The Ayurvedic Wellness Counselor Program

KAA 105: Ayurvedic Prevention (Swastha Vritta)
Swastha Vritta is an important aspect of Ayurveda emphasizing Prevention.

Prevention means creating balance.

Swasthavritta concerns the state of complete physical, sensory, mental and spiritual as well as social wellbeing.

- **Swastha**: Swa is Self, Stha is established; Swastha means established in the self, or a person who is established in their unique body constitution.

- **Vritta**: Science or information.
Swastha Vritta: Background

Translation

**Ayurveda** gives us the guidelines for how to live our life in a state of peace and happiness, how to create joy in our personal as well as social lives and how to create balance, both within and without.

**Hita Ahita:** Primarily for social wellbeing.

**Yamas:** Satya, Ahimsa, Asteya, Brahmacharya, Aparigraha.

**Sukham Dukham:** Personal wellbeing.

**Niyamas:** Shoucha, Santosha, Tapa, Swadhyaa and Eeshvera Pranidhana.
Swastha Vritta: Background

Translation

Life (Jivita) consists of the physical body, the sense organs, the mind and the soul. Our efforts must be directed toward creating balance at all these levels.
Health is the foundation (Mulam) to achieve the four goals in life: Kama (activities), Artha (prosperity), Dharma (codes of conduct) and Moksha (liberation). Health is the prerequisite for all aspects of life.

Health is necessary for the three Eshanas (desires, cravings):
1. Prana Eshana
2. Dhana Eshana
3. Paraloka Eshana
According to the Vedic system, there are four major goals in life:

1. **Kama**: Activities, Actions, Enjoyment
2. **Artha**: Money, Prosperity
3. **Dharma**: Code of Conduct, Guidelines, Purpose
4. **Moksha**: Liberation, Nonattachment
The Four Goals of Life: Kama

1. Kama  
*Activities, Actions, Enjoyment*

- All the activities performed, such as growing, learning and enjoying life.
- Includes the joy or beauty of sensory experience.
- The goal of the desire principle or emotional mind (Manas).
- Rajasic quality.

*Note:* The strongest form of pleasure is sexual enjoyment.
The Four Goals of Life: Artha

2. **Artha**
   *Money, Prosperity*

- Making money to acquire material things.
- Prosperity, wealth, attainment of outer objects and possessions in life.
- Outer goal of the ego-principle (Ahankara).

*These three goals are outward or secondary in nature to the fourth major goal of life...*
3. **Dharma**

*Code of Conduct, Guidelines, Purpose*

- Code of conduct.
- Guidelines to follow the different stages of life (Brahmacharyashram, Grihasthashram, Vanaprasthashram, Sannyasashram).
- Power and our career or status in life.
- The inner goal of the ego-principle (Ahankara).

These three goals are outward or secondary in nature to the fourth major goal of life...
4. **Moksha**  
*Liberation, Nonattachment*

- Liberation is considered by Ayurveda to be the prime goal in life.
- Moksha provides us freedom for our full expression in life.
- Depends upon knowledge.

Through knowledge we gain a greater freedom and mastery of life and become capable of appropriate actions at all levels of experience. This is the goal of intelligence or reason (Buddhi).
Swastha, or Healthy Person:

- **A person** who has maintained his or her Body Constitution, i.e. experiences balanced functions of the three Doshas, Agni, Dhatus and Malas.

- **A person** who has clear thoughts, sharp sense organs and a calm and peaceful mind.
What Makes a Healthy Person?

Individual health is not sufficient unless the society we live in is also healthy. There is a constant interaction occurring with other people. While providing us with preventive tools to maintain our own health and wellbeing, the study of Swasthavritta guides us on the steps necessary to keep the rest of society healthy as well.

One unhappy person can affect an entire society:
The Goal of Swastha Vritta

The goal of Swasthavritta is to achieve, maintain and preserve health and prevent disease. Achieving the four goals of life is critical. The body is a medium or tool for action and enjoyment in all areas of life. We have to maintain its optimum state. These are based on Ahara (diet), Nidra (sleep) and Brahmacharya (celibacy), as they are the three pillars (supports) of life on which our strength, stamina and harmony are dependent. Our actions must be right, regular and truthful.

1. Dinacharya: Daily Routines
2. Ratricharya: Nightly Routines
3. Ritucharya: Seasonal Routines
The Three Pillars of Life

Everything we do has a particular Doshic characteristic. The way we eat, sleep, work and enjoy ourselves all have qualities of Vata, Pitta and Kapha.

The Three Pillars of Life

Achieving a balance between all three of these Doshas does not happen overnight. We have to work at it. The best way to start is to ask yourself questions about how you lead your life: Do I have a consistent bedtime? Do I get up at the same time each day? What activities do I participate in most often? When do I eat my meals? and Do I take the time to observe my emotional and physical state before I eat?
Daily Routine: Dinacharya

Daily Routine represents the daily activities that we follow according to the cycles of Kapha, Pitta and Vata. Daily Routines (or Dinacharya) have tremendous benefits.

*For example:* Making your main meal at lunchtime and eating a light breakfast and dinner improves your digestion. Meditating and planning your whole day early in the morning increases mindfulness and productivity. Following a daily routine is like swimming with the current of the river whereas not following a routine is like swimming against the current.
Seasonal Routine: Ritucharya

Changes in the season are potential causes of Dosha imbalance. We cannot control these changes but we can maintain balance by adapting our lifestyle accordingly.

For example: Changing your clothes according to the season. T-shirts and cool cotton clothing are best in the summer, warm and heavy jackets are best in the fall and winter and warm but light clothing is best in the spring. We also need to change our diet and other activities according to the seasons to maintain balance.

It is necessary that we establish the right rhythm in our lives. Ayurvedic routines help to keep us in harmony with the universe and the cosmic life force.
Everybody should follow a *Sattvic* or pure lifestyle. It gives the mind peace, clarity and tranquility.

**Physical purity** includes a diet comprised of organically grown raw or freshly cooked vegetarian food, clean water and air, proper exercise and hygiene.

**Purity of lifestyle** includes a healthy livelihood, or an occupation that does not bring harm to others, pleasant speech and a harmonious or pleasant environment. It also includes devotion to the divine or truth, compassion, service to humanity and practice of Yoga and meditation.

Purity of lifestyle is probably the most important factor involved in physical and mental health. The right lifestyle does not mean suppressing our nature but bringing out its deeper powers.
The primary consideration for Vata-predominant individuals is *sticking to the routine*. This can prove to be one of the most difficult things for the Vata-predominant individual to achieve, because they tend to change their mind very often. Vatas need to stick to their routine about diet, about work habits, about exercise, about sleep and about doing things.
Special Considerations for Pitta

The primary consideration for Pitta-predominant individuals is *cooling down*. Pitta-predominant individuals are born to be tidy and organized, however they often go overboard. Pitta-predominant individuals should avoid being too intense. They need to remember that life is for living and is meant to be enjoyed. Letting go of their overly-competitive edge can be very beneficial for Pitta-predominant individuals. They are best served when they take the time to participate in soothing activities, such as taking a relaxing walk or sitting outside on a clear summer night staring at the moon, just for the fun of it.
Special Considerations for Kapha

The primary consideration for Kapha-predominant individuals is to activity and variety. If you cannot stand any form of change, you are most likely Kapha-predominant in your psycho-physiological makeup. Kapha-predominant individuals do best when they add a few variations to their daily and seasonal routines. For example, they might choose to walk for their exercise portion of one particular day and then to dance another. Or they might go running, or to play tennis. Kapha-predominant individuals benefit greatly from a wide assortment of activities from day to day.
Dinacharya: The Daily Cycle

- 6 am: Kapha
- 2 am: Vata
- 10 am: Pitta
- 2 pm: Vata
- 6 pm: Kapha
- 10 pm: Pitta
Waking Up

The ideal time to rise is three hours before sunrise or at the very least, a ½ to 1 hour before sunrise.

Notes About Waking Up
In the early morning, Sattva Guna is most prevalent, so it is the best time of the day to meditate.
The body is well rested.
The mind is alert, focused and peaceful.

Exceptions to Waking Early
Young children, hospital patients, the elderly, those who work the night shift.
A bowel movement (BM) first thing in the morning is a sign of good health.

The Vata cycle in the early morning helps prompt the body’s natural urge. Allow this urge and do not resist it but at the same time do not create the urge forcefully (this will aggravate Vata).

Healthy Tip

Drinking 1-2 glasses of plain water (room temp or warm) helps to create a natural urge for a BM. Ideally, keep water overnight in a copper container and drink it in the morning. Copper increases the ionization in water, which helps to cleanse the body and reduce blood pressure.
Dinacharya: Morning Rituals

Tooth Brushing

In the old days, small twigs of certain trees were used to brush the teeth.

For Example
- Neem (Bitter)
- Babbul
- Khair (Astringent)
- Karanja (Pungent)
- Yashtimadhu (Sweet)

*These twigs cleanse the mouth, strengthen the gums, kill bacteria and reduce bad breath and excessive Kapha.*

Using a Twig to Brush Your Teeth
- The twig should be approximately 6 inches long and about ½" thick.
- The twig is to be chewed and then used to clean the teeth.
- Teeth should be cleaned in the morning, at night and after each meal (after eating).

Along with these twigs, certain combinations of herbal powders were used as tooth powders (instead of pastes).

Exceptions to Brushing Teeth
- Throat infections, problems with the tongue, palate and lips, stomatitis and dental problems.
Dinacharya: Morning Rituals

Tongue Scraping

Guidelines for Scraping the Tongue
- Use as scraper made of gold, silver, copper.
- Should be strong, and have a gentle, rough edge.
- Tongue should be scraped every time after cleaning teeth.

Benefits of Scraping the Tongue
- Removes Ama.
- Cleanses coated tongue.
- Gets rid of foul breath.
- Throat infections, problems with the tongue, palate and lips, stomatitis and dental problems.
There are two primary gargling techniques:

1. **Herbal Juice**
   
   *Swarasa*

   **Procedure**
   Place oil or herbal juice (*Swarasa*) in the mouth for a few minutes.

   **Benefits**
   - Helps to strengthen teeth.
   - Soothes the voice.
   - Keep the lips moist.

2. **Herbal Teas**

   **Procedure**
   Gargle with herbal teas like Khadira, Umbara, Babbula (astringent in taste).

   **Benefits**
   - Cleanses the mouth.
   - Strengthens the mucus membrane, teeth and gums.
   - Reduces swelling.
Dinacharya: Morning Rituals

Cleansing the Face

**Procedure**
Use astringent water (cool water for Pitta, warm for Vata and Kapha).

**Benefits**
- Removes dirt, sweat, natural secretions.
- Improves circulation.
- Prevents skin infections, acne and discolorations of the skin.
**Dinacharya: Morning Rituals**

**Cleansing the Eyes**

**Procedure**
Use room temperature water to rinse and cleanse the eyes.

**Benefits**
- Improves vision.
- Reduces eye discharges.
- Prevents eye problems and reddening.
Dinacharya: Morning Rituals

Shaving

Benefits
- Feels clean, light and energetic.
- Looks neat and tidy.
Dinacharya: Morning Rituals

Meditation

*Chanting, Pranayama, Mantra, Reading from Scriptural Books, Visualization*

One should meditate for at least 20 to 30 minutes, although regularity is more important than length of time.

**Benefits**

- Calms the mind.
- Increases Sattva Guna.
- Energizes mind and transcends from physical level to the higher levels.
- Reduces anxiety, depression.
- Gives confidence, changes attitude about life.
**Dinacharya: Morning Rituals**

**Eye Exercises**

**Procedure**
- Watch the morning sun for 1-2 minutes.
- Move eyeballs in a clockwise and anticlockwise direction 6-8 times.
- Alternate focusing on an object that is 10 feet and 6 inches away, respectively for 2-3 min.
- Focus eyes on candle light in the dark.

**Benefits**
Help to increase eye muscle strength, thus improving vision.

**Things to Avoid to Improve or Protect Vision**
- Watching TV from too close of a distance.
- Bright lights.
- Reading in the dark.
- Reading in a moving vehicle.

› **Healthy Tip**
*Massaging the soles of the feet cools the eyes.*
Dinacharya: Morning Rituals

Physical Exercise

Benefits
- Strengthens body and increase stamina.
- Body becomes light.
- Builds and tones muscles, increases endurance.
- Improves digestion, reduces fat, fatigue and lethargy.
- Increases internal heat and opens Srotas, removes blockages.

Guidelines for Exercise
Exercise in moderation, until the person
- Feels tired.
- Starts becoming breathless.
- Starts sweating on forehead and under the armpits.
- Gets a dry mouth.
Dinacharya: Morning Rituals

Physical Exercise

Things to Remember
- Do not over exert
- Do not lift weights beyond your capacity
- Do not do stunts which may harm the body

All of the above things deplete the Dhatus, making you dizzy and excessively hot.

Exceptions to Exercise
- Physical weakness
- Physical sickness
- Bleeding disorders
- Asthma or cough
- Right after meals

Healthy Tip
Light walking* is ideal for individuals who meet these exceptions.

*Walking is the best form of exercise. It increases longevity, sharpens the sense organs & intellect and improves digestion.
Dinacharya: Morning Rituals

Oil Massage (Abhyanga)
Whole Body Massage

Abhyanga is a massage performed in the direction of hair growth with sesame (warm) or coconut oil (cool).

Benefits
- Prevents aging.
- Strengthens the body, increases stamina and tones muscles.
- Pacifies Vata Dosha.
- Smoothes the skin, prevents wrinkles and improves the sense of touch.
- Calms the mind and helps promote sound sleep.
- Heals the body faster.
- Improves vision.

Oil Absorption
In the first 5 minutes, the skin absorbs the oil, then after every 1-1½ minutes each successive Dhatu absorbs it, so leave the oil on the body at least for 10-15 minutes before taking shower.

Precautions
Avoid Abhyanga in the following cases:
- Fever
- Indigestion
- Kapha aggravation
Dinacharya: Morning Rituals

Head Massage

*Massaging warm oil into the scalp with the fingertips.*

**Benefits**
- Calms the mind.
- Prevents headaches.
- Strengthens hair follicles, increases body and luster and makes hair thick.
- Prevents early balding, graying, dandruff and/or hair loss.
- Strengthens the bones of the skull.
- Sharpens the sense organs and memory.
- Helps promote sound sleep.
Sole Massage

Massaging the soles of the feet with oil or ghee.

Benefits
- Prevents cracking, numbness & drying of the feet.
- Increases stamina.
- Good for pedicure.
- Improves vision.
- Pacifies Vata Dosha.
- Strengthens the sciatic nerve.
Dinacharya: Morning Rituals

Herbal Powder Application

Among the herbal powders or pastes used for Herbal Powder Application are Amla, Ginger, Ritha, Sandalwood, Nagarmotha, Ushira and Vacha.

Benefits
- Pacifies Vata Dosha.
- Reduces Kapha Dosha and Meda Dhatu.
- Improves stamina.
- Improves the function of Bhrajaka Pitta.
- Cleanses the body.
- Opens the pores of the skin.
- Removes body odor.
- Prevents itching and blemishes.
Dinacharya: Morning Rituals

**Herbal Face Pack**

1 part Amalaki  
½ part Haritaki  
¼ part Sandalwood powder

Mix all of the powders. Use ½ tsp powder in 1-2 tsp milk and apply as a face pack. Leave it on for 5 minutes and then wash it off.
Dinacharya: Morning Rituals

Bathing

Benefits
- Cleanses the skin of impurities and sweat.
- Reduces heat and relaxes the body.
- Energizes the body, mind and senses.
- Improves digestion.
- Reduces lethargy and sleepiness.
- Opens the Srotas and cleanses the subtle Malas.

Precautions
When not to bathe:
- During sickness
- Right after a meal
- With very cold water
Dinacharya: Morning Rituals

Bathing

Healthy Tip
- Bathe once or twice a day.
- Depending on the season and Dosha condition, warm or cool water is used on the body (below the neck).
- Bathe the head using cool or lukewarm water. Avoid hot water on the head – The 7th chakra is very heating. Also, bathing the head in hot water causes dizziness and loosens hair follicles.
- The best time to bathe is in the morning.
  - As we get the urge for a BM in the morning, all Dhatu Malas that have been formed at night should be removed from the body.
Dinacharya: Morning Rituals

Perfumes

Chandana paste is used on the forehead whereas a powder is used on the body.

Benefits
Reduces sweat, cools the body, has a pleasant fragrance and increases Ojas.
Dinacharya: Morning Rituals

Aromatherapy

**Vata**
*Calming and pacifying aromas*
such as basil, orange, geranium, clove and rose.

**Benefits**
- Calms Vata Dosha, restlessness and anxiety
- Promotes sleep
- Stabilizes the metabolism

**Pitta**
*Cooling and sweet aromas*
such as sandalwood, mint, rose, jasmine and khas.

**Benefits**
- Reduces irritability, anger and jealousy.
- Improves digestion.

**Kapha**
*Stimulating, spicy aromas*
such as juniper, ginger, eucalyptus, camphor, clove and saffron.

**Benefits**
- Reduce blockages, fat and water retention.
- Stimulate the metabolism
Hair Styling

For a neat and tidy look.
Dinacharya: Morning Rituals

Guidelines

- Clothing should be clean and well fitting.
- Cotton is the best fabric, especially for undergarments. It is important that the clothing is absorbent and the body is able to breathe.
- Wear different colors according to the seasons.
  - In the spring, wear pastel or light-colored clothing.
  - In the summer, wear white as it repels heat.
  - In the winter, wear darker colors as they retain heat.
Breakfast

Breakfast gives energy, strength and stamina. There is a fast break between lunch and dinner, so eat a light breakfast.

Why?

*Hint: Kapha time of day*
Dinacharya: The Work Day

After your morning routines, begin your workday.

The following can be ideal professions depending on Dosha predominance:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Vata</th>
<th>Pitta</th>
<th>Kapha</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sales, Marketing</td>
<td>Management, CEO</td>
<td>Administration, Nursing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acting, Dancing</td>
<td>Doctors, Finance</td>
<td>Homemaker</td>
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<td>Teaching, Writing</td>
<td>Politics, Leadership</td>
<td>Building</td>
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<tr>
<td>Photography, Design</td>
<td>Law</td>
<td>Counseling</td>
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Healthy Tips
The morning is the best part of the work day to get physical work complete.

Why? Hint: Kapha Period

The afternoon (after 3 p.m.) is ideal for planning, meeting, strategizing, accounting, intuitive work or planning for the next day.

Why? Hint: Vata Period
Dinacharya: Morning Rituals

Lunch

The time around noon is ideal for the main meal of the day. Sit down, take your time and enjoy your food. Do not work on the computer, make or receive telephone calls or eat on the go.
Dinacharya: Morning Rituals

Vamakukshi

Procedure

- Take a 15-20 minute nap lying on your left side.
- **Alternative:** Take a nap in a sitting position or take a leisurely walk (this helps improve digestion).

After work, go home, rest for few minutes and then exercise (if this was not done in the morning).

Folder: Vama: Left Kukshi: Side
Weekly Practices

Do the following practices once a week:

**Ear Care**

**Guidelines**
Pour a few drops of warm oil in both ears. Generally, sesame oil is used. For earache, garlic or clove oil may be used.

**Benefits**
- Improves hearing.
- Prevents ringing in the ears.
- Loosens ear wax.
- Strengthens the bones and ear drum.
- Prevents neck stiffness.

**Precautions**
- Loud noises and loud music.
- Prevent cold air from gushing into the ears by putting small cotton balls in the ears during cold weather.
Weekly Practices

Nose Care

Ayurveda emphasizes Nasya as a doorway to the brain, where all the centers of the sense organs and organs of action are situated.

Guidelines

- A special oil called Anu Tail is used. If this is not available, sesame oil can also be used.
- Four to eight drops of warm oil are administered in both nostrils.

Timing

- In spring, fall and winter, Nasya is performed every day.
- In the summer it is done once a week.
- In Pitta conditions, this is done in the afternoon.
- In Vata conditions it is done in the late afternoon or at night.
- In Kapha conditions, it is done in the morning.
Weekly Practices

Nose Care

Benefits
- Sharpens the sense organs.
- Prevents disease above the neck. For example: Sinus problems, migraines, headaches and neck stiffness.
- Strengthens the joints in the scalp and face.
- Improves the texture of the skin and prevents wrinkles.
- Prevents early graying, balding and general hair loss.
- Improves the clarity of the voice.
Weekly Practices

Herbal Smoking

Inhaling herbal smoke is a normal weekly routine advised by Ayurveda.

Guidelines
- The paste of herbs is applied to a bamboo stick and dried in the sun.
- The bamboo stick is removed and the herbal cigar is burnt into a special Dhooma Yantra.
- The smoke is inhaled either through the nose (in nasal or sinus congestion) or by mouth (in throat congestion) and exhaled through the mouth.

Herbs Used
Chandana, Lotus, Licorice, Jatamansi, Guggul, Pimpal and Lodhra, etc.
Herbal Smoking

Benefits
- Clears congestion in the throat, nose and sinuses.
- Clears the voice and strengthens hair and lungs.
- Sharpens the senses and calms the mind.
- Reduces lethargy and fatigue, headaches and neck stiffness.
- Prevents from all ear, nose, throat and lung diseases.

Precautions
- People who are taking enemas and/or purgatives.
- People with bleeding conditions.
- Pregnant women.
- Pitta aggravation.
- Physical weakness.
- Anxiety and depression.
Weekly Practices

Cutting Finger and Toenails

For hygiene.
Dinner

Guidelines

- Dinner can be taken around 7 p.m.
- Food should be light, cooked and easy to digest.
- Enjoy Family Time
  - Relax, watch TV, read, listen to music or wash dishes.
Ratricharya: Nightly Rituals

All living beings have an instinct for sex. Having sex at the right time and frequency improves life and longevity. Having sex too frequently depletes Ojas and/or the immune system and should be avoided.

Guidelines
- In winter, sex can be performed daily.
- In the spring and fall it should be reduced to twice a week and in the summer to twice a month.
- The minimum age to perform sex is puberty.
  - Girls reach puberty around age 16-20. This is earlier in the US mainly because of fatty foods.
  - Boys reach puberty around the age of 21-25.
- Ideally, the wife should be four to six years younger than her husband. *This is an Ayurvedic view. Of course there are cultural differences.*

Avoid
- Right after meals.
- In conditions of disease.
- During the menstrual period.
- During the first and last trimester of pregnancy.

After Sex
- Take a shower.
- Drink milk or eat sweets to replenish energy and reduce Vata.

- **Having sex is very natural and is essential for mental and physical health. To suppress the urge or desire causes Vata aggravation, and many psychological symptoms.**
Ratrigharya: Nightly Rituals

Sleep

Sound sleep is a sign of good health and is of necessary in order to maintain good health. Health, happiness, strength, intelligence, healthy mental state and Dhatu-building all depend on sound sleep.

Importance

- After a day’s work and running around in the world, the body and mind need rest.
- Our senses need rest after constantly taking in impulses.
- Metabolism (subtle digestion) happens at night during Pitta time. Complete rest is essential in this time frame.
- During the day time we are busy taking in information from all the five senses. Night is when we take the time to process that information and create meaning and realization.
Ratricharya: Nightly Rituals

Sleep

At night, Tamasa Guna is predominant, so the body and sense organs become heavy and weak. When the sense organs are tired and the mind is withdrawn from them, we feel sleepy.

Before dawn, the Sattva Guna prevails, so the senses become alert and energetic and we wake up.

Healthy sleep is sound and occurs naturally.
Ratricharya: Nightly Rituals

Sleep

Unhealthy sleep is:

- Heavy Sleep
  - Due to hangover from Alcohol or drugs.
  - Due to Kapha aggravation.
  - Due to excessive physical exertion.
- Insomnia or waking early, around 3 a.m.
  - Due to Vata aggravation.
  - Due to mental agitation.
  - Due to worry, anxiety, depression, fear and/or pain.
Sleep

During the day, sleep should be avoided except for a catnap after a meal unless the following conditions apply:

- Individuals who work the night shift, or after physical exertion.
- Patients.
- Physical injury or psychological problems.
- Sleep period during daytime should be ⅓ of the night sleep.
Ratricharya: Nightly Rituals

Sleep

People with Kapha aggravation or overweight people should avoid sleep during the day completely.

People with Pitta or Vata constitution can take a short nap during the day.

Dangers of Excess Sleep
Congestion, indigestion, heaviness, swelling, headaches and lethargy.

Things Which Promote Sleep
Abhyanga, warm bath, warm milk, fatty and heavy deserts, alcohol and Pranayama.
Ritucharya: The Seasonal Cycle

- Summer: Pitta
- Late Winter & Spring: Kapha
- Fall & Early Winter: Vata
Ritucharya: Seasonal Rituals

Modifying the Lifestyle to Match the Doshas

**Kapha** is aggravated in the late winter and spring (February to May)
**Pitta** is aggravated in the summer (June to mid-September)
**Vata** is aggravated in the fall and early winter (October to February)

It is not really the calendar but nature that tells us when and which Dosha will be influenced. Therefore we should not indulge in things like food and activities, which are likely to aggravate respective Doshas. On the other hand we should undergo Vamana or herb induced emesis in early winter, Virechana or herb induced purgation in summer and Basti or herb induced enema in fall to eliminate aggravation of Kapha, Pitta and Vata by following these procedures and try to prevent seasonal diseases.

In India, the whole year is divided into six (6) seasons.
In the US, there is a vast difference in the weather pattern in different states.
In Ritucharya, the same Dinacharya should be followed. Ritucharya is fine-tuning of Dinacharya depending on the individual Constitution.
Ritucharya: Spring

Kapha Season

The sky is cloudy. Spring features the cold and heavy hallmarks of Kapha Dosha, so our diet and lifestyle should be designed to balance this energy.

**The diet** should be comprised of food and drinks with hot, dry and light qualities to counter the cool, moist, and heavy qualities of Kapha. Eat more baked, broiled or grilled warm foods. Avoid cheeses, ice creams and yogurts. Add pungent spices. Eat more vegetables. Cut down on sweets. Sweet, salty and sour tastes aggravate Kapha, so they should be avoided. Pungent, astringent and bitter tastes reduce Kapha and should be added.

**Drinks** should be made with ginger, calamus and clove. Emphasize herbal teas. Use medicated wines such as Draksha and Ashwagandha. Drink warm water.
Ritucharya: Spring

Kapha Season

**Massage** and body therapies should be done with dry herbal powders such as Haritaki or Ginger or heating oil such as Mustard. Spring is a good period for Vamana.

**Yoga** practices such as Bhasrica Pranayama and sun salutations, shoulder stand, boat, bow, lion and camel pose can be practiced.

**Sleep** during the daytime should be avoided.

**Dress** is bright warm colors like gold, orange.

**Herbs** to benefit Kapha include Pippali, Maricha (Black Pepper), Haritaki, Guggul, Ginger and Punarnava.
**Ritucharya: Spring**

**Kapha Balancing Tea**

**Ingredients**
- 4 cups water
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon sticks
- 1/4 teaspoon turmeric powder
- 1 teaspoon grated Ginger
- 1 tablespoon of sucanat or rice syrup (optional)

**Procedure**
Heat water in a pot. Add slightly crushed cinnamon sticks and turmeric powder. Boil for 3 minutes. Add sucanat or rice syrup and grated ginger and boil for 2 more minutes. Strain and serve hot.
Summer represents the hot, bright, sharp qualities of Pitta, so our diet and lifestyle should be designed to balance this energy.

The diet should be cool, heavy and bland to counter Pitta’s hot, light and sharp qualities. Add more fruit and vegetables to the diet. Avoid hot, spicy, sour and pungent tastes. Emphasize sweet, astringent and bitter tastes, which palliate Pitta. Avoid alcohol. Working in a hot kitchen provokes Pitta so cook your meals in the morning.

Drinks such as Lassi (yogurt drink), lime juice and coconut water should be emphasized.

Massage in the morning with coconut or sunflower oil. This is an ideal period for Virechana.
Ritucharya: Summer

Pitta Season

Summer represents the hot, bright, sharp qualities of Pitta, so our diet and lifestyle should be designed to balance this energy.

**The diet** should be cool, heavy and bland to counter Pitta's hot, light and sharp qualities. Add more fruit and vegetables to the diet. Avoid hot, spicy, sour and pungent tastes. Emphasize sweet, astringent and bitter tastes, which palliate Pitta. Avoid alcohol. Working in a hot kitchen provokes Pitta so cook your meals in the morning.

**Drinks** such as Lassi (yogurt drink), lime juice and coconut water should be emphasized.

**Massage** in the morning with coconut or sunflower oil. This is an ideal period for Virechana.
Pitta-Balancing Tea

**Ingredients**
- 4 cups water
- 1-tablespoon mint leaves
- 1-tablespoon spearmint leaves
- 1/8 teaspoon saffron fibers
- 1-tablespoon of sucanat or rice syrup (optional)

**Procedure**
Ritucharya: Fall/Winter

Vata Season

Fall and winter are marked by the cold, dry, windy and rough qualities that are hallmarks of Vata Dosha, so our diet and lifestyle should be designed to balance this energy.

The diet should be warm, moist and heavy to counter Vata's cold, dry and light qualities. Soups, stews and pasta with gravy are the right foods for the fall and winter season. Eat a handful of nuts such as pecans or almonds, which are heavy and oily. Butter and natural cheese are good choices for fats. Avoid salads, raw fruits and vegetables. The tastes to avoid are pungent, astringent and bitter. Favor sweet, salty and sour tastes.

Drinks such as herbal teas made with cumin and fennel or ginger and mint are beneficial. Have a cup of warm milk at bedtime. Avoid iced tea and cold water.
Ritucharya: Fall/Winter

**Vata Season**

**Wake** at 5 a.m. when the weather is calm.

**Massage** warm sesame oil all over the body and take a warm shower. Bastis are particularly beneficial during the fall and winter months. **Activities** to avoid include listening to loud noises and music and driving quickly.

**Dress** in red, orange, yellow colors to pacify Vata. Wear warm clothing.

**Yoga** practices to benefit Vata include gentle alternate nostril Pranayama, forward, backward bending, vajrasana, spinal twist, camel, cobra, pavan muktasana and shavasana.

**Herbs** to benefit Vata include dashmul, ashvagandha, vidari, brahmi, haritaki and triphala.
Ritucharya: Fall/Winter

**Vata-Balancing Tea**

**Ingredients**
- 4 cups water
- 1-tablespoon fennel seeds
- 1-tablespoon coriander seeds
- 2 pods of cardamom
- 1-tablespoon of sucanat or rice syrup (optional)

**Procedure**
Heat water in a pot. Add slightly crushed fennel seeds, coriander seeds and cardamom pods. Boil for 3 minutes. Add sucanat or rice syrup and boil for 2 more minutes. Strain and serve hot.
Ritusandhi represents the period between seasons, beginning from approximately eight days before the end of the previous season and ending eight days after the beginning of following season. Ritusandhi typically lasts for approximately fifteen days.

Ritusandhi is an important period because:

- Our bodies have become accustomed to the food and weather we experienced during the previous season.
- Adapting our diet and lifestyle helps prevent the Doshas from accumulating, aggravating and causing disease.
  - For example: As the seasons begin to change, the Doshas of the approaching season begin to accumulate. Eating hot foods in the spring begins to cause an accumulation of Pitta, eating cold foods in the late summer begins to accumulate Vata and eating heavy foods in the winter begins to accumulate Kapha.
Important Note
Changes to the diet and lifestyle should be done moderately, with foods appropriate for the coming seasons added slowly into the diet.

Within two weeks (by the end of Ritusandhi), we should be eating a diet that is in complete accordance with the new season.

Healthy Tip

Ritu Haritaki

Haritaki is a cleansing herb that works like an Amrit (nectar). It is used with different Anupanas in different seasons (Bhava Prakasha).

- In spring with Honey, warm water
- In summer with Sugar (raw), cool water
- In fall and winter with Ginger (Shunthi), or Pippali, warm water
The Life Cycle

Birth to Puberty

Kapha

Puberty to Menopause

Pitta

Menopause through Old Age

Vata
The Life Cycle

The same cycle repeats in all three stages of life:

**Kapha** predominates during childhood

**Pitta** predominates in midlife

**Vata** predominates during old age

Depending on our Body Constitution, or *Prakriti*, our Doshas will rise during their respective periods and reveal signs of imbalance. Because this happens, it is important to follow specific life cycle guidelines to fine tune this energetic response.

One example of Prakriti revealing signs of imbalance during its corresponding phase in the life cycle is in the example of a Kapha-predominant individual during childhood. This child may suffer from colds, coughs and congestion more often than their Vata and Pitta counterparts, so it is important that they avoid certain Kapha-aggravating foods and lifestyles during that period.
Another example is Menopause. Menopause is a natural transition from the Pitta cycle of life into the Vata cycle of life (this means men also have menopause). Women who are Pitta-predominant will likely suffer from an increase in hot flashes and anger, while women who are more Vata-predominant will complain of increased dry skin, wrinkles and osteoporosis. Kapha-predominant women will likely zoom through menopause. They paid their dues during childhood.

At puberty, some teenagers get acne. Why?

Once we understand the Dosha cycles of life, we can further prevent many diseases. Understanding these great energetic cycles that span our lifetimes along with our Body Constitution is a great secret revealed by Ayurveda for our benefit.
In life, we should all live by Satvritti (honesty).

Satvritti is meant to be both personal and social. When we work and live in society, there are certain guidelines everybody should follow to improve the overall health of the society. Along with personal routines, Ayurveda has described some guidelines for social behavior.

**The Importance of Satvritti**

The Ayurvedic approach is universal and cosmic. Human beings are a part of the entire cosmos. From the perspective of Sankhya Philosophy, we learned that the sense organs, organs of action and the body are developed from the mind. The mind controls the body, so the body should be balanced by the mind. Purely physical treatments are not enough.

The Mind is comprised of three gunas: Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Sattva causes balance and harmony. Rajas and Tamas cause imbalance. Rajas increases agitation, while Tamas increases dullness, heaviness and ignorance. Desire, anger, greed, pride, addiction, fear, worry and jealousy are all examples of effects caused by Rajas and Tamas, which aggravate all three Doshas, causing physical and mental disease. Because of this, mental cleansing and removing of clutter is essential. Satvritti increases Sattva, which maintains health, happiness and peace, thereby preventing mental and physical disease.
Satvritti

Mental Satvritti
- Discriminate your actions.
- Keep the mind calm and tranquil.
- Try to neutralize your emotions, such as anger and greed, etc.

Avoid
- Agitation and oscillations of the mind; Momentary excitement.
- Overuse, underuse, or nonuse of the Indriyas, or senses.
- Anger, worry, fear, pride and weakness.
- Hurting yourself or others.

Social Satvritti
- Speak the truth but be gentle and do not insult others.
- Be humble, strong, kind and an expert on a topic of importance to you.
- Forgive, help and compliment others. Give them their due respect.
- Honor your guests.
- Respect the elderly.
- Be kind to animals.
- Support others who are in fear, pain, depression and/or anxiety.
- Guide others to follow the right path.

Dharmic Satvritti
- Have a belief and/or something to respect.
- See the godliness in the elderly and/or a beloved guru.
- Help the needy.
- Practice meditation and mantra.
- Avoid sinful actions, or actions that are harmful in any way to yourself or others.
The Urges

In the prevention of disease, Ayurveda distinguishes resistible and irresistible urges. To resist an irresistible urge or to create an urge forcefully aggravates Vata, causing a host of diseases:

Irresistible Urges
- Urination
- Bowel movement
- Gas
- Vomiting
- Burping
- Sex
- Yawning
- Sneezing
- Coughing
- Hunger
- Thirst
- Crying
- Sleep

Resisting these urges will cause disease.
The Urges

Resistible Urges

- Working beyond your capacity.
- Unhealthy thinking, speech or actions (related to the self or others).
- Urge for negative emotions: Desire, anger, greed, pride, addiction, fear, worry, jealousy.
- Urge for unhealthy speech: Hurting others by saying bad or insulting things.
- Urge for unhealthy actions: Stealing, robbing, and killing others.
Rasayana: Rejuvenatives

**Definition:** The therapy by which healthy Dhatus are formed.

Rasayana is the therapy by which healthy Dhatus are formed. Because of this, it is considered a very important branch of Ayurveda.

Dhatus are the energy reserves. When Dhatus are well built, we feel strength, resilience and confidence. Coupled with a strong immune system, we can defend against many diseases. Rasayana substances (or Rasayana Dravyas) also have a calming effect on the mind, which increases Sattva Guna, thereby promoting mental health. Rasayana Dravyas are not limited to herbs. The diet, lifestyle and even our behavior or attitude creates a Rasayana-like effect.
Rasayana: Rejuvenatives

Healthy Dhatu

- Increase longevity
- Strengthen Immune system
- Sharpen Dhi Dhriti and Smriti
- Increase Ojas
- Improve skin luster
Rasayana: How They Nourish the Dhatus

1. Improving Rasa

For Example: Shatavari, dates, milk and ghee

These foods and herbs increase Rasa Dhatu. Since Rasa is the first Dhatu, it nourishes all of the deeper Dhatus and becomes a precursor for other Dhatu nutrition. These herbs and foods increase both the quality and quantity of the Dhatus.
Rasayana: How They Nourish the Dhatus

2. Increasing Agni

*Increase Jatharagni:* Vidanga, Haritaki, Pippali
*Increase Dhatuagni:* Amalaki, Guduchi, Kumari

These herbs work at both Agni levels. They perform functions such as Deepana, Pachana and Chaya Apachaya (Digestion, absorption and separation of nutrients and wastes), thereby increasing the quality of the Dhatu.
Rasayana: How They Nourish the Dhatu

3. Cleansing the Channels

For example: Guggulu, Garlic, Pippali

These herbs cleanse the channels to improve the flow of Rasa to all of the other Dhatu. If the channels are blocked, even good quality Rasa cannot be circulated further to all of the Dhatu. Herbs in this category remove all blockages in the body.
Rasayana: Rejuvenatives

Rasayanas for Each Prakriti

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prakriti</th>
<th>Rasayana</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vata</td>
<td>Bala, Ashvagandha, Shankhapushpi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitta</td>
<td>Amalaki, Shatavari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapha</td>
<td>Garlic, Guggul, Pippali</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Rasayana: Rejuvenatives

### Rasayanas for Each Dhatu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dhatu</th>
<th>Rasayana</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rasa</td>
<td>Dates, Raisins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rakta</td>
<td>Amalaki, Bhrungraj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mamsa</td>
<td>Bala, Ashvagandha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meda</td>
<td>Guggulu, Haritaki, Guduchi, Sheelajeet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asthi</td>
<td>Bambu, Prushniparni, Seashells, Coral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majja</td>
<td>Guduchi, Loha Bhasma (Iron)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shukra</td>
<td>Kavacha Beej, Shweta Musali, Aatmagupta</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rasayana: Rejuvenatives

Naimittik Rasayanas

Naimittik Rasayanas are Rasayanas used in states of imbalance in order to restore to the Doshas and promote health:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disorder</th>
<th>Rasayana</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eye Disorders</td>
<td>Triphala, Shatavari, Licorice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Disorders</td>
<td>Shaliparni, Arjun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skin Disorders</td>
<td>Vidanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tumors and Asthma</td>
<td>Pippali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weakness</td>
<td>Garlic, Bala, Pippali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anemia</td>
<td>Amalaki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypertension</td>
<td>Garlic, Bala, Rasna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vata disorders</td>
<td>Garlic, Guggulu, Bala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>Haridra, Amalaki, Shilajatu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obesity</td>
<td>Guggulu, Haritaki</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rasayana: Rejuvenatives

Medhya Rasayana

*For example: Shankhapushpi, Mandukaparni, Yashtimadhu, Guduchi*

Many Rasayana Dravyas increase Medhya (Buddhi or intellect) but the above are examples of herbs which have a special effect on Mind.
Rasayana: Rejuvenatives

Achara Rasayana

Achara Rasayana represents a way of achieving a Rasayana effect through the practice of Satvritti. The individual speaks the truth, doesn’t get angry, stays away from addictions, becomes humble, goes beyond Ahankara, Manas and Chitta, lives in the present moment and becomes spiritual. Achara Rasayana creates a Sattvic effect in the mind and body, increases longevity, balances all the physiological systems and makes you eternally happy and peaceful.

Healthy Tip: Recommend these herbs as tonics in particular Dosha Constitution instead of Chyavanprash to all.
Vajikarana: Aphrodisiacs

**Definition:** The therapy which increases Shukra Dhatu.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vaja</th>
<th>Vaji</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sperm, Ovum</td>
<td>Having good quality sperm, ovum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse</td>
<td>Giving energy like a horse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Person with strong sexual energy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vajikarana: Aphrodisiacs

Benefits of Vajikarana

- Increases desire.
- Creates satisfaction and happiness.
- Strengthens the body.
- Creates healthy progeny.
- Improves the luster of skin, hair, eyes and nails.
Who is Right for Vajikarana Treatment?

Everyone is right for Vajikarana treatment as it helps provide the above benefits. However, this treatment is essential in the following conditions:

- Weakness due to chronic disease.
- Excessive sexual urge.
- Repeated sex depletes Shukra Dhatu, causing weakness and impotency.
- Low or no sperm or ovum count.
- Depression and anxiety.

Although Ayurveda emphasizes Brahmacharya, having sex and healthy children is an important aspect of Grihasthashram. Because of this, Vajikarana is recommended only at this stage of life and not before or after. Using Vajikaranas improves both the quality and quantity of Shukra Dhatu, so to restore and maintain health, Vajikarana therapies are beneficial.
### Vajikarana Dravyas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Herbs</th>
<th>Foods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shatavari, Ashvagandha, Gokshur, Kavachabeeja, Vidari, Ushira, Bala, Punarnava, Licorice, Rasna, Pippali, Cinnamon, Cardamom, Saffron, Amalaki, Talimkhana, Shweta Musali.</td>
<td>Ghee, Butter, Cream, Milk, Mango (ripe), Sugar Cane, Dates, Raisins, Eggs, Meats.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:** It is beneficial to do Panchakarma before the use of Vajikarana herbs. This helps absorb the herbs quickly to emphasize the Vajikarana effect.

**Notes:** Avoid excess use of hot, spicy, astringent, sour, salty and bitter foods, leafy vegetables, and cold foods.