

Ayurveda is a practical, individualized approach to wellbeing.

Ayurveda emerged thousands of years ago—ages before microscopes and laboratory equipment were even conceivable. This healing science began with ancient Masters understanding “what is.” It is grounded in a series of foundational principles and the understanding that life was to be lived vibrantly, with happiness in the mind and senses. From these Masters, healing came in the form of insights about humankind and its intimate connection with nature, the seasons and the universe.

Ayurveda is supported by thousands of years of studying human nature and the consequences of diet and lifestyle decisions. The science recognizes that:

- You are a unique person and require an individualized system of health
- Everything is energy
- Your body was designed to be healthy on its own, at all times
- When you are functioning as you should, your natural intelligence calls the shots and there is health in the body and happiness in the mind and senses
- When you do not give your natural intelligence what it needs, imbalances (and ultimately diseases) result
- Change is directional—even a little shift has huge benefits!

Ayurveda is a combination of two Sanskrit words: “Ayur” meaning life and “Veda” meaning knowledge or science. Combined, these two words mean the “Science of Life.” Ayurveda is a science focused on the consequences of life choices.

And most importantly, Ayurveda’s goal is always to enable you to feel as healthy and vital and young and strong as possible—at every stage of your life.

The Origin of Ayurveda

The Masters comprehended that everything was energy. They saw this in the surrounding world. They noted that late winter and early spring were cold, moist and sticky. During this time, the earth’s energy stabilized, creating a container for the world to turn green and grow. They labeled this foundational energy “**Kapha**.” During the summer, universal energies became hot and sharp, creating a ripe environment for transformation. Plants produced blossoms that changed into fruit and seeds. They called this heat energy “**Pitta**.” The transition into autumn and early winter brought energy that was rough, dry, mobile and cold. The Masters understood that everything was shifting inward to hibernate. They labeled this movement energy “**Vata**.”

As in the Universe, So in Each of Us

The ancient ones also saw that the energies of the universe were not just around you, but also within you. They defined how these three energies appeared in the human experience:

- The movement created by Vata energy in the fall and winter is what enables your body’s limbs to move, its wastes to be eliminated and its blood to be circulated.
- Like Pitta, the energy of summer that produces blooms, your body has heat energy to power transformative functions like metabolizing food into nourishment.
- Just as Kapha’s cohesive energy creates a container for life in the springtime, it creates a container for your life through muscles and fat, joint lubrication and general immunity.

Vata, Pitta and Kapha energies are the organizing principles in nature and in the human body through movement, transformation and cohesion. The understanding of these universal energies became the foundation for a timeless, common sense system of health. In Ayurveda, these three functions are labeled “biological energies,” but they are also known as Doshas when not in alignment in the body.

Unique and Healthy By Design

No two people experience life or health in the exact same way. Ayurveda explores this using a handful of concepts surrounding your Birth Constitution, your Today’s Constitution and how your natural intelligence works to keep you healthy.

Ayurvedic findings were first passed on through the oral tradition and later committed to text.

The ancient Masters attributed your uniqueness to numerous factors. One is the distinctive ratio of the three biological energies (Vata, Pitta and Kapha) formed within you at conception. In Ayurveda, the ratio between these energies is referred to as your Birth Constitution. Much like a genetic code, your Birth Constitution never changes. It determines your permanent characteristics and genetic predispositions. These extend far beyond physical form to define your emotional and mental nature, and even your spirit.

Uniquely yours for life, your Birth Constitution is your personal health baseline. It functions as a guide for wellbeing. It enables you to understand:

- Who you are (your “true self”)
- Why you react as you do to the world around you
- The types of health issues that have a higher likelihood of surfacing during your lifetime
- Factors to consider to regain alignment after an imbalance (or disease) occurs

Biological Energies “In the Moment”

The Ayurvedic Masters also accounted for daily changes in their “uniqueness equation.” Energy ebbs and flows, and so do Vata, Pitta and Kapha as you live your life. The concept of a Today’s Constitution highlights that you, too, are always changing. It is a measure of how far your personal Vata, Pitta and Kapha levels are from your innate nature “in the moment.”

Your Birth Constitution, similar to your genetic code, is an indicator of how you MIGHT go out of alignment. Your Today’s Constitution, or who you presently are, tells you if an imbalance HAS manifested.

Think about it. No matter how much of YOU will always be YOU, there are parts of you that continually change as you move through life. You make daily diet and activity decisions. You grow older. Seasons shift. These factors—and countless others—all bring about consequences that influence your biological energies. Ayurveda understands that your reaction to a stimulant is as unique as your thumbprint.

Your Today’s Constitution—how you look and feel in the moment—explains what health consequences have accumulated. Remember, according to Ayurveda, life is to be lived vibrantly, with happiness in the mind and senses. Experiencing anything less than this ideal is due to a bio-energy imbalance. In other words, your Today’s Constitution reflects the degree of alignment your in-the-moment biological energies have with your baseline biological energies or Birth Constitution (who you were at conception).

In Ayurveda, the key to happiness and health is remaining in sync with your Birth Constitution. The

closer your current bio-energy ratio is to this baseline, the more vibrant your wellbeing. The farther apart the ratios are, the more likely you are to have imbalances or health issues, which can ultimately lead to disease. Misalignment is seen through the health issues manifesting in the here-and-now. For example, being a little bit out of alignment might cause a hangnail to develop, but if you are more out of sync, a panic attack could arise.

Your Natural Intelligence Keeps You in Alignment

The concept of natural intelligence is integral to Ayurveda. The ancient Masters understood that if there are health issues, the body's natural intelligence is not operating as it should. The logic goes like this: For you to stay alive (and live a joy-filled existence), your body performs thousands of biological functions every second. These functions are designed to nourish and cleanse your tissues, as well as to maintain ideal conditions under which your body was designed to operate.

Unknowingly, you are constantly self-regulating to maintain the perfect temperatures, acid/base ratios and chemical reactions to function at peak performance. For example, when it is hot during the summer, the body dilates its blood vessels to cool down. But when it is cold, it contracts them to conserve heat. Your body intuitively understands how to do these things. This is your natural intelligence at work. It maintains your health so you are able to live life vibrantly. And, from an Ayurvedic perspective, your biological energies and natural intelligence are one and the same.

In days gone by, the most significant stimulants were varying weather conditions, transitions between seasons and local food availability. Today, your stimulants are more invasive. They include an endless stream of toxins in the food system, homes, water and air.

The world around you is always changing. So are you. Your natural intelligence, moving through the biological energies, was designed to adapt to these ebbs and flows of nature's energies. Since the dawn of mankind, the human body has evolved to live in concert with seasonal weather changes and local food availability. Your natural intelligence works steadfastly to keep you in a vibrant state, regardless of what is happening around you.

Your Job is to Support Your Natural Intelligence

Ayurveda explores how imbalances (and ultimately disease) manifest when your natural intelligence is not operating at peak performance (unable to do its work). This happens when your biological energies fall out of alignment. When your Today's Constitution (current biological energy ratio) is in alignment with your Birth Constitution (the biological energy ratio of your true nature), your natural intelligence is able to fully function. When you are not in alignment with who you were intended to be, your natural intelligence is NOT able to fully function.

Although your natural intelligence is innately designed to call the shots, it needs the right inputs to function properly. Health begins with the basics in Ayurveda. Wholesome foods, regular sleep, the right amount of exercise and a strong daily routine serve as your daily medicines. In other words, smart life choices (based on your unique constitutions) support your wellbeing. They enable your natural intelligence to do its work. This is why Ayurveda is known not only as a comprehensive and individualized system of health, but also a lifestyle.

A couple of additional insights on your natural intelligence. First, Ayurveda maintains a concept called "Ama." This is the name given any type of build-up that inhibits your natural intelligence. Ama is created by taking in things that your being cannot properly process. On the most basic level, this might be a

Excessive substances (food additives, preservatives, cleaning chemicals, beauty care innovations and the list goes on and on) in your daily life, that your body was never designed to process, are today's major sources of Ama.

heavy or hard to digest meal. Ama could also be brought on by a traumatic life event that you cannot process on an emotional level. Keeping your life clear of Ama enables your natural intelligence to function as it should.

The science also maintains a concept called, "Agni." Agni means fire, burning, transforming or perceiving. It is the metaphorical force that governs your intelligence, anatomical structure and physiological function of cells and tissues. In Ayurveda, Agni is

said to fuel all metabolic functions, enable clarity of thought and maintain body temperature—to name a few of its functions. Agni has a direct relationship with your natural intelligence. When it is burning too high or too quickly, your metabolic functions increase. You become "burned out," so to speak. The reverse is true when the Agni fire is cooled. Your body is not able to process life as it was intended to. The result could be accumulation of Ama, or biological energy imbalances. When Agni is balanced, your natural intelligence is able to function as intended.

Imbalances Surface Quickly—Disease Develops Over Time

Ayurveda understands that disease evolves over time. A misaligned biological energy creates an imbalance. If un-attended, this imbalance gains strength and, over eventually, evolves into what modern medicine labels a disease.

For thousands of years, Ayurveda has been teaching individuals how to maintain or re-gain alignment. The Masters might have explained disease as simply "you not remembering you." For the most part, an imbalance starts in the mind, or with the misuse of your senses, and manifests first in the digestive tract. By the time a disease is diagnosed in modern medicine, it is in fifth of six stages of development by Ayurvedic measures. As an imbalance progresses towards a disease, your natural intelligence becomes more compromised. It is less able to take charge and redirect the path.

Imbalance may manifest with a minor occurrence like a bout of indigestion or a bit of gas. This may expand into an irregularity such as dry skin or sleeplessness. Over time, you might notice an increase in your anxiety level. In terms of treatment, Ayurveda would look at this progression in search of the root cause. Once the root cause is eliminated, and your body is nourished appropriately to enable repair, your natural intelligence should be able to bring about alignment. When considering the scenario above, a conventional M.D. would probably focus on suppressing the acute symptom of anxiety with a prescription. The difference in approaches is evident.

According to Ayurveda, if the root cause of an imbalance is not eliminated, the body can never truly gain alignment.

It is important to note that each bio-energy has its own path and outcome—and biological energies can also combine to create an imbalance:

- If Vata is aggravated, you might constantly feel fearful, anxious or cold. Vata imbalances often focus on the nervous system.
- A Pitta bio-energy imbalance creates heat issues (physically and metaphorically). This may manifest as an anger management issue or acid reflux. Pitta has an affinity with your metabolic functions.
- If Kapha is out of alignment, it can bring on a weight increase or sluggish feeling in the mind or body. Kapha has a close relationship with your physical form.

Ayurveda considers all of this in context of understanding that every person has a unique Birth Constitution. Your path to an imbalance or disease is uniquely your own. It is an individualized equation involving your true nature (or Birth Constitution) and how your daily diet and lifestyle decisions support or hinder your natural intelligence.

Total System of Health—from Prevention to Interception

Disease prevention is an age-old Ayurvedic concept. It is achieved by consciously making small daily choices to keep you in alignment. The beauty of this Vedic science is understanding—in any given moment—what will help you (as a unique being) bring about alignment.

Wholesome foods, regular sleep, the right amount of exercise and a strong daily routine are what enable disease prevention. Each of these should be utilized daily with an understanding of how your true nature is impacted. Diet and lifestyle decisions should always be based on individual distinctions, needs and circumstances.

Daily wellness is about enabling your body to bring itself back into alignment.

At the core, Ayurveda is about living a life that supports biological energy alignment. However, sometimes things get off-track. The science suggests correcting imbalances as they surface. Ideally, you would employ the same tools—wholesome foods, regular sleep, the right amount of exercise and a strong daily routine—to correct an imbalance. Ayurveda recognizes that the best tools for your wellbeing come through your kitchen cabinet, daily routine and local farmer's market.

This isn't always easy to follow. Throughout the course of a typical week, you'll have situations where you're choosing the "lesser of two evils." Ayurveda is not about being perfect. It is about understanding the consequences of your choices and reaching for the most wholesome solution when things feel out of control.

To that end, Ayurveda provides a comprehensive view of healing. Beyond diet and lifestyle choices, it also encompasses thoughts, exercise, massage, herbs, color therapy, sleep routine, mantra and meditation—to name a few modalities. Yet, no one therapy works for everyone. As an individualized system of healing, Ayurveda understands that what works like a charm for one person might be totally ineffective, or even harmful, for another person. And anything—and everything—has healing or harmful qualities depending on your unique constitution.

"In alignment" or "in sync" does not mean equal amounts of the three biological energies. It means you are in alignment with whatever individual amounts of Vata, Pitta and Kapha you came into this life with.

Life-Long Journey

Keep in mind that things naturally change with time. To stay in sync, your lifestyle will also need to change. Your routine should change by time-of-day because your body is hard-wired to stay in sync with circadian rhythms. Your food should change with the seasons. A local, seasonal

and fresh diet will help offset predictable seasonal imbalances like spring allergies, summer heat rashes or winter dryness.

As you age, your activities should evolve appropriately. Children need to get out and run around every day to release energy, while older adults may look to increase their energy through gentle movement, such as restorative yoga or tai chi.

To achieve true health, Ayurveda understands that you have to give your natural intelligence time to get back to work. The Ayurvedic healing process isn't about taking an herb or supplement to bring about instant wellbeing. This makes perfect sense considering that as an imbalance lessens or the world around you transitions through seasons, what you need to attain alignment might change a bit too.

As a final thought on your journey, remember that you are not alone in the world. How you care for everything around you affects your wellbeing. True health is dependent on consciously building a stronger local community and a healthier planet. Both bring benefits back to you.

Healing from Opposites

Sometimes it is hard enough to know what you need to stay healthy, much less knowing how to make that part of your daily routine. What seems "normal" in our frenetic world might not be healthy for you in the long run. It goes back to understanding "who you are," so you can build an individualized approach to maintaining (or re-gaining) alignment.

A simple Ayurvedic rule is that "like increases like, and opposites balance." The science understands, on a bio-energy level, that utilizing opposite qualities brings about alignment. What does this mean? Usually, it's just common sense. If you're hot, a brisk shower will cool you down. A bowl of hearty, grounding stew will calm an active mind, whereas a raw-food meal may aggravate it. Simply applying an opposite quality (such as hot vs. cold or grounding vs. active) can bring your energies back in sync so your natural intelligence can release the resulting symptoms.

Journey into Ayurveda

Now that you understand a little more about Ayurveda, you're probably wondering how to apply the science. How do you figure out your energy ratios? How do you know what to eat and what to avoid? How do you go about correcting an imbalance?

We are just beginning to understand what the Ayurvedic Masters understood over 5000 years ago.

Ayurveda is a common sense science. Often, your best remedies are through the things you do (or don't do) every day. It is not about a fancy diet or a restrictive lifestyle. It is about getting back to the basics and giving your natural intelligence what it needs to work through simple lifestyle changes. And when a little extra support is needed, Ayurveda has a long history of providing wholesome options. With time and commitment, almost anyone can regain vitality. Change is directional and even small shifts help. Ayurveda recognizes that there is always hope.

As you read through the Ayureka site, keep in mind that the road to successful change requires that you be gentle with yourself. What initially feels like tremendous effort inevitably evolves—with Ayurveda's help—into a joyful life flow. (We promise!) And as your journey becomes challenging, please remember that even under the most supportive conditions, lasting change is about doing what you are able to do in the moment. Healthy progress happens over time. Focus your efforts on "baby steps" and Ayurveda will help you experience subtle but powerful shifts. **Oh, yeah, and one last thought. The best thing about Ayurveda? It really works!**

For more information on Ayurveda, go to: www.Ayureka.com.

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