

What is Ayurveda?

Ayurveda is a science of living that has guided people to better health for more thousands of years. With its origins in India, Ayurveda is commonly referred to as a “sister science” to yoga.

Far more than a diet, Ayurveda offers wisdom on how to live so you can feel well today and tomorrow.

The Mother of All Healing

- **Ayur:** life **Veda:** science or truth
- **Ayurveda:** literally, “The Science of Life”
- The **traditional** medical system of India.
- Origin dates back over 5,000 years. Widely considered to be the **oldest form of health care in the world.**
- It is understood by most scholars that, as Ayurveda spread out from India, it influenced the ancient Chinese system of medicine, as well as the medicine practiced by Hippocrates in Greece. For this reason, Ayurveda is often referred to as the **“Mother of all healing.”**

“The knowledge of longevity.”



Ayurvedic medicine views health as much more than the absence of disease. The wise seers and sages of the time intuitively understood the physiology and workings of the mind-body-spirit long before the advent of modern medicine.

A little history lesson . . .

Much of Ayurveda’s ancient wisdom, including books and writings, was destroyed (or hidden) between 700-1,000 AD when India was invaded by the Middle East. What little was left was targeted by the British imperialists in the 1800s. Ayurvedic schools were closed, materials were destroyed, and Ayurveda basically vanished into the quiet corners of society, while modern “Western” Allopathic medicine replaced the 5,000+ year old wisdom of longevity.

Ayurveda is on the rebound!

It wasn't until 1947, when India gained her independence, that strong interest in Ayurveda was renewed. At this point scholars and spiritual teachers began to knit back together the scattered pieces of this profound science. Schools were re-established and began to train Ayurvedic physicians once again. By the early 1990's there were several hundred small Ayurvedic schools in India.

“Ayurveda is a science that is, *first and foremost*, about creating harmony with one's environment. Ayurveda teaches us that when we live in harmony we shall be healthy... that disease is the normal expression of living out of harmony. Hence, Ayurveda is a discipline that begins by asking us to look at ourselves so that we may discover HOW we are living out of harmony . Only then can we make the life changes necessary for healing to take place.” ~Dr. Marc Halpern



Ayurvedic Definition of Health

“He whose DOSHAS (fundamental physiological elements) are in balance, whose appetite is good, whose DHATUS (tissues) are functioning normally, whose MALAS (waste products) are in balance, and whose mind and senses remain full of bliss

(24 hours a day)

is called a healthy person.”

- Sushruta

Soooo....

What's My Dosha (and why does it matter?)



Ayurveda describes the human being as being composed of 5 elements, 3 doshas (biological energies), 7 dhatus (tissues), and numerous srotas (channels).

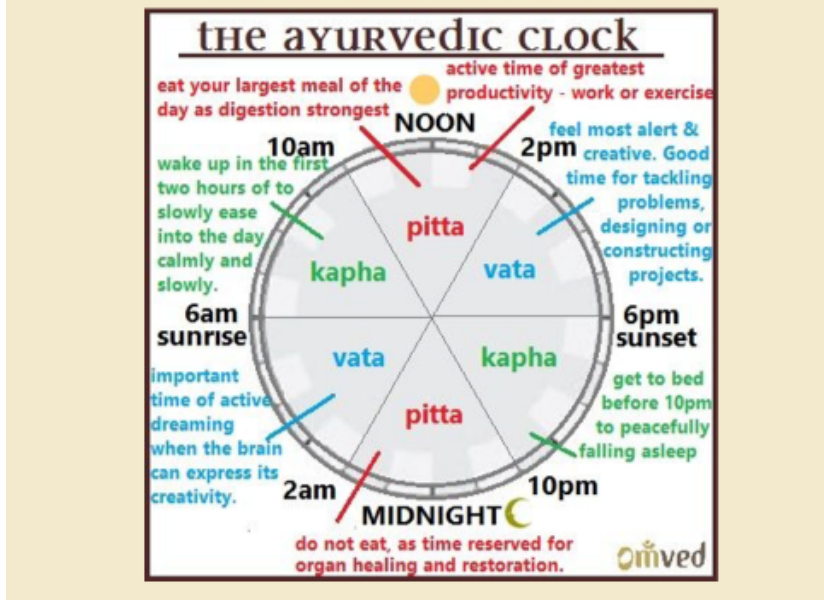
The five elements are **ETHER, AIR, FIRE, WATER, and EARTH**. These five elements, which also make up all of Nature, are not meant to be taken literally. They are ideas described as elements – ideas of space, motion, heat, flow, and solidity respectively. They have the qualities as noted above. The three doshas, the biological forces that govern the functions of the body, are composed of these elements.

ELEMENTS & DOSHAS

- In the Ayurvedic perspective, everything on the planet (including us) is made up of different combinations of five elements: earth, water, fire, air and ether.
- The three doshas – **Vata, Pitta and Kapha** – each represent two elements and are responsible for various functions in the body and mind.
- You have all three doshas present in you, just in different amounts. Most people have two primary doshas. Some people have one primary dosha, and a few have all three.

Kapha Energy of lubrication and structure cold, heavy, wet, static, dull, dense	moon/rain Late winter Early spring 	mind love, nurturing, compassion, patience body builds, strengthens, nourishes, lubricates, protects, fat, fluids, reproduction.	mind greed, envy, holds grudges, attachment. body congestion, obesity, allergies, lethargy, sinus problems
Pitta Energy of transformation hot, sharp, oily, light, mobile, smooth	sun/heat Late spring Summer 	mind intelligence, memory, discrimination body metabolism, digestion, eyes, blood, skin, brain & heart	mind anger, hate, controlling, hot temper body acid reflux, heart burn, acne, hypertension, nausea, migraines, endometriosis
Vata Energy of movement dry, cold, light, rough, mobile, subtle	wind Autumn Early winter 	mind creative, spiritual, tranquility. body all movements, blood flow, nerve impulses, fast in actions, emotions	mind fear, anxiety, stress, worry, poor memory body hyperactivity, dry skin, constipation, gas, arthritis, osteoporosis, PMS

VATA	KAPHA	PITTA
LATE FALL/EARLY WINTER COLD, DRY, LIGHT, SWIFT, MOBILE, IRREGULAR, ROUGH	LATE WINTER/EARLY SPRING COOL, WET, OILY, HEAVY, DENSE, STATIC, STABLE	SUMMER HOT, OILY, LIGHT, LIQUID, MOBILE, SHARP, SOFT, SMOOTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thin, light and wiry frame, long and tapered fingers and toes, small dark eyes, smaller mouths and thin lips. Dryness of skin, hair, lips and joints. Irregularity in bones, teeth, hair, spine ect (scoliosis). Extreme sensitivity to cold, wind, and dry weather. Cold extremities, such as hands, feet, and nose. Erratic appetites and irregular digestion. May suffer from arthritis, fibromyalgia, anxiety, migraines Irregular menstrual cycles with premenstrual physical and emotional symptoms. Light, restless sleep. Very active mind. Creative, artistic with imaginative ideas. Ideas change often. Open and tolerant of others. Energetic but sporadic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stocky build, large and strong frame, tendency to gain weight easily, and well-developed chest. Large and attractive blue or light brown eyes, thick eyelashes, round faces with full lips. Soft, thick, oily hair that is wavy and plentiful. Intolerant of cold, damp environments. Cool extremities that may be clammy (cool sweaty palms/feet). Steady appetite with slow but regular bowel movements and minimal urination. Tendency towards colds, congestion, allergies, water retention, and sluggish digestive systems. Regular menstrual cycles with little premenstrual symptoms Heavy sleepers with tendency to over sleep Easy going, fun loving, patient, slower moving, endurance, grounded disposition, resistance towards change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium-sized build, moderate muscle tone, ruddy coloring, medium sized eyes that are light in color. Skin is fair, warm, reddish, soft, and moist. Many freckles and moles, with a tendency towards rashes or acne. Soft, thin, light-colored or reddish hair, tendency to grey or bald early. Burn easily in sun. Sensitive to heat and humidity. Extremities are warm with good circulation. Robust, healthy appetites. Become irritable if they skip a meal. Prono to inflammation of muscles and tissues, especially in the shoulders and middle back where they accumulate stress. Indigestion, heartburn. Regular menstrual cycles with heavy bleeding and PMS. Light but moderately good sleep. Often overheat during sleep with tendency to burn candle at both ends. Intelligent, powerful, clear, focused mind. Aggressive, quick temper, competitive, workaholic, overly ambitious, great conversationalists.



Bristol Stool Chart

Type 1		Separate hard lumps, like nuts (hard to pass)
Type 2		Sausage-shaped but lumpy
Type 3		Like a sausage but with cracks on the surface
Type 4		Like a sausage or snake, smooth and soft
Type 5		Soft blobs with clear-cut edges
Type 6		Fluffy pieces with ragged edges, a mushy stool
Type 7		Watery, no solid pieces. Entirely Liquid

THE FOUR PILLARS OF AYURVEDA
Sleep, Elimination, Digestion, Menstruation

SLEEP

- *What time do you go to bed?
- *What time do you awaken?
 - *Do you use an alarm?
- *Are you refreshed when you wake up?
- *Do you wake up in the night *(if so when, and how often, for how long?)*
- *How long does it take for you to fall asleep?
 - *Do you sleep during the day?
 - *Do you dream?
- *What are the qualities of your dreams?

The Four Pillars of Ayurveda

ELIMINATION

- *How frequently do you have a BM?
- *Does the frequency of the BM vary much?
 - *Is the stool well formed?
- *What is the color and consistency of the stool?
 - *Do you have to strain to eliminate?
 - *Does the stool float or sink?
- *Any hemorrhoids, rash, or discomfort?

The Four Pillars of Ayurveda

DIGESTION

- *Are you hungry when you sit down to eat?
 - *How long until you are hungry again?
 - *What food cravings do you have?
- *What foods do you have difficulty digesting?
- *Would you describe your appetite as strong, medium, or weak?

The Four Pillars of Ayurveda

MENSTRUATION

- *How many days between periods?
- *How long does bleeding last with periods?
 - *Cramping, discomfort, or problems?
 - *How regular are periods
 - *Is flow heavy, light, or variable?
- *Any pain or discharge with period?