

Dosha Imbalance Self-Assessment

A Practical Test of Dosha Imbalances

Yoga therapy practitioners don't think in terms of one's "body type" (called prakriti in Sanskrit) when prescribing, but rather in terms of imbalances. They may keep the body type in the back of the mind, but the critical issue is the predominant disorders. If there is a major problem that needs attention, it will have precedence over all other factors when considering the therapy. Here, for the first time, is a quiz that assesses your dosha *imbalance* based on signs and symptoms of disorders, as opposed to your constitution. It asks, for example, not whether you are over- or underweight, but why you are, so that you can address the cause of the problems. The results can be used to determine the best diet, exercise and lifestyle including the types of music, aromas, leisure activities or even landscaping that may be therapeutic. Mark a point for a positive response in the appropriate box. In some cases, a positive response is weighted more heavily, even up to five points, because its presence overrides other imbalances. You can have points in several boxes on the same line or in no boxes. Add up the columns and write your scores:

	Vata	Pitta	Kapha
Temperature regulation	Uncomfortably cold feet and hands	Uncomfortably hot, hot flashes, sweats	I often feel cold and clammy
Skin	Dry, flaky skin or ichthyosis	rosacea, acne, easily sunburn, eczema, psoriasis 3 points	Oily, waxy skin with large pores, edema
Mental imbalances	Anxiety, panic, distracted, forgetful 3 points	Anger, frustration, irritability 3 points	Lethargy, melancholy
Disordered sleep	Sleep-onset insomnia or light, fitful sleep-3 points	Sleep-maintenance insomnia: I awake and can't get back to sleep - 2 points	Excessive sleep: I regularly need 9-10 hours per night
Joint problems	Cracking, rough aching, brittle	Inflamed, hot, red	Effusion, liquid, loose
Upper digestion	Irregular	Heartburn, acidity, ulcers, reflux 3 points	Sluggish: food leaves stomach slowly
Lower digestive symptoms	Cramps, gas, bloating, esp. related to stress, anxiety	Loose stools, related to anger and time pressures	-----
I am underweight because I am:	Too active and nervous to eat well (3 points)	Metabolism is too fast. I eat a lot and burn it off	-----
I am overweight because:	I overeat due to stress and anxiety	I overeat due to an insatiable appetite (4 points)	I am sedentary and lethargic, lonely (5 pts)
Cholesterol	Below 140	-----	Over 250 (4 points)
Constipation with:	Dry, small, hard stools	External hemorrhoids	Pasty stools.
Menopause	Insomnia, spacey, vaginal dryness	Hot flashes	Weight gain
Blood pressure	Elevated due to anxiety	Elevated due to anger	Elevated due to obesity and lack of exercise
Eyes	Dry	Red, inflamed	Excess mucus
Fatigue	Due to lack of sleep, anxiety, emaciation	Due to autoimmune or inflammatory diseases	Due to depression, obesity

Menstruation	Irregular or with scant, dark clots	Heavy flow lasting many days	Bloating, lethargy, fluid retention, fibroids
PMS	Anxious, edgy	Irritable, angry	Depressed
Heart	Arrhythmias	-----	Coronary disease-5 points
Headache	Tension	Migraine	Sinus
Other organs	Kidney stones, bladder and prostate problems	Hepatitis, gallstones 2 points each	Asthma or bronchitis; sinusitis (2 points each)
My totals			

With the results of this test, you can follow appropriate dietary and lifestyle guidelines to help correct the problems. If there is one dosha that is clearly predominant, your job is simple. You only need to modify your diet and lifestyle based on that dosha. If there are two that are equally predominant, make your life simple by selecting the dosha underlying the most significant problem or the one that is most affected by diet (such as obesity -- that's why it gets extra points on this quiz). Consultation with an experienced physician trained in Ayurveda is often necessary to put these issues in their proper perspective.