Introduction to Doshas
Living in Balance

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Introduction to Doshas
(Living in Balance)

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In Western Medicine we know a great deal more about the causes of disease than we do about the causes of health.
Ayurveda

- Science of Life
- Ayurvedo Amritanam
- Consciousness based approach to health
- Mind, Body, Spirit Medicine
- Yatha Pinde Tatha Bramhanede
- The True Natural Medicine
- Food/Air/ Water Mind/Emotions/ Actions
- Dharma Artha Kama Moksha: Aarogya
Ayurveda- The Science of Life

• It respects the uniqueness of the individual

• It offers natural ways of treating dis-eases and promoting health. Wellness Education

• It emphasizes prevention

• It empowers everyone to take responsibility for their own well-being

• It is cost-effective & it works
Elements
*Building Blocks of Nature*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akasha</td>
<td>Potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vayu</td>
<td>Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agni</td>
<td>Transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jala</td>
<td>Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prithivi</td>
<td>Structure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Akasha: Potential
- Vayu: Movement
- Agni: Transformation
- Jala: Protection
- Prithivi: Structure
Three Doshas
Mind-Body Constitutions
QUALITIES AND FUNCTIONS OF VĀTA DOSHA

- DRY
- LIGHT
- COLD
- ROUGH
- QUICK
- MOVING
- SUBTLE

TRANSPORTATION

MOVEMENT

COMMUNICATION
QUALITIES AND FUNCTIONS OF PITTA DOSHA

SLIGHTLY OILY  FLOWING

LIGHT  LIQUID

HOT  SHARP  PUNGENT

METABOLISM  DIGESTION  TRANSFORMATION
QUALITIES AND FUNCTIONS OF KAPHA DOSHA

- OILY
- HEAVY
- COOL
- SLOW
- STABLE
- STICKY
- DULL

QUALITIES:
- STRUCTURE
- COHESION
- LUBRICATION
# General Doshic Qualities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Space &amp; Air</th>
<th>Fire &amp; Water</th>
<th>Earth &amp; Water</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vata</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pitta</strong></td>
<td><strong>Kapha</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold</td>
<td>Hot</td>
<td>Cold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light</td>
<td>Light</td>
<td>Heavy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry</td>
<td>Intense</td>
<td>Solid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irregular</td>
<td>Penetrating</td>
<td>Stable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rough</td>
<td>Pungent</td>
<td>Smooth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile</td>
<td>Sharp</td>
<td>Slow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quick</td>
<td>Acidic</td>
<td>Steady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changeable</td>
<td>Moist</td>
<td>Enduring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mind-Body Patterns

• Determined at conception

• One or two doshas predominate in most people

• Experiences and choices influence current state
Who Am I?
Vata
Resembling the Wind

Characteristics
• Thin, light frame
• Variable digestion and sleep patterns
• Dry skin and hair
• Cold hands and feet
• Moves and talks quickly
• Resists routine
• Welcomes new experiences

Balanced
• Energetic
• Creative
• Adaptable
• Shows initiative
• Good communicator
• Spontaneous

Imbalanced
• Overactive Mind
• Anxiety
• Worry
• Inconsistency
• Insomnia
• Constipation
• Gas, bloating
## Pitta

### Fiery Nature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Balanced</th>
<th>Imbalanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medium build</td>
<td>Bright</td>
<td>Angry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong digestion</td>
<td>Warm, friendly</td>
<td>Irritable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm body temp</td>
<td>Good decision-maker</td>
<td>Excessively critical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleeps soundly for short periods</td>
<td>Leader</td>
<td>Judgmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharp intellect</td>
<td>Strong digestion</td>
<td>Aggressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct and precise</td>
<td></td>
<td>Skin rashes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stays close to routine</td>
<td></td>
<td>Inflammation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courageous</td>
<td></td>
<td>Indigestion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Kapha

**Grounded and Solid in Nature**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Balanced</th>
<th>Imbalanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Heavyset</td>
<td>• Steady</td>
<td>• Dull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Smooth skin and thick hair</td>
<td>• Consistent</td>
<td>• Inert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Deep sound sleep</td>
<td>• Loyal</td>
<td>• Needy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Slow moving</td>
<td>• Strong</td>
<td>• Attached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good stamina</td>
<td>• Supportive</td>
<td>• Congested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Easygoing</td>
<td>• Content</td>
<td>• Overweight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Methodical, thoughtful nature</td>
<td>• Calm</td>
<td>• Complacent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enjoys routine</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Overly protective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Referring to Mind-Body Constitutions

- Vata
- Pitta
- Kapha
- Vata-Pitta or Pitta-Vata
- Pitta-Kapha or Kapha-Pitta
- Kapha-Vata or Vata-Kapha
- Vata-Pitta-Kapha or tri-doshic
Individual Mind-Body Constitution

- **Prakruti**
  - Your individual constitution – determined at conception
  - Made up of all three doshas – but one or two typically predominate

- **Vikruti**
  - Current state of balance – now!
  - Influenced by your experiences and choices

*Maintaining balance is essential to health.*
Balancing Vata

- The key to balancing Vata Dosha is Regularity.
- Take a long, warm bath or shower in the morning.
- Sesame oil massage (abhyanga)
- Avoid mental strain and over-stimulating yourself.
- Make your surroundings light and bright. Vata responds well to sunlight and cheerful colors.
- Stimulants of any kind, including Coffee, Tea, Alcohol and Nicotine.
- Regular habits, balanced routine
- Quiet time, Meditation
- Attention to fluids, warm fluids during the day to prevent dehydration.
- Ample Rest & Warmth
- Steady supply of Nourishment
Balancing Pitta

- Moderation
- Coolness, calm
- Attention to leisure
- Exposure to natural beauty, Green vacations, Outdoor
- Balance of rest and activity, Unwind early
- Decreased stimulants
  - *The key to balancing Pitta is moderation, making sure that you do not push yourself too hard.*
- Eat a Pitta-pacifying diet, not to overeat, eat moderate meals at regular hours three times a day. Sweet, Bitter Astringent
- Avoid artificial stimulants, Coffee, Tea, Alcohol
- Avoid strenuous physical exertion or overheating
Balancing Kapha

- Stimulation, Regular exercise, Weight control
- Variety of experience, Warmth, dryness

*The key to balancing Kapha is stimulation.*

- Eat a Kapha-pacifying diet, Pungent, Bitter & Astringent tastes
- Stay warm. Kapha benefits from heat.
- Dry foods, Spices, Fasting
- Perform a dry massage on your body to stimulate circulation.
- Drink warm fluids during the day, but take them in moderation.
- Exercise regularly, preferably every day
- Less Luxurious lifestyle
**Prakriti**

*Self awareness which leads to Self Analysis which in turn is useful in Self Management*

**Self Awareness**
- Mindfulness
  - Self Referral
  - Consciousness based
  - Lamp at the Door

**Self Analysis**
- Observation
  - Dispassionate Vigilance
  - Non-Judgmental
  - Reflection

**Self Management**
- Personal Care
- Shreyas & Preyas
- Dynamic Balance
- Profession
- Relationships
**Lifestyle Medicine:** Many chronic diseases, such as heart disease, can be prevented and even reversed by simple changes in diet, exercise, and effective stress management

**Personalized Medicine** identifies genetic and metabolic differences between individuals and then prescribes drugs and treatment programs based on those differences

- The field of **Nutrigenomics** studies how food or nutrients can influence the expression genes in the body. Turn **ON** & Turn **OFF**

- Scientific verification of the ancient Ayurvedic principle that **Food is Medicine**

- Recent studies have shown that, Doshas are correlated with specific groups of genes and physiological functions in the body
Next Steps

• Use the Dosha quiz to check your balance
• Embrace the Qualities of the Elements
• Use taste (food/drink) and doshic qualities to balance your body and mind
• Use Senses to Restore and Maintain Balance.
• Commit to Doshic Awareness in People & Places
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