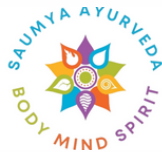


HOW TO



KEEP YOUR COOL



An Ayurvedic guide to finding and maintaining balance **from menses to menopause.**

Veena Haasl-Blilie
Saumya Ayurveda

Table of Contents



Introduction	02
I: Ayurveda 101	04
II: An Ayurvedic Perspective on Menstruation	08
III: Supportive Ayurveda for Menses	11
IV: Ayurveda + the Perimenopausal Transition	18
V: Ayurveda + Menopause	24
VI: Ayurveda for Specific Symptoms	32

EXPERT REVIEW

Veena Haasl-Blilie has written an upbeat eBook that gives you lots of tips for getting into a healing flow with your cycle and body, no matter where you are in life's path.

This clear, visually appealing presentation of Ayurvedic healing in women's health offers info about healing foods, herbs, and other Ayurvedic practices you can directly and immediately apply. I warmly recommend this accessible and engaging book.



AMADEA MORNINGSTAR

Teacher & Author of The Ayurvedic Cookbook & Ayurvedic Cooking for Westerners



Most people remember their first period. Let's face it, it's a shock. One day we're children at play. The next, the capacity to create life has descended upon us. Yet, we're still just kids! How could we comprehend that—from now on, for the majority of our lives—we'll be in some phase of this powerful cycle?

If we truly understood the lifelong impact of our menstrual cycle, we'd want to ensure it was balanced right out the gate. There's no way we'd sign up for 70+ years of inconvenience, discomfort, and, far too often, outright suffering and health concerns.

An imbalanced cycle can affect our whole life, and not just a few days a month. Cramps, acne, bloating, hot flashes, mood swings... there are so many ways an imbalanced cycle can manifest. And they can plague us from our first period until well after our last.

Now, imagine a cycle free of drama. It shows up on time and has minimal influence on your day-to-day life. You feel like yourself—cool, calm, and collected all month long. This is a balanced menstrual cycle.

With Ayurveda's ancient wisdom, we can achieve balance at any age—and maintain it for decades to come. When we're balanced, we can enjoy life, feel our best physically and emotionally, and avoid an array of health issues.

"How to Keep Your Cool" is an invitation to balance your menstrual cycle... and while you're at it, transform your life. From menses to menopause, you deserve to keep your cool. This guide will show you how.



"My personal goal is for every menstruating human to know what a balanced cycle is... and what it is NOT. By balancing the cycle off the bat—I'm talking as early as the first period—we can avoid a lifetime of physical, mental, and emotional suffering."

Let's not accept discomfort, pain, anxiety, acne, mood issues as an inevitable part of the process. We can do better than to suppress symptoms and suffer.

Ayurveda offers 5,000 years worth of tools and wisdom to create and maintain a balanced cycle."

— Veena Haast-Blielie

What's Inside?

1. COOLING MENSTRUAL SUFFERING

Menstrual issues can begin as early as the first period, which can arrive as young as ten! Women may endure cramps, acne, and mood swings for decades—only to develop hot flashes, night sweats, and other painful new symptoms when they begin the perimenopausal transition and menopause. Ayurveda offers answers and relief.

This guide reveals how common menstrual issues are linked to imbalances of the Ayurvedic doshas. Learn how these foundational energies affect your cycle and all aspects of your wellbeing. Then, discover simple ways to restore balance using food as medicine, gentle herbs, and Ayurvedic lifestyle tools.

2. NAVIGATING THE STAGES OF LIFE

From the fiery Pitta years of productivity and (potential) reproduction, to the rise in Vata that arrives with the perimenopausal transition, the Ayurvedic doshas are intimately tied to the stages of our lifelong menstrual cycle.

Shifts in the delicate dance between Pitta and Vata occur naturally throughout our life. But they can spark a plethora of menstrual issues if we're not careful—particularly as we move through the perimenopausal transition into menopause. As Vata rises and fuels Pitta's fire, many women feel burnt out, dried up, and simply... not like themselves anymore.

Ayurveda helps us flow with the dosha influences at every stage of life. Use this guide to leverage Pitta's fire without burning out and keep your cool as your ease into your Vata years.

3. FINDING YOUR INHERENT COOL

Our bodies and lives are constantly changing. These changes can be intense, particularly as we reach the end of our reproductive years. Our bodies change, our faces change, our energy changes. We look different on the outside and feel different on the inside. It's out of our control, and it can be hard to accept.

As time passes, Ayurveda reminds us our essence remains unchanged. We are cool and unique at every age—and we're only getting better as we go!

Ayurveda helps us embrace the unique flavor and opportunity in every phase of life. In this guide, you'll find simple tools and wisdom to make YOUR life journey one of deepening spiritual-richness, self-love, and self-knowledge.

When our cycle is balanced at each stage of life, we feel our best, we feel confident, we feel cool. We ARE cool. This guide is a framework to help you get there. Through Ayurveda's ancient wisdom, you'll discover your distinct path to a calm and centered life—and find relief from menstrual suffering along the way. **Let's dive in!**

CHAPTER ONE

An Introduction to Ayurveda

No matter your age, Ayurveda can help balance your menstrual cycle.

But 5,000 years of wisdom can be a lot to wrap your head around! This chapter unpacks Ayurveda's foundational concepts. It's your first step in harnessing this powerful wisdom to "Keep Your Cool" for a lifetime.

What is Ayurveda?

Ayurveda is a Sanskrit word that translates directly as the "knowledge" (veda) of "life" (ayu). It is part of the Vedic tradition, an ancient Indian wisdom tradition based on the idea that all of life—from the mundane to the majestic—is inherently connected and divine.

While most folks know Ayurveda as a powerful natural medicine system, this is just one small dot on the vast map of this ancient tradition. It's more accurate to think of Ayurveda as a compass for living and a spiritual journey that lasts a lifetime.



THE AYURVEDIC DOSHAS

Ayurveda seeks to achieve an optimal energetic balance in the body, mind, and spirit so we are healthy and free to pursue our fullest lives. At the center of this approach lie the Ayurvedic doshas.

Everything and everyone in the world around us is composed of five elements: air, space, fire, water, and earth. Ayurveda groups these elements into three pairs, known as doshas. These foundational energies—called *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*—are the building blocks of our entire universe, including ourselves.

The doshas are a dynamic presence in our inner and outer worlds. They govern different seasons, hours of the day, stages of our lives, and even our unique physical and mental characteristics.

	VATA <i>Essential engine of the universe</i>	PITTA <i>The universal force of action + reaction</i>	KAPHA <i>That which nourishes + protects</i>
ELEMENTS	Space + Air	Fire + Water	Earth + Water
GOVERNS	All functions of movement within the mind, body, and outer world	All transformations within the body, mind, and outer world	Structure, stability, and lubrication in the body, mind, and outer world
PROPERTIES	Cold, dry, mobile, subtle, light, irregular	Hot, light, sharp, oily, liquid, penetrating, spreading	Moist, heavy, slow, cool, stable, oily, and smooth
BALANCED	Creativity, expansion, openness, eagerness, ingenuity	Ambition, discernment, charisma, strong-will and insight	Groundedness, endurance, strength, and dependability
IMBALANCED	Constipated, dry, scattered, ungrounded, tense, and anxious	Heat in the body (acne, inflammation, indigestion, heartburn) and mind (jealousy, criticism, anger)	Physical and mental “dullness.” Weight gain, lethargy, brain fog, depression

DOSHIC CONSTITUTION + PERSONALIZED TREATMENT

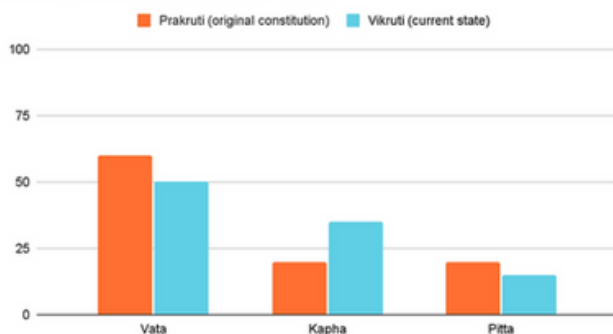
Though we may sometimes forget it, we humans are part of the greater universe. Just as rays of sunlight are not separate from the sun, we are not separate from nature. We are nature. As such, we are made up of the same energetic elements as the world around us.

While all three doshas are present in every one of us, they manifest to varying degrees. Our distinct physical, mental, and spiritual traits are the result of our unique dosha constitution. You can think of it like our energetic fingerprint – no two are the same!

Our doshic constitution influences everything from our body type to our temperament, and even our bowel movements! Ayurveda assesses a person's dosha makeup in two ways:

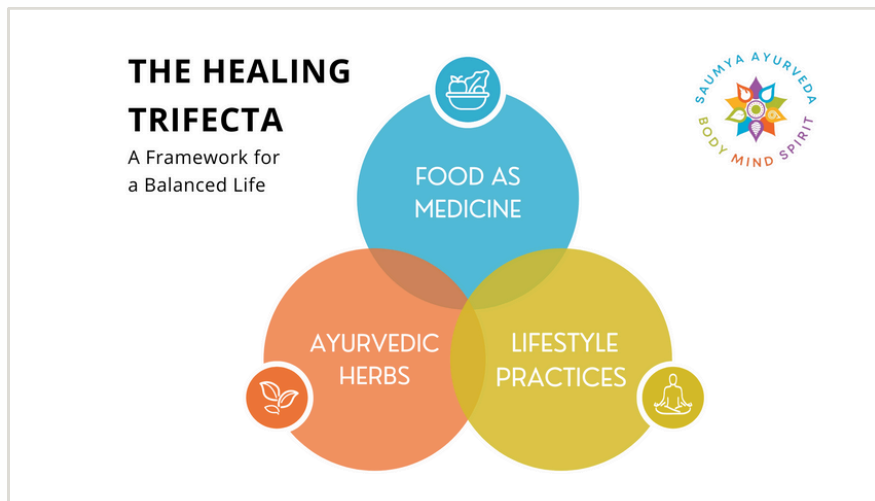
- **PRAKRUTI (Original Constitution):** The doshic composition of your body and mind at the moment of your creation. This determines your innate tendencies, physical/psychological traits, and is considered your natural optimal state.
- **VIKRUTI (Current State):** How your doshas are manifesting in the present moment. Our environment and lifestyle choices affect our physical and energetic bodies, our mood, and our psychology – which can lead to imbalances in our doshas.

Example of Doshic Constitution



In an ideal world, when all is balanced, our prakruti and vikruti will be the same. But disturbances to our inner and outer worlds can throw the doshas out of balance. This can result in any variety of physical and mental symptoms—like fatigue, anxiety, irritability, constipation, acne, sleep issues, etc—and a number of persistent nuisances we often discount as part of life.

Left unchecked, an imbalance may lead to a more serious health condition, syndrome, or disease. The original personalized medicine, Ayurveda takes into account your unique doshic makeup, current doshic state, and life circumstances to come up with a custom plan to bring you back into harmony.



At [Saumya Ayurveda](#), our treatment plans center around three pillars: food as medicine, herbs, and Ayurvedic lifestyle practices like meditation, breathwork, and yog-asana. We call this our **Healing Trifecta**—a simple framework that makes Ayurveda easy to understand and tailor to your unique needs.

While Ayurveda’s 5000-year track record is a testament to the power of these holistic tools, as modern clinical trials validate Ayurveda’s ancient knowledge, this powerful wellness tradition is working its way into contemporary healthcare practices. As a result, more and more folks are embracing Ayurveda as a powerful way to integrate positive changes and bring their lives back into balance.

Additional Resources

[Ayurveda’s Healing Trifecta: A Framework for a Balanced Life](#)

[What is Ayurveda? A Beginner’s Guide and Beyond](#)

CHAPTER TWO

An Ayurvedic Perspective on Menstruation



You might think of menstruation as the few days you get your period. But this dynamic cycle influences us all month long, and through all phases of our lifelong reproductive journey.

Ayurveda helps us tune into subtle (and sometimes not-so-subtle) shifts in our menstrual cycle that indicate what's happening within our bodies, minds, and spirits. This awareness empowers us to make choices that support our distinct reproductive needs—as well as our mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing.

In other words: Ayurveda helps us step into the flow, so we can embrace the true essence of a balanced menstrual cycle.



THE DOSHAS AND THE MENSTRUAL CYCLES

The Ayurvedic doshas are present in and influence everything in existence, including our menstrual cycles. While painful period symptoms are indicative of a dosha imbalance, that's just the tip of the iceberg. Vata, Pitta, and Kapha all play essential roles in our monthly and lifelong menstrual cycles.

1. MONTHLY MENSTRUAL CYCLE

Our human rhythms are tied to the greater movements of the universe. In the Ayurvedic tradition and many others, the menstrual cycle follows the moon through its roughly 29.5-day cycle. This is where the term “moon cycle” comes from. As we move through our monthly menstrual cycle, the doshas ebb and flow within us to propel and support the process.

- **Beginning of Cycle:** After a period of physical and psychological cleansing (the flow) Kapha increases and estrogen levels begin to rise. We are settled, grounded, and content.
- **Ovulation:** In a healthy body, ovulation begins as the energy of the full moon draws the egg from the ovaries. Estrogen levels spike and Pitta rises in the body—engorging the blood tissue in preparation for fertilization.
- **Menstruation:** If a person does not become pregnant, the period should begin at the new moon. A sudden rise in Vata, and decline in estrogen levels, sparks the menstrual flow—the start of a new cleansing process.

When it comes to your monthly cycle, it helps to think about the doshas as rising and falling tides. We fare best when we swim with, rather than against, these dynamic flowing energies.

The Ayurvedic Stages of Life

In Ayurveda, each life stage is associated with a dosha, embodying the traits and characteristics it represents:

- **Childhood (Brahmacharya):** Ayurveda generally associates childhood with Kapha—the dosha of earth and water. Childhood is viewed as a stage of learning, growth, and gaining awareness of ourselves and our world.
- **Adulthood (Grihastha Ashram):** Adulthood is considered the time for achievements, producing—including potential reproduction—and making one’s mark on the world. This time of transformation is associated with Pitta, the dosha of fire and water.
- **Elderhood (Sannyasa Ashram):** In our later years, we shift into a season of Vata, of air and ether. It is a time for simplifying, physical, mental, and spiritual lightening, and sharing the wisdom we’ve gathered along the way.



2. LIFELONG MENSTRUAL CYCLE

In Ayurveda, the stages of life coincide with our lifelong menstrual cycle. Our first period marks a shift from childhood to adulthood—a shift from learning to doing—and a shift from a Kapha to a Pitta phase of life.

Our periods become less frequent as we reach the end of our Pitta years. This slowing down signals the onset of the perimenopausal transition. As we move through this phase, we are shifting from adulthood to elderhood—from action to reflection—and into the final stage of our lifelong menstrual cycle. After 12 months without a period, we are considered menopausal, and have entered our Vata years.

As we age, our needs and doshic baselines shift. Ayurveda provides a framework to balance and nourish the shifting energetic influences in our spirits, minds, and bodies—so we can embrace the waves of change in each beautiful new season of our lives.

CHAPTER THREE

Supportive Ayurveda for Menses



Your body is constantly moving through its cycle during the years you physically menstruate. Whether you're ovulating, shedding, or restoring—chances are, you feel it! For example, your breasts may swell or get sensitive right before your period, or you may feel extra sensual when you ovulate.

Menses is a substantial season of your life. Unfortunately, for many, this season comes with some pretty unpleasant symptoms. Cramps, moodiness, acne, anxiety, and heavy bleeding can show up as early as our first period and plague us our whole life.

The worst part? We're told they're normal.

Uncomfortable periods are so common they're nearly expected. But if your cycle is too heavy or too light, painful, unpredictable, or disruptive to your life—these are health issues that need attention. In fact, believe it or not, a healthy menstrual cycle should be nearly symptom-free.

SYMPTOMS OF MENSTRUAL IMBALANCE

- Heavy flow and clotting
- Irregular or scant periods
- PMS
- Blood clots
- Dysfunctional uterine bleeding (DUB)
- Constipation or diarrhea
- Weight gain or bloating
- Joint or muscle pain
- Headaches
- Weakness and exhaustion (may lead to extreme tiredness or shortness of breath)
- Trouble sleeping
- Feeling faint
- Vomiting
- Nausea
- Mood swings, irritability, anger
- Diminished concentration
- Extended symptoms (feeling like your cycle lasts all month)
- Crying spells or depressed moods
- Acne flare-ups
- Migraines
- Headaches
- Anxiety or feeling tense
- Bleeding between periods
- Endometriosis
- Painful periods (dysmenorrhea)
- Your day, week, or month are dominated by your cycle and disrupt your life.

The list goes on and on (and on!). Chances are, if you menstruate—you can relate. While these issues may seem like standalone problems, in many cases, they're a sign of deeper dosha imbalances.

How Can Ayurveda Help?

According to Ayurveda, the troubling symptoms we associate with menses aren't just par for the course. Each month, our cycle clues us into the health of our entire being. When things like headaches, heavy bleeding, and moodiness arise—it's a sign the Ayurvedic doshas have fallen out of balance.

In contrast to modern medicine, which aims to suppress symptoms—*"hey, take a Midol!"*—Ayurveda treats them as guideposts pointing to the root of your imbalance. By addressing the root cause of imbalanced doshas, we restore balance to the entire system, and troubling symptoms naturally resolve.

READING YOUR PERIOD

So, why is our period so good at revealing the state of the doshas? Because it's a foundational part of our being. Our menstrual flow—a.k.a. our period blood—is a byproduct of the first *dhatu*, or tissue layer, of the body: plasma. In Ayurveda, plasma is known as *rasa*, the juice or sap of life.

In Ayurveda, *rasa dhatu* (plasma) is considered the “primary waters of the body.” It is the agent that mixes with and carries nutrients and hormones to all other tissues. When *rasa dhatu* is healthy, we experience a sense of well-being in every cell of our body. The foundations for health are set.

Rasa dhatu is linked to Kapha dosha by its shared qualities of moisture and nourishment. The other doshas, Pitta and Vata, are the main drivers of its depletion. Too much fiery, intense Pitta energy, and *rasa* burns up. Too much busy, erratic Vata energy, and *rasa* dries up. However, too much of a good thing is also possible, and excess Kapha can weigh down and clog up *rasa*, too.

Rasa dhatu and *rakta dhatu* (our blood) are the first to get aggravated by excess Vata, Pitta, or Kapha dosha. That means changes to our menstrual cycle are early indicators of changes (imbalances) elsewhere in our body and mind. By examining our periods, we can observe the state of our *rasa* and *rakta*, the state of the doshas, and how it correlates to other changes in our lives. *What a wonderful tool!*



So, What's a Healthy Flow?

By paying close attention to our flow and the characteristics of our cycle before, during, and after menstruation, we can get a sense of the state of the doshas before imbalances manifest in other parts of the body.

While a “normal” cycle can vary from person to person, Ayurveda considers the following characteristic of a balanced period:

- Bright red in color, odorless or faint scent, with a uniform consistency.
- Comes regularly, around once every four weeks, with little spotting before or after.
- Produces an average of four anjalees per bleeding cycle. (One anjalee is the amount that will fit in your cupped hand.)
- Few “classic” period symptoms like bloating, cramps, and moodiness.

*“A **healthy period** is one you don't know you're getting.... other than it arrives **on time!**”*

- Veena Haasl-Blilie

GENERAL TIPS FOR REGAINING AND MAINTAINING BALANCE

In many parts of the world, menstruation was once revered as a time for women to recharge and reflect. Today, we're expected to maintain the breakneck speed of modern life—all while bloated, cramped, and edgy. It's no wonder so many of us are suffering!

Contemporary lifestyles simply don't support a balanced cycle. The intensity is inflammatory, particularly during menses, a Pitta stage of life. Ayurveda offers a new framework for living, with simple guidance to cool down and restore harmony to your cycle and your life.

No two cycles or imbalances are the same. Each dosha and each person require different things to regain balance. Working with a [Certified Ayurvedic Practitioner](#) is the best way to pinpoint your exact needs. However, the following advice is generally beneficial for all, regardless of circumstance.



1. TAKE TIME FOR DEEP REST

Our period is a time of great power, but first—we need our rest! Fiery Pitta spikes during our monthly flow. Slowing down helps reduce heat in the body and mind to calm aggravated Pitta. Rest also helps support our bodies physically as we shed blood, toxins, and heat.

Menstrual seclusion rituals are part of many ancient traditions. Ojibwe women, for instance, would rest and regenerate in small wigwams called “moon lodges” while other women helped care for them and their families. While most of us can't retreat from our lives completely when we get our period, we can all make space for deep rest.

Avoid exercising and other rigorous activities during your period, as generating heat is counterproductive to the body's cleansing and cooling processes. Trim non-essential activities from your schedule and find ways to relax. It might be uncomfortable at first, but letting others lend a hand is a wonderful way to honor the value you provide your community.

2. CALM THE MIND + REFLECT

- Menstruation magnifies feminine intuition. Connect with your cool, calm, and centered Self by listening to Saumya Ayurveda's short [guided meditations](#) throughout the day.
- [Learn Diaphragmatic Breathing and Change Your Life](#). When we learn diaphragmatic breathing, we remain relaxed, focused, and less stressed and overwhelmed. We shift our nervous system from fight flight mode to rest, restore, and relax mode. This calms Vata and cools Pitta.
- Tune into your own enlightenment by studying wise and inspiring words. Read literature on the nature of the Self and consciousness.
- Breathing exercises like [Nadi Shodhana](#) before bed and upon waking ease the body into a sense of calm, whether you're greeting the day or ending it.
- Journaling calms the mind. Write about what you are ready to release and what you're grateful for.



3. EAT A SIMPLE, BALANCING DIET

A period-friendly diet doesn't need to be complicated. In fact, it's best to keep things simple. During your flow, you want to preserve as much of your body's digestive fire (*agni*) as possible for cleansing. Heavy, oily, fatty, and processed foods can worsen period symptoms and take more energy to digest.

Food is Medicine in Ayurveda, and diet is one of the best ways to counteract vitiated doshas and clear up menstrual imbalances. Ayurveda is a highly personalized system, which is why we encourage working with a [Certified Ayurvedic Expert](#) to determine the best food program for your unique circumstances. There are, however, a few helpful rules of thumb:

Nourishing and Warm Food: Warm foods are easier to digest and preserve agni, the all-important digestive fire. Opt for nourishing soups, stews, and cooked grains to ground and comfort during your flow.

Limit Stimulants: In Ayurveda, stimulants increase the qualities of certain doshas, particularly Vata and Pitta. During your period be mindful of caffeine, spicy foods, alcohol, and nicotine. (If you're ready, reduce and then eliminate alcohol and nicotine.)

Healthy Fats: Incorporate sources of healthy fat—like ghee, coconut oil, avocado, sesame oil, flaxseed, and almond butter—for sustained energy and hormonal support.

Avoid Cold and Raw: Likewise, uncooked and cold foods can aggravate Vata, deplete agni, and lead to bloating and discomfort.

Gentle Spices: Aid digestion and flavor food with mild spices like cumin, coriander, and fennel.

4. FIND YOUR DAILY RHYTHM

It's important for our body, mind, and spirit to know what to expect throughout the day. This helps us feel less stressed and overwhelmed. When we are able to spend more time in rest, relax, and restore mode, we trend towards balance rather than imbalance.

A grounding daily routine helps keep your body regular as it flows through its monthly menstrual cycle. As menses is considered a Pitta phase of life, routine is a vital tool to cool the excess heat associated with this season:

- Waking at a supportive time helps us catch a wave of energy from the sun rising vs. fighting through the day. The best time to rise varies depending on your constitution, but as a rule of thumb, it's best to start your day before sunrise to harness the expansive, dynamic energy of the early Vata hours.
- After waking, take a few deep breaths and welcome your body, mind, and spirit into another day. Connect with your breath with gentle diaphragmatic breathing – observe which nostril is more open. You may also take a moment to self-reflect, express gratitude, or journal.
- Cleanse and clear the ama (toxic gunk) from your system with tongue scraping, oil pulling, dry brushing, or abhyanga massage. Read this guide to Ayurvedic morning rituals for deeper instructions.



5. STAY HYDRATED!

During your flow, your body is cleansing toxins, excess heat, and built-up Pitta dosha. Just like any cleanse, it's important to stay well-hydrated during this time. Increase your water intake to help your body release what it is meant to. You may also:

- Drink warm herbal teas-like peppermint, chamomile, and fennel-to soothe the digestive system and ease cramps.
- Drink coconut water, cucumber-water, or aloe vera juice-which have cooling properties to soothe Pitta dosha.
- Drink room or tea temperature water over cold water-as cold beverages deplete agni and may trigger cramps or other menstrual discomfort.

Individual hydration needs vary, so it's important to pay attention to your body's unique signals. Drink water when you feel thirsty! Adapt the rest as it feels right.

AYURVEDIC MEDICINE FOR PERIOD PAIN

Intense period discomfort is a symptom of menstrual imbalance. While over-the-counter drugs like Midol and Ibuprofen might ease your misery, they do little to support your reproductive health. Thus, the symptoms return – again and again.

Rather than suppress present symptoms, Ayurvedic medicine addresses their root cause. When the body is empowered to fully cleanse and move through a balanced cycle, painful symptoms naturally diminish as the doshas balance.

But what about the discomfort you feel

NOW? Here are a few natural remedies for menstrual cramps and other menstrual pain.



- **Herbal Tea:** [Research](#) supports the use of certain herbal teas for menstrual cramps and other period symptoms.
 - Ginger may relieve cramps as efficiently as certain painkillers.
 - Chamomile tea helps improve sleep, which is linked to reduced period pain.
 - Cinnamon helps reduce inflammation to ease bloating.
 - Lemon tea with honey helps remove waste.
- **Aromatherapy:** Ayurvedic aromatherapy can help relieve menstrual issues like sleeplessness, anxiety, and excess heat. Visit the [Saumya blog](#) to learn which essential oils are balancing to each dosha, and how to use them.
- **Essential Oils:** Lavender, cinnamon, sage, and chamomile essential oils all have properties that soothe inflammation or reduce cramping when rubbed on the abdomen.
- **Oil Massage:** Regular [Abhyanga massage](#) in the weeks leading up to your period helps balance the doshas to alleviate chronic symptoms. For best results, use oil personalized to your doshic makeup. ([Saumya Ayurveda](#) can help!)
- **Yogasana:** Restorative yoga-sana like supported bridge and legs up the wall help relieve tension in the uterus. This [Healthline article](#) highlights a few great poses.
- **Apply Heat:** When all else fails, placing a heating pad on the painful area can help relax constricted muscles.

CHAPTER FOUR

Ayurveda for the Perimenopausal Transition



The end of the menstrual cycle is a normal part of the aging process. The perimenopausal transition is the beginning of a new stage: the shift towards menopause. It begins when your period starts to slow and ends when you go twelve months without bleeding. (At this point, you are considered menopausal—or, as Veena says, you’re a graduate of Menopause University!)

According to Mount Sinai, “Perimenopause can begin in some women in their 30s, but most often it starts in women ages 40 to 44... American women reach menopause at an average age of 51 years, although it can occur as early as age 40 to as late as the early 60s.” This powerful stage of life can last anywhere from a few years to more than a decade.

Modern medicine tends to pathologize the perimenopausal transition, working to simply suppress its associated symptoms. In contrast, Ayurveda views it as a natural energetic transformation, seeking to maintain whole-being balance through this season of change.

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF THE PERIMENOPAUSAL TRANSITION

Hormone levels fluctuate as we shift towards menopause. This can disrupt the body's bioenergetic field as it finds its new equilibrium—sparking lighter (or heavier) periods, lower libido, hot flashes, body aches, and numerous other disruptive issues.

While symptoms vary, here are a few common signs the perimenopausal transition has begun

- Moon Cycle Changes: further apart or closer together
- Hot flashes/night sweats
- Reduced heat/cold tolerance
- Mood changes/PMS symptoms
- Anxiety
- Sleep problems
- Physical dryness: skin, hair, lips, vagina
- Mental dryness: reduced enthusiasm, memory, focus
- Decreased libido
- Weight gain
- Dry digestion: gas, bloat, constipation
- Heated digestion: inflammation, loose stools, diarrhea
- Heartburn, GERD, acid reflux
- Headaches/migraines
- Body stiffness/aches and pains
- Increased urination
- Bone density loss
- Change in cholesterol levels

“How we enter the initial phase of the perimenopausal transition is significant. In other words, we want a balanced cycle out of the gate, so that as changes begin to manifest, they are softer, not severe, and not a syndrome marked by years or decades of suffering.

We want to balance the cycle now.”

- Veena Haasl-Blilie

AN AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE

Ayurveda considers the perimenopausal transition a shift from a Pitta to a Vata-dominated stage of life. While you may still get your period, the winds of Vata are rising... and change is underfoot.

Estrogen and progesterone production decrease in the later stages of the perimenopausal transition (and decrease even more significantly in menopause). These hormonal changes often trigger dual Vata and Pitta imbalances—the source of many of the troubling symptoms we associate with this phase of life.

As estrogen levels fluctuate and we move towards our Vata years, Vata levels rise and its qualities become more pronounced. For many, this manifests as a sense of physical and mental dryness (lack of interest, reduced focus), scattered energy, and heightened anxiety. Vata's rising winds fuel Pitta's fire, increasing heat in the body and mind. This contributes to common perimenopausal symptoms like hot flashes, inflammation, and emotional reactivity.

Ayurveda offers simple guidance to restore doshic balance—so we can keep our cool (literally and figuratively) through this intense and profound transition.



Embracing the Changing Tides

This phase of life, marked by the gradual cessation of fertility and the shift into later stages of careers and parenthood, can feel marked by a sense of loss. It is the recognition of the inevitable endings woven into the fabric of life—and societal narratives that tie women's value to youth, motherhood, and fertility.

Yet, there's a silver lining. With the profound wisdom of Ayurveda, and the right guidance, we discover there is so much left ahead of us—and we're only getting better as we age! As we slow down and lighten our loads of old responsibilities, narratives, and mindsets, we create space for a meaningful new chapter. One that is spiritually abundant, wise, authentic, and free.

*"When we recognize the beauty, power, and relief in embracing the Vata stage of life – we can't help but lighten up! We might simplify our lives by trimming down our busy schedules or downsizing. We lighten the load we've been carrying for decades, **creating more space to simply be.**"*

- Veena Haasl-Blilie

SUPPORTIVE AYURVEDA FOR THE PERIMENOPAUSAL TRANSITION

It's hard to exaggerate just how important it is to balance your menstrual cycle through the perimenopausal transition into menopause. It can begin as early as your mid-thirties, which means it can account for a substantial portion of your life. *Don't you want to feel your best for it?*

While there are many commonalities, the perimenopausal transition is different for everyone. Our unique dosha composition, current imbalances, hormone levels, and life situation all influence what we need to regain and maintain balance. That's why it's best to work with a Certified Ayurvedic Practitioner, who will tailor their recommendations to YOU.

This said, there are Ayurvedic principles that are generally supportive for this phase of life. The following guidance will help lay the foundations for a balanced perimenopausal transition.



1. START SHIFTING GEARS

In our endless hustle culture, slowing down—or even thinking about slowing down—can seem out of reach. Who has time for that!?

The perimenopausal transition is a chance to cool our breakneck pace. Like it or not, we're shifting away from the productivity of our Pitta years. We're nearing the end of our ability to physically produce life. Our roles as "productive" members of society change, too, as children leave home and we approach retirement.

These natural endings create space for lightness in our Vata years. When we embrace them as they occur, we can transition into a calmer, more introspective lifestyle by degrees. It's not about fading into the backdrop or getting boring—it's about flowing gracefully into a new season of life. It can be challenging, but our energetic needs are changing; if we keep living with fiery Pitta intensity... we'll dry up and burn out.

As you get older, explore letting go and slowing down. Allow the natural shift from doing to being to manifest. Let the associates burn the midnight candle. Let your kids learn through trial and error in adulthood, rather than doing everything for them. Let someone else take over responsibilities you've carried long enough. You've earned it.

2. INTEGRATE YOUR LESSONS

Often, we're reluctant to let chapters of our life come to completion. Perhaps we think our value is in the things we leave behind, like our career status, youth, and fertility. But the perimenopausal transition can be a powerful moment for closure, completion, and reflection.

It is a time to reflect on our life's narrative, shifting from a role of constant production to that of a wise elder. With a sense of purpose, we can transition with intention, deciding what to leave behind and what to carry forward.

Journal. Work with a [meditation guide](#). Take an online course. Actively seek ways to engage with and integrate your life lessons thus far. By processing past experiences, releasing the past, and identifying the strength and knowledge you've acquired over your lifetime, you'll pave the way for an empowered journey into the later stages of life.

3. EMBRACE GROUNDING PRACTICES

The perimenopausal transition marks a significant hormonal and energetic shift, but also a shift to the spiritual flavor of our lives. Moving toward our Vata years is a natural progression to a more introspective, emotionally- and spiritually-rich way of being. Grounding practices help us go deep and keep our cool through the intense changes of this new phase.

Yoga, with its mindful movements and emphasis on breath, is a spiritual ally. The physical postures (asanas) promote flexibility and strength while deepening the connection between body, spirit, and mind. **Meditation**, another potent grounding practice, anchors us in the present to cultivate a calm and centered mind.

Pranayama, the practice of conscious breathing, is a vital tool for navigating the energetic and emotional fluctuations that occur through the perimenopausal transition. The ancient techniques help balance the subtle energies in the body to promote a sense of equilibrium and harmony.

As we transition into a more contemplative phase of life, these practices serve as gentle guides, helping us integrate the emotional, physical, and spiritual changes present in our journey.



Additional Resources

[Nadi Shodhana: Alternate Nostril Breathwork Guide](#)

[Learn Diaphragmatic Breathing and Change Your Life](#)

[Saumya Ayurveda's Guided Meditation Practices](#)

4. ESTABLISH NOURISHING RITUALS

The transition to a Vata stage of life is characterized by a natural lightening, which makes it inherently depleting. As the winds of Vata continue to rise, they further fuel Pitta's fire. This dance of the elements can leave us increasingly burnt up and dry.

Counteract depletion with daily rituals (*dinacharya*) that nourish and rejuvenate. This approach aligns with the Ayurvedic concept of *rasayana*, the restoration of vital essence.

- **Abhyanga Self-Massage:** Enhance circulation, promote relaxation, and nurture the skin with a calming [Ayurveda oil massage](#) each morning.
- **Oil Pulling:** Cleanse built up toxins by swishing a tablespoon of sesame oil in your mouth each morning for 10-15 minutes. (See our guide to [Ayurvedic oil pulling](#).)
- **Tongue Scraping:** Remove accumulated toxins and support healthy agni by gently scraping the tongue each morning with a stainless steel scraper. (See our guide to [Ayurvedic tongue scraping](#).)
- **Morning Lemon Water:** Boost agni and gently detox the body with warm lemon water on an empty stomach first thing in the morning.

5. EAT TO GROUND VATA + PACIFY PITTA

A harmonious balance between Vata and Pitta helps foster a smooth perimenopausal transition—and food is very much medicine. Align your diet choices to ground heightened Vata energy and pacify any exacerbated Pitta imbalances.

It's essential to account for individual nuances in one's constitution, which is why working with an [Ayurvedic practitioner](#) is so beneficial. While personalized dietary recommendations are optimal, the following are helpful rules of thumb:

- **Incorporate Healthy Fats:** Healthy fats play a crucial role in satiety and hormonal balance, while pacifying excess Pitta. Include sources like ghee, nuts, seeds, avocado, and olives.
- **Diverse Protein Sources:** Ensure a variety of protein sources in your diet, such as beans, paneer, yogurt/curd, and eggs, to support essential tissue repair, hormone production, and grounding of Vata.
- **Cooked Veggies:** Cooked veggies are less demanding on the digestive fire and provide stability to Vata, while Pitta benefits from their cooling nature.
- **Whole Grains:** Incorporate quinoa, brown rice, oats, and barley, which are packed with fiber, boost energy, and are nourishing to both Pitta and Vata.
- **Ayurvedic Spices:** Incorporate agni-boosting, anti-inflammatory spices like coriander, fennel, turmeric, and cardamom—which have a balancing effect on Vata and Pitta.
- **Herbal Teas:** Sip on warm ginger, or chamomile tea to soothe Vata and fennel for calming and cooling Pitta energy.
- **Eat Earlier:** Schedule your main meal around midday when your body's digestive fire is at its peak. This choice supports efficient digestion and ensures that later meals contribute to the body's repair and hormone production.
- **Mindful Eating:** Eat at the same time each day, in a calm environment, slowly and intentionally, to support healthy agni and calm aggravated Vata and Pitta.

CHAPTER FIVE

Ayurveda for Menopause



In the west, we tend to associate the lightening of our sunset years with loss. Our kids leave home to start lives of their own. We may downsize our empty nests. We retire from life-defining careers. As our obligations wane, many folks are unsure how to fill the space they leave behind.

There's no need to sugar coat it. This phase of life can be challenging, especially as you hit menopause. Suddenly, sleepless nights become the norm, or you're plagued with anxiety about what comes next. Mix in hot flashes, mood swings, and a general sense of drying up—from lack of enthusiasm to vaginal dryness—and it's no wonder our golden years get bad press.

Ayurveda doesn't ask you to ignore these challenges. Instead, it connects the dots between your symptoms and the dosha changes happening within and around you. Then, it provides a thoughtful framework to help you embrace the abundant potential in this dynamic stage of life.

AYURVEDA, MENOPAUSE, AND YOUR VATA YEARS

When you enter menopause, you've officially arrived in a Vata stage of life. In other words, you're shifting from a season of action (Pitta) to one of reflection and lightness (Vata). Understanding how to support this transition is the key to a graceful, luminous menopause.

Vata energy manifests in many ways as we grow older. Our hair may lighten, our eyesight may diminish, and even our bone density decreases. Yet, we can embrace the lightness of being and deepening of self-knowledge that comes with age. We're getting cooler and wiser as we go!

Even if we're still working when we reach menopause—which most of us are—we can start integrating an Ayurvedic lifestyle to ease into our Vata years. Ayurveda's wisdom helps balance shifting Pitta and Vata energies to relieve common menopausal symptoms, namely increased heat and dryness.

Ayurveda can also help us maintain a positive outlook on this period of intense change. Yes, our bodies will change. We'll look older, feel different. But we don't have to resent the passing of time—we can embrace all it has taught us. Our Vata years are a shift to a more spiritually-rich way of being. They're a chance to honor and share the bountiful wisdom we've acquired with age.

HORMONAL CHANGES + OJAS/TEJAS

While the perimenopausal transition is defined by rising and falling hormones (progesterone and estrogen), once we enter menopause, levels of these hormones take a nosedive. In Ayurveda, this decline reduces two subtle, yet important substances in our bodies: *ojas* and *tejas*.

- **Ojas:** A form of subtle Kapha, ojas builds immunity, stability, and vigor. Low ojas can lead to imbalances, illnesses, and low tolerance to external changes.
- **Tejas:** A subtle form of Pitta, tejas is our luminosity, our glow. It governs transformation and digestion. When tejas is low, our luster dims. With Vata, we feel a sense of drying out—while excess Pitta builds as the body cannot effectively direct heat.

It's essential to keep ojas and tejas at healthy levels throughout life, especially as we approach and enter menopause. Low ojas or tejas—especially when paired with erratic Vata—wreaks havoc on our whole being, and our nervous system in particular. This is the root cause of many troubling symptoms we associate with menopause.



THE DELICATE DANCE OF VATA + PITTA

It's so common, it's a trope. A cranky, frazzled woman sweating through her blouse during yet another hot flash. She is sleep-deprived, anxious, and sapped of her enthusiasm for life.

This physical and emotional “burning up” and “drying out” is what menopause is known for. But it's not inescapable. It's linked to the delicate dance between Pitta and Vata dosha, which intensifies in our later years. *Here's what's happening:*

- Once we hit menopause, we no longer release excess Pitta during menstruation. Without this therapeutic natural cleansing process, Pitta builds up—and we heat up.
- Vata's rising winds push Pitta's fire. The stronger the wind, the stronger the fire—as we move from a Pitta to a Vata stage of life, this dynamic becomes more pronounced.
- As Vata rises, its irregular qualities can catch us off guard. We may feel a sense of destabilization, like we don't know what's happening with our bodies and minds. The resulting stress increases Pitta. We're ready to fight or flee.
- How these fluctuations affect us depends on our constitution and current dosha state. For instance, someone who is predominantly Pitta may feel anxious for the first time in their life, while someone with strong Vata may develop unbearable sleep issues.
- We're meant to lighten up and slow down during menopause. If we keep living Pitta-driven lives in our Vata years—eventually, we'll burn out, dry up, and become imbalanced.

While western medicine pathologizes menopause, Ayurveda sees it as a shift in a lifelong dance of the elements. Instead of seeking to medicate and suppress symptoms, Ayurveda seeks to flow with the rhythm of dosha changes to restore balance.



SIGNS OF MENOPAUSAL IMBALANCE ACCORDING TO AYURVEDA

As with all aspects of Ayurveda, an imbalance during menopause can manifest in a variety of ways. It all depends on the state of the doshas and your unique energetic composition. The symptoms below are common signs a dosha is out of balance:

- **Vata:** Anxiety, dryness (inside and outside/mind and body), constipation, sleep issues, difficulty thinking clearly, troubles with memory, loss of vitality, persistent fatigue.
- **Pitta:** Hot flashes, odd sensations around heart (especially with hot flashes), night sweats, sleep issues, heated mind (short fuse, losing one's cool, explosive emotions out of nowhere), skin issues, and inflammation.
- **Vata/Pitta:** Alternating between soft stool and constipation, inconsistent sleep patterns, persistent sense of overwhelm, intensity and hot-headedness, feeling all over the map.
- **Kapha:** Unexplained weight gain ("I never had this weight 'round my middle before!"), feeling unmotivated and uninspired, mental dullness, general sense of heaviness/weightedness.

AYURVEDA FOR AN EASY, BREEZY MENOPAUSE

While the transition into menopause can feel overwhelming, your journey to greater balance doesn't have to be. Ayurveda is a lifestyle medicine, which means its power lies in your daily routines. Small changes to simple habits—like how you eat, drink, sleep, and move—can have a big impact on your doshic state.

We recommend consulting a [Certified Ayurvedic Practitioner](#), who will work to achieve a *saral*—or simple—crystal clear assessment of what's going on with you. It's essential to have a clear and personalized picture from the start; otherwise, how can treatment be correct?

Whether or not you work with an expert, it helps to understand which qualities best support a balanced menopause. The following provide the greatest impact:

- **Increase Moisture:** What counterbalances both the sense of burning up and drying out? Moisture! Seek to increase juiciness throughout the body, spirit, and mind.
- **Support Agni:** Healthy agni—the digestive fire—is the key to health. Strong agni is critical for efficient nutrient absorption, metabolism, emotional well-being, and hormonal balance during menopause.
- **Ground and Center:** With our hormones and doshas in flux, seek to nurture a sense of peace and groundedness to steady erratic Vata and soothe inflamed Pitta.

Ayurveda's [Healing Trifecta](#) of food as medicine, herbs, and lifestyle practices contains all the tools you need to support these qualities during menopause. While the best Ayurvedic treatment plan will vary from person to person, the following rules of thumb are generally beneficial.

1. NOURISH OJAS + TEJAS

Healthy ojas and tejas help maintain the delicate equilibrium between Vata, Pitta, and Kapha doshas.

Keep your system in harmony by prioritizing foods like ghee, whole organic milk (preferably warm), almonds, raw honey, dates, and Tulsi (Holy Basil)—all of which enhance ojas.

Boost tejas through whole grains, dark leafy greens, root vegetables, healthy fats, and herbs like Brahmi and Gotu Kola (known for enhancing cognitive function).



2. BALANCED DOSHAS DIET

With the proper diet, food IS medicine. During menopause, most will benefit from prioritizing food that is warm, nourishing, and well-cooked, filled with dosha-balancing spices.

- In a Vata stage of life, Pitta should favor coriander, fennel, and peppermint.
- Black pepper, mustard seed, and turmeric are balancing for Kapha types.
- Vata-dominant individuals benefit from cinnamon, ginger, and cardamom.

The ideal diet will be Vata-balancing. It will also pacify, rather than aggravate Pitta, and invigorate, rather than weigh down Kapha.

- To balance Vata, favor grounding and moistening foods, such as cooked grains and veggies—particularly root vegetables—nuts, seeds, oils, and ghee.
- To soothe Pitta, incorporate cooling foods like cucumbers, melons, and sweet fruits, and moderate amounts of cooling dairy, like milk, and ghee.
- To support Kapha, incorporate warm, light foods like legumes such as mung and red lentils, leafy greens, and light grains such as quinoa and basmati rice.

Bring a sense of groundedness to mealtime by eating at the same time each day—slowly, mindfully, and without distraction. Try a quick [two-minute meditation](#) to ground and center before each meal.

3. HERBAL SUPPORT

Ayurvedic herbs can offer life-changing relief from menopausal symptoms. However, Ayurveda's power is in its high degree of personalization, and Ayurvedic herbs are no exception. That's why we strongly recommend consulting a [Certified Ayurvedic Practitioner](#) before beginning any herbal protocol.

Your practitioner may recommend:

- **Shatavari:** Known for its adaptogenic and hormone-balancing properties.
- **Ashwagandha:** An adaptogenic herb that helps the body adapt to stress and may help ease symptoms linked to menopause.
- **Brahmi:** Known to enhance cognition, can help with mental clarity and focus during menopause.
- **Licorice:** Contains estrogenic properties that may help manage hormonal imbalances during menopause.
- **Gokshura:** Herb used to help alleviate hormonal fluctuations and their associated hot flashes and mood swings.

Note: Individual responses to herbal remedies can vary. An improper herbal protocol can further imbalance the doshas. Contact [Veena at Saumya Ayurveda](#) to ensure you get the right herbs for YOU!

4. REGULAR AYURVEDIC CLEANSSES

Regular cleansing supports the body through the transformative (and often disruptive) changes occurring during menopause. A gentle Ayurvedic cleanse can help eliminate accumulated toxins—known as ama—from the body. This cleansing process is particularly supportive if you're experiencing excess heat (Pitta) or ungroundedness (Vata), and extra weight or low mood (Kapha).

Working with a Certified Ayurvedic Practitioner can help ensure your cleanse supports your specific dosha needs and helps alleviate your *specific symptoms*. Alternatively, the following resources unpack the basics of Ayurvedic home cleansing.

- [How to Do an Ayurvedic Detox Cleanse at Home](#)
- [Cleanse and Cool with Pitta Kitchari](#)
- [Ground and Sooth with Vata Kitchari](#)
- [Nourish and Invigorate with Kapha Kitchari](#)
- [How to Detox Emotionally | Ayurveda for Emotional Cleansing](#)



5. STAY HYDRATED!

A simple, yet profoundly important habit. Proper hydration supports your overall health and helps counteract potential Vata and Pitta imbalances associated with menopause. Try this:

- Drink warm water with a splash of lemon every morning to cleanse the digestive tract.
- Consume hydrating herbal teas like chamomile, mint, or fennel, which may provide calming effects to alleviate stress and hot flashes.
- Add slices of cucumber to your water for a hydrating boost that helps cool inflamed Pitta.
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol, which can contribute to dehydration, dryness, hot flashes, poor sleep, and anxiety.

CLEANSE WITH SAUMYA AYURVEDA

*"I was looking for a home cleansing program and **Saumya Ayurveda** delivered! I work full time, have a family, sports, commute – and this cleanse was manageable! I had such a **positive cleanse experience**, I plan to do it again and I have it on my planner already."*

A.B., White Bear Lake, MN

6. MINDFUL STRESS MANAGEMENT

Practice stress-reducing techniques such as meditation, diaphragmatic breathing, and pranayama (breathwork). Think of these practices as training—or more accurately, re-training—the mind and nervous system. You don't need to meditate two hours each day to feel the benefits, a small effort can create a profound shift in your body, spirit and mind.

- **Breathwork:** Pranayama techniques such as diaphragmatic breathing, alternate nostril breathing (Nadi Shodhana) help calm and balance the body and mind.
- **Yoga Asanas:** Gentle and grounding poses like Child's Pose (Balasana), Legs Up the Wall (Viparita Karani) and Corpse Pose (Savasana) help relieve stress, balance the energies, and rejuvenate.
- **Daily Meditation:** Listen to Saumya Ayurveda's short and powerful guided meditations once or more daily to tap into a sense of calm that lasts all day.

7. REJUVENATING SLEEP

Restorative sleep is an essential pathway to balance and health. But it can be oh-so elusive during menopause. Establish a calming bedtime routine and bring elements into the bedroom that help you ease into sleep mode (essential oils, cozy sheets, soft lighting, etc.). Prioritize quality sleep, aiming for 7-8 hours every night to support hormone regulation, mood stability, and overall rejuvenation.

Resources

- [Ayurvedic Tips for Good Sleep](#)
- [10 Ayurvedic Evening Rituals for a Calming Night](#)

8. ABHYANGA MASSAGE

Abhyanga self-massage is a simple practice that nourishes the skin, calms Vata, cools Pitta, and invigorates Kapha, and helps alleviate feelings of anxiety and stress. Before you can make Ayurvedic self-oil massage part of your daily routine, however, you'll need to select which oil to use. The oil best suited for you depends on a number of factors, including location, season, stage of life, and current symptoms. Saumya Ayurveda can help you target which oils will work optimally.

9. SHARE WITH OTHERS

From an Ayurvedic perspective, our Vata years are a unique opportunity to contribute to our communities—not through our labor, but by sharing the wisdom we've acquired throughout the years. We may volunteer for causes for which we've never had the time, offer mentorship to younger members of our community, or share our precious insight in a myriad of creative ways.

As we shift our focus away from the need to achieve, we open ourselves to a new chapter of self-reflection and service. This can make a profound difference in our ability to feel calm, cool, and fulfilled in this spiritually-rich period of life.

CHAPTER SIX

Managing Common Symptoms



Menopause is a [unique](#) and [transformative](#) journey for every individual. But, boy, can the symptoms be unbearable! Ayurveda takes a holistic approach to correct the imbalances behind these frustrating changes. While Ayurveda's ancient wisdom is best harnessed under the guidance of an experienced practitioner, there are many general principles and practices that can offer relief.

The following chapter serves as a guide to managing common issues associated with menopause and the perimenopausal transition. Consider these tips a starting point on your journey to natural and holistic wellbeing during this significant life transformation.

HOT FLASHES + NIGHT SWEATS

The hormonal shifts and rise in Vata that occur during menopause can disturb Pitta dosha—leading to excess heat in the body. The body's inability to regulate this internal heat properly manifests as sudden, intense sensations of heat known as hot flashes.

To address hot flashes and night sweats, the Ayurvedic approach involves cooling and pacifying Pitta dosha:

- **Beat the Heat:** Avoid generating additional heat in the body and mind. Limit hot, spicy, and inflammatory foods, excessive physical heat exposure, vigorous exercise, and situations that trigger heightened stress. Hydrate, hydrate, and hydrate more to bring down internal temperatures.
- **Pitta-Cooling Diet:** Embrace cooling foods like cucumber, peppermint, and coconut, green vegetables (zucchini, broccoli, leafy greens), lentils, mung beans, and quinoa. Favor sweet, bitter and astringent tastes. Limit sour, fried, and salty foods, which are Pitta-aggravating.
- **Cooling Activities:** Practice sheetali pranayama (cooling breath) and nadi shodhana (alternate nostril breathing) to regulate body temperature. Gentle yoga, regular meditation, and activities you personally find soothing can help calm inflamed Pitta.
- **Cooling Herbs:** A certified Ayurvedic practitioner may recommend the following for hot flashes and night sweats—Shatavari; Brahmi; Gokshura; Aloe Vera; Licorice; Fennel.



MOOD ISSUES

Feeling anxious, resistant to change, or uncharacteristically irritable? Mood changes of all types are common with menopause—and an imbalance of the doshas is often the underlying cause.

- **Vata Imbalance:** Aggravated Vata during menopause can lead to ungrounded feelings including anxiety, nervousness, restlessness, and mood swings.
- **Pitta Imbalance:** An excess of Pitta leads to increased heat and intensity. During menopause, this may manifest as irritability, frustration, and heightened emotional reactions or outbursts.
- **Kapha Imbalance:** Characterized by earth and water, aggravated Kapha is heavy and stagnant. Menopausal women may feel lethargic, sad/depressed, and resistant to change when Kapha is imbalanced.

With the central goal being to correct the specific doshic imbalance, a few general approaches to regulating mood changes with Ayurveda include:

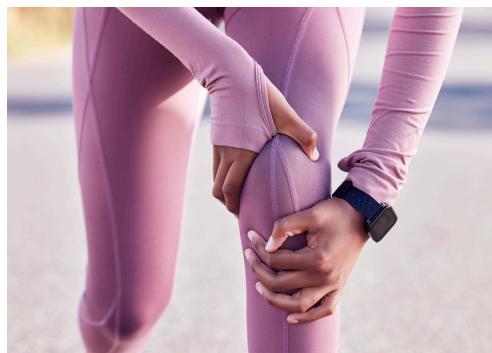
- **Dosha-Balancing Diet:** After identifying the dosha contributing to mood changes, favor foods with opposite qualities for a pacifying effect. Prioritize cooling, nourishing foods for Pitta imbalances; warming and grounding foods for Vata imbalances; and light, invigorating foods for Kapha imbalances.
- **Herbs and Supplements:** Ayurvedic herbs known for their adaptogenic and mood-balancing properties include: Ashwagandha (stress reduction), Brahmi (cognitive supports), and Shatavari (hormonal balance). Consult a [Certified Ayurvedic Practitioner](#) for personalized recommendations.
- **Balancing Lifestyle:** A nourishing daily routine ([dinacharya](#)) helps calm the nervous system. Align your sleep schedule with natural circadian rhythms. Practice stress-reducing techniques such as meditation, breathwork, and yoga. Get regular, moderate exercise to support your physical and mental wellbeing.
- **Aromatherapy:** Use calming essential oils such as lavender, chamomile, and rose to soothe the mind and emotions. Incorporate [Ayurvedic aromatherapy](#) into your daily routine or diffuse essential oils in living spaces.
- **Ayurvedic Self-Care Rituals:** Practice self-care rituals tailored to the dosha imbalances, such as [nasya oil](#) or Ayurvedic self-massage ([Abhyanga](#)) with calming oils for Vata, Pitta, or Kapha.

BONE DENSITY LOSS

The lightening caused by increased Vata during menopause can affect bone density. Coupled with a decline in ojas (vigor, stability, nourishment) and tejas (digestion, transformation), we become more susceptible to imbalances affecting bone health in our later years.

The Ayurvedic approach to bone density issues is to balance Vata, nourish ojas and tejas, and improve the body's ability to absorb calcium:

- **Balancing Vata:** Include warm, nourishing foods in the diet to counteract Vata's dry and light qualities. Healthy fats (ghee, sesame oil, avocados) offer much needed lubrication.
- **Calcium Rich Diet:** Calcium is key to supporting bone health. Eat leafy green, sesame seeds, almonds, fish, chickpeas, black beans, quinoa, and dairy (if tolerated). More calcium rich foods [here](#).
- **Mineral Rich Diet:** Eat a variety of seeds, nuts, and beans, which provide essential minerals and nutrients for bone health.
- **Proper Exercise:** As we age, it's important to engage in weight-bearing exercises like hiking, yoga, or light weightlifting to promote bone strength.
- **Oil Massage:** Perform warm Abhyanga massage with Vata-balancing oil to promote circulation and support the bones.
- **Vitamin D:** Spend ample time outdoors or take vitamin D supplements to aid in calcium absorption.



Sleep Problems

Increased Vata can spark restlessness and anxiety-and a variety of oh-so-frustrating sleep issues. In addition to seeking to live a Vata-balancing lifestyle, the following can offer relief:

- **Calming Foods:** Drink chamomile tea or warm milk with nutmeg to relax before bed.
- **Early Dinner:** Have your main meal at least three hours before bedtime so your digestive system isn't churning while you try to sleep.
- **Sedative Herbs:** Incorporate jatamansi, known for its calming properties, to promote restful sleep.
- **Relaxing Routine:** Adopt intentional [Ayurvedic evening rituals](#) to signal to your body it's time to wind down. You may practice mindful breathing, abhyanga massage, or light yoga for sleep.

DECREASED LIBIDO

Vata imbalance, hormonal changes, and increased stress and fatigue can all reduce interest and enjoyment of sexual activities. But it doesn't have to be permanent!

It's important to approach decreased libido holistically, considering the spectrum of emotional and physical changes underway. Here are a few tips to support the process:

- **Balance Vata:** Dryness, coldness, and a lack of lubrication are common with Vata imbalance during menopause—and they don't make us feel too frisky. Seek to balance Vata through diet, herbs, and lifestyle practices.
- **Herbal Support:** Herbs such as Shatavari, Ashwagadha, and Gokshura and known for aphrodisiac qualities—as always, consult an Ayurvedic practitioner before beginning any herbs.
- **Take Care of Yourself:** Get adequate rest, exercise, and adopt stress-reducing practices like meditation and deep breathing to bring a sense of awakesness and awareness back to your body and mind.
- **Oil Massage:** Engage in loving self-massage (Abhyanga) with specialized dosha-balancing herbs.



Vaginal Dryness

The increase in Vata during menopause can lead to uncomfortable vaginal dryness. In addition to living a Vata-balancing lifestyle, seek to increase moisture in your environment and body.

- Adopt a hydrating diet, rich in lubricating foods like ghee, avocados and coconut oil.
- Incorporate soothing activities like warm baths and gentle self-massage.
- Seek Ayurvedic guidance on specialized vaginal oils or internal oleation (applying small amounts of ghees internally).
- Apply a warm compress to your pelvic area to improve circulation and reduce dryness.
- Use mild, natural cleansers to avoid further drying of the vaginal tissue



CHOLESTEROL ISSUES

Elevated Pitta dosha during menopause can contribute to reduced agni (digestive fire). Impaired digestion can affect the body's ability to metabolize and balance cholesterol—which is why many women find their numbers spiking at this time.

The Ayurvedic approach to managing cholesterol issues is to support the digestive fire, balance Pitta, and invigorate Kapha (which, according to Ayurveda, is what cholesterol is made of).

- **Pitta Pacifying Diet:** Incorporate cooling foods like leafy greens, cucumbers, and juicy fruits. Avoid spicy, oily, and fried foods—favoring those that are bitter, astringent, and sweet.
- **Kapha-Invigorating Lifestyle:** Perform garshana, Ayurveda dry brushing. Prioritize daily movement.
- **Healthy Fats:** Support agni and balance Pitta with healthy fats from nuts, seeds, avocados, and olive oil.
- **Herbal Support:** Ayurvedic herbs like Guggulu, Triphala, Shilajit, and Arjuna are known to have cooling and cholesterol lowering effects.
- **Fiber Rich Foods:** Support digestion and cholesterol metabolism with high-fiber foods like whole grains, fruits, veggies, and legumes.

You're only getting **cooler** as you go.



From the rhythmic flow of menses to the transformative journey into menopause, Ayurveda is a guiding light to a lifetime of balance. As you've explored the ancient wisdom in this book, you've glimpsed the many ways Ayurveda can restore harmony to your menstrual cycle - and your whole being.

The beauty in Ayurveda lies in its individually-tailored approach. Take the next step on your wellness journey and schedule a [free consultation call](#) with Saumya Ayurveda. Together, we'll explore your personal health goals and create YOUR unique roadmap to sustained balance and vitality (and let's not forget, relief from menstrual suffering!).

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for trusting Saumya Ayurveda on your path to greater wellbeing. I can't wait to see where it takes you.

- Veena Haast-Blilie

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