

Ayurveda - Health notes

Weight Imbalance - Vata

If you are Vata-predominant, you are normally thin and wiry. But that does not mean weight gain will never be a problem for you. Sometimes Vata types are thin all their lives and then suddenly put on weight because their metabolism has changed. Vata-predominant people are susceptible to mental stress because they tend to overuse or misuse their minds. When under stress they also tend to forget to eat regularly, thus disturbing their digestion, creating ama and clogging the channels. This is often the precursor to weight gain.

For a Vata person, the most important thing is to reduce mental stress and to nourish the body with light, easily digestible food. To reduce mental stress, you can practice the Transcendental Meditation™ program, which has been proven in hundreds of scientific studies to be the most effective technique for dissolving mental, emotional and physical stress. It only takes twenty minutes twice a day, but its effect in improving the quality of life is enormous.

ROUTINE IS IMPORTANT

People with a predominance of Vata dosha need a regular routine, to balance the uneven, variable nature of Vata dosha. It's important that they go to bed early, well before ten o'clock and rise early, before 6 a.m. A regular routine with adequate sleep is one of the best antidotes to Vata imbalance. Regular meals are essential, with three warm, cooked meals a day. It's important to eat them at the same time every day, as Vata digestion tends to be irregular. By eating at the same time, your digestive enzymes will prepare to digest the food and digestion will be stronger. Avoid work that is stressful to the mind, and practice relaxing exercise such as yoga and pranayama (breathing exercises). A daily oil massage is especially important for Vata, and the Youthful Skin Massage Oil helps alleviate dry skin that is often a result of Vata imbalance. The skin is one of the primary seats of Vata dosha in the body, so massaging your body every morning with warm, Vata-pacifying oil can go a long way toward soothing your entire nervous system and emotions. The more relaxed you are, and the more regular your routine, the better you will withstand day-to-day stress and the less likely you are to fall prey to weight imbalances.

Many times people with Vata disorders find themselves in a rush, always in a hurry. It's not healthy for anyone to always be rushing around, to constantly have to hurry, and it's especially harmful to people with Vata imbalances. If you find yourself in that situation, it's important to cultivate a habit of taking it easy and slowing down. Learn to structure a more relaxed, royal daily routine. This is important for mental, emotional and physical health.

EAT A BALANCED DIET

When Vata dosha is the underlying cause of a weight problem, it's important to eat a balanced diet that is easy to digest but also nurturing. Take the middle path, and eat a tridoshic diet, which means one that balances all three doshas. Avoid foods that are too hot and spicy (such as food spiced with chillies, cayenne, and black mustard seed), and at the same time avoid foods that are ice cold, such as ice cream, iced drinks, and cold, heavy desserts. Stay away from foods that are too heavy (such as aged cheeses, meats, and heavy desserts) and also avoid foods that are too light and dry, such as crackers, cold cereals, and packaged snacks. In general, avoid leftovers; frozen, canned or packaged foods, and processed foods of all kinds.

Eat foods that are fresh, organic, and whole. Favor foods that transform easily into ojas, the product of perfect digestion that improves immunity, bliss and happiness in the body, rather than ama. For breakfast try stewed apples and pears; for dinner eat whole grains and soups made with fresh vegetables and pulses; and for the main meal at noon include organic vegetables such as zucchini and loki squash, grains such as quinoa, light proteins such as split mung dhal soups, and light dairy products such as lassi and panir. Cook with light,

split mung dhal soups, and light dairy products such as lassi and panir. Cook with light, nourishing oils such as ghee and olive oil and spices such as turmeric, coriander, cumin and fennel.

HERBS THAT HEAL

Rasayana for women or rasayana for men is excellent for individuals experiencing Vata-induced weight imbalance. These herbal formulas strengthen resistance to stressful situations and increase creativity, mental abilities and emotional balance. They also aid the body's natural digestion, elimination and purification systems. The overall result of boosting the body's natural systems is an increase in energy and vitality. Someone who has gained weight due to Vata disorders would also benefit greatly from taking peace of mind and the peace of mind tablets. These natural products nurture the mind and help counteract mental strain, which Vata-predominant people are often susceptible to. Peace of Mind tablets and Tea contain Brahmi, an herb famous for reducing stress and anxiety.

A pilot research study that was done at the University of California in San Diego showed that peace of mind tablets are effective in reducing the effects of day-to-day mental stress. It is highly effective in alleviating occasional stress-related difficulty in falling asleep. Other herbs used in peace of mind tea include Ashwagandha and Arjuna. Ashwagandha is an adaptogenic, which means that it combats physical fatigue that converts to mental dullness. Research shows that Arjuna supports the physical and emotional heart. This ancient herb Arjuna is contained in the Blissful Joy tablets, which are helpful for managing emotional stress, which can be another cause of weight gain.