

Maharishi International University

Maharishi AyurVeda Training Program
for Health Professionals

Maharishi AyurVeda Approach to Lifestyle, Behavior and Daily Routine

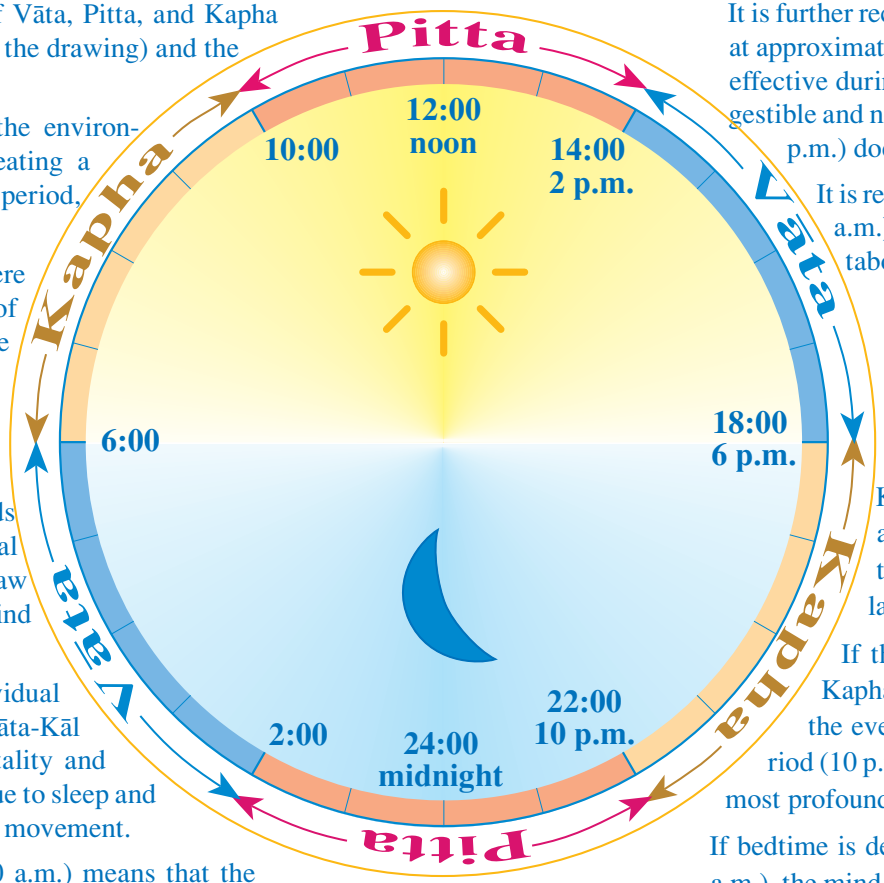
Life in Accordance with the Cycles of Nature

Balanced Daily Routine for Prevention

This diagram illustrates the natural cycles of Vāta, Pitta, and Kapha through the day (shown on the upper side of the drawing) and the night (shown on the lower side).

Each of these three Doshas predominates in the environment at different times of day and night, creating a corresponding influence in the physiology. Each period, or Kāl, lasts approximately four hours.

In countries near the North or South pole, where the sun sets very early or very late, the cycles of the Doshas are the same, but their qualities are modified due to light and temperature.



Lunch

It is further recommended that the main meal of the day should be lunch, at approximately midday, since the Pitta functions of digestion are most effective during Pitta-Kāl (10 a.m.–2 p.m.). Dinner should be easily digestible and not taken too late in the evening, because Kapha-Kāl (6–10 p.m.) does not favour rapid or strong digestion.

It is recommended not to eat during Pitta-Kāl at night (10 p.m.–2 a.m.), since this is the time the body needs for complete metabolism of the food previously taken during the day.

Arising

Maharishi's Vedic Approach to Health recommends a balanced daily routine that follows these natural rhythms, bringing life into accord with Natural Law and thereby gaining the support of Nature for mind and body.

For example, it is recommended that the individual arise early in the morning, towards the end of Vāta-Kāl (6 a.m.), when the influence of Vāta brings vitality and freshness to mind and body, removing dullness due to sleep and facilitating normal Vāta functions such as bowel movement.

Conversely, sleeping late into Kapha-Kāl (6–10 a.m.) means that the influence of Kapha dominates the mind and body when the individual wakes, creating heaviness, dullness, and sluggishness, and reducing the effectiveness of normal digestive and metabolic functions.

Dinner

Kapha-Kāl (6–10 p.m.) is the ideal period to prepare for and begin the night's sleep. After the activity of the day, the influence of Kapha naturally favours restfulness, relaxation, drowsiness, and sleep.

If the individual is in accord with this natural influence of Kapha, enjoying pleasant, relaxing, non-excitatory activities in the evening and going to bed towards the end of the Kapha period (10 p.m.), sleep will come most naturally and easily, and will be most profound and restorative to the system.

If bedtime is delayed until Pitta-Kāl (10 p.m.–2 a.m.) or Vāta-Kāl (2–6 a.m.), the mind and body will not benefit from the restful influence of Kapha at the start of the night. As a result, sleep will not come as naturally and will not be as profound or effective (even if the duration of sleep is not reduced).

Sleep

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Daily Routine (Dinacharyā) for Prevention

Recommended Daily Routine to Maintain Health

Morning

- Arise early in the morning.
- Drink a glass of plain water.
- Evacuate bowels and bladder.
- Engage in light physical exercise, e.g., *Sūryanamaskār**.
- Clean teeth; scrape or clean tongue.
- Massage head, body, and soles of feet with oil.
- Shave and cut nails.
- Gargle with oil.
- Take a bath or shower.
- Practise Yoga Āsanas and *Prāṇāyāma*.❀
- Practise Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi Programme.
- Wear clean and comfortable clothes, suitable to the season and activity.
- Take a light breakfast (optional).
- Engage in the activity of the day.

Afternoon

- Take lunch, selecting food and drink in accord with one's physiological state of balance and the season.
- Briefly rest after lunch.
- Engage in the activity of the day.
- Practise Yoga Āsanas and *Prāṇāyāma*.
- Practise Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi Programme.

Evening

- Take dinner, selecting food and drink in accord with one's physiological state of balance and the season.
- Take a short walk for 10–15 minutes.
- Engage in pleasant, relaxing activity.
- Retire to bed early.

* One should not exceed 50% of the capacity for physical exercise. This is reached approximately when breathing becomes noticeably deeper (when the individual typically starts to breathe through the mouth) and perspiration begins.

❀ More knowledge on Yoga Āsanas and *Prāṇāyāma* is available in the course 'Maharishi Yoga: First Course on Yoga Exercise'.

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Balanced Daily Routine for Prevention

Natural Urges Not to Be Suppressed

न वेगान् धारयेद्धीमाञ्जातान् मूत्रपुरीषयोः ।
न रेतसोन वातस्य न छर्द्याः क्षवथोर्न च ॥३॥
नोद्गारस्य न जृम्भायाः न वेगान् क्षुत्पिपासयोः ।
न वाष्पस्य न निद्राया निश्वासस्य श्रमेण च ॥४॥

एतान् धारयतो जातान् वेगान् रोगाः भवन्ति ये ।
पृथक्पृथक्चिकित्सा तान्मे निगततः शृणु ॥५॥

'One should not suppress the natural urges relating to urine, faeces, semen, flatus, vomiting, sneezing, eructation, yawning, hunger, thirst, tears, sleep, and enhanced breathing due to exertion.

'Various types of diseases occur by the suppression of these urges…'

—Charak Saṁhitā, Sūtrasthān, 7.3–5

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Cycles of Vāta, Pitta, and Kapha to Consider when Evaluating the Degree of Balance in the Pulse

वयोऽहोरात्रिभुक्तानां तेऽन्तमध्यादिगाः क्रमात् ।

'Vāta, Pitta, and Kapha predominate, respectively, during the last, middle, and first stages of life, day, night, and the process of digestion.' —*Ashtānga Hṛidayam, Sūtrasthān, 1.7*

Age

0 - 30	Kapha
30 - 60	Pitta
60 onward	Vāta

Day

6 am - 10 am	Kapha
10 am - 2 pm	Pitta
2 pm - 6 pm	Vāta

After Meals

1st hour	Kapha
2nd hour	Pitta
3rd hour	Vāta

Night

6 pm - 10 pm	Kapha
10 pm - 2 am	Pitta
2 am - 6 am	Vāta

Time of Year (Seasons)*

Vasant	Spring	(March – April)	Kapha
Grīshm	Summer	(May – June)	Pitta
Varshā	Rainy season	(July – August)	Vāta
Sharad	Autumn	(September – October)	Pitta
Hemant	Winter	(November – December)	Vāta
Shishir	Late winter	(January – February)	Vāta

* Many parts of the world have four seasons: Spring—Kapha (March to June); Summer—Pitta (June to September); Autumn—Pitta/Vāta (September to December); Winter—Vāta (December to March)

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Remove the Causative Factors
Nivardanam Parivarjanam

1. **Diet**
    a. Unwholesome food or food lacking freshness (e.g., leftovers, fast food, junk food, processed food, packaged food)
    b. Not properly cooked: too much raw food, or raw food taken at improper times (evening, morning)
    c. Not enough time for meals: rushed, eating before previous meal is digested, dividing the mind while eating (working, watching TV, etc.)
    d. Too much (or too little) quantity of food
    e. Cold foods and drinks
    f. Taking milk with mixed tastes
    g. Too much heavy food, or taking heavy foods at inappropriate times (breakfast, late supper)
    h. Rushing immediately after meals
    i. Large amounts of Rajasic and Tamasic foods: e.g., red meat; very spicy, sour, or salty foods; root vegetables (carrots OK)
    j. Impure foods: pesticides, additives, genetically modified
    k. Improperly cooked: overcooked, undercooked, microwaved

2. **Behavior and Routine**
    a. Irregular routine
    b. Too hectic, rushed routine; not enough time for relaxation
    c. Bedtime too late (after 11 p.m.)
    d. Arising too late (after 7 a.m.)
    e. Daytime sleep
    f. Night vigil
    g. Too little exercise
    h. Too much exercise
    i. Untimely exercise (after meals, after sundown)
    j. Insufficient attention to elimination functions
    k. Suppression of natural urges
    l. Chronic exposure to stress and stressful situations (at work, at home)
    m. Insufficient attention to inner spiritual development (the Self, Atma, meditation)

3. **Other causative factors**
    a. Lack of regular (seasonal) physiological purification (*Panchakarma*)
    b. Imbalances related to the near environment: Improper orientation of home or workplace (*Vastu*)
    c. Imbalances related to the distant environment: Influence of cosmic cycles (*Maharishi Jyotish*)

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Ideal Daily Routine:
Morning Routine

Early Bedtime (by 10:00-11:00 PM): The Day Starts the Evening Before!

Awake by 6:00 AM, just before the Kapha period of day:

It is recommended to awaken by 6:00 A.M. Since we prefer not to strain or use alarm clocks to do this, going to bed early is usually necessary so that the body is fully rested and ready to awaken by 6:00 AM.

The period before 6:00 AM is the time when all of nature awakens, and Vata dosha is most enlivened in the environment. The Vata period of night is from 2:00 to 6:00 a.m. Vata controls the nervous system and our level of alertness. Remember the principle of "well begun is half done?" If we start our day in Vata time, our mind will experience more of the qualities of balanced Vata throughout the day – increased energy, clarity, intelligence, and alertness.

On the other hand, if we sleep past 6:00 AM, we are sleeping into the Kapha time of day. For example, sleeping until 7:30 AM involves 1 1/2 hours of sleep during Kapha time, imbibing the body with the qualities of excess Kapha – dullness, heaviness, and lethargy. Not exactly how we want to feel at the start of the day and *exactly* why so many people do not feel they can function until they have their espresso! Sleep after 6:00 AM day after day, year after year, can cause a Kapha imbalance build up with symptoms such as sinus congestion, fluid retention, weight gain, headaches, joint aches, and stiffness, and (perhaps worst of all) bags under the eyes!

Elimination

It is beneficial to have elimination in the morning. To help evacuate the bowels and bladder and create a cleansing influence in the physiology, drink a glass of fresh, warm or room temperature water upon awakening. Add a squeeze of fresh lemon and a half teaspoon of raw honey to kick start your digestion and metabolism for the day.

Cleansing the mouth and teeth

In addition to brushing the teeth, it is recommended to cleanse the tongue. This can be done by brushing the tongue with your toothbrush or ideally using a stainless steel or silver tongue scraper to scrape any white film or coating off the tongue. A coating on the tongue in the morning is a sign that your body is not fully eliminating toxins and impurities. Scraping the tongue not only freshens the mouth and breath, but it stimulates the digestion and metabolism of residual wastes in the body, according to Ayurveda.

Oil gargle (Gandusha)

Gargle with sesame oil for 1-2 minutes swirling through teeth and gums. See the accompanying handout describing this procedure. Sesame oil has an anti-bacterial effect, absorbs oil-soluble impurities, and nourishes gum tissue.

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Ayurvedic oil massage: *Abhyanga*

Daily morning Ayurvedic oil massage is one of the most powerful rejuvenation regimens you can add to your daily routine.

The motion and pressure of the massage create heat and friction and help to loosen up impurities, improve circulation, and enliven the body. The quality of the oil is also important, as it is being massaged into the entire surface area of the body and is being absorbed. The proper oils and herbs create a cleansing and nourishing influence throughout the body and help keep the skin youthful and supple.

Ayurvedic oil massage is especially good at removing *Vata* imbalance, the usual cause of weakness, anxiety, and fatigue. Most people report feeling much stronger, emotionally smooth, and balanced throughout the day as a result of their morning *abhyanga*.

*See the accompanying handout for directions on how to do *abhyanga* and what massage oil to use.

Yoga *Asanas* (stretching exercises) and/or sun salutations

After the bath or shower, it is highly recommended to practice yoga *asanas* (stretching exercises), followed by meditation, e.g., the Transcendental Meditation (TM) technique.

Yoga *asanas* and sun salutations help remove stiffness and heaviness in the body and are an aid in increasing circulation and flexibility. Improving flexibility removes surface fatigue and stress and helps reconnect the physiology with its inner intelligence. Wherever there is stiffness or hardness in the body, it indicates that part of the body is losing contact with circulation and the nervous system. When this happens, the fertile ground for disease has been created in the affected tissues. Maintaining a high level of flexibility in the body through *asanas* and sun salutations is a vital pillar of good health.

Yoga *asanas* sequentially remove surface fatigue and tension, thereby preparing the mind and body to gain the most from the meditation period. Yoga *asana* postures should be learned from qualified instructors for proper technique and the correct sequence of postures.

Meditation (e.g., the Transcendental Meditation™ technique)

The Transcendental Meditation technique is an authentic, Vedic technique for the development of higher states of consciousness and the full health potential of the physiology. Maharishi Ayur-Veda recommends the twice-daily practice of the Transcendental Meditation technique as the single most powerful healing modality available. Documented health benefits include reduced stress, anxiety and depression; improved heart health; reduced need for medical care; and increased longevity. These effects have been validated in research studies published in leading medical and scientific journals, including the *American Journal of Cardiology,* the American Heart Association's journals *Stroke* and *Hypertension,* and the American Medical Association's journal *Archives of Internal Medicine*.

Practiced for 15-20 minutes twice daily while sitting comfortably with eyes closed, regular TM practice helps the body throw off deep stress and fatigue, improves mental functioning, and is an ideal preparation for the activity of the day.

While easy to learn, it is always taught in personalized instruction by a certified teacher.

More information on the Transcendental Meditation technique is available at www.tm.org or by calling 1-888-Learn-TM.

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Morning Walk or Exercise

The benefits of the morning walk cannot be overemphasized. There is an ancient Vedic story about a king with many physicians who held a contest in which the physicians were asked to discover a medicine that would be good for everyone, cost nothing, and be easy to do. The physician who prescribed the morning walk won the competition.

A significant part of the benefit comes from the special health promoting qualities of the morning sun. Vedic Science describes how the effects of the sun are very different at different times of the day. The setting sun is calming and relaxing – the effect most of us have when watching a sunset.

The morning sunrise effect is considered one of the most powerful positive, enlivening, and creative forces in all of nature. It is considered so powerful that the science of Vedic Architecture recommends that buildings be oriented to the East to bring the nourishing and enlivening effect of the rising sun into the home. People who take early morning walks almost universally feel a significant subtle vibration of energy and alertness throughout the day. Due to the tremendous positive energy that is picked from the rising sun, early morning walks are a standard Ayurvedic recommendation if someone is feeling depressed or fatigued. Drinking water in the morning on arising and taking a morning walk is also an important aid in maintenance of regular bowel movements.

The walk also awakens body and mind and enhances blood flow, helping to cleanse the tissues of heaviness and toxin buildup that may have occurred over the dormant time of sleep. Research has also shown that the natural light coming into the eyes in the morning helps turn off the sleep hormone melatonin and enlivens the biochemistry of wakefulness and alertness.

Early morning is *Kapha* time (6-10 AM), which is considered the best time for exercise.

Natural fabric clothing

Maharishi Ayur-Veda recommends natural fabric clothing as the most suitable attire for physical and mental health. Natural fabrics breathe and do not disturb the subtle energy fields of the physiology. Cotton, wool, silk, and rayon are the preferred fabrics. Wearing polyester/synthetic clothing of any kind is not recommended.

Breakfast

Digestion is not as strong at breakfast as compared to lunch, so food should be lighter and easier to digest in the morning. Stewed apples, pears, and raisins, ripe sweet juicy fruits, flat breads with *ghee* or honey, hot milk, medjool dates, and whole grain cereals are examples of foods that are nourishing and appropriate for most people at breakfast. Avoid meats, eggs, and cheese at breakfast. And avoid citrus fruits or juices if milk is taken at breakfast. (Citrus and milk should be separated by at least 30-60 minutes.)

Please follow the advice of your medical doctor regarding any changes in your diet.

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Daily Oil Massage

The purpose of Ayurvedic Daily Oil Massage as part of daily routine is to assist in preventing the accumulation of physiological imbalances and to lubricate and promote flexibility of the muscles, tissues, and joints. The classical texts of Ayurveda also indicate that daily oil massage promotes softness and lustre of the skin as well as youthfulness. The following are some simple instructions to assist you in learning the Ayurvedic Daily Oil Massage.

1) Unless a specific oil has been recommended for you, then sesame oil should be used for daily massage. If you find sesame oil unsuitable in some way, you may try olive oil or coconut oil as alternatives. To purify the massage oil, 'cure' it by heating it to about 212 degree Fahrenheit (100 degree Celsius), the boiling point of water. Stir occasionally. By adding a drop of water to the oil, in the beginning, you will know that the proper temperature has been reached when the water boils. (You will hear a crackling or popping when this point is reached. Then remove the pan from the stove immediately before the oil begins to burn.) It is best to cure oil for each day's massage on a daily basis. As an alternative (to save time) you may cure more oil at a time. One liter of oil will cover about fifteen massages.

Note: Please be aware that sesame oil and other oils are flammable, for this reason they should be cured in the following way:

- Always heat oil on low heat, never on high heat.
- Oil should never be heated unattended.
- Once oil reaches the proper temperature it should be removed from heat and stored in a safe place to gradually cool.

2) Before beginning the massage, the oil should be at or slightly above body temperature. Start by massaging the head. Place a small amount of oil on the fingertips and the palms and begin to massage the scalp. Use comfortably soft pressure for the massage. The massage for the head and for the entire body should be with the palm of the hands rather than with the fingertips alone. Since the head is said to be one of the most important parts to be emphasized during Ayurvedic Daily Oil Massage, spend proportionately more time on the head than you do on other parts of the body.

3) Next apply oil gently to your face and outer part of your ears. You do not need to apply much pressure to these areas.

4) Massage both the front and back of the neck, and the upper part of the spine. Continue to use the palms of your hands, in a rubbing type of motion.

5) You may want to now apply a small amount of oil to your entire body and then proceed with the massage to each area of the body. This will allow maximum amount of time for the oil to in contact with the body and get absorbed through the skin.

6) Next massage your arms. The proper motion is back and forth over your long bones, and circular over your joints. Massage both arms, including the hands and fingers.

7) Now apply the oil to the chest and abdomen. A very gentle circular motion should be also used, following the bowel pattern from the right to the right lower part of the abdomen, moving clockwise towards the left lower part of the abdomen.

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Daily Oil Massage contd.

8) Massage the back and spine. There will be some area which you may have difficulty reaching.

9) Massage the legs. Like the arms, use a back and forth motion over the long bones and circular over the joints.

10) Lastly, massage the soles of the feet. The feet also are considered especially important and proportionately more time should be spent here that other parts of the body. Use the palms of your hands and massage vigorously back and forth over the soles of the feet.

11) This completes the Ayurvedic Daily Oil Massage. Ideally, about 10 to 20 minutes should be spent each morning on the massage. However, if this time is not available on a particular day, it is better to do a very brief massage rather than to skip the massage altogether. Once you have added this Ayurvedic Daily Oil Massage to your daily routine, the benefits will make it quite natural for you to continue the massage on a permanent basis.

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Morning Routine

Gandusha and *Nasya*

Oil gargle (*Gandusha*):

Use sesame oil (refined or unrefined), which is available in most natural foods stores. Start by "curing" the oil, which purifies it and allows it to be absorbed more easily. You can cure a whole 16 oz. bottle of oil (or more) at a time and use about 1/4 cup of oil each morning for *Gandusha*.

Procedure for curing oil:

Place the oil in a pan and heat it briefly on moderately high heat, stirring occasionally, until you see the color of the oil lighten and the oil just begin to move in the pan. This occurs just at the boiling point of water, 212 degrees F. This is the point where the oil is cured. Alternatively, you can add a few drops of water to the oil before heating; then when you hear the first "crackle" or "pop" of the boiling water drops within the oil, remove the pan from the heat immediately. (Do not allow the oil itself to burn, which will begin to happen soon after the oil has been heated beyond the boiling point of water.) Allow the oil to cool to room temperature and place it in a plastic or glass container. You can pour a small amount of this cured oil into a cup each day for your *Gandusha*.

Procedure for Gandusha:

Take about 1/8 cup of water and hold it in the mouth for about 2 minutes, gently swishing the oil around the mouth, teeth, and gums. Spit out the oil. Then take another 1/8 cup of oil and gargle with it briefly in the back of the throat. After spitting out again, gargle briefly with warm water. (Note: it is best not to spit the oil into the sink, as this may clog the drain over time. Instead, spit the oil into a paper cup and then pour the used oil into a zip-lock bag and discard in the trash.)

Nasal administration of oil (*Nasya*):

You may use cured sesame oil (good for Vata and Kapha), or ghee (good for Pitta), or an herbalized oil such as MP-16 (best overall for Vata and Kapha). (There is no need to cure ghee or herbalized oil.) Put 3-4 drops of oil in the palm of your hand. Roll the little finger of your other hand in the oil until the fingertip is coated with the oil. Then insert this finger in one nostril and rotate the finger so that the oil coats the inner lining of the nostril. Repeat this procedure for the other nostril, using another few drops of oil. Having inserted oil in both nostrils, pinch the nostrils together while inhaling through the nose, then suddenly let go of the nostrils. Air will be sucked in through the nostrils, bringing a small quantity of the oil into the upper nostrils.

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