

# Ayurveda for the over 50s

*Who doesn't want to remain looking and feeling young and vibrant as they grow older? Yet over the years, stress, environmental toxins, unsuitable foods and unbalanced lifestyle habits take their toll on your body.*

Ayurveda, the world's oldest system of natural medicine, offers a host of strategies for gaining better health and reversing the effects of ageing.

## A question of balance

One of Ayurveda's underlying healing principles is to re-establish balance. It sees mental and emotional well-being, as well as a balanced diet and lifestyle, as central to good health.

According to Dr Donn Brennan, founding President of the Ayurvedic Practitioners Association of Great Britain, Ayurveda describes physiological balance in terms of three basic principles, or Doshas, that control our body. These Doshas are known as Vata, Pitta and Kapha.

Each of us has a body-type dominated by one or more of these Doshas:

- **Vata** governs movement and circulation
- **Pitta** governs metabolism, digestion and energy production
- **Kapha** governs strength and bodily structures.

Different times of life are also associated with each of the Doshas:

- Our early, growing years are said to be a Kapha time of life when our body structures are being developed, and the ailments of childhood tend to be Kapha-related.
- Next comes the Pitta phase of life, from around 20 to somewhat beyond 50, where we build businesses, raise families, and generally rush around setting the world to rights.
- The age of 50 to 60 onwards is governed by Vata.

## Maintain your health

### Keep doshas in balance

From the age of 50 onwards, ailments are often Vata-related. Keeping Vata in balance can play a big role in maintaining health, happiness and energy.

### Stay warm

Vata has certain qualities – cold, rough, dry, irregular – which are balanced by opposite qualities. To help balance Vata, stay warm, avoid raw and dry meals, keep a regular routine and don't over-do things.

### Maintain a regular routine

Dr Brennan recommends, "*Maintain a regular daily routine. Don't rush around – use your insights and experience to guide others and delegate!*"

### Keep your memory sharp

"*Memory loss is linked with a Vata sub-Dosha and results from too much strain in life,*" says Dr Brennan. So avoid straining to help keep a sharp memory.

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### Daily exercise

He also recommends to, *“Exercise regularly, but just to 50 per cent of your capacity. A brisk walk every day would be fine.”*

### Avoiding Osteoporosis

*“Bones are linked with Vata,”* says Dr Brennan. *“Keeping Vata settled helps keep bones strong.”*

### Looking after your skin

Our skin is affected by imbalances in Vata and the first signs of ageing is usually seen in the skin.

According to Dr Brennan, *“If the amount of Vata in our system is too much, our tissues become weak and flabby. Dryness may become noticeable in the tissues and we may start to get wrinkles.”*

*“Well-aged people retain beautiful tissues. They look like they are in their 40s or 50s, even though they may be in their 70s and 80s. Their tissues are still very firm, compact and strong.”*

Dr Brennan recommends a daily skin massage with sesame oil. *“Oil massage helps keep your skin youthful and gives protection against ageing – and sesame oil is a great anti-oxidant.”*

### Take Ayurvedic preparations

Ayurvedic herbal and mineral preparations, known as Rasayanas, are also recommended for nourishing bones, tissues, and keeping Doshas in balance.

### Amrit Kalash

Two very special rasayanas are **Maharishi Amrit Kalash** Nectar and Ambrosia. Each contain different ingredients – one targeting the body and other the mind. Ideally Nectar and Ambrosia are used together but they may be used alone. Using age-old formulas, numerous herbal ingredients are combined synergistically in hundreds of meticulous

steps to create these Rasayanas. The results are two herbal masterpieces that protect and bring vitality and strength

### Ayurvedic purification

Rasayanas work most effectively in conjunction with a famous Ayurvedic purification and detoxification therapy known as Panchakarma, which is highly recommended at all ages.

### Rest is the best medicine

Vata is associated with movement and is best balanced by stillness.

### Get to bed early

Being in bed by 10pm promotes good health, says Dr Brennan. In addition, regular practice of meditation intensifies rest and promotes rejuvenation.

### Get deep physical rest

He particularly recommends **Transcendental Meditation** (TM), a simple and easy-to-learn mental technique derived from the Vedic tradition by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. TM is practised sitting comfortably in a chair, gives deep physical rest and mental alertness, and has been found to produce effects counter to many of those involved in the ageing process.

### Having the time of your life

*“With proper attention to balancing Vata, the 50-plus phase should be the best time of our lives,”* says Dr Brennan.

*“It’s a more spiritual, mellow, happy, intuitive, compassionate phase of life. And if we remain in balance, we don’t age in the sense of deteriorating so much as we mature, and retain our vitality.”*

### Ayurveda tips for the over 50s

- Maintain a regular daily routine.
- Get plenty of rest – bed by 10pm, and practise Transcendental Meditation a few minutes each day.
- Take **Ayurvedic Rasayanas** – strengthening herbal and mineral preparations – particularly **Amrit Kalash**.
- Enjoy a daily sesame oil massage.
- Exercise regularly to 50% capacity. Don’t strain!
- Have the main meal of the day at lunchtime, and eat mainly cooked foods rather than salads.
- Include Vata-pacifying foods such as carrots, tomatoes, broccoli, spinach, and Vata-pacifying spices such as turmeric, cumin, fenugreek, and asafoetida.

For further information about our products or how to order or call 01695 51015 and for information about the Maharishi AyurVeda Health Centre email [info@maharishiayurveda.co.uk](mailto:info@maharishiayurveda.co.uk) or call 01695 735531.