

# Yoga Spirit Academy E-zine

Healing body, mind and spirit  
with the wisdom of Yoga, meditation and Ayurveda

May / June 2020

Volume 13, Issue 3

## Boost Immunity through Yoga and Āyurveda

By Janet W. Parachin, PhD

How are you handling your circumstances surrounding the pandemic?

- I'm afraid of getting sick, worrying about money, and anxious for the future.
- I'm frustrated that my life has been disrupted and I'm angry at the way the situation is being handled by the people in charge.
- I'm so sad that people are suffering. I lack motivation and I'm tending to eat and sleep more than usual.
- All is well with me. My moods are not determined by what is happening in the outside world.

You may find yourself routinely in one of the responses above, or maybe you have experienced each one at different times. These responses correspond with the three doshas of Ayurveda. The doshas are the energetic forces which govern our mental and physical health. When doshas are out of balance a person exhibits attitudes and behaviors which do not serve them well.

√ Fear, worry and anxiety signal an imbalance of Vata dosha

√ Frustration and anger occur when Pitta dosha boils over

√ Sadness, lack of motivation and overindulgence indicate Kapha dosha is in control

√ Equanimity, peace and acceptance are hallmarks of dosha balance

I was so fortunate to participate in a webinar with my teacher Dr. Vasant Lad at the Ayurvedic Institute in Albuquerque on the topic of immunity. How fortuitous that the topic was chosen last summer, well before the current health crisis erupted. The Universe always provides!

So much of the discussion in the medical community and the media is focused on developing a vaccine to prevent the new

virus. Conservative estimates say it will be at least 18 months before such a vaccine is mass produced.

Vaccinations provide acquired immunity. Thank goodness for that because humans have actually eradicated many illnesses through vaccination. But not all acquired immunity lasts, which is why people have to get a new flu shot every year.

Yoga and Ayurveda are more interested in preserving natural immunity. The tradition recognizes that the human body and mind are amazing in their ability to build a barrier against and fight off infections, viruses and other diseases. No one has to wait for someone else to protect them. From the ancient wisdom of Yoga and Ayurveda, there are things we can all do to boost immunity NOW.

Regulate digestion: Healthy absorption and assimilation of nutrients is always the first line of defense against disease. If you're eating fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains and organic dairy, you will be consuming all the



building blocks of a disease-free body. Digestive fire is known as agni. "Eat when you're hungry; don't eat when you're not hungry." Eating meals at regular times every day teaches your body when to eat and how to digest it properly.

Complete elimination of toxins: Ayurveda teaches that ama, or toxins, are the main cause of all disease. Urinating regularly, having 1-3 bowel movements each day, and sweating each day are the three ways we eliminate toxins from the body. Also use a copper tongue scraper first thing each morning. Copper is

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Yoga Spirit Academy  
200-hour and 300-hour yoga teacher training  
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best because it is anti-microbial, but other types work well too.

**Drink fresh water:** Since the body is largely made up of water, a steady flow of internal water keeps the circulatory, lymphatic, digestive and eliminative systems working well. Start the day with a large glass of warm water and sip hot water with honey throughout the day. Avoid cold and icy drinks as they douse digestive fire.

**Turmeric** is anti-inflammatory and anti-bacterial, an easy addition to your meals. An excellent bedtime drink is hot milk with ½ teaspoon of turmeric. This calming drink also promotes the strength of ojas, the superfine essence of immunity in the human body.

**Yoga postures:** During Spring season it's a good idea to break a sweat every day to counter the heavy Kapha influences. Sun salutations are a great choice. You can also hold challenging poses for 5-10 breaths: plank, side plank, warrior poses, triangle, all balancing postures.

**Pranayama:** Because prana is our very life force, a little pranayama every day goes a long way. Try alternate nostril breathing, ocean-sounding breath, humming breath or equal breathing for 5-10 minutes once or twice a day.

**Mantra meditation:** This is the part of Yoga and Ayurveda that works primarily on the mind. Recite a mantra 108 times using a mala once or twice each day. OM GUM GANAPATAYEI NAMAHA to remove obstacles. OM SHRIM MAHA LAKSHMIYEI NAMAHA to cultivate abundance and generosity. OM NAMA SHIVAYA for strength and balance.

**Herbal support:** For those who are living the Ayurvedic lifestyle, Dr. Lad recommends the following herbs: Super Nasya oil, 3 drops in each nostril once a day to keep viruses from migrating into the respiratory tract; Trikatu before meals to kindle digestive fire; Triphala after meals to burn ama; daily dose of adaptogens shatavari for women and ashwagandha for men.



May you be happy, healthy, safe and free from suffering! May you know balance in body, mind and spirit!

## Therapeutic Yoga and Ayurveda

This 45-hour course is an advanced teacher training which explores the therapeutic applications of Yoga and Ayurveda to heal and prevent injuries and illness, therapeutic yoga for the hips and sacrum, for the shoulders and neck, for the back and spine, for the extremities, and for mental and emotional healing. The cost of the course is \$675. The prerequisite is 100 hours of yoga teacher training from any school or 300 hours of documented yoga teaching. Classes are held on Saturday and Sunday from 1:00-7:00pm on the following days:

May 30-31

June 27-28

July 25-26

August 22-23 (make-up)

For more information, contact the Director at [jparachin@cox.net](mailto:jparachin@cox.net) or visit our website <https://yogaspirittulsa.com/300-hour-training/>

## The Path of True Awakening

“Life is a good teacher and a good friend. Things are always in transition, if we could only realize it. Nothing ever sums itself up in the way that we like to dream about. The off-center, in-between state is an ideal situation, a situation in which we don't get caught and we can open our hearts and minds beyond limit. It's a very tender, nonaggressive, open-ended state of affairs. To stay with that shakiness—to stay with a broken heart, with a rumbling stomach, with the feeling of hopelessness and wanting to get revenge—that is the path of true awakening. Sticking with that uncertainty, getting the knack of relaxing in the midst of chaos, learning not to panic—this is the spiritual path.”

-Pema Chödrön



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