

# Heal your *dosha*

**Deepak Chopra** once said: "Making your doshas happy will make you happy. This is the secret to balancing the whole mind-body system." It's a big statement by all accounts; but one that pretty much sums up what one of the world's oldest medical systems, Ayurveda, is all about. Did we lose you at the word 'dosha'? **Don't worry, YogaLife's Cheryl Parsons sets out to decipher this ancient method of healing and find out what steps we can take to keep our dosha in check...** ▶



doctors can accurately determine a dosha type simply by reading the nature of the pulse – whether it’s quick, slow or shallow, or even by which finger it is felt most strongly beneath.

“We also look at the basis of a number of physical, mental and emotional factors that are associated with each individual, including facial features – the shape and colour of eyes, nose, teeth, chin and other parts of the face; physical features – the shape and build of different body parts, colour and texture of skin, hair and nails; digestive patterns; mental and emotional characteristics as well as their attitudes and responses to different stimuli.”

Since the doshas refer to energies that determine not only a person’s physical, mental and emotional characteristics, but also decide their other personality traits, any

imbalance in them has a profound effect on the physical and mental wellbeing of a person. It is believed that we are all born with a predominant dosha type and that it cannot be changed. However imbalances can naturally happen, as Dr Chandy explains: “This can be caused by external conditions and situations, which result in manifestations of symptoms of other dosha types – these symptoms in themselves are strong signs of illness.”

The very word ‘Ayurveda’ means ‘the science of life’, and this article simply scratches the surface of the knowledge that this vast, ancient system for healing can hold. To truly understand the doshas and live a lifestyle that supports them fully takes study and a lifelong commitment. That being said there are steps we can take to keep our doshas healthy, once we have determined our predominant one. Dr Chandy breaks down each type, what can happen when our main dosha is out of balance, and what we can do to bring it back into harmony... ❁

### An Ayurvedic doctor can determine a dosha type simply by reading a person’s pulse

“According to Ayurveda, the whole universe and everything in it, including the human body, is made up of five elements: Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether,” Dr Chandy George, Ayurvedic Lifestyle Consultant at Dubai’s Balance Wellbeing 360, explains. “The human body is balanced with three elemental energies – Vata, Pitta and Kapha – which are called the Tridoshas. When the Tridoshas are in harmony, the body will function at its best and when it is imbalanced, the body will lose its ability to function normally. Diseases are a result of the imbalance of these life forces: Kapha, Pitta and Vata.”

The Sanskrit word ‘dosha’ can be translated as ‘mind–body personality’ and the first step to working with the doshas is to determine which primary category you fall into. While we all have one predominant dosha or even two, our main constitution can fluctuate depending on our environment, diet, behaviour and more. “The best way to find out your constitution is to visit an experienced Ayurvedic practitioner, who can determine your personal dosha by reading your radial pulse,” continues Dr Chandy, who has over 15 years’ experience in Ayurvedic medicine. By feeling this pulse with three fingers, Ayurvedic



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## Types of doshas and keeping them in check

DOSHA TYPE	MAIN CHARACTERISTICS	WHAT AN IMBALANCE IN THIS DOSHA LEADS TO	DAILY STEPS TO KEEP YOUR DOSHA IN CHECK
<p><b>VATA</b></p> <p><i>Elements:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Space</li> <li>• Air</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thin, light frame and excellent agility</li> <li>• Energetic in bursts, with sudden bouts of fatigue</li> <li>• Dry skin and hair, and cold hands and feet</li> <li>• Light sleep and sensitive digestion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weight loss, constipation, hypertension</li> <li>• Arthritis, weakness, restlessness, and digestive challenges</li> <li>• Fear, anxiety, insomnia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring about healthy changes, even to eating habits</li> <li>• Opt for stimulating but non-strenuous activities like yoga, walks, non-strenuous cycling and swimming to bring movement and circulation</li> <li>• Avoid hot weather, hot baths, stress, anger, overwork, over-exercising and over-competitiveness</li> <li>• Abstain from hot spices, oily or fried food, all kinds of acidic and fermented foods, alcohol and cigarettes</li> <li>• Eat cooling, mild tastes, mainly wholegrains and vegetables</li> <li>• Have cool showers</li> </ul>
<p><b>PITTA</b></p> <p><i>Elements:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire</li> <li>• Water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium size and weight</li> <li>• Sometimes have bright red hair, but baldness or thinning hair is also common</li> <li>• Strong appetite, excellent digestion, warm body temperature</li> <li>• Sound sleep, lustrous complexion, perfect digestion, abundant energy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skin rashes, burning sensations, peptic ulcers, excessive body heat, heartburn, and indigestion</li> <li>• Short temper, argumentative nature and ulcers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be regular with your bedtime, mealtimes and all habits</li> <li>• Eat soothing, warming and nourishing foods, like cooked wholegrains, vegetables, dairy and fruit, and soups and herbal teas</li> <li>• Meditate, have warm baths, rest and relax, practise deep breathing and meditation</li> <li>• Do mild exercise like yoga, walks, non-strenuous cycling and swimming, especially in natural surroundings</li> <li>• Avoid excess multimedia stimulation, especially in the hours before bedtime</li> </ul>
<p><b>KAPHA</b></p> <p><i>Elements:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Earth</li> <li>• Water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong build and excellent stamina</li> <li>• Large, soft eyes, smooth, radiant skin, thick hair</li> <li>• Sound sleep, regular digestion</li> <li>• Naturally calm, thoughtful, and loving, comfortable with routine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weight gain, fluid retention, and allergies</li> <li>• Asthma, diabetes, and depression</li> <li>• Insecurity, envy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an active, stimulating and healthy routine that can be followed easily</li> <li>• Eat warming, spicy, light foods, mainly vegetables, beans and wholegrains</li> <li>• Have spices with every meal</li> <li>• Avoid dairy products, nuts and sugar</li> <li>• Pursue activities that challenge the mind</li> <li>• Sweat it out with brisk walks, cycling, swimming, dynamic yoga or running</li> </ul>

For more information on determining your dosha, contact Dr Chandy George at Balance Wellbeing 360; [www.balance-wellness-centre.com](http://www.balance-wellness-centre.com); telephone: (971) 04 384 7010 / 7011.