

An Ayurvedic Approach to Gaining Weight



Are you tired of hearing the latest pitch on how to lose weight when all you really want to do is *gain* a few pounds? The reality is that there is a ton of information out there about how to lose weight, and far less available on how to gain it—especially in a healthy, balanced way. In Ayurveda, your optimal weight is determined less by a number on a scale, and more by your constitution. A lighter constitution will naturally have a lower ideal body weight than someone of a similar height with a denser constitution. That being said, when it is appropriate, Ayurveda offers a number of effective strategies for building and nourishing the body that encourage a balanced approach to gaining weight.

It doesn't matter how long you've struggled with being underweight or if you are just looking to reset after an unusual period of stress or depletion. The Ayurvedic approach is simple, holistic, healthy, and effective. More importantly, it looks beyond the symptom of being underweight to address the deeper imbalances that are driving the condition. Therefore, even if your system has been depleted for some time, the process will support you in reclaiming a vibrant sense of health and well-being—physically, mentally, and emotionally. This approach is not about packing on the pounds as quickly as possible, and it will not require you to eat vast quantities of unhealthy foods. Instead, it will teach you how to eat a deeply nourishing diet while balancing *agni* (the digestive fire) in order to ensure that your body can actually absorb the nutrition you are eating. It also serves to address the more subtle influences (like stress and emotional discord) that so often interfere with our ability to receive nourishment. In fact, you may find the process enriching your life in ways that no simple building “diet” ever could.



Softening Self-Criticism, Cultivating Discernment

Being underweight can be a lonely and isolating experience; there is so much cultural focus on being thin, trim, and lean, that many people simply can't understand why anyone would want to *gain weight*. But having a very light constitution can dictate a consistent struggle with maintaining a healthy bodyweight. In these cases, it is often quite appropriate to focus on building the physical body. That being said, it is incredibly important to understand your constitution and to be honest about how it naturally influences your physique. You can take our [Prakriti Quiz](#) to help you determine your constitution and our [Vikriti Quiz](#) to identify your current state of balance. This process can help to illuminate both your natural, healthy tendencies, as well as any imbalances that may be interfering with optimal health. You can also peruse our resource, [Vata, Pitta, Kapha, and You](#), which explores the many ways that the *doshas* inform our lives in both healthy and imbalanced ways.

Whatever your constitution, we suggest that you begin this journey with a sincere look at your personal motivations. Is your desire to gain weight due to an underlying dissatisfaction with your body's natural expression of optimal health? Or are you truly undernourished and underweight? Cultivating this level of discernment is important, though certainly not always easy. Making the distinction can be especially difficult for men, who are generally taught that a masculine physique should embody a certain strength and bulk. Still, the same dynamics of discontent can be at play in anyone. If you are aware that you reject or judge your physical nature in some way (no matter how subtle), cultivating appreciation for your body as it is may prove essential to your healing process. Softening any self-criticism can also help to support more realistic goals and expectations as you begin to build and nourish your body.

Ayurveda on Being Underweight

One of the foundational principles of the Ayurvedic tradition is that like increases like and that opposites balance. Typically, excessive weight loss and the condition of being underweight are *vata* disorders. Vata is light, dry, rough, mobile, subtle, and clear—all qualities that are considered to be reducing, or lightening in nature (*langhana*, in Sanskrit).¹ Appropriate treatment strategies therefore emphasize the building and nourishing qualities that best pacify vata. This can be accomplished by introducing foods, experiences, and herbs that are heavy, oily, smooth, stabilizing, gross, and substantive. But if the body's ability to receive nourishment is compromised in any way, this strategy alone will be inadequate. Ayurveda therefore simultaneously focuses on balancing agni so that the deep tissues can properly assimilate the nourishment that is being introduced. Any hyperactivity in the metabolic pathways is carefully slowed while the body's ability to absorb nutrition is recalibrated. The following strategies work on all of these levels to build the physical body in a balanced way. However, because this is a general introduction to building the body, any personal health concerns should still be taken into consideration and discussed with your health care provider.



Quiet the Mind, Calm the Nervous System

We will begin with a number of subtle therapies intended to settle the mind and the nervous system, and it is no coincidence that our discussion begins with these more subtle realms of consciousness. As we have seen, being underweight is a vata disorder—involving vata’s light, dry, rough, mobile, subtle, and clear qualities. An excess of these qualities can leave the mind and the energetic pathways extremely sensitive to stimulus, even hyper-vigilant. When the system is constantly on high-alert, it becomes very difficult to successfully ground and nourish the body. On the other hand, when we foster a sense of calm, stability, safety, and rejuvenation in the mind body organism, we can encourage the body to be more receptive to deep nourishment. Not only do the following practices help to ease stress, quell anxiety, and unwind the nervous system, they can also help to reframe our relationship with the day-to-day challenges that inevitably arise. And because they tend to address systemic patterns of depletion, these practices can be even more essential to our success than any dietary adjustments we might make.

Establish a Daily Routine

Ayurveda recommends a daily routine for everyone, but it is particularly important when we are trying to balance excess vata and redirect long-standing patterns of depletion. Our physiology is very much adapted to—and supported by—some sense of regularity. Think about the natural world and how prevalent routines are; most plants and animals are profoundly attuned to the cycles of day and night, the seasons, and other cyclical patterns that direct the broader community of life. By contrast, the human experience seems increasingly disconnected from these natural rhythms. Adopting even a modest sense of routine gives our nervous systems a number of comforting and reassuring reference points throughout each day. These touchstones send a resounding message to the deep tissues of the body that all is well, that we can be at ease. Over time, a context of predictability and safety allows the nervous system to relax, slows the consumption of biological resources, and improves the body’s ability to receive nourishment.

If the idea of a daily routine is new to you, begin with a commitment to wake up, eat your meals, and go to bed at consistent times each day. If at all possible, consider maintaining a consistent work or activity schedule as well. To create a more elaborate routine or to expand on one you already have, please visit our [Daily Routine Department](#), which explores this concept in depth, and offers personalized recommendations for different constitutions and imbalances. If being underweight is one of your primary concerns, then a [Vata-Pacifying Daily Routine](#) will likely be the most supportive for you.

Practice Fifteen Minutes of Pranayama Daily

Prana (the vital breath) is the subtle essence of life force that animates each of us. It is carried on and stimulated by the breath, and it permeates every cell and tissue throughout the body. Imbibing prana helps to restore fluidity and vitality to the subtle energy *channels* of the body, while digesting and eliminating stagnation and *ama* (toxins).³ One of the best ways to bathe our tissues in fresh prana is to practice *pranayama* (yogic breathing exercises). In particular, the practice of [Nadi Shodhana](#) (Alternate Nostril Breathing) is deeply calming to vata,



soothing to the nervous system as a whole, and serves to quiet stress and tension throughout the system. This pranayama can therefore help to preserve vital resources, redirect them to the deep tissues of the body, and encourage an improved mental disposition in the face of everyday stressors. Just fifteen minutes each day can be transformative.

Prioritize Proper Rest

Sleep is critically important to our overall health, but it is particularly crucial when we are trying to build the body. Sleep's heavy, stabilizing nature helps to ground the excess lightness and activity that tends to cause excess weight loss. In fact, a generous amount of rest is an important antidote to the reducing, lightening qualities that so often underlie depleting patterns in the body. Ironically, an excess of these same qualities often disturbs sleep, causing us to get even less sleep than we require—not more.

If sleep is a challenge area for you, or if you feel that your sleep cycle could use some support, you might be interested in our health guide, [An Ayurvedic Guide to Balanced Sleep](#). Otherwise, prioritize getting adequate rest—maybe even a little extra. You may also find it helpful to build some routine into your sleep cycle. For instance, it can be very helpful to go to bed and get up at about the same times each day, aiming to sleep for a minimum of eight hours each night.

Manage Stress

Stress depletes the nourishment available to our tissues by reallocating vital resources in order to ensure our immediate survival.⁴ Excess stress can therefore be a causative factor in being underweight. Reducing our exposure to stressful situations can certainly help, but addressing our *response* to them is a far more effective means of affecting change. Our [Ayurvedic Guide to Stress Management](#) explores the Ayurvedic perspective on stress and offers a number of useful tools to support you in this process.

Nourish the Tissues through Diet

While subtle therapies can be incredibly supportive of building the body, diet matters, too. In Ayurveda, *when* and *how* we eat are just as important as *what* we eat. Together, the following dietary adjustments will encourage proper digestion, absorption, and assimilation of the foods that you eat.

Eat Three Satisfying Meals Daily

Creating predictability and routine around our meals ensures that the body is fed regularly, and promotes balance on more systemic levels as well. We have seen that our systems are very supported by routine, but they are also highly provoked by a *lack of routine*. In modern life, we often eat with extreme irregularity, eat on the run, or skip meals altogether in order to accommodate whatever else might be going on in our lives. These habits can be extremely vata-provoking, destabilizing, and often reinforce the patterns of depletion that tend to



cause undernourishment. Embracing a predictable meal schedule safeguards against the consequences of such irregularity.

As a starting place, commit to eating three solid meals at consistent times each day, and plan ahead as much as possible to ensure that you can follow through. Even better, set aside twenty to thirty minutes to stop what you are doing and *receive* each meal. Try not to multitask or eat while distracted. It is best to offer your full attention to your meal and to focus on connecting with—and being nourished by—your food. Notice your body’s response to being fed. Envision your digestive fire transforming your food into perfectly refined nutrition, and visualize your circulatory system delivering this vital energy to every cell and tissue throughout your body. Finally, when you are finished eating, take a couple of deep, full breaths, allowing yourself to register satisfaction before moving on to your next activity.

Eat a Vata-Pacifying Diet

A vata-pacifying diet emphasizes the qualities that most effectively support building; it consists of foods that are generally grounding, warm, oily, smooth, stabilizing, and substantive. The following suggestions will introduce you to the most important elements of this type of diet. For a deeper understanding, you may enjoy our resource on following a [vata-pacifying diet](#) as well as our list of [vata-pacifying foods](#), which highlights the foods to favor and avoid in order to support a return to balance.

Ingest Generous Amounts of High-Quality Oils

Because it is heavy, oily, smooth, stabilizing, and substantive, oil is one of the best remedies for an excess of the reducing, lightening qualities (and for excess vata in general). But quality oil also provides the body with an important source of lipids. In fact, depleted fat reserves can be the result of insufficient oil in the diet.³ In general, high-quality, organic oils are best, and most varieties of oil will be beneficial. In particular, favor [Sesame Oil](#), [Ghee](#), olive oil, and [Sunflower Oil](#) while limiting your intake of corn, flax, and soy oils (which are lighter, drier, and can further provoke vata).

Focus on Foods that Are Nourishing and Building

You will want to orient your diet around healthy, whole foods that are deeply nutritious. Choose foods that are warm, moist, oily, grounding, nourishing, smooth, and stabilizing, over foods that are cold, dry, light, or rough. Favor the sweet, sour, and salty tastes over the pungent, bitter, and astringent tastes. Build your meals around staple foods that naturally taste sweet, such as fruits, grains, root vegetables, milk, ghee, fresh yogurt, eggs, nuts, seeds, and vata-pacifying meats (refer to our list of [vata-pacifying foods](#) for more specifics). Nourishing and rejuvenating dishes such as [Sweet Potato Halva](#) and [Urad Dal](#) are fantastic, as are substantive soups and stews. You can also include grounding, nutritive snacks in between meals. For instance, fill a jar with pitted medjool dates, pour warm [Ghee](#) over them and let the ghee solidify. Eat one or two of these ghee dates in the early morning or any time between meals for a rejuvenative boost of energy. Other supportive snacks include soaked and peeled almonds, soaked cashews, [Date Shakes](#), and [Dream Date Balls](#). Experiment with what works for you and keep snacks handy so that you can reach for quality nourishment rather than a quick fix of empty energy (i.e., sugar or junk food).



Follow Intelligent Cravings

When the body is depleted, cravings for heavy, building foods like meat and cheese are often the body's way of asking for exactly what it needs. If you are craving these and other healthy, building foods or the [sweet](#), [sour](#), and [salty](#) tastes, trust your cravings and indulge them—in moderation, of course. If on the other hand, you are craving [pungent](#), [bitter](#), or [astringent](#) foods, it is likely that an imbalance is disturbing your body's natural intelligence. In general, indulging cravings for lighter, drier foods will not be particularly supportive of your efforts to build the body.

Stay Hydrated

Just as with oil, insufficient hydration can dry up and deplete the adipose tissue (fat).³ On the other hand, drinking plenty of fluids—preferably warm and caffeine-free—will help to maintain moisture and hydration throughout the system. Staying hydrated allows the metabolic pathways to function more efficiently and can also improve nutrient absorption. This is true both within the digestive tract and throughout the system at the cellular level. One of the best times to hydrate is first thing in the morning. Try starting your day with 1-4 cups of warm water on an empty stomach. This practice flushes natural toxins released during the sleep cycle, hydrates the tissues, awakens the digestive capacity, and supports healthy elimination. It is a wonderful way to start the day, even after you regain your optimal body weight. Throughout the rest of your day, be mindful of drinking plenty of warm water, herbal teas, and other hydrating fluids—primarily between meals, if possible.

Begin to Pay Attention to Proper Food Combining

According to Ayurveda, some foods digest well together while others do not. Combining foods with radically different energies can overwhelm the digestive fire and can cause indigestion, fermentation, gas, bloating, and the creation of toxins. On the other hand, careful food combining can dramatically improve the quality of digestion, support the body in receiving a deeper level of nourishment, and positively impact our overall health. In any case, it is usually best to embrace this idea slowly and to make changes gradually—at a pace that feels completely manageable to you. Often, the best starting place is simply to notice improper food combinations that show up regularly in your diet and to begin to take note of how they affect you. If you would like more information (or support refining your current practices), please visit our resource on [Ayurvedic Food Combining](#).

Prioritize Proper Exercise

Exercise naturally tends to increase the mobile, light qualities of vata. Done improperly, exercise can be very physically depleting and can contribute to an inappropriate loss of fat. However, the right kind of exercise can help to release accumulated tension, improve circulation, kindle agni, support proper digestion and elimination, promote relaxation in the body, and encourage sound sleep¹—all of which support physical nourishment. Ayurveda offers the unique perspective that, for each of us, the appropriate type, duration, and intensity of exercise depends largely on who we are as individuals. To build the body, follow a vata-pacifying exercise routine that includes gently-paced and grounding activities like tai chi, walking, mellow hiking, or gentle cycling. You can also practice [Vata-Pacifying Yoga](#) or a handful of slow and purposeful [Sun Salutations](#) (Surya Namaskar).



The frequency of your activities is also important. When balancing excess vata, it is generally a good idea to have a recovery day in between days of exercise, meaning that three or four days of exercise per week is usually sufficient. If you are an avid athlete, try cutting back for a while and notice how your body responds. If you do not exercise much right now, three days per week is likely an appropriate starting place, and remember that something as simple as a twenty-minute walk can do wonders for the entire system—body, mind, and spirit.



Ayurvedic Herbs that Support Deep Nourishment

There are a number of herbs in the Ayurvedic tradition that support proper digestion, absorption, and assimilation of nutrients. These herbs often have an affinity for specific tissues and systems in the body such that each of them supports the process of building and nourishing the body in its own way.

Building Rejuvenatives

Ashwagandha is an impressive *rasayana* (rejuvenative). It offers deep nourishment to the tissues, supports the proper functioning of the adrenals, bolsters the immune system, and helps to build *ojas*. It is also a highly regarded adaptogen that helps the body to resist stress—preserving vital energy during the day and encouraging sound sleep at night. **Ashwagandha tablets**, **liquid extract**, and **powder** allow you to choose the form that is most appropriate for you.



Shatavari is a nourishing tonic for both men and women. Its unctuous, grounding, and cooling, qualities make it a powerful rasayana (rejuvenative). It helps to strengthen and nourish the tissues while supporting both physical and mental digestion. Shatavari is also very *sattvic* (pure and harmonious) in nature, so it supports a calm mind and helps to promote love and devotion in our lives. **Shatavari tablets**, **liquid extract**, and **powder** allow you to choose the form that is most appropriate for you.

Chyavanprash is a traditional Ayurvedic herbal jam made in a base of amalaki fruit. This balancing formula is deeply rejuvenating, but it also kindles agni, helps to buffer the body against stress, and bolsters the immune system. A daily dose of this nutritive jam can support energy, vitality, and overall well-being. Take 1-2 teaspoons daily, or use as directed by your health practitioner.

Triphala is revered for its unique ability to gently cleanse and detoxify the digestive tract, while replenishing, nourishing, and rejuvenating the tissues. It encourages balanced agni throughout the system, helps to eliminate ama, and supports ojas. About half an hour before bed, take two **Triphala tablets** with a glass of warm water. If you prefer, steep ½-1 teaspoon **Triphala powder** in 1 cup of freshly boiled water for ten minutes; cool and drink. Or try 30 drops of **Triphala liquid extract** in warm water before bed.

Balancing the Doshas

Herbs and formulas that specifically balance the doshas can be instrumental in correcting the underlying cause of your weight imbalances. If you are unsure of which doshas are primarily behind your struggle with maintaining or gaining weight, our **Prakriti Quiz** can give you a better sense for the predominant doshas in your constitution, our **Vikriti Quiz** can highlight any current imbalances, and our resource, **Vata, Pitta, Kapha, and You**, can help to illustrate how the doshas influence our experiences in both healthy and detrimental ways.

Pacifying Vata

If your struggle with being underweight is primarily due to excess vata, consider taking **Healthy Vata tablets** to balance vata systemically and **Vata Digest tablets** to more specifically support vata in the digestive tract. If you prefer a powder, **Hingvastak** is the powdered form of the Vata Digest formula; it can be taken alone or sprinkled on your food like pepper.

Haritaki tablets can be taken instead of triphala for anyone with excess vata in the digestive tract. Haritaki is one of the three herbs in triphala; it is very lubricating, moisturizing and particularly balancing to vata. It is a potent rejuvenative that nourishes the tissues, gently removes natural toxins, supports the colon, and builds ojas. Take one or two tablets, once or twice daily, or as directed by your health practitioner. If you prefer, haritaki is also available as a **powder**.

Pacifying Pitta

Excess *pitta* can cause the digestive fire to be exceedingly hot, hindering the absorption of nutrients and inhibiting the process of building the body. If your struggle with being underweight is primarily due to excess pitta, consider taking **Healthy Pitta tablets** to balance pitta systemically and **Pitta Digest tablets** to more specifically support

pitta in the digestive tract. If you prefer a powder, [Avipattikar powder](#) is a formula with very similar indications and benefits as Pitta Digest.

[Amalaki tablets](#) can be taken instead of triphala for anyone with excess heat in the digestive tract. Amalaki is another one of the three herbs in triphala and it is particularly balancing for pitta. Amalaki provides a highly concentrated source of antioxidants and is a potent rejuvenative that nourishes the tissues, gently removes natural toxins, and supports ojas. Take one to two tablets, once or twice daily, or as directed by your health practitioner. If you prefer, amalaki is also available as a [powder](#) and a [liquid extract](#).

Complementary Herbs

If there are specific areas of your life—like stress, sleep, or frequent travel—that are especially depleting for you, you might consider one of these:

[Stress Ease tablets](#) support the resiliency and tone of the neuromuscular system, helping the body to better cope with stress and providing a sustained source of natural energy. This herbal formula is naturally rejuvenating and therefore may also benefit anyone prone to fatigue, weakness, or a sense of overwhelm. Take one to two tablets, once or twice daily, or as directed by your health practitioner.

[I Sleep Soundly tablets](#) contain natural muscle relaxants to help release accumulated tension from the neuromuscular system and encourage sound sleep. This formula contains rejuvenative herbs (like ashwagandha) that serve to restore vitality throughout the body and mind. It also has a subtle, soothing effect on the mind as a whole, which helps to ease mental restlessness. Remember, sound sleep will support the building process. Take one to two tablets about a half hour before going to bed, or as directed by your health practitioner.

[I Travel Well liquid extract](#) was formulated to support the body through periods of travel, when our schedules are generally hectic and irregular, our sleep may be disrupted, healthy meal choices are often few and far between, and our bodies are trying to cope with rapid time zone changes. Travel can be very physically depleting, so if you do it often, it could be a factor in your struggle to maintain a healthy body weight. This liquid extract bolsters the body's natural adaptive mechanisms to support the digestive, immune, respiratory, and nervous systems while eliminating natural toxins and supporting the body in reestablishing healthy sleep patterns. Take 30 drops in water or juice one to three times daily, or as directed by your health practitioner.

Optional Additions

The following additions may offer powerful support, but taking on too much too fast will surely backfire. These additions are meant to give you room to grow, and to provide a few additional tools for those of you who may already have some of the above recommendations in place. For best results, add more only as your initial commitments become relatively effortless to maintain. And even then, prioritize the additions that truly inspire you—introducing them one at a time.



Ayurvedic Self-Massage with Oil

It is no coincidence that the Sanskrit word for oil, *sneha*, also means love. Applying oil to the body is a profoundly rejuvenating practice of loving self-care that benefits both the physical body and the more subtle realms of consciousness.

Abhyanga (the ancient practice of full-bodied oil massage) calms the nervous system, lubricates and rejuvenates the tissues, and promotes healthy circulation throughout the body. In addition, the oil itself forms a protective sheath around the body—shielding us from the onslaught of disruptive energies that we inevitably encounter every day. This practice can be life-changing when we are feeling especially stressed, busy, scattered, overextended, or under-nourished. In the morning, before a shower or bath, massage about ¼–½ cup of warm, organic oil into the skin. For further instructions on this rejuvenating technique, and for support choosing an appropriate oil, please see our resource on [Ayurvedic Self-Massage](#). Pay careful attention to the section outlining vata-pacifying abhyanga, as it will be the most supportive of building the body.

Massaging your feet and scalp with warm oil before bed can serve as a simpler alternative, or a regular supplement to the full-bodied practice of abhyanga. Before bed, simply apply some warm [Sleep Easy Oil](#) to your feet, and, if you like, to your scalp as well. This practice grounds the energy, soothes the nervous system, reduces stress, quiets the mind, and promotes sound sleep. Remember that sleep is one of the body's most essential means of building and rejuvenation. Be sure to wear some old socks to bed to protect your sheets. (If you are oiling your scalp, cover your pillow with an old towel.)

Meditation

Meditation can be a potent addition to anyone's daily routine. It is especially supportive of building the body if stress, anxiety, and other mental and emotional influences are involved in your struggle with maintaining a healthy body weight. Because meditation helps us to re-pattern the mind, it tends to support us on a very fundamental level—often reaching well beyond the symptoms we are trying to address. If you do not have an existing practice, Dr. Lad's [Empty Bowl Meditation](#) is a simple yet powerful technique, suitable for anyone.

Consider a Cleanse

A dietary cleanse can help to reset to the digestive system in much the same way that restarting a computer eradicates glitches and idiosyncrasies that interfere with routine functioning. The basic premise of a cleanse is that our bodies are inherently intelligent. When we provide a break from the barrage of potentially harmful inputs, they immediately allocate the extra energy to cleaning house—repairing and rejuvenating the system for optimal performance. That said, cleanses tend to be mildly to intensely depleting. Therefore, for those of us who are underweight, it is important to favor a more substantive cleanse over an all-out fast or juice cleanse. We also highly recommend that you seek the support of a qualified Ayurvedic practitioner to minimize the potential depletion of a cleansing program. If you are intrigued, please visit our [Cleansing Department](#) to access instructions for several different types of cleanses—from simple half- or full-day digestive resets to longer monodiets of kitchari.



Consider a Period of Rejuvenation

Ayurveda has a rich tradition of *rasayana*, otherwise known as a period of rejuvenation. In essence, the idea is to nourish yourself deeply, on all levels, for a designated period of time. This rejuvenation process allows the body to repair, regenerate, and revitalize all of the organs, tissues, and systems, and benefits the whole of who we are—body, mind, and spirit. Ayurvedic rejuvenation therapies can include dietary changes, specific lifestyle choices, the use of rejuvenative herbs, or a combination of all three. Rasayana is about building and nourishing the entire organism, so it is very much in line with the desire to build the physical body, and people generally find the process soothing, sweet, grounding, and enjoyable. If you would like to learn more about the practice of rasayana, please see our [Rejuvenation Department](#), which covers specific therapies for different constitutions and imbalances.

Embrace Your Unique Path

Ayurveda is a Sanskrit word that literally means “knowledge of life,” and the entire tradition is about improving overall wellness and vitality—reclaiming optimal health by making sustainable changes that support every aspect of our lives. As such, each step along the way is a step toward a richer, more vibrant experience of being. So while Ayurveda can certainly support us in achieving an optimal body weight, it also has the capacity to dramatically improve the trajectory of our lives moving forward. And remember, an Ayurvedic lifestyle serves us best when it is undertaken gradually—at a sustainable pace—over time. With this in mind, take a deep breath and move into your process with the intention to make slow, manageable changes that you can realistically maintain. Be gentle with yourself. Honor your unique strengths and challenge areas. Enlist support where you need it. And most importantly, move at your own pace. If you find yourself overly focused on your destination, take a step back and ask yourself what positive outcomes have emerged already? Stop, breathe, and enjoy the ride. Here’s wishing you an immensely rewarding journey on the path of Ayurveda.



References

¹ Charaka, *Charaka Samhita*, trans. Dr. Ram Karan Sharma and Vaidya Bhagwan Dash, vol. 1, *Sutrasthana* (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 2009), chap. 22, ver. 9-17, 388-9.

² Vasant Lad, *Textbook of Ayurveda Volume 3: General Principles of Management and Treatment* (Albuquerque: The Ayurvedic Press, 2012), 154-5.

³ Vasant Lad, *Textbook of Ayurveda, Volume 2: A Complete Guide to Clinical Assessment* (Albuquerque: The Ayurvedic Press, 2006), 259.

