

The Panchakarma Process

Panchakarma was developed thousands of years ago by the ancient healing masters of India. In Sanskrit, *panchakarma* means “the five actions” (*pancha*=five and *karma*=action), referring to the five different cleansing and rejuvenating procedures described in the classic ayurvedic textbooks.

As panchakarma has been adapted for use in the West, the therapies have evolved and the number of procedures included is not always five, but varies according to an individual’s mind-body type (*dosha*) and health concerns. However, the principles of purifying and replenishing remain the same.

Purvakarma: Preparatory Procedures

Panchakarma begins with oleation – applying and ingesting pure essential oils in order to loosen and mobilize accumulated toxins or *ama*. This step includes *abhyanga*, a deep, soothing daily ayurvedic massage treatment using herbalized oils.

A vital aspect of this step is *Swedana*, a Sanskrit word meaning “that which produces heat in the system.” This process helps open the body’s circulation channels (*srotas*) and allows toxins to flow more easily from the tissues to the GI tract for elimination. *Swedana* also relaxes the body, releasing tension and allowing impurities to be eliminated through the sweat glands.

Panchakarma: Elimination and Release

Once the body's toxins have been mobilized, gentle therapies are used to release them from the body. The treatment includes a day of purgation and rest.

Rasayana: Rejuvenation

The final step of panchakarma is *rasayana*, a term that means “that which is nourishing.” Once the toxins have been released, this is a critical time to begin replenishing the body with natural foods and herbs, revitalizing massage treatments, and healing practices such as meditation and yoga. It also includes a sequence of daily *bastis* – a therapeutic process in which medicated oils and herbal preparations are used to flush toxins from the intestinal tract. Bastis are often referred to as enemas but actually offer many more healing benefits than a simple colon cleanse. During a basti, the herbalized oils enter the deeper tissues and eliminate fat-soluble toxins that can't be dislodged with standard enemas.

This stage of panchakarma may include *nasya*, an ayurvedic treatment that gently cleanses the upper respiratory tract and sinuses. This soothing process uses pure herbalized oils to improve the flow of life energy and help you breathe freely and easily.

This process is not recommended without the support of an Ayurvedic practitioner.

Schedule for home Panchakarma (PK), guided by Eliza:

PANCHA KARMA OVERVIEW

Purpose: To remove excess dosha from the mind and body

Three phases:

Purva Karma: prep

Panchakarma: purge

Rasayana: rejuvenate

Please mentally prepare yourself for a two week commitment. I find the real challenge to be maintaining commitment through rasayana, which is very important or else you negate all the previous hard work!

As much as you can, remove yourself from outside stimulation. This includes: travel, email, phone, TV, socializing, reading, music. This may sound daunting, but you may really enjoy the spaciousness this offers. This is a time to REST. Your free time can be

spent resting, journaling, meditating and practicing light yoga. You will be busy with these things! Set some guidelines for yourself before you begin about what you are committing to and this will help you during the process.

Purvakarma

Day 1 abhyanga

Hot bath or hot steamy shower

50 ml of ghee in am before any food

sip ginger tea

light kitchree when ghee is digested (no ghee burps) and in pm

yoga

meditation

pranayama

journaling

Day 2 abhyanga

Hot bath or hot steamy shower

100 ml of ghee in am before any food

sip ginger tea

light kitchree when ghee is digested (no ghee burps) only in pm

yoga

meditation

pranayama

journaling

Day 3 abhyanga

Hot bath or hot steamy shower

200 ml of ghee in am before any food

sip ginger tea

light kitchree when ghee is digested (no ghee burps) only in pm

yoga

meditation

pranayama

journaling

Continue above regime, increasing dose of ghee until proper signs of oleation (oil in stool, kin is oily, breath is sweet, forehead is oily, complete disgust and naseau at though of taking more ghee!)

Gap Day abhyanga

Hot bath or hot steamy shower

Very light diet in am and lunch

Evening before purgation: spicy meal with pitta increasing foods (tomato, red chili, black pepper and garlic)

yoga
meditation
pranayama
journaling

Virechana - Purgation Day

Take 2-3 TBSPS of castor oil preferably before dawn. Sip ginger tea. If no reaction in three hours, take another TBSP. Record bowel movements. Rest. Rest. Rest. When you feel that purging is done, sip warm water. Then follow with rice water (peya) meditation

Rasayana

This is a crucial part of the process. Your digestive fire has been extinguished by the purgative and you must build it back slowly, or else you will overload it, build ama, and negate all the work you have just done! It is like putting kindling on the fire before the heavy logs. Mentally prepare yourself for seven more days of very mindful and careful eating.

Do not eat unless you are hungry! Only eat when your agni is high. Then eat very slowly, chew your food extremely well and eat small quantities! Your diet protocol is: 3 meals of peya, 3 meals of yoosha, 3 meals of vilepi, then slowly integrate normal food after 9 meals. Be strict with yourself! Your beverages may include fennel and cumin tea only for the first 2 days. The first day of rasayana should include only minimal activity. Your energy will be low for a few days. Only increase activity accordingly, along with an 8 day basti treatment.

Peya: 10 pts. Water, 1 pt. rice, cool well and take mostly liquid

Yoosha: 8 pt. water, 1 pt. rice, ½ pt. mung bean, take 50/50 liquid/solid

Vilepi: 5 pt. water, 1 pt. rice, ½ pt. mung bean, take solid part

Carefully add small amounts of turmeric, pepper, salt and ginger

EIGHT DAY BASTI TREATMENT

Cleansing basti

30 ml honey

5 g sea or rock salt

300 ml sesame oil

1 liter dashmool tea (powder in 2 l of water, reduced by simmering to 1 liter)

10 g dill past (mix powder with a little oil and water)

total quantity: 1-1.5 liters

Directions: Place honey in bowl. Add salt and mix very well. Add dill and mix until homogeneous. Add small amount of oil at a time, mixing well. Add small amounts of tea at a time and mix well.

Oil bast

100 ml sesame oil

2 g salt

5 g dill powder

directions: add salt and dill to body temperature oil and stir

Schedule: begin 1 -2 days after virechana (purgation)

Day 1 Oil basti

yoga

meditation

pranayama

journaling

Day 2 Cleansing basti

yoga

meditation

pranayama

journaling

Day 3 Oil basti

yoga

meditation

pranayama

journaling

Day 4 Cleansing basti

yoga

meditation

pranayama

journaling

Day 5 Oil basti

yoga

meditation

pranayama

journaling

Day 6 Cleansing basti

yoga

meditation

pranayama

journaling

Day 7 Oil basti

yoga

meditation
pranayama
journaling

Day 8 Oil basti
yoga
meditation
pranayama
journaling

Timing

Cleansing basti is taken on an empty stomach, either in the morning before breakfast or before dinner. Retain up to 40 minutes.

Oil basti is taken 1 -2 hours after a meal. Retain as long as possible. Retain overnight if taken in evening. You may absorb entire contents.

Procedure

1. External oil massage with warm oil (*abhyanga*)
2. Hot bath or shower
3. Administer *basti*

Diet

Diet should be light and simple during the eight day period. Refrain from heavy, processed foods.