

Kapha-Type Elimination



Excess *kapha* in the *channel* of elimination tends to cause copious amounts of large, heavy, oily, pale, and sticky stools.¹ Kapha stools tend to be well formed, fairly regular, and they can have a somewhat sweet odor to them.¹ Kapha also commonly causes sluggish digestion, and the subjective feelings of heaviness and incomplete elimination. These symptoms are usually accompanied by a suppressed appetite, excess salivation, as well as frequent cough, colds, congestion, and allergies.² Some people may also experience mucoid vomiting, mucoid diarrhea, blood or pus in the stools, and a particular kapha-type of constipation, which is caused by stickiness and sluggishness (as opposed to vata's light, dry, and hard qualities).^{1,2}

Balancing Kapha

To return to balance, we need to balance kapha's heavy, slow, cool, oily, smooth, and sticky qualities with foods, herbs, and experiences that are light, sharp, hot, dry, rough, and clarifying. In general, when kapha is aggravated, it is important to keep warm and dry, to avoid daytime napping, and to stay active. In addition, the following diet, lifestyle, and herbal recommendations will help to pacify kapha so that the channels of elimination can return to balance.



Diet

- Focus on eating a [kapha-pacifying diet](#).
- Minimize the presence of oil and fat in your diet (the best oils for kapha are [sunflower oil](#) and olive oil).
- Reduce processed foods and sugars.
- Favor warm and hot beverages and be careful not to overhydrate. Hot water and herbal teas like ginger, cinnamon, cardamom, or clove can help to liquefy, dry, and eliminate excess kapha.³
- Eat three square meals each day (at about the same time each day) and try not to snack between meals.
- Focus on making lunch the main meal and eating smaller quantities of food at breakfast and dinner.
- Embrace a wide variety of spices in your cooking.
- Stoke the digestive fire about thirty minutes before lunch and dinner by chewing a slice of fresh ginger (about the size of a nickel) with a pinch of sea salt, a few drops of lime juice, and about ¼ teaspoon honey. If this feels overwhelming, you could take one or two [Kapha Digest tablets](#) about thirty minutes before lunch and dinner, instead.

Lifestyle

- Focus on establishing a [kapha-pacifying daily routine](#).
- Get plenty of kapha-pacifying exercise:
 - Make sure that your exercise routine is fun, vigorous, and stimulating—kapha thrives on activities like walking, hiking, running, cycling, and high intensity interval training.
 - Practice [kapha-pacifying yoga](#) or a handful of invigorating [sun salutations](#) each morning.
- Practice [Bhastrika Pranayama](#) every day on an empty stomach. You can start with just one or two rounds of ten breaths, but can slowly build up to five rounds of ten breaths. A few minutes of [Alternate Nostril Breathing](#) make a wonderful complement to this practice.

Herbs

- Support your digestion with [Kapha Digest tablets](#) or [Trikatu](#) (the powdered form of the Kapha Digest formula that can be taken alone or sprinkled on your food like pepper).
- Consider taking [Bibhitaki](#) instead of Triphala to more specifically balance kapha (if kapha is truly the primary concern).
- Balance kapha systemically with [Healthy Kapha tablets](#).



Additional Resources

Of course, an *Ayurvedic* practitioner can offer a more personalized perspective on the appropriate therapies for your unique situation. That said, if you are still hungry for more of the Ayurvedic perspective on digestion and elimination, you may find some of these resources helpful:

- [The Importance of Healthy Digestion](#)
Symptoms in the channels of elimination are often the result of broader imbalances with *agni* (the metabolic fire). As an introduction to the critically important Ayurvedic concept of agni, this resource explores agni's role in maintaining health and vitality throughout the body, and offers practical tools for kindling the sacred fire within.
- [The Importance of Agni](#)
This article explores the specific functions of agni, as well as the signs and symptoms of both healthy and impaired agni.
- [The Four Varieties of Agni](#)
This resource compares balanced agni to the different types of imbalances that can disrupt it, and offers appropriate therapies for each type of imbalance.
- [Ama: the Antithesis of Agni](#)
This piece introduces the toxic, undigested material called *ama*, whose qualities directly oppose those of agni. Ama in the body can either be the cause or the result of impaired agni – and in either case, threatens our health.
- [Ayurvedic Guide to Healthy Elimination](#)
This is a more comprehensive look at healthy elimination through the lens of *Ayurveda*; it highlights the importance of healthy elimination and offers some general tips for supporting proper elimination.



References

¹ Lad, Vasant. *Textbook of Ayurveda, Volume II: A Complete Guide to Clinical Assessment*. Albuquerque: The Ayurvedic Press, 2006. Print. 105-107, 278.

² Lad, Vasant. *Textbook of Ayurveda Volume I: Fundamental Principles of Ayurveda*. Albuquerque: The Ayurvedic Press, 2002. Print. 91-92.

³ Lad, Vasant. *Textbook of Ayurveda Volume III: General Principles of Management and Treatment*. Albuquerque: The Ayurvedic Press, 2012. Print. 113.

