



KAPHA DOSHA TARA Ayurveda 101

Kapha people are blessed with strength, endurance and stamina. They have sweet, loving dispositions and are stable and grounded. Their skin is oily and smooth. Physically, Kapha people tend to gain weight and have a slow metabolism. They shun exercise. They have thick skin and their bodies and muscles are well developed. Their eyes are large, dark, and attractive with thick, long lashes and brows. Kapha people evacuate slowly and feces tend to be soft, pale and oily. Perspiration is moderate.

Sleep is deep and prolonged. Kapha types are attracted to sweet, salty and oily foods, but their constitutions are most balanced by bitter, astringent and pungent tastes.

Psychologically, Kapha people tend to be calm, tolerant, and forgiving. However, they may become lethargic. While they may be slow to comprehend, their long-term memory is excellent. When out of balance, Kaphas tend to experience greed, envy, attachment and possessiveness.

In the external world, Kapha's tendencies toward groundedness, stability and attachment help them to earn and hold onto money. They tend to have diseases connected to the water principle such as flu, sinus congestion and other diseases involving mucous. Sluggishness, excess weight, diabetes, water retention and headaches are also common.

Kapha can become more aggravated as the moon gets full because, as biologists have discovered, there is a tendency for water retention at that time. Winter is the time of greatest Kapha accumulation and following the dietary and lifestyle changes are most important during that season.

Kapha guidelines for diet focus on bitter, astringent and pungent foods while avoiding sweet, sour and salty foods. Kapha people should avoid dairy products and fats of any kind, especially fried or greasy foods. They need foods that will invigorate their minds and bodies while limiting their overall consumption of food.

Those with Kapha constitutions need less grain than Pitta or Vata constitutions with buckwheat and millet (more heating) being optimal grains for them followed by barley, rice and corn. Roasted or dry cooked grains are best. All vegetables are good for Kapha but one should emphasize leafy greens and vegetables. Generally, Kapha people can eat raw vegetables although steamed or stir-fried are easier to digest.

Very sweet or sour fruits should be avoided with the more astringent and drying fruits being preferable such as apples, apricots, cranberries, mangoes, peaches and pears.

Only rarely do Kapha people need animal foods and when they do they should be dry cooked – baked, roasted, broiled – never fried. They could eat chicken, eggs, rabbit, seafood and venison. As their bodies do not require large amounts of protein, they also should not over eat legumes although these are better for them than meat because of the lack of fat. Black beans, mung beans, pinto beans and red lentils are best for Kapha types.

The heavy qualities of nuts and seeds aggravate Kapha, as does the oil in them. Occasional sunflower and pumpkinseeds are all right. Almond, corn, safflower or sunflower oils can be used in small amounts as well. The same holds true for dairy products. In general, Kapha people should avoid the heavy, cooling, sweet qualities of dairy. A little ghee for cooking and some consumption of goat's milk are good for Kapha types.

Since Kapha people should avoid sweets, the only sweetener they should use is raw honey, which is heating. However, they can use all spices, except salt, with ginger and garlic being best for them. A person whose dominant dosha is Kapha and who has very little influence from the other two doshas can benefit from the occasional use of stimulants such as coffee and tea. They are also not as harmed by tobacco and hard liquor.

However, they really do not need alcohol at all. If they elect to use alcohol, wine is their best choice.

MANIFESTATIONS OF KAPHA

Kapha needs stimulating and invigorating

Kapha In Balance

- Strength
- Endurance
- Solid body structure
- Stability of mind
- Dignity
- Affectionate
- Loyal
- Consistent
- Go with the flow
- "Steady as you go"

Kapha Out of Balance

- Gains weight easily
- Slow digestion, water retention
- Cold, damp hands & feet
- Congestion, excess mucous
- Attached, possessive
- Sluggishness
- Excessive sleep
- Procrastination, dullness, lethargic
- Depression, easily upset