Ayurveda
"Science of Life"

Introduction

- Ayurveda emphasizes prevention of disease, rejuvenation of our body systems, and extension of life span.
- Ayurveda provides an integrated approach to preventing and treating illness through lifestyle interventions and natural therapies
- Ayurvedic philosophy and practices link us to every aspect of ourselves and remind us that we are in union with every aspect of nature, each other, and the entire universe.
Basis for Ayurvedic Philosophy

- the entire cosmos or universe is part of one singular absolute.
  - Everything that exists in the vast external universe (macrocosm) also appears in the internal cosmos of the human body (microcosm).
- In the ancient Ayurveda text, Charaka, says, "Man is the epitome of the universe. Within man, there is as much diversity as in the world outside. Similarly, the outside world is as diverse as human beings themselves."

Uniqueness of Individuals

- Ayurveda views each and every person as unique
  - Does modern science views individuals as unique in the universe?
  - We have a unique DNA.
- According to Ayurveda, because we each have a unique constitution, our health prescription must be unique to us.
  - Understanding it lets you know what you need in order to be healthy.
Harmony with Nature and Developing Perfect Health

- The theoretical side of Ayurveda provides insights into how to live one's life in harmony with nature and natural laws and rhythms
- Its practical side helps us take control of our lives and develop radiant health.
- The central goal of Ayurveda is nothing less than a state of perfect health
- According to Ayurveda, nature is permeated by intelligence

Self Correcting Mechanism and Balance

- Nature has set us up with all the equipment we need to be perfectly healthy
- Every second the body is adjusting to countless thousands of changing parameters, keeping us in homeostatic balance
- It is trying to be perfectly healthy all the time, using its innate self-healing, self-regulating ability as it strives for a perfect homeostatic balance.

But we repeatedly interfere!
Concept of Self

- Self is the central point of our being, the hub of the wheel.
  - It is the true inner center of our diversified lives
- Our person can be spontaneously enhanced by the process of **self-referral**
  - looking within to experience the Self.
- The Self can be directly experienced.

How Do We Get Sick?

- Ayurveda holds that specific disease conditions are symptoms of an underlying imbalance.
  - It does not neglect relief of these symptoms
  - Its main focus is on the big picture:
    - to restore balance
    - to help you create such a healthy lifestyle that the imbalance won't occur again.
**The Five Elements**

- **Earth** represents the solid state of matter.
  - In our body, the parts such as bones, teeth, cells, and tissues are manifestations of the earth.
  - Earth is considered a stable substance.
- **Water** characterizes change and represents the liquid state.
  - Water is necessary for the survival of all living things.
  - Water is a substance without stability.
- **Fire** is the power to transform solids into liquids, to gas, and back again.
  - Within our bodies, the fire or energy binds the atoms together.
  - Fire is considered a form without substance.
- **Air** is the gaseous form of matter which is mobile and dynamic.
  - Within the body, air (oxygen) is the basis for all energy transfer reactions.
- **Ether** is the space in which everything happens.
  - It is the field that is simultaneously the source of all matter and the space in which it exists.

**Senses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Senses</th>
<th>Sense Organ</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Organ of Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ether</td>
<td>Hearing</td>
<td>Ear</td>
<td>Speech</td>
<td>Tongue, vocal cords, mouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air</td>
<td>Touch</td>
<td>Skin</td>
<td>Holding</td>
<td>Hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire</td>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>Eye</td>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>Feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Taste</td>
<td>Tongue</td>
<td>Procreation</td>
<td>Genitals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth</td>
<td>Smell</td>
<td>Nose</td>
<td>Excretion</td>
<td>Anus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Like And Unlike

Anything that enters our body (microcosm) can exert three possible effects on the organism.

- It can act as food. This nourishes the organism
- It can act as medicine. This balances the organism
- It can act as poison. This disturbs the organism.
- The five elements may exert one, two, or all three of these effects.
- Law of Like and Unlike. Like increase like. Unlike decreases like.
- Everything you experience, food, medicine, or poison, increases like parts of your microcosm and decreases those parts that are unlike it.

Concept of Tri-Dosha

- Five elements combine in pairs to form three dynamic forces or interactions called doshas.
- Dosha means "that which changes."
  - constantly moving in dynamic balance, one with the others.
  - required for the life to happen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dosha</th>
<th>Related Elements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vata</td>
<td>Air and Ether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitta</td>
<td>Fire and Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapha</td>
<td>Water and Earth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Balanced Tridosha means a Healthy Person

- Every person (and thing) contains all three doshas
  - proportion varies according to the individual
  - one or two doshas predominate.
- Doshas are continually interacting with one another and with the doshas in all of nature.
  - different foods, tastes, colors, and sounds affect the doshas in different ways
- Your basic constitution represents your psychological and physical nature
  - When balance is maintained, health is at optimum.

Concept of Prakruti and Vikruti

- **Prakruti**
  - your basic constitution is determined at the time of conception.
  - Your Prakruti is unique to you just as your fingerprint and DNA
- Your current condition is called your **vikruti**.
- If the current proportion of your doshas differs significantly from your constitutional proportion, it indicates imbalances, which in turn can lead to illness.
  - Farther your Vikruti is from your Prakruti, more ill you are.

http://www.holisticonline.com/ayurveda/ayv-diagnostic-tests.htm