Education is not a matter of always seeing new things; education means seeing the same things in a new light.  
*Unknown*

**Chapter 26**  
**Miscellaneous**

**3 Vital Organs, Dangerous Spiritual Practices, Herbs for Tissues and Organs, Definitions of Glands, Organs and *Dośhas*, When to Take Herbs, Herbal Recipes, Acupuncture**

**3 Vital Organs (Mahā Marmas)**

*Definition:* There are 107 vital body parts. Of these, three organs are paramount: the urinary bladder, heart, and head. They are considered the main sites because they are the seats of the vital breath (*prāṇa*) and *Vāyu* that can cause immediate death if wounded.

*Cause & Development:* Downward moving air (*Apāna Vāyu*) in the colon becomes excessed from eating and drinking pungent, bitter, astringent, and rough foods, suppressing natural urges, fasting, and sexual intercourse. These actions bring about obstructions and retention of stool, gas, and urine, and ultimately cause air to move in the reverse direction.

This results in frequent and intense pain in the pelvic and heart area, abdomen, ribs, and back. Obstructions cause abdominal distention, nausea, cutting and piercing pain, indigestion, cystitis, stool retention, enlarged organ membranes, and upward-moving *Vāyu* (*Udāna Vāyu*). The stool is dry and difficult to pass. The body is rough, coarse, and cold with fever, difficult urination, dysentery, heart, and digestive disorders. Persons may experience vomiting, blindness, deafness, headache, mental disorders, thirst, internal bleeding, anorexia, and tumors. Other experiences include cough, labored breathing, facial paralysis, chest pain, cold, *Vāyu* mental disorders, vāta śtīhilā (prostate disorders), and many other serious disorders.

*Therapies:* Oil *abhyaṅga* (massage-like) with sesame, *mahānārāyana* and *pañcagūṇa* oils. Fomentation (moist heat) should be applied to the troubled area. Once the illness is balanced, oil and dry enemas, suppositories, purgatives, carminatives, and other *Vāyu*-reducing herbs are used. Suppositories are made with oil, *trikatu*, *vidaṅga*, *pippalt*, and cane sugar. Foods include barley, *Vāyu*-reducing (steamed) vegetables, fresh ginger, sesame oil, and *ghee*. Should the condition resolve, but gas and stool retention continue to exist, an oil enema is used. For hard bowels, colic, heart disease, tumor, indigestion, weak spleen, and upward-moving air; *vachā*, *harītaki*, *pippalt*, *chitrak*, and *vidaṅga* are used.

Hard bowels are caused by āma, arising from stiffness, heaviness in the head and abdomen, retaining belches, and mucus. It is healed through emesis, reduction therapies, and digestive herbs.

Vital organ diseases include dysuria, diseases of the heart and head (including mouth, hair, eyes, ears, nose, and throat), and anorexia. These are discussed in detail in their respective chapters.
When each of these three sites is afflicted, various diseases occur.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organ</th>
<th>Governs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heart</td>
<td><em>prāṇa, apāṇa</em>, mind, intellect, consciousness, <em>mahābhūtas</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head</td>
<td>senses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bladder (Basti)</td>
<td>scrotum, raphe, vas deferens, middle of the rectum, and uterus: governs urine, and is the stabilizer of all fluid channels.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Vāyu-Reducing Therapies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organ</th>
<th>Therapeutics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heart</td>
<td>asafoetida, rock salt, sour liquid, sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head</td>
<td><em>abhyaṅga</em>, sweating, poultices, ingesting unctuous items, snuff, juice pressing (in nostrils), smoke (<em>dhūma</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basti</td>
<td>moist heat, suppositories, nonunctuous enema, urethra douche, <em>bilwa</em>, <em>dūrbā</em>, <em>gokṣhura</em>, barley, turmeric, ghee, <em>śhātāvari</em>, <em>guḍūchi</em>, <em>lodhra</em>, <em>balā</em>, <em>vāsāka</em>, vachā, <em>pāśhana bheda</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Heart Disorder (Hṛdaya)

**Therapies:** *Arjuna*, ginger, pomegranate, rhubarb, *harittaki*, asafoetida, black salt, barley, Vāyu- and Kapha-reducing foods and life-styles.

#### Urinary Bladder (Basti)

**Vāyu:** Becomes excessed from suppressing urine. This causes retention, distress, and itching. This is called *vātabasti*. Retention results in excess *Udāna* Vāyu in the urethra. A feeling of pierced, torn, and stiffening of the urethra occurs during urination. Other symptoms include breaking pain, heaviness, cramps, extreme pain, and retention of urine and feces.

In persons who are debilitated and have roughness, Vāyu may cause the stool to be reversed in its passage and enter the urinary canal. Thus, urine is passed with feces accompanied with malodor and straining. This is called *vidvighāta*.

Vāyu with *Pitta:* Drying up the urine causes the passing of red or yellow urine, with difficulty, and burning in the pelvis and perineum.

Vāyu with *Kapha:* This affects the blood and produces a hard nodular mass in the opening of the urinary bladder, resulting in difficult urination. This condition is called *mūtragranthi*.

**Pitta:** When Pitta afflicts the bladder, symptoms include burning sensation, pain, and abnormal color.

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No other therapy equals (unctuous) enema for protecting the vital parts

*Charak; Si., Ch 9 v7*
Kapha: When Kapha afflicts the bladder, symptoms include heaviness, swelling, unctuous, and white and rushing urine.

Pitta and Kapha: When both these *doshas* obstruct the urethra, the condition cannot be healed.

External: Fast traveling, jumping, exertion, injury, and pressure may cause the bladder to bulge and remain extended, making one look pregnant. The bladder is painful, quivering, and burns. Urine passes in drops; however, if the bladder is pressed, urine passes in a stream. The bladder feels stiff with cramping. This severe condition is called *bastikundala*.

Depending on the *dosha* causing these disorders, diuretics, enemas, and urethral douches (see Chapter 7 on *pañcha karma/basti* section) can be used.

### Head Disorders (Śhiro-roga-Vijnāniya)

There are 11 head diseases: Vāyu, Pitta, Kapha, Tridośha, blood, wastes, parasites, *suryāvarta*, *aman-tavāta*, *ardhāvabheda*, *śhamkhaka*.

**Symptoms:**

**Vāyu:** Violent headaches occur without cause. Symptoms worsen at night and are relieved by pressure or head fomentation (moist heat). **Pitta:** Violent burning and aching head pain; a feeling of hot coals on the scalp; burning vapor from nostrils (diminishes at night or when applying cold packs to the head).

**Kapha:** Headaches; a sticky mucus-coated palate and throat that feel cold and heavy; swollen face and eyes.

**Tridosha:** Symptoms of all three *doshas*.

**Blood:** The same symptoms as Pitta; and head pain is unbearable even when touched lightly.

**Wastes (Kṣavajā):** Waste in the fatty substances in the body tissues (e.g., *māmsa, medas, majjā*), brain areas, and semen causes unbearable head pain. This condition is aggravated by fomentation, fumigation, nasal therapies, emetics, and blood-letting.

**Parasites (Krimiā):** Pricking, tingling head pain; with liquid secretions mixed with blood and pus from the nose occur from parasites in the nose.

**Suryāvarta:** Tridośhic excesses, suppression of urine with indigestion, vitiation of blood, and brain involvement from Vāyu can cause severe eye and eyebrow pain at sunrise. This condition worsens as the day progresses, and subsides in the evening. It may be reduced from cold things (and sometimes warm things). The morning sun liquefies the excesses in the brain causing headache. Resolidification occurs after sunset.

**Ananta-Vāyu** (trigeminal neuralgia): Severe pain in the two nerves at the back of the neck and in the carotid arteries. This then spreads to the eyes, eyebrows, and temples, causing throbbing in the cheeks, and paralysis of the jaw bone and eye. It is associated with excesses of all three *doshas*. This condition develops from excess fasting (or insufficient food), grief, or cold. All three *doshas* become excessive. Symptoms also include twitching near the cheeks, lock jaw, and eye disorders.

**Ardhāvabheda:** Excruciating piercing, or aching pain in one half of the skull; causing giddiness when Vāyu becomes excessive from ingesting rough food, overeating, eating with indigestion, or from exposure to easterly winds and dew. Excessive coitus, suppressing natural urges, overexertion and exercise, or Kapha excesses also upset half of the head. It may recur at intervals of 10 to 14 days or at random. Some authorities say it is caused by all three *doshas*. Symptoms include severe, cutting, head pain; churning in one carotid artery, eyebrow, temple, ear, eye, and forehead; trembling. Severe cases may result in loss of sight and hearing.

**Śhamkaka:** Severe head and temple pain due to local Vāyu combined with Pitta, Kapha, and blood. Pain may spread to the temples, causing severe swelling, great pain, burning, and redness. This can be fatal. Healing it is difficult. After three days, therapies may be given, including head evacuation, sprinkling, and other anti-erysipelas therapies.
Apatantraka: Udāna Vāyu, moving upwards in excess, reaches the heart, head, and temples. This causes convulsions and confusion, labored breathing, stiff/closed eyes, unconsciousness, and groaning.

Therapies:
Vāyu: Head diseases caused only by Vāyu doṣha are relieved by the same measures for the nervous system (Vāyu-Vyādhi—Chapter 20). Sesame oil, ghee, boiled milk (taken tepid), and pungent and hot herbs are taken before bed. Milk cooked with ṣhatāvarī, āshwagandhā, and balā is used to wash the diseased area. A lukewarm plaster of the same is applied to the scalp. Afterwards, oil, ghee, and Vāyu-reducing herbs are cooked together and used as a nasal oil.

Herbs: Vamśha lochana, guggul, harītaki, gotu kola, gokṣhura, āshwagandhā, bibhūtā, bhrīṅgarāj, balā, dāshmūl, ṭrikatu, brāhmī ghee.

Foods: Almonds (soaked and peeled), sesame tahini, ghee, sesame oil, boiled milk, basmati rice, whole wheat, barley. Yogurt/water (lassi) is also useful for soothing nerves. If excess impurities develop, and the disorder is not healed from the preceding therapies, one takes mild oil purgatives (e.g., castor oil) to help the evacuation process. Warm carminative herbs such as cardamom, ginger, cinnamon, cloves, and turmeric help dispel gas, improve digestion, and assist absorption of undigested foods that cause impurities. Weak persons should use non-oil enemas and digestive herbs and foods instead of purgatives.

Pitta and Blood: Plasters of cool herbs (vetasa, sandalwood, licorice, musta) and ghee are pasted on the scalp and used as cooling head washes. Pitta and blood visarpa (erysipelas) therapies are also used: chirāyatā, kaṭukā, neem, aloe vera, gentian, maṇḍiṣṭhā, barberry; first purgation then blood-letting is used.

Āshwagandhā, vidārī kand, ṣhatāvarī, licorice, and maṇḍpaṇi are used. Oil or ghee is used as nasal therapy nasya. Dry and oily enemas (basti) are also employed. Basti herbs include madanphal, priyaṅgu, licorice, bilwa, and danti (baliospermum a.) root.

Kapha: Emetics, head purgatives, inhaling aromas, and gargles are useful. The clear upper part of ghee is ingested and frequently used as fomentation to the head. Herbs include frankincense, myrrh, cedar, calamus, and kuṣṭhā. Meals include barley or basmati rice taken with hot spices like ṭrikatu (mixture).

Tridosha: Therapies related to the imbalances of the three doṣhas are used.

Wastes (Kßhayaja): Brīṃhana enema (nourishing—honey, sesame oil, dry ginger, rock salt in hot water). Ghee is mixed with ṣhatāvarī, āshwagandhā, and licorice. Vāyu-reducing herbs are used as nasal therapy and as drinks (brāhmī ghee).

Parasites (Krimija): Inhaling powder and smoke of viḍaṅga and musta.

Suryāvarta: Nasal oils, plaster, gargles, eating boiled rice, drinking milk with ghee, vamśha lochana, vachā, licorice, sandalwood, honey; ingesting ghee after meals. Then, snuffs of ghee and ṣhatāvarī, āshwagandhā, and licorice are used.

Other therapies include plasters of licorice, kuṣṭhā, sarsaparilla, ghee, and sesame oil; purgation, milk, and sprinkling with ghee.

Ananta-vāyu: The same therapies as suryāvarta are used. Blood-letting, Vāyu- and Pitta-reducing foods; and sweets made with wheat, cane sugar, milk, and ghee are also suggested. Other therapies include ingesting ghee after meals, head evacuation, purgation, milk and ghee sprinkling, ingesting vitalizing herbs mixed with 8 times as much milk as snuff.

Samkhaka: Ghee taken internally and as a snuff. Boiled rice with ghee is recommended. Plasters may be made of ṣhatāvarī, black sesame seeds,
licorice, duṛvā, punarnavā. Cooling washes and herb powder nasal therapies are also soothing.

Apatantraka (a form of epilepsy): Cleanse channels obstructed by Vāyu and Kapha by blowing irritating powders such as black powder, viḍāṅga, haritaki, asafoetida, black salt, and barley powder into the nasal passages. Brāhmī has been found to control epilepsy.

Note: Heart, bladder, and head disorders deal with physiological diseases. Mahā marma is important for surgery and for wartime injuries. The surgeon must be aware of the mahā marma when surgery is conducted on the head. Knowledge of mahā marma is contained within the martial arts. Soldiers are trained to aim at these three vital points (heart, bladder, head) to kill an enemy.

Headache/Migraine

Causes: Many situations can cause headaches: indigestion, constipation, colds, flus, poor posture, suppression of urges to urinate or pass stool, muscle tension, mental conditions such as nervousness, worry, anxiety, anger, and high blood pressure. Migraines can be caused by heartburn, congenital factors and other conditions. The climate can further aggravate migraines.

Symptoms:

Vāyu: Anxiety, depression, dry skin, constipation, and extreme pain.

Pitta: Red complexion and eyes, light sensitivity, burning sensation, anger, irritability, and nose bleeds. Liver and blood toxicity are often associated with these symptoms.

Kapha: Dull headache, heaviness, fatigue, nausea, white or clear phlegm, vomiting, and excess salivation. Respiratory disorders are often associated with these symptoms.

Therapies:

Vāyu: Triphalā as a purgative, jaṭāmānśhi, brāhmī, and rest. Šhiro dhārā (hot oil head massage) is very beneficial.

Pitta: Purgatives (e.g., aloe vera gel, rhubarb, and fennel), liver cleansers (e.g., bhāmalaki and brāhmī), sandalwood oil on the third eye, temples, heart, and under the nose, walks in the full moon and by water; and flower gardening reduce Pitta causes of migraines. Overexertion, heat and sun should be avoided. Šhiro dhārā (hot oil head massage) is also highly beneficial.

Kapha: Trīkatu, brāhmī, tulsī tea, inhaling eucalyptus oil, vomiting, exercise, nasal snuff of ginger or pepper. Šhiro dhārā (hot oil head massage) is also very helpful.

Cough, Cold, Flu, Allergy-Caused: Decongestant/expectorant herbs—Vāyu and Kapha excesses (ginger, black pepper, licorice, viḍāṅga, etc.) are ingested or used as nasal snuff. Tulsī tea and inhaling eucalyptus oil are also very helpful. Ginger paste can be applied under the nose, and on the temples and forehead. Vomiting (if the person is strong) will help rid the head of congestion and pain arising from it.

Migraines (Ardhāvabhedaka): The same therapies as suryāvarta (above). Medicated oils or ghee, using guḍūchī, balā, and aśhwagandhā; fomentation, and saturating snuff are also advised. Long-term healing includes chyavan prāśh, brāhmī, and aśhwagandhā. Šhiro dhārā (hot oil head massage) is also beneficial. This is usually a Vāyu and Pitta excess, caused by lack of sleep, overwork, stress, worry, poor digestion, muscular tension, heartburn, or high blood pressure.

Arthritis/Rheumatism (Āmavātā)

Modern medicine recognizes more than 100 types of rheumatic diseases. Causes are attributed to injury, infection, metabolic conditions, or tumors. In many cases the causes remain unknown to western medicine. Some disorders are related to age, gender, and climactic conditions (i.e., cold or dampness). Āyurveda also cites causes related to digestive
disorders. See Chapter 15.

Causes and Development:
Eating incompatible food combinations and following incompatible life-styles, lack of exercise or exercising after eating fatty foods—or with poor digestion, produces āma (undigested food toxins). Āma associated with Vāyu quickly moves to different seats of Kapha in the body, filling them (and blood vessels) with waxy material. Thus, āma associated with all three doṣhas blocks tissue pores and passages. This causes weakness and heaviness in the heart, which becomes the seat of the disease. Joints are simultaneously affected, causing stiffness and many other disorders. It can also be considered an autoimmune disorder.

Symptoms:
Joint pain, loss of taste, thirst, lack of enthusiasm, heaviness, fever, indigestion, swelling (inflammation).
Vāyu: Severe, throbbing, cutting pain that is variable and migrating in nature; becomes worse in cold weather or when cold water comes in contact with the affected joint(s). Other symptoms include dry or scaly skin, stiff or cracking joints, bone deformities, constipation, gas, abdominal distention, low back pain, nervousness, fear, and insomnia.
Pitta: Burning sensation, redness, swelling, inflammation; becomes worse in hot weather or when hot water comes in contact with the affected joints. Other symptoms include diarrhea, anger, irritability, and sweating.
Kapha: Loss of movement, itching, joint swelling, and edema (without inflammation); becomes worse in cold and damp or humid weather. Other symptoms include dullness, heaviness, aches, oily skin, congestion, or mucus in the stool.

Therapies:
General: If only one doṣha is involved, the condition is easy to heal. When two doṣhas are implicated, it becomes difficult to heal. When all three doṣhas are involved, and if swelling involves every joint in the body, healed will not be possible.
First toxins should be digested by balancing the digestive fire. Eating animal products will aggravate the condition, especially pork, red meat, and dark poultry. Heavy, āma-increasing foods will also increase arthritic symptoms. Many people report improvements by following these dietary suggestions.

Mahānārāyan oil improves flexibility, stiffness, muscle fatigue, and removes pain. It is mixed with sesame oil (1:1) and applied to the painful areas. This oil also breaks up blockages and begins to heal locally. After oil application, warm heat, yoga, bath, or mild exercise further improves this situation. Nāḍī sweda (local steam application; see Chapter 4) with daśhmūl can be applied locally.

Nāráyan oil is good for muscle and joint pain, lower body circulation, and reversing imbalances caused by aging. Brāhmī and sandalwood oils (mixed together) are very beneficial for Pitta types of arthritis. Avipattikar chūrna is good to ingest for rheumatism.

Vāyu: Hot spices like cinnamon and fresh ginger. Yogaraj guggul is the best herb for this condition; it cleanses bone tissue, strengthens bones, and improves flexibility. Castor oil or triphala help keep the colon cleansed.

Pitta: Kaishore guggul, sandalwood, guduchi, aloe, turmeric, saffron. Musta and nirgundī relieve pain.

Kapha: Pure guggul is best for this condition. Hot herbs are also helpful, such as cinnamon, dry ginger, turmeric, trikatu. Musta and nirgundī relieve pain.
Dangerous Spiritual Practices

Channeling, especially for Vāyu persons (or Vāyu-minded persons), may render them too ungrounded. Allowing another entity to enter your being can be very dangerous.

Kundalini (spiritual energy)—yoga and other techniques artificially open chakras (spiritual energy centers) before a person may be prepared. This can lead to numerous and serious physical and mental disorders. [This does not apply to persons naturally raising their kundalini through meditation and yoga, but to those who target specific chakras for their manual opening.] Practicing a natural form of meditation that allows for the gradual and holistic opening balances the entire person.

Hypnosis is a psychically induced state in which a subject responds to suggestions from the hypnotist (within certain limitations). If the subject is not naturally ready to respond, even though they may want to, hypnosis may cause subtle anxiety and weakening of the mind-body coordination. Some modern hypnotherapists however, utilize a method whereby the client is in complete control of their choices. This may be a more natural approach to this practice.

Prāṇāyāma (breathing practices) can also be harmful if done with force, breath retention, or in excess without a proper teacher for guidance.

Tissue (Dhātu) Building Herbs

Plasma (rasa): Śhīlājit, punarnavā, vidārī kand, kṣīr kākolī
Blood (rakta): Green leafy vegetables, radish, punarnavā
Muscle (māmsa): Aśhwagandhā, śhatāvari, mahā medha, ghee.
Fat (medas): The same
Marrow (majjā): The same
Bone (asthi): Pravāl piśhti, vaṃśha lochana, śhatāvari, sesame, black dal, milk.
Semen (śukra): Śhatāvari, aśhwagandhā.

Organs and Herbs

Pancreas: Kapha/Pitta: Glyceric acid (Pitta), insulin (sweet/Kapha). Best herb—gurmar.
Ojas: This means life sap, metabolism, and will power. It is not actually something that is found in the body. Śhītāvari, aśhwagandhā, guḍuṣhī, saffron.

Gall Bladder: Pāśhana bedha, dandelion
Liver: Purnarnavā, bhūḍamalakī
Blood purification: Maṇiṣṭhāṣṭha
Lymph: Kaishore guggul, yellow dock, jasmine for Pitta and Kapha; bayberry for Vāyu.
Adrenals: Kapha/Pitta—brāhmī. Secretes adrenaline. Develops the mind and affects spiritual development.
Spleen: Pitta—Punarnavā, kaṭuvā
Tendons, ligaments: Kapha—turmeric
Veins: Pitta - maṇiṣṭhāṣṭha (cleanse/circulate)
Marrow: Fluid—Kapha; Vāyu—space and pushing effect; color—Pitta (due to gall bladder). Herbs according to doṣha. Āśhwagandhā, balā, bhrīṅgarāj, gokśhura, musta, pippalī, vaṃśha lochana
Lungs: Vāyu brings Pitta (from peritoneum secretion of the heart) [carbonic acid] to the respiratory system, hemoglobin, red blood cells, and supplies oxygen in the body parts (Vāyu). Kapha relates to fluids. Vāsāk, balā, harītakī, bibbītakī, pippalī.

Gland Definitions

Exocrine: Channels that open into the organs, gastrointestinal tract, bloodstream, etc. (e.g., salivary glands, intestinal or digestive glands, mammary glands).
Endocrine: Secrete directly into the bloodstream or the surrounding tissues. They do not have any channel, such as the exocrine glands. Examples are hormones.

Thyroid: Responsible for the growth, calcium, and metabolism in the body. Thyroxin discharge (Kapha) digests the seven tissues (dhātus) and develops the mind and body.

Hyperthyroid: Disturbs the mind and body, increases the reflex action, causes fine tremors and palpitations, exophthalmic goiter, and neurosis.

Hypothyroid: Causes slowed thyroid functioning. Symptoms include anemia and Vāyu obesity; low heart rate, infertility, neuritis, goiter, exophthalmia (protrusion of the eyeball), photophobia (fear of light), and sweating.

Parathyroid: Regulates the calcium metabolism level in the body.

Pineal: (Kapha) Controls the brain.

Thalamus: Responsible for the early childhood growth until approximately age 15.

Hypothalamus: (Vāyu) Located in the brain, controlling the pituitary gland and other hormones.

Pituitary: (Pitta/Kapha) Controls all other hormone functions and levels in the body. It sits on top of the suṣhumṇā (the spiritual tube inside the spine), anterior, and posterior lobes. It is in the spinal column.

Suprarenal: This secretes the hormone that controls the fight or flight response. Thus, muscular activity and glucose in the blood are increased.

The vagus nerve is controlled by the thalamus. It runs from the brain to the stomach. Vagus is the 10th cranial nerve supplying the heart, stomach, diaphragm, sensory-motor skills, voice, breathing, pharynx, and esophagus. These areas are affected by all three doṣhas. When there is any reflex or response from any of these organs, it signals the brain. The response from the brain is transmitted back to all the organs (not just the one signaling trouble). In this way, if one organ is ill, it affects the functioning of all the other related organs.
Peritoneal Layer: This is a membranous sheath covering all the visceral organs, and protecting them against friction, separating them, etc.

Sub-Doṣhas Or gans: All five Pitta sub-doṣhas disturb one’s spiritual life. Sadhaka Pitta and Avalbaka Kapha create the most energy disturbances on one’s spiritual path.

The combination of the two is called *Sam Awostha* (balance period). Bodhak Kapha relates to the taylin (mucus gland).

**Times And Methods To Take Herbs**

Stomach disorders are healed by ingesting herbs. Head disorders are removed through the nose. Colon diseases are healed through enemas. Strong persons take herbs in the morning on an empty stomach. Weak persons mix herbs with a light meal or snack. Stool, urine, gas, semen, menstrual, and pregnancy herbs (*apāna*) Herbs are taken before meals (i.e., disorders related to the lower body).

Pervasive ills (*samāṇa*) Herbs are taken during lunch. **Vyān** disorders Herbs are taken after breakfast and lunch. **Udān** diseases Herbs are taken after dinner. **Prāna** ills Herbs are taken between bites of food. Cough, thirst and difficult breathing Herbs are used frequently.
Hiccup: Herbs are taken with delicious foods.

Some practitioners say for Vāyu conditions, herbs are taken before meals to quickly reach these lower areas; Pitta conditions require herbs with meals to affect the middle portion of the body (Pitta organs); herbs are used immediately following meals for Kapha conditions to help with upper torso conditions.

**Herbal Recipes**

**Arteriosclerosis:** Yogaraj guggul, turmeric, aloe, safflower, myrrh.

**Athlete’s foot:** Pitta (infections), Kapha (white). Turmeric and guduchi for infections; Tea-tree oil for Kapha (internally and externally).

**Broken bones:** Mañjiśthá, arjuna, comfrey, Solomon’s seal, horsetail (internally and externally); yogaraj or pure guggul.

**Cholesterol:** Purified guggul.

**Circulation (poor):** Saffron, turmeric, cinnamon, black pepper, ajwan, cloves; trikatu for Vāyu or Kapha (yogaraj guggul for Vāyu; pure guggul for Kapha); Kaisière guggul, turmeric, mañjiśthá, saffron, coriander for Pitta. Other herbs that help circulation include brāhmít, āmalaki, and balá.

**Colic:** Fennel, chamomile.

**Dandruff:** Multani mitti or curd and sesame oil

**Depression:** Saffron, jasmine, patchouli, and ylang ylang aromas.

**Ear disorders:** Nirgundi, ghee ear baths.

**Eczema:** Brāhmít, bhringaraj.

**Encephalitis (brain inflammation):** Jatāmānśhi, brāhmít, sandalwood; 2 to 6 drops of šhadbindu oil.

**Eye disorders:** Nirgundi, triphalá, guduchi, šhweta punarnavá.

**Food allergies:** Foods that increase one’s dosha often cause allergic reactions. Allergies are also related to a weak immune system. Therefore, eating foods and taking immune boosting herbs according to one’s dosha is advised.

**Gangrene:** Echinacea.

**Gums (bleeding):** Massage gums with coconut oil or drink juice of 1/2 lemon in a cup of water.

**Hang nail:** A Vāyu excess (Vāyu-reducing herbs)

**Hemorrhoids:** 1/2 cup aloe vera juice 3 times daily. Triphalá is also useful.

**Hodgkin’s:** Jasmine.

**Immune:** Brāhmít, guduchi.

**Incontinence:** Skullcap (V+), nutmeg (P+).

**Liver:** bhūāmalaki, aloe vera gel, kaṭuká, guduchi, brāhmít, bhringaraj, chitrāyatá.

**Mastitis:** Marshmallow, balá.

**Meningitis (brain edema):** Jatāmānśhi, yogaraj guggul, brāhmít, musk, badam (almonds).

**Menstrual Cramps:** 1 tablespoon aloe vera gel with 1/4 teaspoon black pepper 3 times daily.

**Mononucleosis:** Chyavan prāsh and jatāmānśhi.

**Mouth disorders:** Triphalá.

**Nail deposits (under nail):** Vāyu and Kapha (local mucus). Vāyu/Kapha-reducing herbs.

**Pain, aches, arthritis, back pain, strains, etc.:** Ginger and water paste compress; or mahānārāyan oil equally mixed with sesame oil; saffron, turmeric.

**P/K Áma:** Six cloves of garlic well chopped, boiled in a cup of milk until it is reduced by half. Add cane sugar. Taken once daily for 1st week; every other day for the following week. After that, once or twice a week until áma is cleared.

**Pleurisy:** Licorice and honey to prevent Kapha excess.

**Psoriasis:** Brāhmít, mañjiśthá, barberry.

**Shock:** Sinus congestion—inhale one pinch of vachá powder.

**Sore throat:** Gargle with hot water mixed with turmeric, guggul, pippali, ginger, triphalá, and black pepper.

**Sprue (grahaní):** [āma causes constipation or diarrhea]. Herbs include kuṭaj, bilwa, ginger.

**Stings & Bites:** Drink cilantro juice and apply sandalwood paste externally.

**Swollen knees/ankles:** 2 lb. salt bag heated in a pan and kept on the swelling for 5 minutes a day.

**Swollen legs:** Castor oil and half cooked rice mixed into a paste and massaged on the swelling. TB: Vāsāk, vamśha lochana.

**Toothache:** Apply 3 drops of clove oil to tooth.

**Varicose Veins:** (Vāyu) Shoulder stands (10 minutes daily).
Mutually Contradictory Foods

Milk and Fish (hot and cold, respectively) vitiate the blood and obstruct circulatory channels.

Meat with honey, sesame seeds, sugar, milk, lotus stalk, or grains, causes deafness, blindness, trembling, loss of intelligence, causes voice to sound nasal, may cause death.

Milk after radish or garlic may cause obstinate skin diseases.

Milk with sour foods and drinks
Honey and ghee in equal quantities or honey, ghee and water in equal quantities, causes a subtle toxic reaction.

Drinking hot water after taking honey is contraindicated.

With very few exceptions, mutually contradictory foods cause sterility, blindness, skin diseases, ascites, eruptions, insanity, fistula, fainting, and intoxication. They can also cause tympanitis, throat spasms, anemia, ama poisoning, sprue, edema, acid indigestion, fever, rhinitis, fetal diseases, and death. These diseases are healed through emesis, purgation, antidotes, and can be prevented by protective measures.

The exceptions to mutually contradictory foods include, milk with garlic, and hot water after honey for emesis.

Herbal Preparation and Use

Fresh Juice (Swarasa)

Extracting the juice from fresh herbs (by crushing or pounding) has the most potent healing effect. With few exceptions (e.g., ginger and cilantro), it is difficult to obtain fresh Ayurvedic herbs for juicing. Each of the remaining preparations have slightly less potency than the previous, with confections containing the least degree of potency.

Decoctions (Kwātha)

Decoctions are made by boiling herbs in water over a low flame until 1/2 the amount of water remains. Decoctions are best suited for roots, stems, bark, and fruit, because it takes longer to transfer the energies from these parts of the plant to the decoction liquid (flower and leaf energy is quickly transferred).

Decoction Recipe: 1 part dry herbs to 16 parts water or 1/2 ounce of herbs to 8 ounces of water. The 8 cups of water are boiled over a low flame until half the amount (2 ounces) remains. The herb’s energies are now transferred to the liquid from the dry herb. Herbs are then strained and the decoction is taken.

Sometimes milk decoctions are especially useful for enhancing herbal properties as for ashwagandhā and śatāvari. A traditional recipe for ashwagandhā milk decoction is 1/4 ounce ashwagandhā to 1/4 cup milk to 1 cup water. This mixture is boiled over a low flame until the water evaporates. Less water can be used when using herbs in powdered form.

Hot Infusions (Phāṇṭa)

One ounce of herbs is mixed with 8 ounces of water (1:8 ratio) for hot infusions. After the water has boiled, the flame is turned off, and herbs are added to the water. The herbs are allowed to steep up between 1/2 hour to 12 hours, during which time their energies are transferred to the water. Then, herbs are strained before drinking the infusion.

Aromatic herbs, non-woody plants, leaves, and flowers are best suited to hot infusion because their energies are easily transferred and would be destroyed through boiling. When a formula requires a mixture of herbs (e.g., roots and flowers), the roots are boiled and the flowers are added and steeped.

Cold Infusions (Hima)

Herbal powders release their energies more quickly than raw herbs, so they are left to steep in cold water from 1 hour to overnight (overnight is the preferred time). As with hot infusions, cold infusions are best for delicate parts of the herbs. This method offers the further advantage of preserving herbs which have cooling or refrigerant properties. Pitta-reducing therapies are best suited to this method of preparation. Herbs include jasmine, sandalwood, mint, etc.
Wet Pill, Paste, Bolus (Kalka)

Fresh or dried herbs are rubbed on a stone and mixed with a small quantity of water until they become a soft paste. This preparation is applied externally as a paste to heal wounds, sores, etc. It can also be taken internally. Some recipes call for the addition of sweets or liquids. Twice the amount of raw honey, ghee, or oil may be added to the paste; an equal amount of jaggery may be added, and 4 times the amount of any other liquid is added.

Powders (Chúròas)

Dried herbs are ground in a mortar and pestle or with an herb grinding machine; and strained into a fine powder. They are easily mixed with other herbs and have quick acting properties in the body. However, they stay in the body for only a few hours, and their shelf life is not as long as that of pills and other compounds.

Traditionally powdered mixtures used 20 or more different herbs per formula. Powders are best taken with ghee, raw sugar, or raw honey; which transport the herb’s energies to all seven tissue layers. The ratio of herbs to vehicle is 1:2. If milk or water is used as a vehicle, they are used in a ratio of 4:1 to herbs.

Powders work best for the gastrointestinal tract and on the plasma tissue (rasa dhátu); with the exception of rejuvenative herbs like ashwagandhá, triphalá, śhatavāri, etc., that work on all seven tissues. Traditional powdered (chúrṇa) formulas include lāvan bhäskar, triphalā, sitopalādi, hingwastak, and sūdarśhan chūrṇas.

Pills (Gu्ति and Va्ति)

Pills not only include herbs, but also powdered herbal extracts and burnt minerals and metals. These make the pill more potent, offering a quicker and more effective healing process. Pills also remain in the body longer than powders and have a longer shelf life. When pills are made with burnt metals and minerals (bhasmas), the longer the pills are stored the more potent they become.

Traditional pills include laśhunadi vaţi, chandraprabhā vaţi, kuṭajghan vaţi, yogārāj guggul, and kaिशore guggul.

Confections (Avaleha)

This is the solid mass obtained from boiling a decoction. Sugar or liquid is added in 4 times the quantity, while jaggery is only double the quantity of the mass. This makes a confection. They are best taken with boiled milk, cane juice, or decoction. Chyavan prāś is perhaps the most well known confection. Being sweet in nature, children like to eat the confection. Often avalehas are used as tonics and rejuvenatives. Different confections help different disorders.

Medicated Ghee and Oil (Sneha)

Oils work primarily on the skin, blood, lungs, and colon; they cannot reach the deeper tissue layers because their heavy nature is difficult for the liver to digest (the colon will have some effect on the nerves, however).

The recipe for sneha is 1 part herb paste to 4 parts ghee or oil to 4 parts of any decoction (or 16 parts water). They are cooked over a low flame for 4 to 8 hours until the water evaporates. When water is sprinkled into the oil or ghee, it will crackle; the preparation is now ready.

When the delicate parts of the plant (i.e., leaf or flower) or aromatic herbs are used they may be directly added to the pre-cooked oil or ghee and left to sit for 24 to 48 hours before they are strained.

Herbs are empowered by this process, providing quick and strong healing or rejuvenation. Snehas are used internally, in the nose, eyes, head, as enemas, and elsewhere. Traditional oil formulas include brāhmī ghee, brāhmī, mahānārāyan, daśhmūl, anu, mahābhūṅgarāj, triphalā ghee, piṇḍa oil, and śhad bindu.
Medicated or Fermented Wines (Āsavas, Āriṣṭhas)

Āsavas are prepared in cold water without boiling the herbs. Āriṣṭhas involve boiling the herbs. Fermenting agents are added to these mixtures (e.g., jaggery, dhātkī) which are then stored at specific temperatures for a number of days, weeks, or months. This form of herbology is the Āyurvedic version of western liquid extracts, only more potent. These wines are easily and instantly absorbed into the bloodstream (even if one has trouble digesting herbal pills or powders); improve digestive fire, and contain no alcohol. Traditional wines include balāsavā, kuóajāriṣṭha, drākṣāsavā, arjunāriṣṭha, pañchāsavā.

Extracts

Herbal powdered extracts along with or instead of plain herb powders have become the industry standard. Extracts can offer a guaranteed potency of more than 3 to 6 times the power of plain herbs. Giloy Sattwa is a traditional Āyurveda powdered extract of guāuchí. Purified guggul is another common extract. In the U.S., many extracts are now offered including garcinia (tamarind) and turmeric.

There are 2 approaches to extraction. The common method is to take the active ingredients out of the whole herb. Newer methods to extract the whole plant yet guaranteed potency levels have been developed by Zandu Pharmacies of Bombay. This approach is more in line with Āyurvedic thinking because it uses the entire herb. In this method, one receives the properties of whole herb as mother nature has intended.

By only using so-called “active ingredients,” we are assuming that the other ingredients play no role in the healing process when they may actually prevent side effects or direct the healing effects of the herb to its appropriate site. Thus, the whole plant extract retains the integrity of the herb, ensuring safety and efficacy.

Minerals and Metals (Rasas)

Seven metals are used along with herbs in certain powerful preparations. The 7 metals (gold, silver, brass, copper, lead, tin, and magnetic iron-ore) relate to the 7 dhātus (tissue layers). These 7 plus 2 additional metals relate to the nine planets: copper/Sun, silver/Moon, brass/Mars, lead/Mercury, gold/Jupiter, tin/Venus, steel/Saturn, bronze/Rahu, magnetic iron-ore/Ketu. These metals undergo precise purification processes to remove toxins and make them digestible.

When the metals undergo these alchemical processes they are used for rejuvenation (rasāyanas) therapy. For example, therapies for healing amebic parasites include antiparasitical herbs and immune-boosting herbs. Formulas sold in India include kutaj (antiparasitical) and mercury bhasma (immune-boosting ash). Bhasmas (metal, mineral, and gem ash) are common to many Āyurvedic products in India. Some of the bhasmas have not yet been approved for use in the U.S. by the FDA. Many European countries, however, allow importation of these bhasmas.

Metals, gems, minerals (mica, red coral, sea shells) are burnt into ash (bhasma) in a very specific process, thereby removing all toxic properties. If these items are improperly prepared, ingesting them can be life-threatening. Even in India, only a few Āyurvedic companies are viewed as reliable manufacturers of bhasmas. So caution is strongly advised when considering the use of certain bhasmas.

Mercuy conquers all diseases and confers strength.
Śhāṅgadhrā Samhitā: Ch. 12; verse 1

Herb Mixing

Dose: The herbal dose depends on many factors, e.g., the strength of the person, the herb, the disease or disorder, the season, and geographic location. For example, doses given to person in India are generally 2 to 4 times higher than those required or tolerated
by persons in the U.S. For mild conditions found in the U.S., 1/4 to 1/2 tsp. of powdered herbs; 3 times daily is adequate to produce desired healing results. For more chronic mental or physical problems, 1/2 to 1 teaspoon, 3 times daily is needed. Yet even in these cases, it is wise to allow gradual build-up from smaller doses to the full dose so that the system can adjust to the herbs. In extreme conditions (e.g., cancer), 1 to 3 ounces daily are required for certain tissue layer (dhatu) healing.

Children’s doses have been discussed in Chapter 23. From birth to one month, herbs are given in quantities of approximating 2 rice grains, with raw honey, milk, ghee, or syrup (herbs may also be received through breast milk). This quantity is augmented by 2 grains each month until age 15 to a maximum dose of 1/16 teaspoon.

Pet Care: Pets (horses, cats, dogs) respond extremely well to herbs. Animals are so intuitive they often attack the bag or bottle of herbs before their owner can even give them the product. At our U.S. center, we have found that pets only require 1/16 to 1/8 teaspoon of herbs for most disorders; even chronic ones. Since it is difficult to take the pulse of a pet, deciding on appropriate therapies is achieved through observing symptoms and medical reports prepared by the veterinarian.

Mixing: Mixing herb powders is a fairly simple process so long as the tridoshic theory is followed. Keep in mind the effects each herb has on a particular dosha, disorder, organ, and tissue layer. For example, if a Vayu dosha person needs a brain tonic, Vayu-reducing or tridoshic brain tonic herbs are used, such as ashwagandha, jatamansi, or brahmi. An herb like skullcap, although useful for insomnia and nervousness, will aggravate the Vayu dosha if used in excess. Thus, skullcap can be completely avoided or mixed with warming herbs such as cinnamon to balance out its cooling effect.

Another example of herb personalization is high blood pressure. Although garlic is a well-known herb for hypertension, in Ayurveda it is helpful for Vayu- and Kapha-caused hypertension; it will aggravate Pitta-related high blood pressure. If a person is a dual dosha, herbs that increase the third dosha are used. For example if a person is a Pitta-Kapha dosha and has a Pitta-Kapha health concern, such as bronchitis (Kapha symptoms) with an infection (yellow or green mucus/Pitta secondary symptoms), then Vayu-increasing lung herbs are used (e.g., vashak). The Vayu energies cool the excess Pitta (infection), dry the excess Kapha (phlegm), and the herb directs these energies directly to the lungs. When looking at this balancing effect from the view of the six tastes, the bitter taste is responsible for healing. Bitter herbs often have antibiotic proprieties (e.g., goldenseal).

When tridoshic disorders are involved (all three doshas are present), tridoshic herbs are required. If these herbs are not specific enough to affect healing then herbs are used to heal (reduce) the dosha causing the most problems. As this condition improves, should another dosha become aggravated due to ingesting the herbs being used, then herbs should be changed to balance this newly developed condition. Unquestionably, tridoshic cases are the most difficult situations to deal with.

Sometimes subtle uses of the herbs come into play. If one has an opportunity to effect healing using sattvic (holy) herbs (e.g., brahmi or tulsi,) instead of tamasic or rajasic herbs (e.g., garlic, onions, valerian), then subtler spiritual benefits can develop as well. However, if needed for physical healing, tamasic and rajasic herbs must be used for some time. Directing herbs to the proper organ should also be considered. Certain herbs, such as gokshura break up urinary stones. Coriander is mixed with gokshura to direct its healing effect to break up gallstones.

To summarize the rules discussed:

1) Use tridoshic herbs.

2) Use herbs that reduce one’s dosha.

3) If using herbs that increase one’s dosha, add other herbs that balance the herb’s effects (i.e., add secondary herbs that will reduce the dosha). Even if these herbs are not specifically used for that condition, they will balance the effects of the primary herb.
4) Dual-dośha disorders require herbs that increase the third dośha (i.e., reduce both dośhas)

5) When tridośhic conditions require non-tridośhic herbs, constant switching of herbs is needed for balance depending upon the predominant dośha.

6) Antibiotic or other specific concern herbs can be used.

7) Sattwic herbs are preferred over tamasic or rajasic herbs as long as they affect healing.

8) Secondary herbs may need to be used to direct the main herb to a specific organ or tissue.

The above chart explains how a Pitta/Kapha dośha excess is balanced. Pitta and Kapha are in excess, and Vāyu is deficient. Herbs and foods that increase Vāyu and reduce Pitta and Kapha, are incorporated into one’s life; whereas items that increase Pitta and Kapha are avoided or reduced. Thus, the energies of Vāyu (e.g., cool, dry) will reduce the effects of Pitta (hot) and Kapha (dampness, phlegm). This tridosha theory is discussed in detail in Chapters 3 and 6. Below is a review of this theory.

If Pitta is in excess, heat is the main experience. Herbs that are cooling (sweet, bitter, and astringent) will balance the heat (i.e., reduce the heat). If Kapha is excessive, moistness (phlegm) is predominant or imbalanced in the individual. Herbs that are hot, pungent, and bitter will balance or reduce the moisture by their drying nature. When Pitta and Kapha are in excess, heat and moistness are the predominant symptoms. Bitter-tasting herbs will reduce both Pitta and Kapha dośhas (astringent tastes may aggravate the earth element of Kapha, and pungent or hot tastes will aggravate or increase the Pitta element). Thus, bitter tastes will reduce Pitta and Kapha. See the tables below.

When choosing herbs for a specific health concern, it is advisable to find an herb that works best for the situation. For example mañjiṣṭhā is the best blood purifier. Other blood-cleansing herbs can then be added to the mixture, such as brāhmī and turmeric. Two to 4 times as much of the main herb (mañjiṣṭhā) is used with the secondary herbs (2:1:1). Conditions associated with the main problem are also addressed. Should the liver also need detoxifying, liver-cleansing herbs are added to the mixture. Brāhmī also cleanses the liver, so it helps both conditions. However, if the liver requires serious attention, bhūāmalakī, the best liver cleanser, may be necessary to add to the formula.
If blood purification is the predominating concern, then less bhūāmalakī is used (one or two parts). If the liver needs as much attention as the blood, then equal amounts of bhūāmalakī and mañjiśṭhā are used (2:2). One part coriander can be added to the formula to help digest the herbs, making them more effective and quick acting. If mental stress has caused the disorder, then brāhmī would also be added to the formula to balance the mind.

If the person with this Pitta condition is a pure Pitta dośha, this would be an acceptable formula. If they are a Pitta/Vāyu dośha, then bhūāmalakī may be too aggravating for Vāyu. Brāhmī or bhūṅgarāj can be used instead of bhūāmalakī. When herbs cannot be found to heal a condition without aggravating one’s dośha (in this example, Vāyu) the rule is to choose herbs that will heal the excessed condition (in this case the blood and liver) and watch for any Vāyu-excess symptoms.

To summarize
1) The best herb for a condition should dominate the formula.
2) Other herbs can be used in smaller amounts. 3) Herbs used for secondary conditions are added in lesser amounts.
4) If two conditions are equally predominant, use the one herb that will help both conditions, or separate herbs for both conditions and use them in equal quantities.
5) Include herbs that digest the other herbs, thereby saving digestive energy and improving the absorption of the herbs.

Vessels and Cooking
The nature of the pot used to cook herbs (and foods) affects the final preparation. Aluminum, for example, is absorbed into the body as a poison. The best cooking materials are:
- Kapha-reducing: Clay and copper (scraping and reducing properties)
- Pitta-reducing: Brass or silver (cooling properties)
- Vāyu-reducing: Iron (grounding properties)

Cooking over a flame (gas or wood) is better than using electric heat because it empowers the herbs and foods, making them more easily digestible. Wood fires are best, microwaves are not recommended.

Āyurvedic Acupuncture
(Bhedan Karma)
In the three major Āyurvedic texts, discussions of surgery and marma points also involved Āyurvedic acupuncture or “needling,” and moxibustion. The use of needles was used for both surgical and non-surgical healing. According to Dr. Frank Ross, author of The Lost Secrets of Āyurvedic Acupuncture; acupuncture was taught in Indian schools at least as early as 100 B.C. Students included Chinese visitors.

Very little information about Āyurvedic acupuncture is available in India today. It was first recorded in the Suchi Veda (science of needling) about 3,000 years ago. Since this is a very detailed science, the topic is merely mentioned here. For a more detailed explanation of the subject, please read Dr. Ros’ book.