

A top-down view of various Ayurvedic ingredients on a light-colored wooden plank background. In the upper left, a small white mortar and pestle contains ground brown herbs. Below it, a single large green leaf lies flat. To the left of the center, a small dark glass dropper bottle with a black cap is positioned. In the lower left, a small wooden spoon holds a pile of dried green herbs. Another green leaf is visible at the bottom left corner. Small sprigs of purple flowers are scattered in the upper and lower left areas.

AYURVEDA

THE THREE DOSHAS

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DOSHAS



VATA, PITTA, KAPHA

The doshas are biological energies found throughout the human body and mind. They govern all physical and mental processes and provide every living being with an individual blueprint for health and fulfillment. The doshas derive from the Five Elements and their related properties. Vata is composed of Space and Air, Pitta of Fire and Water, and Kapha of Earth and Water.

"THAT WHICH MOVES THINGS"

Vata is made up of the elements of Space and Air and translates as "wind" or "that which moves things." Vata is often called the "Queen of the Doshas," since it governs the body's greater life force and gives motion to Pitta and Kapha. Just as the wind in balance provides movement and expression to the natural world, the balanced Vata individual is active, creative, and gifted with a natural ability to express and communicate. When the wind in a Vata type rages like a hurricane, negative qualities quickly overshadow these positive attributes.

Common signs of Vata imbalance include anxiety and bodily disorders related to dryness, such as dry skin and constipation.

The qualities of Vata are dry, rough, light, cold, subtle, and mobile.

A Vata individual will display physical and mental characteristics that reflect these qualities in both a balanced and an imbalanced state.

The main locations of Vata in the body are the colon, thighs, bones, joints, ears, skin, brain, and nerve tissues.

Key Words to remember: Grounding, Warming, Routine



VATA

WAYS VATA BECOMES IMBALANCED

- Eating Vata-aggravating foods
- Eating while anxious or depressed
- Eating on the run
- Drinking alcohol, coffee, or black tea
- Smoking cigarettes
- Following an irregular daily routine
- Going to bed late at night

VATA



HOW TO BALANCE VATA

- Eat a Vata-balancing diet.
- Eat in a peaceful environment.
- Engage in wholesome and contemplative activities (like spending time in nature).
- Follow a regular daily routine.
- Go to bed early.
- Meditate daily.
- Do gentle physical exercise like yoga, swimming, tai chi, or walking.

DOSHAS



"THAT WHICH DIGESTS THINGS"

Pitta derives from the elements of Fire and Water and translates as "that which cooks." It is the energy of digestion and metabolism in the body.

The balanced Pitta individual is blessed with a joyful disposition, a sharp intellect, and tremendous courage and drive. As the fire of the mind and body becomes unruly, however, the laughing Pitta quickly becomes the yelling Pitta. Anger, rage, and ego replace Pitta's positive attributes, leaving an individual who is bitter with life and overbearing towards others.

The qualities of Pitta are oily, sharp, hot, light, moving, liquid, and acidic.

Pitta imbalances commonly manifest in the body as infection, inflammation, rashes, ulcers, heartburn, and fever. The main locations of Pitta in the body are the small intestine, stomach, liver, spleen, pancreas, blood, eyes, and sweat.

A Pitta individual will display physical and mental characteristics that reflect these qualities in both a balanced and imbalanced state. When a person has a tendency to "overheat," excess

PITTA



WAYS PITTA BECOMES IMBALANCED

- Eating Pitta-aggravating food
- Eating while angry
- Drinking coffee, black tea, or alcohol
- Smoking cigarettes
- Over-working
- Being overly competitive

PITTA



HOW TO BALANCE PITTA

- Eat a Pitta-balancing diet.
- Eat in a peaceful environment.
- Avoid artificial stimulants.
- Engage in calming activities, like spending time in nature.
- Meditate daily.
- Do calming physical exercise, such as yoga, swimming, tai chi, or walking.

DOSH



"THAT WHICH HOLDS THINGS TOGETHER"

Kapha derives from the elements of Earth and Water and translates as “that which sticks.” It is the energy of building and lubrication that provides the body with physical form, structure, and the smooth functioning of all its parts.

Kapha can be thought of as the essential cement, and glue of the body.

The qualities of Kapha are moist, cold, heavy, dull, soft, sticky, and static.

Just as a nourishing rainstorm may turn into a rampant flood, the fluids of the body may flood the bodily tissues, contributing to a heavy dampness that weighs down the body and clouds the mind.

This dense, cold, and swampy environment becomes the breeding ground for a number of bodily disorders such as obesity, sinus congestion, and anything related to mucous. Mentally, the loving and calm disposition of the Kapha individual may transform into lethargy, attachment, and depression.

The main locations of Kapha in the body are the chest, throat, lungs, head, lymph, fatty tissue, connective tissue, ligaments, and tendons.

A Kapha individual will display physical and mental characteristics that reflect these qualities in both a balanced and imbalanced state.



KAPHA

WAYS KAPHA BECOMES IMBALANCED

- Eating Kapha-aggravating food
- Overeating
- Eating to offset emotions (like indulging in sweets when depressed)
- Spending too much time in cool, damp climates
- Not engaging in physical activity
- Spending most of one's time indoors (especially on the couch watching TV!)



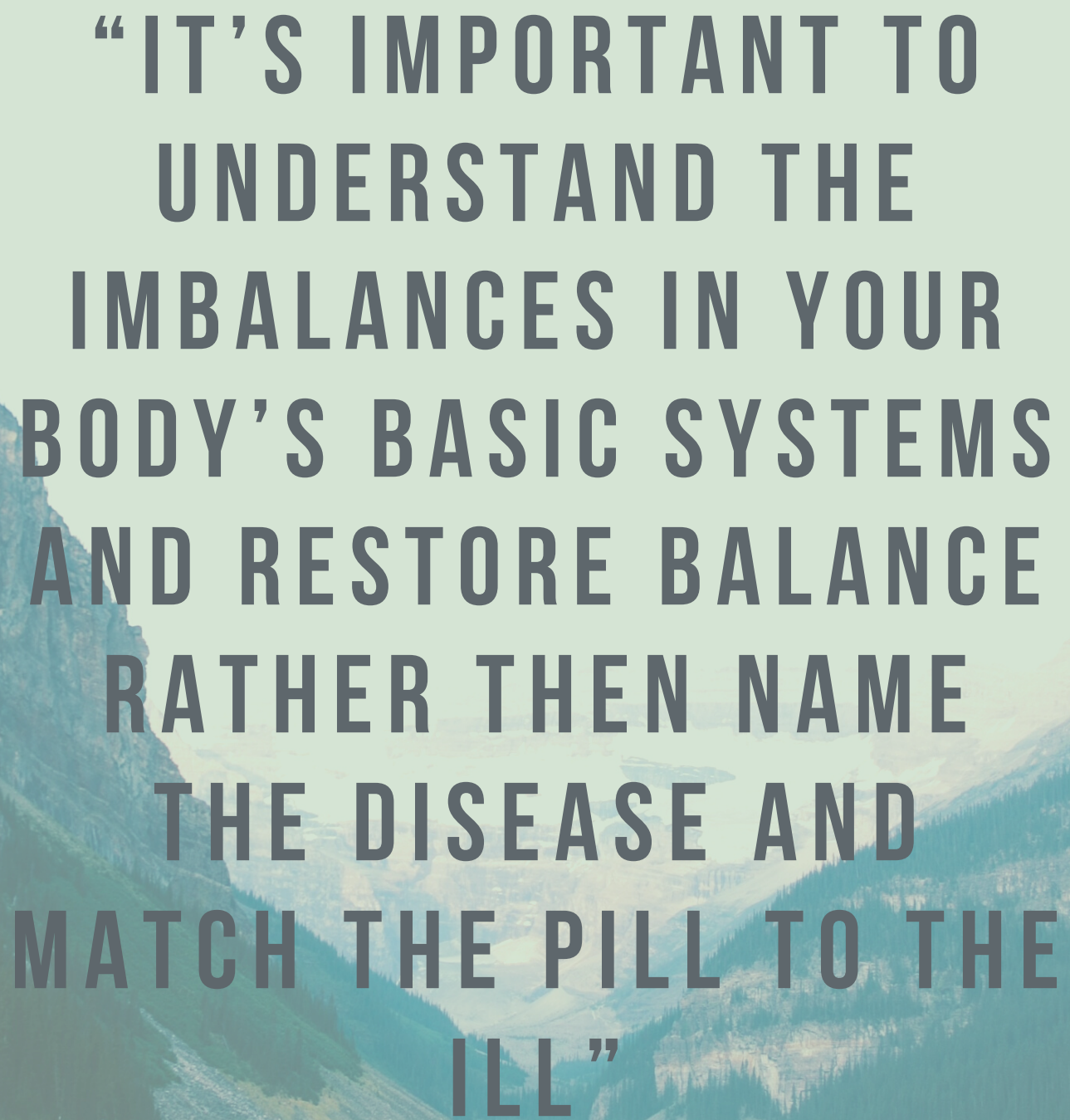
KAPHA

HOW TO BALANCE KAPHA

- Eat a Kapha-balancing diet.
- Eat in a loving environment.
- Avoid a luxurious, leisurely lifestyle
- Make time for introspective activities, like meditation and writing.
- Make a distinction between being nice and being taken advantage of.
- Go to bed early and rise early, with no daytime naps.



DOSH



**“IT’S IMPORTANT TO
UNDERSTAND THE
IMBALANCES IN YOUR
BODY’S BASIC SYSTEMS
AND RESTORE BALANCE
RATHER THEN NAME
THE DISEASE AND
MATCH THE PILL TO THE
ILL”**

~AYURVEDIC PROVERB