

# **Introduction to Ayurvedic Medicine And Joint Health**



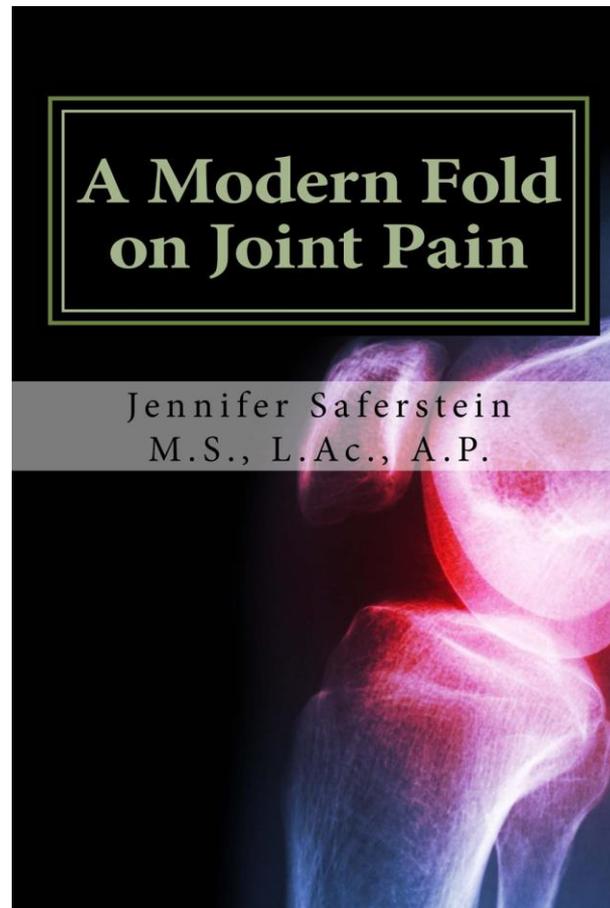
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# Definition

- Ayurveda is Sanskrit for "The Science of Life"
- It is over 5,000 years old.
- Buddhism, Taoism, Tibetan and other cultural medicines have many shared wisdoms of healing.
- The essence is that they look to nature and its rhythms to understand how the body works. Most importantly how to balance the systems when they get shifted.

# A Modern Fold on Joint Pain

The new book is for sale on Amazon.com today!



# History of Ayurveda

- It is described that the medicine was formed through deep meditative insights.
- Ayurveda is one of the 4 main books of Vedic spirituality - *Atharva Veda*.
- Ayurveda consists of 8 branches:
  - Internal Medicine - mind, body, soul
  - Ears, Nose and Throat
  - Toxicology
  - Pediatrics
  - Surgery
  - Psychiatry
  - Aphrodisiacs
  - Rejuvenation



# Philosophy

- Ayurveda is based on the philosophy of how things in nature are formed into each unique balancing act.
- It studies this through the observation of how 5 different elements work together. These include:
  - Ether or Space
  - Air
  - Fire
  - Water
  - Earth

# Philosophy to Medicine

- The 5 Elements are paired with each other to form 3 different Doshas, constitutions. Their Bhoutik (element) compositions are:

- **Vata**

- Ether
- Air

- **Pitta**

- Fire
- Water

- **Kapha**

- Water
- Earth



# Philosophy of Doshas

Balancing of the three doshas in the body can show up in an individual in many different combinations. One may be more Vata dominant or Pitta dominant. One may be Vata-Kapha equally more than Pitta. One may be Tridoshic where all three Doshas are in equal balance.

~ The combinations are: V, P, K, VP, VK, PK, VPK

There are many different tests to determine one's Dosha. A practitioner is trained in asking specific questions, and taking readings of the Tongue and Pulses. It is fun to get to know yourself in these ways and your uniqueness becomes your strength in your pursuits in life, as well as in your balancing medicines.

# Philosophy of Arthritis

Based on what is going on with one's system with joint pain, stiffness, and or weakness, one can categorize and organize their Dosha with the Dosha of the health condition. This is called Vikriti with Prakriti, balancing your born constitutional balance with your current state. Your body knows and wants to be healthy, it just takes many steps sometimes to get there.

Arthritis is known as a condition that can exist with all dosha constitutions if and when their imbalances with each other is strong enough to have a physical sign. These physical signs can appear as swollen red joints anywhere in the body, to achy weak joints, to aches and pains in the muscles. It is important to remember that finding out one's true constitutional Doshas is an important key to learning how to diagnose and treat the type of arthritis and joint pain that you and or another may have. Once learned, the tools are there to help heal the condition. For example, if we meet with a Pitta person with swollen red knee joints with pain, we can see that she may have a Pitta and Kapha imbalance within her own constitutional state. To treat the condition one may chose to use cooling and pain relieving essential oils such peppermint oil, and eucalyptus oil topically, while adjusting the diet to drain dampness and clear heat with such fruits as cantaloupe, and vegetables such as cucumber. The person might be helped with the use of coconut oil after they shower as an Abhyanga massage, and dry brushing before they shower to increase the lymphatic system, improving the cleansing speed of the tissues of the body to help clear out the inflammation and toxins. We will start with learning about each of the three Doshas in detail.

# Vata

- Functions - In nature vata is like the wind. It is constantly moving and scattering things around. Vata is called the King of the Doshas mainly because it is the moving force behind everything, including Pitta and Kapha.
- Characteristics:
  - Dry
  - Light
  - Cold
  - Rough
  - Subtle
  - Mobile

# Vata

- Vata people are generally slim and slender, either short or tall with prominent bones and less muscle. Their other physical characteristics are; oval face, small eyes, a tendency towards dry skin, thin hair, small joints, and long fingers. Variability is Vata nature. Their metabolism and sleep pattern is always changing. They are easily inspired and when it comes to projects a strong Vata is filled with ideas.



# Vata

## ● Vata aggravation causes:

- Fall & early Winter
- Eating too many dry, bitter, pungent, astringent, light, cold, stale or processed foods.
- Drinking cold drinks or food; drugs.

# Vata

## ●Balancing Vata:

- Essential Oil - Vetiver
- **Abhyanga** - After shower use warm oil on body and massage in circular motions over joints.
- Oil - Sesame
- Spices - Fennel, Turmeric
- Chakra -
  - 5 ~ Throat (Vishuddha)
  - 4 ~ Heart (Anahata)



# Vata

- Yoga Asanas (poses) to help balance Vata:
- It's helpful to hold poses for longer periods of time in balancing Vata.

- Child's Pose - Balasana



- Tree Pose - Vrksasana



# Pitta

- **Functions** - Pitta is like the heat from the sun, giving light and bringing transformation. Pitta helps us think, make decisions, have a clear vision, clear speech and helps with confidence. It aids in digestion of food, regulates body temperature and gives vibrancy to skin.
- **Characteristics:**
  - Oily
  - Sharp
  - Hot
  - Light
  - Acidic
  - Spreading
  - Liquid

# Pitta

Pitta people are of medium build and height, with strong muscles. Sharpness is the main characteristic of Pitta personality, along with a sharp nose, sharp eyes and chin. They tend to have grey hair early.

Pitta people are good speakers and leaders. They are very precise, goal seeking, orderly and tidy. They are list makers, planners and always on time.



# Pitta

- **Pitta Aggravation Causes:**

- Summer
- Eating very sour, salty, or pungent food, too much yogurt, sour juices, junk food.
- Smoking, alcohol, hallucinogens, excessive meds.
- Over-exposure to the sun.

# Pitta

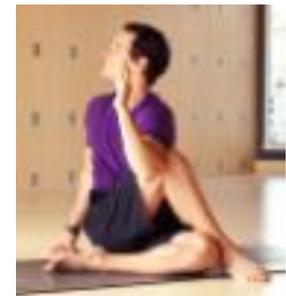
## ●Balancing Pitta

- Essential Oil - Sandalwood
- Body Oil for Abhyanga - Coconut oil
- Spices - Cardamom, Licorice
- Chakra
  - 3 ~ Solar Plexus (Manipura)



# Pitta

- Yoga Asanas to help balance Pitta:
- Presence of control and restraint to not over do it.
- Extended Triangle Pose - Utthita Trikonasana
- Seated Spinal Twist - Ardha Matsyendrasana



# Kapha

- **Function:** Two-thirds of the Earth is comprised of water, two-thirds of the physical body is also comprised of water. The energy of Kapha helps us to feel calm and content. It notices the tastes of our food, nourishes all of the organs and cells in our body, builds tissue, lubricates our joints and air passages and protects all of the physical systems in the body.
- **Characteristics**
  - Moist
  - Cold
  - Heavy
  - Static
  - Soft
  - Liquid

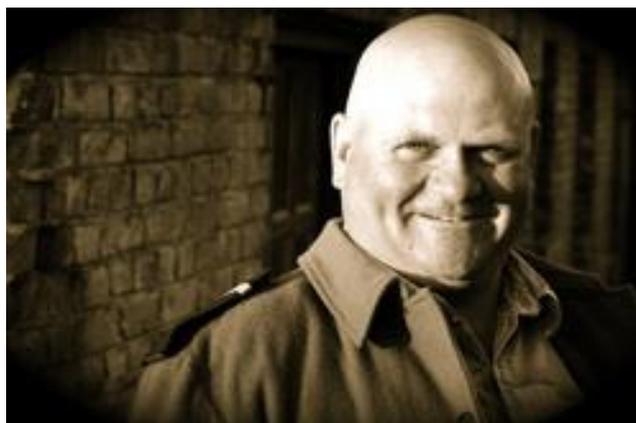
# Kapha

Kapha people are well built, full-bodied people. Their features are rounded -- round face, round big eyes, roundish nose, and sweet looks. They have long and thick hair.

Kapha people are loving, nurturing, caring and are peacemakers. They want everybody to be happy. They have good endurance and a strong immune system. They are good listeners, and have a tendency to be shy.

Kaphas tend to gain weight easily and retain water, causing swelling at times. Slower to remember, but once they remember it's hard for them to forget.

# Kapha



# Kapha

- Causes of Aggravation

- Late Winter, Spring, rainy season
- Eating too much sweet, sour or salty foods, junk food and dairy.
- Excessive eating and drinking.
- Excessive sleep, lack of exercise or physical activity.

# Kapha

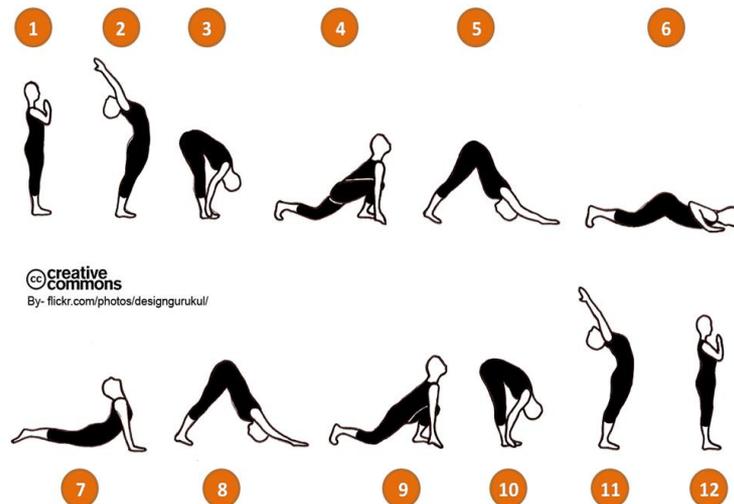
## ●Balancing Kapha:

- Essential Oil - Clove
- Abhyanga Oil - Almond
- Spices - Cinnamon, Ginger
- Chakra -
  - 2nd ~ Sacral Center (Swadhishtan)
  - 1st ~ Root Center (Muladhara)



# Kapha

- Yoga Asanas to help balance Kapha:
- Movements and flows help invigorate and warm up the body.
- Sun Salutation - Surya Namaskar (balances all Doshas)



# Yoga

- Everyone will benefit from a yoga practice that includes all types of postures and sequences. More importantly it is how one approaches the yoga and for what purpose. In more chronic health conditions yoga should be prescribed according to the imbalance (Vikriti) in order to obtain maximum health benefits and reduce any risk of further complications.
- "The greatest benefit of Yoga on the mental factory is the capacity to slow it down."  
~Kerala Ayurveda Academy

# Ayurveda and Joint Health

The goal is to help keep one's Doshas balanced. If and when there is an imbalance and it takes place within the joints, there are protocols within Ayurveda to explain not only the progression of the diseased condition, but also the progression of treatments and self care exercises to help heal one with their condition. It is important to meet with a licensed professional in Ayurvedic Medicine, a list of them can be located at [www.aapna.org](http://www.aapna.org).

# Philosophy of Medicine

These elements are all within us and play a balancing act in our everyday lives. One could be living in their Kapha season with a Vata - Pitta Dosha and fighting a cold. It is all a balancing act that goes deep within the body and bodily functions, expanding out into seasonal patterns. The point is to stay focused on strengthening what you need balanced with your unique system.

**Namaste**

(I honor the light within you)



# References

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