

VATA DOSHA

The term vata stems from a Sanskrit word “vaayu” which means “that which moves things”; it is sometimes translated as wind. It is composed of the elements space and air--the lightest and subtlest of the five elements. It is considered in some ways to be the most influential of the three doshas because it is the moving force behind the other two doshas, which are incapable of movement without it. Vata dosha. is responsible for all the somatic activities and sensations. It is the intelligence which channels perceptions (temperature, pressure, sweetness, lightening, violin music, etc.) through the appropriate sensory organs, converts them into internal psychological events, and then orchestrates the appropriate response via the organs of action. it is responsible for all movements in the mind and body: the movement of air in and out of the lungs, the flow of blood through the circulatory system, nutrients through the alimentary tract, and thoughts through the mind. Vata promotes a healthy balance between the thought and emotion and gives rise to creativity, activity and clear comprehension.

Because, among other functions, Vata regulates the nervous processes involved with movement, thoughts, emotions, eating, drinking, elimination, and our general functioning, its disturbance can often have far-reaching consequences.

Here is a table which summarizes the manifestations of a balanced or unbalanced (excessive) Vata dosha:

EFFECTS OF VATA DOSHA

EFFECT OF BALANCED VATA

Proper coordination of all body functions

Normal movements associated with eating, digestion, and elimination

Mental activity controlled and precise

Control of the organs of perception and the organs of action

Stimulation of digestive juices

Desire to lead an active life; vitality, curiosity and natural interest

Normal drying of occasional mucous discharges

Normal respiratory function

Normal sleep pattern

Excellent energy level

EFFECT OF UNBALANCED (EXCESS) VATA

Body functions impaired or disorganized.

Movements for eating, digestion, and elimination disturbed (bloating, constipation, gas)

Mental agitation, confusion; impaired memory

Perception and action are inappropriate; senses are dulled; responses untimely

Deficiency of the digestive juices

Loss of energy and joy for life

Persistent bodily discharges

Shortness of breath, dry cough, disturbance in respiratory movements

Insomnia, light or interrupted sleep

Non-specific fatigue, anxiety, worry, cold-intolerance, depletion of Life Force