



CONSTITUTIONAL SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

A qualified Ayurvedic practitioner uses a variety of diagnostic tools to assess a client’s “constitution,” i.e., the unique mixture of qualities that defines an individual from birth. These techniques are further used to determine the existence of any systemic imbalances generated by excesses or deficiencies in these qualities so that appropriate measures can be suggested to restore harmony.

An Ayurvedic practitioner’s arsenal typically includes an extensive interview with the client to determine personality and temperament, as well as an examination of body structure and function, including an analysis of pulse, tongue, voice, skin, vision, and general appearance. Only through an assessment of *all* of these factors can a practitioner gain an accurate picture of a client’s constitution, identify the origin of any imbalances, and suggest appropriate measures for restoring balance in that individual.

We have formulated the accompanying questionnaire to give you an idea of the types of questions to expect during an Ayurvedic consultation and to stimulate your interest in Ayurveda. While your answers will give you a rough idea about your innate qualities and areas of imbalance, they are no substitute for an evaluation by a qualified Ayurvedic practitioner.

Section I

The assessment is divided into two parts. This section is designed to give you some insight into the unique combination of qualities or elements that make up your constitution. Ayurveda speaks in terms of the three doshas – vata, pitta, and kapha- when referring to these elements. Vata stands for the qualities inherent in wind and space, e.g., cold, light, dry, mobile, or variable. Pitta evokes the qualities of fire tempered only by sufficient water to avoid self-immolation. Relevant adjectives describing the pitta nature include hot, oily, penetrating, sharp, and light. Kapha encompasses the qualities of water and earth, e.g., cool, moist, stable, heavy and smooth.

Every one of us has some of each of these doshas in our constitution, but one or two of them is likely to be more dominant in a particular individual. To gain some insight into the prevailing qualities of your constitution, answer the following questions by determining which description most accurately describes you **over the long-term**. Then put the corresponding letter, i.e., V, P, or K in the “Choice” column. If more than one description seems appropriate, include each of them. If you find that you can’t make up your mind, or that all of the descriptions seem true to some extent, put a “V” in the Choice column.

Constitutional Assessment

	Vata	Pitta	Kapha	Choice
Memory	Poor, notices things easily, but forgets them easily	Sharp, clear, distinct	Slow to notice, but does not forget	
Leadership style	Independent, off on one's own, self-motivated	Prefers to lead, others choose as a leader	Prefers to be part of a group, supportive of the leader	
Problem solving	Abstract, creative, out-of-the-box thinker	Analytical problem solver, makes lists	Methodical, deliberative thinker. Follows lists	
Beliefs	Erratic, mercurial. rebellious	Intense, determined, extreme.	Constant, loyal, deeply held	
Reaction to stress	Easily overwhelmed, scattered. Runs away, hides, seeks help or rescue. Weight loss, insomnia, constipation, excessive gas	Angry, intense, confrontational. Blames others, resists help. Excess sweat or body odor, use of intoxicants, diarrhea	Rarely stressed. Methodical approach to stress. May withdraw. Oversleeps, overeats, inertia, water retention	
Decision-making style	Quick, but indecisive. Vacillates, easily changes mind. Seeks input from others.	Decisive & analytical. Quick & firm decisions barring new information. Seeks input from experts	Methodical & deliberate decision-making. Self-counsel. Stands by decisions once taken.	
Preferred activities	Travel, dance, movement Artistic/creative endeavors, esoteric subjects	Competitive sports, politics, debating, hunting	Likes the water. Sailing, gardening, cooking, flower arranging	
Words used by your good friends to describe you	Enthusiastic, creative, inspirational, free-thinking, multi-talented, sensitive, talkative	Intelligent, focused, ,passionate, articulate, courageous, persuasive	Loving, supportive, compassionate, trustworthy, steady, loyal, good memory,	

Approach to projects	Enthusiastically embraces lots of projects. Varied interests/causes. Procrastinates projects that aren't fun. Gets bored or frustrated & doesn't always finish projects	Plans for a few projects. Always finishes. Pride in completion. Procrastinates projects that are other people's priorities.	Prefers one project at a time. Thinks through entire project before beginning. Procrastinates projects with lots of steps. Always finishes, if slowly	
What emotions/behavior come up on a "bad day?"	Restlessness, anxiety, fear, overwhelm, spaciness, worry, paranoia. Feeling nervous & fidgety.	Anger, irritability, arrogance, resentment. Being mean, bossy, critical.	Feeling sad, stuck, lethargic, possessive, dull. Greedy, overly attached, stubborn, narrow-minded	
What generates anger & what is your response?	Small inconveniences & rude people. Minor outbursts or blowing up at the wrong person	Stupid people or being stopped from doing what you want. Scream, swear or throw things at the irritating person.	Rarely angry. Only if direct threat to a loved one	
What generates sadness or depression?	Sudden changes in life or too much going on	Loss of control	Low level of sadness present often, can't identify the source	
What do you do that might lead to a "bad day?"	Excess travel, staying up late, irregularity in routines or foods, too much activity or stimulation. Winter weather.	Competition, skipping meals, alcohol consumption, spicy foods, exposure to heat. Summer.	Excessive sleeping, over-eating or emotional eating, heavy food, lack of variety. Spring.	
Voice	Low, weak, hoarse, breathy, whiny	High pitch, sharp, loud, penetrating	Pleasant, deep, resonating, good tone	
Speech	Quick, erratic, talkative, unclear, disjointed	Precise, penetrating, intelligent, articulate, convincing, argumentative	Reticent, quiet, concise, deliberate, melodic,	

Now, find the totals of V, P, and K marks. You should find that one category outnumbers the other two significantly, or that two of the categories are about equal, with the remaining one a distant third. For example, if you have 15 V's, 7 P's and 5 K's, you would be considered a vata type. On the other hand, if you have 10 V's, 8 P's and 4 K's, you would be considered a vata-pitta. While it is somewhat unusual, you may find that all three doshas are about equally represented, meaning that you have about equal qualities coming from all three doshas.

SECTION II

This section focuses on states of potential imbalance by assessing current bodily functions. While an Ayurvedic practitioner would, at a minimum, also look at your tongue and assess your pulse before determining the type and origins of any imbalances, your answers to the following questions can provide you with significant information. It is our hope that this self-assessment process will encourage you to seek out an Ayurvedic practitioner who can educate you in the principles of Ayurveda and guide you on the path of restoring balance in your daily life.

As in the preceding section, for each question, pick the description that seems most appropriate and enter the corresponding letter in the "Choice" column. For this section, however, focus on **current conditions** as opposed to long-term patterns. Again, do not hesitate to mark more than one choice, if multiple descriptions apply. Choose V if all the descriptions seem correct.

Potential Imbalances

	Vata	Pitta	Kapha	Choice
Describe your appetite.	Variable. Irregular eating habits. Feel shaky, anxious or spacey if miss a meal.	Strong. Large meals. Feel irritable or angry if miss a meal.	Low but constant. Few meals. Little reaction to a missed meal.	
What type of digestive disturbance might you experience?	Gas, bloating or pain several hours after eating.	Heartburn, hyperacidity, acid indigestion or burning sensations about 60-90 mins after eating.	Sluggish, heavy, sleepy or nauseous feelings immediately after eating.	
Describe your bowel movements.	Less than 1 movement/day. Constipation. Straining/pain upon elimination. Stool is scanty, dry, hard, pellet-like.	Two or more movements/day. Diarrhea. Quick elimination. Loose or unformed stools. Burning on elimination.	1 movement per day. Large size or volume. Sluggish elimination. Pale color. Mucous in stool.	

Describe the quantity/qualities of your urine.	Scanty. Clear/light color. Bubbles, frothy. Difficult to pass.	Profuse. Yellow to dark in color. Strong odor. Burning sensations. Prone to urinary tract infections.	Moderate. Milky or white color. Mucous.	
Describe your sweating patterns.	Minimal. Little odor. Much exertion, humidity required to sweat. Uneven sweating patterns.	Profuse. Strong odor. Little heat or exertion required to induce sweat.	Moderate. Sweet or pleasant odor. Moderate exertion, humidity required to induce sweat.	
Body temperature	Always cold, particularly the extremities. Dislikes temperature extremes. Prefers Spring, tropical climates, warm and moist heat (hot tubs).	Always warm. Dislikes heat and humidity. Prefers Fall, cool and dry climates.	Cool or not remarkable. Comfortable most of the time. Dislikes humidity. Prefers Summer, hot/dry climates, dry heat (saunas).	
Skin condition	Dry or combination skin. Cracks on hands/heels. Itchy patches in winter.	Prone to redness or rashes, particularly in summer. Allergic reactions, acne, hives, oiliness,	Moist skin. Clamminess, fungal infections. Infrequent problems.	
Weight patterns over time	Variable. Underweight/thin. Easy to lose weight/harder to gain. Lose weight with stress. Weight gain at hips, tends to be airy/puffy.	Consistent, moderate weight. Good proportions. Easy to gain or lose weight. May overeat with stress. Weight gain in the mid-section.	Heavy, stocky. Easy to gain weight/harder to lose. May overeat with sadness/depression. Weight gain all over the body.	
Sleeping patterns	Hard to fall/stay asleep. Mind races/jumps from subject to subject. Insomnia. Early riser.	Easy to fall asleep. Wakes only when stressed; mind focuses on solving problem. Wakes easily.	Easy to fall asleep, heavy sleeper. Falls asleep during the day. Difficult to wake up in the morning.	

Activity and strength levels	Moves quickly, hyperactive, erratic, low endurance	Purposeful movement, competitive. Medium endurance, intolerant of heat.	Sedentary, deliberative. Good endurance, but slow to start.	
Resistance to disease and disease tendencies	Weak/variable immune system. Prone to nervous system conditions, pain, insomnia, eating/ mental disorders	Moderate. Prone to infections, inflammations, febrile diseases, heart attacks.	Strong. Prone to respiratory diseases, edema, obesity, benign tumors, excess mucous.	
Sexual nature	Variable. Strong desire, but low energy. Can be experimental. Few children.	Moderate. Passionate. Can be quarrelsome, domineering.	Consistent, strong. Devoted partner. Can be overly controlling/attached. Many children.	
How often do you worry? What makes you worry?	Worry frequently. About everything.	Worry only over specific situations, particularly finances or projects out of your control.	Rarely worry. Will worry if family member ill or in trouble. Seldom worries about self.	
Menstrual patterns	Irregular cycles. Pain/cramping with flow. PMS include mood swings, anxiety, pain. Scanty, short (3-5 days) flow.	Regular cycles like clockwork. PMS include anger, irritability, diarrhea and heat. Heavy flow lasting 4-6 days.	Regular cycle. PMS include bloating, breast tenderness, sadness/melancholy. Long periods (5-7 days) with medium flow.	

Now, tally the number of V, P, and K marks. Whichever category has the most marks indicates the area in which you are likely out-of-balance or that in which you tend to become imbalanced. You may find that two categories seem equally strong. Such a finding is not unusual; it means that an imbalance in one area has triggered an imbalance in another. An Ayurvedic practitioner can identify the initiating imbalance and help you devise a program to restore harmony.

Ayurveda is premised on the principle that like increases like. To restore and maintain balance requires antidoting or counteracting any qualities that are in excess. With the help of an Ayurvedic practitioner, you will understand the qualities generating your imbalances and be able to make informed choices, on all sensory levels, to pacify these conditions and restore and maintain balance in your system.