

Light Miller

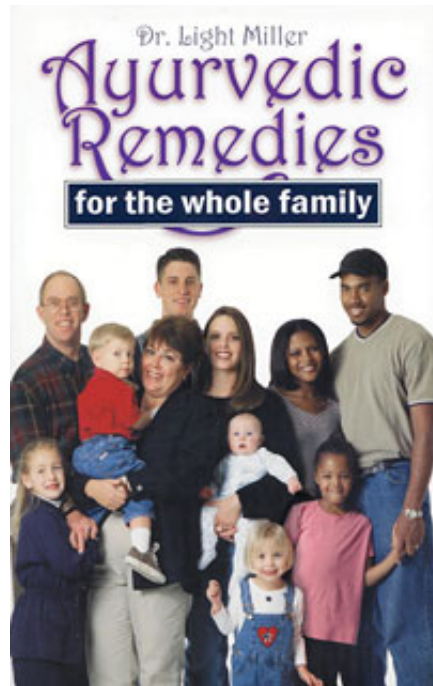
Ayurvedic Remedies for the Whole Family

Reading excerpt

[Ayurvedic Remedies for the Whole Family](#)

of [Light Miller](#)

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CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS AYURVEDA AND WHY SHOULD I USE IT?



TODAY IN THE WEST, we are experiencing a health crisis. There are many diseases for which there are no cures. Modern medicine can only temporarily relieve the disease symptoms and have not yet been able to discover their cause. More and more people are searching for answers away from modern medicine. Statistics show that people in mainstream America spend between \$ 1,000 - \$2,000 a year on holistic health care, on top of their medical insurance. This holistic care includes such treatments as massage,

acupuncture, chiropractic, naturopathic, Chinese Medicine, Therapeutic Touch, herbal and diet regimens.

Ayurveda is the 5,000 year old medical system that has been used in India on over a billion people. Ayurveda is a common sense medicine which can assist the individual with simple home routines which are preventative in nature and promote good health. Individuals learn to care for themselves. Dr. Mom is the home health practitioner for the whole family using at-home therapies including thoughtful application of foods, spices, herbs, massage, vitamins and minerals to correct problems and maintain health. Also available at a higher level for more severe conditions, are Ayurvedic doctors, practitioners, and clinics with advanced diagnostics and therapies.

Ayurveda is the only medical system that recognizes individual metabolic types. "One man's food is another man's poison" is a western phrase which explains this. This difference in metabolism is the reason why some people can eat anything and everything and not gain weight, while others have only to look at food to put on pounds. This knowledge of differences in individuals can be used to make food, herb and vitamin therapies rational and effective. Finding out what agrees with you, and what doesn't, is the difference between increasing health or losing it.

Modern medicine is less than 100 years old. One-third of doctor visits involve iatrogenic disease (disease caused by medicines and doctors). Modern medicine is still working out its bugs. We have placed our trust in medicine to find "magic bullets" for all diseases. It hasn't happened, and it won't. Ayurveda, on the other hand, is time tested and places its trust in basics; good food, appropriate herbs, clean water, peaceful thoughts, and appropriate lifestyle. When we embrace Ayurveda, we take back control of our own health. We rebuild it. We maintain it. Ayurveda teaches us that when we create balance, we can attain perfect health. As we understand our body-mind-spirit connection we are able to extend the span of life and create longevity. The main purpose of this science is to create self-knowledge and mastery. When we awaken to our true potential, we create freedom in our bodies. With practice and mastery of ourselves we can become free of suffering.

Ayurveda recognizes that we came here to this earth to accomplish specific purposes. Our true nature is Divine and everything

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that we need to know is already available within us. When we support our body with these principles, we are open to the unlimited possibilities and potential to live our life in health and awareness.

THE THREE DOSHAS

In Ayurvedic philosophy, Doshas are the primary life forces or biological humors created when the pairing of two of the five elements create three dynamic forces or interactions. The word Dosha means "that which changes," a term which refers to the way the elements are constantly in motion while retaining a dynamic balance. The word Dosha also means "that which darkens" or "spoils," a reference to the way an imbalance among the elements can cause dis-ease.

| | | | | |
|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| ETHER | AIR | FIRE | WATER | EARTH |
| | VATA | PITTA | | KAPHA |

VATA (va-ta) is created by a combination of the elements Ether (space) and Air. The driving force behind the other two Doshas, Vata ("that which moves things") is responsible for balance, energy, breath, movement, sense perception, thought, and will. As movement, Vata manifests itself in life in the movement of air, blood, food, nerve impulses, thoughts, and waste. The seven Vata characteristics which affect the body are cold, light, dry, irregular, mobile, rarefied, and rough. Excessive Vata force causes confusion, gas, high blood pressure, and nerve irritation. Insufficient Vata force can create congestion, constipation, nerve loss, and thoughtlessness.

AIR, UNRESTRICTED BY SPACE (AS IN THE OPEN OCEAN), CAN GAIN ENOUGH MOMENTUM TO BECOME A HURRICANE.

AIR CONFINED TO A BOX CANNOT MOVE AND BECOMES STAGNANT

The PITTA (pit-ta) Dosha or life force is created by the dynamic movement between the two elements which symbolize transformation, water and fire. The transforming nature of Pitta ("that which digests") is evident in our bodies by the digestive enzymes and hor-

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mones governing metabolism. Pitta works in our minds by transforming chemical and electrical impulses into thoughts. Pitta characteristics affecting the body include hot, light, fluid, subtle, sharp, malodorous, and clear. Excessive Pitta causes acne, anger, hormonal imbalance, and ulcers. Insufficient Pitta results in indigestion, sluggish metabolism, and loss of comprehension.

THE BALANCE OF FIRE AND WATER IS VITAL.
NOT ENOUGH WATER AND THE POT BURNS.

BUT TOO MUCH WATER IN THE POT
OVERFLOWS AND PUTS OUT THE FIRE.

KAPHA (ka-fa) is the life force combining the water and earth elements. Kapha ("that which binds") is the composition of the cellular structure of our organs (structure) as well as the fluids which nourish and protect them (lubrication). The Kapha characteristics affecting the body include oily, cold, heavy, stable, dense, and smooth. Excessive Kapha force creates mucous buildup in the sinus, nasal, lung, and colon area. It affects the mind by causing rigidity, fixation, and inflexibility. Insufficient Kapha can produce a dry respiratory tract, burning stomach, and lack of concentration.

Changing Forces

The three life forces (Doshas) of Vata, Pitta, and Kapha are in dynamic motion, forever changing and balancing each other not only in human bodies but in all of life. The Doshas are the energies of life, the motion that makes life happen. When the Doshas are out of balance, they create disease.

The Doshas have a relationship to plant life. The flowers and leaves reaching into space and air are the plant's Vata force. The roots which store water in the depth of the earth is the plant's Kapha concentration. Resins, saps, spices, and the other essential oils of plant life are its Pitta. Human bodies rely on the life forces of plants to balance and harmonize our own concentrations of Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. To increase our Kapha force, for instance, we should eat root vegetables, milk and dairy products, and sedating herbs like Valerian. Vata forces can be increased by drinking herbal flowers like

Jasmine or eating dry grains. Pitta tendencies are increased when we consume hot, spicy foods like cayenne or concentrated protein like Bee Pollen.

BODY GOVERNANCE AND THE 5 ELEMENTS

Each of the five elements is concentrated in a region of the body and controls specific functions.

Ayurveda teaches us that we are made of the same elemental forces as the universe.

| ELEMENT | CONTROL OF |
|---------|--|
| Ether | Brain Nervous System |
| Air | Nose, Chest Respiration |
| Fire | Upper Abdomen Digestion Hormones |
| Water | Urinary Tract Lower Abdomen |
| Earth | Lower Body Excretion Stability |

VATA

Ether, Air

All movement in the body and nerve impulses

Vata Activities of the Body

Cold: preservation and aliveness of the body

Light: movement, mobility, and flexibility

Dry: creates intercellular space

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Mobile: all involuntary body impulses and air movement

Subtle: capillary & cellular breathing

Clear: represents creativity, perception, clarity and understanding

Astringent: represents respiration of the cells, circulating movement

Rough: rough skin, not sensitive or fluid, abrupt, variable

Dispersing: movement of nutrients

Causes of Vata Imbalances

Long hours of computer work, too much TV, chewing gum, excessive exercise, cold wind exposure, excessive travel, excessive movement, disorganized, undisciplined or irregular schedule, working at night, not enough sleep or poor sleeping habits, insufficient natural light, junk foods.

Vata Illnesses

Flatulence, forgetfulness, dryness, emphysema, all pain, spasms, rigidity, goose bumps, nervousness, muscle twitching, atrophy of muscles, impulsive behavior, osteoporosis, insomnia, babbling, sensory disorientation, confusion, emaciation, weakness, bloatedness, constipation, debility, stuttering, dizziness.

Emotional Imbalances

Insecurity, fear, anxiety, restlessness, confusion, indecision, secretiveness, sneakiness, changeable.

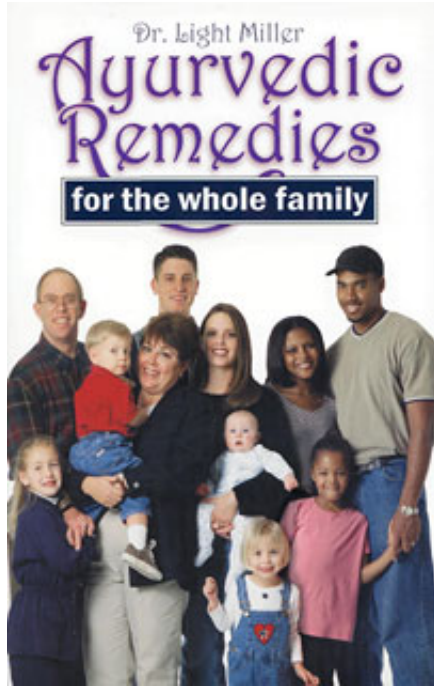
Best Diet for Vata

Summer: Cooked foods, primarily. Salads must be accompanied by lots of salad oil.

Winter: Soups, Immune Broth, stews, warm foods (well cooked), spices, many root vegetables and grains.

Sites of Vata

Colon, thighs, hips, ears, hands.



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