the need to convince or persuade others to accept your point of view or to be rigidly attached to it. This way, the mind is flexible and free. It is able to move on, progress and learn.

Resolving inner conflict & limiting beliefs

‘The Enquiry’

Here are a series of questions that you can ask yourself to enable you to delve into the heart of any issue or problem that is troubling you. By thinking of the issue you would like to resolve and then asking yourself these questions the inner reality of the situation is often revealed. It is important to be really honest with yourself and to listen to your intuition. Ignore your intellectual mind and listen to your quiet, inner voice that would truthfully like to dissolve the particular issue in question, forever.

First think of the particular situation, person, issue or problem that troubles you most at this present moment. Now create a statement regarding this situation, person, issue or problem that you think you have. Make the statement as clear as possible eg: my boss makes my job very stressful; my son shouldn't play on the computer so much; my partner should help me around the house more often; my mother should be more understanding; if I had more money my life would be happier.

For each statement you come up with, ask yourself:

- Is it true?
- Can I absolutely know that my statement or thought is true?
- How do I react when I think this particular thought?
- Who would I be without this thought?
- What would I be like without this thought?

Do not judge each answer too deeply; just be open-minded and relaxed and see what answer spontaneously appears. Try not to be too intellectual or rational and listen to your heart rather than your intellect. See what you really think and not what you may ‘think you should think’ or what others may ‘think you should think’.

- Now see if you can change the original statement round so it applies to yourself rather than the other person. If your statement was ‘my son should not play on the computer so much’ turn it round to say ‘I should not be on the computer so much’ or ‘I should not watch television so much’.

Ask yourself if this reversed statement is true or has any relevance on some level if you are very honest with yourself?

- Now turn the original statement round to it's opposite and then apply it to yourself. You might now have ‘I should be on the computer as often as I am’ or ‘I should be watching television as often as I do’.

Ask yourself if this opposite statement could perhaps be true, especially at the present time?

- Now apply this new (opposite) statement to the other person or situation. For instance the statement may now say ‘my son should be watching television so much’ or ‘my son does need to play computer games so often (he needs to distract himself from the fact his best friend has just been badly hurt in a traffic accident)’.

Ask yourself if this new (opposite) statement could perhaps be true on some level?

Below is a slightly expanded version of the above and may help you go deeper into the absolute reality of the statements you create. Just ask yourself these questions and wait to see if a little clarity and understanding begins to dawn in your awareness.

Create your statement and ask yourself:

- Is it true?
- What's the underlying reality of it? (Does it really happen? Does he/she really do that? Am I really like that? Do I really do that?)
- Whose business it is anyway? (Is not my business only my business and not his/her business? Is his/her business only his/her business and not mine?)
- Can I absolutely know that this statement is true? (What if I am wrong? Could I possibly be wrong in my judgment of this situation/issue?)

- What are the consequences of my statement?
- What are the consequences of my interpretation of the situation/issue?
- What does my statement mean for me and for the other person? Am I a better person or a worse person for it? Are they a better person or a worse person for it?
- What do I think I would have if things were the way I think they should be?
- What's the worst that could happen if my statement is really true?
- What's the "should"? (if there's no should in the original statement then put one in). Where's the proof that this should be so? Where's the proof that things 'should' be any different than what they already are?
- What have I to learn from this situation?
- Will I be a better person or a stronger person from having learnt from this situation?
- Am I going to live life more fully in the future from having resolved this issue?
- Will I be happier if I drop this thought?

Consider for a moment how you react when you think (or believe) the original statement? How much of your life is based upon it? What do you do and what do you say when you do and say you believe it?

Now ask yourself:

- Can I see a reason to drop this thought?
- Can I find one stress-free reason to keep this thought?
- Who would I be without that thought? How would I be without that thought?

Now turn around the original statement. Here is an example: "Paul should appreciate me".

If you turn it around to yourself it becomes: "I should appreciate myself" (it's my job, not his).

Turning it around to the other person it becomes: "I should appreciate Paul" (especially when he doesn't appreciate me).

If you turn it around to the opposite it becomes: "Paul shouldn't appreciate me (unless he does)".

Now consider each of the questions below and work through 'the enquiry' again (if necessary) for each individual person. By slightly altering these questions they can also be applied to other issues or situations.

- Who angers or saddens or disappoints me?
- What is it about them that I didn't or still don't like?
- How do I want them to change?
- Why do I want them to change?
- What do I want them to do?
- Why do I want them to do this?
- Do I need anything from them?
- Why do I need anything from them?
- What do they need to give me in order for me to be happy?
- What do they need to do in order for me to be happy?
- What do I think of them?
- Why do I think of them in this way?
- What is it that I don't ever want to experience with that person, thing or situation again?

By simply asking yourself these questions you begin to look at your circumstances and situations in a different light. The trick is to ask yourself these questions in a relaxed, non-judgmental way and then to notice the answers coming to you without much prompting. Be as light as possible and consider the ways in which the initial answers could be reversed or turned around. Try and allow your more intuitive or sub-conscious mind to answer for you and just innocently 'watch' the answers appearing. Ask yourself these questions whenever negative thoughts arise about any situation, circumstance or issue. You'll soon find that you are able to stand back and witness these thoughts popping up in your awareness and be able to let them go as quickly as they fleetingly appeared in the first place.

If you are interested in this line of enquiry we strongly recommend reading the book on which this material is based: 'Loving What Is' by Byron Katie.

Thought Field Therapy (Tft)

Thought Field Therapy is a simple technique which involves tapping or pressing on energy points (marmas) to rapidly remove phobias, traumas, anxiety and depression. This miraculous phenomenon can seem bewildering to the patient who has often undergone months and sometimes years of physiological counselling to control the problem; and often to little or no avail. The technique has been developed and refined over the past twenty-five years through the dedication and perseverance of Roger Callahan, an eminent and highly successful American clinical psychologist. Many practitioners now claim it has an amazing success rate of over 95%.

At the heart of his theory is the belief that behind every emotional problem is an undigested thought or 'perturbation'. In stressful situations our minds filter out anything we can't cope with in order for us to deal more effectively with the situation in hand. However, the problem here is that if these issues are permanently blocked from our awareness and we are never given a chance to deal with, then they may eventually pop up as phobias, fears, anxieties that bear very little or no resemblance to the original problem or situation. A mistake of the intellect during the stressful situation leads to a 'perturbation' in that particular 'thought field'. It can permanently cloud our judgement surrounding many seemingly unconnected issues and creates further stress and often causes ill health or dis-ease. As the problem is simply a wrongly 'tuned' frequency connected with that particular past event, it follows that removing or 're-tuning' that thought field will resolve the issue very quickly.

Ayurveda views the mind in a similar way and uses meditation to rectify imbalances that are present. Meditation involves introducing a sound into the body's vibrational field. This sound 'resonates' within the vibrational blueprint of the person and entrains his/her vibrational field back into balance. During the practice of meditation the mind transcends through the various 'perturbations' or stresses and arrives effortlessly at a state of pure awareness or restful alertness. This is the realm of pure un-manifest consciousness (the quantum level) that is free from stress, imbalance or 'perturbation'. As the mind is naturally drawn back from this quantum level to the manifest level of reality it entrains the mind back into a state of normality. It infuses the mind with vibrant energy and 'irons out' perturbations – the more this takes place the more often these perturbations are dissolved and collapsed and the more balanced the mind/body becomes.

While meditation releases stresses/imbbalances/perturbations on a daily basis and slowly dissolves accumulated mental debris Thought Field Therapy rapidly tackles specific and often extreme imbalances that are causing severe problems in the present. The two therefore work hand in hand to create balance and harmony in the physiology. Meditation gently works away at dissolving perturbations that may cause problems in the future whilst Thought Field Therapy tackles perturbations that have become a problem and need dissolving or collapsing quickly.

Whilst it is advisable to consult a qualified TFT practitioner if you have a severe problem, many people have cured themselves of simple or mild anxieties, fears and phobias using the 'algorithms' on the following pages.

Please refer to Roger Callahan's book 'Tapping the healer within' for more in-depth information.

Thought Field Therapy Instructions

1. Tune in to the thought field – this means thinking briefly about the problem you would like to resolve (a phobia, fear, anxiety etc) and bringing the issue briefly to the forefront of the mind.
2. Obtain a SUD rating – this necessitates writing down a ‘subjective unit of distress’ – using a scale of 0 –10. A ten would be very distressful when you think of the problem, whilst a six would be less severe. A zero would therefore indicate no distress when thinking about the problem to be dealt with – in this unique situation you would need to put yourself in an environment where a SUD rating could be made.
3. Choose the algorithm which you deem most appropriate to the problem you wish to overcome and ‘tap’ the areas indicated – the correct sequence is very important but the ‘tapping’ point is approximate (use two or three fingers to cover the general area to be tapped)

Thought Field Therapy Codes (for use with algorithms on next page)

eb	Tap eyebrow point (between eyebrows).
e	Tap under eye (high on cheek bone).
oe	Tap outside edge of eye socket bone about ½ inch from eye, near the temple.
a	Tap four inches below armpit (about level with nipple on men).
c	Tap collarbone point one inch below and right or left of collarbone notch (bottom of neck).
Lf	Tap little finger point (on inside tip of nail nearest thumb).
if	Tap index finger point (on the thumb side next to the nail).
th	Tap thumb point (outside edge next to nail).
mf	Tap middle finger (edge next to index finger).
un	Tap under nose.
ch	Tap on chin just under bottom lip.
g	Tap gamut spot on the back of the hand one inch from knuckles in valley between ring and little finger.
9g	Tap gamut spot with eyes open (5 taps), eyes closed (5 taps), eyes open, looking down to the left (5 taps), looking down to the right (5 taps), whirl eyes one direction (5 taps), whirl eyes other direction (5 taps), hum short tune (5 taps), count aloud from one to five (5 taps), hum tune again (5 taps).
sq	Repeat the initial majors sequence (ie., e, a, c).
er	Complete floor/ceiling eye roll (while tapping gamut spot). Hold head level and look downwards towards the feet with the eyes – to a count of eight slowly roll eyes upwards across floor, up wall and across ceiling as far as you can.
pr	Psychological reversal (reverses polarity of meridians). PR spot is located on the outside edge of hand, midway between the wrist and base of little finger. This is used if the algorithms appear to yield minimal results.
Mini pr	Tap gamut point about 15 times to reduce SUD if stuck around 2-4.
Cbb	Collarbone breathing. Use if stuck above SUD 1-2. Breathe normally – full, deep breath in and hold – let half out and hold - let rest out and hold – take half breath in and hold – release. <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Simultaneously touch collarbone point (c) and tap gamut point (g)2. Repeat on other collarbone point using same hand3. Repeat on first collarbone point using knuckles of same two fingers4. Repeat on other collarbone point5. Repeat 1-5 using other hand on collarbone points

Thought Field Therapy Algorithms*

Most simple phobias/fear:	e, a, c, 9g, sq, er
Spiders, claustrophobia:	a, e, c, 9g, sq, er
Simple anxiety/stress:	e, a, c, 9g, sq, er
Addictive urge/general anxiety:	e, a, c, 9g, sq, er
“ “	e, c, a, c, 9g, sq, er
“ “	c, e, c, 9g, sq, er
“ “	a, e, c, 9g, sq, er
Simple trauma: rejection, grief	eb, c, 9g, sq, er
Complex trauma:	eb, e, a, c, 9g, sq, er
Complex trauma with guilt:	if, c, 9g, sq, er
(add to complex trauma algorithm)	
Complex trauma with anger:	Lf, c, 9g, sq, er
(add to complex trauma algorithm)	
Anger:	Lf, c, 9g, sq, er
Guilt:	if, c, 9g, sq, er
Simple relaxation:	er
Negative behaviour	pr
Abnormal clumsiness or awkwardness:	Cbb
Inhalant type allergy reactions:	mf, a, c, 9g, sq, er
Nasal congestion/stuffiness:	un, c, 9g, sq, er
Lung problems:	th, c, 9g, sq, er
Obsession and OCD:	c, e, c, 9g, sq, er
“	a, e, c, 9g, sq, er
“	e, a, c, 9g, sq, er
Rage:	oe, c, 9g, sq, er
Depression:	g (30-50 times), c, 9g, sq, er
Physical pain:	g (30-50 times), c, 9g, sq, er
Embarrassment:	un, 9g, sq, er
Shame:	ch, 9g, sq, er
Panic/anxiety disorder:	eb, e, a, c, 9g, sq, er
“ “	c, a, eb, c, 9g, sq, er
“ “	a, e, eb, c, 9g, sq, er
“ “	eb, a, e, 9g, sq, er
“ “	e, eb, a, Lf, 9g, sq, er
“ “	c, e, a, 9g, sq, er
Inability to visualise/overcoming addictions:	a, c, 9g, sq, er (when SUD below 3)
Jet lag (also try 'west to east' instead if necessary):	eb, c, 9g, sq, er (east to west)
	e, c, 9g, sq, er (west to east)

NB: Perform psychological reversal (pr) after first major sequence if there is no change in the SUD level.
 Perform mini psychological reversal (mini pr) after the second sequence if the SUD level is above 2.

Accomplishing goals

If you feel overwhelmed, indecisive or stressed it's time to take stock of the situation and ascertain the reasons for your problems. It's time to put your life back into order and to re-assess your goals and priorities. The following instructions and priority chart are a very simple and effective way to go about accomplishing this.

Evaluate your goals:

- First decide what your goals are in life.
- Now divide the list into short, medium or long-term goals.
- Remember to use positive language and exchange: *try, should or want*, for: *can, must and will*.
- For each goal state the reason why it's important to you. These can be either negative or positive statements as they can either; create greater pleasure or happiness, or; reduce pain and unhappiness.
- Write down how each of these will be achieved or advanced or maintained and in what timescale.
- Now commit to advancing or implementing at least one, if not all, items in this list in some way each day.
- Review the list each day and change the order of priorities depending on circumstances – be flexible and advance any items on this list as opportunities spontaneously arise.
- Re-evaluate this list periodically and be prepared to change it in light of new values or beliefs.
- Remember to rest and relax and take some time to yourself each day, so that you are able to notice opportunities when they do arise, and to be able to act on them effectively and efficiently.
- Remember the Ayurvedic maxim: 'Do less and accomplish more'.

Evaluate your priorities:

- To evaluate priorities for your goals use the chart below.
- Try and place each goal into one of the four boxes.
- The descriptions on the right of the boxes will guide you as to how you should deal with each priority.
- This technique can be really useful for day-to-day tasks in the home or office - you may need to be ruthless at times, but this will pay off in terms of reducing your stress and anxiety levels.

Time management priority chart

<p><i>Section 1</i></p> <p>Urgent Important</p>	<p><i>Section 2</i></p> <p>Not Urgent Important</p>
<p><i>Section 3</i></p> <p>Urgent Not Important</p>	<p><i>Section 4</i></p> <p>Not Urgent Not Important</p>

Top Left (section 1): These have to be dealt with as a matter of priority; there's little choice involved and they are, therefore, often stressful. As life becomes more structured and orderly this section should have less and less in it. The items that would go in here should have been foreseen and addressed in section 2.

Top Right (section 2): List here all the things that are important to you and have a positive, life-enhancing effect on you - socially, professionally and personally. These are things that make you, and everyone else around you, happier, healthier and more fulfilled. They improve relationships at home, and at work. As this list is calmly and efficiently advanced, there should be less and less tasks to go in the box to the left (urgent & important).

Bottom Left (section 3): These are things often imposed on us by other people (deadlines etc) and need not impact your life if you so choose. They are other people's priorities and should remain so.

Bottom Right (section 4): Delete them. Any items listed in here can be banished from your mind - they need not impact or concern you in any way.

Starting your Ayurvedic lifestyle

The best way to begin integrating an Ayurvedic lifestyle is to introduce it gradually; step by step. Start with things you know will be relatively easy for you to do without radically changing your existing habits or lifestyle. Once you have introduced one or two changes, and found them beneficial, introduce a couple more. Try to be patient and refrain from introducing more changes until the ones you've already incorporated have become fully integrated into your daily lifestyle. Don't worry if you can't follow them all of the time; just do as much as you can. In this way, the changes you've made will become second nature, and your friends and family will accept that this is the new you, and leave you to get on with it. Below is a suggested monthly plan.

Month One

- Retire to bed before 10pm (you can do this gradually by going to bed 10 minutes earlier than normal for one week. The following week, go to bed 10 minutes earlier again, and continue in a similar manner until you reach your target).
- Arise one hour before dawn (you can do this gradually by getting up 10 minutes earlier than normal for one week. The following week, get up 10 minutes earlier again, and continue in a similar manner until you reach your target).
- Meditate for 20 minutes after your morning shower and before your evening meal.
- Practice the 'Sun Salute' for 5 minutes before meditating.
- Scrape your tongue with a tongue-scraper before brushing your teeth.
- Aim to drink at least 2-3 pints of hot water each day (with lemon, ginger or peppermint).

Month Two

- Continue following the practices you have integrated into your life in month one and reflect on the benefits you have noticed so far.
- Eat your largest meal of the day at mid-day.
- Eat a light meal (ideally soup) before 7pm in the evening.
- Take 'ginger pickle' before your mid-day meal to increase appetite and help digestion.
- Choose the appropriate 'churnas' for your body-type and/or season and sprinkle on your food to balance the tastes and increase assimilation of food.
- Cut down on (or eliminate) your consumption of one or two of the following addictions: tea, coffee, sugar, confectionary, sweets, chocolate, smoking, alcohol, watching television.

Month Three

- Continue following the practices you have integrated into your life in month one and two and reflect on the benefits you have noticed so far.
- Cut down on (or eliminate) your consumption of meat and/or dairy products.
- Choose foods that are appropriate for your body-type and season.
- Stop buying processed, micro-waved, low fat and refined foods.
- Drink no more than one cup of hot water with meals or immediately after meals.
- Avoid iced drinks and ice-cream (especially during or immediately after meals).
- Cut down further on (or eliminate) your consumption of one or two of the following addictions: tea, coffee, sugar, confectionary, sweets, chocolate, smoking, alcohol, watching television.
- Take a 10 minute walk in nature each day.

Month Four

- Continue following the practices you have integrated into your life in the previous three months and reflect on the benefits you have noticed so far.
- Massage your body with sesame oil before bathing or showering.
- Massage your hair and scalp with coconut oil before bed.
- Practice 5 minutes of pranayama before meditation.
- Practice 10 minutes of yoga before pranayama.
- Cut down further on (or eliminate) your consumption of one or two of the following addictions: tea, coffee, sugar, confectionary, sweets, chocolate, smoking, alcohol, watching television.

Month Five

- Continue following the practices you have integrated into your life in the previous four months and reflect on the benefits you have noticed so far.
- Exchange your cosmetic products and toiletries for less toxic ones (see resources).
- Read some inspiring, motivation, personal development or spiritual literature each day.
- Increase your practice of yoga to 20 minutes each day.
- Aim to become less argumentative, judgemental and controlling of yourself and others.
- Have a day to yourself each week with plenty of rest and relaxation (and maybe a liquid fast).
- Take a 20-30 minute walk in nature each day.
- Cut down still further on (or eliminate) your consumption of one or two of the following addictions: tea, coffee, sugar, confectionary, sweets, chocolate, smoking, alcohol, watching television.

Month Six

- Continue following the practices you have integrated into your life in the previous five months and reflect on the benefits you have noticed so far.
- Practice the 'healing sounds' for 5-10 minutes each day.
- Eat a purely vegetarian diet most of the time.
- Go on a panchakarma detox retreat for 7-10 days to rejuvenate and revitalise the mind and body.
- Start an on-going Rasayana program taking Triphala and Chywanaprash (Amrit Kalash) daily.
- Buy an auger, masticating-type juicer and start drinking fresh, organic vegetable/fruit juices every day. Choose juices you like and are suitable for your body-type.
- Fast on Peya soup for one day a week.
- Eat mainly organic produce and cook it fresh each day.
- Cut out tea, coffee, sugar, confectionary, sweets, chocolate, smoking and alcohol from your life.

During the following six-months slowly integrate more of these suggestions if you haven't been able to already. Do not be too hard on yourself. Give yourself a reasonable time frame and accept that this may be much longer than is suggested here. It may take years until you can fully integrate everything but at least follow the most important ones; meditation, early nights and early mornings, exercise, drinking hot water and having light meals in the evening. It is worth noting that you may experience mild side effects such as headaches or loose bowels when you begin to cut back on toxic substances like alcohol or coffee. This is not a cause for concern; it is just your body beginning to detoxify. However, drinking lots of hot water will help lessen these symptoms and you can always cut back less drastically on these substances to integrate the change more smoothly.

Chapter 7

Mantras & healing sounds

~ for success, fulfilment, health, wealth & enlightenment ~



When we find delight within ourselves
and feel inner joy and pure contentment,
there is nothing left to be done.

~ Bhagavad Gita ~

(Chapter 6 Verse 8 - 500BC)

Introduction to mantra chanting

Mantra is a profound and practical method of accessing higher states of consciousness. It is a form of yoga which uses vocal and mental sound-currents of both audible and inaudible frequencies. These subtle vibrations awaken dormant centres of the brain, attuning the mind and body to the primordial vibrations of creation. Access to universal knowledge or truth, and spontaneously self-healing, naturally arise when we come into harmony with these sub-atomic pulsations in consciousness. The subtle harmonic vibrations of chanted mantras, both mental and vocal, act as a cleansing and purifying agent on consciousness. The yogic rishis of ancient India discovered that certain sounds brought them joy and ecstasy whilst others illumined the consciousness or brought tremendous psychic powers. Some produced profound tranquility or boundless energy and others brought freedom from fear or mental and physical healing.

These same mantras are still in use today and they still evoke the same results in those who are dedicated to practicing them regularly. Mantras create a stable core in the centre of our beings, which vibrates in unison with the underlying life force. In India, it is not unusual for homeopathic doctors to prescribe specific mantras instead of the usual remedies. In Africa witch-doctors have known for centuries that a certain frequency of drum-beat will serve to break a fever and have developed a repertoire of other rhythms to cure various physical and mental symptoms. Similar methods are used today by advanced radionic practitioners using sophisticated instruments. Even in allopathic circles, sound-therapy is beginning to be utilised in the treatment of both physical and mental problems.

It is only relatively recently in the Western world, that it has been discovered that certain music and sound-waves have the capacity to activate cellular healing when played to bodily wounds. And such sounds have been shown to promote a far speedier return to health than by orthodox methods. So it is that medical science begins to vindicate the findings of the ancient sages.

What is an ordinary dose of allopathic medicine after all? It is no more than a substance composed of atomic particles in a dense state of vibration. Homeopathic medicine goes one step further. Its highly diluted remedies appear to contain nothing of the original substance, yet they are highly potentised and radiate a powerful frequency which can replicate the effects of the disease. This causes the body to throw off its illness without the effects of harmful drugs, simply by a sympathetic frequency. A sonic frequency works on a similar principle.

Medical researchers in Paris have found that certain repetitive sounds played to cancer cells will eventually destroy them. If lifeless repetitive electronic sound can make cancer cells disintegrate in the laboratory, how much more effective the living sound of one's own voice can be in toning the cells with the repetitive vibration of healing.

Mantra is known for its vibrant pulsation of subtle healing frequencies which purify both mind and body. Because of its capacity to resonate in consciousness, it is considered by the great sages as the most efficacious method of unburdening the subconscious and cleansing it of residual traumas. As many cancers can be traced back to unfelt feelings blocked in childhood, mantra (with its internal massage of rigid cellular structures) often allows such frozen pains and tears to be released. On occasion even traumas of previous lifetimes have been experienced following a mantra session, allowing students to relive and release past-life memories which previously created hidden tensions in the body.

It is hardly surprising that mantra chanting also has a significant effect on our mind and body as, like everything else in this universe, our body is made up of vibrating energy. Even though our body appears to be dense, every cell of the human body has its own frequency. There's a sound present in each tiny cell, however minute that cell might be. Wherever there's movement, wherever there's vibration, there's sound. The body's inclination is to be in harmony with itself. All the different parts of the body, all its cells, want to move in unison, the way a shoal of fish or a flock of birds does, always moving but never bumping into each other. When this natural rhythm and harmony is disrupted in the body, disease and disorders arise. However, when the vibrations of a chant sound within our bodies, the cells themselves respond; they resonate with the pure vibration of the mantras so that harmony can be restored. The mantras and chants on the following pages are just a short selection for you to experiment with.

Maha mantras

Lakshmi mantras

Om shrīm klīm lakshmī, nārāyanābhyām namaha

Brings good fortune, wealth, health, beauty, abundance and peace.

Om gurū shrīm maha Lakshmiyei swāhā

Removes karmic obstacles related to abundance and attracts finances or prosperity.

Ganesha mantra

Om gurū Ganapatayai namaḥ

*Removes mental and physical obstacles and ensures success in endeavours.
Heralds auspicious new beginnings and grants education, knowledge, wisdom and wealth.
Destroys vanity, selfishness and pride.*

Gayatri mantra

Om bhūr bhuvah swāhā
Tat savitur vareṇyam
Bhargo devasya dīmahi
Dhiyo yo naḥ prachodayāt (om - swāhā)

*Increases intelligence, concentration, memory, strength, intuition, inspiration and creative thinking.
Ensures success in endeavours, gives spiritual insight and brings enlightenment.*

Maha mrityunjaya mantra

Om tryambhakam yajāmahe
Sugandhim puṣṭi-vardhanam
Urvārukamiva bandhanan
Mṛtyor mukshīya māmṛtāt ...swāhā

*Creates peace and contentment and wards off fear, sorrow and depression.
Destroys anger, selfishness and vengeful thoughts and removes sins and bad karma.
Bestows life-giving energy and rejuvenates the mind and body to ensure a long and fulfilling life.
Blesses one with good health and has great curative power during ill health.
Ensures spiritual and material wealth and helps one attain Moksha or enlightenment.
Guards against untimely death and provides protection from accidents and mishaps.*

Dhanvantre mantra

Om dharū Dhanvantaraye namaha

*Helps find an appropriate physician or practitioner for guidance during health problems.
Helps find the best path to healing or best resolution to a medical problem.*

Kubera mantra

Ha Sa Ka La E I La Hrīm
Ha Sa Ka La E I La Hrīm

*Helps attain great wealth that, once achieved, will be self-sustaining.
Safeguards money or investments for others.*

Shiva mantra

Om sarva kamadaya namaha

Helps fulfil our individual desires.

Mani mantra

Om mani padme hum

*Unites the light of the heart with the power of the mind to make anything possible,
Pulls energy from the lower chakras into the upper ones and circulates energy around them,
As with the Gayatri Mantra, when this mantra is chanted by anyone, all of humanity is benefited.*

Dattatreya mantra

Om dram om guru Dattaya namaha

Helps sharpen your skills as a spiritual counsellor and teacher, as well as moving your personal dharma forward.

Vasudeva mantra

Om namo bhagavate Vasudevaya

Helps obtain spiritual freedom and understanding by building links between conscious divinity at every level of creation and our own ego-based consciousness. Acts as a vehicle for uniting with divinity anywhere in the cosmos.

Tara mantra

Om tara tuttare ture swaha

A Tantric healing mantra for gaining omniscient awareness and strengthening feminine creative energy.

Taraka rama mantras

Shrī Rām, Jai Rām, Jai Jai Rāmo

A mantra to evoke the healing energy of the sun and bring peace, harmony and enlightenment. Helps transcend karma and purifies the ego and personality to gain spiritual freedom. Allows the divinity within to solve and handle our problems in life.

Chant to the guru

Gurur brahma, gurur vishnuh, gururdevo maheshvarah,
Guruh sakshat parabrahma tasmai shri gurave namah

*Salutations to the Guru who is Brahma, the Creator, Vishnu, the Sustainer, Shiva, the Destroyer,
and to the manifestation of the Supreme Absolute. To Him, to the glory of the Guru, I bow down.*

Teacher/student prayer

Om saha nā-vavatu, saha nau bhunaktu,
saha vīryam karavā-vahai, tejas vinā vadhītamastu
mā vidishā-vahai
Om shanti shanti shanti

*Om. May we, guru and disciple, be protected together. May we enjoy the fruits of our actions together. May we achieve strength together.
May our knowledge be full of light. May we never have enmity for one another. Om, Peace, Peace, Peace.*

Meal prayer

Brahmārpanam, brahmahavir, brahmāgnau, brahmāñā hutam
Brahmaiva tena, gantavyam, brahmakarmasamādhinā

*Brahman (God) is the oblation; Brahman is the melted butter (offering); by Brahman is the oblation poured into the fire of Brahman;
Brahman verily shall be reached by him who always sees in action.*

Planetary healing & protective mantras

Om Arkāya namaha

This is healing mantra and offers respect to the divine physician, Arkaya

Om Hiranyagarbhāya namaha

This is a mantra to heal the heart and emotions

Om rām Rāmaya namaha

This mantra balances and heals our solar & lunar energies and brings energy and vitality

Om durm Durgāya namaha

This is a mantra for protection from negative forces both internally and externally

Om shrīm maha Lakshmyai swaha

This mantra blesses us with spiritual and physical abundance and prosperity

Om āīm shrīm brīm Saraswati devyai namaha

Saraswati mantra for giving knowledge, beauty, peace and gentleness

Om namah Shivāya

Shiva mantra for cultivating great yogic powers, inner strength, fearlessness and detachment

Om namo Nārāyanāya

Vishnu mantra for bringing bliss, divine light and unconditional love

Om shanthi, shanthi, shanthihi lokah samastah sukhino bhavantu

Prayer for world peace and prosperity

Om shrī Suryayā namahā

Sun mantra which heals and balances the energies of the heart, spine, diaphragm, thymus, blood and veins

Om shrī Chandraya namahā

Moon mantra which heals and balances the energies of the all bodily fluids (perspiration, gastric, lymphatic and nervous system, stomach and breasts)

Om Budhayā namahā

Mercury mantra which heals and balances the energies of the hands, arms, lungs, sensory organs and thyroid

Om Shukrayā namahā

Venus mantra which heals and balances the energies of the neck, throat, thyroid, kidneys, feet and sex organs

Om Angarakayā namahā

Mars mantra which heals and balances the energies of the blood, adrenal glands and sex organs

Om Gurave namahā

Jupiter mantra which heals and balances the energies of the liver, gall bladder, thighs, pituitary gland and promotes growth

Om Shanaishwarayā swāhā

Saturn mantra which heals and balances the energies of the skeleton, cartilage, skin, lower legs and pituitary gland

Planetary strengthening & vastu mantras

Om̐ namo bhagavate vāsudevāya

Strengthens the Moon's energies and rectifies defects in the northwest of buildings

Om̐ namo bhagavate buddhadevāya

Strengthens Mercury's energies and rectifies defects in the north of buildings

Om̐ namo bhagavate vāmanadevāya

Strengthens Jupiter's energies and rectifies defects in the northeast of buildings

Om̐ namo bhagavate rāmachandrāya

Strengthens the Sun's energies and rectifies defects in the east of buildings

Om̐ namo bhagavate parashurāmāya

Strengthens Venus's energies and rectifies defects in the southeast of buildings

Om̐ namo bhagavate narasimhāya

Strengthens Mars's energies and rectifies defects in the south of buildings

Om̐ namo bhagavate varāhadevāya

Strengthens Rahu's energies and rectifies defects in the southwest of buildings

Om̐ namo bhagavate kūrmadevāya

Strengthens Saturn's energies and rectifies defects in the west of buildings

Om̐ namo bhagavate matsyadevāya

Strengthens ketu's energies and rectifies defects in the entrance of buildings

Om̐ mahā- bhagavatāya vastu-purushāya svāhā

Strengthens the Vastu Purush and the ether element in the centre or Brahmasthana of buildings

Chakra mantras

These seed syllables allow us to balance our chakras (energy centres), senses and tissues.

Mantra		Element	Sense	Tissue	Chakra	
LAM̐	(lamng)	Earth	Smell, Nose	Muscles	Root Chakra	Muladhara
VAM̐	(vamng)	Water	Taste, Tongue	Fat tissue	Sex Chakra	Swadisthana
RAM̐	(ramng)	Fire	Sight, Eyes	Blood	Navel Chakra	Manipura
YAM̐	(yamng)	Air	Touch, Skin	Plasma	Heart Chakra	Anahata
HAM̐	(hamng)	Ether	Sound, ears	Prana	Throat Chakra	Vishuddha
A	(a-a)		Cosmic mind	(Mind)	Third Eye	Ajna
OM̐	(Omnnn)		Pure consciousness	(Head)	Crown Chakra	Sahasrara

Bija Shakti Mantras

These are powerful mantras for general healing, energy and transformation purposes. They allow us to unify with Shakti (the realm of pure consciousness).

Om

This is said to be the most important mantra as it serves to energize or empower everything in the universe. For this reason, all mantras begin and end with the sound of OM. Chanting this sound helps clear the mind, opens the channels of perception and increases our life-energy or Ojas. In ancient books OM is said to be the sound of the Sun and carries the energy of Prana on its breath.

Shrīm

Shrim (shreem) is a mantra of love, devotion, health, beauty, creativity and prosperity. It awakens the heart, engenders faith and gives steadiness to our emotional nature. It promotes general health and aids in fertility and rejuvenation.

Hrīm

Hrim (hreem) is a mantra of cleansing, purification and detoxification. It gives energy, joy and bliss and has creative and healing powers that awaken us, at a soul or heart level, to the divine forces of love and attraction. It increases our aspiration and receptivity to divine light, wisdom and truth and opens the lotus of the heart to the inner Sun of consciousness.

Krīm

Krim (kreem) gives us motivation, energy, power and efficacy for work and action. It is good to chant while making preparations as it allows them to work better. It brings spiritual awareness and power by arousing kundalini and opening the third eye. It can stimulate and transform the lower chakras and helps awaken and purify the subtle body. Krim is the thunderbolt or vajra of Indra that destroys the serpent of ignorance and releases the light of absolute truth.

Huṁ

Hum is a mantra of Agni or fire and helps enkindle our inner fire or thermogenic force and our digestive fire. It also represents the soul hidden in the body and calls the divine down into us. It may be used to destroy negativity and create great passion and vitality. It governs the earth and the material sphere in general and can be used to invoke divine grace and protection through which we can offer ourselves or our afflictions into the divine for purification and transformation. It is the best mantra for warding off negative influences attacking us, whether disease-causing pathogens, negative emotions or even black magic.

Om Hrīm Krīm Huṁ Shrīm

These are the four great Goddess mantras that govern the prime forms of energy as magnetic force, electrical force, heat, and delight. These four mantras can be used together with OM to get an extremely powerful mantra which can bring about an integral development of body, mind and soul in harmony with the Divine or Inner Self.

Rām

Ram (rarm) is the best mantra for drawing down the protective light and grace of the Divine. It gives strength, calm, rest and peace and is particularly good for high Vata and mental disorders.

Aīm

This is the best mantra for the mind. It helps improve concentration, rational thinking and speech in general. It is very helpful when there are mental and nervous disorders.

Klīm

Klim (kleem) gives strength, sexual vitality and control of our emotional nature.

Sham

Sham (a-sound as in shut) is a mantra for Saturn used is generally used for promoting peace, calm, detachment and contentment. It is good for mental and nervous disorders.

Ya - Ra - La - Vaṁ: Seed-sounds of the first four chakras.

Healing sounds

Daily repetition of these sounds can have profound remedial, balancing and harmonising effects on the part of the body indicated. Take a deep breath and make each sound while exhaling. The sound should be held for as long as is comfortable and may be repeated three to ten times (some sounds like 'nnn' and 'ma' also can be repeated in staccato fashion). Place your awareness both on the sounds and the sensation in the body where they appear to resonate.

Balance the whole body:

A E I O U

Lungs, chest:

Humm Humm Humm Humm

Sinuses:

MmmmMmmmMmmmMmmm

Ears:

Nnnn Nnnn Nnnn Nnnn

Eyes:

Immm Immm Immm Immm

Nose:

Lmmm Lmmm Lmmm Lmmm

Stomach:

Paam Paam Paam Paam

Reproductive organs:

Mam Mam Mam Mam

Stomach, digestion system:

Huh Huh Huh Huh

Diaphragm:

Ha Ha Ha Ha

Lungs, large intestines:

Ssss Ssss Ssss Ssss

Liver, small intestine:

Shhh Shhh Shhh Shhh

Spleen, gall bladder:

Who Who Who Who

Kidneys, bladder:

Hoo Hoo Hoo Hoo

Heart:

Ma Ma Ma Ma

Throat:

Kaa Gaa Gha

Migraines & headaches:

Yaa Yu Yai

Heart, throat:

So Hum So Hum So Hum

Respiration, stomach:

Chi Uh Huh Chi Uh Hah

Chakras:

Lam Vam Ram Yam Ham Sham Om

Additional mantra information

LAKSHMI MANTRA

Om Gum Shrim Maha Lakshmiyei Swaha

Let all obstacles to my abundance be eliminated and the flow of the shakti of abundance released within me

This mantra is used to remove karmic obstacles related to abundance and to the attraction of finances or prosperity.

Om: seed sound for the sixth (*Ajna*) chakra or "third eye" (located in the centre of the forehead, about a half-inch above the line of the eyebrows, sometimes referred to as the mystic "third eye"). From here, the principle of mind directs all that follows in the rest of the mantra.

Gum: seed sound for Ganapati, a form of Ganesha, the Hindu God known as the remover of obstacles, who is often portrayed in the form of an elephant.

Shrim: seed sound for Lakshmi and refers to abundance of all kinds.

Maha: a salutation that means both "great" and "heart-centered"

Lakshmi: the feminine principle.

Yei: a shakti-activating sound.

Swaha: a traditional ending of mantras, where its meaning is "I salute and by so doing I automatically invoke her power!"

KUBERA MANTRA

(the celestial guardian of riches)

Ha Sa Ka La E I La Hrim

Ha Sa Ka La E I La Hrim

There is no translation possible of this mantra, since it is composed solely of seed syllables.

This mantra is used to attain great wealth that once achieved will be self-sustaining. This is particularly true if you are in an occupation where you safeguard money or investments for others. *Kubera* is often referred to as the celestial who is the Divine Treasurer. So if you are an investment counsellor, stock broker, real estate broker, or work in some similar capacity, this mantra will greatly aid in the discharging of your financial responsibilities while also providing you with abundance.

Ha Sa: bring energy to the Ajna chakra.

Ka La: brings the energy of the Ajna chakra into connection with the *Kala* (*Ka La*) chakra, literally the wheel of time, located in the upper chest between the heart centre and the throat centre.

E: (pronounced e-e-e) sends energy from the *medulla oblongata* (located at the base of the skull) down the back side of the spine to the *Muladhara* (first) chakra, at the base of the spine.

I: this is really the sounds *Ah* and *E*. *Ah* resounds in the upper chest, and *E* works again as discussed earlier.

La: the seed sound of the first chakra (*Lam*) with the *m* left off. This means that the sound *La* is voiced, but the vibration is just short of actual anchoring on the Earth Plane since it is the voiced *m* on the end of any seed sound that would anchor it here on the Earth Plane.

Hrim: the seed sound of the esoteric *Hrit Padma* (also called the *Hridayam* in some texts) located two fingers below the *Anahata* chakra, which corresponds to the heart centre in the physical body.

A SHIVA MANTRA

(for fulfilment of desires)

Om Sarva Kamadaya Namaha

Salutations to the granter of desires.

This mantra is used to petition the Great Consciousness to fulfil our individual desires. Every desire is tied to our consciousness and this mantra attracts the elements of universal consciousness that fulfil desires strongly held by the mind.

This is a Shiva mantra because it is addressed to Shakti, or the primal energy of Shiva that rises out of the wellspring of compassion, and thus is automatically part of sentient self-consciousness existing everywhere in the universe.

Sarva can mean "source of." Used here, the implication is that desires are part of the nature of universal consciousness and naturally arise in individual consciousness. In fact, the tales and parables concerning Shiva invariably show him absorbed in contemplating his own nature, just as we are completely consumed with the details of our own lives. Only when one merges into universal truth so completely that individual existence ceases altogether does desire, in our normal understanding of the word, cease.

Om: The seed sound for the sixth (*Ajna*) chakra, from which the principle of mind directs all that follows.

Sarva: source of.

Kamadaya: that which grants fulfilment of desires.

Namaha: I invoke by saluting.

DHANVANTRE MANTRA

Om Shri Dhanvantre Namaha

This mantra is used to find the best resolution for a medical problem

One of the tasks we all face when a health problem arises is finding an appropriate physician or practitioner for our problem among so many choices. In Hinduism, the celestial healer or physician is known as *Dhanvantre*, and his mantra is chanted when one is looking for guidance to find the most appropriate path to healing.

Om: the seed sound for the sixth (Ajna) chakra, from which the principle of mind directs all that follows.

Shri: invoking the power of Lakshmi, the transcendental power of manifestation.

Dhanvantre: the celestial healer.

Namaha: I invoke by saluting.

GAYATRI MANTRA

Om Bhu, Bhuvaha, Swaha

Tat Savitur Varenyam

Bhargo Devasya Dhimahi

Dhiyo Yonaha Prachodayat

O Self-Effulgent Light that has given birth to all the lokas spheres of consciousness, who is worthy of worship and appears through the orbit of the Sun, illumine our intellect.

The Gayatri Mantra is a gift to the world from the great rishi Vishvamitra, the seer of the third book of the Rig Veda. It helps carry solar light, energy and power to our minds and bodies and is the best mantra for awakening the higher mind or soul.

This mantra is used to illuminate our intellect. Saying this mantra automatically supports dharma in the world as well as your individual *swadharma*, a word that refers to the law of your own being or nature. As this mantra is chanted over time, spiritual light is drawn into each chakra, starting at the base of the spine. Correspondingly, our ability to comprehend the essence of each of the realms grows. In meditation, travel of consciousness to the higher realms becomes possible as new faculties of consciousness grow from our practice. The Gayatri Mantra is a universe in miniature through the power of sound. It appears in the Rig Veda in a form of twenty-four Sanskrit syllables. For this reason, it is widely practiced in India in this form. It is said to contain all powers of all mantras, and is also known as the source of all knowledge and the "Mother of the Vedas," but its primary application is for illumination of the intellect. An illumined intellect can contain immeasurable knowledge, including a complete understanding of what we call "power." Those who have attained the full fruit of this mantra are in the company of the highest beings in the universe.

Om Bhur: Om and Salutations to the Earth Plane (1st chakra).

Bhuvaha: salutations to the Atmospheric Plane (2nd chakra).

Swaha: salutations to the Solar Region (3rd chakra).

Tat Savitur Varenyam: salutations to that realm which is beyond human comprehension.

Bhargo Devasya Dhimahi: in that place where all the celestials of all the spheres have ...

Dhiyo Yonaha Prachodayat: received enlightenment, kindly enlighten our intellect.

GREAT MANI MANTRA

Om Mani Padme Hum

The Jewel of consciousness has reached the heart's Lotus.

Use this mantra to unite heart and mind. The circulation of energy through the centres listed below builds links among mind, will, and heart. There is a saying in the East, "When the light of the heart is united with power of the mind, anything is possible:"

The Great Mani Mantra is the most often chanted mantra in the world. Pulling energy from the lower chakras into the upper ones, it activates these centres and circulates energy around them, magnetizing the upper spine so that the energy in the subtle body becomes centered in the upper part of the body. The heart and mental chakras become predominant, leading to the ability to exist as a conscious entity without a physical body. As with the Gayatri Mantra, when this mantra is chanted by anyone, all of humanity is benefited.

Om: activates the Ajna chakra between the eyebrows.

Mani: sends energy to the *Manas* chakra in the back of the head.

Padme: in this context, *Padme* sends energy to the Anahata chakra at the heart.

Hum: a seed sound that activates the *Vishuddha* chakra at the throat.

DATTATREYA MANTRA

Om Dram Om Guru Dattaya Namaha

Salutations to the Eternal Enlightener of souls.

Use this mantra to sharpen your skills as a spiritual counsellor and teacher, as well as moving your personal dharma forward. This mantra invokes Dattatreya's energy into your life and activities.

The ancient spiritual being Dattatreya, who transmitted spiritual knowledge and eliminated karma for some of his students, is the first known guru in the specific application of the word. There were sages (*rishis*) and beings of great knowledge and power (*Maha Siddhas*) who often acted in the role of teacher or spiritual benefactor to students, but Dattatreya was the first recorded being whose primary job was the leading of souls back to their highest divinity. The syllables Gu and Ru refer to that which dispels the darkness of ignorance, leading to the release of the actual spiritual light within. The nimbus or halo of the saints and sages is a well-known manifestation of this light.

Om: the seed sound activating the Ajna chakra at the brow centre.

Dram: the seed sound for the Guru Principle manifesting in a form, usually meaning a physical body.

Guru: the transcendental principle of enlightenment, spiritual instruction, and Grace of God that can manifest at any time, any place, through any thing or entity, physical or non-physical. The operation of this is a true spiritual mystery, and there are no limits placed upon how this principle may manifest.

Dattaya: refers to and invokes the presence of that entity who exists, but without a physical body, who is the primal and first individual guru whose sole purpose was the redemption of souls.

Namaha: the energy of salutation that automatically invokes that which precedes it.

VASUDEVA MANTRA

Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya

Om is the name of the In-dweller who is in constant contact with all of creation. Salutations.

Use this mantra to obtain spiritual freedom. The essence of the Divine is everywhere, but we identify with our individual ego-centered existence. This mantra builds a link between conscious divinity at every level of creation and our own ego-based consciousness. Eventually, our sense of identity changes to include all life, even as we know we are living in an individual body.

The Sanskrit term *Vasudeva* means "the In-dweller" referring to the soul or atman. Since the soul is always divine and a part of God everywhere, the Vasudeva Mantra, at an advanced level, can be a vehicle for uniting with divinity anywhere in the cosmos.

The mechanics of the mantra are simple: When the twelve syllables are chanted, energy is rotated around the spine, stimulating the positive and negative poles of the chakras. The energy first goes down the spine, then back up. After the mantra is chanted many thousands of times, energy is rotated around the spine to such an extent that it becomes spiritually magnetized. This allows for higher vibrations and octaves of spiritual energy to be invoked and held in the subtle body. Finally, the subtle body becomes so energy-based that it can ultimately survive without its physical counterpart.

Om: the seed sound for the sixth (Ajna) chakra, from which the principle of mind directs all that follows.

Namo: here means "name of."

Bhagavate: our own completely integrated divine self that we are in the process of becoming.

Vasudevaya: the in-dwelling divinity that you are entreating to permeate your mind, personality, ego, and being.

TARAKA RAMA MANTRA

Om Sri Rama Jay Rama Jaya Jaya Rama

Om and victory to Rama and Sita, victory to Rama again and again.

Use this mantra to begin the process of purification of the ego and personality that will eventually lead to spiritual freedom. In this mantra, *Rama* is the divine self within. All difficulties and problems, including eradication of karma itself, can be solved if we allow the divinity within to handle everything. This is the "victory" of the self within that is indicated in the translation.

Om: the seed sound for the sixth (Ajna) chakra, from which the principle of mind directs all that follows.

Sri: refers to the all-powerful energy of Sita. *Jaya*: victory.

Rama: the syllables *Ra* and *Ma* balance energy in the masculine and feminine channels in the body, located on the right and left sides of the body, respectively. As Rama, it also refers to the avatar himself, as well as to the divine self within.

Taraka means that which "takes one across." In this case, the "across" refers to the ocean of rebirth, this *samsara* that keeps us coming back again and again to assume bodies and burn off, as well as accumulate, karma. This mantra, practiced by Mahatma Gandhi from the time he was a young boy, will free one from the round of rebirth. Gandhi was heard to say "Hey Ram" at the time of his death, when he was pierced by an assassin's bullet. In *The Ramayana*, the epic story of the life of Sita and Rama (the seventh Avatar of Vishnu), this and other mantras pertaining to Sita and Rama are given. However, this particular mantra is uniformly recommended for transcending karma.

Overtoneing

This chanting technique requires no singing skills whatsoever and can easily be accomplished by anyone with a little practice. It is practiced by Tibetan monks to achieve higher states of consciousness but is also a very pleasant way to quickly re-balance the mind and effectively remove stress and tension from the body. It is very effective for improving hearing and increasing alertness.

Overtoneing produces harmonics or pure notes and their flute-like sounds ethereally hover above the base tone or drone. The deep, resonant sound is produced by making a deep 'ooooo' sound in the back of the throat and then altering the position of the tongue and shape of the mouth to produce variations of that sound. The tongue is curled up and bends back towards the roof of the mouth and is then gradually moved forward. The resonance is amplified by pursing the lips, flattening the cheeks (the mouth slightly open) and allowing air to flow between the tip of the tongue and the roof of the mouth; the mouth being the hollow resonating chamber. A deep sound is produced with the tip of the tongue near the back of the mouth and a higher sound with the tip of the tongue towards the front of the mouth, just behind the upper teeth. By slowly saying a long, drawn-out 'onre' as the tongue gradually unfurls towards the front teeth, the correct sound is produced. The deeper 'ooo' or 'uuu' vowel sounds are produced when the tongue is near the epiglottis and the higher 'iii' and 'eee' vowel sounds are produced when the tongue is near the upper front teeth.

If the tongue touches the roof of the mouth and air isn't able to pass over it the sound stops resonating and becomes flat. As you become familiar with the technique you can experiment with altering the shape of the mouth, as well as the tongue, to produce a clearer, more rounded, resonating note.

Try experimenting by imitating the noise of a model aeroplane as it twists and turns above you or a racing car hurtling round a racetrack. If you're not familiar with this sound ask any eight year old to demonstrate – they're usually pretty good! This isn't 'over-toning' as it varies in pitch but its practice involves similar mouth movements. The harmonics a Tibetan singing bowl produces when struck are overtones of a single note, and as one listens more closely more overtones are often 'picked up'.

As you continue practicing overtoneing, harmonics will certainly be produced, though they are often difficult to pick up yourself until your ears becomes 'tuned-in' to them. Other people can often hear them before you do but if you practice in a good resonating chamber, that echoes the sounds around, you'll notice them much more quickly. Large, empty rooms, bathroom sinks, tunnels, bridges and churches work especially well. Cupping your hands behind your ears also helps and practicing with other people can produce quite phenomenal sounds, especially if the room you're in is very resonant.

As you begin to hear the harmonics appearing above or alongside the basic tone/drone you'll begin to sensitise the hearing process and begin to find interesting, captivating sounds in the most unusual places and from the most unexpected sources. The sound of a washing machine or train can suddenly become an enthralling and tantalising experience to the ear that's 'tuned in' to their harmonics. As you begin to explore this new realm of sound you may find that you aren't tone deaf and can sing a few notes and keep in tune after all.

You will most likely find that as you progress ,your breathing improves, your voice becomes clearer and more resonant, and notes that you sing become sharper and more 'bell-like'.

Chapter 8

Recipes

~ Ayurvedic fare for health & well-being ~



Everyone should be his own physician. We ought to assist and not force nature.

Eat with moderation and with what agrees with your constitution.

Nothing is good for the body but what we can digest.

What medicine can produce digestion? Exercise

What will recruit strength? Sleep

What will alleviate in-curable ills? Patience

~ Voltaire ~

Dhal soup or sauce

(Red Lentils or Split Yellow Mung Beans)

Prep time: 20 minutes Cooking time: 1 hour Servings: 4
1 cup yellow mung dhal 2 tsp ginger (grated) 2 tsp ghee
¼ tsp hing 2 tsp Vata churna Pinch of salt

Soak the lentils for six hours and then place in sieve and wash under a cold tap until the water runs clear. Place in a large pan and add 1 litre of water. Bring to the boil for 15 minutes; add more water if the lentils are drying out. Turn the heat off and leave for one hour with a lid on. Now whisk the lentils until they form a creamy texture like scrambled eggs. Fry the spices for two minutes in 2 tsp ghee and then add to the lentils. Add salt/pepper just before serving (seaweed may be using instead of salt)

Variations

- Kicharee: Soak ½ cup Basmati rice with ½ cup lentils overnight (replaces 1 cup lentils)
- Spicy dhal: Add cumin seeds (1½ tsp), coriander seeds (½ tsp) Turmeric (½ tsp) cardamom seeds (½ tsp).
- Mint dhal: Add Pitta churna (1 tsp), dried mint (1 tsp) after whisking the lentils.
- Carrot dhal: Add grated carrot (2 cups) and 2 tsp chopped coriander during cooking.
- Carrot dhal II: Before serving add ½ cup of fennel juice, ½ cup of carrot juice and 2 tsp chopped coriander.
- Fennel dhal: Add grated fennel (1 cup) half way through cooking process.
- Vegetable dhal: Add mixed veg (three types - chopped small) half way through cooking process.
- Herb dhal: Add fresh herbs: basil (1 tsp), sage (1 tsp) or tarragon (1 tsp) half way through cooking process.
- Herb dhal II: Add grated carrot (1 cup), sage (½ tsp), thyme (½ tsp), oregano (½ tsp) during cooking.
- Coconut dhal: Before serving add coconut milk (200ml) or creamed coconut and nutmeg (pinch).
- Spinach dhal: Before serving add coconut milk (200ml) or creamed coconut and chopped spinach (2 cup).
- Coriander dhal: Before serving add coconut milk (100ml) or creamed coconut and fresh coriander (1 cup).
- Celery dhal: Before serving add some freshly chopped coriander and a ½ cup fennel or celery juice.
- Lemon dhal: Before serving add the juice of ½ lemon and 2 tbsp chopped parsley.
- Juice dhal: Before serving add one cup of fresh juice (carrot, fennel, celery).

Mung beans are sweet and astringent in initial taste, sweet in post digestive effect, energetically cooling and balancing to all three doshas. They are easily digested, particularly good for pitta types and excellent during the summer to combat heat. They are light on the digestion and calm and balance the mind (sattvic). They are refrigerant, antipyretic, alterative and haemostatic. They are good for febrile diseases, lung, liver, spleen and bleeding disorders, cancer, fever, heat stroke and alcohol detoxification. A plaster or poultice can be made from mung bean flour to draw toxins from the body and for treating burns, sores, inflamed or swollen joints, swollen breast, mastitis and breast cancer.

Basmati rice is sweet, both in initial taste and post-digestive effect, energetically neutral and balancing to all three doshas. It is easy to digest, a tonic for the body, soothing to the mucus membranes (demulcent) and nutritive (helps build the tissues) and mildly laxative. It is not clogging and very sattvic (clarifies and calms the mind). It is high in B-complex vitamins and generally well tolerated food in conditions of anorexia, poor digestion and vomiting. It is detoxifying and an excellent convalescence food; it is also good for breaking a fast. Kicharee, a combination of basmati rice and split mung beans, is an excellent staple diet for maintaining good health and in treating many diseases. However, bleached, refined rice is sticky and can increase kapha and ama in the body. Whilst brown rice is higher in nutritional status because it does not have the hull, bran and germ polished off, it is more perishable and much harder to digest. Therefore, Ayurveda sees white basmati rice as the preferred grain as its nutrients are more easily available and better assimilated by the tissues.

Sauces

Red pepper sauce I

1 red pepper - diced	½ tsp basil
1 courgette - diced	1 tsp salt
2 carrots - juiced	¼ pepper
1 tsp thyme	6 cups water
1 tsp oregano	1 cup soya milk

Bring everything (except milk & carrot juice) to boil and simmer for 30 minutes. Blend thoroughly and then add soya milk and juice.

Red pepper sauce II

1 red pepper - chopped	1 tsp nutmeg
1 cup soya milk or coconut milk	

Put pepper and nutmeg in a saucepan and cover with boiling water. Simmer until liquid has reduced to half. Place in liquidizer with the soya milk and blend until smooth. One cup of cooked red lentils may also be added if desired.

Watercress sauce

75 g watercress – washed thoroughly	1 tbsp coconut milk
1 cup cooked red lentils	Salt/pepper (opt)
1 ltr boiling water	

To the cooked lentils add the boiling water, bring to boil and add watercress. Simmer for 10 mins. and then liquidize with the coconut milk. Add salt/pepper to taste.

Pesto sauce

2 tsp ghee or olive oil	1 tbsp pumpkin seeds - ground
1 cup fresh tarragon/basil	¼ tsp hing (or 1 clove garlic if not on PK diet)
1 tbsp fresh parsley	

Blend all the ingredients until smooth. Serve with pasta or add 1 tsp Udo's oil and use as a salad dressing.

Asparagus sauce

½ courgette - chopped	Salt/pepper to taste (add before serving)
1 cup asparagus ends - chopped	1 bay leaf
½ cup coriander or basil	½ cup cooked lentils

Bring to boil and simmer until soft (except lentils). Remove bay leaf and add lentils. Blend until smooth.

Coriander sauce

1 cup fresh coriander	4 asparagus spears – chopped/steamed
1 cup fresh basil	1 cup warm soya milk
1 tsp fresh ginger - grated	Salt/pepper (opt)

Blend in a liquidizer until smooth and then add hot water if a more liquid sauce is desired.

Basil sauce

1 ½ cup fresh basil	1 tsp vata churna
1 cup fresh parsley	1 tsp ghee
2 M courgettes – chopped small	3 cups hot water
1 broccoli floret	1 cup warm soya or coconut milk
1 tsp fresh ginger	

Melt the ghee and add ginger and vata churna. Fry for ½ min and then add vegetables and 1C hot water. Bring to boil and simmer until liquid has been absorbed. Add parsley, basil and 2 cups hot water and bring to boil and simmer until liquid has halved. Blend with the milk in a liquidizer until smooth.

Churnas

(spice mixtures)

Vata

2 tsp cardamom
1 tsp cumin
1 tsp ginger
½ tsp cinnamon

½ tsp nutmeg
Pinch hing
Pinch salt (opt)

Pitta

2 tsp coriander
2 tsp fennel
1 tsp cumin
1 tsp cardamom
½ tsp ginger

½ tsp turmeric
¼ tsp cinnamon
¼ tsp stevia
Pinch salt

Kapha

2 tsp ginger
1 tsp black pepper
1 tsp coriander

½ tsp turmeric
¼ tsp cinnamon
Pinch salt

Chinese spice mix

1 tsp grated ginger
¼ tsp nutmeg
½ tsp cinnamon
½ tsp caraway seeds

Pinch black pepper
Pinch hing (asafoetida)
Dash of lemon or lime

Indian curry mix

1 tsp cumin
1 tsp cardamom
1 tsp turmeric

1 tsp coriander
Pinch hing (asafoetida)
Salt/pepper (opt)

Korma mix

2 tsp ground coconut
1 tsp ground almonds
1 tsp coriander
1 tsp ginger
1 tsp cumin

¼ tsp nutmeg
¼ tsp paprika
¼ tsp clove
¼ tsp cinnamon
Pinch hing (asafoetida)

Chutneys

Mint chutney

1 cup fresh mint leaves
2 tbsp grated coconut
1 tbsp sesame seeds (opt)
1 tbsp lemon juice

1 tbsp grated fresh ginger
1 tsp honey
¼ cup water

Place in a blender and blend until smooth.

Fruit chutney

½ cup fresh pineapple
1 apple
¼ cup raisins
¼ cup dates

¼ cup apricots
½ cup fresh coriander
¼ tsp turmeric
¼ tsp cayenne pepper

Chop the pineapple, apricots, dates and coriander. Place in a small pan and add the other ingredients. Cover with boiling water and simmer until almost all the liquid has gone.
For spicier chutney add 2 tsp kapha churna.

Kapha chutney

½ red pepper
1 tsp fresh ginger – grated
1 tsp kapha churna

Pinch hing or jerk
½ tsp honey (opt)
1 tsp pumpkin seeds - ground

Simmer pepper, ginger, churna and hing in 1 cup hot water until liquid has gone. Allow to cool and then add pumpkin seeds and honey.

Fig & pear chutney

6 dried figs – chopped
3 pears - chopped
¼ cup raisins

1 tbsp coriander - fresh
1- 2 fresh apricots - chopped
1 tsp Kapha churna

Place all the ingredients in a small pan and cover with boiling water. Simmer until all the liquid has gone.

Date & pear chutney

4 pears (dried) - chopped
8 dates
½ tsp paprika

1 tsp parsley - dried
¼ tsp ginger - ground
½ tsp French mustard

Place all the ingredients in a small pan and cover with boiling water. Simmer until all the liquid has gone.

Fresh green chutney

1 cup parsley/coriander- chopped
Juice of 1 lemon
¼ tsp cayenne pepper

¼ cup almonds - flaked
¼ cup water
Salt to taste

Place in a blender and blend on a low speed until smooth.

Dips

Avocado dip

1 avocado	¼ tsp hing
1 S tomato	Pinch salt/pepper
2 tsp lemon juice	

Place all the ingredients in a small bowl and mash thoroughly.

Soya bean dip

2 cups soya beans – soaked overnight	1 tbsp Udo's oil
Pinch hing	½ tsp salt/pepper (or cayenne pepper)
2 tsp chives	1 cup water & 2 tsp lemon juice

Cook beans for approx. 1½ hrs and then liquidise all the ingredients until smooth.

Cashew dip

¼ Avocado	1 tsp Udo's oil
S ginger piece – finely grated	Hing - pinch
1 tsp lemon juice	Salt/pepper (opt.)
⅓ cup cashew nuts - ground	

Add all the other ingredients together and then blend until smooth.

Almond & avocado dip

¼ avocado	1 tsp Udo's oil
2 tsp almonds – ground	Hing - pinch
2 tsp mint - chopped	Salt/pepper – to taste
2 tsp lemon juice	

Add the ingredients together and blend until smooth. Add more oil if needed.

Pine nut dip

½ cup pine nuts	1 tbsp yoghurt
½ cup almonds - ground	Salt/pepper to taste
1 tbsp pumpkin oil	

Add the ingredients together and blend until smooth.

Parsley dip

1 tbsp ground pine nuts	2 tbsp Udo's oil
1 tsp dried parsley or 1 tbsp fresh parsley	Hing - pinch
½ tsp cider vinegar	1 tbsp full cream (opt. Not on PK)
½ tsp honey (opt)	1 tbsp cold water

Add the ingredients together and blend until smooth.

Dressings

(flax, pumpkin or hemp oil may be used instead of Udo's oil)

Instructions: For the recipes below place ingredients in a blender and blend until thoroughly mixed.

Basil & orange dressing

1 tbsp Udo's Oil
1 tsp honey
1 tsp basil – fresh

Black pepper - pinch
1 tsp English mustard
2 tsp orange juice- freshly squeezed

Mint dressing

1 tbsp Udo's oil
1 tsp honey
2 tsp mint – fresh

2 tsp Balsamic vinegar
1 tsp English mustard
2 tsp yoghurt

Tarragon dressing

2 tbsp Udo's oil
1 tsp honey
2 tsp tarragon – fresh

2 tsp Balsamic vinegar
½ - 1 tsp mustard – whole grain

Tomato & mint dressing

1 tbsp Udo's Oil
1 S tomato

½ tsp English mustard
1 tbsp mint leaves - chopped

Ginger & basil dressing

3 tbsp Udo's oil
2 tsp honey
1 tsp ginger - fresh
3 tbsp basil – fresh
1 tsp lemon juice - fresh

½ tsp Balsamic vinegar
1 tsp cider vinegar
¼ tsp Dried mustard
1 tsp almond – ground (opt.)

Parsley & pumpkin dressing

4 tbsp Pumpkin or Udo's oil
¼ cup pumpkin seeds - ground
1 tsp honey
1 cup parsley – fresh, chopped

2 tsp cider vinegar
2 tbsp water
1-2 tbsp lemon juice - fresh

For a thicker consistency only use 2 tbsp of oil and no water – this makes a good 'dip'

Vegetables

Celery & aubergine

4 celery stalks - chopped	Pinch of turmeric
1 L aubergine - chunks	Salt & pepper (opt)
1 cup coriander - chopped	Ghee

Place ½ tsp of ghee in a wok, heat and add turmeric & celery. Fry for 2 mins, stirring all the time. Add ½ cup of hot water. Cook on medium heat until all the liquid has gone. Add the aubergine and half the coriander and fry for further 1 min. Add ½ ltr of hot water, bring to the boil, and then turn the heat to low. Cook until the vegetables are soft. Add the remaining coriander and salt/pepper and serve.

Aubergine & courgettes

1 L aubergine – thickly chopped	½ tsp turmeric
3 M courgettes – thickly chopped	1 tsp thyme
½ tsp oregano	1 bay leaf
1 tsp salt	1t basil
1 tsp beetroot – grated	1 tbsp ghee

Stir fry aubergine and courgettes in ghee for 1-2 mins.
Add all other ingredients and 2 cups hot water and simmer for 5 mins.
Add beetroot and turmeric just before serving.

Tasty broth

1 L celery stick	½ pineapple – diced
3 cauliflower leaves	1 cup fresh coriander - chopped
5 carrots - juiced	1t salt
Ginger root – 3 L slices	Pepper
1 tsp fennel seeds	

In 1½ ltr water simmer all ingredients until cooked (except the carrot juice and coriander) and then strain. Add coriander and carrot juice and then serve.

Vegetable stew

1 M butternut - chopped	1 fennel bulb - chopped
5 M carrots - sticks	½ tsp thyme
1 M aubergine - diced	½ tsp paprika
2 courgettes - diced	Salt/pepper

Dry-fry the herbs/spices in ghee and then add the carrots and fennel and 1 cup of hot water. When all the liquid has gone add the other vegetables and 1ltr hot water and cook for 30mins. Add salt/pepper to taste.

Spicy courgettes

2 M courgettes – thin strips	½ cup carrot juice
2 tsp ginger – grated	1 tsp ghee

Prepare the courgettes. Heat the ghee and fry the ginger until golden brown. Add the courgettes and continue to fry until they appear slightly browned – stir occasionally. Add the carrot juice and simmer until the courgettes are tender and the liquid has almost gone.

Spinach & celery

1 tbsp ghee	1 tbsp soy sauce
3½ lb spinach	1 tbsp tarragon
6 celery stalks - small pieces	1 tbsp thyme
1 tsp vata churna	½ tsp nutmeg - grated

Heat the ghee and sauté the spinach until tender. Barely cover with water and add everything but the nutmeg. Simmer for about 10 minutes. Serve warm with a sprinkling of nutmeg.

Chunky veg

1 aubergine	1 tsp kapha churna or jerk
2 courgettes	1-2 tsp ghee
4 baby mooli	

Chop the vegetables into large chunks. Mix the mooli and courgettes with the spices - leave for 15 mins. Heat half the ghee in a wok and stir-fry the aubergine for 1min and then remove and set aside. Add the rest of the ghee, courgettes and mooli to the wok and stir fry for 2 min. Add 1 cup boiling water and simmer until all the water has gone. Then add the aubergine and 2 cup of boiling water and simmer until all vegetables are cooked.

Glazed carrots

8oz carrots - sliced	1 tbsp soy sauce
½ tsp ghee	1 tsp maple syrup

Steam or boil carrots until tender and then stain. Heat the ghee in a frying pan and stir-fry the carrots until slightly browned. Add soy sauce and maple syrup. Toss and serve.

Curried sweet potatoes

2 sweet potatoes - cubed	½ tsp black pepper, salt and turmeric
½ leek stem- finely sliced	1 tsp kapha churna
1 garlic clove – chopped (or pinch hing)	Ghee

Boil sweet potatoes until almost cooked. Strain (keep the liquid). Heat the ghee in a wok, add the onion and garlic and fry until golden brown. Add the spices and stir for 1 min. Add potatoes and stir for 2 mins. Add the potato water, bring to boil and then turn heat down. Cook until liquid reduced to half. Place in an ovenproof dish, cook on gas mark 5, for ½ hr. Serve.

Fennel & red peppers

2 fennel bulbs – L chunks (steamed until almost soft)	Sesame seeds (opt)
1 red pepper – cut in strips	1 tsp ghee

Heat the ghee in a wok, add the sesame seeds and fry for 1 min. Add fennel and pepper and fry for 1-2 mins. with 1 cup hot water until soft. Serve.

Butternut puree

1 M carrot - chopped	Pinch nutmeg
1 M butternut – chopped	1 ½ ltrs hot water
1 M courgette - chopped	¼ tsp pepper
1 M fennel - chopped	

Place all the ingredients in a saucepan and cover with hot water. Bring to boil and simmer until water has almost gone. Liquidize or mash and serve hot as a side dish.

Curry dishes

Cauliflower curry

1 M cauliflower - florets	2 tsp ground cumin
2 M apples - chopped small	1 tsp ground ginger
1 tbsp sultanas	Salt/pepper to taste
2 M carrots - diced	½ tsp ground cinnamon
½ aubergine - chopped	1 cup coriander – fresh
2 tsp ground coriander	

Fry cauliflower in 1 tsp of ghee for 4 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add 1 cup boiling water and the other vegetables, keep the heat on high and stir slowly until all the water has gone. Stir in all other ingredients. Add 2 cup of hot water and simmer, stirring once or twice and adding more liquid if required. Add fresh coriander and serve.

Vata, pitta or kapha curry

1 apple - chopped	1t turmeric
2-3 dates - chopped	1 cup butternut squash – chopped
1 tsp ginger chopped	2 tsp churna (vata or pitta or kapha)
3 M fennel - chopped	1 tsp cumin
2 M carrots - grated	1 tsp cardamom
1 celery stick - chopped	1 ltr boiling water
6 green beans	2 tsp ghee

Coat vegetables with the herbs/spices and leave for 10-20 mins. Heat the ghee and dry-fry for 2 mins, stirring continuously. Add 1 cup boiling water and cook until liquid has gone. Add the rest of the water and bring to the boil. Simmer until the vegetables are cooked. Serve with rice.

Squash & fennel curry

1 M butternut squash - chopped	1t ground cardamom
2 cups fennel - chopped	1t salt
1 cup carrots - chopped	1t turmeric
3 cups water	1T fresh coriander - chopped
1t ground cumin	½ ltr coconut milk

Heat 1 tsp ghee and then add vegetables and herbs/spices. Add the water and bring to the boil - simmer for 25mins. Add the milk and simmer for a few minutes. Add coriander just before serving.

Sweet korma

½ red pepper - sliced	1t ground cardamom
1 courgette - sliced	¼ tsp nutmeg - grated
1 M aubergine - cubes	Salt & pepper
½ sweet apple - chopped	1 tsp Ghee
½ cup dates - chopped	2 tsp korma mix
½ cup raisins	1 cup coconut milk
1t fresh ginger - grated	

Melt ghee in a wok, add the red pepper and stir-fry for 1 min. Add ½ cup of water and cook until all the liquid has gone. Add the courgette and cook for 1 min. Then add the rest of the ingredients and ¼ ltr of water. Bring to the boil and then turn heat to low and simmer until the vegetables are cooked. Add coconut milk and simmer for 2 mins. Serve.

Rice dishes

Cooking rice: Place rice in sieve and wash thoroughly under tap – until water is clear. Add to saucepan and cover with water – 2cm above rice (for wild rice – first heat a little ghee in a saucepan, add rice and stir-fry for 1 min. Add 1 cup hot water and cook until liquid has gone). Bring to boil and simmer with lid on for approx. 15 mins. Remove lid and cook for a further 2 mins. Serve.

Coconut-sesame rice dish

2 C Basmati rice	¼ tbsp sesame seeds
2 tsp ghee	¼ tbsp desiccated coconut
Water	Coriander - chopped
1 tsp salt	

Cook rice for about 15 mins and remove from heat. In separate saucepan heat ghee and add the sesame seeds and coconut - stir until they darken slightly. Pour immediately into cooked rice and toss with coriander. Serve.

Aborrio rice

2 cups aborrio rice	4 saffron strands
Salt & pepper	½ tsp turmeric
2 tsp olive oil	

Cover rice with water. Fry the saffron strands, turmeric, black pepper in the olive oil to release the flavour and add this to the rice. Cook the rice. Serve.

Mediterranean risotto

1 ½ cups basmati rice	1 tsp salt
3 ½ cups mixed veg	Black pepper - pinch
2 bay leaves	2 tbsp ghee or olive oil
1 tsp turmeric	2 tbsp pesto (basil)
½ tsp thyme	12 black olives
½ tsp basil	1 tsp oregano

Briefly fry all the herbs in the ghee/olive oil. Add the chopped vegetables (except olives) and stir-fry for 1 min. on a high heat. Add 1 cup boiling water and simmer until the vegetables are cooked.. Cook Basmati rice separately with turmeric and add to the vegetables when cooked. Add olives and serve.

Indian pilau rice

2 cups basmati rice	2 bay leaves
3 cups mixed vegetables - diced	1 tbsp ginger - grated
1½ tbsp raisins	1 tsp cinnamon
3 cloves	1½ tsp turmeric
1 tbsp cumin seeds	3 cups water
1 tsp fenugreek seeds	3 tsp ghee
1 tsp cardamom	

Fry the spices in the ghee until the cumin seeds have darkened. Add the vegetables and ½ cup hot water and dry-fry for 5 minutes. Add the rice and turmeric and continue to stir-fry for a few minutes. Add the salt and water, bring to boil, cover and turn down low. Leave to cook for 20 minutes.

Grain dishes

Buckwheat, bulgur wheat, millet, cracked wheat, rye, quinoa: Heat a little ghee in a wok and stir-fry grain for 1 min. Add one cup of hot water and cook until the liquid has gone. Repeat this process until all the grain is soft. Add herbs/spices.

Barley: Wash barley, place in saucepan and add water (1 litre per cup). Bring to boil and simmer for 15 mins. Strain off liquid (can be put in flask and used as a herbal tea) and add to soup or main meal.

Plain Couscous: Cover with boiling water – it is fully cooked once all the water has been absorbed. For a spicy couscous heat a little ghee in a wok, add herbs/spices and couscous and stir-fry for 1-2 mins. before adding boiling water.

Couscous & carrot

4 oz couscous	2 tsp soy sauce (not on PK diet)
1 red pepper - chopped	Hing (asafoetida) - pinch
3 carrots - grated	½ tsp paprika
½ cup of fresh peas	Salt & pepper
1 tsp cashew nuts – ground (not on PK diet)	Ghee or olive oil
1 tsp pumpkin seeds - roasted	½ ltr hot water
1 tsp ginger -grated	

Heat the ghee in a wok and then add the pepper, carrots, peas and ginger. Fry for approx 2 mins. Add the cashew nuts and pumpkin seeds and fry for a further 2 mins. Add 2 cups of hot water and cook on a med. heat until the vegetables are soft and the liquid has almost gone. Add the hing, paprika, salt, pepper and couscous and stir together. Stir in the rest of the water. The couscous should have absorbed all the liquid and be separated. Place in small to medium sized bowls, compress and then turn out on plates.

Nut loaf

1 cup millet	½ cup cashew nuts
1 cup red lentils - cooked	1 tsp sesame seeds
2 broccoli florets	1 inch ginger - fresh
½ S fennel	1 tsp sage - ground
½ red pepper	1 tsp oregano
½ yellow pepper	Salt/pepper - pinch
½ cup sunflower seeds	2 tsp ghee

Put all the seeds, nuts, vegetables herbs/spices into a food processor and grind. Heat ghee in a wok and add millet – stir-fry for 2 mins. Add 1 cup boiling water - when liquid has gone repeat process twice more. Turn heat off, add the other ingredients and turn into oiled loaf tin – cover with foil. Bake at gas 6 for 45 – 90 mins (or until it slightly shrinks from sides). Remove from oven and let cool for 5 mins. Remove from tin and leave to stand for a further 5 mins before serving.

Country loaf

1 cup basmati rice	½ leek
1 cup red lentils	½ cup fresh basil
1 cup mixed ground seeds	Salt, pepper, hing (pinch of each)
½ red pepper	

Cook the rice and lentils in 4 cups of water until soft and the water has almost gone. Finely chop the red pepper and leek and steam for ten minutes. Add all the ingredients together (it should resembles a cake mixture – if consistency seems too watery you may add some wholemeal flour to thicken). Place mixture in an oiled loaf tin, cover with foil and bake at gas 6 for 45 mins (or until it slightly shrinks from sides). When firm and almost ready remove foil and bake for a further 5 mins. Remove from oven and let cool for 5 mins. Remove from tin and leave to stand for a further 5 mins. As an alternative the loaf tin may be lined with wilted spinach leaves before the mixture goes in the oven.

Soups

Vegetable stock

½ cup peas - fresh	1 carrot - chopped
1 celery stalk/leaves -chopped	½ red pepper - chopped
¼ cup parsley - chopped	4 ½ cup water

Bring all the ingredients to the boil and then cover, reduce heat and simmer until tender. Either strain out the vegetables or puree them into the stock.

Cream of asparagus soup

300g asparagus	1 cup coriander - fresh
3 cup coconut or seed milk (see milk recipes)	1 tsp ghee
1 tbs pumpkin seeds - ground	Salt/pepper - to taste

Steam the asparagus until tender and then cut off the tips and set aside. Heat the ghee in a small pan, add the hing and ground pumpkin seeds and sauté on a low heat for 30secs. Stir while adding a little water to make a paste. Add the milk and stir for further 30 secs. Place in a blender with the asparagus stems and coriander and blend until smooth. Reheat if necessary and then add the asparagus tips before serving.

Celery soup

1 celery head - chopped	1 tsp parsley
½ cup red lentils - cooked	9 cups water
½ cup rice	1t ghee
1t dill	5 M carrots - juiced
1 cup soya milk	

First cook the lentils. Then melt the ghee in a separate pan and then add herbs, celery, rice and 1 cup of hot water - bring to the boil and simmer until all the liquid has been absorbed. Add the rest of the water and the lentils and then bring to boil again and simmer for 45 mins. Finally, liquidize with the soya milk and carrot juice and serve garnished with fresh herbs.

Rice & celery soup

1 celery - chopped	1t celery salt
4 celery stalks - juiced	2 tsp fennel - ground
½ fennel – juiced	1t ghee
½ cup rice	1 cup soya milk
1t ginger - grated	

Cook the rice. Heat the ghee and add the rice, ginger, celery. Fry for 1 min. and then add 1 cup boiling water – cook until liquid has evaporated. Add ground fennel and 1 ltr of boiling water - simmer until celery is tender. Add the celery juice, fennel juice, soya milk and salt (blend for a smoother soup).

Spinach soup

½ cup cooked basmati rice	1 tsp nutmeg - grated
500g spinach (juice 250g)	1 tsp ghee
½ cup soya milk	

Steam half the spinach until tender. Heat the ghee and add nutmeg and rice – stir fry for one min. Add 1 ltr hot water and bring to boil. Add spinach and simmer for 2 mins. Add milk and spinach juice and serve. Add salt/pepper to taste.

Vegy broth

5 carrots - juiced	4 celery sticks
3 cauliflower florets - chopped	1 tsp dried dill
1 courgette - diced	1 carrot - diced
½ red pepper - diced	4 raisins

Add to 1 ltr water and simmer until vegetables are soft. Add juice, blend and serve.

Butternut squash soup

1 M butternut - chopped	½ tsp ground ginger
½ cup red lentils	1 tsp ghee
1 tsp nutmeg	Salt/pepper to taste
Cinnamon – pinch	3 tbsp coriander - chopped
1 tsp vata churna	

Heat the ghee and then add the herbs (except coriander) and squash and fry for one minute. Add the lentils and 1 cup of boiling water. Boil until liquid has gone and then repeat twice more. Add 1 ½ litres of boiling water and simmer until cooked. Blend the soup very thoroughly and add the coriander.

Sweet potato & squash soup

2 M sweet potatoes - diced	Salt & pepper
1 M butternut squash - diced	1 bay leaf
1 tsp basil	1-2 tsp ghee (optional)
Nutmeg - 2 pinches	2 tbsp milk or soya milk
½ tsp ground ginger	2 tbsp parsley or coriander - chopped

Place all ingredients except the milk in a pan and cover with water. Bring to the boil and simmer for 35 - 45 mins until soft. Add the ghee and milk and blend. Add the chopped herbs and serve.

Thermos flask lunch

¼ cup yellow mung dhal	Salt/pepper
¼ cup basmati rice	1 tsp ghee
1 ½ cup mixed vegetables – chopped	1 ½ ltr boiling water
Herbs/spices to taste	

Heat the ghee in a saucepan and stir-fry the herbs/spices (cumin, ginger, coriander, dill etc) for 1 min. Add the other ingredients, stir and then add 2 cups of the boiling water. Rapidly cook until most of liquid has gone. Add the rest of the hot water, bring to boil for 2-3 mins and then pour into flask. Leave enough gap at the top of the flask for rice/lentils to cook and swell. Ready in 3-4 hours. Shake well before opening flask to mix contents thoroughly.

Carrot & red lentil soup

2 cups carrot juice	1 tsp fresh ginger - grated
½ kg carrots - grated	1 tsp cumin
2 L vegetable stock or water	1 ½ tsp vata churna
1 cup red lentils	½ tsp cardamom
2 M fennel – chopped small	Hing - pinch
1 cup fresh coriander	1 tsp ghee

First cook the lentils (see 'dhal' cooking instructions). Then coat the vegetables with the herbs and leave for 10 mins. Next, heat the ghee and fry the vegetables for 2 mins. Add 2 cups stock or water, bring to boil and simmer until liquid has almost gone – stir occasionally. Add to the cooked lentils and simmer until vegetables are soft. Liquidize half the soup with ⅓ cup coriander and carrot juice; return to pot and cook for a further 2 mins. Garnish with coriander, salt, pepper and a little coconut milk if desired.

Hearty vegetable & red lentil soup

2 carrots - grated
1 celery stick – chopped small
2 courgettes – chopped small
2 cups red lentils
1 bunch asparagus - chopped
½ cup fresh coriander

1 tsp fresh ginger - grated
200 mls coconut milk
2 tsp vata churna
Hing - pinch
1-2 tsp ghee

First cook the lentils (see ‘dhal’ cooking instructions). Heat the ghee in a wok and dry-fry the hing and ginger - add the celery and stir. Add 1 cup hot water and cook until the water has been absorbed. Add the carrots and courgettes and another cup of hot water. Whilst this is gently cooking, steam or simmer the asparagus and then add this to the rest of the soup mixture along with the vata churna and 1 ½ L hot water. Bring to the boil and simmer until the vegetables are soft. Add the coconut milk and coriander, simmer for 2 mins. and serve. Add salt/pepper if desired.

Peya soup

½ cup basmati rice
½ cup split yellow mung beans
2 tsp fresh ginger – grated
½ cup fresh coriander
¼ tsp turmeric

½ tsp cumin
salt/pepper
½ tsp coriander
½ tsp cardamom
1 tsp ghee

Soak the rice and beans overnight (red lentils may be substituted if split yellow mung beans are difficult to obtain). Place the rice/dhal in a sieve and wash thoroughly under a cold tap until the water is clear. Cook the mixture as basic dhal (see dhal section) but adding more water near the end to make a thin soup – it should then be simmered for 20 minutes more. Fry the ginger, turmeric, cumin, salt/pepper, coriander, and cardamom in the ghee and then add to the dhal mixture. Mix in most of the fresh coriander but save a little to use as a garnish.

Desserts

Baked pears & apples

1 apple or pear - cored
4 dates - quartered
2 tbsp raisins

2 dried apricots - quartered
2 cups apple juice

Mix the dried fruits together and pack them into apple core. Place in a small ovenproof dish and pour over the apple juice. Cover and bake at gas 5/160 C for 30 minutes, checking after 15 mins (apples sometimes take longer).

Apricot fool

2 cups dried apricots (soaked)
½ vanilla pod

1 apple
½ cup soya milk

Cover fruit with water, add vanilla pod and bring to the boil. Simmer until all the liquid has gone, remove vanilla pod and add milk. Liquidise until smooth. Serve.

Mango dream

3 very ripe mangos

100 mls coconut milk

De-stone the mango and place in a blender with the coconut milk. Blend until smooth.

Mango & pawpaw

1 pawpaw
6 red grapes

1 mango

Liquidise the grapes and pawpaw. Place in serving dish. Liquidise mango and pour over pawpaw/grapes.

Almond delight

1 tsp honey
1 cup almonds (soaked overnight)

2 tsp yoghurt

Dry the almonds and place in a grinder - grind into small pieces. Mix with the honey and yoghurt. Top with a sprig of mint.

Strawberry delight

6 strawberries
1 tsp maple syrup

1 tbsp Udo's oil
1 tsp coconut milk

Liquidise all the ingredients and use as a fruit topping.

Herbal teas

Digestive tea *(drink during meals)*

2 tsp cardamom seeds

2 tsp fennel seeds

Add seeds to flask and add 1 ltr boiling water.

Post digestive tea *(for after meals)*

2 cups of boiling water

1 tsp fennel seeds

1 tsp coriander seeds

1 tsp cumin seeds

Place seeds in blender and blend for 30 secs. Add water and blend for further 30 secs. Strain and serve.

Ginger tea

1 ltr boiling water

4 slices fresh ginger

Place ginger in flask and add boiling water.

Hibiscus tea

1 ltr boiling water

2 tsp hibiscus

1 cinnamon stick

1 tsp grated fresh ginger

Bring water to the boil and add all the ingredients.

Cover and turn heat to low. Simmer for 10 mins.

Strain and serve unsweetened (or add ½ tsp honey when tea has cooled to body temp). This tea is excellent for relieving and preventing cold/flu (as a preventative add more ginger to the mix).

Ajwan tea

½ ltr boiling water

½ tsp ajwan seeds

Pour boiling water over seeds and let sit for 5 mins.

Strain serve unsweetened (or add ½ tsp honey if desired)

This tea is good for relieving lung congestion but be careful if you have asthma.

Raisin tea

½ cup washed raisins

Place raisins in flask and add 1 litre of boiling water. Allow to steep for 15 minutes. Raisins can be eaten after you've finished drinking the tea.

Barley tea

½ cup organic barley

Soak barley for ½ hour and then rinse. Place the barley and 1 litre of water in a saucepan and bring to boil. Simmer until soft and then strain into flask. The cooked barley can be used in soup.

Vata tea

½ tsp whole cumin seeds
½ tsp whole coriander seeds
½ tsp fennel seeds
3 pinches of ashwagandha root powder
1 pinch whole-root licorice powder

Boil 1 litre of water. Add spices and cover to steep. Pour it into your thermos and drink throughout the day. Drinking beverages at a warm temperature is best for Vata types.

Pitta tea

2 pinches of Indian Sarsaparilla powder
¼ tsp cumin seeds
2 pinches of licorice powder
½ tsp. fennel seeds
½ tsp coriander seeds

Boil 1 litre of water. Add spices and cover to steep. Pour it into your thermos and drink throughout the day. Let the water cool to room temperature before drinking as this is best for Pitta types.

Kapha tea

2 thin slices of fresh ginger root
2 basil leaves
2 whole cloves
½ tsp whole cumin seeds
2 pinches licorice powder

Boil 1 litre of water. Add spices and cover to steep. Pour it into your thermos and drink throughout the day. Drinking beverages at a warm to hot temperature is best for Kapha types. Sip during and after meals.

Detoxifying tea

¼ tsp. whole cumin
½ tsp whole coriander,
½ tsp whole fennel

Boil 1 litre of water. Add to the spices and let steep for ten minutes with the lid on. Strain out the spices and pour water into a thermos and sip throughout the day.

Lassi & Raita

Plain lassi

1 cup yoghurt
3 cup water

Sugar (or jaggery) to taste
½ tsp cardamom

Whisk together and serve. For warding off gas and bloating add 1 pinch ground ginger, 1 pinch ground cumin, 1 pinch ground coriander, 1 pinch salt and drink after lunch.

Lassi zinger

½ cup yoghurt
1 cup water
2 tsp honey
Pinch cinnamon

Pinch ginger powder
Pinch black pepper
Pinch ground cumin
3 cardamom seeds

Blend all the ingredients. This drink has a kick and is best for kapha types (pitta types beware!).

Mango lassi

1 cup yoghurt
Pulp of 1 mango
½ tsp cardamom

¼ tsp nutmeg
2 tsp honey
3 cup water

Whisk together and serve.

Banana lassi

1 cup yoghurt
1 banana
2 tsp maple syrup

½ tsp cardamom
3 cup water

Whisk together and serve.

Raita I

1 cup cucumber
1 tbsp yoghurt

1 cup salted water

Finely chop the cucumber and cover with salted water for 10 mins. Strain through a sieve and with the back of a spoon carefully squeeze out excess moisture. Mix in the yoghurt and then blend briefly or fork mix. Add salt/pepper to taste.

Raita II

¼ tsp freshly roasted ground cumin

1 cup plain yoghurt

Stir in most of the cumin and sprinkle rest on top. Cover and refrigerate for 30 mins before serving. Add finely shredded carrots or radishes (or other vegetable) if desired.

Fruit & vegetable juices

Homemade fruit & vegetable juices

A delight to the taste buds and an elixir of life to the body. They contain an abundant supply of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and nutritional enzymes and are easily digested by the body. One or two pints of juice per day can be consumed but raw/cooked fruits and vegetables should also form part of a daily diet to help cleanse the colon and keep it functioning properly.

Vata balancing juices:

Apple (good for headaches, asthma and arthritis)
Lemon & ginger (good for migraines)
Beetroot, carrot & cucumber (good for headaches and weight loss)
Apple, guava & potato (good for insomnia)
Grape (good for rheumatism, dry skin, constipation)
Beetroot (good for gaining weight and as a liver cleanser)
Apricot, cranberry, orange, peach, pineapple, pomegranate (variety of combination)
Asparagus, carrot, cucumber, green beans, turnip, pumpkin (variety of combinations)

Pitta balancing juices:

Carrot & ginger (good for eyes)
Carrot & Spinach (purifies the blood and good for weight loss)
Watermelon (refreshing & cooling)
Peach, pineapple, pomegranate, prune, apple, grape (variety of combinations)
Asparagus, celery, potato, cucumber, peas, leeks, cabbage (variety of combinations)

Kapha balancing juices:

Grape (good for constipation)
Carrot, cucumber & celery (good for weight loss)
Orange, pomegranate & papaya (reduces constipation)
Apples, pears, berries, cherries, peaches, prunes, mangoes (variety of combinations)
Asparagus, carrot, potato, celery, spinach (variety of combinations)

Other drinks & digestives

Hot water

Boil water, preferably distilled, and then pour into a small, stainless steel flask. Small sips should be taken frequently throughout the day. Hot water reduces toxicity/impurities in the tissues and is very good for digestion and weight loss. It is balancing to the physiology of all body types and is a general cleanser and purifier of the body. Add fresh ginger, lemon or peppermint for extra flavour if desired.

Nourishing milk drink

1 cup of organic milk	8 – 10 raisins
2 tsp of root ginger	Pinch of turmeric
Pinch of cardamom	½ tsp Ghee
½ inch of vanilla pod	Pinch of nutmeg

Place all the ingredients (except ghee) in a heavy bottomed, stainless steel saucepan. Bring slowly to the boil and simmer for two minutes, stirring continuously. Add ghee, pour into cup and drink slowly. Soya or rice milk may be used for those who are lactose intolerant. Boiling milk breaks down it's proteins making it much easier to digest and causing less congestion/mucus than if taken cold – it should not be taken with meals but alone for breakfast and/or before bedtime.

According to Ayurvedic texts milk is rejuvenating, strengthening and nourishing – it also soothes the mind and promotes longevity. It is high in calcium and, contrary to popular belief, has been shown to lower cholesterol levels. Even people diagnosed with lactose intolerances are able to digest small quantities of boiled milk, especially once the above ingredients are added.

Ginger pickle

½ tsp ginger	grated
½ tsp lemon juice	freshly squeezed
½ tsp honey	cold-pressed/organic
Salt	pinch

The above is enough for one serving but it is far more convenient to make one week's supply at a time. To do this, simply grate enough fresh ginger to fill half a jam jar, cover with lemon juice and store in a refrigerator. Twenty minutes before lunch and evening meal take 1 tsp. of the ginger/lemon mix, add honey (to taste) and a pinch of salt.

Taking ginger pickle regularly helps maintain a strong, healthy digestion and improves the metabolism/assimilation of nutrients from the food you intake. From an Ayurvedic standpoint, it contains all six tastes (sweet, sour, salty, bitter, pungent and astringent) required to satisfy the palate and leaves the body feeling balanced and satisfied after eating.

Date recipe

Soak 10-15 dates overnight. Cook for 10-15 minutes, remove stones and then blend with 1 tsp ghee and a pinch of cardamom. This is good with breakfast or as an afternoon pick-me-up as it feeds and nourishes the physiology on a very deep level.

Milk Drinks

(Add to soups, deserts, breakfast cereals & sauces)

Coconut milk

500ml hot water 180g coconut – grated

Puree the water and coconut in a blender until fairly smooth and allow to stand for 10 minutes. Line a sieve with a piece of muslin and strain the liquid through it. Squeeze out any remaining liquid from the cloth. This drink is balancing for vata and pitta dosha types.

Almond milk

½ cup almonds
500 – 700mls water (hot or cold)

Soak the almonds overnight in a little water. Drain and then grind the nuts and then place in a blender with the water and mix until smooth.

Pumpkin or sunflower seed milk

½ cup pumpkin seeds (or sunflower seeds)
500 - 700mls water

Grind the seeds and then place in a blender and mix until smooth.

Soy milk

170g soya beans
1 ltr water (hot or cold)

Clean the beans and soak overnight in plenty of water. Puree the beans and water in a blender until smooth and then strain the mixture through a muslin cloth. It may be stored refrigerated for up to a week.

Ghee

Making ghee at home

- Place 2 lb of UNSALTED, organic butter into a heavy bottomed, stainless steel saucepan and slowly melt on a low heat.
- Continue to cook slowly, keeping a wary eye all the while as it burns easily if heated too fast or on too high a heat. Bubbles will be seen rising to the surface and a residue of milk solids will be seen forming on the surface. This usually clears in the middle allowing you to observe the liquid changing colour beneath and milk solids forming on the base of the pan.
- When ready (about 30 mins), the ghee turns a transparent golden brown colour and bubbles begin to stop rising to the surface (*the bubbles are the water content of the butter evaporating*). The ghee burns very quickly at this stage so remove from the heat as soon as the milk solids on the bottom of the pan begin to turn brown and most of the bubbles have stopped rising.
- Wait until the ghee has cooled but is still in a liquid form and then strain the ghee through a piece of muslin cloth into a suitable container - jam jars work well.
- Ghee has a long shelf life if stored in tightly sealed jars. Refrigeration is unnecessary.

Why is it so good for you?

- Ghee is cow's butter with the milk solids and water content removed and is a very pure food. It aids digestion, strengthens the body, increases energy levels, improves memory and brain functioning and increases longevity.
- It strengthens and balances the physiology but doesn't raise cholesterol or clog the liver and arteries. This is due to its chemical makeup - predominantly short-chain fatty acids which are easily absorbed, assimilated and metabolised by the body for energy release. Ghee is high in antioxidants (free radical scavengers) and high in monounsaturated fatty acids, which are associated with the prevention of cancer and heart disease. It also contains linoleic acid, a chemical that may have anti-carcinogenic properties, as well as vitamins A, D, E & K.
- Taking 1 tsp to 2 tbsp daily will greatly improve your health but any more than that will start to have the opposite effect and reduce digestive efficiency.
- Ghee can be spread on toast, used to fry herbs and spices or simply added to vegetables during cooking. It can also be used medicinally to help heal burns, reduce skin inflammations and on haemorrhoids and eczema where it is especially effective combined with equal parts of pure Aloe Vera gel.

How to make chapatis

Ingredients:

1 cup chapatti flour

Cold water

- Mix the chapatti flour with enough water to make a soft dough ball.
- Knead for two to five minutes.
- Cover the dough with a small damp towel/kitchen roll.
- Leave in the fridge for half an hour.
- Knead the dough again for two to five minutes.
- Divide dough into four to six small balls.
- Roll each ball into very thin saucer-sized chapattis on a 'floured' board.
- Heat a flat skillet or frying pan (med. heat).
- Place one chapatti on the skillet for approx. 30 secs.
- Turn over with a fish slice and heat until it begins to rise a little.
- Turn the chapatti over again and remove once it has risen slightly.
- Repeat this process with the rest of the chapattis.
- Serve with a drizzle of ghee or Udo's oil.

(opt: Vata churna can be added to the dough mix at the start of the process)

For the kitchen

Implements

Oscar Juicer
Water Distiller

Blender
Food Processor

Grinder
Wok

Herbs

Aniseed
Asafoetida (hing)
Basil
Bay Leaves
Black Pepper
Caraway Seeds
Cardamom
Cardamom Seeds
Cayenne
Cinnamon
Cinnamon Sticks
Cloves
Coriander

Coriander seeds
Cumin
Cumin Seeds
Curry Powder
Dill
Fennel
Fennel Seeds
Fenugreek
Ginger
Hibiscus
Mint
Mustard Seeds
Nutmeg

Oregano
Paprika
Parsley
Peppercorns
Rosemary
Saffron
Sage
Tarragon
Thyme
Turmeric
Vanilla Pods

Dried fruits

Apricots
Dates

Figs
Pears

Raisins
Sultanas

Grains/pulses/lentils

Aborio Rice
Barley
Basmati Rice
Buckwheat

Bulgur Wheat
Chapatti Flour
Couscous
Gram (chickpea Flour)

Millet
Red Lentils
Yellow Mung Dhal

Nuts/seeds

Almonds
Cashew Nuts

Pine Nuts
Pumpkin Seeds

Sesame Seeds
Sunflower Seeds

Oils

Flax
Ghee

Olive
Pumpkin

Sunflower
Udo's

Miscellaneous

Honey
Jaggery
Maple Syrup
Date Syrup
Steva Extract
Balsamic Vinegar
Black Olives
Celery Salt

Cider Vinegar
Desiccated Coconut
Mustard
Pesto
Soy Sauce
Salt
Coconut Milk
Oat Milk

Rice Milk
Soya Milk

Chapter 9

Inspirational quotes & sayings

~ from around the world & through the ages ~



I was free and I had shrunk. I was so tiny, almost like a minute particle of dust.

Everything was within me. The whole Universe was inside me.

Light beings disappeared and new ones appeared.

We were linked together with connecting radiating beams.

We were as one. We are all connected with each other.

If we only realised how closely we are connected,

we would never be able to hurt each other.

~ Shanti Devi ~

Desiderata

*Go placidly amid the noise and the haste
And remember what peace there may be in silence.*

*As far as possible, without surrender, be on good terms with all persons.
Speak the truth clearly, and listen to others, even the dull and ignorant:
They too have their story.*

*Avoid loud and aggressive persons; they are vexations to the spirit.
If you compare yourself to others you may become vain and bitter,
For always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself.*

*Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.
Keep interested in your career however humble;
It is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.*

*Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery.
But let this not blind you from what virtue there is;
Many persons strive for high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism.*

*Be yourself, especially do not feign affection.
Neither be cynical about love;
For in the face of all aridity and disenchantment, it is as perennial as the grass.
Take kindly the counsel of years gracefully surrendering the things of youth.*

*Nurture the strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune.
But do not stress yourself with imaginings.
Many fatigues are born of fear and loneliness.
Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself.*

*You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars:
You have a right to be here.
And whether or not it is clear to you,
No doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.*

*Therefore be at peace with God,
Whatever you conceive Him to be.
Whatever your labours and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life,
Keep peace with your soul.
With all its shams, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world.
Be careful.
Strive to be happy.*

Unknown

*Learn to be silent.
Let your quiet mind listen and absorb.
*Pythagoras**

*All man's miseries derive from not being able to sit quietly in a room alone.
*Blaise Pascal**

Do not be desirous of having things done quickly.
Do not look at small advantages.
Desire to have things done quickly prevents their being done thoroughly.
Looking at small advantages prevents great affairs from being accomplished.
Confucius

When you are inspired by some great purpose,
some extraordinary project,
all your thoughts break their bonds;
your mind transcends limitations,
your consciousness expands in every direction,
and you find yourself in a new, great and wonderful world.
Dormant forces, faculties and talents become alive,
and you discover yourself to be a greater person by far
than you every dreamed yourself to be.
Patanjali

Men are disturbed not by things that happen,
but by their opinions of the things that happen.
Epictetus

God sleeps in the minerals,
awakens in the plants,
walks in the animals,
and thinks in you.
Ancient Sanskrit saying

Before enlightenment, chopping wood, carrying water.
After enlightenment, chopping wood, carrying water.
Zen proverb

Every now and then go away, have a little relaxation,
For when you come back to your work your judgement will be surer;
Since to remain constantly at work will cause you to lose power of judgement...
Go some distance away because the work appears smaller and more of it can be
taken in at a glance, and a lack of harmony or proportion is more readily seen.
Leonardo Da Vinci

The greatest danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it,
but that it is too low and we reach it.
Michelangelo

Great spirits have always encountered violent opposition from mediocre minds.
Albert Einstein

Look well to this day for it is life; the very best of life.
In its brief course lie all the realities and truths of existence.
The joy of growth; the splendour of action; the glory of power.
For yesterday is only a memory and tomorrow is only a vision,
But today, if well lived, makes every yesterday a memory of happiness
and every tomorrow a vision of hope.
Look well therefore to this day.
Ancient Sanskrit poem

To live a creative life we must lose our fear of being wrong.

Joseph Chilton Pearce

In creating, the only hard part is to begin.

James Russell Lowell

Emotions are like guests. They should be treated very nicely and gently, and sent away if they don't fit in.

Yogi Bhajan

Your heart has not to open to others.

Your heart has to open to yourself.

Yogi Bhajan

*If somebody is terribly bad, thank God that it is not you.
And if somebody is terribly good, thank God that you have seen something good,
and that it could be you.*

Yogi Bhajan

Your brain will release thoughts, one thousand per wink of the eye. So you have no thinking power; you only have pursuing power. It is up to you which thoughts you will pursue.

Yogi Bhajan

When a negative thought hits you, hit it with a positive thought - you will come out the best.

Yogi Bhajan

You will be tested - but that is the nature of life. When it is rough, be very calm. Go inside and find your soul. Be neutral and meditate, and the way will become more clear.

Yogi Bhajan

Go inside and listen to your inner voice. Every question has an answer. Your soul is full of wisdom and knows the way.

It is very important that we work to develop our intuitive power (which comes through meditation), for without intuition, we have doubt, which in turn creates duality and leads us into crisis in our lives.

Yogi Bhajan

Going through life without intuition is like driving a car which has no side mirror and no rear-view mirror. All you can see is just straight ahead.

*If you can't see God in All,
Then you can't see God at all.*

Yogi Bhajan

*If we think of defeat, that is what we get
If we are undecided, nothing will happen to us.*

We must just pick something great and do it.

Never think of failure at all,

For as we are now, that is what we get.

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi

Enjoy your life and be happy,
Being happy is of utmost importance.
Success in anything is through happiness,
More support of nature comes through being happy.
Under all circumstances be happy,
Even if you have to force it a little to change long-standing habits.
Just think of any negativity that comes to you
As a raindrop falling on your ocean of bliss.
You may not always have an ocean of bliss,
But think that way anyway as it will help it to come.
Doubting is not blissful and does not create happiness.
Be happy, healthy and let all that love
Flow through your heart.

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi

Keep your desires turning within and be patient.
Allow the fulfilment to come to you
Gently resist the temptation to chase your dreams into the world.
Pursue them in your heart until they disappear into the self,
And leave them there.
It may take a little discipline - be simple, be kind, stay rested.
Attend to your own inner health and happiness.
Happiness radiates like the fragrance from a flower
And draws all good things towards you.
Allow your love to nourish yourself as well as others.
Do not strain after your needs in life -
It is sufficient to be quietly alert and aware of them.
In this way life proceeds more naturally, effortlessly.
Life is here to enjoy.

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi

When we live in the present nature works out our destiny.
Nature is the best organiser.
Simplicity and naturalness will bring success.
Naturalness is the basis of happiness.
If one poses to be someone else, one loses the charm of naturalness.
The result is that one accumulates a stress.
We do not think of life, we live it.
We do not think of ourselves too much.
We do not think of others too much.
We just behave in a natural way.
We do not make moods, or wonder what anyone thinks of us.
We do not live life on the remarks of others.
What others think is not our concern - it is their concern.
If we are weak we will always put ourselves at the whim of others.
We do not base our lives on the opinions of others.
But if we are not clear in our conscience, then we will always be weak
And will always mind the looks and remarks of other people.
It is important only that we radiate life.
Every individual must be a joy to himself, to his family and to society.

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi

Do not oppose, because in opposing the tenderness of the feeling level is crushed.
All action should be to develop the fine feelings developed in the Sidhis.
This is why we say speak the Truth; but see that you are speaking delicately.
Do not speak non-truth and do not speak in a non-sweet way,
So that the feeling is nourished.
The whole effect of activity is to enrich the feeling of the other.
Be as delicate as possible.
If a communication accomplishes something on the gross
But damages something on the level of feeling, then it is a spiritual loss.
The feeling is more important to life.
Nourishment of the feeling is the basis for growth of spiritual holistic value.
Delicate behaviour on the surface should be as to nourish, uphold and enhance
The transcendental value where feelings merge into a common source.
Do not oppose; opposition is dangerous to immortality.

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi

If a man does not keep pace with his companions,
perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer.
Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured and far away.

Henry David Thoreau

When the mind is calm
How quickly, how smoothly, how beautifully
You will perceive everything!

Paramahansa Yogananda

We are the very consciousness
Out of which this universe has been created

Paramahansa Yogananda

We are gathered here to travel together for a while.
Then in diverse direction we have to go;
But if we have divine love in our souls,
No matter where we go we shall meet again.
We can never remain apart.

Paramahansa Yogananda

Infinity is our home.
We are just sojourning awhile
In the caravanserai of the body.

Paramahansa Yogananda

What seems true to reason and perception is not always true in fact.
The only sure way to know truth is to realise it intuitively.

Paramahansa Yogananda

Most people imitate others.
You should be original.
And whatever you do, do well.

Paramahansa Yogananda

Stillness is the vast spirit that lies behind all created things.

Paramahansa Yogananda

Live more simply, so that you can find time to enjoy the little pleasures of life.

Paramahansa Yogananda

*Be always with people who inspire you;
Surround yourself with people who lift you up.*

Paramahansa Yogananda

Love is the silent conversation between two hearts.

Paramahansa Yogananda

*Happy are those who are wise enough to seek contentment by cultivating true joy
and peace in a simple environment.*

Paramahansa Yogananda

*Remember that not getting what you want is sometimes
a wonderful stroke of luck.*

Dalai Lama

Don't let a little dispute injure a great friendship.

Dalai Lama

*When you realise that you've made a mistake,
take immediate steps to correct it.*

Dalai Lama

Remember that silence is often the best answer.

Dalai Lama

*Live a good, honourable life. Then when you get older and think back,
you'll be able to enjoy it a second time.*

Dalai Lama

*Remember that the best friendship is one in which your love for each other,
exceeds your need for each other.*

Dalai Lama

*A man and a woman were walking along a beach
where thousands of starfish had washed up.*

*The woman kept bending down and throwing starfish back into the water.
The man asked her, "Why do you bother throwing some back, there are thousands,
what difference are you making.*

*She bent down again and threw another into the water, replying, "It made a
difference to that one."*

Unknown

*"The doctor of the future will give no medicine, but will interest his patients in the
care of the human frame, in diet, and in the cause and prevention of disease."*

Thomas Edison

"Let thy food be thy medicine, and thy medicine be thy food."

Hippocrates, the Father of Modern Medicine

*"Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people
who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all."*

Dale Carnegie

*If there is light in the soul,
There will be beauty in the person,
If there is beauty in the person,
There will be harmony in the house.
If there is harmony in the house,
There will be order in the nation.
If there is order in the nation,
There will be peace in the world.*

Chinese Proverb

*Constant kindness can accomplish much.
As the sun makes ice melt,
kindness causes misunderstanding, mistrust, and hostility to evaporate.*

Albert Schweitzer

*The difference between great people and everyone else
is that great people create their lives actively,
while everyone else is created by their lives,
passively waiting to see where life takes them next.
The difference between the two is the difference
between living fully and just existing.*

Michael E. Gerber

*Too often we underestimate the power of a touch,
a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment,
or the smallest act of caring,
all of which have the potential to turn a life around.*

Leo Buscaglia

*If you don't follow through on your creative ideas,
someone else will pick them up and use them.
When you get an idea of this sort, you should jump in with both feet,
not just stick your toe in the water...
Be daring, be fearless,
and don't be afraid that somebody is going to criticise you or laugh at you.
If your ego is not involved no one can hurt you.*

Guru R.H.H

*Nothing would be done at all
if a man or woman waited
until they could do it so well
that no one could find fault with it.*

Cardinal Newman

*Things turn out best for the people who make
the best out of the way things turn out*

Art Linkletter

*They may forget what you said,
but they will never forget how you made them feel.*

Carl W. Buechner

The quickest way to do many things is to do only one thing at once

Samual Smiles

*Yesterday is history.
Tomorrow is a mystery.
And today?
Today is a gift.
That's why we call it The Present.*

Babatunde Olatunji

*An old man was walking along the beach,
when he came upon a part of the sand
where thousands of starfish had washed ashore.
A little further down the beach he saw a young woman,
who was picking up the starfish one at a time
and tossing them back into the ocean.
"Oh you silly girl," he exclaimed.
"You can't possibly save all of these starfish. There's too many."
The woman smiled and said, "I know. But I can save this one,"
and she tossed another into the ocean,
"and this one", toss, "and this one..."
*'The Starfish' by Randy Poole**

*Your vision will become clear
only when you look into your heart.
Who looks outside, dreams.
Who looks inside, awakens.*

Carl Jung

*Vision without action is a daydream.
Action without vision is a nightmare.*

Japanese Proverb

*Detachment is not indifference.
It is the prerequisite for effective involvement.
Often what we think is best for others
is distorted by our attachments to our opinions.
We want others to be happy in the way we think they should be happy.
It is only when we want nothing for ourselves
that we are able to see clearly into others' needs
and understand how to serve them.*

Mahatma Gandhi

There is no greater loan than sympathetic ear

Frank Tyger

Chapter 10

Appendices



The wind was against them now, and Piglet's ears streamed behind him like banners as he fought his way along, and it seemed hours before he got them into the shelter of the Hundred Acre Wood and they stood up straight again, to listen, a little nervously to the roaring of the gail among the tree tops.

"Supposing a tree fell down, Pooh, when we were underneath it?"

"Supposing it didn't" said Pooh after careful thought!

A.A Milne Winnie the Pooh

Toxins in your bathroom?

Nowadays it is widely known that whatever is placed on the skin is readily absorbed and can enter the bloodstream and subsequently enter the body's deepest tissues in a matter of seconds. Although this is beyond dispute, manufacturers of cosmetic and bathroom products still allow potentially toxic substances to be included in their products; substances that are also used in the manufacturing industry with health warnings associated with them. Listed below are some of the ingredients to watch out for.

Sodium Lauryl Sulphate (SLS): One of the commonest foaming and bulking agents used in cosmetics. It is also used as an engine de-greaser, garage floor cleaner and car wash detergent. It readily penetrates the skin and can accumulate in our bodily tissues causing damage and irritation to the skin. It also damages the immune system and can cause hair loss with long-term use. It has been associated with the formation of cataracts, gum disease and mouth ulcers.

Propylene Glycol: A petrochemical solvent used in anti-freeze, de-icer, paint, floor wax, brake and hydraulic fluid, pet food and many cosmetic and personal care products. It is a humectant or moisture retainer and prevents things drying out. It can make the skin feel smooth but beyond that it has no therapeutic benefits. It has been implicated with contact dermatitis, kidney damage and liver abnormalities. It may cause skin rashes, gastro-intestinal disturbances, nausea, headaches, vomiting and central nervous system depression.

Fluoride: It is found in most toothpaste products and has been shown to be poisonous when ingested over long periods as it steadily accumulates in our tissues.

Talc: This is chemically similar to asbestos and is a known cancer causing substance. It is used as a dry lubricant on surgical gloves, condoms, personal-care powders and many cosmetics. It clogs the pores and has been linked to post-operative peritonitis and fibrous adhesions.

Formaldehyde: Used as a preservative in many cosmetics. It is known to cause eye, nose and throat infections, coughing, asthma attacks, shortness of breath, nausea, vomiting, skin rashes, nose bleeds, headaches and dizziness.

Diethanolamine (DEA), Monoethanolamine (MEA): When found in products containing nitrites they can chemically convert to form nitrosamines which are potentially carcinogenic. They are also known to be skin and eye irritants. They are readily absorbed through the skin and can accumulate in organs.

Toluene: A very common solvent found in nail enamels, hair spray, hair gel, perfumes and fragrances. It triggers asthma attacks and can even cause asthma in previously healthy people. It is a neurotoxin (adversely effects the nervous system) and can cause liver damage and hormonal imbalance.

Aluminium: A metal found in antiperspirants and often suspected of being linked to Alzheimer's disease. As a neurotoxin it can actively interfere with brain functioning.

Peg Laureth (ethoxylated): This may contain dioxane which is an oestrogen mimic, endocrine disrupter and also potentially carcinogenic.

Luckily there are natural, alternative sources of personal-care and cosmetic products available on the market. They can be obtained through companies such as Green People and Young Living (see 'resources' section).

Do suntan lotions really work?

Recent scientific studies have revealed that sunscreen lotions may not offer protection from the type of sun damage that cause skin cancer. Unfortunately, these studies also suggest that sunscreens may actually do more harm than good and that correct nutrition and sensible exposure time may be all that is needed to stay safe. Sunscreen lotions may well be effective in protecting the skin from bad sunburn but there are other things going on below the surface of the skin that could create more serious problems in later years.

Researchers at the UK's Restoration of Appearance and Function Trust found that free radical damage beneath the surface of the skin was reduced by approximately 50 percent in skin samples treated with sunscreen, compared to unprotected skin. While that may seem to be effective, researchers determined that the actual "free-radical protection factor" was only 2. In other words, the sun protection factor of 20+ held true only with ultraviolet B (UVB) rays - the rays that cause sunburn. But protection from the free-radical damage that corrupts DNA and may prompt skin cancer was judged to be insufficient.

Sunscreen use may well help prevent burning but because people feel safer they spend many extra hours in the sun and the additional hours of exposure may add up to cumulative DNA damage and skin cancer because a considerable amount of UVA rays are still getting through.

It is important to remember the health benefits of adequate exposure to sunlight, especially in terms of the manufacture of vitamin D. Those who live in extreme northern and southern latitudes are often vitamin D deficient because their exposure to sunlight is too low. A lack of vitamin D negatively impacts just about every system in the body so what we need is balance - the right amount of sun exposure with not too much, and not too little. Sunlight is not just good for us, it's essential. But excessive exposure leads to sunburn, which is obviously not good for the skin. Nevertheless, sunburns do serve a purpose; they are nature's way of telling us that we're getting too much sun. When you start turning red, you're done - your body has had enough sunlight exposure.

Proper nutrition also plays a key role in preventing skin damage. An adequate intake of Vitamins C and E are very important to relieving stress to the skin and reducing the risk of skin cancer. Folic acid is destroyed rapidly by heat, cold, and exposure to sunlight. In fact, it is sunlight's destructive effect on folic acid in the skin, not the actual sun exposure itself that accounts for a significant part of the skin cancer problem. The best dietary sources of folic acid include spinach and other dark green vegetables, brewers yeast, lima beans, cantaloupe, watermelon and liver from organically raised animals.

Sunbathing & Sunscreens (excerpt from the Key to Health and Rejuvenation, www.authorhouse.com)

...."The sun is completely harmless unless we expose our bodies to it for unduly long periods of time, especially between 10am and 3pm (during the summer). Overexposure to sunlight makes most people feel very hot and bothered and burns their skin. To avoid being burnt and to find relief, our body's natural instinct urges us to look for a shady place or to take a cold shower. Sunscreens, however, interfere with our natural response to sunlight.

A British medical report, released in July 1996 and published as the lead article in the prestigious British Medical Journal, showed that the use of sunscreens might encourage skin cancer because they prompt people to stay in the sun far too long. Their use can postpone the onset of sunburn by many hours. Most people think that this is advantageous whereas in fact it puts their lives at risk. The doctors who edited the report cited studies conducted in 1995 in Western Europe and Scandinavia, which showed that frequent users of sunscreen lotion actually suffered disproportionately higher rates of skin cancer. The report says: "Sunscreens containing only ultraviolet B blocks protect against sunburn and therefore enable greater exposure to ultraviolet A (UVA) than would otherwise be possible to obtain." In other words, many sunbathers expose themselves to much more UVA than they would if they didn't use screens. Sunburn in fact is the body's natural defence response against more serious damage such as skin cancer.

Without sunscreen your skin would begin to itch uncomfortably if it was exposed to too much sunlight. However, by using a sunscreen, you would not notice when your body has had enough of it because your first line of defence -- sunburn -- has been crippled. This would lead to overexposure of UVA that together with other internal toxins might cause skin cancer. Under normal conditions (without sunscreen) you would never get too much UVA even if you were lying in the sun for five hours. Instead, you would burn your skin heavily through overexposure to UVB.

Although sunburn can impair immune functions and damage the skin, there is no proof that it can cause skin cancer. The above report stated that medical experts know "little about the precise relation between sunburn and skin cancer." This includes the fatal type of skin cancer, the malignant melanoma. Despite the enormous amount of research done on skin cancers, there has been no indication that malignant melanoma has any links with UV exposure. But what is known for sure is that sunscreen does not only fail to prevent skin cancer but on the contrary encourages it by amplifying UVA exposure. This makes sunscreens more dangerous than UV light could ever be.

The question remains whether sunscreens that are made to block out both the UVA and UVB radiation could solve the problem? Research has shown that they don't prevent skin cancer either. There are more people suffering from skin cancer today who have no or only very little exposure to sunlight. Those who live mostly outdoors, at high altitudes, or near the equator, have the lowest incidence of skin cancers. But those who work under artificial lighting are the most susceptible.

The average American, for example, spends twenty-two hours a day indoors beneath and around artificial light. During the winter season most of the working population in the cities never even get to see the daylight, except through windows that reflect UV light. Incandescent light has a narrow band compared to sunlight and is known to weaken natural immunity (a Russian study showed that workers who are exposed to UV light during working hours suffer 50% fewer colds than those who are deprived do). A weak immune system cannot properly defend itself against disease, and that includes skin cancer!

Researcher Dr. Helen Shaw and her research team conducted a melanoma study at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and the Sydney Melanoma Clinic at Sydney Hospital. They found that office workers had twice the incidence of the deadly cancer as people who work outdoors. The results of the study were published in 1982 by the British medical journal Lancet. Dr. Shaw proved that those who spend most of their time sunbathing have the lowest risk of developing skin cancer. By contrast, office workers who were exposed to fluorescent light during most of their working days had the highest risk of developing melanomas. She also discovered that fluorescent lights cause mutations in cultures of animal cells.

Dr. Shaw's research lead to the conclusion that both in Australia and Great Britain, melanoma rates were high among professional and office workers, and low in people working outdoors. In other words, the Australians and British would be better off spending more time outside where there is plenty of UV light! Similar controlled studies were conducted at the New York University School of Medicine, which confirmed and substantiated Dr. Shaw's research results."

Recommended reading - Ayurveda

General interest Ayurveda books (entry level)

Perfect Health	Deepak Chopra
Quantum Healing	Deepak Chopra
Perfect Weight	Deepak Chopra
The Wisdom of Healing	David Simon
Mind, Body & Sport	John Douillard
Yoga for your Type	David Frawley
Prakruti	Robert Svoboda
Ayurveda, the Science of Self-Healing	Vasant Lad
The Physiology of Consciousness	Robert Keith Wallace
Ayurvedic Beauty Care	Melanie Sachs
A Woman's Best Medicine	Nancy Lonsdorf
Practical Ayurveda	Atreya
Ayurvedic Healing for Women	Atreya
Perfect Balance	Atreya

Ayurvedic books (beginner level)

Secrets of Ayurvedic Massage	Atreya
Yoga and Ayurveda	David Frawley
Ayurvedic Massage	John Douillard
Encyclopaedia of Ayurvedic massage	John Douillard
Freedom from Disease	Hari Sharma
Ayurveda (life, health & longevity)	Robert Svoboda
Ayurveda for Women	Robert Svoboda
Forever Healthy	Kumuda Reddy
Ayurveda and Aromatherapy	Light Muller
Ayurvedic Remedies	Light Miller
Ayurvedic Home Remedies	Light Miller

Ayurvedic books (student level)

The Ayurveda Encyclopaedia	Swami Sada Shiva Tirtha
Yoga of herbs	Vasant Lad/ David Frawley
Textbook of Ayurveda (Vol I & II)	Vasant Lad
Ayurveda and the Mind	David Frawley
Ayurvedic Healing	David Frawley
Contemporary Ayurveda	Hari Sharma
Ayurveda and Panchakarma	Sunil Joshi

Ayurvedic books (practitioner level)

Ayurveda & Marma Therapy	David Frawley
Ayurvedic Medicine	Sebastian Pole
Secrets of the Pulse	Vacant Lad
Secrets of Healing	Maya Tiwari
Charaka Samhita (three vol)	Sharma & Dash
Sushruta Samhita (three vol)	Murthy
Astanga Hridayam (seven vol)	Murthy

Sthapatya-veda books

Vastu – the origin of Feng Shui	Marcus Schmiede
The Vastu Vidya Handbook	Juliet Pegrum

Astrology Books

Astrology of the Seers	David Frawley
Ancient Hindu Astrology	James Braha

Recommended reading - general

Music for Healing Books

Through Music to the Self	Peter Michael Hamel
Healing Sounds	Jonathon Goldman
The Mozart Effect	Don Campbell

Fictional Books

The Worm Forgives the Plough	John Collis
The Glass Bead Game	Hermann Hesse
Knulp	Hermann Hesse
The Art of Motorcycle Maintenance	Robert Pirsig
Lila	Robert Pirsig
Bridge Across Forever	Richard Bach
Illusions	Richard Bach
Walden	Henry Thoreau
The Snow Leopard	Peter Metthiason
Touching the Void	Joe Simpson
The Way of the Peaceful Warrior	Dan Macmillan
The Celestine Prophecy	James Redfield
Tai of Poo/Piglet	Benjamin Hoff

Inspirational Books

Men From Mars Women from Venus	John Grey
The White Hole In Time	Peter Russel
Conversations With God	Neale Donald Walsh
The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success	Deepak Chopra
Autobiography of a Yogi	Yoganananda
Bhagavad Gita	Maharishi
Science of Being	Maharishi
The Road Less Travelled	Scott Peck
Writings of Florence Shovel Shinn	Florence Shovel Shinn

Miscellaneous Books

Essential Oils Integrated Medical Guide	Gary Young
The Master Cleanser	Stanley Burroughs
The Key to Health & Rejuvenation	Andrea Moritz
The Amazing Liver Cleanse	Andrea Moritz
Loving What Is	Byron Katie
The Breakthrough Experience	John Demartini
Tapping the Healer Within	Roger Callahan
Yoga Nidra	Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Scientific references

Schneider R H, Cavanaugh K L, Kasture H S et al 1990

Health promotion with a traditional system of natural health care: Maharishi Ayur-Veda.

Journal of Social Behaviour and Personality 5(3): 1-27

Psychological effects of PK – reductions in distress, anxiety, depression, fatigue, vigour.

Sharma H M, Nidich S, Sands D E 1993

Improvement in cardiovascular risk factors through Panchakarma purification procedures.

Journal of Research and Education in Indian Medicine 12 (4): 2-13

Lipid peroxide levels reduced significantly three months after treatments.

Waldschutz R 1988

Influence of Maharishi Ayur-Veda purification treatments on physiological and psychological health.

Erfahrungsheilkunde – Acta medica empirica 11: 720-729

Reduction in cholesterol and urea.

Emotional stability, psychological inhibition.

Stryker T., and Wallace, K

Reduction in biological age through an Ayurvedic treatment program.

Presented to the International congress of Psychosomatic Medicine, September 5, 1985, Chicago, Illinois.

Morgan test – systolic blood pressure, hearing threshold, near-point vision.

4.8 yrs reduction in biological age in only one week.

Glossary

Agni:	Digestive 'fire' – related to enzymatic action in the stomach, tissues and cells
Ama:	Undigested food – sticky, white and toxic
Asthi:	Bone tissue
Basti:	Literally means 'container' - used for enema treatments
Dhal:	Split yellow lentils made by de-husking and splitting Mung beans
Doshas:	The energetic principles of Vata, Pitta & Kapha
Ghee:	Clarified butter – the milk solids and water are boiled away to leave pure milk fat
Dashamula:	A famous Ayurvedic herbal formula using ten roots and barks
Dhatus:	The seven tissues of the body – lymph, blood, muscle, fat, bone, nerve, reproductive
Kapha:	The energetic principle of cohesion – made from the elements of water and earth
Kichari:	A thick soup of basmati rice and split yellow lentils
Mala:	Waste products
Majja:	Bone marrow or nerve tissue
Mamsa:	Muscle tissue
Matra basti:	A small, nourishing oil-based enema
Meda:	Fat or adipose tissue
Nasya:	Therapeutic cleansing of the sinus and nasal passages
Niruha basti:	A cleansing and eliminating enema with a mixture of herbs and oil
Panchakarma:	The five (pancha) actions (karma) used to cleanse the body and restore balance to the <i>doshas</i>
Prana:	The essential life-force of the body responsible for all movement and communication
Peya:	A thin soup of rice water
Pitta:	The energetic principle of heat and digestion – made from the elements of fire and water
Purvakarma:	Pre-treatment to main Panchakarma therapies using oil and ghee
Prakriti:	Ayurvedic constitution (<i>vata, pitta, kapha</i> etc)
Rakta:	Blood tissue
Rasa:	Lymph tissue
Rasayana:	Rejuvenative
Snehana:	Oleation
Shirovirechana:	A purgative treatment for the head, nose and sinuses
Shrotas:	Channels of the body
Shodhana:	Cleansing or eliminating
Shukra:	Reproductive tissue
Svedana:	Sweating therapy
Shamana:	Palliation therapy aimed at reducing symptoms
Vamana:	Therapeutic vomiting used to cleanse the upper body of <i>ama</i> and excess mucus
Vata:	The energetic principle of movement and communication – composed of air and space
Vilepi:	A thick porridge-type soup of rice, water and spices
Virechana:	Purgation therapy to reduce pitta and excess acidity in the body

Resources

Meditation & Jyotish

Transcendental Meditation	Independent Transcendental Meditation teachers	www.tm-meditation.co.uk
Maharishi TM Organisation	Transcendental Meditation teachers in the UK	www.transcendental-meditation.co.uk
Howard Beckman	Vedic astrology readings and Jyotish gem supplier	www.vedicworld.org

Ayurvedic herbal products

MAV Products (UK)	Ayurvedic herbs, teas, oils, books, music and skin-care products	www.maharishi.co.uk
Pukka Herbs	Ayurvedic herbs, teas and oils	www.pukkaherbs.com
Essential Ayurveda	Ayurveda herbs & oils	www.essentialayurveda.co.uk
Ayurveda Pura	Ayurvedic teas, herbs, oils & equipment	www.ayurvedapura.com
Banyan Botanicals (USA)	Ayurveda herbs and oils.	www.banyanbotanicals.com
Ayurveda Institute (USA)	Ayurveda herbs, oils & books	www.ayurveda.com
MAV Products (USA)	Ayurvedic herbs, teas, oils, books, music and skin-care products	www.mapi.com
Ayushakti (India)	Ayurveda herbs and oils	www.ayushakti.com

Ayurveda, Yoga & Panchakarma centres & practitioners (UK & Europe)

The Vedic Retreat	Ayurveda detox, panchakarma and yoga retreat in Staffordshire	www.ayurveda.uk.com
Maharishi Ayurveda Centre	Ayurveda therapies and Panchakarma detox in Lancashire	www.maharishi.co.uk
Ayuseva	Ayurveda therapies and Panchakarma detox in Sussex (Brighton)	www.ayuseva.com
The Tor Spa Retreat	Ayurvedic retreat and day spa in Kent (Canterbury)	www.torsparetreat.com
Ayush Wellness Spa	Ayurvedic retreat and day spa in the Channel Islands (Jersey)	www.ayushspa.com
Ayurveda Retreat	Ayurvedic retreat and day spa in London	www.ayurveda-retreat.co.uk
Shymalaayurveda	Ayurvedic centre in London (Holland Park)	www.shymalaayurveda.com
Ayurvedic Clinic	Ayurveda clinic in London (Wimbledon)	www.real-medicine.org
The Ayurveda Clinic	Consultations and treatments (Dr Deepika Rodrigo) in Brighton	www.theayurvedicclinic.com
Lotus Ayurveda Spa	Ayurveda treatments and consultations in Leicestershire	www.lotus-ayurveda.co.uk
Gardoussel	Ayurvedic and Yoga retreat in the south of France.	www.gardoussel.com
Bad Ems	Maharishi Panchakarma & Ayurveda centre in Germany	www.ayurveda-germany.com
Sharon Jackson	Ayurveda practitioner in Nottingham	www.ayurvedalifestyle.co.uk

Ayurveda, Yoga & Panchakarma Centres & practitioners (USA & India)

Ayurvedic Life-spa	Ayurveda centre in Colorado (USA)	www.lifespas.com
The Ayurvedic Institute	Ayurveda centre in Albuquerque, New Mexico (USA)	www.ayurveda.com
The Chopra Centre	Ayurveda centre in California	www.chopra.com
The Raj	Maharishi Ayurveda centre in Fairfield, Iowa (USA)	www.theraj.com
Cameron Alborzian	Ayurveda therapies & Yoga Retreats	www.camerongoodhealth.com
MAV clinic	Maharishi Ayurveda centre run by Dr Raju in Delhi (India)	www.drraju.com
Ayushakti	Ayurveda centre run by Dr Pankaj Naran in Mumbai (India)	www.ayushakti.com
Jiva	Ayurveda centre run by Dr Partap Chauhan in Delhi (India)	www.jiva.com
Vinayaka Ayurveda Foundation	Panchakarma centre run by Dr Sunil Joshi in Nagpur (India)	www.vinayakayurveda.com
Ananda	Ayurveda spa hotel in the Himalayas (India)	www.anandaspa.com

Ayurveda study courses

Ayurveda UK Academy	Ayurveda massage training (UK)	www.ayurvedatraining.com
Ayurveda Pura Academy	Ayurveda massage training (London)	www.ayurvedapura.com
Tri Doshha	Ayurveda massage training (UK)	www.tri-dosha.co.uk
Vedic Studies	Ayurvedic correspondence courses (UK & France)	www.atreya.com

Ayurveda Collage	Degrees & diplomas in Ayurveda at Middlesex University (UK)	www.ayurvedacollege.org.uk
Ayurvedic Institute	Ayurveda training with Dr Vacant Lad in New Mexico (USA)	www.ayurveda.com
Vedic Institute	Ayurveda correspondence courses (USA)	www.vedanet.com
Academy of Vedic Studies	Ayurvedic training courses (Holland)	www.ayurvedicstudies.nl
California Collage of Ayurveda	Ayurveda training courses (USA)	www.ayurvedacollege.com

Ayurveda information directories

MAV practitioners	Herbal product information for Ayurvedic practitioners	maharishiyurvedapractitioners.co.uk
Herbal Ayurveda	Herbal product information for Ayurvedic practitioners (Pole)	www.herbalayurveda.com
Ayurveda Practitioners Assoc.	Representing Ayurvedic practitioners in the UK	www.apa.uk.com
Netera Publishing	Information on Rasa Shastra and Jyotish by Andrew Mason	www.neterapublishing.com

Vitamin, mineral & herb information

Henrietta's Herbal	Herbal reference directory	www.henriettesherbal.com
Planetary Herbs	Herbal reference directory - Michael Tierra	www.planetherbs.com
Herbal diary	Herbal reference & medical conditions directory	www.herbaldiary.org

Herbs, spices, essential oils, super-foods & nutritional food supplements

Baldwins	Western herb supplier	www.baldwins.co.uk
Neals Yard	Western herb supplier	www.nealsyardremedies.com
Hydes Herbal Clinic	Western herb supplier and clinic	www.hydesherbalclinic.co.uk
Halzephron Herb Farm	Western herb & natural food supplier	www.halzherb.com
Pacific Botanicals	Western herb supplier (USA)	www.pacificbotanicals.com
The Nutri centre	Herbs, vitamins, minerals and nutritional food supplements	www.nutricentre.com
Savant	Nutritional food supplements, probiotics & super-foods	www.savant-health.com
Young Living Oils	Essential oil supplier	www.youngliving.co.uk

Cosmetics & toiletry

Green People	Organic skin care, beauty products, toiletries & cosmetics	www.greenpeople.co.uk
Spiezia	Organic skin care, beauty products, toiletries & cosmetics	www.spieziaorganics.com
Organic Pharmacy	Organic skin care, beauty products, toiletries & cosmetics	www.theorganicpharmacy.com
Organic Blue	Organic skin care, beauty products, toiletries & cosmetics	www.organicblue.co.uk

Retreat centres, spas, therapists & workshops

The Retreat Company	Directory of retreats, courses and therapy centres	www.theretreatcompany.com
Chanting Workshops	Mantric chanting and pranayama with Muz Murray	www.mantra-yoga.com
Jem Friar	Personal detox coach in your own home	www.personaldetoxcoach.com
Aghadoe Heights	Ayurveda Spa Hotel in Killarney (Ireland)	www.aghadoeheights.com
Spa Directory	Retreats, spas and practitioners nationwide	www.thespasdirectory.com

Health directories

Mercola	Health directory	www.mercola.com
Cure Zone	Health directory	www.curezone.com
Self Growth	Health directory	www.selfgrowth.com
Chis UK	Health directory	www.chisuk.org.uk
Merck Manuals	Online medical library	www.merck.com

Ayurveda UK Education Service



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