

Spanda® Yoga for Resilient Aging: Digestion™

From an Ayurvedic (yoga's medical science) point of view, indigestion is the base of all physical disease, i.e. the condition from which all other conditions arise. Properly functioning *agni*, or digestive fire, is the key to good health. Good *agni* allows us to efficiently assimilate nutrients and get rid of waste (*ama*). When *agni* is balanced and strong, our efficient digestion creates good internal warmth, efficient digestion, and courage. The results are minimal toxic build up in our tissues, lots of available energy, mental clarity, and robust health.

Good digestion nourishes and sustains every tissue and organ in our bodies.



The Vedic God: Agni

When *agni* is weak, digestion is weak and thus incomplete. The substances left behind become toxins in the body that then interfere with the flow of blood, lymph, and energy. There is cellular and energetic congestion. This accumulation of waste in the body is called, *ama*, and is generally considered to be the cause of disease. Here are some signs that *ama* is building up in the body:

- Inefficient digestion (bloating, gas, constipation, diarrhea)
- Evidence of toxic buildup (coated tongue, body odor, excess mucus, and cloudy urine)
- Internal coldness
- Low energy
- Mental dullness, forgetfulness, confusion
- Emotional weakness
- Illness/ always getting sick/ catching everything

Agni's home is in the solar plexus. By generating heat and strengthening the muscles in this region, we stoke the fire of our digestive power. Here are some ways Improve Agni:

- Do *agni sara*: the most important exercise for improving digestion & maintaining overall health
- Get regular aerobic exercise. Ayurveda's general rule is to exercise daily until sweat forms on the forehead, under the arms, and along the spine
- Strengthen your abs. Do sit-ups, crunches, or leg lifts for 5–10 minutes a day
- Lie on your left side for five minutes after a meal to stimulate digestion
- Eat your largest meal around noon, when *agni* is the strongest
- Fast daily for at least 12 hours (e.g., 7 p.m. to 7 a.m.)
- Don't dilute your digestive fire by drinking cold beverages at meals
- Warm sesame oil and in a quiet place, lie down and slowly rub the oil on your belly in a clockwise motion for @ five minutes. This will soothe a gaseous stomach, promote digestion, and help you tune in.