

## **Pranic Therapy IV**

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All the basic forces in the Universe - visible and invisible - are but different manifestations of that Unitary Power which the Vedists call Prana. Using this Vital Energy to heal is called Pranic Therapy. This article is a continuation of the earlier article Pranic Therapy Part III.

### **The Ayurvedic Model**

The system of Indian Holistic medicine, Ayurveda, postulates a different view of the human personality. Based on the Sankhya school of Indian philosophy, Ayurveda conceives life as the interplay of three Life-principles called humours (which correspond to the three attributes of Nature- Sattwa, Rajas and Thamas). These are Vata (wind), Pitta (bile) and Kapha (phlegm). In the healthy person, these three doshas are in a state of perfect equilibrium. Illness arises when this balance is lost. Ayurveda holds that every person has in him or her a tendency to have one of the three humours dominate the psychophysical system and this predominance of one humour makes Ayurveda classify the body under three types: Vata type, Pitta type and Kapha type (this is parallel to the Vedantic model which classifies individual minds as Sattwa dominant, Tamas dominant and Rajas dominant). Taking this predominance of one of the humours into consideration and identifying the body type, Ayurvedic doctors prescribe medicine and diet.

*Attributes of Nature are these!  
Know then that Being and Nature both  
Hath no beginning; that all qualities  
Are Nature-born!*

### **Regulation of Food, Sleep and Exercise**

*Food is medicine; Medicine is food.*  
Hippocrates

*Food is Brahman. Food was verily born before all creatures: therefore it is called the  
medicine for all.*  
Upanishads

By stating that food is the root cause of all ills and illnesses, Vedanta formulated one of the foundational principles of holistic health. At least half the ailments of humans can be traced directly or indirectly to problems of food intake and nutritional management.

Regulation of food is not easy, because it is an addiction like alcohol. Problems like obesity, high cholesterol levels and irritable bowel syndrome crop up if food intake is not controlled properly. By controlling food, the whole body comes under control. "When taste is conquered everything is conquered," suggests Vedanta. What really matters is not how much we eat but how much of what we eat is transformed into bioenergy and the building materials of life. Sir William Osler pointed out many years ago: "Only a small percentage of what we eat nourishes us; the balance goes to waste and loss of energy".

In holistic health, food should be revered and a proper attitude towards food should be developed. "Be thankful for all food, for food is Brahman," said Vivekananda.

Six hours of rest each day is prescribed for every individual in Ayurvedic medicine even though sleep requirements vary from person to person.

Further, the importance of exercise should not be underestimated. Research studies clearly indicate that even moderate levels of exercise bolster the immune system.

No amount of sleep is sufficient for unwinding the mind for it is always in a tense state under the stressful conditions of modern life. Antidotes to stress include: yogic techniques like Meditation, prayer, cultivation of the Witness attitude, and practice of absolute self-surrender to the Divine. These enable us to avoid a lot of unnecessary stress.

### **Acid-Alkaline Balance: A Key Indicator of Health**

Foods either leave an acid ash or an alkaline ash. Maximum health is in an alkaline body. The average 20th century diet, stress, pace, lifestyle and environment produce far more acid than is healthy. The human body is alkaline by design and acidic by function, which means that your body's health is dependent upon it being alkaline.

The original source of stress is known as a stressor. Most of the stressors in today's society (cigarette smoke, alcohol, stress itself, bad diet, coffee, sodas, pharmaceuticals) all produce an acid state in the body. All cancerous states are acid states of long duration.

Research indicates that 90% of our general population is far too acidic, which leads to a variety of negative health effects. Over time, being acidic is the main cause of degenerative diseases and aging. If you have an acidic body, you become energyless, exhausted physically and mentally and you lose the radiance and shine of your skin and hair.

Grains, sugar, dairy, animal or vegetarian protein and oils yield an acid ash while fruits, sea vegetables, common vegetables, quality water and herbs yield an alkaline ash. 20% of your daily food consumption should come from the acid ash-forming foods and 80% from the alkaline ash-forming foods.

pH (standing for 'potential of Hydrogen') is a measure of the relative acidity or alkalinity of a solution. The scale of pH ranges from 1 to 14. 14 is totally alkaline and zero is acidic. The middle of this line is 7, neutral. Quality water has a pH of 7 and you should attempt to maintain this balanced level.

It is ideal to incorporate 2 glasses of lime juice along with the 8-12 glasses of water which is taken daily. A diet of 80% alkaline ash foods is ideal. We have to maintain this ratio - 80% alkalinity and 20% acidity for optimum health.

The effects of having an alkaline body:

- 1) we are calm and collected
- 2) we have high energy level
- 3) our sleep patterns are deep
- 4) we have less colds and flus than normal
- 5) the immune system is fortified
- 6) the body has good absorption/assimilation/digestion.

### **Yoga Exercises for Relaxation**

Doing nothing or simply lying down is not relaxation. The muscles when stretched bring in relaxation as it frees them from the tense condition. Some of the yogic Asanas are highly effective because they can relax the muscles.

There will be a focal point in the body which reflects the mental tension which one finds oneself in. That focal point of mental tension should be identified and you can choose that type of yogic exercise which will relax the muscles and tendons of the specific focal point of tension in you.

### **Regulation of Breath**

"Breathlessness is deathlessness " averrs Yoga. Regulation of breath gives tremendous relaxation. Pranayama, without the help of a bona fide Master, can lead to serious complications. What is needed is the practice of breathing deeply (as deeply as possible) through both the nostrils and then slowly breathing out (without breath retention). This kind of regulated deep breathing can be done at any time, even in your office.

Psychosomatic pain can be alleviated by these simple yogic techniques more effectively than allopathic pills or tablets. Here we employ the internal pharmacy of Skill power in lieu of the external pharmacy of Pill Power!