

# PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES OF VATAS, PITTAS AND KAPHAS



Vata



Pitta



Kapha



We continue the description of how our intrinsic nature determines the physical attributes of the body, as per Ayurveda.

**Voice and Speech**

*Vatas* have low voices, which may sound almost as if they are projected merely from the throat. Their voices, if projected from the chest, are deeper. They can be very talkative, speaking quickly and jumping from one topic to another.

*Pittas* have nicely projected voices which sound slightly nasal. They do not talk as much as *Vatas* but can argue at great length. Their speech can often have a magnetic pull, in the sense that they sound sincere and trustworthy.

*Kaphas* have deep voices. They speak slowly and their talking sounds like a series of prepared

speeches, with no random or redundant words.

**Perspiration**

*Vatas* rarely perspire. Only if they are doing heavy physical exercise do they sweat. They

may sit on the beach on a sunny day without any perspiration. Their sweat is light and stays on the body. They usually have minimal body odour.

*Pittas* tend to sweat profusely. Small temperature variations can make them sweat.

They sweat evenly on their entire body.

*Kaphas* perspire moderately. Their body uses sweat as a way of keeping them healthy.

*Pittas* tend to sweat profusely. Small temperature variations can make them sweat. They sweat evenly on their entire body.

## Appetite and Digestion

*Vatas* have good appetites. They need their proper breakfast in the morning or they may experience headaches or heaviness in the head. *Vatas* have sensitive stomachs. If they eat more than what they generally do, they experience pain in their stomach or even indigestion. High protein foods or spicy meals can upset their stomachs in no time. They are generally lactose intolerant. Their digestion depends on the food they have just eaten.

*Pittas* have good appetites and phenomenal digestion. They eat at a moderate speed. If they have to skip a meal, they feel irritated and unsettled. They need their three daily meals. The portion of the meals may be small, but *Pittas* need to eat something at regular intervals.

*Kaphas* have decent appetites. They are not driven by their appetites, though they are driven by their routines. They

are steady eaters. They eat slowly and they digest slowly. Due to slow digestion and metabolism, their bodies learn to utilize internal energy stores. As a result, dietary irregularities can make them more prone to diabetes.

## Sleep Pattern

*Vatas* are light sleepers; they can wake up at the slightest of noises. They must have their required sleep. If it gets disrupted, or if they sleep less than they should in a night, they

need to make up for the lost sleep within the next day or they become fidgety and irritated. They find it hard to change their sleep patterns.

*Pittas* are moderate sleepers. They sleep lightly but soundly. Of the three *doshas*, *Pittas* require the least

amount of sleep to feel refreshed and recharged. They like to get out of bed as soon as they get up and get on with their daily routine. They sometimes wake up in the middle of their sleep to drink water.

*Kaphas* are sound sleepers, and they can sleep for very long periods, for eight to ten hours.

*Kaphas* are sound sleepers, and they can sleep for very long periods, for eight to ten hours. They like to lie in their beds and relax for a while before getting up for the day.

### Seasonal Allergies

When allergens are running riot during the change of seasons, *Vatas* tend to get dry eyes. Their noses remain mostly blocked during the allergy season.

There is very little discharge of mucus. They may experience chest congestion, but they get well soon enough.

If struck with hay fever, *pittas* get red eyes. While a *Vata's* nose is blocked, a *Pitta* gets a runny nose. *Pittas* can suffer from chest congestion, but their coughs are mostly dry. They may also experience some difficulty in breathing. It has often been observed that *pittas* tend to fall sick twice during the same season.

*Kaphas* get watery eyes when suffering from hay fever. Their noses are blocked with thick mucus and they experience the worst congestion of the chest among people of the three *dosha*

types. Phlegm formation is the greatest in *Kaphas* during the change of seasons.

### Mental Attributes

*Vatas* are lively and bubbly people. They are enthusiastic and are keen to try new things. And they do not mind changing their opinions as they gain new information or insight. *Vatas* are usually extroverts. Just like the wind that is never stable, their beliefs change quickly. It does not take them long to form new radical beliefs. *Vatas* get worried and anxious quickly, though they get over their worries just as swiftly. They are quick to grasp new concepts, but their memory retention is not as good as *Pittas* or *Kaphas*. *Vatas* are quite adventurous in nature and love to spend time outdoors. They are quick acting, accommodating and adaptable by nature. They dream a lot during their sleep but often forget their dreams.

*Pittas* are generally more 'head-driven' than *Vatas*. Purposeful, and at times intense, they make great leaders. They are persuasive and good at debating. *Pittas* can be quite aggressive and get irritated rather easily under stress. They have very good concentration and can be

quite engaging. *Pittas* have sharp memories and their headspaces are quite clear. Possessing critical and penetrating minds, *Pittas* are outcome driven and goal-oriented. They are somewhat impulsive; anger is their primary shortcoming. Generally, however, they have a warm nature.

*Kaphas* are the most stable of the *dosha* types. Slow, steady, easy going and accepting, they are great supporters and loyal followers too. They are mostly introverts and become withdrawn under stress. They are slow to learn but have elephant-like memories. Their actions are thought out and rarely impulsive; they have strong preferences and don't make visceral decisions. *Kaphas* take their time in forming opinions but stick to them firmly.

### Dual Constitution

As I said before, it is rare for a person to be an absolute *Vata*, *Pitta* or *Kapha*. Usually, people have a mixture of the *doshas*. If you assess yourself deeply, however, one *dosha* should be more dominant than the other two. The better you analyse yourself, the quicker and better you can heal yourself, because

the success of all remedies, herbs and treatments in Ayurveda is dependent on how accurately your constitution is determined.

Your *dosha* and your *prakriti* represent how your genetic make-up affects your physical and mental wellbeing. This is only one side of the coin. Just like the three physical humours, there are also three mental humours.

When stressed, why do some people eat a lot, while many others lose their appetite altogether? Why do some get irritated easily, while many remain unaffected under the most annoying circumstances? Why do some people suffer from addictions while many do not? Why do some gain, and others lose, weight during depression? What determines these traits? What affects our mental state and why are we the way we are? Yogic texts state that just as *doshas* set our physical traits, our mental humours create a genetic mental disposition.

To be continued...

OS