



Shankara

AYURVEDA WELLNESS SPA

KAPHA

THE DOSHA HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

We've created this booklet to give you a better understanding of how your body and mind work.

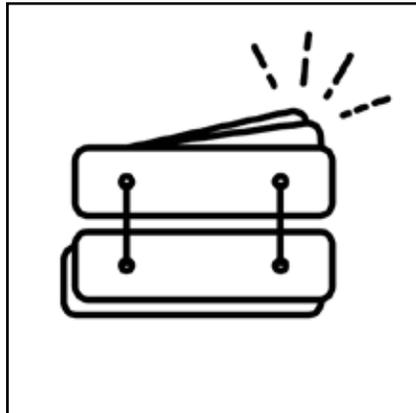
Did you ever wish life came with a playbook? I sure did growing up. This handbook is just that—a guide on how to live, based on your Ayurvedic body-mind type, or dosha. In this handbook, you'll find

- New insights into how your body and mind work
- The foods that give you more energy (and less trouble!)
- Lifestyle choices suited to your type
- Herbal supplements to help you feel balanced and at ease.

The guide is designed with three main sections—food, lifestyle and supplements—sections you can use as an ongoing reference. Whether you print it out, stick pages to your fridge, or save it to your phone, there are plenty of ways to use this guide so that Ayurveda becomes easy, convenient, and useful.

So, feel free to read ahead, or jump straight to the section that interests you.

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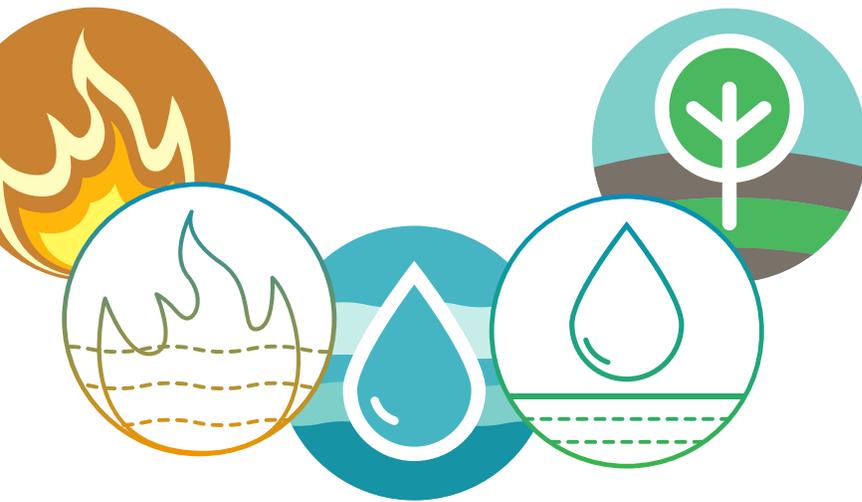
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AYURVEDA

The Science of Life

VATA



PITTA

KAPHA

People are different. It's part of what makes being a human being so special, there is no one just quite like you. But why? For thousands of years, people have been asking what makes us different. Why are some people able to eat more than others? How can some leap out of bed in the morning, ready to face the day, while others take hours to fully wake up? Is there a reason why some people can handle the cold better than others?

Answers to these and many more questions can be found through the ancient holistic practice of Ayurveda, the healing branch of yogic science. Ayurveda literally means the "knowledge of life and longevity." Many modern healing practices have their roots in Ayurveda, including massage with medicinal oils, dietary therapies, herbal remedies, psychiatry, acupuncture, color and gem therapy and meditation.

Ayurveda tells us that people are not “one size fits all.” They come in three body-mind types, or combinations of types. For example, physically, some of us are tall and thin, some are mid-size, and some have a stocky frame. The Sanskrit names are vata, pitta, and kapha.

Humans have vata, pitta, and kapha traits in various combinations and proportions. One trait is usually predominant, one secondary, and the third is least prominent. In that way, each of us has a particular combination of physical mental and emotional traits that make up his or her type, or prakruti. Just like we have unique fingerprints, we also have unique “energy prints,” proportions of vata, pitta, or kapha that are uniquely our own.

Once you know your dosha, you can use that knowledge as a blueprint for a happier, healthier life. Your custom diet and lifestyle plan will include knowledge of the foods, herbs, activities, climates, and places that are right for you.

Balance is our normal state of order. When in balance, physically, mentally and emotionally, good health follows. When out of balance, the result is disease. The root of the word disease is dis-ease, a state where we feel tense, out of balance, and out of whack. Ayurveda is all about coming to a state of ease—relaxed, balanced, and abundant with energy.

WHAT
IS AN
AYURVEDIC
TYPE?

What is an Ayurvedic Type? Your Ayurveda type is your physical, mental and emotional blueprint—all of the physical traits and mental tendencies present when you were born. It is what makes you YOU.

Modern medicine calls this blueprint a genetic code. Ayurveda calls it your prakriti, your “essential nature” or individual type. It is your own combination of physical, mental and emotional characteristics.

Knowing your type is essential to understanding how to maintain inner balance and correct imbalances that may arise. What may be good for one person may not be good for you. Learning about your Ayurvedic body-mind type will give you valuable information for nurturing your body’s inner intelligence. You can identify the foods, activities, and lifestyle that have the greatest benefits for you. This understanding will allow you to make the best choices for your own health and wellbeing.

By following the lifestyle that best suits your type, you better your chances to stay fit, energetic, healthy, and happy.



UNDERSTANDING YOUR TYPE



OUT OF BALANCE

sleep excessively
overweight
suffer from asthma,
depression,
diabetes;
resistance
to change
stubbornness



IN BALANCE

excellent stamina
large and soft eyes
strong build
thick hair
smooth skin
loyal
patient
steady
supportive



Ayurveda says that because a kapha person is the least bothered, happiest type of person on the whole planet, the best constitution is kapha. They're cheerful all the time. Kaphas are naturally calm, thoughtful and loving. When in balance, kaphas are strong, loyal, patient and supportive. Excess kapha may manifest as resistance to change and stubbornness. In the face of stress, kaphas may withdraw and become reclusive. Under duress, a common kapha response is "I don't want to deal with it."

Kaphas tend to hold on to things too long—not just material things, but also relationships—sometimes even when they are no longer supportive. However, kapha people have a caring and sharing streak that moves them to service for others.

Physical Traits

Those who are Kapha in nature have thick, broad, and well-developed frames with large, long limbs. They have excellent stamina to support their strong build.

Kapha skin is usually smooth, oily, pale, and cool. They have plentiful thick, wavy, lustrous hair that is generally brown. Speech is generally low, slow, and rhythmic (monotonous) with a pleasant deep and resonant voice. Kapha-types have solid necks, large rounded and full faces, large round noses, large mouths with big full lips.

Those who are Kapha in nature sleep soundly and have regular digestion.

Dosha Imbalance

Kapha dosha imbalance may manifest as excess body weight, fluid retention and a tendency toward constipation. Kapha types often sleep excessively and suffer from diabetes and depression.

Excess kapha may present as

- Constipation
- Indigestion
- Lethargy and laziness
- Stubbornness
- Diarrhea.

MEDITATION FOR YOUR DOSHA

Kapha dosha (out of balance) is prone to being sedentary and becoming too attached. Sitting for prolonged periods, even for the benefit of meditation, might encourage laziness and unhealthy attachments.

Walking meditation: Walking on a nature trail or in a labyrinth is ideal but if that is not available to you, walk anywhere!

Walking meditation is a great way to combine breath and movement. Synchronize your steps-inhale right foot, exhale left...

Another option is to inhale as you swing your arms up into the air and exhale as you swing them back down by your sides.

Breathe smoothly in and out of your nostrils with your mouth closed and maintain a steady gaze about 6 to 8 feet in front of yourself on the ground.

Read the full article, and many more [▶ aolrc.org/blog](https://aolrc.org/blog)

KAPHA DIETARY GUIDE

Ayurveda has given us an abundance of treatments for balancing excess kapha. One of the most important is nutrition. If your constitution is primarily kapha, follow these nutritional guidelines for a kapha balancing diet.



Foods for Kapha Balance

Fruits All fruits can be eaten in moderation

Vegetables All leafy greens, cabbage, cauliflower, peas, wheat grass, okra and sprouts

Grains Corn, barley, oats and rye

Beans All beans, including black-eyed peas, butter beans, green beans, pinto beans, green peas, lentils and soy

Nuts small quantities

Dairy Buttermilk, goat milk, ghee

Oils Sesame, olive, mustard

Spices Use heating spices like chilis, cayenne pepper, black pepper, cumin, ginger and turmeric

Foods to Avoid

- Oily, greasy, and fatty foods like cheese, pudding, and cake
- "Sweet, sour, and salty"
- Pastries and chocolate
- Red meat
- Cold or carbonated drinks

Balancing Tastes

Pungent, bitter, and astringent.

General Dietary Tips

- Eat in a peaceful place with a calm mind.
- Eat only when you feel hungry.
- Avoid cold drinks just before and after meals. Don't quench the digestive fire (agni).

Weight Management

Kapha types find that they gain weight all too easily. Emotional overeating can also be a problem. To lose weight without feeling weak, Dr. Lokesh at Art of Living recommends fresh fruits for breakfast, a nice lunch of sattvic veggies, and warm soup for dinner.

RECIPE

CCF TEA (Cumin, Coriander, and Fennel)

1 tsp. cumin seed

1 tsp. coriander seed

1 tsp. fennel seed

16 Oz water

Lemon or lime

Bring seeds to a boil in a small pot. Turn down heat down to low and simmer uncovered for 15 minutes. Strain into a mug with juice of half a lemon or lime.



LIFESTYLE FOR KAPHA



Warrior Pose



Warrior 2 Pose



Downward Dog



Headstand



Eagle Pose

Exercise

When creating a fitness plan, make sure it is something you enjoy so you can stick with it. The plan should also be well-suited for your body-mind type.

For kaphas, vigorous exercise is best—hiking, jogging, biking, and yoga.

Daily self-massage (abhyanga) with sesame oil also helps to reduce kapha in the body.

Yoga

As Ayurveda is the healing branch of yogic science, it is not surprising that yoga asanas play an important role in dosha balance. For kaphas, yoga should be at vigorous pace with short resting periods between poses. Challenge yourself. Keep moving!

- Standing poses like Warrior
- Downward Dog
- Back bends
- Head Stands
- Vinyasa flow

Kapha people may be drawn to a gentle class or a restorative class when a moderate class may serve them better. Kaphas benefit from standing poses, headstands, inverted poses and back bends.

Downward dog is an excellent posture to reduce kapha for those who are on the heavy side and not regular practitioners.

Forward bends are great for calming the body. In addition to cobra pose, boat and fish postures help release tension from the mid-abdominal area.

LIVING WELL TIPS

5 Keys to Kapha Balance

Kaphas are gifted with a loving disposition and laid back approach to life. Yet they need to be aware of the tendency to become a couch potato. Remember: kaphas need stimulation.

Here are five invigorating tips for kaphas that can be incorporated into any lifestyle:

1. Lights out by 10:00 pm; up and active by 6:00 am. Avoid naps.
2. Exercise in morning or evening—hiking, biking or yoga.
3. Massage the body daily with sesame oil.
4. Seek stimulation—enjoy lively music, smells, and experiences. Find a break from routine.
5. Manage stress with yoga and meditation, especially the Sudarshan Kriya.

Herbal Supplements For Kapha

Ayurveda uses herbal formulas to help keep the doshas in balance. Kapha balancing herbs include bibhitaki and ginger.

An ingredient found in triphala, bibhitaki is an excellent rejuvenative. It has both laxative and astringent properties. Its drying effect reduces the excess mucus in the body often associated with kapha dosha.

Ginger is known for its heating properties. It strengthens the digestive fire, improves digestion and removes toxins. It's better to use fresh ginger rather than the dried form of the spice.

Check out the Kapha Balancing Kit available at [SriSriTATTVA](#).

LIFE IN BALANCE

Ayurveda places great importance on recognizing the unique qualities of individual human beings. Ayurveda's understanding of constitutional types or doshas offers us a remarkably accurate way to pinpoint what is happening inside each individual. It allows us to customize treatment and offer specific lifestyle recommendations.

Kapha body-mind types are naturally calm, thoughtful, cheerful and loving. When in balance, they are strong, loyal, patient, and supportive.

Excess kapha may manifest as resistance to change and stubbornness. Many kaphas have a tendency to be a little lax, thinking "I don't really want to do this kind of thing." The challenge for kapha is to keep up the level of effort needed to reduce their dosha.

Kapha balance is maintained by a kapha-reducing diet with lots of leafy greens and fresh veggies, combined with an invigorating lifestyle that includes yoga and exercise.

In Yoga, kaphas benefit from standing poses, headstands, inverted poses and downward dog. Ayurvedic herbs for kapha include bibhitaki and ginger.

The goal of Ayurveda is to prevent disease and promote health and longevity. Keeping the doshas balanced is one of the most important factors in keeping the whole mind-body system in balance.

Physical balance means a body that is healthy and fit. Emotional balance gives rise to understanding, compassion, and love.

"A physician, though well versed in the knowledge and treatment of disease, who does not enter into the heart of the patient with the virtue of light and love, will not be able to heal the patient."

—Physician-Sage Charaka, one of the founders of Ayurvedic medicine



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