Creating Health from Within
Ayurveda’s Approach to Wellness and Healing

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Ayurveda
Traditional Medical System of India

• Oldest continuously practiced medical system
• Oldest extant medical texts: Charaka, Sushruta, Vagbhatta
Ayurveda

Ayur + Veda = Ayurveda

Life + Knowledge = Science of Life

Key Features

• Prevention-oriented
• Holistic: includes mind, body, behavior, environment
• Generally free of side-effects
Ayurveda

- Health is a state of balance of consciousness, mind, body, and environment
- Ayurveda teaches how to live in harmony with natural law
  - To enliven the body’s internal self-repair and balancing mechanisms
  - To prevent disease and create health and healing from within
Comprehensive Revival of Ayurveda: Maharishi Ayurveda

- Holistic re-formulation of Ayurveda in accord with the classical texts
- Under the direction of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and leading Ayurvedic experts
- Multi-modality / Holistic
- Emphasizes mind-body balance as key to creating health
The Body’s Inner Intelligence

The body has an inner intelligence that underlies all physiological structure and function ("biological memory").
The purpose of all wellness and treatment approaches is to enliven the body's inner intelligence, to promote homeostatic and self-repair mechanisms.
The Three Doshas
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Assessment of health in terms of the degree of balance or imbalance of 3 fundamental operators

Vata  Pitta  Kapha
Doshas are three: Vata, Pitta and Kapha. In their balanced state, they maintain the body. When imbalanced, they afflict the body with imbalances and diseases.

—Charaka Samhita, Vimanasthan, 1.5
Vata Dosha: Movement and Transport

Constituent elements: Space and Air

Qualities: Quick, Light, Cold, Moving, Dry
Pitta Dosha: Digestion and Metabolism

Constituent elements: Fire and Water
Qualities: Sharp, Hot, Acidic, Intense
Kapha Dosha: Structure and Fluid Balance

Constituent elements: Water and Earth
Qualities: Heavy, Oily, Slow, Cold, Steady, Soft
Doshas and Gene Expression

Recent studies have indicated that the three basic governing principles of Ayurveda (the Doshas) are correlated with specific groups of genes and physiological functions in the body.


Constitutional Type: Biological Individuality

Prevention and treatment should be tailored to the individual’s constitutional type, including food, spices, herbal preparations, lifestyle routines (*Personalized Medicine*). What will promote balance for one constitution may produce imbalance for another.
Vata
Pitta
Kapha
Take the Dosha Quiz
Maharishi Ayurveda: Prevention and Treatment approaches

- **Mind-body balance**, stress-reduction
- **Diet**: general and specific factors (constitutional type, imbalances)
- **Digestion**: involved in most chronic disorders
- **Herbal preparations**
- **Detoxification**
- **Lifestyle imbalances**
Diet and Digestion
“Without proper diet, medicine is of no use. With proper diet, medicine is of no need.”

-Traditional Ayurvedic aphorism
Digestion: Key to Health or Disease

Digestive Power

Proper Digestion
- Ojas
- Good Health

Or

Improper Digestion
- Ama
- Poor Health
Kapha
Mucus lining of G.I. tract/protectant coolant

Pitta
Biochemical activity of digestive juices

Vata
Secretion of digestive juices/peristalsis
General Dietary Recommendations

• Favor fresh foods, freshly prepared—avoid packaged/highly processed foods, and leftovers or reheated foods (to the extent possible)
• Favor whole foods—avoid refined foods
• Avoid cold foods and beverages
• Eat as low down on the food chain as possible. Lacto-vegetarian diet is preferable. Poultry and fish are better than red meats (better to have them at lunch than supper).

Top Behaviors for Good Digestion

• Regular mealtimes, around the same time each day: breakfast, lunch, supper and (optional) afternoon snack.

• Take enough time to eat, avoid rushing meals:
  • Eat in a quiet, settled atmosphere with settled mind
  • Chew food well—digestion begins in the mouth
  • Take a few minutes to sit quietly after eating

• Eat to about ¾ of capacity; satisfied but not feeling “full”

• Make lunch the main meal of the day

Dietary Use of Spices

• Natural medicinals that aid digestion and metabolism; they are abundant in phytonutrients

• They are documented to have numerous health benefits: anti-inflammatory, anti-cancer, cardio-protective, anti-diabetes.

• A variety of spices should be included in the diet on a daily basis

• Average American diet does not include sufficient amount or variety of spices

• Premier spices: ginger, cumin, turmeric, coriander, fennel, cinnamon, black pepper, fenugreek, cardamom, mustard seeds, saffron, basil.
Mind-Body Balance
Transcending

From Charaka Samhita (principal text of Ayurveda):

• “Direct contact with the least excited state of awareness (Atma) is the most powerful means of promoting health.”

• “Complete transcending (of mental activity) is the best among the sources of health and happiness.”
The Transcendental Meditation Technique

“Yogas chitta-vrtti-nirodhah” Patanjali Yoga-Sutra, 1.2 250 BC

“Yoga is the least excited state of consciousness, pure consciousness”
Effects of Transcendental Meditation Program on Death, Heart Attack and Stroke

48% lower rate in Transcendental Meditation practitioners over 5 years follow-up (p = .025)

Transcendental Meditation has been shown to lower blood pressure and may be recommended for inclusion in clinical treatment programs for high blood pressure. All other meditation techniques, including MBSR, received a ‘Class IIIC, no benefit, Level of Evidence and are not recommended in clinical practice to lower blood pressure at this time.

Lower blood pressure through Transcendental Meditation practice is also associated with substantially reduced rates of death, heart attack and stroke.
Ayurveda Training Program at UM Center for Integrative Medicine

• **Health Professionals track:** a 66-hour program for physicians and other health professionals to incorporate Ayurvedic medicine into their practices

• **Wellness Education track:** a 56-hour program for non-health professionals who wish to be trained as Ayurveda wellness educators, or who wish to take the program for their own enrichment and knowledge

Both tracks are available online, with optional live weekend modules: Module 1 at UM-Baltimore on June 13-14, 2015.
For more information and to enroll

• Website:  www.ayurveda-courses.org/umd.html
• Email:  info@ayurveda-courses.org
• Phone (toll-free):  877-540-6222