

History of Ayurveda ... a heritage of healing

The Origins –

The word 'veda' means knowledge. The evolution of the Indian art of healing and living a healthy life comes from the four Vedas namely : Rig veda , Sama veda , Yajur veda and Atharva veda .Ayurveda attained a state of reverence and is classified as one of the Upa-Vedas - a subsection - attached to the Atharva Veda. The Atharva Veda contains not only the magic spells and the occult sciences but also the Ayurveda that deals with the diseases, injuries, fertility, sanity and health.

Ayurveda incorporates all forms of lifestyle in therapy. Thus yoga, aroma, meditation, gems, amulets, herbs, diet, astrology, color and surgery etc. are used in a comprehensive manner in treating patients. Treating important and sensitive spots on the body called Marmas is described in Ayurveda . Massages, exercises and yoga are recommended.

History

The knowledge we have now is by three surviving texts of *Charaka, Sushruta and Vaghbata*. Charaka (1st century A.D.) wrote *Charaka Samhita* (samhita- meaning collection of verses written in Sanskrit). Sushruta (4th century A.D.) wrote his Samhita i.e *Sushruta Samhita*. Vaghbata (5th century A.D.) compiled the third set of major texts called *Ashtanga Hridaya and Ashtanga Sangraha*. Charaka's School of Physicians and Sushruta's School of Surgeons became the basis of Ayurveda and helped organize and systematically classify into branches of medicine and surgery.

Sixteen major supplements (Nighantus) were written in the ensuing years – Dhanvantari Bahavaprakasha, Raja and Shaligrama to name a few – that helped refine the practice of Ayurveda. New drugs were added and ineffective ones were discarded. Expansion of application, identification of new illnesses and finding substitute treatments seemed to have been an evolving process. Close to 2000 plants that were used in healing diseases and abating symptoms were identified in these supplements.

Dridhabala in the 4th century revised the Charaka Samhita. The texts of Sushruta Samhita were revised and supplemented by Nagarjuna in the 6th century.

There developed eight branches/divisions of Ayurveda:

1. Kaya-chikitsa (Internal Medicine)

2. Shalaky Tantra (surgery and treatment of head and neck, Ophthalmology and ear, nose, throat)
3. Shalya Tantra (Surgery)
4. Agada Tantra (Toxicology)
5. Bhuta Vidya (Psychiatry)
6. Kaumara bhritya (Pediatrics)
7. Rasayana (science of rejuvenation or anti-ageing)
8. Vajikarana (the science of fertility and aphrodisiac)

Many modern medications were derived from plants alluded to in Ayurveda texts. The oft-cited example is that of Rauwolfia serpentina that was used to treat headache, anxiety and snakebite. Its derivative is used in treating blood pressure today.

Two areas of contribution of Indian physicians were in treating snakebite and prevention of small pox. Detailed account of steps to be followed after a poisonous snake bite including application of tourniquet and lancing the site by connecting the two fang marks and sucking the poison out is described. A decoction of the medicinal plant Rauwolfia serpentina is next applied to the wound.

A form of vaccination for small pox was commonly practiced in India long before the West discovered the method. A small dose of pus from the pustule of small pox lesion was inoculated to develop resistance.

Charaka Samhita

Charaka was said to have been in the court of the Kushana king, Kanishka during the 1st century A. D. Some authors date him as far back as the 6th century B.C. during Buddha period. The sacred trust between physician and patient was held in high esteem by Charaka and patient confidentiality, similar to the Hippocratic Oath, was deemed the proper conduct for a practicing physician. Charaka also told us that the word Ayurveda was derived from Ayus, meaning life and Veda meaning knowledge. Nevertheless, according to Charaka the word Ayus denotes more than just life. Ayus denotes a combination of the body, sense organs, mind and soul. The principles of treatment in Charaka's teachings took a holistic approach that treated not just the symptoms of the disease but the body, mind and soul as single entity.

Compiled by Charaka in the form of discussions and symposiums held by many scholars, Charaka Samhita is the most ancient and authoritative text that has survived. Written in Sanskrit in verse form, it has 8400 metrical verses. The Samhita deals mainly with the diagnosis and treatment of disease process through internal and external application of medicine. Called Kaya-chikitsa (internal medicine), it aims at treating both the body and the spirit and to strike a balance between the two. Following diagnosis, a series of methods to purify both the body and spirit with purgation and detoxification, bloodletting and emesis as

well as enema (known as Pancha-karma) are utilized. The emphasis seems to be to tackle diseases in the early phase or in a preventative manner before the first symptoms appear. Ayurvedic diagnosis and treatment is traditionally divided into eight branches (sthanas) based on the approach of a physician towards a disease process. Charaka described them thus:

1. Sutra-sthana - general principles
2. Nidana-sthana - pathology
3. Vimana-sthan- diagnostics
4. Sharira-sthana - physiology and anatomy
5. Indriya-sthana - prognosis
6. Chikitsa-sthana - therapeutics
7. Kalpa-sthana - pharmaceutics
8. Siddhi-sthana - successful treatment.

Detailed accounts of various methods of diagnosis, study of various stages of symptoms and the comprehensive management and treatment of debilitating diseases like diabetes mellitus, tuberculosis, asthma and arthritic conditions are to be found in the Charaka Samhita. There is even a detailed account of fetal development in the mother's womb, which can rival descriptions of modern medical textbooks.

Charaka also wrote details about building a hospital. A good hospital should be located in a breezy spot free of smoke and objectionable smells and noises. Even the equipment needed including the brooms and brushes are detailed. The personnel should be clean and well behaved. Details about the rooms, cooking area and the privies are given. Conversation, recitations and entertainment of the patient were encouraged and said to aid in healing the ailing patient.

SushrutaSamhita

Sushruta was a surgeon in the Gupta courts in the 4th century A.D. Though Indian classics is full of accounts of healing through transplantation of head and limbs as well as eye balls, Sushruta Samhita is the first authentic text to describe methodology of plastic surgery, cosmetic and prosthetic surgery, Cesarean section and setting of compound fractures. Sushruta had in his possession an armamentarium of 125 surgical instruments made of stone, metal and wood. Forceps, scalpels, trocars, catheters, syringes, saws, needles and scissors were all available to the surgeon. Rhinoplasty (plastic surgery of the nose) was first presented to the world medical community by Sushruta in his Samhita, where a detailed method of transposition of a forehead flap to reconstruct a severed nose is given. Severed noses were common form of punishment. Torn ear lobes also were common due to heavy jewelry worn on ear lobes. Sushruta described a method of repair of the torn ear lobes. Fitting of prosthetics for severed limbs were also commonly performed feats.

Sushruta wrote, "Only the union of medicine and surgery constitutes the complete doctor. The doctor who lacks knowledge of one of these branches is like a bird with only one wing." While Charaka concentrated on the kaya-chikitsa (internal medicine). Sushruta's work mainly expounded on the Shalya Tantra (surgery).

The Samhita contains mostly poetry verses but also has some details in prose. 72 different ophthalmic diseases and their treatment are mentioned in great detail. Pterygium, glaucoma and treatment of conjunctivitis were well known to Sushruta. Removal of cataract by a method called couching, wherein the opaque lens is pushed to a side to improve vision was practiced routinely. Techniques of suturing and many varieties of bandaging, puncturing and probing, drainage and extraction are detailed in the manuscript.

Ashtanga Hridaya

Vaghbata in the 5th century compiled two sets of texts called Ashtanga Sangraha and Ashtanga Hridaya. It details the Kaya-chikitsa of Charaka Samhita and the various surgical procedures of Sushruta Samhita. The emphasis seems to be more on the physiological rather than the spiritual aspects of the disease processes. Ashtanga Sangraha is written in prose whereas the Ashtanga Hridaya is in poetry for recitation of the Verses.

The Ancient ayurvedic Physician

Originally only Brahmins (a certain caste) were practicing physicians. Later people from other castes became well versed in the art of healing and a term Vaidya came to be applied to the practitioners. Merely by their art and knowledge, the physicians gained high social status regardless of their caste of birth. The court physician was of political importance and sat on the right side of the throne, an important symbolic place. Though the physician, patient, the nurse and the medicine were all important in curing a disease, the physician was thought to be the most important.

The codes of conduct for physicians and medical students were laid down by the texts. The poor and downtrodden were to be treated free of charge. Others were charged according to their ability to pay.

The physician was expected to behave in an exemplary manner, conforming to the highest ideals of professional and personal life. His dress, manner and speech were expected to be beyond reproach. Medical education was arduous, consisting of many years of sacrifice learning the art of healing. Visiting the sick, collecting herbs and preparation of drugs, memorizing the Vedic texts of Ayurveda, performing procedures on dead animals, melons, and leather bottles and bladders were part of the training. These exercises helped refine both theoretical and practical training of the student. When finally the student is deemed ready to practice on his own, he was certified by the ruler.

Recent History

Before Ayurveda began its recent renewal in the West, it went through a period of decline in India when Western medical education became dominant during the era of British rule. Ayurveda became a second-class option used primarily by traditional spiritual practitioners and the poor. After India gained its independence in 1947, Ayurveda gained ground and new schools began to be established. Today more than five hundred Ayurvedic companies and hospitals have opened in the last ten years, and several hundred schools have been established. Although Ayurveda remains a secondary system of health care in India, the trend toward complementary care is emerging, and Western and Ayurvedic physicians often work side by side.

Interest in Ayurveda in the West began in the mid 1970's as Ayurvedic teachers from India began visiting the United States and Europe. By sharing their knowledge they have inspired a vast movement toward body-mind-spirit medicine. Today Ayurvedic colleges are opening throughout Europe, Australia, and the United States.

OUR COSMIC BEGINNING

TRIGUNA

Three primordial forces, or principles (GUNAS) namely Sattva, Rajas & Tamas, interweaving to create the five elements - space, air, fire, water and earth – birth the entire creation.

The principle of stillness, *tamas*, replenishes the universe and its beings and is the main principle of support within the physical universe. The principle of self-organizing activity, *rajas*, gives motility and co-ordination to the universe and human life. The Principal of harmonic and cosmic intelligence, *sattva*, maintains universal and individual stasis and awareness. These three cosmic principles, called *gunas*, operating through the five elements they have created, directly interface with human existence.

On the physical plane, *tamas* works closely with the physical functions of the body, summarized as bodily humors called doshas, tissues and wastes. *Tamas* is said to exercise the greatest influence on the body's water aspect, or *Kapha dosha(humour)** human and gives the body its ability to cogitate and to endure long periods of gestation.

Rajas influences the psychic plane of existence and works closely with the psychological functions of the body. On the physical level, *rajas* is said to exercise the most influence on the body's air aspect, *Vata Dosha (humour)**. It gives us our power to transform what is being perceived externally into thoughts, concepts, visions, and dreams.

Referred to as the universe's cosmic intelligence, the third principle *sattva*, permeates each and every minute cell of our being. It functions through our existential states of awareness, although it also influences the physical organism to some extent. Within the physical body, *sattva* is said to exercise the most influence on its fire aspect, *Pitta dosha (humour)**. Closely linked to the universal subtle fire, *tejas*, the *sattva* principle maintains the cosmic memory of the entire creation- the collective memory of every human- each individual's memory accumulated from the beginning of time through each rebirth until the present time i.e- our personal wisdom.

*all the above mentioned doshas will be explained in detail in the coming chapter(tridosh)**The Panchamahabhutas**

As mentioned earlier the three primordial forces (*sattva* , *rajas* & *tamas*) interweave to create the five elements(*panchmahabhutas*) which birth the entire creation.

According to Ayurveda everything in life is composed of the **Panchamahabhutas – Akash** (Space), **Vayu** (Air), **Jal** (Water), **Agni** (Fire) and **Prithvi** (Earth). Omnipresent, they are mixed in an infinite variety of relative proportions such that each form of matter is distinctly unique. Constantly changing and interacting with each other, they create a situation of dynamic flux that keeps the world going.

This is a small example: Within a simple, single living cell for example the earth element predominates by giving structure to the cell. The water element is present in the cytoplasm or the liquid within the cell membrane. The fire element regulates the metabolic processes regulating the cell. While the air element predominates the gases therein. The space occupied by the cell denoting the last of the elements.

In the case of a complex, multi-cellular organism as a human being for instance, **akash** (space) corresponds to spaces within the body (mouth, nostrils, abdomen etc.); **vayu** (air) denotes the movement (essentially muscular); **agni (fire)** controls the functioning of enzymes (intelligence, digestive system, metabolism); **jal** (water) is in all body fluids (as plasma, saliva, digestive juices); and **prithvi** (earth) manifests itself in the solid structure of the body (bones, teeth, flesh, hair et al).

The **Panchmahabhutas** therefore serve as the foundation of all diagnosis treatment modalities in *Ayurveda* and has served as a most valuable theory for physicians to detect and treat illness of the body and mind successfully. For example if a person has more of the fire element in the body he may suffer from more acid secretion (gastric/ digestive), which if causing harm in the form of hyperacidity etc., can be controlled by giving him food which contains more of *jala* (water) mahabhuta in it like sugarcane juice etc.

Table – 1

Panch Mahabhutas	Sense Organs	Sensory Faculty	Properties	Actions
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Space	Ears	Hearing	*Creates natural space in the body * No distinct taste	Produces softness, lightness and porosity
Air	Skin	Touch	*Light, clear and dry. *Governs breathing, movement of eyelids, joints, and other motor functions. *slightly bitter taste	Creates dryness, lightness and wasting
Fire	Eyes	Sight	*Rough & bright *Controls temperature and luster of body colour. *Pungent taste	Helps in digestion, improves eye sight
Earth	Nose	Smell	*Heavy, immobile, compact & rough. *Controls organs as teeth, nails, flesh, skin, tendons & muscles. *Sweet taste.	*Increases firmness & strength of the body *Acts as a nutrient, and purgative
Water	Tongue	Taste	*Cold, heavy fluid *Slimy, fat and sweat by nature *Sweet & astringent, sour & saline taste.	*Imparts glossiness. *Enhances fluid content & purgative *Acts as nutrient, purgative.

Language of the Doshas)

The Physical, psychic and cosmic language of the body is created from the circadian rhythm of the universe set in motion some billions of years ago when the five great elements were born. Space, air, fire, water and earth, the first material for life, are the basis of the Vedic sciences. In Ayurveda human physiology and anatomy is rooted in bodily humors (*doshas*) tissues (*dhatu*s) and wastes (*malas*). These three principles support all of life and are more than the physical substance of our anatomy.

Doshas are three in number called Tridoshas (*tri* meaning three and *doshas* being the basic physical energies/humors) . They are the primary and essential factors of the human body that govern our entire physical structure and function. Derived from the **Panchmahabhutas (five elements)**, each *dosha* – which like the elements cannot be detected with our senses but their qualities can be. They are the combination of any two of the five *bhutas (five elements)* with the predominance of one. Called **Vata**, **Pitta** and **Kapha** in Sanskrit, these three are responsible for all the physiological and psychological processes within the body and mind – dynamic forces that determine growth and decay. Every physical characteristic, mental capacity and the emotional tendency of a human being can therefore be explained in terms of the *tridoshas*.

When existing in the body of all living organisms, the five elements congregate in a certain pattern and are known in Sanskrit as doshas, the literal meaning of which is, **“that which is quick to go out of balance.”** Doshas imply that the human system maintains a delicate balance, its dynamic elemental composition always being on the verge of disorder.

The doshas are a classic example of energy and matter in dynamic accord. All matter born from energy remains intricately woven within its core nature of energy. In a state of balance or equilibrium, doshas are considered an energy force in that we cannot visibly detect them as they move through and support bodily function.

For example most of the physical phenomena ascribed to the nervous system by modern physiology for example, can be identified with **Vata**. Just as the entire chemical process operating in the human body can be attributed to **Pitta**, including enzymes, hormones and the complete nutritional system. And the activities of the skeletal and the anabolic system, actually the entire physical volume of an organism, can be considered as **Kapha**.

In a state of imbalance or disequilibrium the doshas become visible as excessive mucus, bile, flatus, and physical matter. When these early signs of disorder are ignored, imbalances can quickly become full-blown diseases.

In this unique system of explaining health, air and space—both ethereal elements – form one of the three doshas called **Vata**. Here air exercises its power of mobility only when space is available.

The elements fire and water form a second dosha called **Pitta**. Here the bodily water protects the heat of the body from burning through. An example of bodily fire is the acid in our stomachs, which, if leaked from the stomach, is capable of burning the organism with the force of a raging fire. Water is the buffering force that contains the body's fires.

The elements water and earth combine to form the third dosha called **Kapha**. Because of their mutual density, water gives earth its fluidity. Without water, earth would become stagnated and inert. Thus, the Kapha dosha enables a certain fluidity in the body without depriving it of its solid support. Thus the three doshas co-exist in all living organisms.

It is important to realize that these three are forces and not substances. **Kapha** is not mucus; it is the force that causes mucus to arise. Similarly **pitta** is not bile; but that which causes bile to be produced. And they are called **doshas** – literally meaning `faults' or `out of whack'- as they indicate the fault lines along which the system can become imbalanced.

It is equally important to understand that the three **doshas** within any person keep changing constantly due to their doshic qualities (explained in the next chapter), the specific lifestyle and environment of the person, time and the season. Remember that these three are not separate energies but different aspects of the same energy, present together in an infinite

variety of combination .The degree to which each dosha exists within a person determines the individual's constitution, commonly referred to as body type (prakriti , which will be mentioned in the forthcoming pages).

Each **dosha** thus shares a quality with another (although there remain slight differences in the nature of shared quality). Also, each has an inherent ability to regulate and balance itself, which comes from the opposite qualities that arise from the **doshas** constituent (basic) elements.

When the **doshas** are in balance i.e. in a state of equilibrium, we remain healthy. As **Charaka**, the great ayurvedic sage, explained: "**Vata**, **pitta** and **kapha** maintain the integrity of the living human organism in their normal state and combine so as to make the man a complete being with his **indriyas** (sense organs) possessed of strength, good complexion and assured of longevity."

It is only when that there is imbalance within these three doshas that disease is caused. And since it is the strongest **dosha** in the constitution that usually has the greatest tendency to increase, one is most susceptible to illnesses associated with an increase of the same.

THE THREE DOSHAS & THEIR BASIC QUALITIES

Table-2

Vata (Air and Space)	Pitta (Fire and Water)	Kapha (Water and Earth)
Light	Light	Heavy
Cold	Hot	Cold
Dry	Oily	Oily
Rough	Sharp	Slow
Subtle	Liquid	Slimy
Mobile	Sour	Dense
Clear	Pungent	Soft
Dispersing		
Erratic		
Astringent		

Each dosha also has a primary function in the body. Vata is the moving force, Pitta is the force of assimilation, and Kapha is the force of stability.

Vata, the most dominant of the doshas, governs bodily movement, the nervous system, and the life force. Without Vata's mobility in the body, Pitta and Kapha would be rendered lame.

Pitta governs enzymatic and hormonal activities, and is responsible for digestion,

pigmentation, body temperature, hunger, thirst, and sight. Further, Pitta acts as a balancing force for Vata and Kapha.

Kapha governs the body's structure and stability. It Imbricates joints, provides moisture to the skin, heals wounds, and regulates Vata and Pitta. Vata, Pitta, and Kapha pervade the entire body, but their primary domains are in the lower, middle, and upper body, respectively. Kapha rules the (UPPER) head, neck, thorax, chest, and upper portion of the stomach, fat tissues, and the joints. Pitta pervades the (MIDDLE) chest, umbilical area, stomach, small intestines, sweat and lymph glands, and the blood. Vata dominates the (LOWER) body, pelvic region, colon, bladder, urinary tract, thighs, legs, arms, bones, and nervous system.

Apart from its main site; each dosha has four secondary sites located in different areas of the body. Thus each dosha then has five sites considered to be its centres of operation, which include the various outreach systems because of which the entire body functions. The doshas interact continuously with the external elements to replenish their energy within the body. Each of the three doshas' five sites has a specific responsibility towards the maintenance of the organism.

PHYSIO- PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PATHOLOGICAL NATURE OF THE DOSHAS

Five Airts of Vata

The five sites or centres of operation and systemic outreach through which Vata casts its influence on the entire organism are called the five airts of Vata, namely: prana, udana, samana, apana and vyana

Air of Respiration: Prana

Prana means 'life' is the first air of the universe and of the body. Although located in the body between the diaphragm and throat, it not only pervades the region of the heart and chest, but also up into the face and brain. Prana aids in the chewing and swallowing of food and provides immediate nourishment to all vital tissues of the body. The system is constantly being rejuvenated through the natural rhythm of the breath's inhalation, exhalation, and timely retention. The activity of the colon is attuned to the respiration's rhythm; the main function of prana is extracting 'prana' i.e life from the digested food and diffusing it into all of the tissues in the body. When the colon is disturbed and unable to fulfil its natural ability to extract and diffuse prana, this unused prana becomes waste.

Prana facilitates all movement in and out of the body. It moves in the region of the heart, causing it to beat. It carries food through the oesophagus into the stomach. Prana sustains the heart, arteries, veins, senses, and our wisdom faculty, (*buddhi*). When prana cannot function properly our very life force is threatened. Respiratory ailments such as bronchitis and asthma result. Heart ailments and the impulse to vomit are also related to prana's imbalance.

Air of the Throat: Udana

Udana, the second air of Vata, which means “rising air,” flows upward from the umbilicus through the lung and into the throat and nose. Known as the air of ejection, it provides us with our vocal powers and clarity of sense perceptions. It also preserves our body’s natural forces, such as its strength of will and capacity for effort.

Udana has the supreme task of keeping track of the number of breaths we expend.

An equally supreme task is udana’s capacity to preserve memory, both experiential (memories gathered within a present lifetime) and cognitive (cumulative memories carried into all lives from the beginning of creation through all time). Impairment of udana can result in loss of memory, impaired speech, giddiness or heaviness in the head, deep-seated fears, and a shortened life span).

Air of the Stomach: Samana

Samana, the third air of Vata, is located between the diaphragm and navel. It aids the movement of food through the stomach and small intestines, fans the fires of digestion by stimulating the production of gastric juices and digestive enzymes and helps in the assimilation of nutrients extracted from our food. Samana is the moving force that transports these nutrients to the various tissue elements and discharges wastes into the colon. When the samana air is disturbed, it can cause mucus accumulation in the stomach called ‘ama’, indigestion, poor assimilation, and diarrhoea.

Air of the Colon: Apana

The fourth air of Vata, apana, is located in the colon and the organs of the pelvic region. Also known as the air of elimination, apana’s primary function is to relieve the body of feces, urine, flatus, semen, and menstrual waste. Its down ward pressure maintains position of the foetus and the flow of its eventual birth. Apana is the most dominant of the five airs, situated as it is in Vata’s primary location. Apana maintains the delayed nutrition of prana in the organism. When apana is impaired, diseases of the bladder, anus, testicles, uterus, menstrual problems and obstinate urinary diseases, including diabetes, prevail.

Air of Circulation: Vyana

Vyana is the fifth and final air of the Vata and is located in the heart. It diffuses the energy derived from food and breath throughout the entire organism including the skin. Circulatory in nature, Vyana functions in the body’s circulation channels, such as the blood vessels, to transport nutritive juices and blood throughout the body. Vyana also carries sweat from the glands to the skin and is the force behind bodily expressions such as yawning and blinking. When vyana malfunctions, there is dryness of the skin and other body extremities, poor circulation, and diseases such as fever.

Table -3

Doshas	Site	Normal function
Prana	Heart & Head, between diaphragm and throat	Breathing and swallowing of food, life & thinking, heart rhythm
Udana	From umbilicus to lung, throat and nose	Speech, voice, colour, strength, immunity, energy, memory, capacity for effort
Samana	Between diaphragm and navel (stomach and intestines)	Helps action of digestive enzymes, assimilation of end products of food and separation into their various tissue elements & waste products.
Apana	Colon & organs of pelvis	Elimination of stool, urine, flatus, semen, fetus and menstrual blood.
Vyana	Heart	Diffusion of energy from food and breath in the whole body, helps in the functioning of circulating channels as blood vessels.

Five Fires of Pitta

Pitta, formed from the elements of fire and water, also is said to reside in five sites. These sites are the centers of operation and systemic outreach through which the Pitta dosha influences the entire organism; they are: *pachaka*, *ranjaka*, *sadhaka*, *alochaka* and *bhrajaka*.

Fire of the Stomach: Pachaka

Pachaka is referred to in Ayurveda as the first fire of the body. It exists in the small intestine, duodenum, gall bladder, liver, and pancreas, and supports the remaining four fires, to be discussed below. Pachaka's main action is to dissolve and digest the food we eat. It also regulates body temperature. Once digestion has taken place, pachaka separates the food's nutritive elements from its waste elements. An imbalance in this first fire, pachaka, causes indigestion as well as a revulsion for food.

Fire of the Blood : Ranjaka

True to its name, ranjaka, the second fire of Pitta, controls the formation and preservation of blood. Located in the liver, spleen, and stomach, ranjaka provides the blood with its colour and oxygen. When ranjaka is impaired, bile compounds may appear in the blood and diseases such as anaemia and jaundice may follow.

Fire of the Heart: Sadhaka

The finest of the fires, sadhaka, the third fire, is central to the activity of Pitta. It reigns, along with prana, in the heart. With udana, it governs memory and the retention and wellness of all mental functioning. When sadhaka is impaired, there may be psychic disturbances, mental disorientation, extreme emotional states, and craving for extreme foods, drugs, and so on.

Fire of the Eyes: Alochaka

Alochaka, the fourth fire of Pitta, exists in the pupils of the eyes. It gives the eyes their lustre and diffuses light and its spectrum of colours throughout the body, When the fourth fire is vitiated, there is impairment of vision and yellowness may appear in the eyes.

Fire of the Skin : Bhrajaka

The fifth fire, bhrajaka, is located in the skin, given the skin its lustre and gleam. Bhrajaka protects the body from extreme atmospheric conditions and facilitates the assimilation of light, wind, water, and oil through the skin. When this fire is disturbed, skin diseases such as psoriasis, eczema, and leukoderma may result.

Table -5

Doshas	Site	Normal function	Ailments caused by its vitiation
Pachaka	Stomach & small intestines, gall bladder, liver, pancreas,	Digesting and dissolving of food, regulating body temperature, separation of nutritive elements from wastes	Indigestion, Anorexia
Ranjaka	Liver, spleen and stomach	Blood formation and preservation	Anemia, Jaundice Hepatitis
Sadhaka	Heart	Memory and other mental functions.	Psychic disturbances, Cardiac diseases, mental disorientation and extreme emotional states
Alochaka	Eyes	Vision, lusture of eyes	Impairment of vision, yellowness of eyes
Bhrajaka	Skin	Colour and glaze of the skin	Leucoderma, Other skin diseases eg psoriasis, eczema

Pitta Dosha Imbalance

All the above mentioned functions of pitta and its various subtypes are executed when they are in their balanced state. Due to various reasons *pitta gets imbalanced and causes the following results. If pitta dosha is in excess it results in:

Table -6

Ambition	Hate
Anger	Jealously
Envy	Judgemental or critical tendencies
Fear of Failure	Lack of discernment
Sarcastic speech and actions	Pride
Skepticism	Burning sensations
Excessive thirst	Craving for cold
Loss of sleep	Fever
Frustration	

Decreased Pitta results in:

Indigestion	Loss of luster in the skin
Abnormal loss of body heat	Irregular bowel movements.

Five Waters of Kapha

Kapha, formed from the elements water and earth, also manifests in five doshic sites, through these centres of operation and systemic outreach it influences the entire organism. The five waters of Kapha are: *kledaka, avalambaka, bodhaka, tarpaka and slesaka*.

Water of the Stomach: Kledaka

The first water of Kapha, kledaka, originates in the stomach. It is the cause of mucus formation in the body. Most important of the waters, kledaka's moist foamy liquid aids digestion, liquefies foods, and nourishes the remaining waters of Kapha. When the first water is aggravated, the digestion process becomes impaired, heaviness of the abdomen prevails, and nausea may also occur.

Water of the Heart : Avalambaka

The second water of Kapha, avalambaka, resides in the chest and heart. It provides a plasmic (fluid) tissue covering to the heart, thus insulating it from heart & acting as a shockabsorber. Avalambaka also provides the limbs with their energy. When this water is disturbed, laziness and lethargy ensure. Heart originating diseases such as rheumatic fever and pains in the pericardium(tissue around the heart) may also occur.

Water of the Tongue: Bodhaka

Bhodhaka, the third water of Kapha, is the one which joins the five waters of body's river. It sends water to the tongue and palate and gives the perception of taste. It registers each of the six tastes in nature and sends the appropriate impulses to the receiving tissue long before the food is ingested. Bodhaka water also liquefies the food.

When this water is disturbed, crimes against the body's natural instincts are committed, due to the impairment of taste. This creates **Ama**, the foul undigested remnants of food which stick in the tissues and promote diseases such as obesity, bulimia, and anorexia. Generally, a thick white coating on the tongue indicates the presence of ama in the body.

Water of Head: Tarpaka

Tarpaka, Kapha's fourth water, flows in the brain and spinal cord. It soothes the sense organs and, as a result lubricates and protects the nervous system. When this water is out of balance, the sense organs become impaired. Loss of memory and dullness of sensory perceptions are the natural result.

Water of the Joints: Shlessaka

The fifth water of Kapha, slesaka, is located in the joints. It lubricates the joints and gives them their solidity. Slesaka's unctuous gel protects the joints from heat, and gives ease and flexibility of movement. When this water is impaired, the joints may become swollen, painful, and dysfunctional.

Table 7

Doshas	Site	Normal function	Ailments caused by its vitiation
Kledaka	Stomach	Moistens food, which helps in digestion, formation of mucus in body.	Impairment of digestion, heaviness in abdomen , nausea
Avalambaka	Chest & Heart	Energy in limbs , controls temperature of the heart	Laziness, Rheumatic heart disease
Bodhaka	Tongue, palate	Perception of taste.	Impairment of digestion, bulimia, anorexia, obesity
Tarpaka	Brain, spinal cord	Nourishment of the sense organs, lubrication and protection of nervous system.	Loss of memory, Impairment of function of sense organs

Shleshshaka	Joints	Lubrication of joints,protection of joints from heat	of Pain in joints, Impairment of function of joints.
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Kapha Dosha Imbalance

All the above mentioned functions of kapha and its various subtypes are executed when they are in their balanced state. Due to various reasons *kapha gets imbalanced and causes the following results. If kapha dosha is in excess it results in:

Table 8

Boredom Carelessness Lack of compassion Greed Feeling lack of support or love Obsessive behavior Unkindness	Lack of interest Secretions from the mouth Lethargy Excessive sleep Improper digestive function Obesity Nausea
---	--

And decrease *Kapha* gives way to:

Thirst Giddiness Body aches Dryness of mouth	Cramps
---	--------

* The various reasons for the aggravation of vata, pitta, & kapha are mentioned below in the (do's & don't's chart), factors increasing vata, pitta & kapha & food charts.

Agni

Being the biological fire that governs metabolism, **agni** encompasses all the changes in the body and mind from the dense to the more subtle. Such changes include the digestion and absorption of food, cellular transformations, assimilation of sensory perceptions and mental and emotional experiences. **Agni** therefore covers all the sequences of chemical interactions and changes in the body and mind. Digestive abilities are directly proportional to the strength of **agni**.

Agni and **pitta** are closely connected. While both are hot and light, **agni** is subtle and dry, while pitta is gross & liquid. The heat energy to help digestion contained by **pitta** is **agni**. **Pitta** is therefore the container and **agni** the content. **Agni** is acidic in nature and stimulates digestion. It is subtly related to the movement of **vata**. In every tissue and cell **agni** is present and is necessary for maintaining the nutrition and auto-immune mechanism which is performed by destroying micro-organisms, foreign bacteria and toxins in the stomach and the intestines.

A balanced **agni** therefore is vital for health. The strength of the body to resist disease and also its physical strength are directly related to its heat energy determining the metabolic processes of the body. Disturbances to **Agni** are usually the chief causes of disease leading to ama in the body.

As per **Ayurveda** there are thirteen types of Agni(12 dhatwa{tissue}agnis given below, & 1 jatharagni) in the body and mind according to the conversion and the transformation made. The most important of them is the **Jatharagni**, the gastric fire, responsible for digesting the food eaten (can be correlated to hydrochloric acid in the stomach and the digestive enzymes and juices secreted into the stomach, duodenum and the small intestines). If digestive **agni** is low and the its capacity is impaired, one may experience pain, **discomfort, feeling of heaviness or gases gurgling, constipation or loose stools.**

*In such conditions one should practice the **sansarjana kram** given in the 'diet' part of the course below, preventing the accumulation & production of **ama**(*explained in the seed of disease, below*) & thus diseases.

Dhatu: Bodily Tissues

PHYSIOLOGICAL ANATOMY

Ayurveda has identified seven constituent tissues whereby the body both lives and dies. These tissues are called dhatu. Like doshas, dhatu are formed from the five elements – space, air, fire, water, and earth. The **Sapta** (seven) **Dhatu** (tissues) elements form the pillars of the body that form the means of nourishment and growth while providing support to the body as well as the mind.

With the help of the digestive fire, the dhatu form the body's protective biological system. In other words, they nourish and defend the internal immune system. If one dhatu is defective, each successive dhatu is affected, thereby triggering a chain reaction of impairment throughout the entire tissue system.

The concentric formation of dhatu occurs through the ingestion of food substances. Infinitely well expressed by Charaka, the use of naturally healthy foods is essential to the quality of

nutrients responsible for sustaining the dhatus: “The availability and consumption of a wholesome diet are essential to promote the healthy growth of a person; likewise, indulgence in unwholesome foods promotes diseases.” Equally relevant is the recognition that mental unrest or a negative outlook contaminates even the most wholesome foods once these have been ingested.

Through an enormously sophisticated process of chemical reactions (main digestive fire called **jatharagni**)*, spurred by both the energy in the food and the energy vibrations of bodily tissues and mental thoughts, the nutrient called *ahara rasa* is produced.

The main digestive fire lies in the umbilicus region called jatharagni(macroscopic- can be seen as hydrochloric acid,pancreatic juice etc). Every dhatu has its own digestive fire called *dhatwa-agni* (microscopic-on the tissue and cellular level, cannot be seen), which is a subtle part of the jatharagni and is totally dependent on the jatharagni. So if the jatharagni of a person is strong and well working all the dhatwagnis will be working properly and the all the tissue formation (each cell) will be of superior quality and vice the versa.

The nutrient, once absorbed into the digestive tract, is synthesized by the *rasa- dhatu* digestive fire i.e *rasadhatwa-agni* to form the first of seven tissues, *rasa dhatu*. This tissue, a milky, sticky, cold chyle resembling the quantities of Kapha, is the body's plasma tissue and derives its existence from the water element. The proper conversion of the primary nutrient, *ahara rasa*, into plasma is dependent upon the quality of the foods, the state of mind, health of bodily prana (prana vayu), the main digestive fire i.e JATHARAGNI and the tissues digestive fire (*rasadhatwa-agni*). In wholesome conditions, these factors contribute to the production of plentiful *rasa*. In unhealthy conditions, they contribute more to the production of wastes in the form of mucus i.e 'ama', rather than to the production of healthy plasma.

Each of the six subsequent dhatus is fed by the previous dhatu. Once *rasa* tissue is formed,

The nutrients are refined through a process by *raktadhatwa-agni* and transported to form blood tissue, *rakta dhatu*. Again, if the nutrients quality is defective, the production of bodily waste in form of bile is produced at expense of healthy blood tissue. The main universal element comprising blood is fire. **Rakta** (blood) **Dhatu** – Regarded as the basic of life, it not only nourishes the body tissues, but provides physical strength and colour to the body.

Not surprisingly, then, once the hemoglobin of the blood is nourished, the nutrients are further refined by *mamsadhatwa-agni*, to provide the fuel necessary to produce muscle tissue, *mamsa dhatu*. **Masma Dhatu** – The muscle tissues main function is to provide physical strength and support for the **meda dhatu**. Muscle tissue's dominant element is earth, the most matter-like element of the five elements from which the dhatus derive their form. The body's muscle tissue shares earth's nature of matter. Next in the dhatu nourishment is the fat tissue from *medadhatwa-agni*, called *medas dhatu* which is pervaded by water element. It's main function is lubricating the entire body system.

The bone and cartilage tissue, (*asthi dhatu*) from the *asthidhatwa-agni* which is pervaded by the elements air and space is next in the dhatu nourishment lineage. **Ashti Dhatu** – Comprising of bone tissues, including cartilages, its main function is to give support to the **majja dhatu** and provide support to the **masma dhatu**.

The continuously refined nutrients are then transported and converted by *majjadhatwa-agni* to the tissue comprising the body's red and white bone marrow, *majja dhatu*. **Majja Dhatu** – Denoting the yellow and red bone marrow tissue, its main function is to fill up the **ashti** and give fullness to the body.

Finally, the refined nutrient remaining after all these dhatus have been fed replenishes the sperm and ovum tissues, *shukra* and *artava* respectively by their *shukradhatwa-agni*. This last dhatu, once formed, is fed by the subtle essences of the nutrients refined through the synthesis of all the previous dhatus. It is the subtle pervasive essence remaining in the body before it becomes the material for procreation. If this dhatu is contaminated or not properly formed, due to pollution of the nutrients, the new life formed from the union of sperm and ovum is usually adversely affected in some way or other.

Since the **dhatus** support and derive energy from each other, affecting one can influence others. For instance, interference in the manufacture of the plasma affects the quality of the blood, which in turn affects the muscle. As mentioned earlier each tissue type has its own **agni** (digestive fire- dhatwa-agni) which determines metabolic changes in the tissues and forms by-products*, which are either used in the body or excreted. Menstrual periods for example are a by-product of **rasa**. The tissues are also governed by the three **doshas**, and any imbalance in them also causes imbalances in **dhatus**.

* see the chart below (table no 9)

Oja: The Glow of Health

Oja is the cumulative essence remaining after the cycle of dhatu nutrition is complete. Our physical, mental, and spiritual strength is totally dependent on oja. Our personal aura, the strength and glow we are meant to exude, is produced from an abundance of oja. This is our best safeguard against mental and physical disease. As oja thrives, so does the body's natural immunity. Mental clarity and cognitive memories flourish. If, on the other hand, the body has insufficient **rasa**, the tissues become dry and contaminated, resulting in the depletion of oja. Decreased oja also fosters an increase in the **ama**, or wastes, produced by the body thus hampering the physical and mental capacity of an individual.

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The Dhatus, Upadhatus, and Malas

At the end of the dhatu feeding chain, a secondary group of tissues is created, called the *upadhatu*. These tissues do not provoke a chain reaction with subsequent upadhatus, as is seen in the dhatus. Also, each primary dhatu, after having been fed, produces its own bodily waste called malas. The primary dhatus, along with their upadhatus, malas, and physical and emotional functions, are presented in the following chart.

Table 9
THE PRIMARY DHATUS, THEIR UPADHATUS, MALAS.
PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL FUNCTIONS

DHATU	UPADHATU	MALA	PHYSICAL FUNCTION	EMOTIONAL FUNCTION
Ingested Foods		Feces urine	Production of Nutrient Substance	Joy
Rasa (plasma tissue)	Breast milk, menstrual secretion	Mucus	Nourishment	Exhilaration
Rasa (blood tissue)	Blood vessels, tendons	Bile	Stimulation	Invigoration
Mamsa (muscle tissue)	Muscles, skin	Ear wax, naval lint	Buffering the body	Nurturing
Medas (fat tissue)	Omentum*	Sweat	Lubrication	Love
Asthi (bone and cartilage tissue)	Teeth	Body hair, beard, nails	Supporting the body	Courage
Majja (bone marrow tissue)	Head hair	Tears	filling of the bones	Fullness
Shukra & Artava (reproductive tissue)	----	----	Procreation	Life

* A fold of peritoneum from another organ that supports an organ.

MALAS: BODILY WASTE

Malas are the various waste products of the **dhatu** produced during the normal metabolic process. The three primary **malas** being **Purisa** (faeces), **Mutra** (urine) and **Sweda** (sweat). **Ayurveda** clearly states that only a balanced condition of **doshas**, **dhatu** and **malas** is **arogya** (good health or disease free condition) and their imbalance is the cause of ill health or disease.

Purisa is the waste left back after nutrients of digested food have been absorbed in the small intestine. The consistency of the faeces depending on the main digestive fire i.e jatharagni and apana vayu(refer to the 5th type of vata).This system is known as **Purishvahastrotas**.

The **tridoshas** must be in balance to ensure normal evacuation. **Pitta** and **kapha** help digestion and **vata** governs the mobility throughout the process. Any imbalance between these can lead to various symptoms of abdominal heaviness or pain, flatulence, constipation or diarrhea. It may also give rise to diseases as rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, low-back pain, asthma, bronchitis as well as stomach ulcers and irritable bowels.

Mutra is derived during the course of digestion within the human body. The first stage of urine formation begins in the large intestine where fluids are absorbed into the system. The entire urinary system i.e **Mootravaha strotas**-kidneys, uterus, bladder and urethra, take part in the formation and elimination of urine, regulating the fluid balance in our body and also maintaining blood pressure. Any imbalance of increased or decreased urine may result in disorders as kidney stones urinary infections, cystitis, abdominal pain and bladder disorders.

Sweda (sweat) is the third primary **mala**, and it occurs as a waste product during the synthesis of **meda dhatu** (fatty tissue). Eliminated through skin pores, it controls body temperature. The channels responsible for bringing the sweat to skin surface are known as **sweda vaha srotas**. It is essential that normal formation and flow of sweat takes place as otherwise it may lead to skin infections, itching/burning sensation over the body, loss of fluid balance and reduced body temperature.

The three principal malas are urine, faeces, and sweat. These waste products, like the doshas and dhatus, are composed of the five elements. Secondary malas include the intestines fatty excretions, earwax, hair (body, head, and beard), nails, tears, and menstrual discharge.

The normal flow of the malas is obstructed whenever the Doshas are increased or decreased beyond their natural state. Pancha karma, the five-fold Ayurvedic cleansing therapy, is designed to assist the body in the elimination of **The Malas**.

*Balanced **Doshas** (humors), healthy **Agni (digestive fire)**, a good state of tissues(**dhatu**) and their proper metabolic end- products(**mala**) lead to a balanced state of the senses, mind and spirit, all of which lead to sound health.*

AMA: THE SEED OF DISEASE

When the body's digestive fire is not adequate, foods remain undigested and unabsorbed in the intestinal tract, and ama is the result. Foul-odour and sticky, ama clogs the intestines and other channels of the body, including its blood vessels. Ama prevents the colon in its attempt to carry out its primary functions like extracting the vital force, or prana, from the digested foods. Ama undergoes a multitude of chemical changes, gradually creating toxins, which are released into the bloodstream. As mentioned earlier if the main digestive fire vitiates, so do the seven other fires (dhatwagni) on the cellular (tissue) level, thus creating ama in the tissues. Excess dosha and toxins (from ama) form a sinister team as they travel through different channels (as mentioned in the next topic) with great rapidity to a weakened (disease prone/vulnerable) part of the body. Through its toxicity, ama elicits a negative immune reaction in the body's tissues until, finally, disease manifests in these organs.

All internal diseases begin with ama's presence in the body, and all externally created diseases eventually produce ama. In addition to obstructing the body's channels, ama causes a deterioration in our strength and energy levels. It reduces rasa, inducing lethargy and fatigue. Equally crippling to the system is mental ama, gathered through misperception and disturbed emotions. Greed, selfishness, possessiveness, stubbornness, anger, and excessive desires become mental pollutants, are also ama.

An early sign of ama in the body is a sticky coating on the tongue. In Kapha types*, the coating is usually thick, sweetish, and whitish in colour. Pitta types* tend to have a slimy, sourish, yellowish coating and Vata types* have a dryish, bitter, grayish coating. When these early symptoms occur, fasting may readily alleviate ama and/or the pancha karma therapies administered according to the body type and in the appropriate season.

* Described in the chapter on body types (prakruti)

Role of Taste

It is as important to realize that every food's unique combination of attributes will influence its taste and the action it causes in the body. With every taste having a different action – as detailed below. **Astanga Hridayam** clearly describes the characteristics of each of the six tastes and problems that might be experienced from its habitual over-consumption. Most foods being a combination of two or more of these tastes e.g. coffee is bitter and pungent.

Sour

Comprised of the elements earth & fire, it increases **pitta** and **kapha** and is good for heart and digestion. Stimulates **agni**, moves inactive **Vata** energy down the pelvic cavity, sets the teeth on edge and increases salivation. Excess use may cause looseness and flabbiness,

loss of strength, giddiness, itching, irritation, a whitish yellow pallor, swelling, thirsts and fever, and diseases arising from excess **pitta** and **kapha**.

Sweet

Related to earth & water, it increases **pitta** and **vata**, producing greater strength in the tissues and value to the aged, wounded, emaciated and children. Universally liked, it often adheres to the inside of the mouth, giving a feeling of pleasure, contentment and comfort. Good for the complexion, hair, senses and oja, it also increases breast milk and helps unite broke parts like bones. By its virtue it prolongs life and helps life activities. In excess however it may cause diseases arising from fat and excess **kapha** e.g. obesity, skin infections, unconsciousness, diabetes, enlargement of neck glands or malignant tumors etc.

Salt

The water & fire in salty taste increases **pitta** and **kapha**. It clears obstruction of channels and pores and increases the digestive activity and salivation. Also responsible for lubrication and sweating, it penetrates the tissues. An excess of it may cause baldness and graying of the hair, wrinkles, thirst, skin diseases, blood disorders and loss of body strength.

Pungent

Fire & air in pungent increases **vata** and **pitta** and mitigates **kapha**. Increases hunger, is digestive, causes irritation, brings secretion from the eyes, nose & mouth, and gives a burning sensation to the mouth. It dilates the channels and breaks up the hard masses. But an excess use of it may cause thirst, depletion of reproductive tissue and strength, fainting, contracture, tremors, pain in the waist and back, and other disorders related to excess of **pitta** and **kapha**.

Bitter

Air & space being its elements, it increases **pitta** and **kapha**. Drying up moisture from fat, muscles, faces and urine. It cleans the mouth and destroys the perception of taste. It is said to cure anorexia, worms, bacteria, parasites, thirst, skin diseases, loss of consciousness, fever, nausea, burning sensation. But in excess, it increases **vata**, causing diseases of **vata** origin and depletion of tissues.

Astringent

Air & earth increases **vata** and controls increased **pitta** and **kapha**. It cleans the blood and causes healing of ulcers. Like bitter, it too dries up moisture from fat. It absorbs water, causing constipation and hindering digestion of undigested food. Its excess use causes stasis of food

without digestion, flatulence, pain in the cardiac region, emaciation, loss of virility, obstruction of channels and constipation.

BALANCING SEASONAL TASTES AND BODY TYPE TASTES

The apparent contradictions between the tastes and qualities beneficial to each body type, and the tastes and qualities suggested by the cyclical nature of the seasons are to be understood in the following way: The tastes which are generally good for each body type may become heightened or prevalent in the body and external environment due to seasonal influences. For example, of the six tastes, the pungent flavour naturally predominates during the summer; although considered a generally good all-year taste for Kapha types, it needs to be used in the summer season with discretion. This is because in summer the pungent taste prevails out of the six tastes. (According to the seasonal accumulation of the doshas, in summers there is decrease of kapha and the pungent taste also causes decrease in kapha and increase of vata which may lead to vata/kapha disorders)

Similarly, the salty taste which predominates during autumn, although considered a generally excellent all-year taste for Vata types, needs to be reduced during the autumn season, even by Vata types (According to the seasonal accumulation of the doshas in autumn there is alleviation of pitta, the salty taste also causes alleviation of pitta which may lead to pitta disorders).

In the early winter, the sweet taste predominates, and although generally an excellent all-year taste for Pitta types, needs to be reduced during the early winter, even by Pitta types. (According to the seasonal accumulation of the doshas in winter there is increase in kapha and sweet taste also causes increase of kapha which may lead to kapha disorders)

Table 16

TASTES OF THE SEASONS

Northerly Phase (Winter Solstice to Summer Solstice)

Season	Dry Tastes	Element Composition	Dosha
Late Winter	Bitter	Air and space	Vata
Spring	Astringent	Air and earth	Vata & Kapha
Summer	Pungent	Air and fire	Vata & Pitta

Note: the dry tastes are created by the progressive northward movement of the sun

Southerly Phase (Summer Solstice to Winter Solstice)

Season	Dry Tastes	Element Composition	Dosha
Rainy Season (early fall)	Sour	Earth and fire	Pitta and Kapha
Autumn	Salty	Water and fire	Pitta
Early Winter	Sweet	Water and earth	Kapha

Note: the moist tastes are created by the progressive southward movement of the sun

Beneficial Tastes According to Doshas

Vata : sweet, sour, salty

Pitta : Sweet, bitter, astringent

Kapha: pungent, bitter, astringent

Table 17

SEASONAL TASTE ADJUSTMENTS

	VATA	PITTA	KAPHA
LATE WINTER	Major: sour, salty, unctuous Minor: sweet	Major: sweet, sour*, salty,* warm, unctuous Minor: bitter, astringent, cool, light	Major: sour,* astringent, pungent, warm, moderate unctuous Minor: bitter, salty, dry
SPRING	Major: sweet, salty, warm, moderate unctuous, alkaline Minor: sour, pungent	Major: sweet, bitter pungent*, warm Minor: astringent, cool, alkaline	Major: pungent, moderate astringent, alkaline, ward, dry Minor: bitter, salty
SUMMER	Major: sweet, sour, warm, moderate unctuous Minor: bitter, salty, cool, light	Major: sweet, bitter, cool, moderate unctuous Minor: astringent, light	Major: bitter, astringent, moderate sweet, warm, dry Minor: pungent, cool
RAINY SEASON (early fall)	Major: sweet, moderate bitter,* salty, moderate unctuous, warm Minor: sour	Major: bitter, astringent, moderate salty, moderate sweet, warm, moderate unctuous	Major: bitter, astringent, pungent, warm, light
Temperate Climates	Minor: sour	Minor: pungent, cool Major: sweet, bitter, salty,* warm, moderate unctuous	Minor: salty, sour, dry
Tropical and Semitropical	Major: sweet, salty, moderate unctuous, warm	Minor: astringent, pungent	Major: moderate salty,* pungent, bitter, warm, moderate unctuous.
Climates	Minor: bitter, pungent		Minor: astringent, dry

AUTUMN	Major: sweet, sour, warm, light Minor: salty, astringent	Major: sweet, bitter, astringent, cool, light Minor: pungent	Major: bitter, astringent, moderate sweet, warm, light
EARLY WINTER	Major: salty, bitter,* moderate sour, warm unctuous Minor: pungent, sweet	Major: bitter, astringent, moderate pungent,* warm, moderate unctuous Minor: sweet	Major: pungent, astringent, bitter, warm, moderate unctuous Minor : salty

***Vata types:** If strong tendency to Vata disorders, use bitter as minor tastes and increase the use of sweet and salty tastes during the seasons indicated.

***Pitta types:** If strong tendency to Pitta disorders, use sour, pungent and salty as minor tastes and increase the use of bitter, astringent and sweet tastes during the seasons indicated.

***Kapha types :** If strong tendency to Kapha disorders, use sweet,sour and salty as minor tastes and increase the use of pungent, bitter and astringent tastes during the seasons indicated.

[vata, pitta & kapha disorders can be seen in the charts mentioning **increase in the respective doshas** in **DOSHIC IMBALANCES**]

Table 18

SEASONAL DO'S AND DON'TS

Climates	DO	DON'T
Late Winter	Sour, salty, moderate sweet, unctuous, substantial quantity of food	Excess sweet, pungent, bitter, dry, cold, raw foods
SPRING	Pungent, astringent, moderate sweet, moderate salty, warm, moderate quantity of food	Sour, excess sweet, bitter, too many fluids, cold
Summer	Sweet, bitter, astringent, cool, moderate unctuous, sufficient fluid	Salty, sour, pungent, hot, insufficiency of fluids
Rainy Season (early fall) Temperate	Sweet, moderate sour, moderate salty, warmfood,	Pungent, bitter, astringent, light, cold food. excess unctuous
Tropical and Semitropical Climates	Sour, salty, unctuous, moderate sweet, moderate unctuous, warm	Pungent, bitter, astringent, excess sweet, cold, dry

Autumn	Sweet, bitter, astringent, cool, light, non-oily	Sour, salty, pungent, hot, oily, excess food, heavy foods
Early Winter	Salty, bitter, astringent, moderate sour, warm, moderate unctuous,	Sweet, excess sour, excess cold, dry, excess food, raw foods
	Moderate quantity	

The “Seasonal Don’ts” may be used occasionally as a minor taste. See previous chart.

Important Rules And Regulations Related to DIET :

CONCEPT OF DIET IN AYURVEDA :

1) Defination :

Diet is that – what we eat.

It includes everything we eat or drink.

Diet is the cause of the very existence, Energy , Colour & ‘Oja’ (immunity/Ultimate purified form of all the Sharir Dhatus i.e Body tissues) of every living being on this earth.

2) ‘Diet’ is the cause of the birth, maintenance, & destruction of all forms of life on this earth.

From ‘Diet’ only we acquire following things – constant growth, unhampered growth , Energy , Wellbeing – Health, Colour, Proper functioning of the Indriyas (Sense Organs).

Improper diet is the major cause of all illness according to Ayurveda.

From all above statements one can say that ‘ In short everything depends on diet.

AYURVEDIC CONCEPT OF FORM OF DIET

According to Ayurveda Body is said to be made up of Panch Mahabhutas (Pentads) & hence the food also needs to be Panchbhautic (Made up of Panch (five) Mahabhutas) then only food can get digested & be utilized for the growth of Panchamahabhutas (the basic constituents of body) which in turn results in growth of body.

The diet should be made up of all the six tastes i.e. Sweet, Sour, Salty, Hot, Bitter, Astringent.

It has also been stated that according to the properties diet again can be of 2 types i.e.

Heavy to digest , & Easy or light to digest .

Ideal Diet

The ideal diet should have following properties:-

- 1) It should increase the strength of body.
- 2) It should be tasty/it should be such that it should be liked by the one, who is taking it.
- 3) It should give energy instantaneously / immediately after taking it.
- 4) It should have the capacity to withhold the body & give its strength & energy to carry on its regular functions.
- 5) It should satisfy the one taking it .
- 6) It should be hot, unctuous ,not dry when taken.

- 7) Should be taken in proper quantity.
- 8) It should not be incompatible .(mentioned in uneasy combinations below)

The food (Diet) with all above properties is said to be Ideal diet.

The Diet which is of all the properties explained above can only do the functions prescribed to it.

3) FUNCTIONS OF DIET (food)

- 1) Instantly satisfying.
- 2) Gives strength/energy.
- 3) Maintains the body & maintains the functions of the body .
- 4) Increases longevity.
- 5) Increases the Digestive fire , Vitality , Recollecting Power , & Oja .

4) TYPES OF DIET

There are four types of diet

- i) That which can be drunk
- ii) That which can be licked
- iii) Easily chewable e.g. Rice etc.
- iv) Hard food substances which need to be chewed e.g. Sugarcane, meat.

Some have given 6 types in addition to the four stated above :

- v) which should be sucked e.g. Mango.
- vi) Which needs mastication by teeth, these include very hard food materials e.g. various nuts.

Some have stated 8 types / forms of food / Diet. In addition to the above 6.

- vii) Those which can only be eaten after being grinded into powder, various pastes etc.
- viii) Food substances like Suger candy etc.

5) According to Nature – Diet has been classified into 2 types Heavy Diet & Light diet.

Rain water, Raktashali (Red rice), Sathe Sali (Old rice), Mudga, Eina (black deer) & lava (kind of bird und in airid regions) are light / laghu.

Milk, sugarcane, fresh Rice, Udad(black gram) & meat of the animals from Anoop Desh – land with abundant water & plantation (Marshy lands, equatorial Rain forests) are considered to be Guru (Heavy)

6) Seven Concept of Diet

The following points are important in the making the Diet complete – (promoting health) or improper- (giving Rise to various diseases).

- 1) Basic nature / properties of the food

- 2) Combination of 2 or more food material changes the qualities / properties of food material.
- 3) Due to boiling, roasting etc. there is change in the properties of the food.
- 4) Quantity of food we take.
- 5) Region has 2 meanings – the region where the food is being taken & Secondly region means the area the food is been produced affects the properties of food material.
- 6) The time when one takes the food.
- 7) The order in which one takes the food.

7) TIME OF TAKING DIET

Proper excretion of urine & Stools, Doshas go to the there respective sthanas i.e sites, strotasas are clean and free from blockage & indriyas i.e. sense organs are sharp and attentive, one feels lightness of body , Belching with proper smell to it. With proper excretion of 'Apaan vayu' , Heart becomes Nirdosha i.e. we feel like eating & drinking.

When all the above signs are present then only one should eat; as this is the proper time for taking the diet.

It is said that when the Doshas go to their own respective places & the Strotaras (channels) become clean then only one should take Food.

QUANTITY OF FOOD TO BE TAKEN

It is decided according to digestive capacity of Agni. If Agni is weak then one should take food only once or should take food in less quantity.

Food taken once i.e. at one time which gets digested completely & properly , is said to be Matra/Quantity of food to be taken.

Considering four parts of the Stomach, one should take food such that 2 parts of the Stomach get filled by the food taken, one part to be filled by water or other liquid matter & one part should be kept free for the 'Vayu' / Gas to move .

One should take diet in proper quantity. The quantity of diet to be taken depends on the digestion capacity of the person which varies from person to person & so does the Matra.

20) The amount of food, which without disturbing the equilibrium of dhatus & doshas of the body gets digested as well as metabolized in proper time is to be regarded as the proper quantity.

The proper quantity of food does depend upon the nature of food articles. If the food article is heavy only three fourth or half of the stomach capacity is to be filled up. Even in the case of light food articles excessive intake is not conducive to the maintenance of the power of digestion & metabolism.

IMPORTANCE OF FOOD TAKEN IN PROPER QUANTITY

Taken in Appropriate quantity, food certainly helps the individual in bringing about strength, complexion happiness & longevity without disturbing the equilibrium of dhatus & doshas of the body.

Indicated Food :-

One should regularly (can take everyday) take Shastika (a kind of rice harvested in sixty days), Sali (oryza sativum), yellow gram , food cooked in Rock Salt, Amalaka (emblica officinalis), Rain Water, Ghee, Meat of animals dwelling in arid climate & Honey.

Contradicted Food :

One should not regularly take heavy articles such as dried meat, dry vegetables, lotus rhizomes & lotus stalk. One should never take meat of a diseased animal. Moreover, one should not regularly take boiled buttermilk, inspissated milk with pork, beef, meat of buffalo with fish curd, & barley.

ORDER IN WHICH ONE SHOULD TAKE THE DIET

First, one should eat food of sweet taste for the purpose of Vata Pitta pacification. Sweet taste is helpful for pacification of vata dosha present in the digestive tract or intestines.

Then one should take sour & salty substances for they do the function of increasing the digestive juices. Lastly one should take food of bitter and pungent taste for the purpose of pacification of 'Kapha' .

One should take fruits like pomegranate first in the diet. Then one should take liquid material & then lastly semisolid & solid food.

EIGHT FACTORS DETERMINING THE UTILITY FOOD.

The Eight factors which determine the utility or otherwise of various types of food are.

- 1) nature of food articles
- 2) method of their processing
- 3) combination
- 4) Quantity
- 5) Habitat
- 6) Time
- 7) Rules governing intake of food.
- 8) Wholesomeness to individual who takes it.

21) RULES FOR TAKING FOOD

Healthy individuals as well as patients should observe the following:

While having food articles which are most wholesome by nature; one should eat only that food in proper quantity which is hot, unctuous & not contradictory in potency & that too after the digestion of the previous meal, food should be taken in proper place with all the accessories, without talking & laughing with concentration of mind & paying due regard to oneself , not too fast or too slowly.

Important Rules And Regulations Related to Diet

- 1) Eat to live but don't live to eat.
- 2) Eat food which is beneficial.
- 3) Eat food in a moderate quantity.
- 4) Don't eat food, properties of which are not known to you.
- 5) Don't eat food in a hurry or when you are in a disturbed state of mind, full of tensions, strains, and emotional outbreaks. Regain peace of mind and then enjoy food with happy and hearty mood.
- 6) Wash your hands, feet and mouth, using clean utensils in a clean place which is well lighted and well-ventilated.
- 7) Fill half quantity of stomach with food, one fourth quantity with water and liquid substances and keep the remaining one fourth for air.
- 8) A person who takes only one full meal a day is called Yogee (or Yoga – practitioner). He takes light breakfast in the morning and the healthy and happy life.
- 9) A person who takes two full meals in a day is called 'Bhogi" i.e. a lusty and greedy person who lives mostly to eat and suffers from illness and or ill health from time to time.
- 10) A person who takes full meals more than two times is called Rogee or a sick person. He is a gluttonous person and lives only to eat. He is always sick and away from health.
- 11) Don't do yogic exercises immediately after taking food. It is safe to do them three hours after taking food. It is better therefore to do Yogic exercise early morning or in the evening when the stomach is empty.
- 12) Don't take food immediately after doing yogic exercises, but one hour after doing them.
- 13) Don't go to bed immediately after taking supper wait for a minimum of one hour after it.
- 14) According to Ayurveda well balanced diet consists of food stuffs having six tastes namely Sweet, Sour, Salty, Pungent, Bitter and Astringent.

Diet and Mind :

Yogic and Ayurvedic aspects. Modern Dietetic consideration is only related to body. But it is a uniqueness of Yogashastra and Ayurveda which shows intimate relationship between diet and mind. Both the sciences assert with proofs that diet affects mentality of a human being. Satva (virtue), Raja (Aggressive desire) and Tama (Ignorant sloth) are the basic qualities of mind. Satvaguna is always strengthening, invigorating and vitalising. Satvaguna expresses essence, understanding, purity, clarity, compassion and love. Rajoguna implies movement, aggressiveness and extroversion and it operates on a sensual level. Tamoguna manifests ignorance, inertia, heaviness and dullness.

Satvaguna is a positive virtue and it strengthens and stabilizes mind. Rajoguna and Tamoguna are negative attributes which destabilise and weaken the mind. Yet all the three attributes are required of course in a balanced state and having a strong control of satvaguna are necessary for normal functioning of the mind.

As the final goal of yoga practitioner is elevation and uplifting of mental faculties to attain eternal bliss or moksha he/she should do everything to go on increasing his satvaguna through proper diet and good behaviour. Yoga becomes the destroyer of all woes and sorrows and can be accomplished only by him who is regulated and moderate in diet and recreation, regulated in speech and actions, and regulated in thinking and sleeping too.

The Taste Process

The first subjective experience of a substance on the tongue is taste (**rasa**). A short time later, one feels heating or cooling energy (**virya**). Finally the substances have an action on urine, faeces and sweat (**vipak**). For instance, for hot chilli peppers, one immediately experiences its pungent taste (rasa) and heating energy (virya) , observing a burning sensation in the faces and urine (vipaka) .

Virya – Heating or Cooling Energy

When any medicinal herb or food substance is put in the mouth, the first experience is its taste. Later, and in some cases immediately, you feel its heating or cooling energy, either in the mouth or stomach. This change is all due to its action or potent energy called **Virya**.

By experience, one can form general rules about what a taste "feels like" in the body. For example, the sweet taste has a cooling energy, due to its heaviness. This action provokes **kapha** and is pleasing to **pitta** and **vata**. But there are occasional exceptions to this rule. Honey is sweet but have heating energy. This unexpected effect is termed **Prabhav**. In this same way, sour taste is usually heating expect in the instance of lime, which is cooling.

Vipak – Post-Digestive Effect

The final post-digestive effect of the taste on the body, mind and consciousness is called **Vipak**. While sweet and salty taste have a sweet *vipak*, sour taste has a sour *vipak*, but that of pungent, bitter and astringent tastes are all pungent. Knowledge of the energy and post-digestive effect of food or medicinal herbs makes understanding of its action on bodily system easy. This knowledge being essential for both healing and cooking.

Prabhav – Specific Unexplained Action

When two substances of similar taste, energy and post-digestive effect show entirely different action, it is called prabhav. There is no logical explanation for this. All gem stones, crystals and mantras aid healing due to their **prabhav**.

Prabhav is therefore the specific, dynamic, hidden action of the awareness present in the substance.

Diet Planning

Choice of Food

In planning the diet it is necessary to know which food to have or avoid based on ones personal **doshic** constitution or imbalance. For easy reference therefore some of the acceptable and avoidable items for each doshic type has been listed below:

Table 19

Fruits

Vata		Pitta		Kapha	
No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
apples	Avocades	apples(sour)	apples(sweet)	bananas	apples
dates	grapes	berries(sour)	berries(sweet)	dates	berries
figs (dry)	lemons	cranberries	coconuts	grapes	cranber
pomegranate	bananas	strawberries	dates	water melons	ries
raisin	sweet oranges	banana	figs	sweetners	pomegr
pears	Plum	lemon	avocados	melons	anates
	figs (fresh)	peaches	sweet melons		dried
	mango		plums		fruits
			pomegranates		strawbe
					ries in
					small
					amount
					s
				mango	
				coconut	

Dairy

Vata		Pitta		Kapha	
No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
cheese	dairy	yogurt	fresh ghee	milk	just a
cow's milk	Fresh, whole	sour cream	fresh whole un-	clarified butter	little
			homogenized	cheese	dairy
			milk		goat
					milk
					and
					ghee in
					modera
					tion

powdered yogurt	un-homogenized milk Ghee little butter white meat (chicken, fish or turkey – baked or broiled) chicken broth		
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Grains

Vata		Pitta		Kapha	
No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Barley	white or brown basmati rice	Corn	white or brown basmati rice, wheat	Bread(with yeast)	barley buckwheat couscous millet muesli
corn	wheat	millet	barley	oat(cooked)	
cereals granola	Oats quinoa	oat(dry) quinoa	oat bran oats	wheat white rice	oats oat bran small amount of wheat
millet		polenta	wheat or wheat bran	cane	
tapioca					

Meat

Vata		Pitta		Kapha	
No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes

turkey	white meat (chicken, fish and turkey - baked or broiled)	meat	baked or broiled chicken, turkey or white fish in moderate amounts	beef	fresh water fish
rabbit	chicken broth	chicken		buffalo	shrimp
pork		ducks		chicken	rabbit
lamb		eggs		duck	venison
		pork			small amount of white meat
		salmon			
		sardines			

Vegetables

Vata		Pitta		Kapha	
No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Cabbage(raw)	beets	Beet	asparagus	Cucumber	asparagus
Cauliflower(raw)	cauliflower(cooked)	greens	broccoli	Olives	beets
Peas	Leeks	Carrots	cabbage	Potato	bitter
Potatoes	carrots	Garlic	cucumber	Pumpkin	melons
Spinach	asparagus	Green Chillies	cooked onions	Spaghetti	broccoli
Eggplant	cilantro	Onion	sweet	Squash	beet
Mushroom	fennel and a little bit of garlic	Peppers	potatoes	Tomato(raw)	greens cabbage garlic
Raddish(raw)	green beans	Prickly pear	sprouts		fennel
Spinach	greens chillies	Radishes	squash and a small amount of okra and cauliflower		carrot
Tomatoes (raw)	Okra	Spinach			horseradish leafy greens leeks
	parsnips	Turnips			lettuce okra
	pumpkins				
	radishes(preferably cooked)				

		cooked onions spinach sprouts squash turnip and a small amount of artichok e, burdock root and brussel s sprouts
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Spices

Vata	Pitta	Kapha
No Yes	No Yes	No Yes

Carawas	Ajwan Almond extract	Ajwan Anise	Black pepper cardamom	Salt	chillies, ginger, cinnam on, clove, fenugre ek and bay leaves Ajawan Arvise Asafoeti da Bay leaf Carawa y Cinnam on
	Aruse Basil Bay leaf Black pepper All spices are good. cilantro, cummin, corriander and fennel seeds, turmeric and asafoetida(hing)	Asafoctida Basil Bay leaf Garlic Ginger Mace Pippai Mustard Seeds	coriander seeds cinnamon cilantro fennel seeds fresh basil dill turmeric and a small amount of cumin and fresh ginger		Dill Mace Nutmeg Saffron

Nuts

Vata		Pitta		Kapha	
No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes

None	small amount of almonds pecans and sesame seeds	Almonds Cashew Peanuts Pinenuts	sunflower seeds and almonds in moderate amount	Almonds Black Walnuts Brazil nuts Filberts Hazelnuts Peanuts Pine nuts Walnuts	small amount of almonds, charole
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Uneasy Combinations for all body types

The next important factor requiring attention in the planning of diet is the incompatibility of certain combinations of food that disturb the normal functioning of gastric fire and interfere with the equilibrium of the three doshas, thereby creating toxins (ama) – the root cause of all ailments. A list of the same is indicated below :

Table 20

Milk with	fish, meat, curd, sour fruits, bread containing yeast, cherries, yogurt
Melons with	grains, starch, fried foods, dairy products
Starches with	eggs, tea, dairy, bananas, dates, most fruits
Honey with	when mixed with an equal amount of clarified butter, boiled or cooked honey
Radishes with	milk, bananas, raisins
Nightshades with	potato, yogurt, milk, melon, cucumber, tomato, eggplant
Yogurt with	milk, sour fruits, melons, hot drinks, meat, fish, mangos, starch, cheese
Eggs with	milk, meat, yogurt, melons, cheese, fish, bananas
Fruit with	with any other food
Corn with	dates, raisins, bananas
Lemon with	yogurt, milk, cucumbers, tomatoes

THE THIRTEEN CHANNELS OF CIRCULATION

The body contains numerous channels through which the dhatus, doshas and malas circulate, known as *strotas* in Ayurveda, these consist of both gross channels, such as the intestinal tract, lymphatic system, arteries, veins, and the genitor-urinary tracts, as well as the

more subtle channels, such as the capillaries.(mentioned earlier in 'malas' as mootravahastrotas etc)

In Ayurveda, a complex system of diagnosis is employed to trace the root cause of disease. The diagnosis of all diseases is based on which of the individual doshas are compromised and which channels are obstructed. An excess of any one dosha can create a spill-over effect in the body. Thus, a disease originating from one vitiated dosha is able to travel through the channels to the site of another dosha. Dosha excesses can also create blockages in the channels, thereby obstructing their normal flow.

Men have thirteen groups of channels, and women have fifteen. Of the thirteen common groups of bodily channels, the first three are the channels through which the air (or breath), food, and water travel; these are governed by Vata, Pitta, Kapha, respectively.

Air Channels- pranavahastrotas

The body's air channels originate in the heart and the alimentary tract and conduct pranic force and vitality through the respiration and circulation systems. These channels become impaired by the suppression of natural bodily urges, by ingesting dry or stale food, and by excessive physical exertion. Symptoms expressed by vitiated air channels are shallow and restricted breathing, fear, anxiety, and nervous tension.

Food Channels- annavahastrotas

Food channels originate in the stomach and carry food through the digestive system. Untimely or indiscriminate eating, unhealthy foods, and low digestive fire cause vitiation of these channels. The symptoms of afflicted food channels are loss of appetite, indigestion, vomiting, anorexia, greed, and possessiveness.

Water Channels- udakavahastrotas

Water channels originate in the palate and pancreas, and regulate the body's fluid. Obstruction of these passages is caused by excessive exposure to heat, excessive use of alcohol or other addictive substances, and ingesting very dry foods. The symptoms of vitiation are excessive thirst, dryness of lips, throat, tongue and palate, as well as selfishness and dullness.

The following seven groups of channels service each of the body's seven dhatus. Like the dhatus, the nature of these channels range from the most gross (megascopic) to the most subtle (Microscopic cellular level)

Rasa (Plasma) Channels- rasavahastrotas

Plasma channels begin in the heart and its several blood vessels and transport chyle and plasma to the rasa (plasma) dhatu (all over the body). Obstruction of these passages is caused by stress, grief, and excessively cold and heavy foods. The symptoms of vitiations are anorexia, drowsiness, nausea, fainting and anaemia, impotency, stress and grief.

Rakta (Blood) Channels- raktavahastrotas

Blood channels originate in the liver and spleen and transport blood to the rakta dhatu (all over the body). This group of channels is often referred to as the circulatory system. Vitiating of this system is caused by hot and oily foods, excessive exposure to the sun or fire, and exposure to radioactivity. The symptoms of vitiating are skin diseases and rashes, abscesses, excessive bleeding and inflammation of the genital organs and anus. The emotional symptoms are anger, dullness, and aggressiveness.

Mamsa (Muscular) Channels - mamsavahastrotas

Muscular channels, which originate in the ligaments, tendons, and skin, supply nutrients to the muscle dhatu (all over the body). Impairment of these channels is due to regular intake of heavy, greasy foods, excessive sleep, sleeping after meals, and sedentary lifestyle. The symptoms of vitiating are usually benign tumors produced by the muscular system, tonsillitis, a swollen uvula, hemorrhoids, and swelling of the thyroid glands and adenoids. The emotional symptoms are lack of mental clarity and nervous tension.

Meda (Fat) Channels - medavahastrotas

Fat channels, commonly known as the adipose system, originate in the kidneys and the omentum. They supply fat tissue ingredients to the Meda dhatus (all over the body). Vitiating of this system is due to suppression of digestive activities, and excess of fatty foods, alcohol, and other addictive substances. The symptoms of affliction are generally diabetes, urinary disorders, and possessiveness.

Asthi (Bone and Cartilage) Channels - asthivahastrotas

Bone and cartilage channels, commonly known as the skeletal system, begin in the hipbone and supply nutritive ingredients to the asthi (bone and cartilage) dhatus (all over the body). Affliction of these channels is generally caused by excessive activity, friction of the bones, and excessive intake of food which is dry, cold or stale. Some symptoms of vitiating are dry, flaky nails and decaying teeth, painful joints, dry and thinning hair, and feelings of deprivation and fear.

Majja (Bone Marrow) Channels - majjavahastrotas

The bone marrow channels, commonly referred to as the central nervous system, supply the marrow and nerve tissue nutrients to the Majja (bone marrow) dhatus (all over the body). In Ayurveda, the marrow is not only the matter found in the bone encasement (called white and red marrow), but is also found in the brain and spinal cord. Impairment of the bones and joints is generally caused by consumption of uneasy combination foods, such as the use of animal foods with milk, or hot and cold substances taken together, trauma and injury, which, in turn,

affect the bone marrow. The symptoms of vitiation are fainting, dizziness, loss of memory, blackouts, and compound abscesses.

Shukra (Ovum and Sperm) Channels - shukravahastrotas

The ovum and sperm channels are subtler than the nine preceding channel groups. Originating in the testes and ovaries, these channels are ordinarily referred to as the reproductive system. They transport the semen, ovum, and ojas essence to the male and female tissues. Affliction of these passages is normally the result of unwholesome activities such as excessive or suppressed sex, unnatural sex, sex at improper times like during menstruation and pregnancy, drug addictions, and abortions. The symptoms of vitiation are impotency, infertility, and defective pregnancy. The emotional symptoms are sexual perverted indulgences, selfishness, and aggression.

The remaining groups of channels common to both the male and female are the body's three elimination systems.

Urinary Channels - mootravahastrotas

The urinary channels being in the kidneys and bladder eject urine from the body. Impairment of these passages is caused by the suppression of urination. The symptoms of vitiation are generally excessive, scanty, or frequent urination, as well as fears, anxieties, and nervousness.

Excretory Channels - purishvahastrotas

The excretory channels ordinarily referred to as the excretory system, originate in the colon and rectum. They evacuate feces from the body. Vitiation of these channels is caused by weak digestive fire, eating before the previous meal is digested, suppression of defecation, and ingesting food of opposite quality. The symptoms of affliction are usually diarrhea, constipation, or excessively hard stools. The emotional symptoms are excessive attachment, dullness, and fear.

Sweat Channels - swedavahastrotas

The last of the excretory channels, commonly known as the sebaceous system, originate in the fat tissue and hair follicles, and expel sweat from the body. Affliction of these channels is caused by excessive activity, heat, spicy foods, acidic foods, excessive alcohol, other addictive substances, grief, fear and anger. The symptoms of vitiation are excess perspiration or no perspiration, rough and dry skin, burning sensation of the skin, aggressiveness, or dullness.

Female Channels

Two additional channels exist within the female body: the menstrual channel, which expels blood, secretions and tissue debris from the uterus, and the breast milk channel, which carries milk to the nourishing mother's breast. These two channels are both part of the plasma channel, which supply the plasma dhatu (rasa dhatu).

When the channels are blocked, their corresponding doshas/dhatu/mala and updhatus become vitiated. *(as mentioned before air, food and water channels are governed by vata, pitta and kapha respectively, also refer to the chart of primary dhatu, updhatu and mala)* The cleansing therapies of pancha karma restore order to the system by clearing away to obstacles so that the doshas can flow as they should.

Ayurvedic Body Types

PRAKRITI

The Ayurvedic texts provided specific guidelines to help us identify our constitutional nature. These guidelines enable us to live wisely on the earth while safeguarding our health. From the three doshas, Vata, Pitta, and Kapha, seven body types were originally identified. Our body type, which is determined at birth is our constitutional nature, our *prakriti*. This prakriti is derived from the particular combinations and permutations of the five elements in the sperm and ovum that exist during conception (ref to the chart below). Once birth has made its elemental imprint, we cannot alter it without adversely affecting our balance of well-being. The human constitution, or prakriti, is comprised of all three doshas. This means that every individual has within himself the dynamic forces of Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. The difference between individuals is the degree to which the three doshas interact with one another within each body type. Only our physio-psychological aspects change, influenced as they are by social, environmental, and cultural factors operating in our lives, and as well as by our personal choices.

The Seven Original Body Types

Originally, Ayurveda defined seven body types. These were Vata, Pitta, Kapha, Sama, Vata-Kapha, Vata-Pitta, and Pitta-Kapha. The first three types occur in their pure form very rarely, so seldom is it that anyone is primarily influenced by one dosha alone. Even more infrequent is the Sama dosha (all three doshas in balance). More common are the combination body types, referred to as dual prakriti, i.e. Vata-Kapha, Vata-Pitta, and Pitta-Kapha. In more recent times, these three dual types have been expanded to include six dual types. By reversing the two doshas within each dual type and considering it a separate type, i.e. Kapha-Vata, Pitta-Vata, Kapha-Pitta. A person who has both Vata and Pitta dominant may, therefore, be either a Vata-Pitta or Pitta-Vata type, depending on which of the two doshas is more dominant. Because the body types are the basis, from which all Ayurvedic diagnosis begins, they are explained here in some detail. This explanation is also intended to help you better understand your own personal constitution.

Elemental Source of Body Types

Rare Body Types

- | | | |
|----|-------|-----------------------------|
| 1) | Vata | air/space |
| 2) | Pitta | fire/water |
| 3) | Kapha | water/earth |
| 4) | Sama | balance of all three doshas |

***NOTE-** The relation between dosha & their elements refer to the chapter on TRIGUNA, table no.1, & table no.2

Dual Body Types (original classification)

- | | | |
|----|-------------|--|
| 1) | Vata/Pitta | air/space main; fire/water subordinate |
| 2) | Vata/Kapha | air/space main; water/earth subordinate |
| 3) | Pitta/Kapha | fire/water main; water/earth subordinate |

Additional Dual Body Types (recognized by contemporary practitioners)

- | | | |
|----|-------------|--|
| 1) | Pitta/Vata | fire/water main; air/space subordinate |
| 2) | Kapha/Vata | water/earth main; air/space subordinate |
| 3) | Kapha/Pitta | water/earth main; fire/water subordinate |

Body Type Qualities

VATA (like wind)	Kapha (like water)	Pitta (like fire)	
dry	oily		hot
cold	cool		oily
light	heavy		light
mobile	stable		intense
erratic	dense		fluid
rough	smooth	smelly	
bitter	sweet		sour
astringent	sour		pungent
pungent	salty		salty

Table 10

Characteristics of body types

For a better understanding of your Ayurvedic constitution and to cross-check the results of the test, listed below are the principal physical and psychological characteristics of persons with the predominant single **dosha** constitution.

VATA - Physically such people are very tall or very short, non-muscular, with thin and bony limbs and have a quick gait with short fast steps. Skin is generally thin, darkish and cool. The hair is thin, dark, coarse and either kinky or curly. The face is usually long and angular, often with an underdeveloped chin. The neck is thin and scrawny. Nose is small and narrow. May be long, crooked or asymmetrical also. Eyes tend to be small, narrow or sunken, dark brown or grey in colour, with dull lustre. The mouth being small, with thin, narrow or tight lips. Teeth are irregular, protruding, or broken, set in receding gums. And while the voice is weak, low or cracked, speech is fast with interruptions.

Creativity ~ Enthusiasm ~ Freedom ~ Generosity ~ Joy ~ Vitality

Vata people have restless minds and weak memories. They avoid confrontation. Have active and sensitive natures and express themselves through sport and creative pursuits. Likely to be artistic and creative with a good imagination, they will sometimes overindulge in pleasures. And are sexually the very active. Fearful, worrisome and anxious they are into questioning, theorising and over-analysis. Often dissatisfied with and unable to sustain friendships, they spend money quickly, often on trifles. With light, interrupted sleep of 5-7 hours a day.

PITTA - A moderately well developed physique with muscular limbs and a purposeful, stable gait of medium speed. With a loud, strong voice and precise, convincing speech. The skin is fair, soft, lustrous, warm, and tends to burn easily in the sun – has freckles, many moles, and a tendency to rashes. And the bodies are hot and sweaty. Characterised by fine and soft, either fair or reddish/ light brown hair that tends to grey soon. Face is heart-shaped, often with a pointed chin. While the neck is proportionate and of average size. A neat, pointed, and average sized nose matches the average sized eyes that are either light blue, light grey or hazel in colour, with an intense lustre which gets red in summer or after bathing. The mouth being medium, with average lips and medium-sized, yellowish teeth.

Ambition ~ Concentration ~ Confidence ~ Courage ~ Enthusiasm for knowledge ~ Happiness ~ Intelligence

Pittas have an intellectual and precise disposition due to a very alert, focussed mind. Sharp and knife-like in anger, they are irritable, jealous and aggressive by nature. Discriminating and judgemental, they are articulate, learned and proud. With a developed sense of responsibility, they can take decisions and organise affairs well. Argumentative, but with a sense of humour, their selectively excellent memory makes them fast learners. Moderately passionate in their sexual pursuits, they spend moderately, usually on luxuries.

KAPHA - A thick, broad, well-developed frame and large, long limbs go well with a pleasant, deep and resonant voice with low, slow, rhythmic speech. The skin is usually thick, oily, pale or white and cold. Plentiful, thick, wavy, lustrous and generally brown/black hair is set on a large, rounded and full face. The neck is solid, with a near tree-trunk quality. A large, rounded nose and large, attractive, blue or light brown / black color of eyes are found, in a mouth that is large with big, full lips. Teeth too are big and white and set in strong gums.

**Caring ~ Centeredness ~ Compassion ~ Contentment ~ Faith ~ Fulfillment ~
Groundedness ~ Patience ~ Sense of being nourished ~ Stability ~ Support ~
Tenderness**

Kapha predominated people are calm, steady, considerate - stable, patient personalities they are slow to anger. Not easily provoked, once angry they do not calm down easily. They are honourable, true to their word and avoid lies. Loyal, forgiving and understanding, they can be lethargic, even lazy, if not driven by others. Learning may be slow but memory will be strong. Excellent in logical analysis, they take time before reaching conclusions. Long hours of deep sleep and a strong, enduring sex drive come naturally. While they do save money, it does get spent on food. And there can at times be an element of dullness, given that a **kapha** mind is usually too content to seek fresh mental stimulation

Nurturing Requirements

VATA: Nurtured by the elements fire, water, and earth

moist	sweet
heavy	salty
smooth	sour
hot	

PITTA: Nurtured by the elements water, air, space, and earth

cool	sweet
	bitter
aromatic	astringent

calming

KAPHA:	Nurtured by the elements fire, air, and space	
	dry	pungent
	warm	bitter
	light	astringent

Table 11

Do's and Don'ts

REMEDIES	VATA	PITTA	KAPHA
Food	Warm, well cooked food. Sweet, sour and salty tastes	Warm to cool rather than steaming hot. Sweet, bitter and astringent tastes.	Decreased quantities of warm food. Pungent, bitter and astringent taste. Healthy Kapha types should observe fast one day per week.
Oil Massage	With calming and warming oils such as Mahanarayan Oil etc.	With cooling oils such as chandanbala Laxadi oil etc.	With stimulating oils such as sahacharadi oil etc.
Exercise	Moderate exercise such as yoga, walking and light weights	Moderate exercise which may include jogging, swimming, Yoga, cycling and weight lifting	Regular and vigorous.
Herbal Dietary supplements	Ashwagandha, shatavari, haritaki, Guggul, Trikatu ,Vata tea, Calming Tea.	Haritaki, BhumiAmala, Chyavanprash, surakta, sitopladi churan, pitta Tea.	Guggul, sitopladi churan, trikatu, chyavanprash, Kapha Tea.

Factors that increase vata

Exposure to cold , lack of routine in your life, eating too much dry, frozen or leftover food, or food with bitter, pungent or astringents taste.

Fasting, too much traveling, too much or inappropriate exercise, suppressing natural urges, abdominal surgery.

Not oiling the skin.

Factors that increase pitta

Exposure to heat, eating too much red meat, salt, spicy or sour foods. Indigestion and irregularity of meals. Exercising at midday, Drugs especially antibiotics.

Too much intellectual work/thinking. Alcohol, Fatigue. Anger, Hate, fear.

Factors that increase kapha

Exposure to cold, eating too much sweet, meat, fats, cheese, milk, ice cream, yogurt, fried food, excessive use of salt. Excessive intake of water, taking naps after meals. Doing nothing. Sedative and tranquilizers. Doubts, greed, and possessiveness.

Determining Your Ayurvedic Body Type

Generally, everyone possesses characteristics from all three categories of body type, although one or two will usually predominate. Approach the chart below honestly. Remember that your evaluation will be coloured by the qualities of your present lifestyle. Six weeks after making the necessary changes in your diet and daily activities and doing the cleansing as given in the forthcoming pages, re-do the Body Type chart. The latter response will be more in keeping with your true constitutional nature.

Directions : Move horizontally across each of the sections set out in the chart below and circle the attributes that you feel most accurately reflect you. Choose at least one from each section. Ask a spouse, parent, or friend to assist you with the Emotional Characteristics portion of the assessment so that your choices will be as objective as possible. Men are advised to seek the assistance of a woman – a spouse, a friend, or mother – for both the Physical Characteristics and Emotional Characteristics section of the chart. Then, moving down each of the three columns, count how many characteristics you circled for each body type. Which ever column yields the highest score indicated your Ayurvedic body type. For example, if your scores are 15 for Vata, 12 for Pitta and 5 for Kapha, then your Ayurvedic body type is Vata/Pitta.

Table 12

BODY TYPE CHART: PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Dosha	VATA	PITTA	KAPHA
Body Frame	Thin, irregular, very short or very tall	Medium, proportionate, toned	Heavy, board, evenly proportioned
Weight	Hard to gain, easy to lose	Easy to gain, Easy to lose	Easy to gain, Hard to lose

Skin	Cold, dark or dusky	Warm and reddish, sunburns easily	Cool, fair or oily, tans easily
Hair	Dry, frizzy, thin, dark	thin, fine, reddish, premature, balding or graying	Oily, wavy, thick, lustrous.
Eyes	Brown, gray or unusual color, small, nervous eyes	Green, hazel, light brown, peircing eyes	Black, blue, dark brown, big, sensual eyes
Nails	Dry, grayish, rough, brittle	Clear, well formed, soft, pink	Square, white, even
Appetite	Irregular	Intense	Consistent
Evacuation	Constipated, irregular, small quantity	Loose, regular, large quantity, soft	regular, moderate quantity
Sweat	Scanty	Profuse	Moderate
Stamina	Poor, exertive	Moderate, driven	Excellent
Sleep	Poor, variable	Moderate, light	Long, deep
Activity	High, restless	moderate	Low, moves slow
Sensitivities	Cold, dryness, wind	Heat, sunlight, fire	Cold, damp
Immune function	Low, variable	Moderate, sensitive to heat	High
Disease tendency	Pain	Fever, inflammation	Congestion, oedema

Table 13

BODY TYPE CHART: EMOTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Mental characters	Vata	Pitta	Kapha
-------------------	------	-------	-------

Temperament	Fearful, indecisive, nervous, perceptive	Angry, arrogant, successful	intelligent, calm, stable, stubborn
Memory	Learns quickly Forgets quickly, quick but absentminded	Learns quickly Forgets slowly, sharp & clear	Learns slowly Forgets slowly, slow but study
Speech	Erratic, talkative, fast	Decisive, articulate, sharp	Slow, cautious, melodious
Faith	Variable, erratic	Strong, determined	Steady, slow to change
Dreams	Flying, fearful, erratic, frequent	Fiery, intense, moderate	Violent, Watery, sensual, infrequent, long sequences
Sexuality	Cold, variable	Hot, intense	Warm, enduring
Positive emotions	adaptability	courage	Love
Negative emotions	Fear	anger	Attachment

Superior qualities are allotted to the Kapha body type as far as physical and emotional characteristics are concerned. But when body types concerned with more than one dosha is concerned, the 'sama' type where all the doshas are in equal quantity is the best of all body types which is very rare to find.

Dinacharya

In order to keep the **tridoshas** in a state of healthy equilibrium, digestion & metabolism (*agni*) in proper order, **Ayurveda** prescribes for each individual a specific daily routine (dina – day & acharya – behavior). The various stages to this daily routine as per **prakriti**(constitution), that will enable you to make the most out of your life are :

Arising

Since our biological clocks are attuned to the rising and setting of the sun, it is obviously better to awake an hour before sunrise in perfect synchronization to the natural clock i.e between five & six in the morning. An ideal time to let the body cells soak in the strength of a tempered sun to be charged for the day. It increases the life span of an individual and helps maintain the equilibrium of doshas in once body. Drinking a glass of Luke-warm water helps flush out all toxins accumulated overnight in the body.

Natural Urges

The last portion of the night being ruled by **vata** – involved in the process of elimination – the time before dawn is best to eliminate the body's physical waste . Proper elimination also helps remove the **kapha** that naturally accumulates overnight. Defecation once or twice daily is the best. Examine your eliminations each morning and if you notice any disturbance indicating poor digestion, go on a fast. It will allow the body rest to correct the system before disease sets in.

Never suppress the natural physical urges as elimination, hunger, thirst, sleep, sneezing, yawning, burping, crying, vomiting, flatus and ejaculation, for it will lead to discomfort and even disease.

ORAL HYGIENE

Oral gargles

Specific oil gargling according to one's constitution is beneficial for the strength of jaws, depth of voice, glow on the face and perfect taste sensation. One who does these gargles never gets dryness of throat, cracking of lips, his teeth will be free from cavities and be deep-rooted, he won't suffer from toothache and can chew the hardest of things.

HEAD OIL

One who applies ayurvedic herbal head oil (according to one's body constitution) on his head does not suffer from headache, baldness, hair graying. Strength of his head and forehead is specially enhanced, his hair becomes black long and deep-rooted, his sense organs work properly, the skin of his face brightens, applying this head oil produces sound sleep and happiness. This oil should be applied lukewarm, at night before going to bed. The best results for lustrous & thick hair is when the oil is washed with an ayurvedic herbal shampoo.

OILING OF EARS

Ear diseases due to vitiated vata like lock jaw, difficulty in hearing, tinnitus(whistling sound in the ears),accumulation of wax and deafness(also appear during old age) are prevented if ear oil called **bilwatailam** is used regularly (twice in a month)i.e dropped into the ear. It also helps keep the ears clean of wax and other external impurities.

Massage

Necessary for every person, a regular self-massage (before a bath) with herbal oils is necessary at least twice a week but needs to be supplemented with professional attention (ayurvedic oil massage) occasionally. It makes the skin supple; controls vata by reducing its cold, dry, light, rough & erratic qualities, enhances blood circulation, encourages quicker removal of metabolic wastes and relaxes the body. The one who practices oil massage regularly, his body, even if subjected to injuries or strenuous work is not much injured. He remains strong and charming. The ayurvedic oil massage done with proper oil according to ones constitution regularly is highly rejuvenating. Follow the normal direction of hair growth, massage the scalp and head at least twice weekly and just the soles of your feet if short of time

Exercise

Either passive like massage or active like aerobics or both as in yoga postures; regular exercise increases the body's stamina and resistance to disease by facilitating the immune system, clearing all channels, promoting circulation & waste disposal, and destroying fat. Done regularly, it can reduce anxiety . Depending on age & body type, **kaphas** can go for heavy exercises, **pittas** should do it in moderation (aerobics) and **vatas** should perform yoga and not aerobics. Never exert more than half your capacity. Avoid any kind of exercise during illness, just after a meal and without rhythmic breathing. Swimming, brisk walking and jogging are excellent options.

Cleanliness -

EFFECTS OF HAVING A BATH

Bathing is purifying, increases libido and is life-giving. In today's fast life we use soaps which are made of chemicals , these make our skin dry and are harmful in the long run especially to children. Done after the herbal oil massage with a proper 'herbal body scrub' it removes fatigue, sweating and dirt. It brings about strength in the body and is an aid par excellence for the enhancement of oja.

Thorough washing of the limbs, face, mouth, eyes & nose purifies the bodies sense organs. Best done with a bath in clean water, it should accompany brushing of the teeth (should be repeated after every meal), scraping off a toxicated coating of ama from the tongue, occasional gargling of salt water with a pinch of turmeric to keep gums, mouth & throat healthy. Proper cleaning of the nose and the ears and washing the eyes should be done. Keep your hair trimmed, nails filed and wear clean clothes. Ayurveda encourages to use perfumes in moderation and feel good.

TIME FOR USE OF COLLYRIUM- rasanjana

One should regularly apply the collyrium made of antimony called '**rasanjana**', once in every five or eight nights as it causes lacrymation of the eyes. Of all the mahabhutas fire (tejas) dominates the eyes, so they are especially susceptible to kapha (which leads to cataract, blurring of vision). Therefore collyrium, which alleviates kapha, is good for keeping clarity of vision.

The rasanjana must not be applied to the eyes during the day time, as the eyes weakened by the drainage will be adversely affected in sunlight. Thus collyrium should be applied at night. Charaka says 'As different types of tarnished gold are spotlessly cleaned by means of oil, cloth & brush, so also with the use of rasanjana the eyes of human being become spotlessly bright like the moon in the clear sky.'

USE OF NASAL DROPS

One should inhale specially prepared oil for nasal drops during all seasons called '**anu taila**'. Two drops of this oil should be applied in both the nostrils, after hot water bath or before going to bed with a cotton swab or ear bud.

One who practices this nasal drop therapy called nasyam in proper given time and according to the prescribed method his eyes, nose and ears are not effected easily by any disease or by any external infection. It prevents hair graying (hair on the head, beard, eyebrows, and eyelashes) and hair fall rather they grow luxuriously. Diseases such as headache, facial paralysis, lock jaw, rhinitis etc are treated. Being nourished by inhalation of anu taila his veins, joints, ligaments and tendons of the head and neck gain greater strength. There is glow on his face, voice becomes sweet, established & stertorous. All his sense organs become clear & there is considerable strength in them. Even though a person might be growing older but the age is not reflected on his face.

By massaging oil on the feet roughness, lethargy, dryness, fatigue and numbness are instantaneously cured. Tenderness, strength and steadiness of feet are effected, eye sight becomes clear and vitiated vata is relieved. prevention from sciatica, cracking of feet, constriction of vessels and ligaments of feet is ensured if oil massage is done on the feet.

Meditation

Ideal for disciplining the mind and removing stress & strain, it is best done after a quick bath to cleanse yourself. Critical in satisfying the mind's hunger, when done well it is so nourishing that even the body can survive on less. Control of desire, or mental hunger, is the key to longevity. Anything can be meditation so long it is sincere and heartfelt.

Clothing

In shielding from extreme temperatures, it tends to reflect the temperament of the wearer in a society showing growing preponderance of the same. Should always be light & airy(unless it is very cold), and made of natural fibers as cotton, wool, linen or silk. Since energy is brought into the body through the crown of the head and exits from the soles of the feet – extracting abnormal heat from the system – the polluted energy usually collects in the footwear. So avoid wearing other's footwear, try not to take shoes into the house and walk barefoot whenever possible. And wooden sandals are healthier than animal skin or rubber shoes.

*all the above mentioned products i.e oils/ shampoo etc (according to one's constitution) can be ordered on our website .

Sound sleep is the key to good health

ANCIENT ayurvedic texts while dealing with right and ideal lifestyle have discussed three pillars of life. They are ahara (diet), nidra (sleep) and brahmacharya (observance of sexual discipline). Out of these three, the concept of proper sleep finds mention in the work of every author.

The time spent on sleep is likely to vary according to the age and other situations. On an average, it is believed that a man passes one-third of his life asleep. An infant sleeps 20 hours daily, whereas, on an average, adults require seven or nine hours and an old person five or seven hours of sleep in 24 hours. The requirement for sleep also varies individually. There are persons who are “short-sleepers” but do not show any sign of illness attributed to less sleep .

Physiology of Sleep:

When the mind including sensory and motor organs is exhausted and they dissociate themselves from their objects, then the individual sleeps.

Effect of Sleep:

Happiness, misery, nourishment, emaciation, strength, weakness, virility, sterility, knowledge, ignorance, life and death – all these occur depending on proper or improper sleep.

According to Sushruta, a good sleep enjoyed at proper time and for proper period, tends to improve the growth, strength, vigor and complexion of the body. It increases the sense of well-being by freshening the body and mind and also restores the natural equilibrium among different body tissues. So much so that the scope and importance of good sleep has been equated with the soundness of health enjoyed by a person. There is no physiological system in the body which doesn't get the salutary effect of sound and soothing sleep.

Untimely and excessive sleep takes away both happiness and longevity. The same sleep, if properly enjoyed brings happiness and longevity in human beings as real knowledge brings about spiritual power in a yogi.

Indication of day sleep:

Sleeping during the day time in all season is prescribed for those who are exhausted by singing, study, alcoholic drinks, sexual acts, elimination therapy, carrying heavy weight, walking long distance; those suffering from phthisis, wasting diseases like tuberculosis, thirst, diarrhoea, colic pain, dyspnoea, hiccup, insanity, those who are too old, too young, weak and emaciate; those injured by fall and assault, those exhausted by journey by a vehicle, anger, grief and fear, and those who are accustomed to day sleep i.e they are working in night. By this the equilibrium of dhatus and strength are maintained and kapha nourishes the organs and ensures longevity.

In summer season nights become shorter and vata gets aggravated in the body due to the absorption of fluid (adana kala). Therefore, during this season, sleep during the daytime is prescribed for all.

Contra-indications of day sleep:

Sleeping during the daytime in the seasons other than summer is not advisable as it causes vitiation of kapha and pitta. Persons with excessive fat, those who are addicted to taking unctuous substances, those with kapha constitution, those suffering from diseases due to the vitiation of kapha and those suffering from artificial poisoning should never sleep during day time. If one violates the prescription regarding sleep during the day time, he would subject himself to halimaka (type of jaundice), headache, timidness, heaviness of the body, malaise, loss of digestive power, hridaya-alepa (a feeling as if phlegm adhered to the heart), oedema, anorexia, nausea, sinusitis, rhinitis, hemicrania, urticaria, eruption, abscess, pruritus, drowsiness, coughing, diseases of the throat, impairment of the memory and intelligence, obstruction of the circulating channels of the body, fever, weakness of sensory and motor organs and enhancement of the toxic effects of artificial poisons. So one should keep in view the merits and demerits of sleep in various seasons and situations so that it may bring happiness to him.

Dreams:

After hours of working(physical or mental) our mind & body need rest , so that they are once again charged. But when we are dreaming during sleep our mind is still working , it is'nt taking rest. That is why people who dream often are not feeling fresh(mind is not recharged) even after long hours of sleep , or they want to sleep more in the daytime. The quality of sleep is hampered due to dreams which in turn hampers our thinking/working process & thus quality of life in the long run.

Effect of night awakening:

Awakening during night causes roughness in the body; sleep during daytime causes unctuousness and dosing in sitting posture does neither cause roughness nor unctuousness.

Methods and measures to induce a good sleep :

If for some reason or other, one is subjected to sleeplessness, he can instantaneously be cured by ayurvedic herbal massage, unction, hot herbal bath, intake of soup of domestic marshy and aquatic animals, Sali rice with curd, milk, herbal unctuous substance and herbal alcohol, psychic pleasure, smell of scents and hearing sounds of one's own Ayurveda believes that usually it is the vitiated "vata" which disturbs the natural body physiology and results in various types of sleep disturbances. Adverse physical situations such as like painful conditions, cramps, an urge to urinate frequently etc can interfere with sound sleep. Social situations like an irregular routine, noise, excessive use of caffeine and alcohol and eating a very heavy meal close to bedtime may also ruffle the sleep pattern. In most cases, however, the core problem is emotional which includes anxiety, stress and depression.

There are a number of ways which can help a person to fall asleep more easily. The most important of these is to establish a bed time "ritual" composed of a daily timetable and proper sleeping environment. Short-term sleep disturbances can be overcome by adopting taste, samvahana (rubbing the body by hand), application of soothing ointment to the eyes, head massage, comfortable bed, home and proper time.

simple measures like cutting back on coffee and tea, especially in the late evening hours, and avoiding alcohol, which may help sleep onset but causes early morning wakefulness.

Taking a light and timely dinner, avoiding late night TV programmes and following an exercise schedule reduce stress and help bring sound sleep.

Ayurveda offers many herbs and other classic medicines and herbal therapies(SHIRODHARA) for good sleep and most of these are safe and devoid of any hangover or addiction. For mild-to-moderate cases of insomnia, taking twice a day two gm powder of *ashwagandha, amla, brahmi and shankhpushpi (all crushed in equal parts)* is quite helpful. *Aswagandharishta, Sarsvatarishta, and Brahmi Vati are good classic medicines. Another herb called sarpagandha is famous for its somnolent effect, but all of the above mentioned herbs should be used only under expert supervision.*

Except for the cases of senile insomnia and sleeplessness associated with other chronic ailments, long-term use of sleep-inducing medicines should always be avoided.

Causes of Insomnia:

Elimination of dosas in excess from the body through purgation and emesis, fear, anxiety, anger, smoking, excessive physical exercise, excess blood letting / loss, fasting and uncomfortable bed are causes for insomnia.

The above mentioned factors along with overwork, stress, old age, diseases, specially these due to the vitiation of vatta like colic pain, etc. are known to cause sleeplessness even in normal individuals. Some are insomniac even by nature.

Bramhacharya:

It refers to the state of life when any living being refrains from excessive sensuality. This state does not mean a complete sexual abstinence but to indulge in sex in such a way, so as not to have any adverse effect on health.

Ayurveda insists on refraining oneself from sexual activities during academic years (*masturbation*) and is defined as *Bramhacharya ashram*. Ayurveda advocates sexual intercourse after marriage in the form of *gruhastha ashram* but here also excessive indulgence is prohibited as it leads to loss of physical strength, memory, lack of vitality, increases irritability (because of loss of *oja*, which is produced after considerable amount of sperm is stored in the body) and disturbs the normal physiological functions of the body by causing a dis-equilibrium of the three doshas. Ayurveda looks upon sex not merely as fun but as the means of procreation.

Ayurveda believes in the principle where excess in any walk of life be it food, sleep or sex causes harm to the body. All of this emphasize on the regulated functioning of the three triads i.e food, sleep & sex

THE SIX SEASONS

PART ONE

Northern and Southern Movements of the Sun

The seasons are defined according to the two directions in which the sun appears to be moving. As the earth makes its annual voyage around the sun, we also experience six distinct phases called the seasons. The northern and southern movements of the sun are created mainly by the earth's relationship to the sun and the moon. The northward movement of the sun, known as *adanakala* in Sanskrit, begins with the winter and ends before the beginning of summer. The southern movements start at the summer solstice and ends at the winter solstice and is known as *visargakala*.

During the northerly phase i.e *adana kala*, the sun's energy is at its strongest and sucks moisture from the earth, leaving it dry. Also the wind conjugates with the sun, adding to the harsh nature pervading the three seasons in this phase. During this half of the year the body tends to be weakened by the sun absorbing its moisture and humidity.

THE THREE SEASONS IN THE NORTHERLY PHASE OF THE SUN

The three seasons in the northerly phase of the sun are late winter, spring, and summer. From late winter, in mid-January, the absorbing effects of the sun and wind increase

progressively until their culmination in mid-June, when the sun's southward movement across the earth commences.

Due to the sun's harshness during the **northerly** phase, three of the six tastes **bitter**, **astringent** and **pungent**-are dramatically **enhanced**. These three tastes share a constricting and absorbent nature which, when used in the form of food, further weaken the physical organism.

THE THREE SEASONS IN THE SOUTHERLY PHASE OF THE SUN

The southerly phase i.e **visagra** in Sanskrit, influenced more by the moon, provides a period of cooling relief to the earth. The sun's energy begins to wane and more moisture is released into the atmosphere. During these remaining three seasons of the year, the body tends to gain strength and vitality.

Contrary to the northerly phase, the sun's southward movement begins a period that gives strength for earth's inhabitants and vegetation. During this period, the sun and wind are also restrained by the clouds and rains, triggering a period of cooling release, which begins towards the end of summer. The stupendous powers of the sun begin to slacken as a result of the course of the earth's movement, cloud formation, and the presence of wind and rain. During the southerly phase, the natures of the three remaining tastes, sweet, sour, and salty are greatly enhanced. As a result, they contribute to bulk and vigour when used in the body. The three seasons created by the southward movement of the sun are the rainy season or early fall, autumn and early winters from mid June until towards the beginning of summer, the heat of the sun slackens progressively until its weakest culmination in mid November. The end of the southerly phase and the beginning of the northerly phase marks the important junction of the changing seasons.

Daily and Seasonal Cycles

THE SEVEN DAILY CYCLES

The earth is a mobile force, which circles the sun, just as the moon circles the earth. The daily and seasonal cycles are created by the earth's dynamic relationship to both the sun and moon.

Table 14

7 DAILY CYCLES OF THE DOSHAS

	VATA	PITTA	KAPHA
DAWN	Dominant	Neutral	Accumulating
MORNING	Lessening	Accumulating	Dominant
MID-DAY	Neutral	Dominant	Lessening

AFTERNOON	Accumulating	Lessening	Neutral
DUSK	Dominant	Neutral	Accumulating
EARLY MORNING	Lessening	Accumulating	Dominant
MIDNIGHT	Neutral	Dominant	Lessening

VATA: Dominant 2:00am-6:00 am & 2:00pm-6.00 pm

PITTA: Dominant 10:00am –2:00 pm & 10.00pm-2.00 am

KAPHA: Dominant 6:00 am– 10:00 am & 6.00pm-10.00 pm

Each day we experience six phases of expansion and contraction, all of which are controlled by the sun. At dawn, when the sun is about to rise, the dry, cold, mobile aspects of Vata, gathered through the night, are prevalent. At daybreak, the cool and heavy energy of Kapha begins to flow out of the body as we rise from rest. At midday, when the sun is at its peak and saps the body with its heat, Pitta prevails. In the early afternoon, as the sun's energy begins to wane, the dry, cold energy of Vata once more dominates. At sunset, when the sun has descended on the horizon, Kapha begins to pour back into the body to induce the body to rest. Finally, at midnight, when the sun is farthest away from the earth, Pitta once more prevails

THE SEASONS OF NATURAL ACCUMULATION, AGGRAVATION AND ALLEVIATION

Given that the term *prakriti* denotes both body constitution and nature, it is only expected that with the changing seasons of nature there will be corresponding effects on the *panchmahabhutas* and thereby the *doshas* of the constitution(of the human body). Cold, dry weather for instance enhances vata, hot humid climate increases *pitta*, while cold, wet weather aggravates *kapha*.

To avoid such continued aggravation leading to imbalance of the *doshas*, Ayurveda prescribes a seasonal routine to preserve the doshic balance as the seasons change. For each season therefore, there is a unique diet (*ahar*), a distinct mode of living (*vihara*) and routine living (*karya*). These keep your doshas in a state of equilibrium and help you cope with the stresses and strains of changing seasons.

Table 15

	Accumulation	Aggravation	Alleviation
VATA	Summer	Rainy season ,early fall, Late winter	Autumn

PITTA	Rainy season	Autumn	Early winter
KAPHA	Early winter	Spring	Summer

RITUCHARYA

Dietetics and Regimen for winter:

During winter, the digestive power of human beings possessing good health (strength) is enhanced due to the restraint caused upon it by the cold wind, so much so that it is capable of digesting any foodstuff irrespective of its heaviness and quantity. When it does not get proper fuel, the digestive fire affects the nutritive fluids, resulting in the vitiation of vatta having cold quality. Therefore, during the winter one should take unctuous, sour, salty and sweet juices of the meat of the aquatic and marshy animals, which are fatty. One should also eat the meat of burrow-dwelling animals that eat by snatching. Thereafter, one should drink herbal wine and have honey.

If a person habitually takes preparation of cow's milk, cane juice, fat, oil, new rice and hot water during the winter his span of life is never decreased.

In winter one should resort to ayurvedic herbal massages, unction, application of oil on the head, fomentation, and one should reside in an underground residence or an inner heated apartment.

In the winter one should see that the conveyance, bedding and seat are well covered specially by heavy wrappers, silken cloth ropes and blankets. One should wear heavy and warm clothes and should besmear his body with heavy aguru (Aquilaria agallocha Roxb, kind of herb). One should embrace a healthy women with her well developed plumpy breasts, and with her body besmeared with aguru (Aquilaria agallocha Linn), lie down on the bed intoxicated with strong passion and may indulge in excessive sexual intercourse during the winter. One should avoid food and drinks, which are liable to vitiate vata; one should not expose him to cold wave. Under feeding should be avoided.

Dietetics and Regimen for spring:

During the spring, the accumulated kapha is liquefied by the heat of the sun and as such disturbs the power of digestion and causes many diseases. So, one should administer therapies like emesis, etc. and should avoid heavy, unctuous, sour and sweet diets. One should not sleep during day time. At the advent of spring one should habitually resort to exercise, unction, oral gargles and collyrium. The excretory orifices should be regularly washed with lukewarm water. One should besmear his body with chandana (Santalum album

Linn.) and aguru (*Aquilaria agalocha* Roxb.) and take food consisting of barley and wheat, meat of sarabha rabbit, antelope, common quail and grey partridge. One should drink herbal wines made of barley. One should also enjoy the company of women and blossoms of the garden.

Dietetics and Regimen for summer :

During the summer, the sun evaporates the moisture of the earth by its rays. In that season, the intake of sweet, cold liquid and unctuous diets and drinks is prescribed. One who takes cold mantha (a type of herbal drink) along with sugar as well as the meat of the animals or birds of aired climate, ghee and milk along with Sali rice (*Oryza sativum* Linn) during this season does not suffer from any diseases. One should either drink alcohol in little quantity or should avoid it, and even if one drinks he should drink it along with plenty of water. One should further avoid taking diets, which are salty, sour, pungent or hot. Physical exercise is also to be given up during this season. During the day time one should sleep in an air cooled apartment. During the night, after having besmeared the body with sandal wood paste, one should sleep on the open airy roof (under the cooler or air-conditioning) of the house, which is cooled by the rays of the moon. One should keep him aloof of sexual intercourse (restrict as much as possible) and should enjoy gardens, cold water and flowers during this season.

Dietetics Regimen for rainy season :

The body, which is weakened during the period of dehydration, with its digestive system, is also weakened. It is further weakened due to the vitiation of vata and other dosas during the rains. The power to digestion in the period is also affected due to the gas coming out of the earth, rainfall, increase of acidity in water. So it is advisable to be moderate as regard to diet and regimen during the rainy season.

One should abstain from taking diluted drinks in excess, day sleep, frost, water, (excessive) exercise, moving in sun, and too much indulgence in sexual intercourse. One should generally use honey in their diet and drinks.

If these days are cooler due to heavy rains accompanied by the storms, one should take food that is a little sour, salty and unctuous; this serves as an effective antidote to the vitiation of vata during the rainy season.

In order to maintain normal power of digestion one should take old barley, wheat and Sali rice (*Oryza sativum* Linn.) along with the meat of arid animals and vegetable soup. More over, one should drink the madhvika or arista (herbal type of liquor), pure rainwater or water – boiled and cooled, mixed with little honey. It is advisable to apply herbal body scrubs, ayurvedic massages, take bath and wear fragrant garlands during the season. One should wear light and clean apparel and should reside in a house devoid of humidity.

Dietetics and Regimen for autumn:

The body parts adopted for rains and cold is suddenly exposed to the heat of the sun with the beginning of autumn so the pitta accumulated during the rains gets generally vitiated. In this season, sweet, light cold and bitter foods and drinks, which have potentialities to alleviate pitta, are to be taken in proper quantity when there is good appetite. Furthermore, the meat common quail, Grey Partridge, antelope, sheep, wapiti, rabbit, rice, barley and wheat are prescribed during this season. Intake of ghee prepared with bitter medicines, purgation, and bloodletting are also prescribed for this season. One should avoid taking sunbath, fat, oil, and meat of aquatic and marshy animals, alkaline salt preparations and curd in food. One should not sleep during day time and should not expose himself to frost and wind. The water which is exposed to the heat of the sun during the day time and to the cooling rays of the moon during, is also purified by time and is detoxicated by star canopus (agastya) is known as "hamsodaka", which is spotlessly clear and is as beneficial as nectar for the purpose of bathing, drinking and swimming. Use of garlands made of autumnal flowers and clean apparel and also the rays of moon in the evening are exceedingly beneficial in this season.

Seasons and Strength

Note: S = Southern phase; N = Northerly phase

S	Early winter, <i>hemanta</i> November to January; maximum strength (peak period)
N	Late winter, <i>sisira</i> January to March; maximum strength (wane period)
N	Spring, <i>vasanta</i> March to May ; moderate strength (wane period)
N	Summer, <i>grisma</i> May to July ; minimum strength (wane period)
S	Rainy season (early fall), <i>varsa</i> July to September minimum strength (peak period)
S	Autumn, <i>sarada</i> September to November ; moderate strength (peak period)

A Woman's Season

There is an additional season for women which happens once every month during menstruation. The beginning period of the full moon is the natural cycle for ovulation. Receiving the essence of the moon at this time, a woman's sexual impulses heighten and her vitality is once more replenished. Then, during the time of the new moon she experiences the natural cycle of menstruation. Menstruation is caused by the sun absorbing energies from the earth, which in turn draws the menstrual waste from the body. When the cycle has not been tampered with by use of contraceptive pills and other birth control devices, harmful foods and

activities, and disruptive sexual activities, the natural ebb and flow of a woman's monthly cycle remains in harmony .

Regimen to be observed by women in their Menses:

During the period of menstruation, activities need to be reduced to the essential so that the body experiences the least degree of interference. Quick warm showers, or sponging(wiping down the body), is the appropriate means of bodily cleaning during menstruation. She should avoid crying nor take a head bath. A woman should refrain from all sexual foreplay & intercourse. Day sleep and collyrium during the first four days of her periods should be avoided. Considered a very fragile period for a woman, this time is to be used to rest and to allow the body to empty it self before it is renewed. She should also not indulge in loud and excessive laughter and talk, nor should she hear loud noises. Food should be easy to digest, not too heavy, not too unctuous, nor too dry or cold. She should avoid fatiguing work. All the above things during menses may lead to the vitiation of doshas, which may especially lead to gynaecological problems. One may observe these rules in order to eventually restore your natural cycle.

During ovulation, Pitta is most dominant, while Vata dominates the period of menstruation and Kapha the period following menstruation.

Seasonal Cleansing Therapies for Each Dosha

VATA: SEASONS OF AGGRAVATION

Rainy: Season (Early Fall)

During the rainy season, the earth releases more gases into the atmosphere, which tends to aggravate Vata. Further aggravation is created by the dampness of the rainy season and the higher acidity in the water at that time. The rainy period comes at a time when the body, having endured the long and harsh time of the northerly phase. Even through the rainy season marks the beginning of the southerly phase, a period of strengthening, the body is still to vulnerable to resist the onslaught of the rains.

Vata is the dosha that leaps out of bounds very quickly and is thus afflicted somewhat consistently throughout the year. However, it requires special help at the end of the period of major aggravation, which begins in the summer and runs into and throughout the rainy season. Thus Vata's first annual cleansing period comes between the early and late phases of the rainy season.

Although Vata's main season of alleviation is the rainy season (early fall), the next appropriate cleansing period occurs at the end of autumn.

NOTE: In temperate climates, where there is no definitive rainy season, the vitiation of Vata still occurs at this time due to the northerly movement of the sun; therefore, the same seasonal recommendations apply.

Late winter

Late winter is the next season in which Vata is generally alleviated. The extreme coldness of winter increases the already cold nature of Vata, and the body requires the greatest amounts of physical warmth and nourishing foods. When not amply protected or fed, the body begins to eat its own tissues, and Vata becomes aggravated as a result. Nourishing, warm foods with sour, sweet, and salty tastes are recommended to balance Vata during this time of year. Ayurvedic massages, warm atmosphere and clothing are all deemed vital so that Vata may remain balanced throughout this season.

NOTE: Although there are some cooling influences in tropical and semi-tropical climates at this time of year, the late winter cleansing programs recommended do not apply.

Summer

Vata may become mildly disturbed during the summer, due to the reduction of Kapha in the body caused by the heat of the sun.

Vata may be nurtured at this time by sweet and nourishing food, decreased sexual activity.

Autumn

The end of autumn is generally considered to be the time when all three doshas can be relieved of their excesses. Therefore, if Vata's condition was not alleviated during the rainy season, it may be removed through the elimination therapies at the end of the autumn season.

Ayurveda presents a vast and illuminating group of healing therapies. Although many of its practices have become virtually extinct, we are fortunate to have a practicing knowledge of the Panchakarma and its supporting therapies. Pancha karma therapies include those treatments that cleanse and eliminate the aggravated doshas and rejuvenate the body. This helps the tissues and doshas to regain their equanimity, which leads to sound health.

The therapies and the proper time to apply them are described below. These therapies may be used by all body types, according to how the doshas are behaving.

Vata Seasonal Cleansing Therapies

Vasti Therapy: The Ayurvedic use of herbal decoction enemas, as well as medicated herbal oil enemas, to clear the excess dosha from the large intestines.

Enema decoction are derived from herbs (permutation and combination of more than 100 herb) such as castor, *dashamula*, *gotu kola*, and liquorice etc. The medicated herbal oil enema is usually administered as a separate procedure. These enemas re-direct the apana vata to its normal downward flow and soothe Vata disturbances in the body.

Pinda Sweda: The Ayurvedic use of fomentation therapy to thoroughly invigorate the body. This therapy stimulates the vital tissues and organs, while alleviating body pain. Swedan (fomentation) therapy also removes fear from the mind.

Abhyanga: The application of the Ayurveda system of massage, using herbal medicated oils, sesame oil, sandalwood oil, and so on.

Abhyanga is a vital Ayurvedic practice used to restore equanimity to the body's muscular system. This massage also promotes both peace of mind and strength of limbs and is highly rejuvenating.

Shirovasti : The Ayurvedic practice of pouring medicated oil on the head and allowing it to remain for a period of time.

This therapy promotes mental clarity, stimulates memory power, removes stress, arrests hairfall and hairgreying and completely revitalizes the body.

Shirobhayanga: The Ayurvedic application of medicated oils to the head. Various Ayurvedic herbs (permutation and combination of more than 250 herb) such as *bremhi,avala,shankpushpi etc* are boiled in sesame oil in preparation for shirobhayanga. The head is then amply massaged with the oil, giving life and balance to the sense organs and rejuvenating the entire body.

PITTA : SEASONS OF AGGRAVATION

Autumn

Accumulated Pitta from the rainy season becomes aggravated during the autumn season, a time when the digestive fire is already tremendously affected by the long and dry period of the previous northerly phase. Pitta is further afflicted by the extreme conditions of the rainy season that precedes autumn. As the sun begins to brighten the sky, providing the heat necessary to evaporate the moisture of the rainy season just passed, it affects the vulnerable Pitta, causing vitiation of both the digestion and blood systems . At this time, the liquid that Pitta has accumulated during the rainy season dampens the digestive fire, resulting in a loss of appetite.

In order for Pitta to retrieve its normal and excellent digestion, the Ayurvedic purgative therapy of *virechana* is recommended (See below). The best time of the autumn season for any form of cleansing therapy is at its tail end , i.e. the latter part of the season when the dosha is in its most fluent form.

Note - In tropical and semi-tropical climates, the best time is at the end of autumn.

Rainy Season

There are many Ayurvedic healing therapies that may be observed during both the rainy season and throughout the autumn period. These include massages, using aromatic and cooling oils such as coconut oil combined with sandalwood essential oil; daily body brushing with herbal body scrubs ; altering one's activities to those that are milder and more harmonious, especially during the initial stages of doshic vulnerability; aroma therapy using herbal oils (permutation and combination of more than 100 herbs) like mint, liquorice (*yashtimadhu*), sandalwood, jasmine, or vetiver (*usheer*), to calm the mind and stomach.

Pitta Seasonal Cleansing Therapies

Virechana Therapy: The use of Ayurvedic purgatives (permutation and combination of more than 500 herbs) to clear the lower pathways of the body.

This therapy helps to purify the blood and to cleanse the stomach, sweat glands, small intestines, colon, kidneys, liver, and spleen. Substances such as psyllium husk(isabgol), castor oil, cow's milk with ghee, *trivrrita* and *triphala* are used to induce purgation.

Rakta Mokshana: Although this form of therapy, commonly referred to as bloodletting, is seldom used in India today, and is illegal in the United States and Europe, when performed correctly it is an effective form of therapy to extract toxins from the blood. Generally, toxins that accumulated under the skin and around the marma points (the energy junctions of the body's meridians) are eliminated through the process of blood-letting. Because Pitta manifests in the waste products of blood, many skin ailments, such as rash, eczema, and acne, are caused by toxins circulating in the blood system. The drawing of a small amount of blood from the vein relieves the blood tension created by these toxins. Internal use of certain bitter herbs (permutation and combination of more than 100 herbs) such as *neem*, manjishta, sariva, guduchi and turmeric etc, may also be used to purify the blood.

Shirodhara: The use of a decoction, such as medicated ghee and buttermilk, sugarcane juice, and herbal oils on the forehead, to relieve burning sensations or pain in the head and body.

In the traditional Ayurvedic application, the person lies down on a wide, seasoned, wooden log. A vessel called *dhara chatti*, which resembles a wide top funnel, or a *dhara patra*, a pot with a hole in bottom, is used, through which the medicated herbal oil is dripped rhythmically onto the centre of the forehead where the third eye is located. Shirodhara is a beautiful therapy which stimulate our subconscious mind and lulls the entire bodily organism into a state of calmness. This therapy is used to balance all three doshas, employing medicated oils and substances best suited to the different doshas and various ailments.

Kapha : seasons of aggravation

Spring

Although Kapha enjoys the strongest stamina of the three doshas, it experiences its fragility in the springtime. After the long, cold, and inert periods of early and late winter, Kapha begins to soften so that most of the semi-frozen wastes accumulated during the previous seasons liquify.

Kapha's imbalances are expressed through the feeling of lethargy, cold, sore throat, lung congestion, cold body extremities, and so on. Winter changes to spring, almost at the very height of the northernly phase of the sun, when strength and vigor tend to become depleted by the sun's harshness. The softening out of liquid waste in the body retards both the digestive fire and the body's metabolism, which is why Kapha's potential listlessness and lethargy increase. The gap before the full bloom of the spring season is the best time of the

year for the kapha dosha to be thoroughly cleansed by means of both the elimination therapies and rejuvenative therapies. These processes relieve the excess dosha when it is in its most fluid form and not yet rooted in the body in the form of disease. Kapha then has plenty of time to mobilize during the remaining season and does not cause obstruction in the channels.

Rainy Season

Kapha experience similar difficulties during the rainy season (early fall), a time when the spring seasonal process is reversed. The end of the summer heat and the ensuing decline in strength is braced up by the damp and humid cold of the rainy season. During this period, replenishing therapies used to maintain Kapha's balance include: seasonally appropriate foods; Ayurvedic massage with medicated oil; inhalation therapies using aromas such as eucalyptus and aromatic smoke

Kapha Seasonal Cleansing Therapies

Vamana Therapy: Vamana, also known as emesis therapy, is an ancient therapeutic method for eliminating Kapha's accumulation through the oral pathway.

Vamana releases congestion from the lungs and provides immediate relief for asthmatic and bronchial attacks. Vamana is used for serious Kapha disorders and in skin diseases, diabetes, chronic disorders of the lungs and stomach, sinusitis and tonsillitis.

Oil massage and fomentation applied to the chest on the evening before the emesis therapy is the preliminary steps taken to induce the state most conducive to this therapy.

Nasya: It is the nasal application of medication in both powder and liquid form. The powdered medication is inserted into the nose through a tube and the liquid medication is applied with a dropper. The nose is the gateway to the cerebral, sensory, and motor functions of the body. Disorders associated with the movement of prana are usually corrected by nasya therapy. Excess kapha stored in the throat, nose, sinus, and head are also removed from the body as a result of nasya. Herbal powders, such as *brahmi*, *shatavari* etc as well as substances such as milk, ghee, medicated oils, ginger and garlic etc are used, depending on the dosha and the nature of the disorder.

Relationship Between the Doshas and the seasons

The doshas are to the body what the seasons are to the earth. Both the doshas and the seasons are created from the five elements. The elemental aspects of the seasons are in the form of space, wind, sun, moon, rain, and the earth. Here, we must understand the interplay between the doshas and the seasonal influences within the primacy of the five elements. The doshas are not simply the dynamic energy within the body; rather they are influenced primarily by seasonal variations. Knowledge of the seasons is related to the balancing of the

doshas. Therefore, a thorough understanding of the function of the doshas within the body necessitates an understanding of the variations within each season, the junction between seasons, and the annual rotation of the six seasons.

In many cases, the designated seasonal tastes and qualities appear to be contradictory. For this reason, charts are provided to assist you in coordinating your body type with its seasonal tastes and qualities. (See below)

Role of Taste

It is as important to realize that every food's unique combination of attributes will influence its taste and the action it causes in the body. With every taste having a different action – as detailed below. ***Astanga Hridayam*** clearly describes the characteristics of each of the six tastes and problems that might be experienced from its habitual over-consumption. Most foods being a combination of two or more of these tastes e.g. coffee is bitter and pungent.

Sour

Comprised of the elements earth & fire, it increases ***pitta*** and ***kapha*** and is good for heart and digestion. Stimulates ***agni***, moves inactive ***Vata*** energy down the pelvic cavity, sets the teeth on edge and increases salivation. Excess use may cause looseness and flabbiness, loss of strength, giddiness, itching, irritation, a whitish yellow pallor, swelling, thirsts and fever, and diseases arising from excess ***pitta*** and ***kapha***.

Sweet

Related to earth & water, it increases ***pitta*** and ***vata***, producing greater strength in the tissues and value to the aged, wounded, emaciated and children. Universally liked, it often adheres to the inside of the mouth, giving a feeling of pleasure, contentment and comfort. Good for the complexion, hair, senses and oja, it also increases breast milk and helps unite broke parts like bones. By its virtue it prolongs life and helps life activities. In excess however it may cause diseases arising from fat and excess ***kapha*** e.g. obesity, skin infections, unconsciousness, diabetes, enlargement of neck glands or malignant tumors etc.

Salt

The water & fire in salty taste increases ***pitta*** and ***kapha***. It clears obstruction of channels and pores and increases the digestive activity and salivation. Also responsible for lubrication and sweating, it penetrates the tissues. An excess of it may cause baldness and graying of the hair, wrinkles, thirst, skin diseases, blood disorders and loss of body strength.

Pungent

Fire & air in pungent increases ***vata*** and ***pitta*** and mitigates ***kapha***. Increases hunger, is digestive, causes irritation, brings secretion from the eyes, nose & mouth, and gives a burning

sensation to the mouth. It dilates the channels and breaks up the hard masses. But an excess use of it may cause thirst, depletion of reproductive tissue and strength, fainting, contracture, tremors, pain in the waist and back, and other disorders related to excess of **pitta** and **kapha**.

Bitter

Air & space being its elements, it increases **pitta** and **kapha**. Drying up moisture from fat, muscles, faces and urine. It cleans the mouth and destroys the perception of taste. It is said to cure anorexia, worms, bacteria, parasites, thirst, skin diseases, loss of consciousness, fever, nausea, burning sensation. But in excess, it increases **vata**, causing diseases of **vata** origin and depletion of tissues.

Astringent

Air & earth increases **vata** and controls increased **pitta** and **kapha**. It cleans the blood and causes healing of ulcers. Like bitter, it too dries up moisture from fat. It absorbs water, causing constipation and hindering digestion of undigested food. Its excess use causes stasis of food without digestion, flatulence, pain in the cardiac region, emaciation, loss of virility, obstruction of channels and constipation.

BALANCING SEASONAL TASTES AND BODY TYPE TASTES

The apparent contradictions between the tastes and qualities beneficial to each body type, and the tastes and qualities suggested by the cyclical nature of the seasons are to be understood in the following way: The tastes which are generally good for each body type may become heightened or prevalent in the body and external environment due to seasonal influences. For example, of the six tastes, the pungent flavour naturally predominates during the summer; although considered a generally good all-year taste for Kapha types, it needs to be used in the summer season with discretion. This is because in summer the pungent taste prevails out of the six tastes. (According to the seasonal accumulation of the doshas, in summers there is decrease of kapha and the pungent taste also causes decrease in kapha and increase of vata which may lead to vata/kapha disorders)

Similarly, the salty taste which predominates during autumn, although considered a generally excellent all-year taste for Vata types, needs to be reduced during the autumn season, even by Vata types (According to the seasonal accumulation of the doshas in autumn there is alleviation of pitta, the salty taste also causes alleviation of pitta which may lead to pitta disorders).

In the early winter, the sweet taste predominates, and although generally an excellent all-year taste for Pitta types, needs to be reduced during the early winter, even by Pitta types.

(According to the seasonal accumulation of the doshas in winter there is increase in kapha and sweet taste also causes increase of kapha which may lead to kapha disorders)

Table 16

TASTES OF THE SEASONS**Northerly Phase (Winter Solstice to Summer Solstice)**

Season	Dry Tastes	Element Composition	Dosha
Late Winter	Bitter	Air and space	Vata
Spring	Astringent	Air and earth	Vata & Kapha
Summer	Pungent	Air and fire	Vata & Pitta

Note: the dry tastes are created by the progressive northward movement of the sun

Southerly Phase (Summer Solstice to Winter Solstice)

Season	Dry Tastes	Element Composition	Dosha
Rainy Season (early fall)	Sour	Earth and fire	Pitta and Kapha
Autumn	Salty	Water and fire	Pitta
Early Winter	Sweet	Water and earth	Kapha

Note: the moist tastes are created by the progressive southward movement of the sun

Beneficial Tastes According to Doshas

Vata : sweet, sour, salty

Pitta : Sweet, bitter, astringent

Kapha: pungent, bitter, astringent

Table 17

SEASONAL TASTE ADJUSTMENTS

	VATA	PITTA	KAPHA
LATE WINTER	Major: sour, salty, unctuous Minor: sweet	Major: sweet, sour*, salty,* warm, unctuous Minor: bitter, astringent, cool, light	Major: sour,* astringent, pungent, warm, moderate unctuous Minor: bitter, salty, dry
SPRING	Major: sweet, salty, warm, moderate unctuous, alkaline Minor: sour, pungent	Major: sweet, bitter pungent*, warm Minor: astringent, cool, alkaline	Major: pungent, moderate astringent, alkaline, ward, dry Minor: bitter, salty
SUMMER	Major: sweet, sour, warm, moderate unctuous Minor: bitter, salty, cool, light	Major: sweet, bitter, cool, moderate unctuous Minor: astringent, light	Major: bitter, astringent, moderate sweet, warm, dry Minor: pungent, cool

RAINY SEASON (early fall)	Major: sweet, moderate bitter,* salty, moderate unctuous, warm	Major: bitter, astringent, moderate salty, moderate sweet, warm, moderate unctuous	Major: bitter, astringent, pungent, warm, light
Temperate Climates	Minor: sour	Minor: pungent, cool Major: sweet, bitter, salty,* warm, moderate unctuous	Minor: salty, sour, dry
Tropical and Semitropical	Major: sweet, salty, moderate unctuous, warm	Minor: astringent, pungent	Major: moderate salty,* pungent, bitter, warm, moderate unctuous.
Climates	Minor: bitter, pungent		Minor: astringent, dry
AUTUMN	Major: sweet, sour, warm, light Minor: salty, astringent	Major: sweet, bitter, astringent, cool, light Minor: pungent	Major: bitter, astringent, moderate sweet, warm, light
EARLY WINTER	Major: salty, bitter,* moderate sour, warm unctuous Minor: pungent, sweet	Major: bitter, astringent, moderate pungent,* warm, moderate unctuous Minor: sweet	Major: pungent, astringent, bitter, warm, moderate unctuous Minor : salty

***Vata types:** If strong tendency to Vata disorders, use bitter as minor tastes and increase the use of sweet and salty tastes during the seasons indicated.

***Pitta types:** If strong tendency to Pitta disorders, use sour, pungent and salty as minor tastes and increase the use of bitter, astringent and sweet tastes during the seasons indicated.

***Kapha types :** If strong tendency to Kapha disorders, use sweet,sour and salty as minor tastes and increase the use of pungent, bitter and astringent tastes during the seasons indicated.

[vata, pitta & kapha disorders can be seen in the charts mentioning **increase in the respective doshas** in **DOSHIC IMBALANCES**]

Table 18

SEASONAL DO'S AND DON'TS

Climates	DO	DON'T
Late Winter	Sour, salty, moderate sweet, unctuous, substantial quantity of food	Excess sweet, pungent, bitter, dry, cold, raw foods
SPRING	Pungent, astringent, moderate sweet, moderate salty, warm, moderate quantity of food	Sour, excess sweet, bitter, too many fluids, cold
Summer	Sweet, bitter, astringent, cool, moderate unctuous, sufficient fluid	Salty, sour, pungent, hot, insufficiency of fluids
Rainy Season (early fall) Temperate	Sweet, moderate sour, moderate salty, warm food,	Pungent, bitter, astringent, light, cold food. excess unctuous
Tropical and Semitropical Climates	Sour, salty, unctuous, moderate sweet, moderate unctuous, warm	Pungent, bitter, astringent, excess sweet, cold, dry
Autumn	Sweet, bitter, astringent, cool, light, non-oily	Sour, salty, pungent, hot, oily, excess food, heavy foods
Early Winter	Salty, bitter, astringent, moderate sour, warm, moderate unctuous, Moderate quantity	Sweet, excess sour, excess cold, dry, excess food, raw foods

The "Seasonal Don'ts" may be used occasionally as a minor taste. See previous chart.

Important Rules And Regulations Related to DIET :**CONCEPT OF DIET IN AYURVEDA :****1) Definition :**

Diet is that – what we eat.

It includes everything we eat or drink.

Diet is the cause of the very existence, Energy , Colour & 'Oja' (immunity/Ultimate purified form of all the Sharir Dhatus i.e Body tissues) of every living being on this earth.

2) 'Diet' is the cause of the birth, maintenance, & destruction of all forms of life on this earth.

From 'Diet' only we acquire following things – constant growth, unhampered growth , Energy , Wellbeing – Health, Colour, Proper functioning of the Indriyas (Sense Organs).

Improper diet is the major cause of all illness according to Ayurveda.

From all above statements one can say that ' In short everything depends on diet.

AYURVEDIC CONCEPT OF FORM OF DIET

According to Ayurveda Body is said to be made up of Panch Mahabhutas (Pentads) & hence the food also needs to be Panchbhautic (Made up of Panch (five) Mahabhutas) then only food can get digested & be utilized for the growth of Panchamahabhutas (the basic constituents of body) which in turn results in growth of body.

The diet should be made up of all the six tastes i.e. Sweet, Sour, Salty, Hot, Bitter, Astringent.

It has also been stated that according to the properties diet again can be of 2 types i.e.

Heavy to digest , & Easy or light to digest .

Ideal Diet

The ideal diet should have following properties:-

- 1) It should increase the strength of body.
- 2) It should be tasty/it should be such that it should be liked by the one, who is taking it.
- 3) It should give energy instantaneously / immediately after taking it.
- 4) It should have the capacity to withhold the body & give its strength & energy to carry on its regular functions.
- 5) It should satisfy the one taking it .
- 6) It should be hot, unctuous ,not dry when taken.
- 7) Should be taken in proper quantity.
- 8) It should not be incompatible .(mentioned in uneasy combinations below)

The food (Diet) with all above properties is said to be Ideal diet.

The Diet which is of all the properties explained above can only do the functions prescribed to it.

3) FUNCTIONS OF DIET (food)

- 1) Instantly satisfying.
- 2) Gives strength/energy.
- 3) Maintains the body & maintains the functions of the body .
- 4) Increases longevity.
- 5) Increases the Digestive fire , Vitality , Recollecting Power , & Oja .

4) TYPES OF DIET

There are four types of diet

- i) That which can be drunk
- ii) That which can be licked
- iii) Easily chewable e.g. Rice etc.
- iv) Hard food substances which need to be chewed e.g. Sugarcane, meat.

Some have given 6 types in addition to the four stated above :

- v) which should be sucked e.g. Mango.

vi) Which needs mastication by teeth, these include very hard food materials e.g. various nuts.

Some have stated 8 types / forms of food / Diet. In addition to the above 6.

vii) Those which can only be eaten after being grinded into powder, various pastes etc.

viii) Food substances like Sugar candy etc.

5) According to Nature – Diet has been classified into 2 types Heavy Diet & Light diet. Rain water, Raktashali (Red rice), Sathe Sali (Old rice), Mudga, Eina (black deer) & Iava (kind of bird and in arid regions) are light / laghu.

Milk, sugarcane, fresh Rice, Udad(black gram) & meat of the animals from Anoop Desh – land with abundant water & plantation (Marshy lands, equatorial Rain forests) are considered to be Guru (Heavy)

6) Seven Concept of Diet

The following points are important in the making the Diet complete – (promoting health) or improper- (giving Rise to various diseases).

- 1) Basic nature / properties of the food
- 2) Combination of 2 or more food material changes the qualities / properties of food material.
- 3) Due to boiling, roasting etc. there is change in the properties of the food.
- 4) Quantity of food we take.
- 5) Region has 2 meanings – the region where the food is being taken & Secondly region means the area the food is been produced affects the properties of food material.
- 6) The time when one takes the food.
- 7) The order in which one takes the food.

7) TIME OF TAKING DIET

Proper excretion of urine & Stools, Doshas go to their respective sthanas i.e sites, strotasas are clean and free from blockage & indriyas i.e. sense organs are sharp and attentive, one feels lightness of body, Belching with proper smell to it. With proper excretion of 'Apan vayu', Heart becomes Nirdosha i.e. we feel like eating & drinking.

When all the above signs are present then only one should eat; as this is the proper time for taking the diet.

It is said that when the Doshas go to their own respective places & the Strotaras (channels) become clean then only one should take Food.

QUANTITY OF FOOD TO BE TAKEN

It is decided according to digestive capacity of Agni. If Agni is weak then one should take food only once or should take food in less quantity.

Food taken once i.e. at one time which gets digested completely & properly, is said to be Matra/Quantity of food to be taken.

Considering four parts of the Stomach, one should take food such that 2 parts of the Stomach get filled by the food taken, one part to be filled by water or other liquid matter & one part should be kept free for the 'Vayu' / Gas to move.

One should take diet in proper quantity. The quantity of diet to be taken depends on the digestion capacity of the person which varies from person to person & so does the Matra.

20) The amount of food, which without disturbing the equilibrium of dhatus & doshas of the body gets digested as well as metabolized in proper time is to be regarded as the proper quantity.

The proper quantity of food does depend upon the nature of food articles. If the food article is heavy only three fourth or half of the stomach capacity is to be filled up. Even in the case of light food articles excessive intake is not conducive to the maintenance of the power of digestion & metabolism.

IMPORTANCE OF FOOD TAKEN IN PROPER QUANTITY

Taken in Appropriate quantity, food certainly helps the individual in bringing about strength, complexion happiness & longevity without disturbing the equilibrium of dhatus & doshas of the body.

Indicated Food :-

One should regularly (can take everyday) take Shastika (a kind of rice harvested in sixty days), Sali (oryza sativum), yellow gram, food cooked in Rock Salt, Amalaka (emblica officinalis), Rain Water, Ghee, Meat of animals dwelling in arid climate & Honey.

Contradicted Food :

One should not regularly take heavy articles such as dried meat, dry vegetables, lotus rhizomes & lotus stalk. One should never take meat of a diseased animal. Moreover, one should not regularly take boiled buttermilk, inspissated milk with pork, beef, meat of buffalo with fish curd, & barley.

ORDER IN WHICH ONE SHOULD TAKE THE DIET

First, one should eat food of sweet taste for the purpose of Vata Pitta pacification. Sweet taste is helpful for pacification of vata dosha present in the digestive tract or intestines.

Then one should take sour & salty substances for they do the function of increasing the digestive juices. Lastly one should take food of bitter and pungent taste for the purpose of pacification of 'Kapha'.

One should take fruits like pomegranate first in the diet. Then one should take liquid material & then lastly semisolid & solid food.

EIGHT FACTORS DETERMINING THE UTILITY FOOD.

The Eight factors which determine the utility or otherwise of various types of food are.

- 1) nature of food articles
- 2) method of their processing
- 3) combination
- 4) Quantity
- 5) Habitat
- 6) Time
- 7) Rules governing intake of food.
- 8) Wholesomeness to individual who takes it.

21) RULES FOR TAKING FOOD

Healthy individuals as well as patients should observe the following:

While having food articles which are most wholesome by nature; one should eat only that food in proper quantity which is hot, unctuous & not contradictory in potency & that too after the digestion of the previous meal, food should be taken in proper place with all the accessories, without talking & laughing with concentration of mind & paying due regard to oneself, not too fast or too slowly.

Important Rules And Regulations Related to Diet

- 1) Eat to live but don't live to eat.
- 2) Eat food which is beneficial.
- 3) Eat food in a moderate quantity.
- 4) Don't eat food, properties of which are not known to you.
- 5) Don't eat food in a hurry or when you are in a disturbed state of mind, full of tensions, strains, and emotional outbreaks. Regain peace of mind and then enjoy food with happy and hearty mood.
- 6) Wash your hands, feet and mouth, using clean utensils in a clean place which is well lighted and well-ventilated.
- 7) Fill half quantity of stomach with food, one fourth quantity with water and liquid substances and keep the remaining one fourth for air.
- 8) A person who takes only one full meal a day is called Yogee (or Yoga – practitioner). He takes light breakfast in the morning and the healthy and happy life.
- 9) A person who takes two full meals in a day is called 'Bhogi' i.e. a lusty and greedy person who lives mostly to eat and suffers from illness and or ill health from time to time.
- 10) A person who takes full meals more than two times is called Rogee or a sick person. He is a gluttonous person and lives only to eat. He is always sick and away from health.
- 11) Don't do yogic exercises immediately after taking food. It is safe to do them three hours after taking food. It is better therefore to do Yogic exercise early morning or in the evening when the stomach is empty.
- 12) Don't take food immediately after doing yogic exercises, but one hour after doing them.

- 13) Don't go to bed immediately after taking supper wait for a minimum of one hour after it.
- 14) According to Ayurveda well balanced diet consists of food stuffs having six tastes namely Sweet, Sour, Salty, Pungent, Bitter and Astringent.

Diet and Mind :

Yogic and Ayurvedic aspects. Modern Dietetic consideration is only related to body. But it is a uniqueness of Yogashastra and Ayurveda which shows intimate relationship between diet and mind. Both the sciences assert with proofs that diet affects mentality of a human being. Satva (virtue), Raja (Aggressive desire) and Tama (Ignorant sloth) are the basic qualities of mind. Satvaguna is always strengthening, invigorating and vitalising. Satvaguna expresses essence, understanding, purity, clarity, compassion and love. Rajoguna implies movement, aggressiveness and extroversion and it operates on a sensual level. Tamoguna manifests ignorance, inertia, heaviness and dullness.

Satvaguna is a positive virtue and it strengthens and stabilizes mind. Rajoguna and Tamoguna are negative attributes which destabilise and weaken the mind. Yet all the three attributes are required of course in a balanced state and having a strong control of satvaguna are necessary for normal functioning of the mind.

As the final goal of yoga practitioner is elevation and uplifting of mental faculties to attain eternal bliss or moksha he/she should do everything to go on increasing his satvaguna through proper diet and good behaviour. Yoga becomes the destroyer of all woes and sorrows and can be accomplished only by him who is regulated and moderate in diet and recreation, regulated in speech and actions, and regulated in thinking and sleeping too.

The Taste Process

The first subjective experience of a substance on the tongue is taste (**rasa**). A short time later, one feels heating or cooling energy (**virya**). Finally the substances have an action on urine, faeces and sweat (**vipak**). For instance, for hot chilli peppers, one immediately experiences its pungent taste (rasa) and heating energy (virya) , observing a burning sensation in the faces and urine (vipaka) .

Virya – Heating or Cooling Energy

When any medicinal herb or food substance is put in the mouth, the first experience is its taste. Later, and in some cases immediately, you feel its heating or cooling energy, either in the mouth or stomach. This change is all due to its action or potent energy called **Virya**.

By experience, one can form general rules about what a taste "feels like" in the body. For example, the sweet taste has a cooling energy, due to its heaviness. This action provokes **kapha** and is pleasing to **pitta** and **vata**. But there are occasional exceptions to this rule. Honey is sweet but have heating energy. This unexpected effect is termed **Prabhav**. In this same way, sour taste is usually heating expect in the instance of lime, which is cooling.

Vipak – Post-Digestive Effect

The final post-digestive effect of the taste on the body, mind and consciousness is called **Vipak**. While sweet and salty taste have a sweet *vipak*, sour taste has a sour *vipak*, but that of pungent, bitter and astringent tastes are all pungent. Knowledge of the energy and post-digestive effect of food or medicinal herbs makes understanding of its action on bodily system easy. This knowledge being essential for both healing and cooking.

Prabhav – Specific Unexplained Action

When two substances of similar taste, energy and post-digestive effect show entirely different action, it is called *prabhav*. There is no logical explanation for this. All gem stones, crystals and mantras aid healing due to their *prabhav*.

Prabhav is therefore the specific, dynamic, hidden action of the awareness present in the substance.

Diet Planning

Choice of Food

In planning the diet it is necessary to know which food to have or avoid based on ones personal **doshic** constitution or imbalance. For easy reference therefore some of the acceptable and avoidable items for each doshic type has been listed below:

Table 19

Fruits					
Vata		Pitta		Kapha	
No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
apples	Avocades	apples(sour)	apples(sweet)	bananas	apples
dates	grapes	berries(sour)	berries(sweet)	dates	berries
figs (dry)	lemons	cranberries	coconuts	grapes	cranber ries
pomegranate	bananas	strawberries	dates	water melons	pomegr anates
raisin	sweet oranges	banana	figs	sweetners	dried fruits
pears	Plum	lemon	avocados	melons	strawbe rries in small amount s
	figs (fresh)	peaches	sweet melons	mango	

mango	plums pomegranates	coconut
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Dairy

Vata		Pitta		Kapha	
No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
cheese	dairy	yogurt	fresh ghee	milk	just a little
cow's milk	Fresh, whole	sour cream	fresh whole un-homogenized milk	clarified butter cheese	dairy goat milk and ghee in moderation
powdered yogurt	un-homogenized milk Ghee little butter white meat (chicken, fish or turkey – baked or broiled) chicken broth				

Grains

Vata		Pitta		Kapha	
No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Barley	white or brown basmati rice	Corn	white or brown basmati rice, wheat	Bread(with yeast)	barley buckwheat couscous millet muesli
corn	wheat	millet	barley	oat(cooked)	
cereals granola	Oats quinoa	oat(dry) quinoa	oat bran oats	wheat white rice	oats oat bran small amount of wheat
millet		polenta	wheat or wheat bran	cane	

tapioca

Meat

Vata		Pitta		Kapha	
No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
turkey	white meat (chicken, fish and turkey - baked or broiled)	meat	baked or broiled chicken, turkey or white fish in moderate amounts	beef	fresh water fish
rabbit	chicken broth	chicken		buffalo	shrimp
pork		ducks		chicken	rabbit
lamb		eggs		duck	venison
		pork			small amount of white meat
		salmon			
		sardines			

Vegetables

Vata		Pitta		Kapha	
No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Cabbage (raw)	beets	Beet	asparagus	Cucumber	asparagus
Cauliflower (raw)	cauliflower (cooked)	greens	broccoli	Olives	beets
Peas	Leeks	Carrots	cabbage	Potato	bitter melons
Potatoes	carrots	Garlic	cucumber	Pumpkin	broccoli
Spinach	asparagus	Green Chillies	cooked onions	Spaghetti	beet
Eggplant	cilantro	Onion	sweet	Squash	greens
Mushroom	fennel and a little bit of garlic	Peppers	potatoes	Tomato (raw)	cabbage
Raddish (raw)	green beans	Prickly pear	sprouts		garlic
Spinach	greens chillies	Radishes	squash and a small amount of okra and cauliflower		fennel

Tomatoes (raw)	Okra	Spinach		carrot
	parsnips	Turnips		horsera dish leafy
	pumpkins			greens leeks
	radishes(preferably cooked)			lettuce okra cooked onions spinach sprouts squash turnip and a small amount of artichok e, burdock root and brussel s sprouts

Spices

Vata		Pitta		Kapha	
No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes

Carawas	Ajwan Almond extract	Ajwan Anise	Black pepper cardamom	Salt	chillies, ginger, cinnam on, clove, fenugre ek and bay leaves Ajawan Arvise Asafoeti da Bay leaf Carawa y Cinnam on
	Aruse Basil Bay leaf Black pepper All spices are good. cilantro, cummin, corriander and fennel seeds, turmeric and asafoetida(hing)	Asafoctida Basil Bay leaf Garlic Ginger Mace Pippai Mustard Seeds	coriander seeds cinnamon cilantro fennel seeds fresh basil dill turmeric and a small amount of cumin and fresh ginger		Dill Mace Nutmeg Saffron

Nuts

Vata		Pitta		Kapha	
No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes

None	small amount of almonds pecans and sesame seeds	Almonds Cashew Peanuts Pinenuts	sunflower seeds and almonds in moderate amount	Almonds Black Walnuts Brazil nuts Filberts Hazelnuts Peanuts Pine nuts Walnuts	small amount of almonds, charole
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Uneasy Combinations for all body types

The next important factor requiring attention in the planning of diet is the incompatibility of certain combinations of food that disturb the normal functioning of gastric fire and interfere with the equilibrium of the three doshas, thereby creating toxins (ama) – the root cause of all ailments. A list of the same is indicated below :

Table 20

Milk with	fish, meat, curd, sour fruits, bread containing yeast, cherries, yogurt
Melons with	grains, starch, fried foods, dairy products
Starches with	eggs, tea, dairy, bananas, dates, most fruits
Honey with	when mixed with an equal amount of clarified butter, boiled or cooked honey
Radishes with	milk, bananas, raisins
Nightshades with	potato, yogurt, milk, melon, cucumber, tomato, eggplant
Yogurt with	milk, sour fruits, melons, hot drinks, meat, fish, mangos, starch, cheese
Eggs with	milk, meat, yogurt, melons, cheese, fish, bananas
Fruit with	with any other food
Corn with	dates, raisins, bananas
Lemon with	yogurt, milk, cucumbers, tomatoes

Water in Ayurveda :

Different synonyms for water are used by the brilliant scholars of Ayurveda representing either the properties of the water or importance of the water in human life. Jeevanam is a synonym for water which means life. Life could not exist on this planet without water. For an Ayurveda

physician water is not only an essential nutrient but is one among the five basic elements essential for the creation of this universe. It is Jalamahabhoot i.e water element. According to charaka liquid, unctuous, cold, soft, sticky & sweet taste are the attributes of the substances predominated by water. Moistening, unctuous, binding, oozing, softening and exhilarating are the effects of watery edible substances on the human body. Taste is also an attribute of jalamahabhoot. According to charaka water is the basis of taste. Water is basically tasteless but as soon as it falls from the sky gets endowed with the properties of the five elements, or comes in contact with other substances & taste appears in water.

Classification of Water:

Charaka while describing the various types of water mentioned that, entire water is only one which falls down as rain from the sky, that while falling or having fallen down depend on place and time. He further says that water while falling down from sky & coming in contact with the moon the air & the sun which follows time, gets impregnated with the properties of cold, hot, unctuous, non unctuous etc. & so on, as it rests on the ground.

Soil & The Water :

According to Charaka the pure rain water has by nature six qualities namely cold, pure, wholesome, palatable, clean & light. But when water falls on earth its properties change according to the soil on which it has fallen. In white soil it becomes astringent, in pale it becomes bitter, in brown alkaline, in usara i.e red saline, in hilly area pungent, & in black soil it becomes sweet. The water from rain, hailstone and snow is tasteless.

The Season & The Water :

According to charaka-

- (1) The fresh rain water of the rainy season is heavy, causes blockage to the channels & sweet. That of autumn is thin, light, and which does not block the channels in the body.
- (2) In early winter water is unctuous, aphrodisiac, strength promoting & heavy.
- (3) In later winter it is light and alleviates kapha & vata.
- (4) The water of spring season is astringent, sweet & rough.
- (5) In summer it is non blocking for channels.

The River & The Water :

Charakacharya has described the properties of water from different rivers. It's a huge ecological observation. It shows the wisdom & the extent of eco-friendly nature of oriental thinking.

The river originating from Himalayas, constantly used by the sages having water that is obstructed, agitated & beaten is wholesome & virtuous, says Charaka. (According to modern science the water agitated & beaten by the big stones in the bed of the river contains more

oxygen). Those originating from Himalaya, carrying stones & sand have clean water which is like nectar. This rivers flowing towards west have clean water & are wholesome while those joining the eastern sea are mostly mild flowing & do not have clean water.

Good Water

The water which falls from the sky is called as Aindrya Jala. It is the principal drinking water. Best water is slightly astringent, sweet, thin, non slimy, light, non rough & does not block the channels of the body says Charaka.

Jala Mahaboot & Human Body :

While describing the predominance of Mahabhootas in human body in Charak samhita Charakacharya cleared stated that, " the liquid, mobile, dull, unctuous, soft & slimy, plasma, blood, fat, kapha, pitta, urine, sweat etc. along with the taste & gustatory sense are predominantly made up to Jala Mahabhoot. These are the watery ingredients of the body.

Udakavaha Srotas :

Srotas are defined as transporting passages of dhatus undergoing transformation. For udakavaha srotas, the origin is palate & pancreas. The symptoms of their affliction are dryness of tongue, palate, lips, throat, pancreas & excessive thirst. The signs mentioned above are the early signs of dehydration irrespective of the cause. It is clear from the description mentioned above that the udakavaha srotas is ment for maintaining the water balance of the body.

***Rules for water intake:**

Water should not be taken before food as it diminishes the digestive fire in the stomach & hampers digestion.

Water with food(*advised in cases of regular stones in the excretory system*) causes weight gain & postpones digestion.

Water after food hampers digestion & aggravates kapha, because of which one feels drowsy. Cold water taken in normal & cold climates causes constipation, irritable bowel syndrome,& weight gain. It should always be taken in hot temperatures.

Hot / lukewarm water is good for digestion, alleviates vata & kapha & is fat – cutting. Thus should be used in obesity. This should be avoided in hot temperatures, pitta diseases & persons of pitta constitution.

An ideal time for drinking water after meals is at least half an hour after you have had food .

Drinking a glass of luke-warm water helps flush out all toxins accumulated overnight in the body, is helpful in constipation & relieves one of gases.

*lukewarm water should be avoided by pitta body types in summers, or if a person is suffering from *gastric acidity*.

Dehydration :

Thirst is an urge to drink water. Water is so vital for all our body processes that thirst compels us to drink long before we get dehydrated i.e. dangerously low level of water in the body.

Charakacharya, in his topic dealing with urge specifically mentioned that the urge of thirst should not be held. Suppression of thirst gives rise to dryness of throat & mouth, deafness, fatigue, depression & cardiac pain. For which cold & gratifying drinks are recommended. It becomes easy to control the complications when thirst itself is alleviated. Hence one should overcome thirst before it leads to other disorders.

Excessive thirst due to loss of fluid dries up the patient & kills him instantly. Hence one should take rain water mixed with honey. The ground water which is astringent in post digestive fate, thin, light, cold, fragrant, of good taste & non blocking of channels should be considered as rain water.

Water In Disease :

Charaka recommends naturally cold water in different conditions of thirst, burning sensation, fainting, giddiness, exhaustion, poisoning & bleeding disorders naturally . In hiccups , difficulty in breathing, acute fever, coryza, after intake of ghee, disease of chest & throat, kapha & vata disorders, unctuosness in the body & just after evacuation, hot water is wholesome.

Intake of too much water is not wholesome in case of aneamia , Ascitis, coryza, Diabetes, Tumor, poor digestion, diarrhea & spleen enlargement. However, if the desire is intolarable

one should drink water added with sugar & honey or some other suitable & favourite preparation.

Water In Fever :

In condition of thirst, hot water should be given in fever. Thirst caused by wine & pitta(excessive heat), cold water boiled in small quantity is advisable. Both the above types of water are appetisers, digestive, antipyretic, channel cleansing, strength promoting, producing relish & are wholesome.

Water boiled with *musta, parapatak, usira, chandana, udichya & Sunthi*(names of herbs) self cooled, should be administered to alleviate thirst & fever.

Water In Benign Tumor

The patients of benign tumor should use water boiled with *laghu panchamool*(group of herbs)

Water in Diabetes

A person suffering from Diabetes should drink water processed with the drug of *salasardai* group (group of herbs) or *kusa* or honey water / triphala water / juice of triphala which helps in controlling the sugar & keeping the body free from post- diabetic complications.

Water In Anaemia & Jaundice

For those suffering from Anaemia water boiled with herbs of *laghupanchamula* & for those suffering from Jaundice, the grape juice & the juice of *amalaki* is recommended.

Water in Panchakarma :

In virechana karma, (Purgation) after taking purgative drugs if there is constipation & the impurities are discharged in little quantity & with delay, the patient should drink hot water. By this tympanitis, thirst, vomiting & constipation are pacified.

In charaka it is stated that "hot water digests the undigested unctuous substances, breaks kapha & carminates mind. Hence hot water should be given in emesis, purgation in herbal water & oil enema for pacification of vata & kapha.

Water Preparation :

Water prepared with different substances are mentioned in Charak samhita. To avoid the repetition these water preparations are discussed here in short.

1) Shadangapaneeya (water with six herbs) in obesity

Water boiled with *musta, parapatak, ushir, chandan, udichya & sunti* is called as Shadangapaneeya. Shadangapaneeya is indicated in all types of fever & benign tumour. It is fat cutting & very useful in obesity.

2) Trinapanchamool water.

This is indicated in excessive thirst. The water boiled with *Trinapanchamool* & mixed with sugar candy is called as Trunapanchamool Jala.

3) Water in excessive thirst

In excessive thirst the water boiled with tender leaves of *matrulunga, vetas, roots of kush, kasha & madhuyashti* is advised. This water is then filtered & allowed to cool for the use. Water prepared with *Laghu panchamool, Bruhat Panchamool, Dashamool* are also some other examples of the water prepared useful in different disease conditions.

Cow Milk & Buffalo Milk – An Ayurvedic View Point :

Charak samhita is the oldest one in all Ayurvedic texts. In the Charak Samhita the properties & the usage of cow & buffalo milk are described. The description is based on the panchamahabhautic theory.

Cow Milk

Properties – Best among the Rejuvenator tonics .

Buffalo Milk

Properties – Enhances Sleep & decreases excessive appetite.

In the description from Charak Samhita the properties of cow's milk & buffalo's milk are compared. So the buffalo's milk is colder, more unctuous, heavier than the cow milk. It means though the Gunas (properties) are same in both the milk but their percentage & proportion with each other varies in the two types. This difference in the proportion of Mahabhuta influences the properties of the milk. More of Pruthvi & Jala Mahabhuta are the causative factors of 'Kapha dosha' and hence buffalo's milk increase the 'kapha dosha' in the body. Because of this increase in kapha dosha it enhances the sleep & controls excessive appetite. On the other hand because of the proportionate composition of gunas & the balance of Panchamahadhus the cow milk is described as the best rejuvenator & also it delights the mind.

Charakacharya stated that, because the properties of cow's milk & 'Oja' are the same, the cow's milk is the best among the rejuvenator tonics.

GENERAL RULES TO BE PRESCRIBED FOR EVERY INDIVIDUAL:

When a person comes for ayurvedic counselling, you may directly prescribe him the general rules which are to be followed by every person.

These constitute of the following:

- 1 **Dinacharya** i.e regime to be followed everyday,
- 2 **Rutucharya** i.e regime to be followed in that particular season,
- 3 **Uneasy combinations** which are to be avoided by all.
- 4 Make the individual aware of the **concept of an ideal diet & functions of food**. He should be informed about the **time , quantity & order in which the food should be taken**.(all this information is given above in *importance of diet*)
- 5 Rules of **water intake** as given above(in water according to ayurveda)should be prescribed to all individuals.
- 4 The food articles (**diet**) to be taken & avoided on **daily basis** should be prescribed from table **no. 19 i.e choice of food** according to vata/ pitta / kapha , which will be most beneficial for the individual.
- 5 **Food articles** prescribed out of the table no.19 should be taken from **table no.21** keeping in mind that they don't aggravate the individuals Doshas with respect to his body constitution & season in which he is dwelling.(refer **NOTE 21** at the end of food charts)
- 6 The regime for **woman's cycle** (periods) is also common and hence should be prescribed to all woman.
- 7 In the regime of Rutucharya and Dinacharya the prescribed hair oil, massage oil etc ,should be different according to the body constitution.

Apart from common prescriptions, here are some principal guidelines with examples about how to prescribe seasonal routines & diet to all **healthy individuals** according to their personal body constitution & the season they are dwelling in.

DETERMINING THE BODY TYPE OF AN INDIVIDUAL:

Table 12 & 13 which give information about physical characters and emotional characters about each body type. One should tick the particular characters he has for each of the Dosha and count them. The maximum number of characters in a particular dosha gives his major body type, and the second is his minor body type i.e if one finds maximum characters of Vata Dosha and lesser of Pitta Dosha and the least of Kapha Dosha, his body type is predominant in Vata and less dominant in Pitta. He has a dual body type i.e. Vata Pitta.(you can match it with table no.10 and see which of the photograph type does the individual resemble).

After diagnosing the constitution of the individual, if he is predominant in kapha dosha, table 11 will give him the Do's and don't's of each dosha. In Kapha Dosha and even in diseases related to Kapha dosha(increase in kapha dosha- table no 8, table no.7- ailments caused by the impairment of five types of kaphas), one must be prescribed to take less quantity of food which is warm and take food having pungent, bitter and astringent taste. He should be advised to observe fast, once a week. He should do oil massage with stimulating oils like *sahacharadi* oil etc. He should do regular and vigorous exercise & have kapha tea. **Herbal dietary supplements as mentioned earlier like Guggul, Sitopaladi Churna, Trikatu,**

Chavanprash should be prescribed strictly under medical guidance. Likewise, for pitta & vata body types.

If a person is dwelling in the rainy season (early fall) it is but natural that even the seasonal aggravations of Vata Dosha will be there. This is given in table 15. The tastes of seasons and seasonal taste adjustment are given in table no 16 & 17. A person having Vata dosha predominant should be prescribed & strictly told to follow the regime of early rainy season (given *in, regime in rainy season*). The tastes given for this season are Major- Sweet, moderate salty, moderate unctuous, warm. Minor –Pungent, astringent etc given in the same table. He should be prescribed with the season do's & dont's given for rainy season in table 18. The food articles (diet) to be taken on daily basis should be prescribed from table no. 19 i.e choice of food according to vata, which will be most beneficial for the individual. (on the same guidelines prescribe routines for pitta body types dwelling in autumn & kapha body types dwelling in spring).....*always remember that before aggravation there is accumulation of the specific Dosha with respect to the season(refer table no.15). So if the 16 & 17 no charts are followed in the accumulation period i.e 25 days prior to the aggravating season , there would be minimum aggravation of the Doshas & thus the ailments(refer table no 3,4, 5,6,7 & 8) related to it ...* **In this way Ayurveda can be the best preventive natural medication.**

If an individual's body type is Pitta-Kapha and he his dwelling in the early rainy season, where there is aggravation of Vata Dosha. He should be prescribed with the general rules given in regime for rainy season , as both the Doshas forming his body type are not dominant in this season(table no.15). The prescription should include seasonal taste adjustments & seasonal do's & don'ts for pitta(table 17 & 18). The food articles (diet) to be taken on daily basis should be prescribed from table no. 19 i.e choice of food according to pitta , which will be most beneficial for the individual. Food articles prescribed out of the table no.19 should be taken from table no.21 keeping in mind that they don't aggravate pitta & kapha(**refer note 21** at the end of food charts). He should follow the Dincharya and avoid the uneasy combinations given for all body types in table 20. These combinations should be avoided by every individual as mentioned earlier.