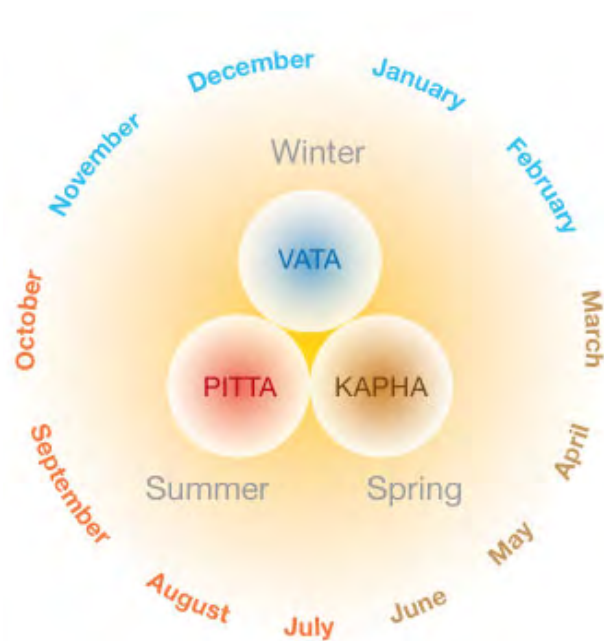


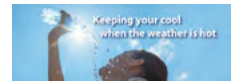


From the Ayurvedic perspective, summer is the time when the fire element increases in nature, and therefore also in our physiology. With increased Pitta Dosha, the digestive power (Agni) tends to decrease. An imbalance in Pitta Dosha can cause a range of ailments such as various types of inflammation, heartburn, skin rashes, as well as fatigue and irritability.



To remedy these challenges, Ayurveda offers a treasure trove of natural approaches to reduce Pitta Dosha and enhance internal balance. From choosing foods that are cooling and refreshing, adapting our lifestyle to summer conditions, to using specific herbs and oils, Ayurveda can help us mitigate the heat of summer and maintain our well-being.

Hot weather leads to decreased metabolic activity and a weaker Agni, the digestive fire, which is closely related to Pitta Dosha. It is not surprising that high temperatures can throw our inner fire out of balance: our body tries to release the excess Pitta and this results in a slower metabolism. So the hotter the sun is shining, the weaker our Agni becomes. Most people notice this, for example, by a decreased feeling of hunger during the day, fatigue, and weak digestive power. Our goal should therefore be to adapt our daily routine and diet to the external circumstances. With simple measures, we can keep our balance, even during summer.



Keeping your cool when the weather is hot

Choose herbs and plants that have a cooling effect

Like in European naturopathy, there are many herbs and plants in Ayurveda that can provide a cooling effect on body and mind, and are thus particularly helpful during the warm season. We will present a few of them below – some are common, others are less well-known.

Mint

First on the list is mint, which is so common that many people grow it in their gardens or on their balconies. Mint has a cooling effect that is very beneficial for the Doshas Pitta and Kapha; excessive use may increase Vata. Three varieties in particular are well-known: peppermint, spearmint and Moroccan mint. They have a mild calming effect on the nervous and digestive system, and refresh the mind and the senses. Mint is mainly associated with the ether element, which brings clarity and expansion, and helps to relieve mental and emotional tensions.



The mint leaves can be used as a tea infusion in warm water or also as a cold extract. The essential oil from mint, dabbed on the temples and the back of the neck, is great if you have tension headaches. It can also be used for oral care, for example by adding a drop of essential oil in classic oil pulling or in home-made toothpaste.

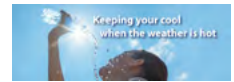
Coriander

Coriander can be found in kitchens all over the world, especially in Asia, Spain and Mexico. Its roasted seeds, whole or ground, form the spice basis for many dishes, such as soups and curries, and its fresh leaves, called cilantro in the USA, are finely chopped and sprinkled over dishes.



Coriander has a strong Pitta-reducing effect and is particularly beneficial for the digestive, respiratory and urinary tracts. Particularly if Pitta Dosha is so high that many herbs are considered contraindicated and should be used only with caution, coriander is a safe spice. Fresh coriander juice – one teaspoon three times a day – is especially recommended for skin rashes, allergies and hay fever. The juice can also be applied externally to treat itching and skin inflammations.

Coriander seeds, mixed in equal parts with cumin and fennel seeds, can be used to prepare a very beneficial tea that soothes Pitta Dosha and the intestines. Simmer one tablespoon of the mixture with one liter of water for 15–20 minutes.



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Aloe Vera

Aloe Vera is moisturizing and cooling and has a balancing effect on all three Doshas. It is considered a tonic for skin, liver, blood and the female organs. Aloe balances Agni and the metabolism of fat and sugar. As a general tonic in summer, you can take one to two tablespoons of it three times a day, pure or diluted with water. However, it is important to use fresh aloe vera or a very high-quality product, for example from the health food store, because otherwise the effect is changed and weakened by dilution or admixture of other ingredients.



The gel from the aloe vera plant can also be used externally: apply it directly to the skin to treat sunburn, burns, rashes and herpes. Indeed, many moisturizing skin care products contain aloe vera gel. It can be massaged into the scalp as a hair treatment before washing, which soothes the skin, strengthens the hair follicles and stimulates hair growth.

Sandalwood

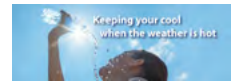
Sandalwood has a calming and cooling effect on both body and mind, particularly pertaining to the digestive, circulatory and nervous systems. Sandalwood is a good choice especially for burning sensations, heavy sweating, fever, and thirst. It can be used as an essential oil in a diffuser or directly on the body by applying a drop of the oil to the point between the eyebrows. This can alleviate excessive heat, for example after prolonged sunbathing, but also in the case of fever.



Sandalwood powder can be mixed with water, milk or ghee to make a paste that is applied externally to treat damaged skin. To make sandalwood oil yourself, you need 60 g of the powder, which is soaked in 250 ml of water and then carefully heated with 250 ml of coconut oil (without boiling) until all the water has evaporated. This oil keeps wonderfully and is especially suitable for your evening skin care, as it has a relaxing and sedative effect.

Sariva

Sariva, also known as Indian sarsaparilla or Anantamoola, is a relatively unknown creeper that balances all three Doshas and has a strong association with Pitta Dosha. Its root has a pleasant smell and taste. In summer, Sariva is wonderful for redressing heat conditions, excessive acidity and skin problems. It purifies the blood, improves Agni and helps to eliminate excess Vata (shown, for example, by flatulence) from the



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intestines. Likewise, it has a calming effect on nervous disturbances by cleansing the mind of negative emotions.

Sariva can be used as a Rasayana by steeping one teaspoon of the powder in one liter of water overnight and drinking that, spread over the day. For a stronger Pitta-reducing effect, simmer one teaspoon of Sariva powder with one liter of water for about 10 minutes, then strain; drink lukewarm.

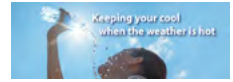
The powder can also be added to green tea, as a refreshing summer drink or, in cases of severe inner dryness combined with heat, boiled with milk. For this, a spoonful of the powder is stirred into a quart of milk, boiled briefly and drunk warm.



Ten general tips to balance Pitta Dosha

1. Give preference to cool and lukewarm food; rather avoid very hot food.
2. Predominantly include the tastes sweet, bitter and tart in your daily menu.
3. Season mildly and use chili and pepper sparingly. You may want to resort to Pitta Churna as a ready-made spice blend.
4. Use ghee or heat-stable coconut oil for cooking and frying.
5. Choose drinks that are cooling (not: iced). For example, you can steep fresh peppermint leaves or Pitta tea in a liter of water overnight – in the morning, your cool, refreshing drink for the day will be ready. Or use the recipes mentioned above.
6. Reduce or completely avoid alcohol, vinegar and hard cheeses, as they all cause a lot of heat in the physiology.
7. Don't have fasting days in the summer: fasting weakens your Agni even more.
8. Exercise in moderation. High Pitta levels can lead to pent-up energy, which needs to be converted. Use the cool morning or evening hours for this, i.e. avoid vigorous exercise in direct sunlight and especially around noon.
9. Take regular walks in the woods. Elevated Pitta Dosha benefits greatly from green, cool open spaces.
10. Wear loose and light clothing made of cooling fabrics such as silk or loose-fitting linen, and favor the color blue, which calms and reduces Pitta Dosha.





Keeping your cool when the weather is hot

We hope that with all these suggestions you will succeed in keeping your Pitta Dosha balanced and fully enjoying the summer with all its beautiful qualities.

For more support, whether as an outpatient or in-residence, feel free to contact the Maharishi Ayurveda Health Center in Bad Ems.

You can reach us at the telephone number +49 2603 94070.

We look forward to hearing from you.



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