

Volume-4

AyurBodh

Wellness from Ancient Bharat

Eternal Guidance : Youth Excellence



A Concise Book for IKS based Competitive Exams
(NET and UPSC)



AYURBODH

Wellness from Ancient Bharat



1. Introduction

This book explores the integration of Ayurveda and yoga as complementary paths to achieving health and wellness, providing a holistic approach to modern health challenges through the lens of ancient Bhartiya philosophy. Rooted in the concept of puruṣārthas (the four aims of life-Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha), Ayurveda emphasizes the profound connection between physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. Health is seen as a crucial element in fulfilling these life goals. Ayurveda's focus on the balance of biological humors (doṣas), digestive fire (agni), and the seven fundamental tissues (dhātus) offers a comprehensive understanding of the human body as a dynamic and interdependent system. This individualized approach contrasts with the standardized methods of modern medicine, providing personalized health practices that honor one's unique constitution (prakṛti) and external factors. The tri-doṣa system-Vāta, Pitta, and Kapha-governs physical processes and mental states, with imbalances in these doṣas manifesting in both physical symptoms and emotional disturbances. By tailoring diet, lifestyle, and therapeutic practices to an individual's constitution, Ayurveda presents a path to healing that aligns with one's natural rhythms.

Ayurveda's perspective on the importance of managing natural urges, including sleep, diet, and moderation, as essential to maintaining health. Sleep plays a central role in rejuvenation, with night sleep considered ideal, while daytime naps are encouraged only during summer to balance Vāta imbalances. Excessive sleep, however, can disrupt the balance of Kapha and Pitta doṣas. Remedies for sleep disorders like insomnia include oil massages, calming foods, and creating a tranquil environment, while excessive or untimely sleep calls for fasting, physical activity, and mindful practices to restore balance. Ayurvedic disease management involves the collaboration of the physician, the remedy, the patient, and the attendant, where diagnostics such as pulse analysis, urine, and fecal examinations play a key role in identifying root causes rather than simply addressing

symptoms. Ayurveda stresses the importance of diet, sleep, and lifestyle practices tailored to one's constitution and current imbalances to maintain optimal well-being.

The therapeutic methods in Ayurveda include herbal remedies, detoxification processes like *Panchakarma*, and physical therapies such as *marma point massage*. *Panchakarma*, a comprehensive detox process, involves preparatory steps, purification, and recuperation phases to eliminate toxins and restore balance. The importance of proper water quality, freshly prepared foods, and effective digestion are also highlighted as fundamental to maintaining health. These practices demonstrate Ayurveda's emphasis on treating the root causes of disease rather than merely managing symptoms.

In addition to Ayurveda, the chapter introduces yoga as an essential practice for achieving balance. Yoga, beyond physical postures, integrates mental and spiritual disciplines, offering a holistic way of life. Patanjali's *Yoga Sūtras* provide a roadmap for cultivating ethical behavior, mental discipline, and spiritual insight through the eight-fold path of yoga (*Ashtanga Yoga*). Yoga practices like *asanas* (physical postures), *pranayama* (breathing exercises), and *meditation* not only promote physical well-being but also help individuals manage stress, cultivate emotional stability, and achieve greater mental clarity. The practice of yoga addresses stress at its roots, guiding individuals to become more self-aware and resilient in the face of life's challenges.

As modern life becomes increasingly stressful, yoga offers a transformative solution by fostering emotional resilience, enhancing physical vitality, and encouraging spiritual growth. The practices of mindfulness and self-awareness allow individuals to better handle stress, making yoga a comprehensive tool for modern wellness. The holistic approach of yoga, which unites body, mind, and spirit, complements Ayurvedic principles, helping individuals navigate life with greater balance, purpose, and fulfillment.

In conclusion, this chapter presents Ayurveda and yoga as interconnected systems that address health in its entirety—physical, mental, and spiritual. By integrating Ayurvedic wisdom with yoga's transformative practices, individuals can create a life of balance, joy, and well-being. In a world where stress, poor lifestyle habits, and imbalances are prevalent, these ancient teachings offer valuable insights that can support modern health practices. This holistic view of health reminds us that well-being goes beyond just the body—it encompasses the mind and spirit, guiding us toward a more harmonious and fulfilling life.

2. Health as the Foundation of Human Pursuits

In the grand tapestry of Bhāratīya philosophy, the pursuit of happiness and fulfillment—termed *ānanda*—was never seen in isolation from health. From the earliest Vedic hymns to the later treatises of Ayurveda, the sages of Bhārat understood that a sound body and mind form the indispensable basis for all human aspirations.

The doctrine of *Puruṣārthas*—the four principal aims of human life—clearly illustrates this harmony:

- ♦ **Dharma (धर्म)**: Righteousness, duty, and moral living.
 - ♦ **Artha (अर्थ)**: Wealth, prosperity, and economic well-being.
 - ♦ **Kāma (काम)**: Pleasure, desires, and emotional satisfaction.
 - ♦ **Mokṣa (मोक्ष)**: Liberation from worldly existence.
- Without good health (*śroṇa*), none of these aims can be fully realized. As the sage Caraka proclaimed in the classical text *Caraka Saṃhitā*:

"धर्मार्थकाममोक्षाणां आरोग्यमूलमुत्तमम्।"

"Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Mokṣa—all rest upon health as their supreme foundation." (Caraka Saṃhitā, Sūtrasthāna 1.15)

This timeless truth emphasizes that health is not merely the absence of disease but a state of harmonious existence conducive to fulfilling every facet of life.

3. Concept of Individualized Health: A Wisdom Beyond Time

In modern medical science, particularly in Allopathy, health is often defined through *objective, population-based parameters*: average blood pressure, ideal body weight, pulse rate, and cholesterol levels etc. While these benchmarks are undoubtedly useful, they overlook a vital truth that ancient Bhāratīya scholars deeply understood: **no two individuals are identical.**

According to Ayurveda, every individual has a unique constitution (*prakṛti*), determined by the interplay of three fundamental energies or *doṣas*: Vāta, Pitta, and Kapha. This personalized approach to health is beautifully encapsulated in the following verse:

"वायुपित्तकफादोषाः शरीरस्थाः प्रधारिणः।"

"Vāyu (air), Pitta (bile), and Kapha (phlegm) are the principal factors governing the body." (Caraka Saṃhitā, Sūtrasthāna 1.57)

This means that what is beneficial for one may harm another—a philosophy thousands of years ahead of today's modern personalized medicine and genomics.

The world's first documented idea of personalized medicine comes not from the West, but from the Bhartiya texts of Āyurveda written around 1000 BCE—long before Hippocrates proposed similar ideas in ancient Greece.

Bhāratīya wisdom has always integrated the body and mind (*śarīra* and *manas*) as inseparable. The Yajurveda states:

"मनसि शुद्धे सुकृतं भवति।"

"When the mind is pure, righteous action follows." (Yajurveda 34.1)

Thus, emotional well-being is essential to maintain the balance of *doṣas* and overall health. Stress (*chinta*), grief (*shoka*), and fear (*bhaya*) are recognized as important causative factors for disease, as clearly elaborated in the Caraka Samhitā and Suśruta Samhitā.

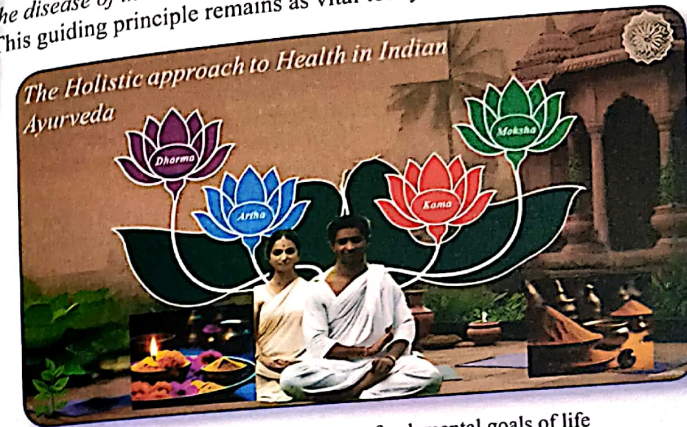
MODERN MISCONCEPTION VS. ANCIENT VISION: HEALTH BEYOND NUMBERS		
Aspect	Modern (Allopathy)	Ancient Bhāratīya Vision
Health Definition	Absence of disease, normal parameters (BP, BMI)	Positive state of physical, mental, and spiritual balance
Individual Variation	Less emphasis	Core concept (Prakṛti-based diagnosis)
Mind-Body Connection	Emerging concept	Central to understanding disease & health
Preventive Approach	Secondary (Vaccination, Screening)	Primary (Daily routines, diet, yoga, meditation)
End Goal	Survival, longevity	Purification, harmony, and spiritual elevation

4. The Eternal Relevance of Āyurveda

Thousands of years before terms like "holistic health" or "personalized medicine" became fashionable, Bhāratīya sages like Caraka, Suśruta, and the authors of the Vedas had already laid out a comprehensive health philosophy grounded in the uniqueness of each individual and the integral unity of body, mind, and spirit.

"स्वस्थस्य स्वास्थ्यरक्षणं आतुरस्य विकारप्रशमनं च।"

"The aim of Āyurveda is to maintain the health of the healthy and cure the disease of the diseased." (Suśruta Samhitā, Sūtrasthāna 1.16)
This guiding principle remains as vital today as it was in ancient times.



Concept of puruṣārthas—four fundamental goals of life

5. Origins and Texts of Ayurveda

The roots of Ayurveda can be traced to the four Vedas, with its principles further elaborated in key texts like the Caraka Samhita, Suśruta Samhita, and Aṣṭāṅga Hṛdaya. These classical treatises are complemented by later works such as the Mādhava Nidāna, Śārṅgadhara Samhita, and Bhāvaprakāśa Nighaṇṭu, collectively known as the "Laghu Trayi." These texts provide detailed discussions on health, disease management, anatomy, physiology, and medicinal plants, offering a comprehensive guide to maintaining and restoring health.

5.1 Philosophical Foundations

Ayurveda is deeply influenced by two ancient schools of philosophy: Vaiśeṣika and Sāṅkhya. The Sāṅkhya system identifies 24 fundamental elements that constitute an individual, forming the basis for understanding human anatomy and psychology. On the other hand, the Vaiśeṣika philosophy classifies the world into six or nine categories (*padārthas*) of substances (*dravyas*), which include sentient (*cetana-dravyas*) and insentient (*acetana-dravyas*) entities. These philosophical concepts guide Ayurvedic practitioners in diagnosing and treating ailments with a focus on the unique constitution of each individual.

THE BĪHAT-TRAYĪ AND OTHER CLASSICAL TEXTS OF ĀYURVEDA				
Text	Author	Focus Area	Key Contents	Unique Features / Facts
Caraka Samhitā (चरक संहिता)	Sage Caraka (revised by Dṛḍha-bala)	Internal Medicine (Kāya-Cikitsā)	Diagnosis, etiology, principles of treatment for systemic diseases	First detailed discourse on preventive care, physician's ethics, and psychology
Suśruta Samhitā (सुश्रुत संहिता)	Sage Suśruta	Surgery (Śalya-Tantra)	Over 300 surgical procedures, 120 surgical instruments, detailed surgical methods	World's oldest known surgical text, predating Western surgery by millennia
Aṣṭāṅga Hṛdayam (अष्टाङ्ग हृदयम्)	Vāgbhaṭa	Comprehensive guide integrating Caraka & Suśruta	Eight branches of Ayurveda (Aṣṭāṅga), including internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics, rejuvenation (Rasāyana)	Synthesizes Caraka and Suśruta's teachings in a concise, practical format
Madhava Nidāna (माधव निदान)	Madhava Kara	Diagnostics (Roga Nidāna)	Causes, symptoms, and differential diagnosis of diseases	Important medieval diagnostic text extensively used for identifying diseases
Bhela Samhitā (भेल संहिता)	Sage Bhela	General Ayurveda	Discussions similar to Caraka Samhitā; some unique therapeutic principles	Possibly predates Caraka Samhitā; fragmentary manuscripts discovered in South India
Kāśyapa Samhitā (कश्यप संहिता)	Sage Kāśyapa	Pediatrics (Kaumāra Bhṛtya) and Gynecology	Child care, obstetrics, maternal health, lactation, infant diseases	Classical text exclusively dedicated to pediatrics and women's health

6. The Ayurvedic Definition of Health

Ayurveda offers a holistic and comprehensive definition of health. According to the ancient scholar *Suśruta*:

समदोषःसमाग्निश्चसमधातुमलक्रियः।
प्रसन्नात्मेन्द्रियमनाःस्वस्थइत्यभिधीयते॥

"samadoṣaḥ samāgniśca samadhātu-mala-kriyāḥ |
prasannātmendriya-manāḥ svastha ityabhidhīyate ||"
(Suśruta Samhitā, Sūtrasthāna 15.41)

"Perfect health is that state where the doṣas, digestive fire, dhātus, and malas are balanced, and the soul, senses, and mind are in a state of happiness."

This definition outlines two key aspects of health:

1. **Physical Balance:** Health is achieved when the three biological humors (doṣas), digestive fire (agni), body tissues (dhātus), and waste products (malas) are in equilibrium.
2. **Mental and Spiritual Harmony:** True health also requires a state of contentment in the mind (manas), clarity in the senses (indriyas), and connection to the soul (ātman).

This perspective emphasizes the integration of physical, mental, and spiritual well-being, making it far more encompassing than early Western definitions of health, which focused solely on the body's functionality.

7. Individualized Approach to Health

In contrast to modern medical systems that depend on generalized health indicators like blood pressure and pulse rate, Āyurveda views health as a unique and individual state for every person. This ancient science considers factors such as an individual's innate constitution (*Prakṛti*), daily habits, diet, and surrounding environment. Central to this personalized approach is the theory of the three doṣas—Vāta (associated with air and ether), Pitta (linked to fire and water), and Kapha (connected with water and earth). Illness arises when there is a disturbance or imbalance among these doṣas. Therefore, treatment in Āyurveda focuses on re-establishing equilibrium by using substances or therapies that possess qualities opposite to those causing the disturbance. For example, when Vāta doṣa becomes excessive-

leading to dryness and coolness-the remedy involves using warm and unctuous (oily) applications to counteract these effects.

"वायुपित्तकफाःदोषाःशरीरस्थाःप्रधारणाः।"

"Vāyu, Pitta, and Kapha are the fundamental energies maintaining the structure and function of the body."

(Caraka Saṃhitā, Sūtrasthāna 1.57)

[Source: Sharma, R. K., & Dash, B. (2003). *Caraka Saṃhitā* (Vol. 1-4). Varanasi: Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series.]

8. Disease: A Disturbance of Inner Harmony

In Āyurveda, disease (*vikāra*) does not suddenly "attack" the body as an external invader, but is rather the **manifestation of internal disharmony among these doṣas**. When their natural equilibrium (*sāmya*) is lost due to improper diet (*ahara*), lifestyle (*vihara*), emotions (*manas*), or environment (*kāla*), illness emerges.

For example, an increase in **Vāta doṣa**, characterized by qualities of dryness and cold, may result in diseases like joint pains, constipation, or anxiety. Āyurveda prescribes **opposite qualities** (*pratiloma guṇa*) to restore balance-thus, oily, warm, and grounding therapies such as sesame oil massage (*abhyanga*) and warm soups are employed (Source: Lad, V. (2002). *Textbook of Ayurveda: Fundamental Principles* (Vol. 1). Albuquerque: The Ayurvedic Press).

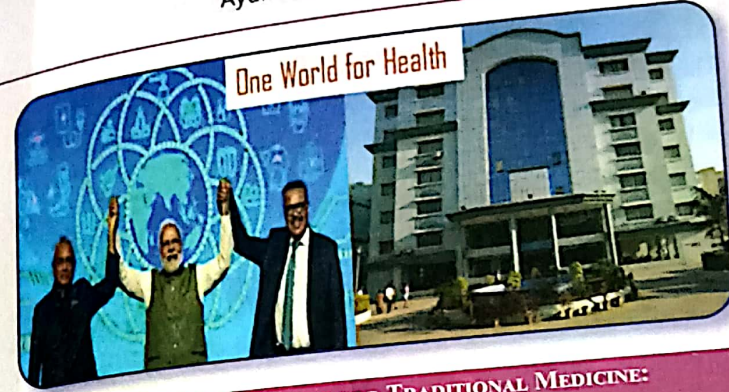
"समदोषःसमाग्निश्चसमधातुमलक्रियः।

प्रसन्नात्मेन्द्रियमनाःस्वस्थइत्यभिधीयते॥"

(Suśruta Saṃhitā, Sūtrasthāna 15.41)

"One whose doṣas, digestive fire (*agni*), tissues (*dhātu*), and excretory functions (*mala*) are in equilibrium, and whose soul, senses, and mind are in a state of contentment, is called a healthy person."

[Source: Bhishagratna, K. K. (2006). *Suśruta Saṃhitā* (Vol. 1-3). Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series.]



WHO GLOBAL CENTRE FOR TRADITIONAL MEDICINE: A NEW CHAPTER IN GLOBAL HEALTH

In April 2022, the **World Health Organization (WHO)**, in collaboration with the **Government of India**, established the **Global Centre for Traditional Medicine (GCTM)** in **Jamnagar, Gujarat**-a historic milestone in the global acceptance of traditional healing sciences, especially Ayurveda. The foundation stone of this first-of-its-kind centre was laid by **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi** and **WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus**, who acknowledged the immense potential of Ayurveda and other traditional systems in addressing the rising demand for holistic and sustainable healthcare worldwide.

This centre aims to serve as an international hub for traditional medicine research, policy-making, and standardization, bridging the gap between ancient wisdom and modern science. Its objectives include global leadership in research, developing regulatory frameworks, integrating traditional practices into public health systems, and creating comprehensive digital repositories on traditional medical knowledge.

The choice of Jamnagar is symbolic, as it is home to the prestigious **Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda (ITRA)**, further emphasizing India's role as the global custodian of this timeless science. (Image Source: <https://www.opindia.com/2022/04/pm-modi-lays-foundation-stone-for-who-global-centre-for-traditional-medicine-tedros/> & <https://www.who.int/initiatives/who-global-traditional-medicine-centre/about-us#>)

Source:

1. World Health Organization. (2022). Inauguration of WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine in India. Retrieved from: <https://www.who.int>
2. Press Information Bureau, Govt. of India. (2022). PM lays foundation stone of WHO-GCTM at Jamnagar. Retrieved from: <https://pib.gov.in>
3. Ministry of AYUSH, Govt. of India. (2022). About WHO GCTM. Retrieved from: <https://gctm.nhp.gov.in>

9. Ayurveda and Modern Perspectives

The Western view of health traditionally emphasized the body's ability to function and sought to restore physical normalcy during illness. However, in 1948, the World Health Organization (WHO) expanded the definition of health to include mental well-being, aligning more closely with the holistic view promoted by Ayurveda for centuries.

The **World Health Organization (WHO)** formally recognizes Ayurveda as a **Traditional System of Medicine** and encourages its integration into national health programs under its **Global Centre for Traditional Medicine**, established in Jamnagar, India (2022). WHO states:

"Ayurveda offers holistic preventive and therapeutic approaches that address physical, mental, and social well-being." (WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2014–2023).

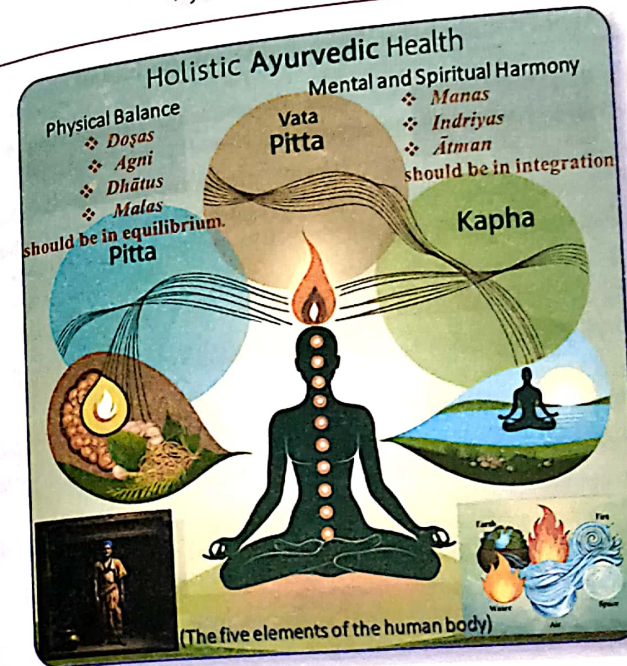
10. Physical Aspects of Health

In Āyurveda, the human body is viewed not as a mere assembly of flesh and bones but as a dynamic system governed by three essential pillars: Dhātus (tissues), Doṣas (biological energies), and Malas (waste products). Each plays a vital role in maintaining balance and ensuring the body's proper functioning.

The three doṣas-Vāta, Pitta, and Kapha-regulate all physiological and psychological processes, while the seven dhātus-Rasa, Rakta, Māṃsa, Meda, Asthi, Majjā, and Śukra-provide structure and nourishment. The malas-urine, feces, and sweat-must be efficiently eliminated to sustain internal purity.

11. The Role of Agni

While *agni* is metaphorically referred to as fire, it is not an actual flame but a liquid form within the body, closely associated with the *pitta* humor. It metabolizes consumed food, transforming it into vital substances. If food intake is inadequate, *agni* begins to "digest" the *doṣas*, *dhātus*, and ultimately the body's vital energies, leading to imbalance and disease. Maintaining a balanced *agni* is, therefore, crucial for overall well-being.



Human body composition

In the science of Āyurveda, **Agni (अग्नि)** holds a position of supreme importance. Far beyond the mere act of digestion, Agni represents the **biological fire or metabolic energy** responsible for all transformative processes in the body—from the digestion of food to the assimilation of knowledge. According to the classical texts, **"Health or disease of the body and mind entirely depends on the state of Agni"** (Caraka Saṃhitā, Sūtrasthāna 28.4). Agni is not limited to physical digestion only. According to **Vedantic literature**, like the **Brahmasūtra**, **Agni is a symbol of life itself**. When Agni is present, life continues. When Agni extinguishes, life ends.

The profound understanding is elaborated in classical texts like the **Shabdakalpadruma** and the **Vedantasūtras**, where **Adi Shankaracharya** describes Agni as a life-sustaining, all-pervading power that fuels growth, awareness, and vitality.

11.1 Agni-Etymology by Yāska and Shankaracharya

The ancient scholar Acharya Yāska gave a beautiful explanation of the word "Agni" by breaking it into its roots:

- ♦ A → from the root "I" (इ) = "to go" → indicates movement or action
- ♦ G → from the root "Anja" (अञ्ज) = "to shine" or "Daha" (दह) = "to burn" → indicates light and heat
- ♦ Ni → = "to carry" or "to lead"

Putting all of these together, Agni means:

"That which moves, shines, burns, transforms, and carries life forward."

So, Agni is not static-it's dynamic. It moves through our body, it glows (like energy), it transforms food and thoughts, and it leads to growth and awareness.

(Source: Shabdakalpadrūma, Radhakantdev R, editors. Amar Publication Varanasi: Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series. 1967:8.)

11.2 Types and Functions of Agni

Āyurveda classifies Agni into 13 types based on their location and function:

1. **Jāṭharāgni** (जाठराग्नि): Located in the stomach and small intestine, this is the main digestive fire responsible for digesting food and transforming it into nutrients and waste. When Jāṭharāgni is strong, digestion is efficient; when weak or disturbed, diseases manifest.
2. **Bhūtāgni** (भूताग्नि) – 5 types: These fires digest the five great elements (Pañcamahābhūta) absorbed from food and ensure that they are properly assimilated into body tissues.
3. **Dhātvaṅni** (धात्वग्नि) – 7 types: Each of the seven dhātus (Rasa, Rakta, Māṃsa, etc.) has its specific fire that governs the transformation of nutrients into that tissue, ensuring proper nourishment and development.

(Source: Agrawal AK, Yadav CR, Meena MS. Physiological aspects of Agni. Ayu. 2010 Jul;31(3):395-8. doi: 10.4103/0974-8520.77159. PMID: 22131747; PMCID: PMC3221079.)

11.3 Core Roles of Agni

1. **Digestion and Metabolism (Ahar Pāka)**: Agni digests food into usable nutrients and waste materials, a process fundamental to sustaining life and energy.
2. **Nutrient Assimilation (Dhātu Pāka)**: Proper functioning of Agni ensures each dhātu receives nourishment and transforms correctly into the next tissue.
3. **Immunity (Ojas Production)**: Strong Agni creates Ojas (the essence of immunity, strength, and vitality), which safeguards the body against diseases.
4. **Mental Clarity and Perception (Manas Pāka)**: Agni is also responsible for the digestion of sensory impressions and thoughts, ensuring clarity of mind, intelligence, and perception.
5. **Elimination of Toxins (Āma Prevention)**: Weak Agni leads to the formation of Āma (undigested toxic material), the root cause of many diseases according to Āyurveda.

"तत्ररोगाः अपि सर्वे अपिमन्देऽग्नौ जायन्ते।"

"All diseases are produced due to the impairment or weakening of Agni."
(Caraka Saṃhitā, Cikitsāsthāna 15.3)

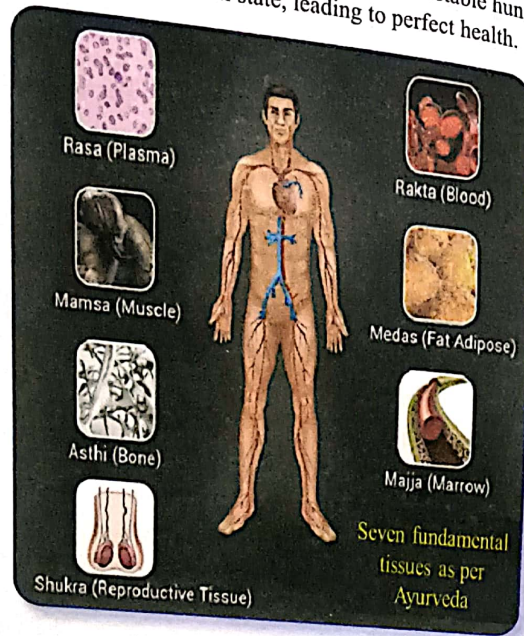
This statement emphasizes that the disturbance of Agni is the root cause of nearly every disease, making the preservation of Agni's strength a key principle of Ayurvedic health management. According to Āyurveda, even mental illnesses like depression or anxiety can originate from disturbed Agni, as undigested food toxins (Āma) affect the clarity of the mind (Manovaha Srotas)-a concept similar to modern "gut-brain axis" theories.

11.4 When Agni is Balanced (Samāgni)

- ♦ Proper digestion and assimilation
- ♦ Stable body weight
- ♦ Clear mind
- ♦ Strong immunity
- ♦ Radiant complexion
- ♦ Longevity and vitality

11.5 When Agni is Disturbed

- ♦ **Manda Agni (Low):** Poor digestion, heaviness, sluggishness.
- ♦ **Tiṣṇa Agni (Sharp):** Over-digestion, hyperacidity, burning sensations.
- ♦ **Viṣama Agni (Irregular):** Gas, bloating, unpredictable hunger.
- ♦ **Samāgni (Balanced):** Ideal state, leading to perfect health.



Seven fundamental tissues- dhātus

12. The Seven Dhātus

In Ayurvedic philosophy, āhāra (food) is regarded as the foundational source for the nourishment and formation of the body's structural and functional units, known as the seven dhātus. The body comprises these seven fundamental tissues (*dhātus*), each playing a specific role in maintaining physical health:

1. **Rasa (Plasma):** Nourishes and hydrates the body.
2. **Rakta (Blood):** Supports vitality and oxygenates the tissues.
3. **Māmsa (Flesh):** Provides structure and strength.
4. **Medas (Fat):** Acts as an energy reserve and insulator.

5. **Asthi (Bones):** Offers structural support and protection.
 6. **Majja (Bone Marrow):** Produces blood cells and sustains nerve function.
 7. **Śukra (Semen):** Represents reproductive essence and vitality.
- Food is the primary source for the formation of these *dhātus*. It is first transformed into plasma and subsequently into blood, flesh, fat, bones, bone marrow, and finally semen. Through meditation and spiritual practices, this essence can culminate in *ojas*-the vital energy or life force that strengthens immunity, promotes longevity, and protects against disease. An imbalance in any of the *dhātus* disrupts this flow and leads to health issues.

THE EFFECTS OF IMBALANCED DHATUS

Dhatus	Increase or Growth	Decaying or Loss
Rasa	Similar effects to Kapha imbalance	Roughness, weakness, dryness, fatigue, and inability to tolerate sounds
Rakta	Visarpa (spreading dry itch), Pliha (spleen enlargement), Vidra (fissures), Kustha (leprosy), Upakusha (gumboils), limb loss, etc.	Looseness of blood vessels, roughness
Māmsa	Ganda (boils), Arbuda (tumors), Granthi (vessel hardening/swelling), Goitre, Mumps, etc.	Sense fatigue, dryness of cheeks, joint pains
Medas	Weakness, breathing problems	Loss of touch sensation, thinness of body
Asthi	Extra bones and teeth	Pain in bones, tooth loss, etc.
Majja	Heaviness in eyes and body, joint pains	Holes in bones, giddiness, blackouts
Sukra	Excessive sexual desire, stones in semen	Early ejaculation, pain in the testicles, and blood loss

12.1 Summary of Dhātu Imbalances

Imbalances in the *dhātus* manifest in various ways within the body, affecting physical and metabolic functions. For instance:

- ♦ **Imbalanced Rasa:** Can cause dehydration or excessive fluid retention.
- ♦ **Imbalanced Rakta:** May result in anemia or blood disorders.

- ♦ **Imbalanced Māṃsa:** Could lead to muscle weakness or overgrowth.
 - ♦ **Imbalanced Medas:** May result in obesity or energy deficiency.
- By maintaining balance in the *doṣas*, *agni*, and *dhātus*, and ensuring the efficient removal of *malas*, one can achieve optimal physical health and enhance overall vitality.

13. Health and the Dynamics of Tri-Doṣas

In Ayurveda, the foundation of health lies in the **harmonious balance** of the three fundamental energies or bio-regulatory principles known as *doṣas*: **Vāta**, **Pitta**, and **Kapha**. These *doṣas* are dynamic forces that govern all physiological and psychological functions in the body. The term *doṣa* literally means "which can spoil or become imbalanced," highlighting their potential to disturb the body's natural state when not in equilibrium.

Each *doṣa* is composed of a unique combination of the **pañca-mahābhūtas**-the five great elements (earth, water, fire, air, and ether)-a concept rooted in the **Vaiśeṣika school** of Bhartiya philosophy. For instance, **Pitta** arises from the combination of fire and water.



Tridoṣa-upadeśaḥ has described the quantities and qualities of three fundamental types of substances called- vāta, pitta, kapha

13.1 The Nature and Functions of Tri-Doṣas

Each *doṣa* has a specific role:

- ♦ **Kapha** represents the solid, structural foundation of the body.
- ♦ **Pitta** governs chemical activities, including digestion and metabolism.
- ♦ **Vāta** regulates motion and energy flow.

Though their properties and functions differ, the *doṣas* work in harmony when balanced. Imbalances in the *doṣas* lead to disease, making their regulation crucial for health.

13.2 Characteristics of Each Doṣa

1. **Vāta:** Light, cool, dry, mobile, subtle, and rough.
 2. **Pitta:** Oily, sharp, hot, light, liquid, and pungent.
 3. **Kapha:** Cool, moist, stable, heavy, slow, and slippery.
- Diet significantly influences the *doṣas*. Foods with similar properties to a specific *doṣa* can increase it. For instance, okra, which is **Kapha**-enhancing, can perturb **Kapha** levels when consumed in excess.

13.3 Taste-Based Relationships

- ♦ **Vāta:** Reduced by sweet, sour, and salty tastes; aggravated by pungent, bitter, and astringent tastes.
- ♦ **Pitta:** Reduced by astringent, bitter, and sweet tastes; aggravated by sour, salty, and pungent tastes.
- ♦ **Kapha:** Reduced by pungent, bitter, and astringent tastes; aggravated by sweet, sour, and salty tastes.

A balanced diet should include all six tastes in appropriate proportions based on the individual's constitution and current health.

13.4 Doṣas and Their Locations in the Body

Each *doṣa* predominates in a specific region of the body:

- ♦ **Kapha:** Upper body, including the head and chest.
- ♦ **Pitta:** Between the chest and navel.
- ♦ **Vāta:** Below the navel.

While these regions represent their primary locations, *doṣas* are present throughout the body and can affect any part. For example, **Kapha** imbalances often manifest as colds or coughs, **Pitta** disturbances may cause acidity, and **Vāta** imbalances might lead to constipation or arthritis.

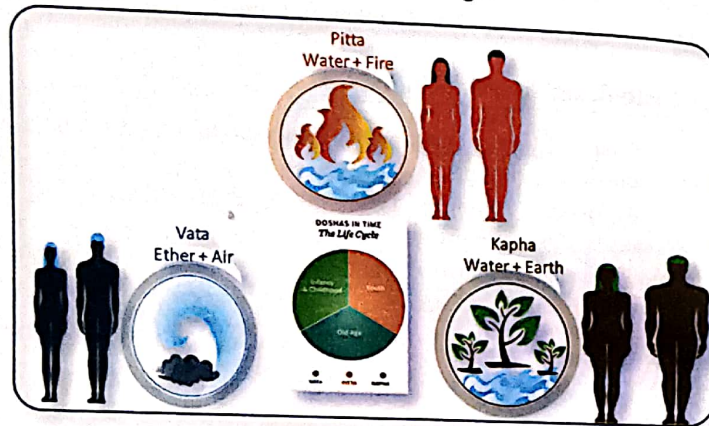
13.5 Doṣas and Stages of Life

The dominance of each *doṣa* varies by age, time of day, and even the phases of the night:

- ♦ **Childhood:** *Kapha* predominates, explaining children's susceptibility to colds and respiratory issues.
- ♦ **Middle age:** *Pitta* is dominant, with increased vulnerability to heat-related ailments.
- ♦ **Old age:** *Vāta* predominates, often causing conditions like joint pain and digestive issues.

Similarly, *doṣas* influence health during specific times:

- ♦ **Kapha:** Morning hours and the early night.
- ♦ **Pitta:** Midday and midnight.
- ♦ **Vāta:** Evening and the latter part of the night.



Tri-Doṣas: Relationship to Health

14. The Role of Vāta

Among the *doṣas*, *Vāta* is considered the most critical due to its role in movement and regulation. It controls:

- ♦ Circulation of blood.
- ♦ Transportation of nutrients.
- ♦ Breathing and lung function.
- ♦ Voluntary and involuntary movements.
- ♦ Initiation of natural urges such as sneezing, urination, and yawning.
- ♦ Mental and sensory activities, including speech.

A disturbance in *Vāta* can disrupt these essential functions, leading to various disorders.

DOSHA BALANCE AND THEIR EFFECTS ON THE BODY			
Condition	Vāta	Pitta	Kapha
Balanced	Energy, balanced breath, movement, normality in urges	Digestion, warmth, vision, hunger, thirst, taste, gleam, intelligence, prowess/heroism, delicateness, softness	Stability, moisture, good joints, patience
Exaggerated	Thinness, need for warmth, shivering, constipation, weakness, chattering, dizziness	Yellowness in eyes and excretions, severe hunger and thirst, burning, insomnia, acidity	Indigestion, nausea, laziness, heaviness, frigidity, slack-limbed
Reduced	Exhaustion of limbs, noxious talk, giddiness	Indigestion, coldness, lack of gleam	Giddiness, emptiness in Kapha's abode, loose joints

14.1 Suppression of Natural and Psychological Urges

Ayurveda identifies the suppression of natural urges as a major cause of physical illness. For example, holding back sneezing or urination can lead to physiological disturbances.

Conversely, suppressing certain psychological urges—such as greed, anger, envy, or excessive passion—is encouraged to foster mental well-being. Cultivating self-control in these areas leads to a balanced mind, ultimately supporting overall health.

By understanding the nature of the *doṣas* and their influence on health, one can make informed dietary and lifestyle choices to maintain harmony and prevent disease.

15. Ayurvedic Approach to Diagnosis and Care

In Ayurveda, effective disease management revolves around four essential components outlined in the *Caraka-saṃhitā*:

1. **Physician (Bhishak):** A physician must possess proper training, knowledge, and experience to diagnose and treat illnesses effectively.

2. **Remedy (Aushadha):** Remedies should be easily available, safe, and effective.
3. **Patient (Rogi):** Patients must provide comprehensive information about their condition and adhere to the prescribed treatment.
4. **Attendant (Paricharaka):** Attendants should be knowledgeable in patient care and maintain cleanliness.

The Ayurvedic framework for treatment includes three fundamental steps:

1. **Symptoms (Linga):** Identifying the observable signs of the disease.
2. **Cause (Hetu):** Investigating the underlying causes of the symptoms.
3. **Remedy (Aushadha):** Administering appropriate treatments to restore balance.

Ayurveda's approach to diagnosing diseases emphasizes identifying root causes rather than merely addressing symptoms, distinguishing it from modern medical methodologies.

15.1 Diagnostic Methodologies

Ayurveda places great importance on early and accurate diagnosis, using various diagnostic, prognostic, and therapeutic techniques. These are comprehensively discussed in the *Caraka-saṃhitā* (*Vimāna-sthāna*, Chapter 8).

15.2 Examination Methods

1. **Patient Examination:** Focuses on understanding the patient's constitution (*prakṛti*), strength, and vitality using ten parameters. A crucial aspect of this is *doṣa-prakṛti* analysis, which classifies individuals based on the three *doṣas* and their combinations, offering insight into their physical, physiological, and psychological states.
 - ♦ Measurements, such as using the breadth of a finger (*aṅguli pramāṇa*), are employed to assess bodily proportions.
2. **Disease Examination:** Employs specific methods to understand the nature and progression of the illness.

Key Diagnostic Methods

- ♦ **Darśana-parīkṣā:** Visual inspection of the patient's appearance, including color, luster, size, and shape of affected areas.
- ♦ **Sparśana-parīkṣā:** Physical examination through touch to assess qualities like temperature, pulse, and texture.

- ♦ **Praśna-parīkṣā:** Questioning the patient or their caregivers to gather information about symptoms and the patient's history.
- ♦ **Nāḍi-parīkṣā:** Pulse diagnosis, introduced during the medieval period, involves assessing health through pulse patterns.
- ♦ **Mūtra-parīkṣā:** Urine analysis, including the *Taila-bindu-parīkṣā* (oil-drop test), which evaluates the urine's physical and chemical properties.
- ♦ **Mala-parīkṣā:** Examination of feces, including observing its behavior in water, to assess digestive and metabolic health.

DIAGNOSTIC TECHNIQUE PRESCRIBED IN AYURVEDA TEXTS

Aspect of Examination	Technique or Focus	Details or Method
Examination of the Patient		
Prakṛti (Constitution)	Darśana-parīkṣā	Visual observation
Sāra (Tissue elements)	Sparśana-parīkṣā	Tactile examination
Samhanana (Organs)	Praśna-parīkṣā	Inquiry through questions
Pramāṇa (Body measurements)	Nāḍi-parīkṣā	Pulse examination
Sātmya (Homologation)	Mūtra-parīkṣā	Examination of urine
Sattva (Psychic condition)	Mala-parīkṣā	Examination of excreta
Vyāyāma-śakti (Physical fitness)	Āhāra-śakti (Food intake)	Evaluation of dietary habits
Vayas (Age)		Determination of age
Examination of the Disease		
Vikṛti (Morbidity)	Sparśana-parīkṣā	Palpation and tactile analysis

16. Importance of Sleep and Food in Health

Dietary and lifestyle interventions are central to Ayurvedic treatment. Recommendations are tailored based on an individual's *prakṛti* and the disturbed *doṣas*. Ayurveda prescribes daily and seasonal routines to support health.

16.1 The Three Pillars of Health

According to *Caraka*, the pillars of health are:

1. **Food (*Āhāra*)**: A diet aligned with one's *doṣa* constitution.
2. **Sleep (*Nidrā*)**: Proper rest to rejuvenate the body and mind.
3. **Celibacy/Control of the Senses (*Brahmacarya*)**: Moderation in sensory indulgence.

16.2 The Nature of Sleep

Sleep arises when the mind and senses withdraw due to fatigue. Excessive *tamas* (inertia) or accumulation of *kapha* can also induce sleep. Proper sleep is essential for:

- ✦ Physical vitality.
- ✦ Emotional stability.
- ✦ Cognitive clarity.

Six Types of Sleep

1. **Tamo-bhava**: Induced by mental lethargy, such as after a heavy meal; linked to negative outcomes.
2. **Śleṣma-samudbhava**: Caused by *kapha*, explaining children's longer sleep durations.
3. **Manah-śarīra-śrama-samudbhava**: Resulting from mental and physical exhaustion.
4. **Āgantuki**: Triggered by external factors like aromas, medicines, or massages.
5. **Vyādhy-anuvartinī**: Associated with diseases, such as fever caused by *kapha*.
6. **Rātri-svabhāva-prabhavā**: Natural night sleep, considered the best and most restorative.

16.3 Recommendations for Healthy Sleep

- ✦ Sleep at night is ideal, with daytime naps recommended only during the summer to counteract shorter nights and *vāta* disturbances.
- ✦ Excessive daytime sleep can aggravate *kapha* and *pitta*.

16.4 Managing Sleep Disorders

1. **Insomnia**: Common causes include stress and lifestyle factors. Ayurveda suggests remedies such as:
 - ✦ Oil massages.
 - ✦ Bathing.
 - ✦ Eating calming foods like *śālī* rice with curd.
 - ✦ Gentle body massage.
 - ✦ Creating a calming bedtime environment with pleasant aromas and soft bedding.

2. **Excessive/Untimely Sleep**: Often linked to *kapha* and *pitta* imbalances. Remedies include:
 - ✦ Evacuation therapy.
 - ✦ Fasting.
 - ✦ Physical activity.
 - ✦ Subduing *tamas* through mindful practices.

By addressing both diet and lifestyle, Ayurveda provides a holistic approach to disease management and overall well-being.

17. Disease Management in Ayurveda

Ayurveda offers a holistic approach to health, emphasizing the balance of body, mind, and spirit. The foundation of its treatment revolves around four key components: the physician, the remedy, the patient, and the attendant. The physician must be well-trained and experienced, while the remedies should be effective, safe, and easily available. The patient's role involves providing accurate information and following the prescribed treatments, and the attendant plays a crucial part in maintaining the patient's comfort and hygiene. Together, these elements ensure a comprehensive and personalized healing process.

The diagnostic process in Ayurveda is meticulous and multifaceted, involving both the examination of the patient and the disease. Understanding a patient's unique constitution (*Tri-dosas*) through their personality and vitality is critical. Diagnosis includes visual inspections (*Darśana-parikṣā*), physical examinations (*Sparsana-parikṣā*), and inquiries (*Praśna-parikṣā*). Traditional methods like pulse analysis (*Nadi-parikṣā*), urine examination (*Mūtra-parikṣā*), and fecal analysis (*Mala-parikṣā*) provide insights into internal imbalances. This thorough diagnostic process helps physicians identify not just symptoms but the root causes of ailments, aligning with Ayurveda's philosophy of treating the source rather than just the symptoms.

Sleep and diet are considered pillars of health in Ayurveda. Sleep, influenced by the dosas Tamas and Kapha, is vital for physical and mental rejuvenation. Ayurveda identifies six types of sleep, with natural night sleep (Ratri-svabhāva-prabhava) being the most beneficial. Remedies for insomnia include oil massages, consuming specific foods, and maintaining a pleasant sleeping environment. While daytime sleep is generally discouraged, it is permitted during summer or for specific groups like children and elders. Improper sleep patterns, whether excessive or insufficient, are linked to disturbances in Kapha and Pitta.

In the 1970s, the government of India appointed a panel of Ayurvedic experts to evaluate the formulas in Ayurvedic texts. The work culminated in compiling an "Ayurvedic Formulary of India"³⁶, which has over 560 evaluated formulas, 22 bhasmas and 55 rasas.

Food is another cornerstone of well-being, with a significant emphasis on its quality, quantity, and timing. Foods are categorized into Guru (heavy) and Laghu (light), where Guru foods are harder to digest but strengthening, while Laghu foods are easier to digest and help in healing.

The timing between meals is crucial, with a recommended gap of 3–6 hours to ensure proper digestion. Freshly cooked food is preferred, as food older than three hours is considered tamasic, reducing vitality and promoting lethargy. Water, too, is treated as a vital element. Its type and quantity should align with an individual's prakṛti (constitution). Ayurveda distinguishes between rainwater (Antarikṣa) and groundwater (Bhauma), emphasizing that water's properties depend on its source and season. Water is seen not just as a thirst quencher but as a remedy for numerous ailments, from fatigue to kidney stones.

18. Classical Ayurvedic Healing Techniques

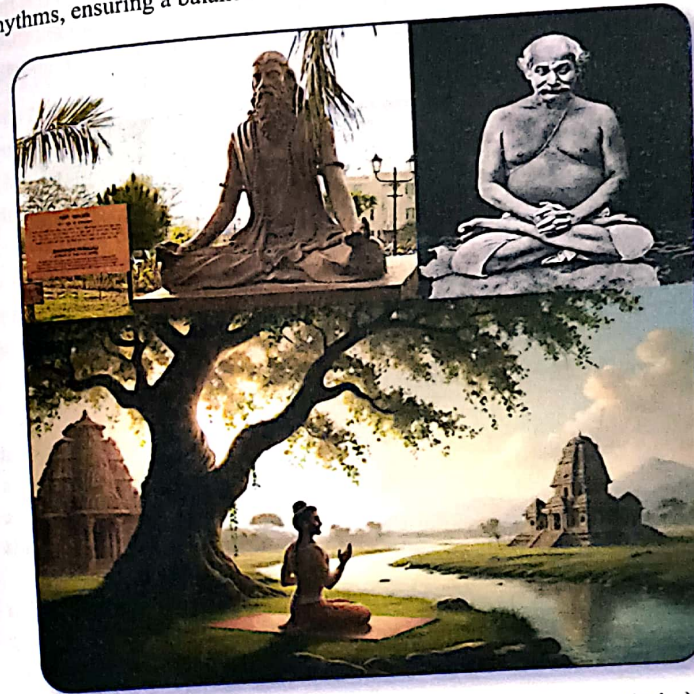
The therapeutic dimension of Ayurveda integrates herbal formulas, bhasmas (metal and mineral preparations), and medicated oils and ghee. Remedies are often compounded with various herbs to enhance absorption and mitigate toxicity. Rasayanas, comparable to modern dietary supplements, are tailored to improve nutrition, immunity, and the bioavailability of nutrients. Bhasmas, detoxified forms of metals and minerals, are prepared through intricate processes outlined in Ayurvedic texts, making them safe and effective for therapeutic use.

A unique feature of Ayurveda is its detoxification therapy, Pañcakarma. This process begins with preparatory procedures such as oil applications, sweating, and herbs that enhance metabolism. The second stage involves

purification methods like emesis, purgation, enema, and bloodletting to eliminate toxins. The final stage focuses on recuperation, prescribing dietary and lifestyle changes to maintain balance and prevent recurrence.

Physical therapy, particularly massage, holds a special place in Ayurveda. The body's vital points, or marma points, where muscles, bones, and nerves intersect, are considered energy centres. Massaging these points with medicated oils tailored to the individual's dosas and condition helps treat ailments and strengthen the body. This therapeutic touch not only alleviates physical discomfort but also restores harmony within.

Ayurveda's comprehensive approach to health emphasizes understanding individual needs and aligning treatments with natural rhythms, ensuring a balanced and holistic journey to wellness.

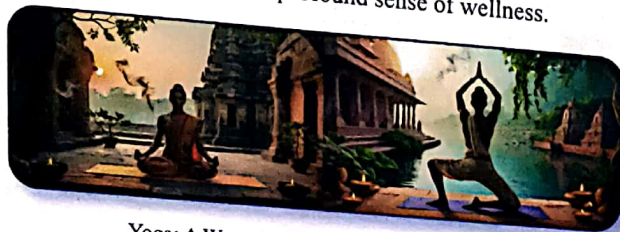


A statue of Patanjali (the author of the Yoga Sutras) practicing dhyana (meditation), one of the eight limbs of yoga; Lahiri Mahasaya in Padmasana, one of the ancient seated meditation asanas.

19. Yoga: A Way of Life for Health and Wellness

In the hustle and bustle of modern life, finding balance has become an increasingly elusive goal. Work-life balance, once considered a privilege, is now a necessity for physical and mental well-being. Yet, employees across the globe often find themselves trapped in a cycle of endless work hours, mounting stress, and a lack of meaning in their daily activities. This stress doesn't just stay confined to the workplace—it seeps into personal lives, affecting relationships, health, and overall happiness. To counter this imbalance, many are rediscovering ancient practices that nurture both inner peace and physical health.

Yoga, an ancient Bhartiya practice, offers a timeless solution to these modern woes. It is more than just a form of exercise; it is a way of life that addresses the interconnectedness of the mind, body, and spirit. By adopting the principles of yoga, individuals can find harmony in their lives, manage stress effectively, and achieve a profound sense of wellness.



Yoga: A Way of Life for Health and Wellness

19.1 The Modern Dilemma: Stress and Its Consequences

Stress has become a silent epidemic of our times, manifesting in physical ailments like hypertension, diabetes, and heart problems, as well as psychological challenges like anxiety and burnout. For many, the workplace is a major source of this stress, where long hours and relentless demands lead to feelings of exhaustion, irritability, and inefficacy.

This chronic stress not only reduces productivity but also takes a toll on personal and social relationships. Families bear the brunt of these pressures, and the financial, emotional, and social costs are enormous. Medical practitioners often recommend lifestyle changes alongside medication to address these stress-induced conditions. And here lies the beauty of yoga—a practice that offers a complete lifestyle transformation to combat these challenges.

19.2 Yoga: A Holistic Approach to Wellness

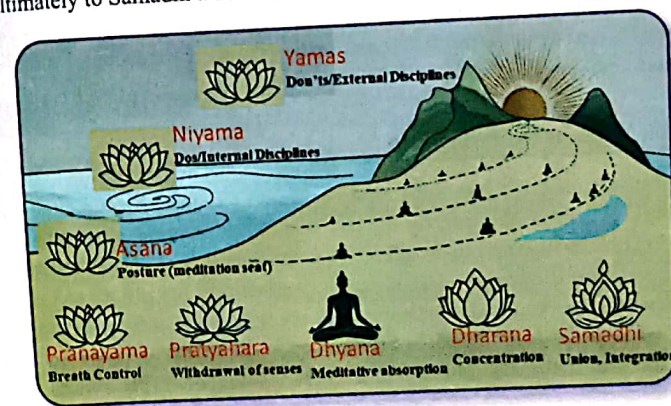
Yoga is not just about physical postures; it is a holistic science that integrates physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions of life. Rooted in Bhartiya philosophy, yoga has been a guiding light for centuries, providing practical tools to lead a balanced life.

The uniqueness of yoga lies in its integrated approach. While asanas (postures) help keep the body agile and strong, pranayama (breathing techniques) regulates energy flow, and meditation calms the mind. Together, these practices offer a comprehensive way to manage stress, improve health, and foster inner peace.

19.3 The Philosophy of Yoga

At its core, yoga is about creating harmony between oneself and the world, between one's thoughts and actions. Patañjali's *Yoga Sutras*, one of the foundational texts of yoga, outline an eight-fold path (Ashtanga Yoga) to achieve this harmony. This path provides a step-by-step guide to cultivating ethical behavior, mental discipline, and spiritual insight.

The journey begins with external practices like Yama and Niyama, which focus on ethical behavior and personal discipline, and moves inward to practices like Dharana (concentration) and Dhyana (meditation), leading ultimately to Samadhi—a state of self-realization and peace.



Eight limbs of Yoga

19.4 Stress Management Through Yoga

Yoga addresses stress uniquely and profoundly. Unlike temporary fixes, yoga delves deep into the root causes of stress, helping individuals become more aware of their unconscious patterns and habits.

By practicing asanas and pranayama, the body and mind are prepared to handle life's challenges with resilience. These practices regulate the autonomic nervous system, restoring balance between the sympathetic (stress response) and parasympathetic (relaxation response) systems. Meditation, meanwhile, enhances self-awareness, helping individuals respond to stressors with calmness and clarity.

19.5 A Pathway to Transformation

The yoga way of life is transformative, addressing every aspect of one's being:

- ◆ **Physical Well-being:** Regular practice of asanas enhances flexibility, strength, and vitality.
- ◆ **Mental Clarity:** Meditation and mindfulness practices foster emotional stability and resilience.
- ◆ **Spiritual Growth:** Through self-discipline and introspection, yoga helps realign one's goals and perspectives, bringing a sense of purpose and contentment.

The eight-fold path of yoga encourages a balanced approach to life. Yama and Niyama guide ethical living, while asanas and pranayama build physical and mental health. Practices like Pratyahara (sense withdrawal) and Dharana train the mind to focus, setting the stage for deeper meditative states.

19.6 Yoga in Everyday Life

Incorporating yoga into daily routines doesn't require drastic changes. Simple practices like starting the day with a few minutes of meditation, taking breaks for mindful breathing, or dedicating time to asanas can make a significant difference. These practices gradually lead to greater self-awareness, helping individuals navigate life with grace and equanimity.

Karma Yoga, or the path of selfless action, teaches us to approach our duties with focus and dedication, without attachment to outcomes. This mindset reduces stress, as it shifts the emphasis from external validation to internal satisfaction.

20. Conclusion

This book has explored the timeless wisdom of Āyurveda and Yoga—two of Bhārat's most profound contributions to the science of holistic well-being. Through detailed discussions on foundational principles such as tri-dōṣa theory, prakṛti-based personalized care, the role of agni, the seven dhātus, daily and seasonal routines, and the philosophical underpinnings of health, it becomes clear that these ancient sciences offer much more than physical healing—they offer a complete roadmap for living a balanced, purposeful, and fulfilled life.

In an age overwhelmed by stress, lifestyle disorders, and emotional fatigue, the teachings of Āyurveda and Yoga provide tools not only for disease management but also for prevention, self-awareness, emotional resilience, and spiritual evolution. Their emphasis on the unity of body, mind, and spirit stands in stark contrast to fragmented modern healthcare systems, inviting a return to natural rhythms, self-discipline, and mindful living.

By reawakening the ancient practices rooted in the Vedas, Saṃhitās, and Yogic texts, this book encourages readers to reclaim their innate capacity for healing, harmony, and inner joy. Ultimately, Āyurveda and Yoga are not relics of the past—they are living sciences, ever relevant and urgently needed in today's world.

Let this knowledge not remain confined to pages, but be lived—daily, consciously, and with devotion. For in doing so, we do not just preserve a tradition; we revive a way of life that nurtures the whole being—body, mind, and soul.

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