

ĀYURVEDA

CU Medical Anschutz Medical Campus

September 10, 2019

Susan Bernhardt

Essence Ayurveda

www.essenceayurveda.com

susan@essenceayurveda.com

303-523-5289



Āyurveda - Definition

आयुर्वेद

- *Ayuh* = life, self-knowledge, self-healing.
- *Veda* = science, body of knowledge.
- *Āyurveda* = the science of life, the science of self-healing.

What Is Āyurveda

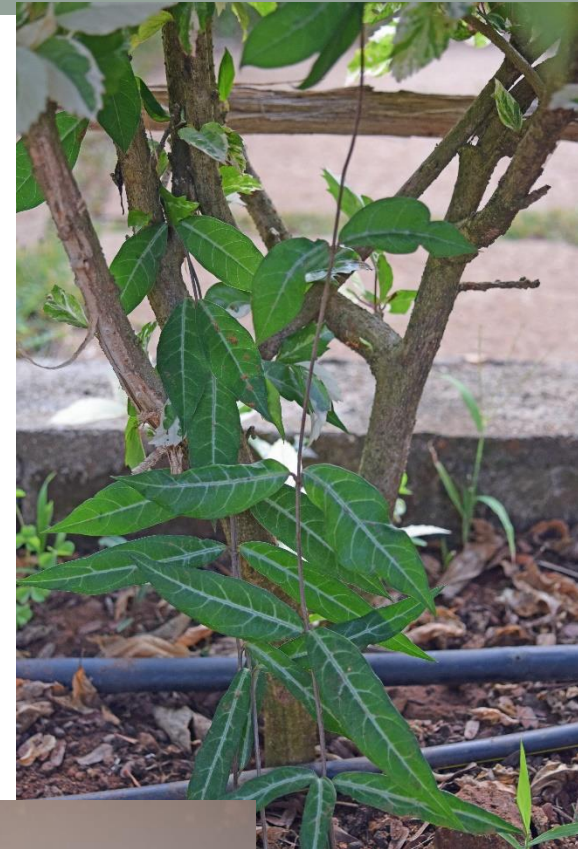
- 5,000-year-old holistic health system, but incorporates modern knowledge
- Oldest continuously practiced health system
- Influenced other forms of Asian medicine
- Influenced aspects of western medicine
- Philosophy
 - Energy and matter are related
 - Mind, body, and spirit/energetic component are related
 - Āyurveda principles can apply to any system, including social spheres
 - Holistic: healing needs to happen on all levels – body, emotions, mental, spirit.

Comprehensive – 8 Branches

- Internal medicine
- Ear, Nose Throat
- Fertility & Conception, Aphrodisiacs
- Pediatrics & Gynecology
- Psychiatry
- Rejuvenation & Longevity (Rasayana)
- Surgery
- Toxicology
- ---
- Herbology / Plant Science
- Nadi [meridian] System
- Yoga

Āyurveda as Lifestyle

- Daily Routines
- Seasonal Routines
- Practices Based on Age
- Food as Medicine
 - What
 - Cooking method
 - When
 - How
 - How much



ĀYURVEDA

The Doshas

दोषः

The Three Doshas

- Āyurvedic diagnosis and treatment are grounded in the concept of three doshas.
- The doshas can be seen as a way of describing qualities.
 - 5 elements/qualities combine into three doshas:
 - *Space and Air* → **Vāta**
 - *Fire (and a little liquid)* → **Pitta**
 - *Water and Earth* → **Kapha**
- Doshas are responsible for physiological function but can cause disorder.
- Everyone is given a unique combination of the doshas at conception.
- The doshas can get out of balance.
- Key: determine what is out of balance and how to get it back into balance.
 - Method: Like increases like; opposites lead to balance.

Dosha Qualities & Principles

	Vāta	Pitta	Kapha
Qualities	Light, cold, dry, mobile, rough, subtle, clear, brown/gray/black	Hot, sharp, slightly oily, light, liquid, spreading, fleshy smell, red/yellow/orange	Heavy, cool, slow/dull, oily, liquid, slimy/smooth, dense, soft, sticky, cloudy, hard, gross, oily, liquid/damp, stable/static, white
Principle	Movement – controls movement, speech cognition, nervous system activity	Transformation – controls all metabolic activity	Structure –formation and lubrication of body tissues
Main Seat	Colon	Small intestine	Stomach / lungs

Vāta

- *Slim*
- Unusual proportions, irregular features, short or tall
- *Dry* hair, skin, and nails
- Dislike cold weather, especially if dry and windy
- *Cold* feet and hands
- Cracking joints; cracking, hoarse voice
- Constipation and dry stools, gas, bloating
- *Nervous system* issues
- Dislocations, misalignments, prolapses, hypermobility
- Walk and talk fast, fidget, hyperactive, jump topics
- Need less sleep than others, tend toward insomnia
- Lively, enthusiastic, easily distracted, erratic, self-discipline and routines are difficult; run late
- Creative, restless, constantly thinking, curious, spacey, intuitive, sensitive, unpredictable, moods and emotions change quickly
- Learn quickly but forget easily
- When stressed, tend toward anxiety, fear, nervousness, lack of self confidence, overreaction; cannot hide emotions; mind spins

Vāta:



Pitta

- *Medium* height and build
- Oily skin and hair with red, copper, or yellowish tones; freckles; early balding or gray hair
- Sharp, bright, penetrating eyes; sensitive to light
- *Warm* feet and hands; perspire a lot; dislike hot weather and sunshine
- Tend toward rash, acne, bruising, burning, inflammation, acidity, heartburn, loose stool, frequent stool
- *Sharp* appetite, thirst; must eat when hungry
- *Critical thinker*, determined, focused, rational, logical, problem solver, sharp, intelligent; intense, perfectionist, leader, goal oriented, ambitious, proud, not easily intimidated, assertive, dislike injustice, *competitive*
- When stressed, tend toward *anger*, frustration, jealousy, critical, irritable, *impatient*, egotistical, try to take control
- Distinct sharp memory; analytical; intelligent
- Speech is sharp, well thought out, argumentative

Pitta:



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](#)

Kapha

- *Large, solid*, broad chest; short or tall; large muscles, joints
- Gain *weight* easily; difficult to lose weight
- Round face; large, attractive eyes; large lips
- Moist, cool, pale skin; thick hair and nails
- Like warm, dry, sunny days, not cool, damp, cloudy
- *Slow* to get going but have the most *stamina*; slow; graceful
- Need the most sleep – 8 or more hours; no troubles sleeping
- Elimination is thick, oily, sluggish; like squeezing toothpaste
- Calm, quiet, peaceful, nurturing, patient, easy going, loyal, supportive, gentle, generous, tolerant, practical, methodical, organized, complacent, doesn't like change, works well in a routine, sentimental, devoted to family and teachers; excellent long-term memory
- When stressed, tend toward calm and unruffled; withdrawn or reclusive; don't show emotions easily; not easily thrown off balance emotionally; tend toward sadness, longing, or depression

Kapha



ĀYURVEDA

Prakṛti & Vikṛti

Prakriti

- *Nature, constitution.*
- Determined at conception, by
 - the genetics, diet, lifestyle, and emotions of the parents.
 - samskaras (mental and other tendencies) of the incarnate being.
- Everyone has all three doshas, but the proportions vary.
- Each person has a specific combination of doshas that express themselves in unique ways.
- *Prakriti never changes.*

Prakṛti – 7 General Types

- 7 types:

Vāta

Vāta-Pitta

Vāta-Pitta-Kapha

Pitta

Pitta-Kapha

Kapha

Kapha-Vāta

- Consider body, mind, emotions
- Dosha quizzes: answer questions as if they asked how you've been most of your life, or how you are at your most balanced.

Vikṛti

- *Current state* of the doshas
 - Dosha = that which can go out of balance
- Vikṛti = false
- Doṣha quizzes: answer questions based on how you are *now*
- Look at which dosha(s) appear to be *increased*, rather than decreased.

Vikṛti vs. Prakṛti

- Vikṛti - the state of the doshas actually present - can be different from prakṛti due to many factors.
 - Weather
 - Season
 - Time of day
 - Age
 - Food and diet
 - Daily routines (or lack of routines)
 - Fatigue
 - Stress
 - Improper use of buddhi (intelligence) – “knowing better”
 - Overuse, underuse, and misuse of the senses
 - Mental and emotional factors
 - Exercise
 - Living conditions
 - Relationships
 - Social / societal pressures and tendencies

Vikṛti, Prakṛti, and Health

- Health requires that vikṛti is the same as prakṛti.
- Having balanced doshas does *not* mean equal VPK
 - except for the rare person whose constitution is equal VPK.
- Often, there is a tendency for the dosha that is dominant in prakṛti to be out of balance (in excess) in vikṛti.
- But a person's vikṛti can be anything, regardless of prakṛti.
- Doshic imbalance is the beginning of the disease process.
- Preventative care requires addressing doshic imbalance.
- Diseases have doshic qualities; treatment thus includes addressing doshic imbalances.

Balancing the Doshas - Principles

- Apply principles of duality to achieve balance.
- *Like increases like.*
- *Opposites decrease each other* and thus lead to balance.

Vata	Pitta	Kapha
Calm Warm Lubricate	Calm Cool	Energize Warm Dry

ĀYURVEDA

Agni & Āma

Agni & Āma

- **Agni:** fire
 - Digestive fire:
 - Separates what is good for the body from what should be excreted
 - Digestion, absorption, assimilation
 - Digestive enzymes, digestive acids, amino acids, all metabolic activities
 - Processing sensory experience, emotions
 - Creation, maintenance, destruction of cells and tissues
- **Āma:** “toxins” that circulate in the body
 - Āma results from
 - agni not functioning properly
 - channels of elimination not functioning properly
- **Disease Process:** generally begins with poor agni

Signs of Agni Dysfunction & Āma

Vāta	Pitta	Kapha
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Constipation• Gas• Flatulence• Bloating• Low belly• Dry skin• General body aches and pains• Joint pain• Dry or astringent taste	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diarrhea• Acidity/reflux/heartburn• Low-grade fever• Inflammation• Nausea• Acne• Rashes• Dark yellow or green stools, tongue coating, urine• Sour or acidic odor• Bitter, sour, or metallic taste or breath	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sticky, slow elimination• Mucus• Congestion• Dull aches, pains• Allergies• Low energy, fatigue• Brain fog• Low motivation• Foul smell• White tongue coating• Lymphatic congestion• Salty or sweet taste

Burping

Causes of Agni Dysfunction & Āma

- Eating foods that you can't digest
- Poor eating habits
 - Foods that aggravate doshas
 - Grazing, irregular meals, eating too soon after prior meal
 - Excessive fasting or overeating
 - Heavy, cold, stale, spoiled, canned food
 - Overly processed foods, additives, preservatives, stabilizers
 - Eating when stressed
 - Poor food combining
 - Too much liquid during or immediately after meals
 - Napping after meals
- Poor lifestyle habits
 - Includes habits that aggravate doshas
- Stress, repressed emotions
- Intestinal parasites / imbalance in the gut flora

ĀYURVEDA

Concepts of Health

Definition of Health

- Digestion is proper.
- The doshas are balanced.
- The body and its tissues (dhatu) are strong and well-nourished.
- The senses are strong, healthy, and function normally.
- Wastes are formed properly and in proper amounts.
- Channels of the body are open (srotansi [physiological systems] and nadis [energy channels, like meridians]).
- Mental function is clear.
- The person experiences bliss, peace.

Digestion Is Proper

- Digestion is proper:
 - Digestion is the root of health
 - Healing starts with digestion
 - Prevention starts with digestion
 - “Let your food be your medicine and your medicine be your food.”
-- Hippocrates
 - When diet is wrong, medicine is of no use. When diet is correct, medicine is of no need.
-- Āyurveda
 - If properly prepared and administered, every substance can be a medicine.
-- Āyurveda
 - Note the word is *digestion* – it’s not just what you eat, but what you can digest, that counts
 - Digestion includes digestion of emotions and mental impressions, as well as food

ĀYURVEDA

Diagnosis and Toolkit

Diagnostic Methods

- Inspection
 - Face lines
 - Hair
 - Nails
 - Tongue
 - Nails
 - Eyes
- Pulse (qualities in addition to rate)
- Waste
- Speech
- Palpation
- Physical form, appearance
- Questioning

Āyurveda Toolkit

- Diet & nutrition
- Dinacharya (daily routine)
- Ritucharya (seasonal routine)
- Herbs, medicated oils
- Pancha Karma (cleansing)
- Marma (acupressure)
- Ayurvedic massage (abhyanga oil application and more), shirodhara (streaming oil on forehead), external basti (oil)
- Aroma therapy
- Jyotish (Vedic astrology)
- Gems
- Color
- Vastu shastra (architecture)
- Yoga
 - Yama & niyama (ethics, restraints)
 - Prāṇāyāma (breathing practices)
 - Āsana (physical poses)
 - Meditation
 - Reflection (vichara)
 - Philosophy
 - Mantra (repeating sound, phrase)
 - Deep relaxation
 - Yoga Nidra (relaxation + intention)
 - Mudra (seals – hand positions)
 - Bandha (locks)
 - Shat Karma (cleansing)
 - Bhakti yoga practices (devotion)



6 Tastes

Taste (Rasa)	Element	Heat/Cool	Dry/Moist	Dosha
Sweet	Water & Earth	Cooling	Moistening	V-, P-, K+
Sour	Fire & Earth	Heating	Moistening	V-, P+, K+
Salty	Fire & Water	Heating	Moistening	V-, P+, K+
Pungent	Fire & Air	Heating	Drying	V+, P+, K-
Bitter	Ether & Air	Cooling	Drying	V+, P-, K-
Astringent	Ether & Earth	Cooling	Drying	V+, P-, K-

Eat to Support Agni & Balance Doshas

- Eat foods to counter any doshic imbalances and to maintain your prakrti.
- Have all 6 tastes at each meal.
- But adjust the proportions of each taste for your doshas.
- Use appropriate cooking methods to make foods more easily digestible and appropriate for your vikrti and prakrti.
 - Vāta: sauté, steam, soup, braise, saucy, plenty of healthy oils
 - Pitta: not hot, not too oily
 - Kapha: dry roast, toast, grill, less oil
- Use appropriate spices for your doshas.

What to Eat

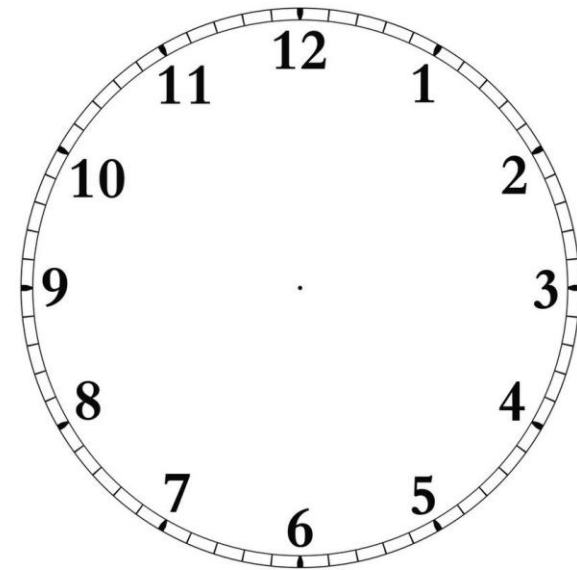
- Don't eat anything you can't digest
 - E.g., results in gas, belching, hyperacidity, diarrhea, constipation, feelings of heaviness or lethargy, undigested food particles in stool.
- Eat whole foods, minimally processed.
 - Organic: at a minimum, the “dirty dozen.”
- Don't boil, bake, or cook honey.
 - For cooking, use jaggery, Sucanat, coconut sugar, or maple syrup instead.
 - Stirring honey into warm tea is okay.
- Milk can be taken only with sweet foods.
 - This does not apply to cultured dairy.
 - At meals, use cultured products (sour cream, yogurt, buttermilk).
- For some, fruit should be combined only with fruit.
- For most, veggies should be cooked.
- Avoid cold food or drink.

How Much to Eat

- At breakfast, avoid kapha-increasing food (cold, damp, heavy, bland).
 - Lighter in summer; heavier in winter when agni is stronger.
 - Kaphas often can skip breakfast.
- Lunch should be the biggest meal.
- Make dinners light, e.g. soup or salad.
- Stomach should be filled $\frac{1}{2}$ with food, $\frac{1}{4}$ with liquid, $\frac{1}{4}$ empty.
 - Enough liquid and space for stomach to work on digesting the food, and not so much liquid that enzymes and acids are overly diluted.
- Eat enough to make it to the next meal without a snack, and not so much that you lack an appetite at the next meal.

When to Eat

- Don't shower or bathe after a meal.
- Breakfast by 8:00.
- Lunch should be between 10:00 and 2:00.
- An early dinner is best.
- Finish dinner at least 2 to 3 hours before bed.
- Try for consistent meal times.
- Don't mix undigested food with partially digested food in your stomach.
- Therefore, after eating solid food, wait at least 3 hours before eating solid food again.
- This also means avoid snacking.
 - If you snack, prefer something liquid (it can have protein and calories) over something solid; e.g., chai tea with milk.
 - If you have something solid, fresh fruit (e.g., an apple) is the next choice, then a few seeds or nuts.



What & When to Drink

- Start the day with 1 to 2 cups of hot water, especially with constipation. Ok to add lemon or lime (best for pitta).
- Avoid cold or iced drinks (including ice water), cold milk, ice cream, and cold foods, except on very hot days away from mealtimes.
- During meals, sip some water.
 - Not too little or too much - about ½ to 1 cup
 - Warm or room temperature (*not* cold).
- Do not drink water or anything else immediately before or after a meal.
- Don't combine milk with foods other than sweets, grains, and sweet fruits.
 - This rule about mixing milk and other foods does not apply to cultured dairy products such as yogurt, buttermilk, kefir, or cheese.
- Lassi after a meal can aid the digestion.

Dinacharya (Daily Routine)

• Morning

- Wake up before 6:00 (preferably before sunrise; vatas can wake up around sunrise)
- Express gratitude or say a prayer before getting out of bed
- Evacuation
- Swish and rinse mouth with water
- Splash eyes with cool water, gently rub eyelids, blink, rotate eyes in all directions
- Kapala shodana (skull cleansing): rub forehead with palm; rub indent between forehead and nose with thumb
- Examine and [scrape tongue](#)
- Drink a cup of warm or hot water, or lemon water.
- [Neti pot](#)
- Brush teeth
- [Oil swishing](#), followed by rinsing with water
- Prāṇayama (breathwork), meditation
- Garshana (dry brushing)
- [Self-abhyanga](#) (self massage)
- Oil in ears
- [Nasya](#)
- Yoga / exercise (1/2 capacity)
- Shower
- Breakfast by 8:00, or skip it.



Daily Routine

- Midday
 - Lunch between 10:00 and 2:00, during pitta time when agni is high
- Evening
 - Light dinner
 - Quiet activity
 - In bed by 10:00 p.m.
 - Digestive agni (liver) detoxes all systems in the pitta time from 10:00 to 2:00 am – but only if you are asleep
 - For sleep:
 - Calming pranayama (e.g., belly breath)
 - Evening meditation and/or yoga nidra
 - Restorative yoga, especially forward folds, legs-up-the-wall
 - Foot massage with oil, and scalp as well
 - Lavender or nutmeg essential oil on pillow
 - Warm milk with nutmeg (and ghee)
 - Spiritual reading. No page-turners. For many people: no news past 5 pm

Pancha Karma (Cleansing) Preparation

- Improve agni (digestion)
- Decrease āma
- External oiling
- Ingesting ghee or other oil
- Steam

Pancha Karma (5 Actions)

- Vamana (emesis)
- Virechan (purgation)
- Basti (*not a colonic*)
 - Niruha basti (water enema)
 - Anuvasan basti (oil enema)
 - Netra basti (eyes)
- Nasya (nasal passages – water or oil based)
- Traditional: rakta moksha (bloodletting)

Rasayana (Rejuvenation)

- Diet
- Herbs
- Routines

Resources



Susan Bernhardt, Essence Ayurveda & Yoga Therapy

- Ayurveda consultations; Yoga Therapy; Tibetan Cranial; Reiki; Thai Massage
- www.essenceayurveda.com
- 303.523.5289
- susan@essenceayurveda.com

General Information, Herbs, Other Supplies

- www.banyanbotanicals.com

Ayurvedic / Indian Cookbook

- Usha Lad & Dr. Vasant Lad, *Ayurvedic Cooking for Self-Healing*.

Ayurveda Books

- Acharya Shunya, *Ayurveda Lifestyle Wisdom*. Good amount of theory and practical information, including recipes and instructions for daily routines, along with references to studies.
- Vasant Lad, *Ayurvedic Home Remedies*. Introduction to Ayurveda theory and many remedies for a wide variety of conditions.