



Introduction to *Ayurveda*

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At its core, **Ayurveda** is a 5,000-year-old science designed to bring the body back into balance. But Ayurveda is so much more...

Ayurveda is a Vedic science. Another Vedic science, often called Ayurveda's sister science, is Yoga. *All Vedic sciences are primarily teachings for the development of full human physical, mental, and spiritual potential.*

Ayurveda's base of knowledge was recorded in a large body of Sanskrit literature that originated in India, called the Vedas. The Vedas are considered to be the oldest written recordings that describe, often in metaphors, ancient Hindu principles and practices.

You may have heard of the Vedic warriors—including Ram, Lakshman, Arjuna, and Krishna. These warriors represent beings that have achieved their full spiritual potential and fearlessness through mental and emotional freedom.

Ayurvedic Healing and Detox

"As within, so without" is a common saying. Ayurveda believes that healing starts from within. The idea of taking an herb to sedate you for insomnia or a laxative to relieve constipation is contrary to Ayurvedic philosophy. Instead, Ayurveda tries to understand and address the root of the problem.

And the root of most problems, according to Ayurveda, is an imbalance in the digestive system.

Therefore, much attention is given to maintaining digestive health. In Ayurveda, the digestive system is also your detoxification system. When digestion breaks down, so does your ability to detox.

Prevention is King

In Ayurvedic medicine, optimal health and even one's spiritual growth starts with *prevention*. Prevention is based on a balanced lifestyle that is in harmony with the cycles of nature.

Ayurveda recognizes that all living creatures, whether human, plant, or animal, must live in harmony with nature in order to survive and thrive. Like the owner's manual of your car prescribes maintenance schedules for the long-term health of your vehicle, Ayurveda speaks of daily and seasonal routines that ensure maximal health, mental clarity, and longevity.

We don't realize that, just like the birds, our survival depends on transitioning with the seasons. Eating the same foods 365 days a year, or simply putting on a sweater when it gets chilly is not in keeping with the original human design.



What is in line with the way our bodies were built is going to sleep and rising with the sun; eating local, seasonal foods; and building activities around the natural rhythms of the day. These are all simple and profound ways to stay in harmony with nature.

When you are living a lifestyle in harmony with nature; eating well; exercising; and working to still the mind with techniques like yoga, breathing, and meditation, you can set the stage for optimal health and emotional growth.

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Five thousand years ago, in a non-toxic world, Ayurvedic experts thought it was important, even then, to design one of the most sophisticated detoxification programs in the world, called panchakarma. Today, with digestive-compromising stress and environmental toxicity at an all-time high, resetting digestive strength and regular detoxification is more important than ever and remains a critical part of Ayurvedic treatment.

Doshas and Ayurvedic Body Types

In Ayurveda, the doshas reflect the three main governing principles of nature: vata (air), pitta (fire), and kapha (earth-water).

Each person's nature reflects a unique combination of these three principles or doshas. For example, you can be predominantly pitta with some vata tendencies, or you can be tri-doshic, with equal parts of all three.

Your doshic composition depicts what and how you eat, how you exercise, when and how you sleep, and even where you prefer to live.

There are different protocols and recommendations for Ayurvedic herbs, lifestyle, diet, exercise, skin, digestion, lymph management and more that can all be organized into the three different body types.

Being aware of your doshas will allow you to identify Ayurvedic protocols to align your internal nature with the larger cycles of nature, also called circadian rhythms. It's like having a roadmap that leads you closer to your best self, so that you can reach your true potential, and be more radiant and joyful.

What's Your Body Type?

Take our [quiz](#) to learn your doshic composition. Check the answers that best fit your long-term experience.

Vata (Winter) Body

[Vata](#) is the most important of the three doshas. If left unbalanced, it causes pitta and kapha to become imbalanced.

Vata is the main driver, or mover, of the body, providing the following functions:

- All eliminations: fetus, semen, feces, urine, and sweat
- Assists with metabolism in the body (*agni*) and transformation of tissues
- Controls movement (mental and physical), including respiration, heartbeat, motivation, contraction of muscles, and natural urges
- Relays all sensory input to the brain and controls motor functions
- Governs the nervous system

Vata Qualities

Primary Aspects: Cold, dry, light

Elements: Air and ether

Season: Fall and winter

Times of Day: 2 a.m.-6 a.m. and 2 p.m.-6 p.m.

Tastes: Pungent, bitter, astringent, light, cold, dry

Best Oils: Sesame, almond, apricot

Vata Body-Type Characteristics

- Small frame, light and thin, has a hard time gaining weight
- Course, dry, kinky or curly hair
- Dry, rough skin
- Small eyes, whites of eyes are bluish or brownish
- Very large, small, or shaded teeth, or crooked teeth
- Performs activity quickly, can't stay idle, quick walking pace.
- Low strength and endurance
- Quick-minded, restless, learns fast, forgets fast
- High-pitched and fast voice
- Moods change quickly, tendency to worry, easily excitable, easily stressed
- Irregular hunger and digestion, prefers warm food and drink and eats quickly
- Tendency toward constipation
- Aversion to cold weather
- Spends money quickly, doesn't save
- Variable, irregular sex drive



Signs of Excess Vata

- Sleep imbalances
- Mood imbalances, including melancholy
- Occasional constipation
- Mild achiness
- Dryness
- Forgetfulness
- Restlessness

If you experience some of these signs, schedule an Ayurvedic [consult](#) and follow the tips below.

To Balance Vata

- Start your day with 1-2 capsules of [Ashwagandha](#) and [Turmeric Plus](#). (Children over 4 take 1 of each.)
- Follow a regular rhythm of sleep, exercise, mealtimes, and rest
- Take 3-5000 IU of [Vitamin D3](#) daily. Use our [home test kit](#) to test your vitamin D levels before use
- To increase vata, eat fewer astringent and bitter foods; to balance excess vata, eat more sweet, salty, heavy, oily and hot foods, such as savory squash soup and hot herbal tea. (See a list of winter-friendly foods [here](#).)
- Nearly 80% of your body's immune system lives in your gut. Take our Digestive Health Quiz to boost your immunity
- Sleep with a humidifier to keep your sinuses clear

Daily Routines (Dinacharya) for Vata

- Self-massage with warm [Tri-Doshic Massage Oil](#) or [Lymphatic Massage Oil](#). Learn how to do [daily self-massage](#) to balance your nervous system and detox your lymphatic system.
- Practice my [One-Minute Meditation](#) up to 10 times per day to help cope with stress, anxiety, and depression.
- Lubricate and protect dry sinuses by performing neti (gentle saline irrigation), followed by nasya (oil).
- Massage ears with Lymphatic Massage Oil.
- At the end of winter, follow one of our at-home cleanses to ensure a healthy spring.

Vata-Balancing Diet

During fall/winter months, which are November to February in the Northern Hemisphere, prioritize the diet tips listed [here](#).

The Best Herbs for Winter and Balancing Vata

Historically, all Ayurvedic foods and herbs were organic, local, and seasonal. In winter, these four herbal supplements tend to be accessible, and perfect for supporting immunity and more:

- [Ashwagandha](#)
- [Chyawanprash](#)
- [Gentle Digest](#)
- [Triphala](#)

Kapha (Spring) Body

[Kapha](#) is the heaviest of the three doshas. It provides the structures and the lubrication the body needs.

Kapha provides the following functions:

- Strength and energy
- Moistness and lubrication
- Stability to add the necessary grounding aspect to both mind and body.
- Mass and structure to provide fullness to bodily tissues
- Fertility and virility

Kapha Qualities

Primary Aspects: Cold, moist, oily, heavy

Elements: Water and earth

Season: Winter and spring

Times of Day: 6 a.m.–10 a.m. and 6 p.m.–10 p.m.

Tastes: Sweet, sour, salty, heavy, oily, and cold

Best Oils: Sesame, olive

Kapha Body-Type Characteristics

- Large frame, heavy, easily gains weight
- Thick, straight or wavy, oily hair
- Oily, moist, pale skin
- Large eyes, whites of eyes are glossy and white
- Medium to large, white and strong teeth
- Slow and steady walking pace
- Excellent strength and endurance
- Calm, steady disposition, long-term memory
- Low-pitched and resonating voice
- Steady moods, slow to get irritated, very understanding, easy-going
- Can miss a meal easily, digestion can be a little slow, prefers dry food and eats slowly
- Elimination is heavy, thick, and regular
- Saves money regularly and accumulates wealth.
- Strong sex drive
- Sound, heavy, and long sleep; dreams of water, clouds, and romance



Pitta (Summer) Body

Signs of Excess Kapha

- Cold, cough, allergies, congestion, and flu
- Fatigue
- Depression
- Weight gain
- Brain fog
- Slow digestion

Schedule an [Ayurvedic Consult](#) to treat the root cause of fatigue, depression, and congestion, which can be different for each person.

To Balance Kapha

- Eat more foods that are pungent (spicy), bitter, astringent, light, dry, and warm, such as flavorful steamed veggies, brothy soups, and brown rice
- To balance a kapha deficiency, eat less food that is sweet, sour, salty, heavy, cold, and oily, such as fried foods, ice cream, and heavy dairy
- Follow our [Short Home Cleanse](#) for a simple but thorough four-day cleanse
- For six weeks, take 500 mg of [Manjistha](#), [Turmeric Plus](#) and [Tulsi](#) twice per day to cleanse your lymphatic system, heal your digestion, boost immunity, and nourish your nervous system

Daily Routines (Dinacharya) for Kapha

- Self-massage with warm [Lymphatic Massage Oil](#) or raw sesame oil
- [Bellows Breath](#) three or more times per day
- Exercise in the morning to increase circulation, mood, and immunity
- Perform neti by irrigating your nasal passage with warm salt water. Always follow with nasya

Kapha-Balancing Diet

During the spring months, which are typically March through May in the Northern Hemisphere, prioritize the foods and recommendations on our [Spring Grocery List](#).

The Best Herbs for Spring and Balancing Kapha

Science has shown that the microbes attached to the plants we eat are also seasonal and inoculate our guts with beneficial seasonal bacteria. Here, four spring herbs to help you decongest:

- [Amalaki](#)
- [Turmeric Plus](#)
- [Regenerate \(Shilajit Plus\)](#)
- [Mucus Destroyer](#)

Do the words burnout, hothead, fired-up, irritable, and angry resonate with you? All of these words reflect imbalances that are caused by excess heat in the body. Ayurveda calls this heat [pitta](#).

Pitta provides the following functions:

- Metabolism—from digestion of food to transformation of all other material, including the comprehension of information into knowledge, reasoning, and judgment
- Thermogenesis to maintain proper body temperature
- Vision
- Complexion—gives color and softness to the skin

Pitta Qualities

Primary Aspects: Hot, moist, oily, light

Elements: Fire and water

Season: Late spring and summer

Times of Day: 10 p.m.–2 a.m. and 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

Tastes: Pungent, sour, salty, hot, light, and dry

Best Oils for Pitta: Sesame, coconut, ghee, sunflower

Pitta Body-Type Characteristics

- Medium frame, medium weight
- Thin, lustrous hair with fine curls Soft, medium oily, pink to red skin
- Penetrating eyes
- Small to medium yellowish teeth Average walking pace, competitive
- Strength and endurance
- Sharp intellect, aggressive, good general memory
- Medium pitched, clear voice
- Slow changing moods, angers easily, quick temper, likes things to be orderly.
- Sharp hunger, can't miss a meal, good digestion, normal elimination. Aversion to dry and hot weather
- Prefers cold food/drink and eats at an easy pace. Saves money, but is a big spender
- Moderate sex drive
- Sound, medium length sleep, dreams are fiery, violent and angry

Signs of Excess Pitta

- Irritability and impatience
- Occasional heartburn, acid reflux, and stomach ulcers
- Sensitivity to heat
- Lethargy
- Sarcasm
- Skin rashes, boils, acne
- Low blood sugar
- Difficulty falling asleep

If you experience some of these signs, schedule a [consult](#) and follow the guidelines below.

To Balance Pitta

- To increase pitta, eat more foods that are sweet, bitter, astringent, cold, heavy, and oily, including salads, steamed vegetables, fruit, and coconut oil
- To decrease kapha, eat fewer foods that are pungent (spicy), sour, salty, hot, light, and dry, including coffee and chips and salsa
- Sip cool or room-temperature water with cucumber slices or drink coconut water to keep hydrated. Or drink herbal teas such as mint, hibiscus, dandelion, and chicory.
- Take [Brahmi Brain](#), [Neem](#), and [Amalaki](#) to keep your mind cool and calm, and to cleanse your blood and prevent inflammation. Take 500-1000mg of each, 1-2 a day after food.

Daily Routines (Dinacharya) for Pitta

- Self-massage with Tri-Doshic Massage Oil, Lymphatic Massage Oil, or coconut oil
- For eight minutes daily, breathe slowly in and out through the left nostril. Hold your right nostril closed with your right thumb. Pause at the inhale and exhale. This can be cooling and calming.
- Avoid excessive activity during midday heat, as it can be draining
- Do not skip meals. Enjoy a big, relaxing lunch before 2 p.m.
- Carve out time each day to rest, rather than push yourself

Pitta-Balancing Diet

During the summer months, which are typically July through October in the Northern Hemisphere, prioritize eating foods and following recommendations from LifeSpa's [Summer Tips and Grocery List](#).

The Best Herbs for Summer and Balancing Pitta

Research suggests herbs are more potent when grown and taken in season. In summer, getting the right microbes from your supplements, like the four listed below, can dissipate heat and keep you calm.

- [Neem Boost](#)
- [Shatavari](#)
- [Brahmi Brain](#)
- [Manjistha](#)

According to the [Ayurvedic diet](#), there are three major guidelines when it comes to eating. They focus on HOW, WHEN, and WHAT to eat.

In the West, we obsess over what to eat, constantly arguing over which is the “best” diet, while ignoring the value of how you eat and when you eat. We generally eat on the run, while driving, late at night, throughout the day, or in a rush. Many of us eat basically the same foods year-round.

We've made eating very complicated—there are more modern theories on eating than there are days in a month. While animals seem to balance their nutritional needs quite well without the technical knowledge of fats, proteins, and carbohydrates, we incessantly count calories and measure grams, only to find out about the latest study that tells us that the rules of eating have changed once again.

Changing what you eat to be in sync with the seasons and when you eat to be in sync with the light and dark circadian cycles is critical and important according to Ayurveda. But how you eat, not when or what you eat, is considered most important.

In Ayurveda, the rules remain constant: As the seasons change and different foods are harvested, we change the foods we eat in accordance.

During the winter, for example, squirrels eat nuts as a good source of protein and fat. This is a perfect food to help combat the cold and dry weather in the winter months (vata season). Grains, which are harvested in the fall and cooked in the winter, are also a perfect winter food. Cooked grains provide a warm, heavy nutritional base that helps us adapt to the cold of winter.

Come spring, after eating heavy nuts and grains during the long, cold, sedentary winter, nature again provides us with the perfect food. Light, leafy green veggies and berries are the first foods harvested in the spring (kapha season) and are the natural antidote for the allergy season.

As the days get warmer in July and August, nature provides cooling fruits and vegetables, like watermelon and bell peppers, to balance the heat of summer (pitta season).



FREE 3-Season Diet Guide

Join our [3-Season Diet](#). It's free! This challenge takes you through a year of eating seasonally, with month-to-month support and guidance. Nature provides the ideal harvest for each season to keep you strong, healthy, energized, and focused. The *3-Season Diet* aligns our desires with the foods that nature has provided in season for thousands of years. You can also learn more in my book [The 3-Season Diet](#).

Why three seasons? Of course we're used to four seasons, but in nature, one season is typically dormant—a resting season. There are really three primary harvests—spring, summer, and fall, which is typically eaten in the winter. In the 3-Season Diet we have classified foods from around the world into fall/winter, summer, and spring so you can eat with the seasons but still eat like a king.

Ayurvedic Seasonal Grocery Lists

Each season (spring, summer, and fall/winter), we recommend eating that season's harvest, which is essentially nature's prescription for balancing the qualities of that season.

[Spring \(kapha-balancing diet\)](#)

[Summer \(pitta-balancing diet\)](#)

[Winter/Fall \(vata-balancing diet\)](#)

When to Eat

The six-meal-a-day diet has become a sensationalized program that is largely being prescribed to a misdiagnosed public. This diet was originally created and designed for hypoglycemic patients to introduce a level of blood sugar stability in lieu of severe blood sugar instability.

This diet usually initially results in an increase in energy and weight loss. But the long-term effects of this diet are generally degenerating to the nervous and immune systems.

The long-term effect of training your body to expect a blood sugar boost every three hours is an eventual deterioration of stable blood sugar, increased anxiety, and increased weight gain.

You may be thinking: wait, aren't those the exact opposite results people are looking for with this diet? And the answer is yes, in the long-term this diet backfires. Traditionally, this diet was intended to be a short-term fix to pull patients away from the dangerous edge of hypoglycemia. They were then slowly weaned back into making the larger stretches between meals necessary for three meals a day. Six meals a day is not the solution to weight loss or anxiety.

Top 20 Ayurvedic Eating Tips

Below are my [top 20 Ayurvedic eating tips](#) to improve digestion. (Notice, many of these revolve around HOW to eat your food.)

1. Eat your main meal at midday. Studies suggest that digestive strength is greater at midday and weaker at night. Start with a small breakfast that is big enough to get you through to lunch without hunger. Make lunch your main meal and have nothing until supper. Make supper as small and as early as possible, but eat enough to get through to breakfast without needing more food.

2. Be sure your stomach, bladder, and bowels are empty before eating. Eat only when you are actually hungry. Eating just two meals a day is fine as long as you remain satisfied throughout the day.

3. Eat predominantly a plant-based, whole food, minimally or completely non-processed diet, and if needed, small amounts of meat (only around 10% of the whole diet).

4. Instead of snacks when craving food between meals, drink water first. Studies suggest many cravings for food are actually just a need for water. Avoid snacking between meals. harvested in the spring (kapha season) and are the natural antidote for the allergy season.



5. Pre-hydrate your stomach for optimal digestion. Studies suggest digestive and weight loss benefits from drinking a glass of water 30 minutes before meals. This hydrates the bicarbonate acid buffer layer in the stomach which allows the full production of stomach hydrochloric acid

6. During your meals, sip room temperature or hot water in an amount needed to create a soup-like consistency of the food and water in your stomach. Too much water too close to meals can dilute essential stomach acids needed for digestion.

7. Do not drink iced beverages during your meals.

8. Do not eat while upset, angry, or distracted. Eat sitting down and in a relaxed, casual manner. Do not rush. There is an old Vedic saying, "If you eat standing up, death looks over your shoulder."

9. Bring everything to the table so you don't need to get up once you start eating. Whenever possible, designate a server so this is easily accomplished.

10. Say grace or give thanks. Studies show that a pre-meal ritual actually improves digestion.

11. Clear your mind and taste, touch, smell, and look at your food while eating eat slowly.

12. No TV, mail, reading, business, or distractions during your meals. Enjoy pleasant company and zero business while eating your meals.

13. Avoid leftovers. If you do have leftovers, do not save food for more than 24 hours.

14. Avoid over- or under-cooked food. Studies suggest that over-cooking can be harmful and under-cooking can make it difficult to assimilate certain nutrients from the food.

15. Eat a balanced meal with a plate that is ½ veggies, ¼ starches, and ¼ protein. Add healthy oils in small amounts.

16. Try to include all six tastes in each meal: sweet, sour, salty, bitter, pungent and astringent.



17. Avoid heavy foods at night, such as yogurt or cheese. These foods are warming and best eaten in the middle of the day when your digestion is strongest.

18. Eat more seasonal foods. Sign up for our free, monthly seasonal eating guide, *The 3-Season Diet*.

19. Plan to eat supper early and maintain a 13-hour fast each day from supper to breakfast. Studies show that this supports healthy weight loss and blood sugar levels while resetting fat metabolism.

20. Take time after meals to rest for 5-10 minutes. If possible, rest on your left side and then take a short walk. Studies show that this improves digestion, and the short walk helps to balance blood sugar.

How to Choose the Best Ayurvedic Herbs, Spices, and Foods for Your Digestion

In this article, I'll discuss the best way to troubleshoot your digestive system and help you [identify the best herbs to support digestion](#), with the ultimate goal of restoring balance. Because nearly 75% of the American population experiences digestive discomfort, I write this with a touch of urgency.

Ayurvedic Herbs to Support Occasional Constipation

You should have a complete bowel movement once a day within an hour of waking up. One or two more during the day are okay depending on your body type.

Stress tends to aggravate [vata](#), or the air element, in your gut, resulting in dryness or occasional constipation. These are my favorite Ayurvedic herbs for this:

Triphala: This 3-fruit formula, including Amalaki, tones and scrubs the intestinal wall. While triphala is excellent support for elimination issues, I find that it is sometimes a difficult formula to wean off of. The aim here at LifeSpa is to restore natural function so that herbs are not needed for a lifetime.

Slippery Elm: The sweet-smelling bark of this elm tree is most often used in powdered form to lubricate a dry intestinal lining.

Marshmallow and Licorice Root: These can be used to coat and protect the gut. My formula [Elim 1](#) combines licorice, slippery elm, and triphala to support lasting intestinal function.

Ayurvedic Herbs for Mucus in Your Stool

If you see white mucus in or lining the stool, nothing else should be done until this issue is resolved. This is an indication that reactive mucus is being produced in the intestinal tract. This mucus can flatten out the villi and lacteals that line the intestines and affect the ability to properly digest, assimilate, and detoxify.

The herbs that I use to resolve this issue are:

Amalaki: This tiny berry chock-full of vitamin C acts as a defense for the intestinal wall, protecting against irritants that can cause reactive mucus production.

Slippery Elm Prebiotic Formula: This combination of slippery elm, marshmallow, and licorice root calms and soothes the intestinal lining.

Being aware of mucus in your stool can allow you to detect whether or not the villi and lymphatic lacteals that line the intestines have become congested.

The lacteals are where the lymphatic system starts. Where the lacteals meet the numerous lymphatic vessels on the outside of the intestines is what I call “the most important half-inch in the body.”

This is where researchers believe 80% of the immune system is housed, and it is “Grand Central Station” for the body’s microbiome.

If this half inch is imbalanced, the [lymph](#) vessels (which drain cellular waste) can become congested, potentially leading to innumerable health concerns. I like to use the following herbs to decongest the lymph while supporting intestinal health:

Manjistha: This red root is a liver, lymph vessel, and blood cleanser with potent antioxidant properties.

Lymph Cleanse: With classic lymph-movers like red root and stillingia, this formula is designed to support healthy lymph nodes and intestinal lymph lacteal function.

Turmeric: This well-known cooking spice has been the subject of many studies touting its support for intestinal health, as well as its blood-, lymph-, and microcirculation-supportive properties.

Brahmi: This revered Ayurvedic herb supports healthy intestinal skin and is a powerful agent for lymph and microcirculation. In Ayurveda, this herb is used to support healthy brain and cognitive function. And new science is linking brahmi to lymph health. This herb may support the healthy draining of the brain lymphatics at night during sleep. It’s best to take it before bed.

Herbs and Probiotics for a Healthy Microbiome

The research is in, and 90% of the DNA in the human body is actually microbial (or bacterial) DNA, leaving only 10% as actual human DNA!

Taking [probiotics](#) has shown to be greatly beneficial for digestive and intestinal health but do they create a dependency? There are two basic types of probiotics: transient and colonizing.

Transient strains make up 99% of the probiotics on the market, and while these do have well-researched benefits, they do not become permanent residents in the gut.

Colonizing probiotics, such as Bifidobacterium lactis HN019, have been shown to adhere to the gut wall and re-populate the gut with new and diverse strains of good microbes. Always look for a colonizing probiotic! I can recommend:

Flora Restore: This is a colonizing probiotic for maintenance and support as you finish restoring balance in your upper digestive tract, to the first part of the small intestine.

Flora Restore MAX: Flora Restore MAX has three times the amount of colonizing probiotic as Flora Restore. This is a high-potential colonizing probiotic that is used to address chronic digestive concerns.

Gut Revival: This combines colonizing probiotics (equivalent of 1 capsule of Flora Restore) along with probiotics that are antagonistic to the undesirable bacteria that take advantage of a weak digestive environment. I recommend using this when you need to address an alteration of the healthy gut microbiology.

The herb neem has also been shown to support a healthy microbiome.

Neem: Referred to as “The Village Pharmacy” in Ayurveda, this herb supports healthy blood sugar and the body’s inner and outer skin. It naturally balances the microbiome of the intestines by supporting the growth of beneficial bacteria.



Foods and Herbs for Gas, Bloating, and Sensitive Digestion

When the lymphatic system becomes congested and elimination slows down, toxic substances are re-absorbed back into the liver rather than being eliminated through the stool.

Over time, this congests the liver and thickens bile. Thick bile weakens and compromises the liver's ability to metabolize fat and make ample bile, which is required to buffer strong digestive acids. When bile is thick or sludge-like, stomach acid accumulates, creating digestive imbalance.

If this continues, the gallbladder will eventually signal the stomach to turn down the production of digestive acid. With weakened digestive acid, the ability to process hard-to-digest foods like wheat and dairy weakens as well.

In my practice, I've found that these foods can increase the flow of bile:

Beets: This root vegetable has natural nitrates that open up bile ducts and increase bile flow. Studies suggest that beets can increase the liver's production of detox enzymes such as glutathione, and decongest an ischemic liver, supporting healthy bowel function, stronger stomach acid production and reduced gas and bloating!³⁶ A beet a day keeps the doctor away.

Olive oil with lemon juice: Olive oil has been used for centuries to help flush the liver and gallbladder. It was first reported on in this context in the British Medical Journal in 1882. Lemons reduce uric acid levels and increase bile flow. When taken together, olive oil and lemon juice act as a mini-workout for the liver and gallbladder.

Fenugreek: Numerous studies suggest that fenugreek may be one of the most powerful herbs for liver, gallbladder, and digestive health. Fenugreek works by removing cholesterol out of the bile and increasing the bile acid concentration by almost four times. Better bile flow means better detoxification of toxic fat-soluble pollutants, reduced gas and bloating, and increased production of stomach acid and an efficient scrub of the intestinal tracks villi.

Artichokes: This vegetable is among those with the highest-fiber content, at 10 grams for a medium-sized artichoke. Without adequate fiber in the diet, 94% of the bile in the intestines is re-absorbed back into the liver where it recirculates fatty toxic substances.

The pancreas plays a significant role in the digestive process. It produces blood sugar hormones like insulin and glucagon, as well as numerous [digestive enzymes](#), which resolve most cases of gas and bloating.

Many of the same substances that cleanse the bile ducts also cleanse the pancreatic ducts, including:

Gymnema Sylvestre: This Ayurvedic herb promotes the healthy function of the islet cells in the pancreas that manufacture insulin.

Cinnamon: This spice can be used to support healthy bile flow and digestive enzyme flow through the pancreatic and bile ducts.

Once bile and pancreatic juices (enzymes) are flowing, only then should you attempt to boost the stomach's production of hydrochloric acid (HCl). Our classic trikatu formula, [Warm Digest](#), turns up the digestive fire with a combination of the following three spices:

Black Pepper: Boosts acid production

Ginger: Protects the stomach lining while boosting digestive acid

Long Pepper: Boosts acid production

These [five spices](#) (which make up our [Gentle Digest](#) formula) boost digestive strength in a safe and gentle manner. Gentle Digest is specifically formulated for issues related to gas and bloat and food intolerances.

Ginger: Boosts stomach acid and supports a healthy intestinal microbial environment

Cardamom: Boosts overall digestive strength while reducing gas, bloating and mucus production

Cumin: Cools the stomach while supporting stomach acid, bile flow, and enzyme production

Coriander: Cools the stomach while supporting stomach acid, bile flow, and enzyme production

Fennel: The most effective agent for gas, bloating and lymphatic congestion



In Ayurveda, exercise is not only about losing weight, winning races, and staying healthy. [Exercise provides a kind of physical stress that can be used to teach us how to deal with all kinds of other stress \(mental, emotional, and social\) with an internal sense of composure.](#)

I published my first book, [Body Mind, and Sport](#), back in the 90s, and from the research in that book, I integrated a specific nasal breathing technique I call "Darth Vader Breathing" into a basic exercise routine. Darth Vader Breathing (Ujjayi Pranayama, as it is called in yoga and Ayurveda) allows a deep sense of calm to co-exist with the movement and intensity of exercise, making it an enjoyable experience rather than a workout.

After learning nasal breathing, tennis star Billie Jean King told me that she hadn't enjoyed exercise that much since she was a child. I have used this technique with world-class athletes like Martina Navratilova, with the aging population who wants safe and enjoyable exercise, and as a therapy for people who have difficulty handling stress.

Simply breathing deeply through your nose while walking fast for 20 minutes can teach you to handle stressful situations. ([Here's a tip](#): If you have to breathe through your mouth, you are walking too fast!)

With 80% of all diseases linked to stress, learning how to take an experience of calm into dynamic activity is an integral part of Ayurveda. The ability to know exactly how much exercise is good for you and how much is harmful becomes more automatic as you learn to listen to your body.

Nasal breathing during exercise provides numerous health benefits, including a natural experience of calm that we require for self-healing and growth.

Learn more about our [nose breathing exercise](#) research and maximize your exercise benefits.



1. Amalaki

[Amalaki](#) is the most powerful source of Vitamin C in the world. It is a very bitter citrus fruit that helps to repair damaged tissues in the body, while boosting your immune system.

Amalaki can be used to support the body during seasonal colds, and help repair irritated mucous membranes in both the respiratory tract and intestinal tract, and it is a great support agent for fevers and other inflammatory conditions.

2. Ashwagandha

[Ashwagandha](#) (Winter cherry, *Withania somnifera*) is becoming a favorite adaptogen of many Western herbalists because of its unique properties. Translated it means "the sweat of a horse," which clinically implies "the strength of a horse," but unlike ephedra or ginseng, ashwagandha is not a stimulant. In the long run, a stimulant will leave the body depleted.

Ashwagandha helps the body adapt to stress, but it also rebuilds the nervous system without stimulating it. The proof that ashwagandha is not a stimulant is that it is a wonderful sleep tonic. It helps give the body the energy it needs at night to put itself to sleep. In the daytime, it helps build the immune system and musculoskeletal systems, both of which are negatively impacted by stress. By both calming and rebuilding the nervous system, this herb exhibits qualities that are perfect for helping those under stress.

3. Bacopa

[Bacopa](#) (*Bacopa monnieri*) has become popular as the "attention deficit herb." Attention Deficit Disorder is caused by a lack of energy and vitality; the body does not have the energy to settle down. Bacopa is a South Indian herb that has been shown in studies to inhibit serotonin re-uptake. Bacopa's action is not limited to its influence on serotonin, rather it is more of an overall nervous system tonic and rejuvenative.

In LifeSpa's formula, bacopa is combined with another nervous system rejuvenative called shilajit, which increases oxygen and carries bacopa into the deep tissue. Bacopa increases cerebral circulation, allowing the brain to access its receptor sites and stabilize its own moods. LifeSpa's Bacopa also contains shankpushpi, which acts as mood stabilizer.

4. Brahmi

[Brahmi](#) (*Centlla asiatica*) is one of the most powerful brain tonics in Ayurveda. Brahmi is a cooling and rejuvenating herb that can both give energy and mental clarity, and at the same time helps you fall asleep. Brahmi naturally revitalizes nerve and brain cells and increases cerebral blood flow, which increases mental capacities, memory, concentration and focus, intelligence, and mental endurance. Brahmi is also used to reduce senility, stress, and stress-related diseases.

Brahmi is named after one of the highest states of consciousness (Brahman or God Consciousness) and is thus revered as one of the most powerful and spiritual herbs in Ayurveda.



5. Elim I

[Elim I](#) is a combination of slippery elm, licorice root, psyllium seeds husk and triphala extract, which is used for chronic eliminative difficulties. When the intestinal tract becomes severely dried out and constipated, [Triphala](#) is sometimes not enough. Elim I lubricates and softens the intestinal wall, tones the bowel, and removes mucus. In some cases, Triphala and Elim I will initially need to be combined. In a short time, Elim I can be dropped, and later the Triphala can also be dropped, to be used only as needed for good elimination.

Elim I is used for intestinal repair and is primarily a lubricant.

Elimination is affected by irritation of the intestinal tract. Laxatives desensitize the bowel, making it unresponsive, which in turn produces reactive mucus because of irritants in the laxatives. We must go into the intestinal tract to heal and restore its function.

6. Gentle Digest

[Gentle Digest](#) is a combination of Ayurveda's [five spices for digestion](#). Ginger, cumin, fennel, coriander, and cardamom have been time-tested for thousands of years and have a library of good science to support their digestion-boosting benefits.

7. Manjistha

[Manjistha](#) (*Rubia cordifolia*) is one of the most powerful blood purifiers available. It is commonly used for skin discolorations, such as liver spots and vitiligo. However, I find it most effective as a lymphatic de-stagnator. Most health professionals don't realize the important role of the lymphatic system, which drains waste from your body and controls and regulates your immune system.

Lymph is pumped through muscular contractions, so if you're sedentary, your lymphatic system will eventually become sedentary and create toxicity in lymphatic-related tissues, such as breast tissue, skin, joints, and muscles. When the lymph system become sluggish, people complain of fatigue, exhaustion, skin conditions, sore throats, puffy hands and feet, and weight gain, to name a few symptoms. The lymphatic system is so important that the symptomatic list goes on and on. Manjistha is an herb that supports the natural function of the lymphatic system, feeding cells and flushing waste from the body. Oftentimes other systems treat the liver and never treat the lymph, and as a result, symptoms remain.

8. Neem

[Neem](#) (*Azadirachta indica*) is considered to be the most powerful antiviral, antifungal, antibacterial agent in Ayurvedic medicine. Neem is the perfect choice for resolving a multitude of skin concerns. Neem has been historically used for the treatment of skin in beauty and skin care products, and we employ it in our LifeSpa Skin Care line. Neem is invaluable support for acne, eczema, skin rashes, contact dermatitis, and it can play an important role in most other skin conditions.

9. Shatavari

In my opinion, [Shatavari](#) (*Asparagus racemosus*) is the most important herb for every woman to know about. Translated it means "a woman with a hundred husbands." It's useful for teenagers moving into puberty and is extremely important during pregnancy. It is very useful for infertility concerns, and extremely effective for the symptoms of premenstrual syndrome and menopause. Shatavari also cleans the blood, rebuilds the nervous system, acts as a hormonal precursor for estrogen and progesterone and is as safe as it is effective.

10. Turmeric

[Turmeric](#) (*Curcuma longa*) is an Ayurvedic herb that has been traditionally used for inflammation, tissue repair, liver, skin, and immune support and an antioxidant. It is mostly Kapha balancing. It builds rakta (blood) and de-inflames rasa (lymph). When combined with medicinal dosages of pippili, the clinical benefits of Turmeric are increased by 25% to 50%.

John Douillard's Guide to Taking Herbs (FREE ebook)

Are you taking a few herbs and supplements that you would like to get the most out of? Now that you have figured out which herb to take, let's focus on how to adjust when and how you take them. [Our ebook on Ayurvedic herbs](#) will help to quickly boost their positive impact on your well-being.

10 Ayurvedic Secrets for Pure Energy and Contentment

Feeling fatigued? You might reach for an energy drink, dark chocolate bar or get your favorite comfort food delivered. The indulgence may be wonderfully satisfying, but that feeling, unfortunately, is short-lived...

Energy boosters can stimulate surges of energy, but in the process deeply exhausts your body. Sadly, each time your energy surges in the wake of a double espresso, it will crash into deeper depths. To dig itself out of the depths, the brain seeks an even stronger stimulant.

With a million Americans suffering from low energy, and many more complaining of always feeling tired, this is not a small problem. To find a source of lasting energy, we must address the underlying cause of tiredness.

Here, 10 Ayurvedic secrets to unearthing pure energy and contentment, without the stimulants.

1: Test Your Energy Aid

As a result of stimulating the nervous system to cultivate energy it doesn't actually have, the adrenals and other energy-producing centers of the body become depleted.

A healthy energy aid should be capable of boosting energy in the morning, and if taken before bed, it should allow for restful sleep—the goal should be rejuvenation, not stimulation. If you take the energy aid at night and it wires you and disturbs your sleep, it is a stimulant in disguise. These types of products will slowly deplete your reserves and, over time, take tolls on your energy, sleep, mood, and focus.

Here, are a few replacements for energy drinks, supplements, or aids that don't actually pay back energy debt. The herbs below offer sustainable ways to support energy throughout the day.

- [Ashwagandha](#) (*Withania somnifera*)
- [Brahmi](#) (*Centella asiatica*)
- Ojas-building foods and herbs (see below)

2: Pay Back Energy Debt with Rejuvenative Herbs and by Building Ojas

In Ayurveda, the best way to pay back energy debt is to build *ojas*. Ojas is best translated as “vitality,” and is the most refined component of digestion. Ojas builds immunity, energy, virility, radiant complexion and a joyful and loving temperament.

While in the West we think of the digestive process lasting about four hours, in Ayurveda it lasts 30 days and ojas is the final product. There are certain herbs, activities, and foods to help boost the production of ojas.

Ojas-Building Herbs

- [Ashwagandha](#) (*Withania somnifera*)
- [Shatavari](#) (*Asparagus racemosus*)

Ojas-Building Activities

- True love—giving yourself fully to your partner
- Caring for others
- Giving unconditionally without expectations

While ojas has not been identified by Western science, yet, many believe that it is actually the hormone oxytocin. Oxytocin is a bonding hormone that is secreted by the mother, the baby, and even the father during childbirth. This hormone bonds the family for life. It is produced when you give, love, bond, touch and care for others. But there is a catch—you must do these things unconditionally, with no needs or expectations.

Ojas-Building Foods

- [Ghee](#)
- Raw honey
- Organic non-homogenized, vat-pasteurized or raw milk
- Almonds
- Coconut
- Dates
- Saffron

Make an Ojas-Building Drink for Healthy Sleep and Energy

At LifeSpa, we call this drink the “Ojas Nightly Tonic.” An [organic 30-day supply](#) can be found in our online shop.

Here is the simplified recipe: Take 1/4 teaspoon each of ghee, dates, almonds, coconut flakes and saffron and bring to a boil in milk. Add raw honey and drink in the morning and before bed.

All of these ingredients have been well-studied to provide healthy sources of sustainable energy.

3: Get Off the Roller Coaster

In 1980, the government began subsidizing farmers to grow wheat and corn in an attempt to eradicate hunger. Back then, no one knew that wheat and corn would be processed in such a way that they would be even worse for you than white table sugar. The result is a population with blood sugar concerns of epidemic levels, the inability to burn fat and an insatiable desire for sweets.

The way to break this cycle is to force the body to burn fat as a source of fuel – the way it was intended to be. There are two main sources of fuel in the body: sugar (carbs) and fat. While the government was funding bread sales at less than a buck a loaf, we were also told that fats were bad. But without healthy fats in the diet to stabilize energy, and with an abundance of cheap bread and corn products on the market, blood sugar levels became unstable. Energy levels soared and crashed incessantly, until yesterday's complaints of hypoglycemia became today's pre-diabetes and extreme fatigue epidemics.

4: Reset Fat Burning Ayurveda-Style and Get your Energy Back!

Americans have lost their ability to burn fat. Inundated with added sugars in almost every product on the shelves, our bodies have adapted to burn sugar as our energy supply, when fat is our body's preferred energy source!

Of course, both work in the body as fuel – but fat is way more efficient and long-lasting compared to sugar. Sugar is quickly depleted in the body, and can leave the body over-stimulated, exhausted, craving, and storing unused sugar as fat.

Basically, we need to train our bodies to start burning fat instead of sugar. We can do so by changing our eating habits with the goal of avoiding spikes in [blood sugar](#) by implementing the fat-burning suggestions below.

A good night's sleep may be one of the best ways to lose weight and reset fat burning which, in turn, delivers long-lasting, stable energy. According to numerous studies, not getting enough sleep is an independent risk factor for weight gain.

5. Eat Three Meals a Day with No Snacks

Eating three meals per day burns fat in between each meal and through the night, which we are designed to do. Make lunch a bigger meal—studies show we digest better in the middle of the day (and this is traditional around the world). And stop snacking! Studies show we eat more food than we need. Have nothing but water between meals to force fat burning and achieve stable energy.

6. Rehydrate!

Our bodies are 60-80% water. It's essential to deliver energy to cells, reset fat-burning, and boost energy. Sip hot water throughout the day. Drink half your body weight in ounces a day.

7. Boost Digestion

Drink 8-12 oz. of water 15-30 minutes before food to pre-hydrate the stomach and fire-up digestion. Take cumin, coriander, fennel, ginger, and cardamom (LifeSpa's [Gentle Digest](#) formula) before or with meals to ignite fat burners and deliver energy to the cells. Take a short rest on your left side after your big midday meal.

8. Eat Foods for Energy

- Vegetables—leafy greens, kale, spinach, chard and watercress
- Root vegetables—beets, yams, carrots, and potatoes
- Fats—coconut oil, olive oil, ghee and fish oils
- Complex carbs—oats, barely, quinoa, millet, amaranth
- Nut and seed butters

9. Eat Balanced Meals

Aim for 1/2 veggies, 1/4 starch, 1/4 protein on your plate. For example: chicken, cooked veggies, yam, and salad with olive oil as dressing.

10. Get Fresh Air and Exercise

Take a walk, breathing through the nose, to drive more prana (life force) into the body.

Have you ever wondered why we sometimes treat the ones we love the worst? Often, we are really just mad at ourselves for letting someone else's behavior turn us into unpleasant, angry versions of ourselves. This kind of emotional behavior is part of our unconscious mind and makes up about 95% of our actions and desires as an adult.

It's Time to Drop the Old Layers of Protection

Science tells us that these unconscious behaviors are all learned in the first six years of life and they drive the same pre-programmed habits again and again in our lives. Maybe when you were three years old, someone hurt your feelings, and to survive, you needed to protect yourself. To do this, you employed the services of your mind to help you create a personality that would keep you safe. Maybe you became the rebel, class clown, a straight-A student or mom's best helper—the better you played these roles, the more you earned approval. You were safe, loved, and appreciated—who could ask for more?

We are all playing a lead role in a movie made by our minds designed to protect us from getting hurt, and we try really hard to make a movie that everyone will like. We casted ourselves in these roles when we were young, when our brains had a high degree of plasticity and impressionability, and we are often still reading the same lines from the same script in that same movie 30 or 40 years later.

Instead of pleasing our parents, we now (as adults) find ourselves pleasing our bosses, our spousees, and even our kids because the script says, "If I do these things, they will like me."

Love with Expectation Hurts

Our minds have convinced us that in order to feel loved, we have to continue to perform—even into a state of exhaustion. Soon we become resentful, because while bending over backwards for everyone else, sooner or later they will let you down. We find ourselves saying, "For crying out loud! I do so much for them – you would think they would show some appreciation!" Or, "If they would change, or just stop doing this or doing more of that, I would be willing to love them so much more." When we expect everyone in our world to change or love us back as a return on the investment we made to them, we are setting ourselves up for disappointment and disaster.



Emotional Detox: Why You Need One and How to Get Started

Write a Love Letter

Take a paper and write a love letter to someone you love fully, completely. Someone you trust with all your heart. Tell them all the ways that you love and appreciate them—really go for it. While writing it, know that they will never read this letter—it is for your eyes only. As you write it, become aware of how you feel writing this letter. You will see that as you write this letter, you will actually feel loved, appreciated, cared for, and even important.

All the things we so desperately think we need from someone else to make us feel good are things we actually experience all by ourselves when we give love fully and freely—without any concern of receiving love back in return.

“I love you... but it is no concern of yours.” This is the game the mind has been playing on us for all these years. To truly win, we must taste the vulnerability of true love by allowing ourselves to love without the need for any return on investment. “I love you... but it is no concern of yours” means I now know that what I really seek is to “be love” rather than “be loved.”

So, find that family member that both pushes your buttons and yet you love them deeply. Write them that love letter and take a risk to act on the things you love about them with no concern that they love you back, appreciate, or approve of you. Simply act on your truth—that you love them. For a moment, just forget about the little things they do that set you off. Reacting to that is not you doing you, it is you reacting to them. For this exercise, just do you!

What are ways that you let the truth of you shine and express your love freely and openly to others? How does that make you feel?

Star in Your Own Movie—And Make it a Good One

The mind has created this world of illusion to keep us safe at a time when our senses, emotions and intellect were not yet developed. When you were two, you needed this type of protection. But now, in your adult years, you can become the director of your own movie and change the script, create a new scene, and even take on that role that you were always meant to play – your real, vulnerable, loving and powerful self. Science tells us that we do retain a certain amount of brain plasticity as adults—thus, we have the power to leave our childhood patterns behind and create new ways of being—living as the true you. Living a life without access to this part of yourself can be, in due time, a very depressing experience.

Your senses will only offer temporary pleasure, and your emotions will distract you from yearning to be yourself for only so long until, sooner or later, you have to step into this new role. The problem is that the mind has convinced you that you can't do this. “If I risk being myself fully and love everyone unconditionally and they don't love me back, I will be hurt and devastated. It is way too risky. Just play it safe and stuff those delicate feelings.”



Almost everyone has felt the impact of emotional stress. We commonly feel it in our guts—kids get tummy aches, while adults get butterflies, nervous stomachs, constipation, diarrhea, heart burn, and irritable and inflammatory bowel conditions.

Emotional stress happens when normal, healthy feelings of sadness, grief, worry, anger, and more become overwhelming, affecting your health, relationships, and self-esteem.

Sometimes if may feel as if your responses to stressful events come out of nowhere or are on autopilot. Studies suggest that 95% of the things we do and say, particularly when we are stressed, come from early childhood impressions. Our responses can become habitual, creating patterns of emotional behavior. These emotional responses can get stored as molecules of emotions in fat and muscle cells. Then, when you're exposed to a familiar stress, the emotions get released, creating another way our responses can be on autopilot, and overwhelming.

Because these molecules of emotion are an important part of our safety and survival mechanism, they often become the way we interface with the world. It's common to constantly react to situations in an emotionally triggered way that we don't seem to have any control over. We often find ourselves way down that familiar emotional road, such as

having an outburst, after the damage has already been done.

This is why we need the occasional emotional detox—to clear out stored emotions and start with a clean slate, which allows us to think and respond more clearly, in the moment, and from the heart, rather than the mind or body. But first, let's cover what makes us emotionally sick.

The Biology of Emotional Stress

Have you ever had someone emotionally dump on you? Have you ever emotionally dumped on someone else? Often they feel the same--yucky. The interesting thing about being wrong or being right in a conflict is that neither feels that great. No one feels good being yelled at, and after yelling at someone, you usually regret it.

And either way it's stressful. Stress not only prompts old childhood patterns and stored emotions, it triggers your primal fight or flight response. Once designed for life-or-death situations, this sympathetic nervous system reaction can now kick in when you're in conflict with a partner, are overwhelmed by work, or can't deal with traffic.

In these situations, the body sends messages to the brain's amygdala, or processing center. If the amygdala determines that there's a threat, it tells the hypothalamus, which in turn tells the adrenals to call stress hormones, like adrenalin, into action. Your heart beats faster. Your breathing becomes quicker and blood sugar and fats are released into your blood stream for fast energy.

Stress and Neurotransmitters

There are other impacts of stress that directly affect your gut. Fight or flight responses can slow down or disrupt digestion so energy is spent instead on threat defenses, causing stomach pain and gastrointestinal disorders.

The digestive system is governed by its very own nervous system, called the enteric nervous system. Coincidentally, this is another part of your nervous system also responsible for managing stress. The enteric nervous system is often called the “second brain” because it produces and uses the same neurotransmitters, or chemical messengers, as the brain. Studies show that 95% of serotonin, a primary neurotransmitter linked to mood and processing emotional stress, is actually produced and stored in the gut.

Under severe emotional stress (like in the case of yelling or being yelled at), neurotransmitters such as serotonin are made in huge quantities to help you deal with the event. But serotonin transporters can't keep up with the serotonin surge and excess serotonin gets trapped in your gut, unable to help you manage stress. While the right amount of serotonin can help stabilize mood, researchers believe that excess serotonin in the gut irritates mucus membranes, causing inflammatory bowel conditions like Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS).

Emotional Stress and Ayurveda

This science I discuss above was something ancient Ayurvedic practitioners understood. Nearly 3,000-year-old Ayurvedic texts suggest that the nervous system, along with stress and other emotions, originates in the gut. Emotions are carried from the gut through mental channels to the heart and the brain, prompting emotional responses such as heart-based love and compassion or mind-based fear and anger. Whether you react with love and compassion or anger and fear depends on many factors, including your experiences and trauma, particularly from childhood and your nutritional and digestive health.

In Ayurveda, the cause of all disease is when the mind and emotions overshadow the experience of the heart, or soul (read oneness with all around you). In other words, we begin to react to life through the filter of fear and anger rather than love and compassion.

The whole purpose of Ayurveda is to help balance the body and detoxify it so it can regain the clarity necessary to choose love and compassion over than anger and fear.

Simple right?

Well, while the task at hand may sound complicated, Ayurveda does have a simple way to release stored emotional stress and cleanse the body and mind of old behavioral patterns.

How to Release Old Emotional Patterns

Unravelling these old destructive patterns of behavior is actually quite easy with an Ayurvedic detox. Ayurveda never just detoxifies the body—treatments always include a digestive reset, a healing of the intestinal lining, a scrub of the liver and lymph, a fat soluble toxic substance detox, and a release and transformation of old unwanted patterns of emotional behavior.

There are three logical steps to take to change emotional stress:

1. Heal your gut so that it can respond to stress in a strong and healthy way and be a better transporter of neurotransmitters.
2. Convince your body and mind that it is safe enough to release old toxic molecules of emotion from fat cells. Ayurvedic cleanses use ghee to force the body to enter into fat metabolism. Fat is the body's calm fuel, versus sugar, which is the body's stimulating fuel. The first step to burning the calm fuel and releasing stored molecules of emotion is to burn fat. In the process of releasing fat soluble molecules of emotions, toxic fat soluble chemicals will be released as well. Yup, we store environmental toxics like pesticides and preservatives in our fat cells. Remember, they were stored there because the body lost its ability to break them down and detoxify them through normal and appropriate detox channels.
3. Take action to transform toxic molecules of emotion once they are released from storage. The key to transforming old emotions is to take action based on your truth rather than what your mind has convinced you is true. Your mind is quite attached to the status quo, so to access the truth, we have to become more self-aware. From there we can take meaningful action.

Be careful when you detox. Make sure the detox you choose resets digestive and detox pathways, or you may find that you only moved the fat soluble toxic substances from one fat cell to another.

Prepare for an Emotional Detox with This Ayurvedic Self-Inquiry Practice

One the main components of Ayurvedic psychology is called critical analysis, or self-inquiry, during a cleanse, when the body shifts into a fat-burning state and molecules of emotion, also called mental ama, are released. A self-inquiry practice at this time gives us access to these emotions and the ability to witness them from a non-emotional, objective place. It's from here, with this kind of self-awareness of unwanted habits, that we can make transformational changes.



Detox with the Colorado Cleanse

1. Ask yourself: What would I change about my partner? Make a list. (This doesn't have to be a significant other - you can focus on a family member, friend or colleague).
2. Pick one item off the list and the next time this person does the thing that bugs you, refrain from reacting immediately.
3. Let yourself cool down for 10-15 minutes before you say anything. While chilling, think of three things you love or appreciate about this person.
4. Now take action based on the truth: Express your love (inspired by the three things you just identified) with words of affection or an act of kindness.
5. Sit for a minute or two and evaluate how you feel after expressing love, kindness, or affection.

Are you still irritated?

Do you feel any joy or happiness?

Do you feel loved even though your partner hasn't changed their behavior?

If you feel better after this exercise, then you are on the road to enjoying better relationships. We often say to ourselves, I would love them so much more if they would change that behavior. In this exercise they didn't change at all yet you were filled up. You felt better and more loved by them without them changing anything.

Podcast Episode on Emotional Detox

Listen to LifeSpa Founder John Douillard discuss the emotional benefits of detoxing and resetting your digestive and metabolic systems. [Listen now.](#)

Sign Up for LifeSpa's Free Natural Detox Training

The truth is that we always have a choice. We can choose to wait until those around us change or we can choose to practice compassion and self-love and take responsibility for our own emotional responses and health.

Learn how to reset your digestion, release molecules of toxic emotions, and boost fat metabolism in my free [Natural Detox Training](#).

The [Colorado Cleanse](#) is a two week, at-home, Ayurvedic digestive detox and lymph cleanse program. Unlike other fad cleanses, the Colorado Cleanse is rooted in sound medical science and the ancient cleansing wisdom of Ayurveda. This kitchari cleanse has been developed by Dr. Douillard through decades of clinical practice with thousands of successful cleansers, many of whom are now its biggest fans.

Where fad cleanses emphasize extreme fasting and dangerously unbalanced diets, the Colorado Cleanse relies on a gentle, simple kitchari diet that allows the body to burn fat without hunger pains.

And where fad cleanses trigger blood sugar crashes, starvation-mode cravings and immediate binging afterward, the Colorado Cleanse balances the blood sugar, allowing the body to enjoy the contented blissful energy of natural fat-metabolism, while you continue working and going about your daily life.

The Colorado Cleanse is unique because it repairs the body's detox and digestive channels before starting the detox. Cleansing without this preparation can move toxins from one fat cell to another, which defeats the purpose of cleansing and often manifests as stubborn digestive weakness and symptoms of lymphatic congestion.

The Colorado Cleanse can be done while working and leading your regular lifestyle.

What does the Colorado Cleanse involve?

During the two-week Colorado Cleanse, you will do a daily practice of yoga, meditation, and breathing exercises, 12 minutes of aerobic exercise, take Ayurvedic herbal formulas that support the detox process, and eat a special diet. There are three phases of the cleanse.

Sign up for the Colorado Cleanse [here](#).



Welcome to LifeSpa!

PHASE 1

To prep your body to flush deep-set toxins from their storage sites, we first make sure that your detox channels are functional by following an allergen-free, whole foods diet, eating three specific foods each day, and taking the specified herbal formulas.

This phase focuses on:

- Balancing the blood sugar and restoring the intestinal mucosal barrier
- De-stagnating the lymphatic system
- De-congesting the liver, thinning the bile, and preparing to detox

PHASE 2

During this phase, you'll eat a simplified diet of non-fat kitchari—a nourishing rice and bean dish prepared in a way to help re-boot your digestion. There are three meal options to choose from. You'll also be drinking increasing amounts of ghee each morning, performing the ancient Ayurvedic process of oleation. Special self-inquiry exercises are employed in this phase to help bring to the surface and release old emotions, patterns, and behaviors that store in the fat cells. Phase 2 is closed with a gentle laxative therapy on the evening of day 11.

This phase focuses on:

- Resetting fat metabolism.
- Flushing the liver and detoxing fat-soluble chemicals, pesticides, and preservatives.
- Recognizing and releasing destructive emotions, patterns, and behaviors.

PHASE 3

After Phase 2, you will return to the Phase 1 diet and add in a protocol that will reset your digestion and boost your digestive fire.

POST CLEANSE

After the cleanse, reset your upper digestive strength, the lack of which is the most common cause of digestive issues. A long-term well-being plan is provided during this post-cleanse phase.

If you liked this ebook, we recommend that you explore all of our free ebooks, as well as our online courses, particularly:

- [The 28-Day Ayurveda Challenge](#) (eCourse): This month-long course will jumpstart you on your personal Ayurvedic wellness journey. Perfect for beginners!
- [Dr. John's Guide to Taking Herbs](#) (eBook): Discover which Ayurvedic herbs are best for you.
- [Short Home Cleanse](#) (eBook): Thousands of our customers do this cleanse each year. Try it for yourself with this simple guide.
- [The 3-Season Diet Guide](#) (free monthly guide): Get monthly eating tips and recipes delivered to your inbox.





About Dr. John Douillard

Dr. John Douillard, DC, CAP is a globally recognized leader in the fields of natural health, Ayurveda, and sports medicine. He is the creator of LifeSpa.com, the leading Ayurvedic health and wellness resource on the web, with thousands of free articles, eBooks, and videos. With 10M+ YouTube views and over 105k newsletter subscribers, LifeSpa is evolving the way Ayurveda is understood around the world, joining ancient wisdom with

modern science. Former Director of Player Development for the New Jersey Nets NBA team, Dr. John is also a repeat guest on the Dr. Oz show. Author of seven health books (including bestsellers *Eat Wheat* and *The 3-Season Diet*), seven online courses (including Yoga Journal's *Ayurveda 201 on Ayurvedic psychology*), he directs LifeSpa Ayurvedic Clinic, the 2013 Holistic Wellness Center of the Year in Boulder, CO