



## Ayurvedic Daily Routine

According to Ayurvedic medical philosophy the more routine that we have in our daily lives the healthier we will be. Our bodies thrive when they are fed, exercised and rested regularly. By creating a daily routine we set an internal rhythm in our lives so that we can live in harmony with the external rhythms of nature. On the mental level it contributes to mental and emotional stability, which allows us to meet the challenges and opportunities of each day with our full vitality, clarity and Love.

Daily routine has three main purposes:

- 1) Maintain our current health and prevent disease
- 2) Support the organs of digestion and elimination
- 3) Assist in alleviating any current state of imbalance or disease

The following suggestions are meant to serve as guidelines for establishing a daily routine, you can select as much as is feasible from this list to fit your personal needs and aims.

### **Wake-up early**

Waking with or before the sunrise is universally considered to be good for supporting health for the following reasons:

- 1) Early morning sleep is often colored by vivid and often disturbing dreams. This quiet time of the day is ideal for prayer and meditation, which alleviates mental dullness, emotional heaviness, and allows time to inspire us with reverence for life and our day ahead.
- 2) This time of day is optimal for encouraging a thorough evacuation of the bowels and bladder. Try drinking a glass of warm water upon waking to encourage this process. If you are prone to sluggish bowels or constipation soaking figs or prunes overnight in water and then eating them slowly in the morning can also be useful. Reading while in the bathroom is discouraged because it takes your mind off of the task at hand.

### **Cleaning the Sense Organs**

**Mouth** - It is wise to clean the tongue by gently scraping it with a silver spoon slowly from front to back five to ten times. This removes unwanted or dead bacteria, viruses, and mucus from the mouth, freshens breath and improves digestion by improving the accuracy of the taste buds. Brushing the teeth and gargling with a soothing solution such as untoasted sesame oil or licorice tea is beneficial to the gums and the throat.

**Nose** - Ayurveda recommends rinsing the sinuses with saline solution and then placing a few drops of sesame oil or olive oil to lubricate the sinuses. This technique has been proven to reduce allergies, sinus infections, and congestion.

**Ears** - Gently swab the ears with a Q-tip and then apply a small amount of oil with your finger.

**Eyes** - The eyes can be washed with rose water or collyrium.

**Skin** - Apply warmed untoasted sesame oil or olive oil over the entire body followed by a hot shower and a cold rinse. This helps to stimulate the lymph circulation, soothes and grounds the mind and emotions, and generally improves immune functioning.

**Exercise** - Doing some gentle exercise after bathing is very helpful for stabilizing and integrating the body and mind. Choose exercises like walking, light aerobics, or yoga that will improve circulation, range of motion of the joints, strength and balance. If you have any injuries it can be very helpful to contact someone who can help you to design a fifteen-minute exercise routine especially for supporting and healing your injury. It is very important to allow a few minutes for relaxation at the end of your exercise routine.

**Work** - Attend to your responsibilities with enthusiasm, creativity, and care.

**Breakfast** - Choose breakfast that are warm, fresh, and easy to digest. In the morning the body needs to receive all the nutrients to support the day's activities. It is important to consume whole foods that have high nutritional value, fiber, protein, and a moderate amount of fat because this combination creates sustained energy and focus. Avoid relying on stimulants such as coffee, sugar, and eating starchy, processed foods such as breads, boxed cereals and doughnuts. These have very little nutritional value and can lead to unwanted fluctuations of your energy and mental/emotional balance.

**Lunch** - Eat the biggest meal of the day at lunch and schedule time to relax after lunch. A little rest in the midday after a substantial lunch will help to prevent tiredness in the later part of the afternoon. If you are involved in sedentary work consider a lighter but nutritious lunch such as soup and vegetables. **Snacks** - Snacking can be necessary if you are doing hard physical work. Choose whole food snacks such as fruits and nuts. Avoid candy and stimulants.

**Sunset** - This is a very important transition during the day. It is a natural time for reflection, relaxation and meditation. If you feel tired it is probably because you are. It is wise to give your body mind time to rest rather than forcing yourself to continue activity by consuming stimulants or just "marching on." Even ten minutes of deep breathing or lying down will have a profound effect on your stamina and long-term endurance. Life is a marathon not a horse race.

**Dinner** - Eating a light dinner is ideal for ensuring sound sleep and optimal functioning of the liver. Consuming a moderate amount of alcohol (1-2 drinks) depending on your body weight and tolerance can be helpful for relaxing. If you find yourself craving more alcohol or other drugs to relax it is probably a sign that you are carrying more stress than is healthy for you. Be creative about finding substitutes to reduce stress. Dancing, singing, enjoying friends and family, and finding spiritually inspirational writings and recordings can provide a superior source of nourishment and renewal.

**Sleep** - Going to bed between 9:30 and 10:30 PM is ideal for getting six to eight hours of rest before sunrise. According to Ayurvedic philosophy sleep is "nature's wet nurse" and is the single most restorative activity in your daily routine. You can assure your sleep by

limiting stimulating influences such as loud music, TV and computers. Some very helpful practices are trading foot massages, doing deep abdominal breathing just before bed, and, when it is cold, going to bed with a hot water bottle. Prayer before bedtime can help to improve the quality of both sleep and dreams.

*Have fun and feel free to be creative about how you incorporate healthy routines in your day!  
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