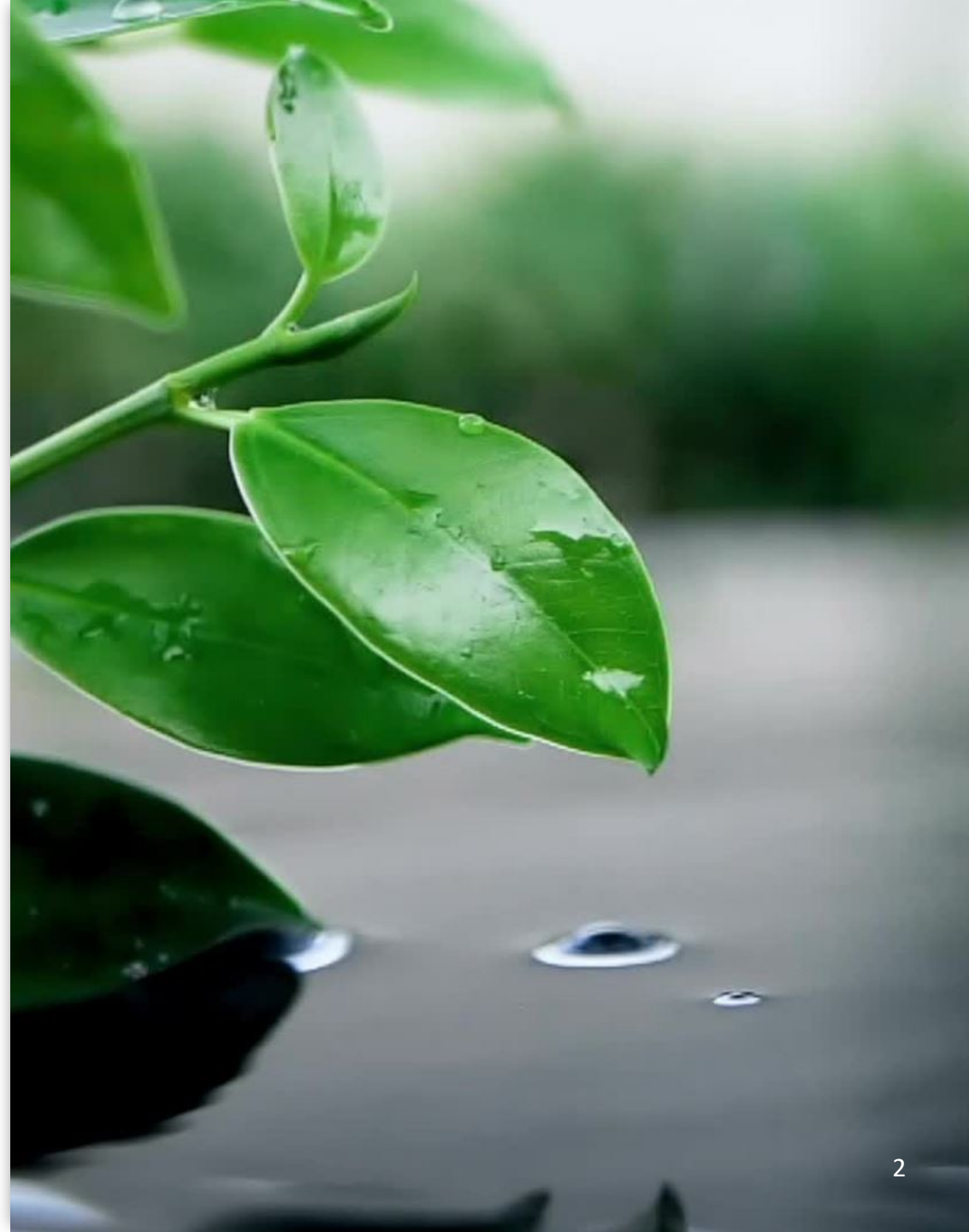
A still life composition featuring a lit candle, a bowl of yellow powder, and a white flower on a woven mat. The scene is softly lit, creating a warm and serene atmosphere. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Introduction to Ayurveda: For Holistic Wellbeing Chapter 1

What Ayurveda Signifies

- Ever since human civilization began, we have been engaged in a continuous effort to fulfill our natural needs for food, water and sleep and to ward off disease and discomfort.
- The genesis of Ayurveda is embedded in our natural inclination towards ***health and happiness.***



What Ayurveda Signifies ?

- Etymologically, the word 'Ayurveda' is a combination of two words
 - **"Ayusah" which means "life"**
 - **"Veda" and which means "science"**
- Hence, Ayurveda means **"The Science of Life"**





- Ayurveda is an integral and inherent part of our daily life, rather than just another modality to treat disease.
- In daily life, we see that people suffering from simple problems, like stomachache or digestive disorders are advised to use thymol seeds (ajvayin) and asafoetida (hing) etc.

Unique Features of Ayurvedic Treatment

Ayurvedic has certain unique features which are summarized below:

- **Comprehensive cure** : Ayurveda examines the patient's overall constitution, emotional state, spiritual orientation and other conditions responsible for the patient's physical and mental makeup.
- **Psycho-somatic nature of disease** :Physical ailments may affect the psyche, and mental disturbances affect physical health too. Therefore, the body and mind cannot be segregated and considered separately for treatment

- **Every medicine is a tonic and a rejuvenator:**
 - Ayurvedic medicines are not only curative(tonic) for specific disease, but also nourishing(rejuvenator).
 - Cyavanprash, Chandraprabhati etc are examples of rejuvenator which is also used tonics for disease prevention
- **Importance of developing the immune system and dietary control:**
 - Ayurvedic system of medicine emphasizes strengthening the immune system for protection from diseases (Prevention)
 - Ayurveda suggest nature of food, food as per seasonal variations and food at different times of the day to support one's own body constitution for increasing immunity



- **Role of dietary regimen and importance of compatible food :**

- Prescribe a diet in accordance with the physical constitution and medical history of a patient.
- Hastens the healing process

- **Simple and affordable remedies :**

- Ayurvedic practitioner can diagnose and treat the ailment by examining the patient's pulse and other bodily conditions or symptoms which helps to avoid stress, delay and expenditure. (Unlike modern age treatment which relays on tests)



- Ayurveda, through pulse examination and diagnostic processes examine, diagnose and alleviate at a very early stage, diseases which have become common nowadays. (Unlike modern age treatment which can detect specific diseases when organs get impaired 70-80%)

Ayurveda is not a symptomatic treatment but a systemic one

- It targets the root of an ailment , eliminating the actual cause of a disease and do not just suppress the symptoms.
- Modern medical treatment fails to cure the root disease although it can effectively control the complications of diseases

Ayurveda and its Diversified Areas

- Ayurveda is concerned with the welfare of all living beings including plants and animals
- **Scope of Ayurveda are also vast :**
 - It teaches a healthy person to remain fit and free from disease throughout his/ her life
 - Instructions given in "svasthavratta" about what to eat and when, according to different seasons and times, what to avoid , how to live etc
 - Ayurvedic texts on plant and animal diseases and their management, eg, Asva Ayurveda (related to the horse), Gaja Ayurveda (to the elephant), Gava Ayurveda (to the cow) and Vrksa Ayurveda (to plants).



ASHTANG AYURVEDA (8 branches of Ayurveda)

Astanga Ayurveda: The Eight Branches of Ayurveda

Vast topics of Ayurveda have been divided into eight categories by the sages :

- **Kaya Cikitsa (Internal Medicine)** : Ayurveda mainly targets this fundamental energy of the body
- **Båla roga (Pediatrics)**: Branch deals with all types of arrangements and treatments for a woman during pregnancy, of neonates, infants and children.
- **Bhuta vidhyå (Psychiatry and Exorcism)**: Holy offerings, sacrifices, chanting and other holy rituals used to counter the bad effects of demons, demigods, ghouls and evil
- **Salya cikitså (Surgery)**: This branch deals with incision, excision, treatments by surgical procedures and equipments.

Astanga Ayurveda: The Eight Branches of Ayurveda

- **Śalākya tantra (Otolaryngology (E.N.T) and Ophthalmology):** This branch includes the diseases above the neck, especially the ear, nose, throat and eyes.
- **Agada tantra (Toxicology):** Includes identification of different types of poisons and their remedies.
- **Rasāyana tantra (The Treatment for Rejuvenation):** Methodology by which we can nourish the lymph, blood and body tissues (dhātus) to restore life.
- **Vajikarana tantra (The Treatment for Infertility and Virility):** Treatment that increases the quality and quantity of semen



Chapter 2: Fundamentals of Ayurveda

Panchamahabhuta (The Five Basic Elements) and Ayurveda

Ayurveda states that the human body, its constituent factors and energy components - dosa, dhātu and mala are comprised of the five elements:

- (vayu (air),
- jala (water),
- agni (fire),
- akasa (space/ ether)
- and prthvi (earth)

On the basis of the predominance of one inherent element, substances are classified accordingly :

Panchamahabhuta (The Five Basic Elements) and Ayurveda



Akasiya dravya:

- These substances are soft, light, minute, homogenous and vocal in their attributes. Intake of these items increases tenderness, lightness, kinetic energy (motility) and porosity in the body.
- Akasa(space) is prominent

Panchamahabhuta (The Five Basic Elements) and Ayurveda

- **Vayavya dravya:**
 - These are light, cool, rough, dry, minute and with a feel or touch. Intake of these items increases roughness, repulsion, motion and energy.
 - Vayu(air) is dominant
- **Tejas dravya:**
 - These are hot, pungent, light, dry, minute, non-sticky and are attractive in form. Use of such ingredients increase burning, digestive power, metabolism, brightness (shine), enhance complexion and lend a healthy glow to the body. They also cause sensation of heat.
 - Tejas (fire) is dominant

Panchamahabhuta (The Five Basic Elements) and Ayurveda

- **Apya or jaliya dravya:**

- These are liquid, cold, heavy, smooth, soft and moist. They lend moisture and softness to the body, increase determination and bring calmness and happiness to the mind and emotions.
- water as the main constituent

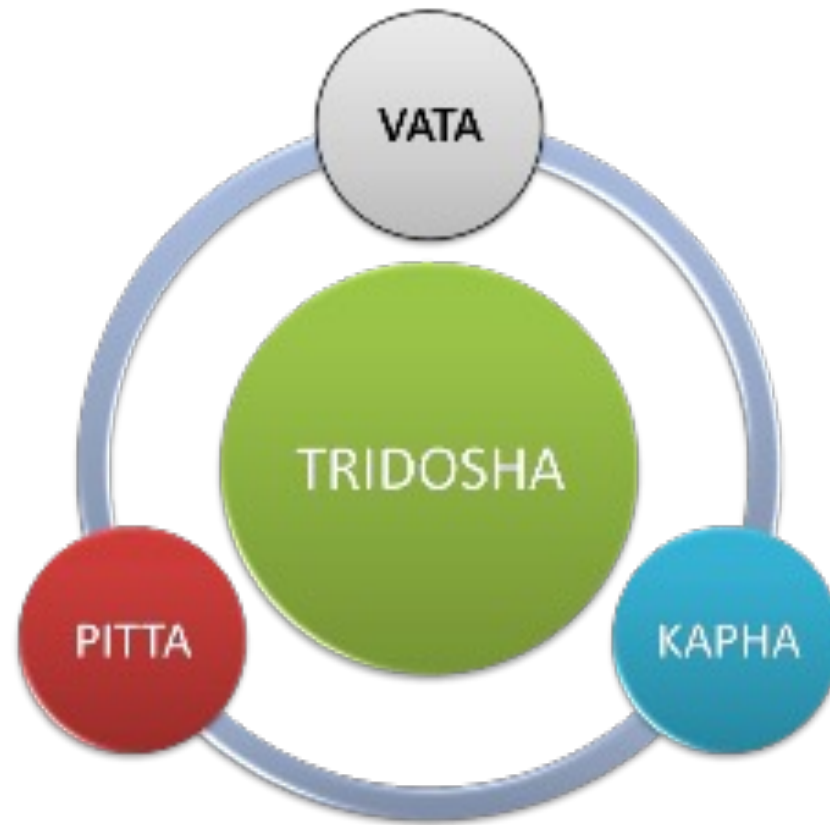
- **Pārthiva dravya:**

- These are heavy, hard, tough, gross, solid, non-sticky and have an odor. These substances cause obesity with an increase in body weight and fat, and build muscles which provide strength and support.
- predominance of the earth element

The Principle of Tridosa: The Three Biological Humors

□ **Tridosa principle:**

- Tridosa is comprised of two words: 'tri+dosa.'
- 'Tri' means 'a group of three basic elements (biological energy forces) viz., Vāta, Pitta and Kapha'
- 'Dosa' means 'which is capable of vitiation.'
- When Vāta, Pitta and Kapha are vitiated they produce disease
- Dosas are present throughout the body even in external body parts such as hair and nails.
- All bodily processes, physical or chemical, are controlled by them



- When they are in equilibrium, or in their natural state, they maintain a perfect balance or harmony between the body and saptadhātus (seven fundamental tissues).
- Most diseases are caused by an increase in the dosas, because with a decrease in any dosa its power to induce an illness automatically gets reduced.

Vāyu or Vāta Dosa: The energy of movement

- The most important of the three dosa.
- The Sanskrit root for Vāyu or Vāta is 'vā-vā gatigandhanayo', referring to breath, vibration, movement and that which causes motility in the body
- The factors that generate motion and vitality in the body constitute Vāta dosa.
- Vāta is the originator of all movements in the body. It governs all nervous functions, controls the mind, senses and motor organs.
- Vāta is also responsible for stimulation of digestive juices and enzymes that break down and digest food.

Vāyu or Vāta Dosa: The energy of movement

- Communication between various organs of the body are due to Vāta.
- Without Vāta, the other two dosas, Pitta and Kapha also remain inactive,
- Vāyu is used for the greater element and Vāta for its specific action as as a biological force
- It is responsible for the stability of other dosas at their specific locations, and when required, it eliminates them through urine, sweat and other wastes from the body.

Vāyu or Vāta Dosa: The energy of movement

- Vāta dosa is in a state of equilibrium, it keeps all dosas, dhātus and malas balanced
- If it loses its balance and equilibrium, it disturbs other dosas, dhātus, malas and srotas (channels).
- Vāta dosa is capable of transporting other dosas to different parts of the body where they are already present, thereby increasing their levels in those parts of the body and cause disease development
- All ailments are ultimately due to an imbalance or corruption of Vāta dosa.

Vāyu or Vāta Dosa: The energy of movement

- Vata has characteristics of yogavāhita It combines with and takes on the attributes of other dosas,
- When it interacts with Pitta dosa, it takes on the characteristic of heating, burning and other properties of Pitta dosa
- On interaction with Kapha it becomes cold, moist and sticky
- This property of yogavahita is the cause of many diseases.

Vāyu or Vāta Dosa: The energy of movement

- Vāta has five divisions (Vayus) or sub-types according to its location and function.
- It is essential to keep these five Vayus in harmony to control Vāta.
 - Prāna - the life-energy or the vital-force in the form of breath;
 - Udāna - the ascending or upward moving force (rising breath);
 - Samāna - the balancing air (circulating in the abdominal region)
 - Apāna - the descending or downward moving force (downward breath);
 - Vyāna - the expanding air, diffused throughout the body, governing the integrity of all vital processes.

Ayurveda Vata

The elements air and ether combine to form the vata dosha. Vata, prana or vayu translated as wind, indicates all-pervading movement.



Table 2: Types of <i>Vāta</i> - Locations and Functions				
S. No.	Types	Locations	Functions	Ailments due to vitiation
1.	<i>Prāṇa</i>	Head, chest and brain	Perceptions and movements of all kinds, respiratory activity, swallowing of food, conversion of breath into life-force, spitting and sneezing.	Hiccoughs, cough, bronchial asthma, cold, sore throat and other respiratory complaints, giddiness, syncope and other neurological disorders.
2.	<i>Udāna</i>	Throat and lungs (diaphragm, chest)	Controls the process of speech and the voice, upward movement of breath, responsible for strength, enthusiasm and will to work.	ENT (Ear, Nose, Throat) and eye ailments, speech defects.
3.	<i>Samāna</i>	Stomach and intestinal tract	Stimulating gastric juices to break down food and categorizing them into <i>dhātus</i> (<i>rasa, rakta, māṁsa</i> , etc.) and <i>malas</i> , digestion, assimilation, controlling <i>svedavaha, jalavaha</i> and <i>doṣavaha srota</i> (channels).	Dyspepsia or low digestive fire, indigestion, diarrhea and defective assimilation linked to too slow or too rapid digestion.
4.	<i>Apāna</i>	Colon (large intestine), lower abdomen, organs of the pelvic region (kidneys, bladder, navel, rectum)	Elimination of waste, keeps foetus in place and helps during birth, responsible for sexual function (ejaculation of semen) and menstruation.	Renal calculi (stone), diseases of bladder, anus, testicles, uterus and obstinate urinary ailments including diabetes, <i>prameha</i> and dysuria.
5.	<i>Vyāna</i>	Permeates the entire body especially the heart	Responsible for sweating, bending, heart rhythm, blinking of eyelids, yawning, governs peripheral circulation, dilation and constriction of blood vessels, transport nourishing juices and blood throughout the body, elimination of waste and ejaculation of semen.	Sluggishness in the circulatory function of <i>srota</i> , fever, diarrhea, bleeding, tuberculosis and other diseases.

Natural attributes of Vāta

- Vāta is dry, cold, light, subtle (minute), mobile, clear and rough
- When Vāta is in balance, its attributes are not usually felt. They can only be experienced during erratic breathing or in a state of excitement.
- The qualities of Vāta such as dryness, etc. manifests only when it gets aggravated.

VATA

AIR (WIND) + ETHER (SPACE)

Vata dosha governs all bodily movement.

PHYSICAL FEATURES	Thin, light frame and wiry structure. Long angular features. Small dark eyes that are usually dark brown. Small mouths and thin lips, irregular teeth, receding gums. Scoliosis of the spine. Thin, coarse hair that is often kinky. Skin is usually dark and dry.
SENSITIVITY	Extreme sensitivity to cold, wind, and dry weather. Cold extremities, such as hands, feet, and nose.
BODY FUNCTION	Erratic appetites and irregular digestion that is easily disturbed. Dryness in the form of constipation. Irregular menstrual cycles with acute pre-menstrual pain and emotional mood swings.
SLEEP CYLES	Light, restless sleep. Often suffer from insomnia.
PERSONALITY & MENTAL ACTIVITY	Very active mind. Vatas are creative, artistic people with imaginative ideas that can change direction as often as the wind. Open and tolerant of others. Sensitive natures and can retreat when anxious or emotionally insecure. Hyperactive and have multiple projects going at one time, which they may have trouble finishing. Energetic but sporadic. They have restless minds.

ELEMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF VATA:
COLD, DRY, LIGHT, SWIFT, MOBILE, IRREGULAR, ROUGH

Reasons for Vāta aggravation

- Being born with Vāta-type is certainly a strong predisposing factor for its aggravation.
- Another factor is old age, a time when Vāta increases in everyone. Aging can bring out the worst signs of Vāta aggravation
- Grief, fatigue, fear and exhaustion are again the causes of Vāta imbalance.
- The most typical reasons are:
 - **Suppression of urges:** Suppressing the natural urges of the body such as defecation, urination, sneezing and so on.

Table 1: Attributes of <i>Vāta</i> and their Effect on Physiology	
Attributes	Physiological Manifestations
1. <i>Rūkṣatā</i> (Dryness)	Dryness, emaciation and stunted growth; poor development of bodily tissues; vocal unclarity, low, obstructed, dry, rough and hoarse voice; and lack of sleep.
2. <i>Śītalatā</i> (Coolness)	Inability to tolerate cold substances, disliking towards cold climate, afflicted with diseases related to cold; stiffness of limbs and shivering of the body, cold hands and feet.
3. <i>Laghutā</i> (Lightness)	Lightness in the body; inconsistent gait, action, food intake and movement (speed).
4. <i>Cañcalatā</i> (Motility)	Movements of joints, eyes, eyebrows, jaws, lips, tongue, head, shoulder, hands and legs; irregular heart rhythm, muscle spasms; changeable mind and emotions.
5. <i>Viśadatā</i> (Non-stickiness, clear)	Dry and cracked skin; crackling sound in limbs or joints, flickering of body parts.
6. <i>Kharatva</i> (Roughness)	Coarse-textured and rough hair, skin, nails, teeth, face, hands and feet.
7. <i>Bahulatā</i> (Abundance or Excessiveness)	Talkativeness; abundance and prominent visibility of tendons and veins.
8. <i>Śīghramitā</i> (Quickness/ Swiftness)	Quick in initiating actions, acting on impulse, restless activities, gets frightened quickly; rapid susceptibility to diseases and infections; mood swings, scattered thoughts, quickly deciding likes and dislikes; picks-up new information quickly, which is also quickly forgotten, poor long-term memory; fast speech.

- The most typical reasons are:
 - **Suppression of urges:** Suppressing the natural urges of the body such as defecation, urination, sneezing and so on.
 - **Dietetics:**
 - Eating before the digestion of the previous meal,
 - eating foods with too many dry, pungent, bitter and astringent tastes,
 - excess intake of dry fruit,
 - overeating, eating cold foods,
 - fasting, skipping meals habitually,
 - ignoring the body's hunger signals.

Reasons for Vāta aggravation

- **Stress:**

- Physical and mental stress,
- too much worry, anxiety and tension,
- overwork, working more than one's capacity,
- suffering emotionally from grief, fear and frightening experiences, unexpected shocks,
- long trips and uncomfortable rides in vehicles, strain and exhaustion.

Reasons for Vāta aggravation

- **Habits:** Poor sleep, sleeping late at night, talking loudly and overindulgence in sexual activity.
- **Season:** During monsoon, Vāta gets aggravated naturally without the onset of these conditions, as the weather become windy

Symptoms of aggravated Vāta

- **Physical indications:**

- dryness, roughness, stiffness in the body and organs,
- pricking pain, loose joints, dislocation of the bones, brittle bones, hardness,
- weak and fragile organs,
- shivering and numbness in the limbs,
- feeling of coolness, debility, constipation,
- pain, discoloration and dull skin
- lack of luster in the teeth and nails,
- losing sense of taste and astringent taste in the mouth.

Symptoms of aggravated Vāta

- **Mental indications:** Worry, anxiety, loss of mental focus, an over-active mind, impatience, short attention span and depression.
- **Behavioral indications:** Insomnia, fatigue, inability to relax, restlessness, low appetite and impulsiveness.

Remedies for balancing Vāta

- Consumption of oily substances (clarified butter, oil, fats); bathing with warm water and taking enemas or basti.
- Stay warm - fomentation or sudation to induce sweating with the help of decoctions prepared from Vāta reducing medicines, bathing with hot water or with these decoctions along with the ingestion of heat producing foods to induce sweating.
- Mild purgation using medicines prepared from oily, hot, sweet, sour and salty substances to eliminate excretory wastes.

Remedies for balancing Vāta

- Tying the diseased area of the body with a cloth or poultice (healing through medicated cloth), pressing the diseased area with hands and feet, massaging and bathing with Vāta reducing substances or inhaling them nasally (nasya).
- Pouring Vāta - controlling warm decoctions gently over the head (Sirodhāra therapy).
- Drinking medicated āsava (fermented medicated herbal decoctions) prepared from Vāta-reducing herbs and substances.
- Get plenty of rest, avoid mental strain and stress.
- Do not drink alcohol or take any form of stimulants including coffee, tea and nicotine. Give them up altogether.

Pitta Dosa: The energy of biotransformation and heat generation



pitta

the energy of transformation

- Pitta is responsible for all aspects of heat, light and color in the body.
- It is derived from the Sanskrit word 'Tapa' from 'Taptati iti pittam' means heat or energy.
- Pitta is a source of thermal energy in the body.
- Pitta doa regulates the enzymes and hormones in the body. It is responsible for digestion and metabolism.
- Whatever is ingested as food and the oxygen we breathe in are converted to body constituents (doas, dhâtus and malas) by the action of Pitta
- Pitta maintains body temperature and digests food.

Pitta Dosa: The energy of biotransformation and heat generation

- It imparts color to the blood and skin, gives form, beauty and glow to the body, keeps the heart healthy, absorbs oily substances that are massaged into the skin and lends it luster.
- Pitta controls mental functions like intellect, wisdom, perception, judgement, valor, courage, confidence and joyousness
- When Pitta is out of balance, the digestion is adversely affected. Digestive energy levels go down leading to an increase in Kapha tendency and its concerned attributes, which results in the accumulation of Kapha in the heart and lungs.

Pitta Dosa: The energy of biotransformation and heat generation

- Five types of Pitta :
 - Pācaka Pitta - that which promotes digestion.
 - Rajaka Pitta - that which increases the formation of rakta dhātu or blood, imparts color.
 - Sādhaka Pitta - that which is responsible for intellect and memory and allows us to accomplish things effectively and promotes contentment and enthusiasm.
 - Alocaka Pitta - that which promotes sight.
 - Bhrājaka Pitta - that which maintains body temperature and provides a glow to the skin.

Ayurveda Pitta

Fire & water elements combine to form Pitta dosha. It is the principle of transformational energy governs heat, digestion, and metabolism.



Natural attributes of Pitta

- Pitta is slightly oily, hot, sharp, fluid, sour, tremulous

	Attributes	Physiological Manifestations
1.	<i>Uṣṇatā</i> (Heat)	Causes intolerance towards heat and hot things; having a red and hot face, warm, flushed skin; tender and clean body; freckles, spots, moles, warts, blemishes; quick advent of wrinkles, premature graying of hair and baldness, soft-brown facial and body hair; overactive metabolism, excessive hunger and thirst.
2.	<i>Tīkṣnatā</i> (Sharpness or Acuteness)	Tendency to over exhibit body strength; sharp mind and sharpness of character; strong digestive power, intake of food and fluids in large quantity due to over secretion of stomach acids; flexibility; and inability to face difficult situations.
3.	<i>Dravatā</i> (Fluid, Moist or Oily)	Causes tenderness and laxity (looseness) in joints, bones and muscles; excessive sweating, urination and excretion.
4.	<i>Amlatā</i> and <i>Kaṭutā</i> (Sour and Pungent)	Results in low semen quantity, poor sexual desire and maternal ability.
5.	<i>Visragandnitā</i> (Sour Smelling or Pungent Odor)	Causes strong and pungent odor in underarms, mouth, head and other body parts.

Reasons for Pitta aggravation

- **Dietetics:**

- Consumption of large quantities of pungent, bitter, spicy, sour, hot, oily substances, fried foods and large amount of sour or fermented foods such as cheese, vinegar, sour cream, alcoholic beverages and fermented drinks.
- irregular food habits (not eating at a fixed time, not eating when hungry, eating without hunger) and indigestion;
- certain foods like sesame oil, mustard, horse gram, intoxicating drinks, fish and flesh of sheep and goat especially aggravate Pitta.

Reasons for Pitta aggravation

- **Emotional disturbances and stress:** Anger, fear and depression, stress, constant pressure, heat and fatigue also affect Pitta dosa.
- **Habits:** Excessive sexual intercourse and too much exposure to heat and sun.
- **Season:** It is also aggravated naturally in autumn, when the weather is in transition phase.

Symptoms of aggravated Pitta

- **Physical indications:**

- Lack of strength, excessive sweating, hunger and thirst, increased body temperature and burning sensation
- Skin inflammation, boils, rashes, acne, hot flashes, ulcers and heart burn;
- Unpleasant body odor, bad breath; oiliness/stickiness; sore throat (pharyngitis), dizziness and syncope; sunstroke, sunburn;
- Yellowing of skin, fecal matter, urine, nails and eyes are special symptoms of aggravated Pitta.

Symptoms of aggravated Pitta

- **Mental indications:** Anger, hostility, impatience, resentment, irritability and self-criticism are the signs of Pitta imbalance.
- **Behavioral indications:**
- Intolerance of delay, outburst of temper, criticism of others, argumentative nature
- fatigue, lack of sleep, craving for cold foods and drinks,
- bitter and sour taste in the mouth, and intolerance to heat

Remedies for balancing Pitta

- Therapeutic purgation is the best way to reduce excess Pitta. Pitta initially accumulates in the stomach and duodenum (small intestine) and purgatives reach these sites and eliminate the accumulated Pitta.
- Meditation is very useful to regain inner calm and equilibrium, and coolness in any form helps to counteract the imbalanced Pitta.
- Regular intake of ghee (clarified butter), which has Pitta-opposing qualities like sweetness, coldness and other moderate features is also very useful to keep Pitta in state of balance.
- Avoid strenuous physical exertion or overheating in sunlight outside, as Pitta types are heat-sensitive.

Symptoms of low level of Pitta and its treatment

- Symptoms:
 - reduction in the digestive power,
 - low body temperature,
 - an increased sensitivity to cold.
- Treatment :
- regular intake of Pitta increasing foods and medicines are useful
- herbal preparations which increase the digestive fire should be administered.

PITTA

FIRE + WATER

Pitta dosha governs the transformation of food and ideas.

PHYSICAL FEATURES	Hot in nature with a robust circulation that leads to ruddy coloring and warm extremities. Medium-sized build and moderate muscle tone. Skin is fair, warm, reddish, soft, and moist. Many freckles and moles, with a tendency toward rashes or acne. Medium sized eyes are light in color. Soft, thin, light-colored or reddish hair that may turn grey or bald early.
SENSITIVITY	Burn easily in the sun. Sensitive to heat and humidity.
BODY FUNCTION	Prone to inflammation of muscles and tissues, especially in the shoulders and middle back where they accumulate stress. Robust, healthy appetite and will become irritable if they skip a meal. Best digestion of all three doshas. Women have regular menstrual cycles with heavy bleeding and PMS.
SLEEP CYLES	Light but moderately good sleep and often overheat during sleep. Burns candle at both ends.
PERSONALITY & MENTAL ACTIVITY	Intelligent, powerful, and clear, with a focused mind that makes it easy for them to succeed. Aggressive and competitive in nature, workaholics and overly ambitious. Dynamic personalities and great conversationalists.

ELEMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF PITTA:
HOT, OILY, LIGHT, LIQUID, MOBILE, SHARP, SOFT, SMOOTH