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HIGHER FORMS OF THE PRANAS

The five Pranas also exist in both the subtle (astral) and causal bodies. The five Pranas pervade the entire universe and are the basis of its manifestation. In their higher forms they aid in spiritual knowledge.

Prana gives power and pre-eminence, independence and transcendence to the spirit. Udana gives the capacity to ascend. Samana gives peace, balance and equanimity. Vyana gives pervasiveness and infinity. Apana allows us to ward off negativity.

On the level of the subtle body Samana governs ether (balance), Vyana governs air (diffusion), Udana governs fire (ascension), Prana governs water (absorption), and Apana governs earth (support).

THE MENTAL FORMS OF THE HUMOURS

PRANA, TEJAS AND OJAS

There are even subtler forms of the three humours than their five subdoshas which occur in the physical body. These are their three forms in the mind. They are the essence of their three forms in the brain and they fulfill similar functions but on a more subtle level.

- The mental form of Vata is also called PRANA (though its meaning here is slightly different than above).
- The mental form of Pitta is called TEJAS (from the root "til" meaning to give heat). Tejas is the fire of the mind.
- The mental form of Kapha is called OJAS (see also section on Ojas later). Ojas is the essential vital fluid of the body in subtle form in the mind.

These three forms function through the third eye or sixth chakra and regulate our mental nature. They also control Vata, Pitta and Kapha in the body.

Prana gives mental adaptability, capacity to communicate, co-ordination of ideas and breadth of comprehension. It provides the will to live, to grow and to get well. It is the basic life force or vitality of the mind.

Tejas gives intelligence, reason, passion to learn or discover, zeal, power of self-discipline and the capacity to perceive. It is the basic clarity of mind.

Ojas gives mental strength, contentment, patience, fortitude, calm and the capacity for good

memory and sustained concentration. It is our basic mental and psychological stability and endurance in life. Ojas is essentially responsible for our experience of tranquil states of mind.

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Pancha Kashaya: Methods Of Ayurvedic Herbal Preparation

Ayurveda contains many different methods and forms of herbal preparation. All are designed for different therapeutic effects, or to maintain the potencies of herbs in different manners.

These are : (1) Infusions, (2) Decoctions, (3) Powders, (4) Poultices, (5) Oils and (6) Liniments. They include herbal wines, jellies, resin preparation, pills and tablets.

Other special preparations include minerals, metals, ashes, salts, alkalis and sugars. Preparations may be accompanied with MANTRA, YANTRAS, rituals and fire sacrifices.

PANCHA KASHAYA : The Five Main Methods Of Ayurvedic Herbal Preparation

Raw herbs are generally prepared according to five basic methods of extraction:

- (1) SWARASA - the fresh juice of the plant,
- (2) KALKA- the crushed pulp or paste of the plant,
- (3) KVATHA - decoction,
- (4) PHANTA- hot infusion, and
- (5) HIMA- cold infusion.

Juice is the strongest; cold infusion the weakest. The rest are into a descending order of strength.

Brief Description of Ayurvedic Methods of Herbal Preparation

(1) SWARASA - Fresh Juice

The fresh juice of an herb is obtained by taking the fresh plant, then crushing or pounding it, and ultimately straining the liquid through a cloth. A juicer may also be used for this purpose. This method is used when freshly picked herbs are available. Easily available herbs are also used in this process.

- (1) ginger
- (2) garlic
- (3) aloe vera
- (4) cilantro
- (5) lemon
- (6) onions
- (7) lime
- (8) parsley

A weaker juice preparation is made by taking the crushed dry herb or powder. Add twice the weight of the herb in water, allowing to set for 24 hours and then strain it. The liquid is

sometimes substituted for a fresh juice, but it is in reality a cold infusion.

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Timing of Vasti Karma

Vasti Karma generally follows Vamana and Virechana after the patient has had a chance to regain his other strength which becomes somewhat depleted from these reducing treatments. If the patient has not received Vamana, then Vasti would follow Virechana and its subsequent samsarjana period after a *one day* rest period. If Virechana was not given, then the same exact schedule follows after Vamana and its samsarjana-karma. If neither Vamana nor Virechana are administered, Vasti should immediately follow Swedana Karma.

Sequence of Administration of Vasti

As already mentioned, Vasti Karma usually consists of an alternating sequence of Anuvasana and Niruha vastis administered over a period of 8, 16, or 30 days. The first and last vastis are always of the anuvasana (oily) type. Since the eight-day schedule is the one most commonly used, it will be shown here. A = Anuvasana; N = Niruha.

DAY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	A	N	A	N	A	N	A	A

Preparation of Anuvasana Vasti

Anuvasana vastis are basically enemas with herbalized oils. To prepare these oils this general formula can be followed:

Herb-----1 /4 cup
Oil (or ghee)-----1 cup
Water-----4 cups

If oil is used instead of ghee, that oil is generally seame oil due to its vatahara quality.

The procedure is to combine these three ingredients in a small pot and bring to a boil. Then reduce the heat to maintain a gently rolling boil until all the water boils off. Strain and discard the residual herbal residue. The oil which remains is now herbalized. It is allowed to cool until warm and then administered as Anuvasana Vasti.

Preparation of Niruha Vasti

Niruha vastis consist of the introduction of *kwathas* , or decoctions, made with appropriate

herbal medicines into the rectum. It is also known as asthapana vasti. The general formula is as follows:

First prepare thekwatha by placing approximately 160 grams of an appropriate herb in a pot containing two liters of cold water (a 1:16 ratio) and boiling it until reduced to 1/4 its original volume. The weight of the herbal material must be adjusted (reduced) if it is very bulky and light. But for typical root material these weights and volumes are perfect.