MY AYURVEDIC PATH
DISCOVER YOUR PATH TO HOLISTIC HEALTH

Daily Nightly Routine (Ratricharya)

Evenings are a sacred part of our daily flow. Wind down and rebalance with these simple Ayurvedic evening rituals. Is there anything better than a good night's sleep? Pick a few that provide you with the greatest benefits.

Our busy days pull us in a million different directions. As a result, our bodies and minds stay revved up long after we finish our to-do lists. Establishing a daily night rhythm known as Ratricharya in Ayurveda can help us reclaim balance.

We're often too exhausted to think much about our nightly habits. But our quality of sleep sets the tone for our entire day. Intentional evening rituals help us flow from busy day to restful sleep.

Evening rituals quiet our "working" minds and signal it's time to unwind. With simple, mindful practices, we can release the day and ground our energy. When bedtime rolls around, we're calm, relaxed, and ready for shut eye.

In Ayurveda, Pitta dosha is active from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. During the day, Pitta energy helps you focus and get things done. At night, if Pitta is working over time, it interferes with restorative sleep. Have you ever had work dreams? Or dreams where you are in conflict in a personal relationship? Unfortunately, if you're still awake – it can spark, not a second wind, but rather a second fire of productivity when we need to be asleep.

We all know the feeling of a frantic morning. We hit snooze, hit snooze again, and struggle to catch up the rest of the day. When we clock out and head home, it's easy to stay in this frantic autopilot. Evening rituals help you break the cycle and reclaim your personal life.

If you recoil at the idea of adding anything else to your to-do list, don't worry. Evening rituals are simply pathways to a supportive natural rhythm. You don't need to follow a strict regimen; integrating even one or two of the following habits can change your life.

- Eat 2+ hours before bed, eat something light and healthy, eat an Ayurvedic dinner. Disconnect to reconnect - Set down the phone, turn off the TV, and connect with your family or roommates over dinner.
- Make time for gentle movement, Take a peaceful nature walk after dinner to calm your mind and aid digestion.
- Gentle stretching is another powerful Ayurvedic evening ritual. These simple yoga poses help relieve stress, soothe nerves, and calm busy minds:
    - Viparita Karani (Legs Up Wall)
    - Makarasana (Crocodile Pose)
    - Balasana (Child's Pose)
    - Savasana (Corpse Pose)
- Diaphragmatic breathing - Breathing links us both to the mind and the body. And the more we pay attention to breathing by way of a gentle awareness, the more we can relax and find our mind concentrated. That's where diaphragmatic breathing exercises come in.
- Pranayama: Nadi Shodhana (Alternate nostril breathing) - Alternate nostril breathing is one of the most effective pranayama exercises to relieve anxiety (Vata dosha), intensity (Pitta dosha) and dullness (Kapha dosha). This exercise can restore balance and put your body and mind at ease.
    - Bring the right hand to the nose, fold the index finger and the middle finger so the right thumb can be used to close the right nostril and the ring finger can be used to close the left nostril (vishnu mudra). Alternatively, you may place the index and middle fingers on the bridge of the nose between the eyes.
    - Close the passive nostril and exhale completely through the active nostril.
    - At the end of the exhalation, close the active nostril and inhale through the passive nostril slowly and completely. Inhalation and exhalation should be of equal duration.
    - Repeat this cycle of exhalation with the active nostril and inhalation with the passive nostril two more times.
    - At the end of the third inhalation with the passive nostril, exhale completely through the same nostril keeping the active nostril closed with the finger.
    - At the end of the exhalation, close the passive nostril and inhale through the active nostril.
    - Repeat two more times the cycle of exhalation through the passive nostril and inhalation through the active nostril.

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- Brew a Sleepy time AYURVEDIC MILK
  - Ingredients
  - 1 cup organic full cream milk Pinch of turmeric
  - 1 cup of water Small slice of ginger
  - 3 open cardamon pods
  - Method
  - Add milk and water to saucepan
  - Add cardamon pods and slice of ginger to a tea egg and place into pan
  - Bring to a boil, slowly adding turmeric in small amounts
  - Sit (only stir one way → energy)
  - Keep boiling till liquid has reduced to half
  - Add 3 saffron stamens at the end
- Massage the day away with Abhyanga or Ayurveda Self-Massage - Loving self-massage creates an inner haven from outer stressors. Oil massage has many health benefits, even if you have just a few minutes before bed.
- Unwind with aromatherapy
- Certain scents trigger physiological responses that can help us fall asleep. Aromatherapy is a fantastic Ayurvedic evening ritual that's easy to incorporate into your nightly flow. There are several ways to use essential oils:Mist your pillow with a spray, Add a few drops to a warm bath, Use in a steamy shower (or a cool one if you run hot), Disperse with an oil diffuser, Soak a cotton ball and place by your bedside
  - Vata: Warm, sweet, and sour aromas. This includes: lavender; rose; clove; patchouli; and vanilla.
  - Pitta: Sweet and cooling. This includes sandalwood and jasmine.
  - Kapha: Warm, spicy, and stimulating. This includes camphor; juniper; eucalyptus; marjoram; and clove.
- Practice healthy sleep hygiene Ayurveda style - Generally speaking, there are ideal sleep and rise times for Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. However, what is correct for you will depend on your current state, symptoms, stage of life, and other factors that are assessed during an Ayurvedic consultation. For example, if someone is predominantly Kapha, but they are in a depleted state from caregiving to parents in hospice, some additional rest may be needed.
- Sunrise varies according to the seasons, but on average Vata people should get up about 6 a.m., Pitta people by 5:30 a.m., and Kapha by 4:30 a.m. (If your schedule is not ideal, adjust schedule gently, 15 minutes per week until you are at ideal waking time. If one week you are not able to manage the change well, repeat same time for one additional week). Tomorrow started yesterday; and proper sleep hygiene is the key to a good night's rest. Set a regular bedtime to attune your body to a daily rhythm, in general, you'll want to get to bed before 10 p.m.
- Downshift starting in the afternoon - Vata time starts around 2:00pm in the afternoon and continues until about 6:00p.m. While we still may be at work, commuting, attending our child's activity, internally, we can begin to downshift, that is to say, relax and release. We've been at it at day, now it's time to embrace Vata's quality of lightness and let go of intensity. Our outward actions may remain the same, but internally we have acknowledge the shift in the dosha tie of day, and we're aligning with it.
- Embrace Kapha time of the evening - Kapha is dominant from about 6:00p.m. to 10:00p.m. The energy of this time of evening is sweet, snuggly, soft, protected, and peaceful. Embrace this energy instead or bee-bopping around more. Reclaim evenings as your rejuvenation time. It's the perfect time relax and unwind by reading an inspirational book, disconnecting from screens, and simply being present to yourself and to those whom you share your life. Being aligned with the qualities of Kapha time, naturally prepares us to be relaxed and ready to let go and slide into a good night's sleep.

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- Eat an Ayurvedic dinner
  - Eat something light 2+ hours before bed
- Make time for gentle movement
  - Take a peaceful nature walk and Gentle stretching
- Diaphragmatic breathing
- Pranayama
- Brew a Sleepy time Ayurveda Milk
- Daily massage (abhyanga)
  - Or at least the souls of your feet and hands
- Unwind with aromatherapy
- Healthy sleep hygiene Ayurveda style
  - Vata by 6 a.m., Pitta by 5:30 a.m., and Kapha by 4:30 a.m.
- Downshift starting in the afternoon
- Embrace Kapha time of the evening
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Print this page and tape to your bathroom mirror for a daily reminder