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presents

**SLEEPLESSNESS ORIGINATES IN EXCESS AIR ELEMENT ACCORDING TO AYURVEDA,  
THE WORLD'S OLDEST HOLISTIC HEALTH SCIENCE.**

©JAISRI M. LAMBERT, R.A.C., R.P.P., AYURVEDA CONSULTANT

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## Introduction

Ayurveda holds that the human being is precipitated from a higher, subtler consciousness, and has taken on 'coverings' such as the human body. It is said to be composed of five progressively denser elements: Ether (Space), Air (Movement), Fire (Luster, Transformation), Water (Plasma) and Earth (Solidity). Ayurveda describes the 'tripod of life' as the unity of body, mind and consciousness. Today, we'll focus on understanding the air element's qualities and actions according to the parent science of Polarity Therapy, Ayurveda, for treating sleeplessness, a disturbingly common disorder today.

The air element is the second in density of the five elements comprising the human body, mind and consciousness. Prana (life force) expressed as the air element governs movement (rajas guna) and agents of movement such as the human nervous systems, sensory systems, respiratory system, structural system, peristalsis, association, choice and ascension.

Its characteristic qualities are dry, light, cold, mobile, subtle and changeable. Its main sites are the colon, joints, skins, ear canals, central nervous system and 'marma' (door receptor) points. Here begins the daily journey of winding down into sound, restorative sleep.

The air element also maintains the auric field of positive and negative electrically charged polarities and its chakra and meridian movements. Here begins the journey of reining in the mind each evening. The mental channels are under the jurisdiction of their owner, who can develop life-affirming habits

The Air Element, when balanced and *in its right places*, functions to govern timing such as coordination of digestive valves opening and closing, blinking, maintenance of endocrine order, cellular communications and cosmic awareness. When imbalanced, subjective signs such as gasses, sleeplessness, joint popping, sensory impairment, constipation, vertigo, auditory delusions, anorexia, forgetfulness, fears or tremors can develop.

## Sub-Doshas

The Air Element expresses in five principal systems and pathways in human life: Prana (inspiration, assimilation, sensory communication), Udana (expiration, speech, motor communication), Samana (abdominal digestive oscillation), Apana (pelvic elimination, stabilization, grounding) and Vyana (cardiac, lymphatic and thermal circulation).

Specifying which of these five sub-expressions of the Air Element is affected and tracing their relationship with other client concerns helps make your choice of therapeutic protocols. For examples, sleeplessness calls for downward moving protocols, while respiratory diseases such as asthma, bronchitis, pneumonia, c.o.p.d., etc. involve more upward or Udana-related disturbances. These call for a protocol such as the Cardio-Pulmonary Grid Balance (see below).

### Air Element Balancing Protocols

Marma points are thought of in Ayurveda as doorways to the higher consciousness. Awareness of these doorways helps awaken insight into the one's symptom's causative factors. Through still-point contacts, prana is invited to restore its natural balance by experiencing letting go of undue physical, emotional or spiritual pain. Exhalation becomes an important pathway of awareness of choice. Re-training the mind and body for stillness is more important for Vata person, who can become more easily influenced by sensory stimuli such as sounds, temperature changes, etc.

'Pranasthana' means to restore stability and balance to prana, life force, by focusing on protocols to contact its main sites and doorways. The respiratory, central nervous, endocrine and fascial systems are all important sites of prana, affecting habitual, sub-conscious inhalations of life force. The pulmonary grid sites of the thoracic cavity, both front (put forward to the world) and back (hidden from the world) serve as important doorways for deepening the inhalations and exhalations.

### Pranayama and Pranasthana

Ancient yogic breathing practices help retrain the mind's patterns from agitation to calmness, from self-centeredness to Self-centeredness. Easily at home, one can practice anuloma-viloma, or alternate nostril breathing, making the breath deeper, fuller and more silent with each successful breath, leading to mastery over one's breath and one's thoughts.

Cranial balancing protocols, such as the centerline pathways help still the mind's 'chitta' or mindstuff. Sleeplessness implies obsession with worldly concerns and forgetfulness of divinity. By remembering one's true stillness, the mind is restored and refreshed. At home, use a late afternoon tea of equal valerian, hops and chamomile. At bedtime, about 9:30pm in winter and 10:30pm in summer, take a warm bath with 1/3 cup sesame oil. Rinse, towel dry and sleep deeply.

### Visually Informed (Pitta) Sleep Deprivation

Unprocessed or undigested visual images can build up in the grey matter and fascia. When one's mind is busy at midnight, and more so when the eyes are exposed to radiation, pitta increases in the nervous system, burning the balance of neuro-transmitters,

and hormones. By reading to fall asleep as compared to sitting for meditation in the evening, one's eyesight will gradually weaken. Meditation gives emphasis to restoration and repair of cells, similar to deep sleep. At home, eye drops of castor oil can be used at bedtime (1 drop first in the right eye, then on the left, can help sedate the eyes and help with falling asleep. Once asleep, pitta is more likely to remain asleep.

### Cardio-Pulmonary (Kapha) Related Sleep Deprivation

This protocol involves systematically balancing the thoracic cavity through the inter-costal marma points horizontally and the five elemental meridians of Dr. Stone vertically. Both anterior and posterior points can be balanced simultaneously for profound restoration of function, while the client relaxes prone. The marma points Sanskrit names help activate vibrational balance throughout the point's range of structural and functional influence. Snoring can lead to apnea, a cause and complication of prolonged sleeplessness. Normal weight is to be achieved along with the practice of daily Utjayi pranayama. Diabetes and cardio-vascular diseases reduce also.

### Meditation

In Ayurveda and Yoga, meditation is considered as the first and last medicine for all symptoms, suffering and delusions. Forgetfulness of God becomes remembrance of God and awareness of the microcosm leads to experience of the macrocosm. Rest, restoration, life balance and tranquility are all restored in stillness. Our mental distress becomes seen more objectively and creative solutions emerge more readily.

Sit facing eastward in the early morning and evening, ideally in the same location each day. The body will look forward to resting and the mind to introverting, providing deep rest to the physical and mental stresses of life. With autogenic suggestions and re-training, the mind can become the servant it is meant to be, rather than a pseudo master, trying to steal away our inborn tranquility. Yes, the peace lies deeper than the agitation of worries and anxieties, so we must look deeper.

To contact the author, please visit [www.ayurveda-seminars.com](http://www.ayurveda-seminars.com) or call 604-290-8201 (Can.) or 408-378-2880 (U.S.).