

## DYNAMIC DOSHAS

### WHO ARE YOU?

*What is my constitution? What is my dosha? These questions mean the same thing. In Ayurveda, a person's constitution is the unique combination and balance of the three doshas, the universal energetic forces that govern the body and mind.*

A person's constitution determines what we are naturally attracted to and what triggers an imbalance or illness. Our constitution determines how we relate to other people and the environment around us. Our goal should be to create a diet and lifestyle that supports our prakriti ("original nature" established at conception) and nourishes our vikriti (current state of "imbalance").

### THE THREE DOSHAS

Sanskrit defines dosha as "that which contaminates." The doshas are made up of the five elements (ether, air, fire, water, and earth) and come together in different proportions to make up our unique physical bodies and emotional and mental constitutions. The doshas determine our likes and dislikes and our habits. One or two doshas dominate our constitution and aggravate our daily disposition and health. Our bodies are made to self-regulate and realign with our true constitution. Optimal health exists when we are able to realign and self-regulate with ease.

When following Ayurvedic principles, we look for imbalances in the body that affect our health. When the doshas becomes aggravated, they each disrupt the body in its own way. But imbalances in our environment and body, brought on by diet, lifestyle, and external influences, disturb our internal systems. We are all susceptible to aggravations and imbalances, and our unique constitutions are predisposed to particular imbalances.

Knowing our unique dosha combination can be used as a tool to understand and maximize our natural strengths while nourishing our vulnerabilities.

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**VATA...** "That which blows" ... *Bridge between body, mind, consciousness*  
*The energy of movement, catabolic activity, sensory stimuli, and motor responses*

**PITTA...** "Heat" ... *Intelligence and understanding*  
*The energy of transformation, metabolic activity, and intellectual discernment*

**KAPHA...** "Flourishing water" ... *The earth principle of foundation & building blocks*  
*Energy of lubrication, hydration and moisture and anabolic activity*

## FORCES THAT INFLUENCE

Dosha	Elements	Gunas
VATA	Air & Ether	Dry, light, cold, rough, mobile, clear, subtle
PITTA	Fire & Water	Hot, sharp/penetrating, light, liquid, subtle, oily
KAPHA	Earth & Water	Heavy, slow/dull, cold, slimy/cloudy, smooth, oily, static/stable, gross, dense/solid, soft

## SEASONAL CLOCK

Dosha	Time of Day	Seasons
VATA	2:00 pm – 6:00 pm 2:00 am – 6:00 am	Fall (cold and windy) Later years of life...after 45-50
PITTA	10:00 am – 2:00 pm 10:00 pm – 2:00 am	Late Spring thru Summer Mid-life...roughly 20s – 40s
KAPHA	6:00 am – 10:00 am 6:00 pm – 10:00 pm	Late Winter to early Spring (cold and wet) Developmental time...birth – 20

Dosha	BODY TYPE	EMOTIONS/ABILITIES
VATA	Thin, light/protruding bones, dry/cold/rough skin, often underweight, small itchy eyes, don't sweat, quick metabolism, irregular/delicate digestion, low stamina	Enthusiastic, energetic, vibrant, creative, innovative, restless, impatient, talkative, independent, spiritual, introspective, short attention span, flexible/adaptable to change, anxious, fearful, worried/stressed, quick to learn and to forget, irregular eating and personal habits, appetite & sexual desire vary between extremes, resist traditions, misunderstood, sleep lightly  Designer, dancer, teacher, writer, photographer

Dosha	BODY TYPE	EMOTIONS/ABILITIES
PITTA	Athletic build, muscular, medium height and build, average weight gain, soft and warm skin, clear and bright eyes (hazel, green or brown), sensitive to light and hot weather, perspires excessively, hair is thin, straight, (often reddish or blond), premature grey or balding, prone to diarrhea, prone to freckles, bruises, rashes, sunburn, acne, sharp strong voice	Decisive, ambitious, determined, extrovert, controlling, center of attention, arrogant, irritable, judgmental, quick to hatred, courageous, precise, persistent, competitive, highly intelligent, keen sense of discrimination, appetite/sex desire strong, dominate conversation, good sleeper, violent dreams, night owl  Politician, surgeon, lawyer, financier, leader, pioneer, innovator, scholar
KAPHA	Solid, physically strong, muscular wide build, gain weight easily, skin is thick, smooth, cool, bright, moist with few wrinkles, complexion is clear, fair or pale, and hair is thick, oily, wavy, eyes are large, warm blue or black, soft voice, lot of mucous, fertile	Calm, grounded, nurturing, loving, serene/tranquil, stoic, reliable, compassionate, forgiving, methodical, slow thinker, learn slowly, medium intelligence, excellent memory, protective, graceful, sensual, strong endurance, sluggish or difficult to motivate, slow to become excited, sentimental, nostalgic, romantic, thrifty, greedy, possessive, hoarder, prefer familiar surroundings & tradition, group oriented, heavy sleeper  Administrator, nurse, farmer, arborist, chef, technician, community builder, good/stable provider

Dosha	INTERNAL FUNCTIONS	SITES in the BODY/SENSES
VATA	Physical movement, breathing, natural urges, motor and sensory functions, muscle/tissue contractions, circulation at the cellular level, secretions, excretions, communication in the mind (awareness) and nervous system	Large intestine, colon, head, thighs, ears, bones, skin, hair  Senses are touch and hearing
PITTA	Intelligence, understanding, perception, digestion, thirst, hunger, nutrition, metabolism, body temperature	Small intestines, gray matter of the brain, sweat and blood, spleen, gallbladder  Sense is sight

KAPHA	Physical structure, stamina, connective tissue support, strength to muscles- tendons-ligaments, maintain electrolyte balance, anabolic repair/regeneration development, lubricate joints	Stomach, lungs, sinuses, lymphatics, adipose tissue  Senses are taste and smell
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Dosha	IMBALANCES/CAUSES	HOW TO BALANCE
VATA	<p>Emaciation, loss of appetite, stiffness, tremors, numbness, intense pain, distention of the abdomen (indigestion), constipation, dehydration, hemorrhoids, bloating, gas, loss of strength, asthma, anxiety, panic attacks, insomnia</p> <p>CAUSES: Consuming foods that are bitter, pungent, dry, and astringent in taste, suppressing natural urges, staying awake during nighttime, speaking a lot in a high-pitched or loud voice, excessive activities, no routine, fear, grief, worries, the end of summer (Fall), dusk, dawn</p>	<p>Calm quiet environment, routine, warmth, moisture, daily oil massage, slow, mindful movement (don't over exert)</p> <p>Asana: focused on activating the pelvis, hips, and thighs (standing poses to stabilize, strengthen and ground, forward bends for the nervous system, heating the internal organs and release tension of the lower back, backbends for sacral instability and hypermobility, inversions for digestive and circulatory systems), surya namaskar</p> <p>Pranayama &amp; meditation: Anuloma Viloma/Nadi Shodhana and So Hum</p>
PITTA	<p>Heartburn, acid indigestion, high blood pressure, inflammation, ulcers, migraines, bleeding disorder, jaundice, vertigo, diarrhea, hives, nausea, perspiration, fever, acne, eczema, ambitious at expense of physical &amp; mental needs</p> <p>CAUSES: Excessive emotions of anger, hatred, judgment, jealousy, criticism, too much fermented foods, sour citrus fruits, hot spicy foods, summer season, hot sun, midday, midnight</p>	<p>Slow down, cool down, pace</p> <p>Asana: unstructured, affect the navel area and stimulates digestion and absorption (standing poses that stretch the lower torso and side body, back bends particularly those on the belly, twisting is harmonizing and balancing major organs within the solar plexus, shoulder stand to cool excess heat in the nervous system), chandra namaskar</p> <p>Pranayama &amp; meditation: Sheetali, Sheetkari &amp; unstructured mindfulness meditation</p>

<p><b>KAPHA</b></p>	<p>Cold, congestion/cough, chronic indigestion, slow metabolism, weight gain, swelling, lethargy</p> <p><b>CAUSES:</b> Too many sweets, salty, sour heavy/rich, oily foods, cold drinks, excess sleep, day sleeping, lack of exercise, high cholesterol, receding gums, pneumonia, hyperglycemia, the winter season, early morning, early evening</p>	<p>Exercise, vary routine, no daytime naps, wake up at dawn, try something new</p> <p><i>Asana:</i> vigorous and challenging asana in the early morning working on stretching and opening the torso and chest, strengthening that increases flexibility and reduces mucous, increase heart rate to help reduce excess weight, hold poses longer, surya namaskar</p> <p><i>Pranayama &amp; meditation:</i> Structured meditation, Bhastrika/Bellows Breath</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>TASTES /DIET</b></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>VATA</b> Irregular/delicate digestion Appetite varies</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Balancing: Sweet, Sour, Salty Aggravating: Bitter, Pungent, Astringent</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Eat warm, heavy, moist, sweet foods</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PITTA</b> Strong digestive fire Voracious eater</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Balancing: Sweet, Bitter, Astringent Aggravating: Sour, Salty, Pungent</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Eat cool, sweet, juicy foods (reduce hot &amp; spicy foods)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>KAPHA</b> Slow digestion Moderate to low appetite</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Balancing: Pungent, Bitter, Astringent Aggravating: Sweet, Sour, Salty</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Eat dry, light spicy foods (nothing fatty and fried)</p>