

Using lifestyle to balance Vata dosha

The basic characteristics of Vata include dryness, coolness, roughness, lightness and constant motion. Use opposite qualities to these in diet and lifestyle help restore balance to Vata dosha.

Lifestyle Recommendations

1. The primary lifestyle recommendation for balancing Vata is to maintain a regular routine, which balances Vata's erratic nature. That means rising and going to bed at roughly the same times each day, eating three meals at about the same times each day, and following a similar pattern of work and rest from day to day.
2. Don't skip meals. Sit down and eat a nourishing, preferably warm lunch at mid-day and lighter meals at breakfast and dinner. Eat in a peaceful atmosphere with your attention on your food, and sit quietly for a few minutes after your meal. If your digestion is irregular, these eating habits will help make it more regular.
3. Daily elimination is very important to prevent *ama* (or toxic waste) from accumulating in the body. Triphala is a blend of herbs that helps promote regularity as well as toning the digestive system. Since Triphala is gentle, not habit forming and not depleting, it can be taken indefinitely to maintain regularity.
4. Enjoy *abhyanga* or an ayurvedic massage every morning before you bathe or shower. Sesame oil infused with Vata balancing essential oils such as lavender or rose is most beneficial. Two or three times a week, include your scalp, massaging with warm oil. Let the oil stay for an hour or two before you shampoo.
5. Vata is especially susceptible to cold so stay warm and toasty in cold weather by wearing several layers of clothing. Wear a cap

and scarf when you go out to protect your ears and throat. Use lip balm to prevent lips from getting dry and chapped.

6. Walking is an ideal exercise for balancing Vata. Walk in the early morning, for about 20 minutes every day.

7. Go to bed early so that you can get adequate rest each night. A cup of warm milk with a pinch of nutmeg, can be helpful before bedtime.

8. Set aside about 30 minutes each day for meditation or reflection. Silence in nature is also very beneficial to Vata.