



DIPLOMA

in

Ayurvedic Lifestyle & Nutrition

Consultant Course

Module 2

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## THE TRIDOSHA CONCEPT

## The Tridosha Concept

According to *Ayurveda*, the human body is composed of three fundamental elements or categories called *dosha* (subtle elements), *dhatu*s (tissues) and *malas* (waste).

### Dosha and the elements

The subtle elements are called *doshas*. The *doshas* (lit. Faults) are composed of all five *mahabhutas* (elements), but one or the other of the *mahabhutas* is predominant.

Dosha	<u>Vata</u>	<u>Pitta</u>	<u>Kapha</u>
<b><i>Mahabhuta</i></b>	<i>Akasa+Vayu</i>	<i>Tejas+Jala</i>	<i>Prithvi+Jala</i>
(Element)	(Ether+Air)	(Fire+Water)	(Earth+Water)

Ether, Air, Fire, Water and Earth, the five basic elements manifest in the human body as three basic principles or humours, known as the *tridosha*. From the Ether and Air or *Akasa* and *Vayu* elements the bodily air principle called *vata* is manifested, this principle is called the *vata dosha*. The Fire and Water or *Tejas* and *Jala* elements manifest together in the body as the fire principle called *pitta*. The Earth and Water elements or *Prithvi* and *Jala* manifest in the body as the bodily water humour known as *kapha*.

### **Dosha and functions in the mind, body and consciousness**

These three elements, *vata-pitta-kapha*, govern all the biological, psychological and physio-pathological functions of the body, mind and consciousness. They act as basic constituents and protective barriers for the body in its normal physiological condition. When out of balance they contribute to the disease processes.

The *tridosha* are responsible for the arising of natural urges and for individual preferences in foods, their flavours, temperatures and so on. They govern the creation, maintenance and destruction of bodily tissue, and the elimination of waste products from the body. The *tridosha* are also responsible for psychological phenomena, including such emotions as fear, anger and greed. They are responsible for the highest order of human emotions such as understanding, compassion and love. Thus, the *tridosha* are the foundation of the psychosomatic existence of man.

### **Determination of constitution**

The basic constitution of each individual is determined at conception. At the time of fertilisation, the single male unit, the spermatozoon, unites with the single female element, the ovum. At the moment of this union, the permutations and combinations of bodily air, fire and water that manifests in the parents' bodies determine the constitution of the individual.

### Seven types of constitution

In general, there are seven types of constitutions:

1. *Vata*
2. *Pitta*
3. *Kapha*
4. *Vata-Pitta*
5. *Pitta-Kapha*
6. *Vata-Kapha*
7. *Vata-Pitta-Kapha*

Among these seven general types, there are innumerable subtle variations that depend upon the percentage of *vata-pitta-kapha* elements in the constitution.

### Changes in the constitution

The constitution is called *prakruti* in Sanskrit, a term meaning "nature", "creativity" or "the first creation". In the body, the first expression of the basic five elements is the constitution. The basic constitution of an individual remains unaltered during the lifetime, as it is genetically determined. The combinations of elements present at birth remain constant. However, the combination of elements that governs the continuous psycho-pathological changes in the body alters in response to changes in the environment.

Throughout life, there is a ceaseless interaction between the internal and external environment. The external environment comprises the cosmic forces (macrocosm), while the internal forces (microcosm) are governed by the principles of *vata-pitta-*

*kapha*. A basic principle of healing in Ayurveda holds that one may create balance in the internal forces working in the individual. By altering diet and habits of living this counteracts changes in his external development.

### **Basic understanding of Tridosha.**

According to *Ayurveda*, the first requirement for healing oneself and others is a clear understanding of the three *dosha*. The concept of *vata-pitta-kapha* is unique to *Ayurveda* and it holds the potential for revolutionising the healing systems of the West. However, the concept of the three principles and the Sanskrit words, *vata-pitta-kapha*, are very difficult to translate into western terms.

### **Vata**

*Vata* is the principle of movement. That which moves is called *vata*. Therefore, *vata* may be translated as the bodily air principle. However, the element of Air in the external atmosphere is not the same as the air in the body. Bodily air, or *vata*, may be characterised as the subtle energy that governs biological movement. This biological principle of movement engenders all subtle changes in the metabolism. *Vata* governs breathing, blinking of the eyelids, movements in the muscles and tissues, pulsations in the heart and all expansion and contraction. Also to be considered are the movements of cytoplasm, cell membranes and movement of single impulses in nerve cells. *Vata* also governs such sensations, feelings and emotions as nervousness, fear, anxiety, pain, tremors and spasms. The large intestine, pelvic, bones, skin, ears and thighs are the seats of *vata*. If the body develops an excess of *vata*, it will accumulate in these areas.

## **Pitta**

*Pitta* is translated as fire, although the term does not literally mean “fire.” The fire of a candle or the fire in a fireplace may be seen; however, the bodily heat-energy, the *pitta-dosha*, which manifests as metabolism is not visible in this way. *Pitta* governs digestion, absorption, assimilation, nutrition, metabolism, body temperature, skin coloration, the lustre of the eyes; and also intelligence and understanding. Psychologically, *pitta* arouses anger, hate and jealousy. The small intestine, stomach, sweat glands, blood, fat, eyes and skin are the seats of *pitta*. *Pitta* is formed from the elements fire and water.

## **Kapha**

The translation of *Kapha* is biological water, and this bodily principle is formed from the two elements, Earth and Water. *Kapha* cements the elements of the body, providing the material for physical structure. This *dosha* maintains body resistance. Water is the main constituent of *kapha*, and this bodily water is responsible physiologically for biological strength and natural resistance in the body. *Kapha* lubricates the joints, provides moisture to the skin, helps heal wounds, fills the spaces in the body, and gives biological strength vigour and stability. *Kapha* also support's memory retention, gives energy to the heart and lungs and maintains immunity. *Kapha* is present in the chest, throat, head, sinuses, nose, mouth, and stomach, also joints, cytoplasm, plasma, and liquid secretions of the body such as mucous. Psychologically, *kapha* is responsible for emotions of attachment, greed and long standing envy; it is also expressed in tendencies toward calmness, forgiveness and love. The chest is the seat of *kapha*.

A balance among the *tridosha* is necessary for health. For example, the air principle kindles the bodily fire, but water is necessary to control fire, otherwise the bodily fire would burn the tissues. *Vata* moves *kapha* and *pitta*, since *kapha* and *pitta* are immobile.

Together the *tridosha* governs all the metabolic<sup>1</sup> activities: anabolism (*kapha*) catabolism (*vata*), and metabolism (*pitta*). When *vata* is out of balance, the metabolism will be disturbed, resulting in excess catabolism, which is the breakdown or deterioration process in the body. When anabolism is greater than catabolism, there is an increased rate of growth and repair of the organs and tissues. Excess *pitta* disturbs metabolism, excess *kapha* increases the rate of anabolism and excess *vata* creates emaciation (catabolism).

In childhood, anabolism and the *kapha* elements are predominant, since this is the time of greatest physical growth. In adulthood, metabolism and the element of *pitta* are most apparent, because at this stage the body is mature and stable. In old age, catabolism and *vata* are the most in evidence, as the body begins to deteriorate.

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<sup>1</sup> Metabolism is the chemical processes occurring within a living cell or organism that are necessary for the maintenance of life. In metabolism some substances are broken down to yield energy for vital processes while other substances, necessary for life, are synthesized.

Catabolism and anabolism are subcategories of metabolism.

Catabolism - The metabolic breakdown of complex molecules into simpler ones, often resulting in a release of energy.

Anabolism - The phase of metabolism in which simple substances are synthesized into the complex materials of living tissue.



Constitution Chart.

General Appearance.

Vata	Pitta	Kapha
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Face	Thin/tall/petite/Bony	Medium build	Large/round
Chest	Flat	Medium	Rounded/large
Eyes	Thin/long/sleepy	Penetrating/sharp	Round/large
Nose	Long/uneven	Rounded	Large/round
Tongue	Long/pointed	Medium/shiny	Large/thick
Ears	Tiny/large	Medium	Large/thick
Eyebrows	Hairy/grey	Rainbow shape/medium	Thick/bushy
Colour of eyes	Muddy/dry	Clear	Clear/watery
Chin	Pointed/sharp	Symmetrical	Rounded
Teeth	Brittle/crooked/uneven	Small	Large/white
Facial hair	None	Shiny/scant	Thick/dark
Facial skin	Dry/wrinkles	Oily/shiny/red/warm	Moist/oily/smooth/cool
Lips	Thin/dry	Medium/red	Thick/fleshy
Shape of Face	Pointy	Medium	Round

## 2. Physiological Makeup.

Vata	Pitta	Kapha
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Appetite	Irregular/erratic	Regular/sharp	Frequent/dissatisfied
Digestion	Quick/flatulent	Quick/acid producing	Slow/ama producing
Metabolism	Quick/absorbs little	Fast/absorbs well	Slow/absorbs well
Elimination	Infrequent/dry/constipated	Frequent/loose	Regular/slow/bulky/moist
Menses	Irregular	Regular	Regular/long cycle
Blood Flow	Light/short periods	Heavy/5 days	Heavy/5-7 days
P.M.T.	Weepy/emotional	Angry/aggressive	Lethargic/sleepy
Fertility	Low	Average	High
Sex/Libido	Frequent/quick	Premeditated/organized	Prolonged/caring

### 3. Mental Aspect.

Vata	Pitta	Kapha
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Mind	Quick imaginative	Focused/productive	Slow/steady
	Quick	Efficient	Slow
Memory	Short term/photographic	Sharp	Slow
Stress level	Short term	Long term	Hardly ever
Mental immunity	Impatient	Intolerant	Patient/tolerant
Intelligence	Moderate	Very good	Slow/steady



### 4. Emotional State.

Vata	Pitta	Kapha
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Anxiety	Anger	Lazy
Creative	Focused	Long term planning
Forgetful	Alert	Strong memory
Disorganised	Organised	Organised
Insecure	Jealous	Relaxed
Panicky	Agitated	Calm
Intolerance to pain	Tolerant to pain	Good pain threshold
Open/Social	Private	Fairly private
Lacks will power	Good will power	Strong will power

Mental Constitution Chart

	S R T	<i>Sattva</i>	<i>Rajas</i>	<i>Tamas</i>
Spiritual practice		Regular	Irregular	Never
Spiritual Power		For humanity	Selfish	Destructive
Mental clarity		Easy	Moderate	Difficult
Mental peace		Good	Moderate	Rare
Satisfaction		Usually satisfied	Partly satisfied	Seldom
Behaviour		Gentle	Aggressive	Destructive
Communication		Good	Controlling	Difficult
Commitment		Total	Partial	Never
Concentration		Good	Fluctuating	Poor
Will power		Good	Variable	Low
Knowledge		Good	Variable	Low
Memory		Good	Variable	Low
Forgiveness		Easy	Difficult	Poor, holds grudge
Cleanliness		Good	Moderate	Poor
Sexual activity		Infrequent, spiritual	Variable	Heavy
Donations		Anonymous	With name, Attachment	For Gain
Depression		Rarely	Moderate	Often, Prolonged
Emotions		Honest	Denial	Suppressed
Attachment		Little	Moderate	Much
Fear		Rarely	Moderate	Often, Prolonged
Anger		Rarely	Moderate	Often, Prolonged
Greed		None	Moderate	Often, Prolonged

	S R T	<i>Sattva</i>	<i>Rajas</i>	<i>Tamas</i>
Confusion		Rarely	Moderate	Often, Prolonged
Pride		Little	Moderate	Much
Hate		None	Moderate	Much
Grief		Rarely	Moderate	Often, Prolonged
Love		Unconditional, Universal	Selfish love	Obsesses
Sensory perception		Clear	Agitated	Interrupted
Speech		Clear, Calm, Peaceful	Fast, Restless, Agitated	Slow, Monotonous
Sleep		Light, Sound, Alert sleep	Interrupted, Disturbed	Deep
Upon waking		Happy, Fresh	Disturbed, Worried	Drowsy, Heavy feeling
Physical activities		Moves with awareness	Hyperactive, Moments	Sluggish, Dull movements
Exercise		Gentle Yoga, Walking, Swimming, Daily exercise	Aggressive, Occasional exercise	Heavy, Difficult, Hates to exercise
Facial expression		Calm, Content, Happy	Mixed	Dullness
Eyes		Calm, Clear	Restless, Active	Dull, Gloomy
Diet		Vegetarian, Loves all 6 tastes in moderation, 1-2 meals a day	Eats meat some times, Loves hot spicy food, 2- 3 meals a day	Heavy meat eater, Loves sweets, cheeses in excess, 4-5 meals a day
Digestion		Good, Normal	Variable	Slow
Elimination		Regular	Irregular	Sluggish
Drug & Alcohol		None	Social, Occasionally	Frequently
TOTAL				

### Vata, Pitta, & Kapha – lifecycle

*Vata dosha* is predominant in old age (after sixty years) in the afternoon (3 to 7 p.m.), late night (2 to 6 a.m.), and at the end of digestion of food. *Pitta* is predominant in middle age (20 to sixty years), midday (11 to 4 p.m.) mid-night (12 to 2 a.m.) and during the middle part of digestion: *Kapha* is predominant in early age (from the day of birth up to sixteen years), in the forenoon (6a.m. to 10a.m.), early part of the night (5 to 11 p.m.) and early period of digestion.

### Vata, Pitta, & Kapha – health and disease

*Vata*, *pitta* and *kapha* are the three important *doshas*. These are the material substances having *pramana* (quantity), *guna* (qualities/properties) and *karma* (functions). Each of these has a normal limit in respect of its quantity, qualities and functions. This normal (*prakruti*) is conducive for maintenance of health (*arogya*). This normality of *doshas* is not stable and undergoes change either to *vrddhi* (increase) or *ksaya/ksina* (decrease) by the effect of age, climate, season, day and night, food and the activities of men. Increase or decrease, are both *vikruti* (abnormal). Such abnormality may be in respect of either: *pramana* (quantity), *guna* (qualities), or *karma* (functions) or all together. Abnormality of *doshas* (*dosha vaisamya*) is not conducive for health but gives rise to diseases. A mild degree of abnormality is constantly going on due to the effect of climate, food and activities that are un-avoidable and the body will have to become accustomed to it. On the other hand, a great degree of abnormality that occurs as a result of wealthy and un-accustomed food, improper food habits, abnormal kinds of activities etc. brings about great changes in the tissues of the body and gives rise to diseases. Hence abnormality of the *doshas* (*dosha vaisamya*) is categorically termed as *roga* (disease). Between these two - *vrddhi* and *ksaya*

(increase and decrease) it is *vrddhi* (increase) that is more powerful and capable of producing all types of diseases, whereas *ksaya* (decrease) is of poor strength and can only produce mild disorders.

### Vata, Pitta, & Kapha – seats

The *tri-doshas* of *vata*, *pitta*, and *kapha* are present all over the body residing in the *dhatu*s (tissues), in the *paramanus* of the *dhatu*s (cells of tissues). In that state due to their quantity being minute they cannot easily be recognised physically. However, their presence can be recognised by their functions. In some places of the body they are present in more quantity and so such places are called *sthana* (seat or abode). Hence the broad demarcation as follows

- area below the umbilicus is the *sthana* (seat) of *vata*,
- areas around the umbilicus is the *sthana* of *pitta* and
- area above the umbilicus is the *sthana* of *kapha*.

Even in these areas some particular organs are enumerated as *visista sthana* (special seats) for each *dosha*.

## VATA DOSHA

### Vata Guna (attributes)

Dry, light, cold, rough, subtle, mobile, clear.

### Vata sites

Generally, the sites of *vata* are in the colon, hips, ears, bones, and skin.

The primary site is the colon.

### Comparison with *Pitta* and *Kapha* sites

Generally, the sites of *Pitta* are in the small intestine, digestive fire, digestive acid, sweat, sebaceous gland, blood, lymph, eyes

The primary site is the stomach

Generally, the sites of *Kapha* are in the chest, lungs, throat, head, sinus, nasal passage, mouth, tongue, saliva, fatty tissue

The primary site is the chest

### Vata Kriya – functions of Vata generally

- a. Conception (bonding of ovum and sperm)
- b. Implantation
- c. Growth of foetus
- d. Inhalation & exhalation
- e. Creation of seven tissues (*dhatu*)



- f. Hearing
- g. Touch / touch sensation
- h. Stimulation of digestive fire
- i. Control of mental activities
- j. Stimulation and function of nervous system

**Vata imbalances generally (inexhaustive list)**

- a. Aggravated *Vata* causes disorders such as anxiety, insomnia, dry skin/eczema, weight loss
- b. Alleviated (or reduced) *Vata* results in conditions such as chronic fatigue/ ME, excessive sleep, lethargy, depression
- c. Vitiating (or impaired/corrupted) *Vata* can cause paralysis, motor neuron disease, dementia, bloating

**Causes of *Vata* imbalances (hidden verse)**

NB. Please note the use of the word 'drug' refers to food as food is considered a drug / medicine in *Ayurveda*

- a. Habitual use of drugs having identical properties to *Vata dosha* such as dry, cold, light or rough foods
- b. Inadequate quantities of food; fasting; excessive weight loss
- c. Excessive exercise (aerobic)
- d. Inadequate sleep; not sleeping at night and sleeping during the day
- e. Incorrect habits such as improper eating and sleeping times

- f. Excessive talking and laughing; keeping bad company
- g. Blood letting
- h. Prolonged exposure to loud music or loud sounds
- i. Suppression of natural urges such as hunger, thirst, urination, elimination, yawning, burping, flatulence, accidents, obstruction of *marma* points<sup>2</sup>
- j. Horse riding
- k. Excessive fast travel (trains, planes and automobiles!)
- l. Excessive exposure to the sun
- m. Excessive meditation; isolation
- n. Exposure to cold and windy conditions
- o. Excessive thinking; excessive sadness
- p. Excessive concentration; excessive exposure to electronic media (not in the original text!)

### Symptoms of *Vata* imbalance

- a. Hyperactivity
- b. Involuntary body tremors
- c. Involuntary rapid muscle movements such as rapid blinking
- d. Cramps
- e. Palpitations
- f. Fatigue
- g. Chills; poor circulation
- h. Excessive talking; talking too fast

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<sup>2</sup> *Marma*, meaning 'hidden' or 'secret' – a *marma* point is a juncture on the body where two or more types of tissue meet, such as muscles, veins, ligaments, bones or joints as well as the intersection of the vital life force and *prana* or breath.

- i. Feeling suffocated
- j. Tinnitus
- k. Bloating; fluid retention
- l. Miscarriage; infertility; light periods or loss of periods
- m. Lack of sperm
- n. Weak legs, dizziness
- o. Runny nose
- p. Stomach noises; difficulty in swallowing; dryness of throat; constipation

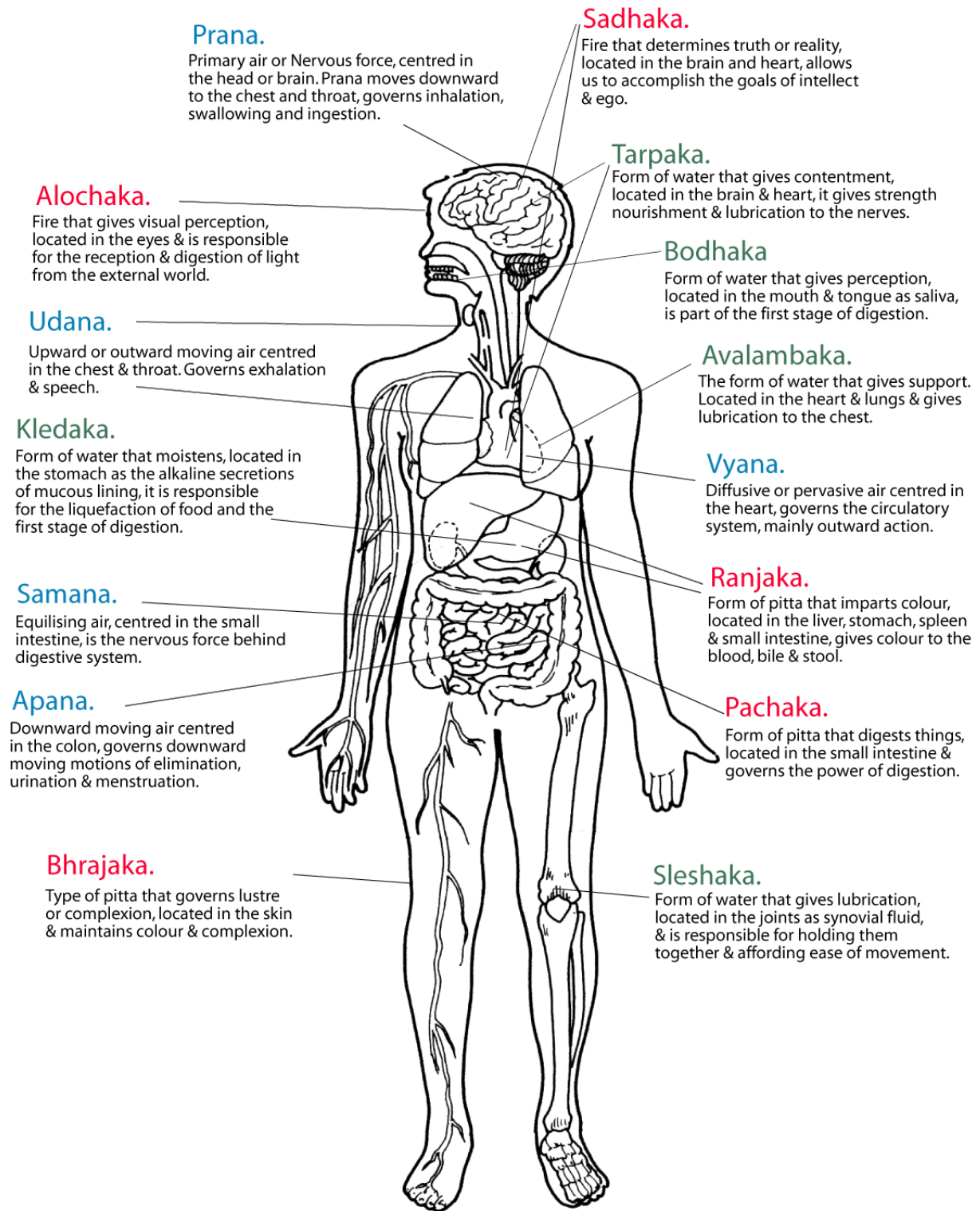
### Treatment of Vata imbalances

- a. Oleation (internal and external) - application and massage using warm oils
- b. Sudation – mild sweating through exposure to sunlight or steam bath
- c. Mild purification therapies (emesis and purgation – drinking ghee with medication or ingestion of triphala - moisturise the internal body)
- d. Ingestion of foods which are sweet, sour and salty (mashed potato, broths, soups, butter, milk, creamy foods)
- e. Warm oil bath (applying oil to the body before bathing)
- f. Massage of the body
- g. Wrapping the body with clothes to encourage sweat
- h. Threatening (stimulating treatments such as sudden loud noises or use of mantra)
- i. Wine or tonics prepared from cornflour and jaggery (such as *arishta* for the body to warm up)
- j. Oil based enema
- k. Drugs of hot potency (in order to induce heat such as ginger or black pepper)

- I. Comfortable activities such as singing, listening to light music, walks, parks, children, non-competitive activities

**Pancha Vata, Pitta, Kapha**

**The Five Types of Vata, Pitta & Kapha.**



### The Five types of Vata, (Udana, Prana, Samana, Vyana, Apana).

The throat is the seat of *udana vata*, heart is of *prana vata*, stomach and small intestines are of *samana vata*, large intestine and rectum is the seat of *apana vata*, and the entire body (head, trunk and extremities) are of *vyana vata*.

**Udana** (*vata*) is so named because it moves upwards and initiates acts like speaking, singing etc. when it becomes aggravated it gives rise to diseases of organs above the shoulders especially.

**Prana** (*vata*) moves about in the mouth and sustains the body by attending to functions such as entry of food (swallowing) inside and maintenance of life; when aggravated gives rise to hiccups, dyspnoea and such other diseases.

**Samana** (*vata*) moves inside the *amasaya* and *pakvasaya* (stomach, small and large intestines) associating with digestive fire, it cooks (helps to cook) the food and separates the products produced after digestion (essence and waste), when aggravated it gives rise to weak digestive power, diarrhoea, abnormal tumours etc.

**Apana** (*vata*) is localised in the *pakvasaya* (large intestine and rectum) and expels flatus, faeces, urine, semen, and menstrual blood downward (out), when aggravated gives rise to many troubles, some disease of the urinary bladder, rectum etc, disorders of semen, diabetes and disorders of *vyana* and *apana vata* aggravation.

**Vyana** (*vata*) moves all over the body, causes circulation of *rasa dhatu*, excretion of sweat and blood, attends to the five kind of actions such as *praspandana* (throbbing), *udvahana* (carrying, lifting) *purana* (filling), *Virechana* (emptying) and *dharana* (supporting), these five actions pertaining to nabhas (akasa); so also gati (forward

movement) *apaksepana* (downward movement), *utksepa* (upward movement), *nimesa* (closing the eyelid), and *unmesa* (opening the eyelid) etc. and thus is responsible for all kinds of actions of the body. When aggravated it generally produces diseases of the whole body.

When the five (vata) become aggravated together, they can destroy the body.

### The five types of pitta (Pachaka, Ranjaka, Sadhaka, Alochaka, Bhrajaka)

*Pitta* is *usna* (hot, heat producing), *drava* (fluid), *pita* (yellow), *nila* (blue), has more of *sattva guna*, *sara* (laxative), *katu* (pungent/bitter), *laghu* (light in weight), *snigdha* (unctuous), and *amla* (sour) after *paka* (digestion).

*Pachaka*, *Ranjaka*, *Sadhaka*, *Alochaka* and *Bhrajaka* – are the names of *pitta* according to their seat; in that order it resides in the *agnyasaya* (stomach), *yakrt-pliha* (liver-spleen), *Hridaya* (heart), *locana dvaya* (two eyes), and *tvaca* (skin).

***Pacaka*** (*pitta*), cooks the ingested food, enhances the strength of the other *agnis* (fire like agencies) and separates *rasa* (essence) *mutra* (urine), and *purisa* (faeces, waste products).

***Ranjaka*** (*pitta*) converts *rasa* (*rasadhatu*-first *dhatu* or tissue) into *sonita* (blood).

***Sadhaka*** (*pitta*) makes for intelligence, courage and power of memory.

***Alochaka*** (*pitta*) is the cause of sight, (perception, vision).

***Bhrajaka*** (*pitta*) is responsible for complexion (exhibition of colour) of the skin.

**The five types of Kapha. (Kledaka, Avalambaka, Bodhaka, Tarpaka, Sleshaka).**

*Slesma (kapha)* is *sveta* (white), *guru* (heavy), *snigdha* (unctuous), *pichilla* (slimy, slippery) *sitila* (cold, causes cold) has more *tamo-guna*, *svada* (sweet) and becomes *lawana* (salt) when half-cooked (improperly processed inside the body).

*Kledaka, Avalambaka, Bodhaka, Tarpaka, Sleshaka* – are the names of *kapha* according to their different seats; *amasya* (stomach), *Hridaya* (heart, chest), *kantha* (throat), *siras* (head) and *sandhis* (bony joints) are the seats of *slesma (kapha)* respectively.

***Kledaka*** (*kapha*) moistens food, bestows strength to other *kapha*, as well as their seats, by the function of *udaka* water.

***Avalambaka*** (*kapha*) associating with *rasa dhatu* support the *Hridaya* (heart) by its own strength, it also supports *trika* (upper back).

***Bodhaka*** (*kapha*) and *rasana* (tongue) are both *saumya* (possess moist and cold properties) and exist together, since man understands *rasa* (taste of substances put into the mouth) hence both are considered the same).

***Tarpaka*** (*kapha*) satisfies the *indriyas* (sense organs) by bestowing oleation (unctuousness, greasiness).

***Sleshaka*** (*kapha*) supports the *sandhis* (bony joints) by lubricating.



Pancha Vata according to Astanga Hridayam Vol. 1Pancha Vata table

Sub type	Governing Element	Primary Sites	Functions	Direction
<i>Prana</i>	Ether	Head, Brain	<b>Purana:</b> to fill the space	Downward, Inward
<i>Udana</i>	Air	Diaphragm, Throat	<b>Udvahana:</b> moves upwards	Upward
<i>Samana</i>	Fire	Small Intestine, Navel	<b>Viveka:</b> isolation, separation, splitting	Linear
<i>Apana</i>	Earth	Colon, Pelvic Cavity	<b>Dharana:</b> holding	Downward, Outward
<i>Vyana</i>	Water	Heart, Whole Body	<b>Praspandanam:</b> pulsation, throbbing	Circular

## **Pancha Vata**

### a. *Prana*

- i. forward or primary air or nervous force
- ii. centred in the head or brain
- iii. moves downward to the chest and throat
- iv. supports the mind, heart, sense organs and intelligence
- v. governs inhalation, swallowing and ingestion, expectoration, sneezing, belching, swallowing food.

### b. *Udana*

- i. upward or outward moving air
- ii. centred in the chest and throat
- iii. moves upward
- iv. governs exhalation and speech, initiation of speech, effort, enthusiasm, strength (capacity of work), colour (complexion) and memory (awareness).

### c. *Vyana*

- i. diffusive or pervasive air
- ii. centred in the heart
- iii. governs the circulatory system
- iv. mainly outward actions
- v. attends to functions such as walking and upwards and downward movements of the limbs, blinking, all activities concerned with the body

### d. *Samana*

- i. equalising air
- ii. centred in the gut
- iii. the nervous force behind the digestive system
- iv. withholds the food in the alimentary tract, helps digestion, assimilation and absorption of the food, separates nutrition and waste and eliminates

- e. *Apana*
  - i. downward moving air
  - ii. centred in the colon
  - iii. moves downward to the waist, bladder, genitals, thighs
  - iv. governs downward moving motions of elimination, urination and menstruation, orgasm and ovulation and birth.

**Pancha Vata Imbalance (in summary)**

- a. *Prana* – shallow breathing, exhaustion, dementia, anorexia
- b. *Vyana* – palpitations, arrhythmia, high blood pressure, poor circulation, Raynaud’s disease, sadness, fear, anxiety
- c. *Udana* – dry mouth, difficulty to swallow and speak, loss of voice,
- d. *Samana* – indigestion, bloating, trapped wind, malnutrition, lack of appetite, feeling full, lethargy, nausea
- e. *Apana* – loss of periods, urinary infections, constipation, loss of libido, miscarriages, infertility

## **PITTA DOSHA**

### **Pitta generally**

*Pitta* is translated as fire, although the term does not literally mean “fire.” The fire of a candle or the fire in a fireplace may be seen; however, the bodily heat-energy, the *pitta-dosha*, which manifests as metabolism is not visible in this way.

*Pitta* is formed from the elements fire and water. It is hard to maintain fire and water in equal quantity, and so often the fire element is greater than the water element.

### **Pitta Guna (attributes)**

- Oily (*sasneha*)
- Sharp or penetrating (*tikshna*)
- Hot (*ushna*)
- Light (*laghu*)
- Unpleasant in odour (*visram*; sour or fleshy smell)
- Mobile (*sara*; spreading as opposed to moving; not agitated)
- Liquid (*drava*)

### **Pitta sites**

The small intestine, stomach, digestive fire, digestive acid, sweat glands, blood, fat, sebaceous gland, lymph, eyes and skin are the seats of *pitta*. The primary site is the stomach and upper intestine.

### **Pitta Kriya – functions of *Pitta* generally**

- Digestion
- Absorption
- Assimilation
- Nutrition
- Metabolism
- Body temperature
- Skin coloration
- Lustre of the eyes
- Intelligence and understanding
- Psychologically, *pitta* arouses forcefulness, anger, hate and jealousy

### **Causes of *Pitta* imbalances**

- Excessive consumption of sour, salty, pungent and astringent foods
- Excessive consumption of foods which share *pitta* qualities (oily, sharp, hot, light, unpleasant in odour, mobile and liquid)
- Excessive consumption of oily and heavy food
- Consumption of cooked food stored for long periods (from 24 – 48 hours)
- Excessive consumption of hot drinks (hot in temperature and quality such as caffeine, mint tea and green tea)
- Excessive consumption of red meat and red fish
- Consumption of two or more different types of animal protein simultaneously (cooked together)
- Excessive consumption of root vegetables
- Excessive consumption of raw vegetables and leafy greens

- Excessive consumption of meat from wild animals
- Excessive consumption of condiments such as vinegar, mustard and fermented sauces and pickles
- Excessive consumption of alcohol (excessive demarcated by the physical response of the body)
- Consumption of foods incompatible with each other (eg. fish and milk)
- Eating meals too frequently or too many meals in a day
- Eating while feeling anger, hatred or frustration
- Sleeping during the day
- Overly luxurious and hedonistic lifestyle

**Pitta imbalances generally (inexhaustive list)**

- Aggravated *pitta* causes disorders such as
  - migraines;
  - *pitta* type eczema and dermatitis;
  - infertility;
  - urine infections;
  - infections in the body;
  - acidity;
  - mouth ulcers;
  - inflammatory disorders and auto-immune disorders such as rheumatoid arthritis; gout.
  - Disorders of the mind include *pitta* type depression; schizophrenia; destructive and violent behaviours
- Alleviated (or reduced) *pitta* results in conditions such as
  - chronic fatigue/ ME
  - fibromyalgia

## Symptoms of *Pitta* imbalance

### *Aggravated Pitta*

- increase in body temperature
- craving for foods with *pitta* qualities (oily, sharp, hot, light, unpleasant in odour, mobile and liquid)
- irritation of eyes
- excessive sweating
- increase in desire
- hyperactivity
- quick temper and frustration
- night sweats
- nightmares
- uncontrollable feelings of desire, jealousy and being excessively goal orientated
- excessive desire for a luxury lifestyle and fear of loss of such lifestyle
- feeling of dissatisfaction and depression
- excessive self criticism and judgement
- desire for excessive control of food, activity, lifestyle

### *Decreased pitta*

- decrease in body temperature
- decrease in desires
- lack of enthusiasm for life/ lethargy
- suicidal tendencies

### Treatment of *Pitta* imbalances

- Consumption of foods with opposing qualities to *pitta* (oily, sharp, hot, light, unpleasant in odour, mobile and liquid)
- Drinking medicated ghee
- Purgation therapy (such as black cumin, triphala or dhatri)
- Foods with sweet taste and cold potency
- Intake of foods possessing sweet, bitter and astringent taste
- Cool breezes
- Indulgence in perfumes which are pleasing, coolant and cordial
- Wearing garlands and gems of similar nature on neck and chest (such as pearls or diamonds)
- Walking in the park
- Moonlight
- Pleasant company of friends who are not controlling, small children, family
- Being near water and playing in the water

### The five types of pitta. (Pachaka, Ranjaka, Sadhaka, Alochaka, Bhrajaka).

**Pachaka** – stomach (*ama-asaya*)

**Ranjaka** – liver spleen (*agni-asaya*)

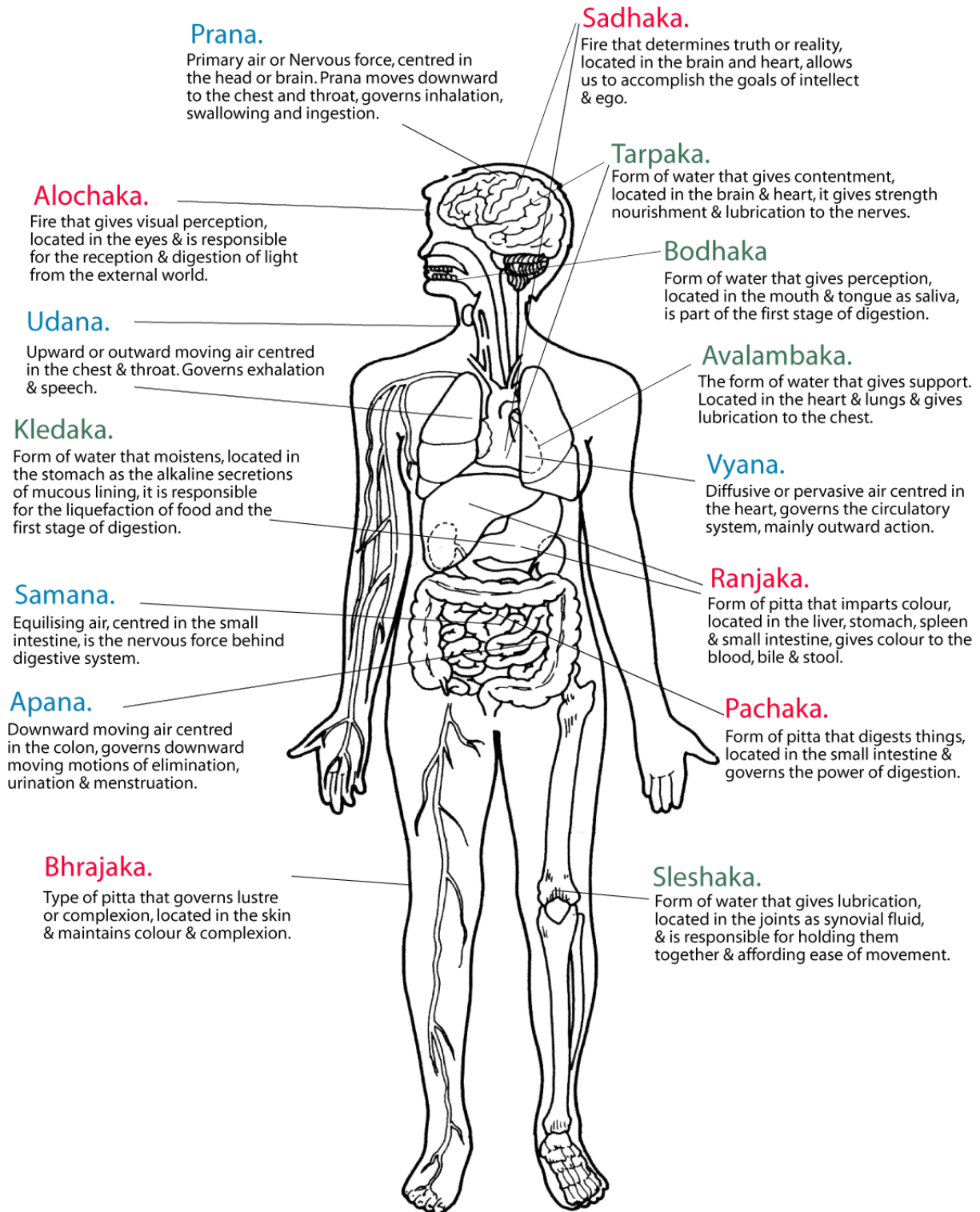
**Sadhaka** – heart (*Hridaya*)

**Alochaka** – two eyes (*locana*)

**Bhrajaka** – skin (*tvaca*)



## The Five Types of Vata, Pitta & Kapha.



## Functions of the five types of *Pitta*

### ***Pachaka*** (*pitta*) –

- Converts food to digested food particles
- Regulates temperature
- Helps absorption of first part of food such as simple carbohydrates and sugars
- Enhances the strength of the other *agnis* (fire like agencies)

### ***Ranjaka*** (*pitta*)

- Creates *dhatu* (tissue) from particles of digested food
- Gives colour to blood, faeces and urine

### ***Sadhaka*** (*pitta*)

- Resides in the head and the heart
- Creates intelligence, pride, victory
- Creates courage and power of memory

***Alochaka*** (*pitta*) is the cause of sight, (perception, vision).

***Bhrajaka*** (*pitta*) is responsible for complexion (exhibition of colour) of the skin.

## **KAPHA DOSHA**

### **Kapha generally**

The translation of *Kapha* is biological water, and this bodily principle is formed from the two elements, Earth and Water. Its primary element is Water. It serves as a vehicle, container or substratum for the other two forces. Etymologically it means “that which holds things together” and indicates the qualities of stickiness and attachment. *Kapha* gives nourishment, provides substance and gives support and thereby makes up the bulk of our bodily tissues.

### **Kapha Guna (attributes)**

- Oily (*snigdha*; unctuous)
- Cold (*shita*)
- Heavy (*guru*; dense)
- Dull (*manda*; slow or cloudy)
- Sticky (*slakshna*; gelatinous)
- Soft (*mritsna*; smooth)
- Firm (*sthira*; steady or stuck or static)

### **Kapha sites**

The chest is the primary seat of *kapha*.

Generally, the sites of *Kapha* are in the chest, lungs, throat, head, sinus, nasal passage, mouth, tongue, saliva, fatty tissue, joints, pancreas, stomach, lymph, nose and tongue and all liquid secretions such as mucous.

### **Kapha Kriya – functions of Kapha generally**

- Cements the elements of the body, providing the material for physical structure
- Maintains body resistance (immunity)
- Lubricates the joints
- Provides moisture to the skin
- Helps heal wounds
- Fills the spaces in the body
- Gives biological strength, vigour and stability
- Support's memory retention,
- Gives energy to the heart and lungs
- Responsible for calmness, patience and forgiveness

### **Causes of Kapha imbalances**

- lack of physical exercise
- indulgence in luxurious lifestyle
- sleeping in the daytime
- indulgence in food made of milk, fat and sugar
- eating starchy foods such as rice and potato
- eating meats such as pork and wild animal
- excessive consumption of yoghurt and other fermented food
- excessive consumption of raw fruit and vegetables
- excessive consumption of ghee and palm syrup products
- sedentary activities
- insufficient stimulus for the mind
- experiencing a lot of sadness, grief or attachment

### Kapha imbalances generally (inexhaustive list)

- Aggravated – causes disorders such as
  - diabetes;
  - high blood pressure;
  - arteriosclerosis (cholesterol);
  - obesity; depression;
  - lethargy;
  - lack of energy;
  - *kapha* type psoriasis;
  - boils; tumours;
  - fibroids; polycystic ovaries;
  - recurrent chest infections; bronchitis; pneumonia; coughs; colds;
  - *kapha* type arthritis; joint edema; fluid retention
  
- Alleviated
  - reduced immunity,
  - longer healing time

### Symptoms of *Kapha* imbalance

- Aggravated
  - heavy body
  - greasy skin and hair
  - sticky or oily bodily fluids
  - feeling of greater gravity
  - joints and organs feel greater gravity

- feeling cold and craving warmth
  - feeling like wearing wet clothes
  - lack of coordination between body and mind
  - swollen edema
  - drowsiness
  - halitosis
  - sweet, sour, salty taste in the mouth
  - pale colour skin
  - wasting time, taking a long time to do things
- Decreased
    - dizziness
    - emptiness of joints
    - heart pains
    - dry skin
    - dehydration, constant thirst and perspiration
    - insomnia
    - feeling defeated

### Treatment of *Kapha* imbalances

- vigorous physical activity (aerobic)
- treatments which involve heat and increased perspiration such as saunas, sunbathing
- taking astringent, pungent and bitter tastes
- eating *vata* and *pitta* foods
- detoxification treatments such as panchkarma
- enemas

- emetic treatments
- exfoliating massage
- bitter tastes in food and decoctions such as wine and beer
- exorcism
- stimulating treatments using mantra or rituals

The five types of Kapha. (Kledaka, Avalambaka, Bodhaka, Tarpaka, Sleshaka).

***Kledaka*** – stomach (*amasya*)

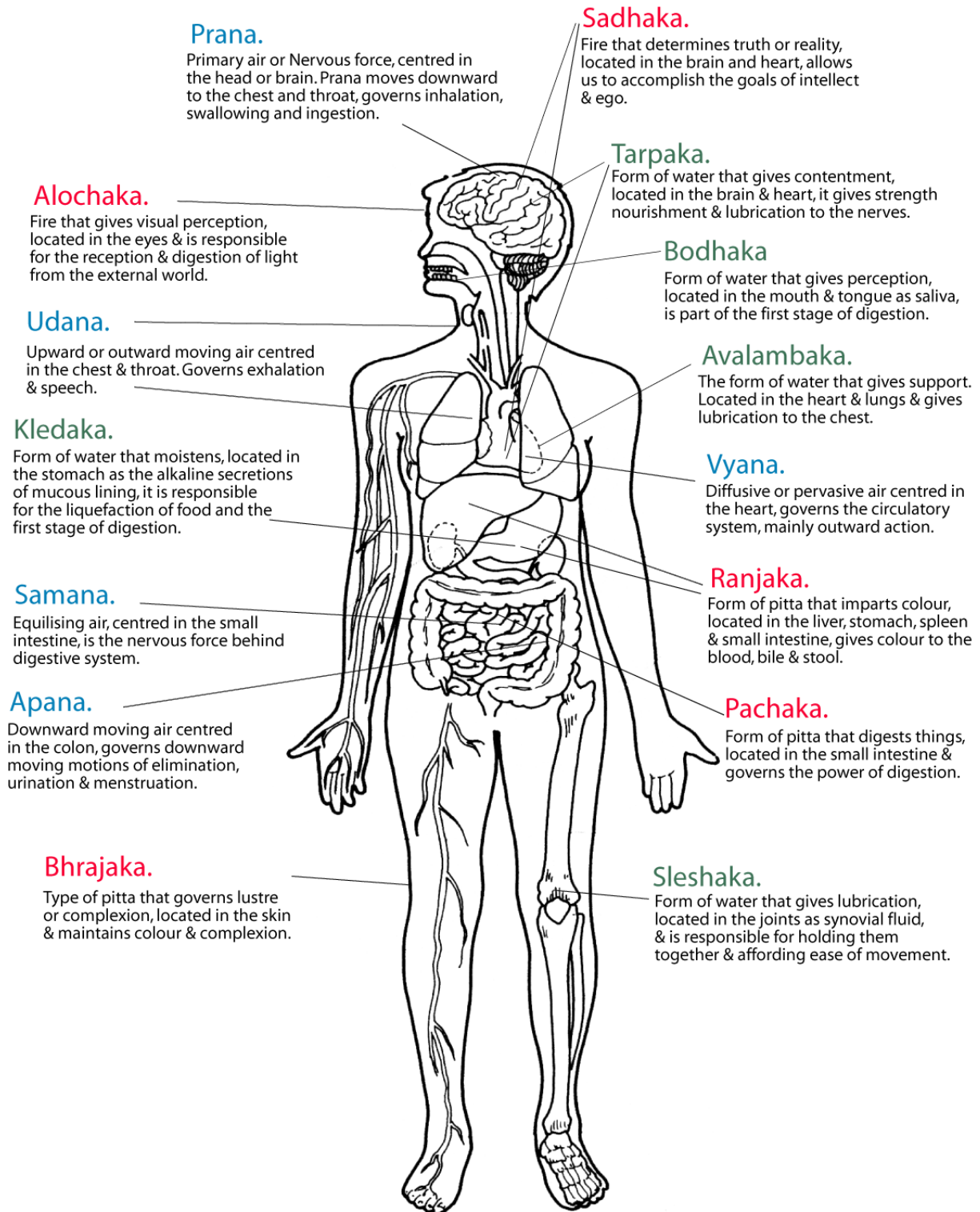
***Avalambaka*** – heart, chest (*Hridaya*)

***Bodhaka*** – throat and tongue (*kantha*)

***Tarpaka*** – head (*siras*)

***Sleshaka*** – bony joints (*sandhis*)

# The Five Types of Vata, Pitta & Kapha.





## Functions of the five types of Kapha

### **Kledaka** (*kapha*)

- Moistens food
- Bestows strength to other *kapha*, as well as their seats, by the function of *udaka* water

### **Avalambaka** (*kapha*)

- Associated with *rasa dhatu*
- Supports the *Hridaya* (heart) by its own strength
- Supports *trika* (upper back)

### **Bodhaka** (*kapha*)

- this type of Kapha and *rasana* (tongue) are both *saumya* (possess moist and cold properties) and exist together, and identify the 6 tastes.
- Bodhana means satisfaction or understanding and thus gives understanding and satisfaction

### **Tarpaka** (*kapha*)

- Satisfies the *indriyas* (sense organs) by bestowing oleation (unctuousness, greasiness)
- Membrane of the brain and spinal fluid
- Co-ordinator of the sense organs and the motor organs
- Supports memory retention
- Assists memory recall

***Sleshaka*** (*kapha*)

- Supports the *sandhis* (bony joints) by lubricating or forming synovial membrane
- Co-ordinator of all *kapha* and function of the joints