



# Celebrate your *constitution*

Ayurvedic practitioner **Caroline Robertson** shares how to live in tune with your type and gain the freedom to love and accept yourself – just the way you are.

## What's your type?

Use the following table to discover your constitutional type.

Choose the description that describes you best and add up your answers from the three columns. The highest number indicates your primary dosha. If two are equal, then you have a dual constitution.

	VATA (air)	PITTA (fire)	KAPHA (earth)
<b>Body size</b>	slim and don't gain weight easily	naturally muscular	large, padded build
<b>Hair</b>	thin and frizzy	oily with easy loss	thick
<b>Height</b>	tall with long limbs	medium height with muscular legs	shortish with curves
<b>Eyes</b>	small	penetrating	big and calm
<b>Teeth</b>	irregular and crowded	medium with soft gums	big and white
<b>Skin</b>	dry in areas	pinkish, warm and sweaty	cool and oily
<b>Nails</b>	dry, split and thin	soft and reddish	thick and smooth
<b>Lips</b>	thin lips	red lips	thick lips
<b>Chin</b>	angular	tapered	big and rounded
<b>Face</b>	thin, long face	triangular or heartshaped face	round face
<b>Neck</b>	long and slim	medium sized	thick
<b>Chest</b>	small	medium	large
<b>Joints</b>	crack easily	strong	large
<b>Appetite</b>	irregular	strong	steady yet moderate
<b>Digestion</b>	tendency to constipation and gas	tendency to acidity and diarrhoea	tendency to get sleepy after eating
<b>Mind</b>	learn things quickly and forget them quickly	learn things quickly and remember them	learn things slowly and remember them
<b>Conversation</b>	a fast and profuse talker	I like conversations with a purpose	I enjoy listening and talk slowly
<b>Ideal career</b>	like doing creative, expressive things	am ambitious and entrepreneurial	like to build things and serve others
<b>Climate preference</b>	feel the cold easily	prefer winter to summer	dislike humidity
<b>Sleep</b>	a sensitive sleeper	can sleep for short periods	have deep, sound sleep
<b>Dreams</b>	often of travel or flying	exciting and sometimes violent	My dreams are romantic and relaxing
<b>Money</b>	I make it and spend it spontaneously	I make it and spend it on planned purchases	I save money and spend it thoughtfully.
<b>Mental tendency</b>	I get spaced out easily	I am intense and precise	I get sentimental easily
<b>Disease tendency</b>	Sudden, shifting symptoms	Burning, intense sensations	Slow to occur and slow to overcome
<b>Interaction</b>	I like change, to try new things	I like to convince, win in anything	I like to support, without judgement

Ayurvedic practitioners in India have long known how to bring balance to the mind, body and spirit. Aside from its holistic approach to wellness, Ayurveda provides valuable insights into the foods, exercises, herbs and relaxation techniques that can bring balance to your particular constitution for health and happiness.

Your cells are coded with qualities that are a lifetime legacy and liability.

This is a key concept in Ayurveda. Your Ayurvedic mind/body type is determined by your proportion of elements or doshas: *vata*, *pitta* and *kapha*. This is ascertained by doing a quiz or consulting an Ayurvedic doctor.

Understanding your unique interplay of energies allows you to find your healthy rhythm. The key to making the most of your make-up is to follow Socrates' advice: "know thyself", and engage your energies appropriately. Once you decode your dosha or elemental type it illuminates all the information you need to manage your model. It's the first step to outlining your ideal diet, routine, recreation, work, exercise and environment.

### MIND/BODY TYPE TRAITS

Everybody's constitution is an equal blessing, with special strengths and susceptibilities. Using the result of your quiz, read on to learn more about your dosha.

**Vata** - Your figure is thin and light and you have excellent agility. Enthusiastic and energetic, you are a flowing force of nature, uplifting others with your fresh ideas and



## EATING RIGHT FOR YOUR TYPE

**Vata** – Eat regular, balanced meals and an early dinner. Nourish yourself with foods that are predominantly cooked, warm and liquid, such as porridge or a hearty casserole. Adding oil and warming spices such as hing, cloves and cumin can reduce your tendency to feel cold and bloated. If you aren't lactose intolerant, warm milk with ground cardamom, nutmeg and ginger grounds you for deep sleep. Since you're already light and dry, it's best to avoid foods such as crackers, crisps, puffed grains and popcorn. Chamomile, fennel and peppermint tea are excellent to calm and hydrate you. Reduce cold, raw foods such as salad unless your digestion is very strong.

**Pitta** – Don't increase your fire with spicy, pungent, oily foods, alcohol or overeating. Acidic foods will also aggravate you so avoid oranges, honey, tomatoes, vinegar, red meat, sugar and excessive grains. Cool down with coconut water, salads, green vegetables, beans and plenty of pure water. Instead of sodium chloride salt try Himalayan or Celtic salt as it's less heating. Stimulants such as caffeine and energy drinks only make you more stressed so substitute with dandelion tea or coffee. Add cooling fresh herbs to your meals such as coriander, parsley and dill. Take time to eat, sitting, chewing ten times and breathing between each mouthful to allow proper digestion.

**Kapha** - Your meals can consist of low calorie, high quality food. As you have a slow metabolism, unless you're committed to exercise you'll have to exercise restraint to maintain your figure. Watch your tendency to emotionally overeat. Go for foods that make you feel light and energised such as stir fries, cereal with rice milk, juices, beans, salads, tofu, honey and fruit. Clear congestion with warming spices such as pepper, green chilli, ginger, garlic, cinnamon and fenugreek to cleanse your lymphatics. Don't buy heavy, sugary foods such as carbonated drinks, dairy, sweets, chocolate and deep fried foods. Have a very light, early dinner of soup, juice or honeyed chai. Only eat when hungry and follow regular fasts.



sprightly spirit. You love excitement and new experiences, your vitality is infectious as you instigate exciting escapades and innovations. Your impulsive and spontaneous side can see you take interesting paths.

Your moods fluctuate, keeping all around you on their toes. Creative, flexible, imaginative and inspirational, you enjoy romantic dreams and may be more satisfied with fantasy than reality. You are generally open-minded and open-hearted with a quick wit and sharp intellect attracting and entertaining others.

Your mind often races, which leads to anxiety and insomnia, however though your energy and idealism may suffer storms, your sails are soon filled with wind again for an exciting life voyage.

Your attraction to activity and stimulation can result in depleted energy and instability. You're unbalanced by lack of sleep,

insufficient nutrition, overexertion, travel, cold, dry weather and worry.

Often cold, particularly in the hands and feet, your skin is also dry, hence you prefer warm weather. Exercise that helps to build stamina, strength and stability is ideal. Be careful not to push yourself too far and exceed the limits of your energy.

**Your mind often races, which leads to anxiety and insomnia**

**Pitta** - You have good musculature and maintain your weight when balanced, as well as a positive and focused frame of mind. Your hair is fair or red with a tendency to hair loss, and you have freckles or moles. Your hotness can manifest as a rosy complexion, warm

temperature, strong metabolism and appetite or, in excess, as ulcers, heartburn or a hot temper.

Your fiery, straightforward nature can also lead to rashness and skin rashes. Pitta people have a sharp mind and clear perception. Principled and not easily swayed, you also have a powerful intellect and a strong ability to concentrate.

When you are in balance, you are a good decision maker, delegator and speaker. You are precise, direct and often outspoken. Out of balance, you can be short tempered and argumentative. Confident and capable, your fiery nature lights up the world when burning brightly. Your flame ignites others to peak performances and success. A steady energy fuels you to accomplish goals and achieve things others only dream of. You are a firecracker who is always exciting to watch, but be wary not to burn others with your

intensity. With your unrelenting drive you can burn out and need time out for rest and relaxation.

**Kapha** - You are well built with broad hips and shoulders with a tendency to put on weight when out of balance. The quality that most defines you is slowness. You can get depressed in cold, damp weather. You sleep long hours and after a slow start to the day you have energy long into the night. You are likely to have smooth, pale skin prone to oiliness and large soft eyes as well as a curvaceous body and a tranquil, seductive demeanor.

Kapha's tend to be more calm and quiet than the other two types. You are sympathetic, sentimental, sweet, slow and heavy set. You give great hugs and your caring puppy dog eyes make people melt. Kaphas are the bricks of society; strong and supportive with a very soft centre. You can care for others so much that you neglect yourself. However, your exceptional stamina can see you through as long as you don't become stuck in outmoded habits. You build enduring relationships and careers with patience and perseverance. Like the turtle winning the race, your steady approach brings slow but stable success. Your loyalty in love makes you dependable partners oozing affection and appreciation.

### BALANCE YOUR TYPE

For your own wellbeing, deliver to yourself what your mind and body want.

**Vata** - As you lack the same reserves as the other types it's important to replenish yourself with regular sleep, meals and relaxation. You need to quieten mental chatter with meditation and massage, which centres and calms you. Cultivate a creative outlet through music, dance, art, writing, photography, pottery, sewing, cooking or design. At the same time, simplify your life so you can focus on what really nurtures you.

Exercising in nature is an excellent energy booster, clearing static from outside. Balance social life with solitude and conversation with quiet contemplation. Warming food and drinks, earthy colours like brown and essential oils such as cinnamon help ground you. Warm sesame oil massages and baths prevent you from getting too cold and dry. For glowing skin take evening primrose oil internally and apply jojoba oil.

Your mantra is BREATHE.

For your own wellbeing, deliver to yourself what you mind and body want.

**Pitta** - Since others may find you abrasive at times, monitor your urge to manipulate and manage everything, as you can come across as a control freak. Take time to laugh. Your drive to succeed can cause burnout unless you chill out regularly. Spend time meditating, perhaps outside in cool natural settings. Ensure you don't skip meals as this makes you snappy. Dynamic exercise such as martial arts, cardio and swimming is a healthy outlet for your emotions and energy, particularly swimming, as you are drawn to being cool. Wearing cool colours and pastels will calm you. It's vital to avoid overheating from hot food, hot weather, alcohol, smoking and hot tempered people. Mellow music and sweet smells such as rose and jasmine relax you. Soothe your skin with aloe vera internally and externally.

Your mantra is SMILE.

**Kapha** - You like to settle in your comfort zone, but before you become stagnant and sedentary you need to shake things up. Otherwise, your slow metabolism and inclination to mucus will cause weight gain and colds. Motivate

yourself to move by committing to daily exercise. Boot camp, classes, marathons, races, anything that makes you sweat is advised. You thrive in warm, dry weather to counter your cold, water-retaining tendency. At best, simulate this with regular dry saunas. You're prone to laziness and depression, so rise early, play uplifting music, exercise, eat light food and focus on your present blessings, letting the past go. Kapha's tend to accumulate energy, possessions and people. Cull your co-dependencies and surround yourself with positive things. Have warming spices, wear bright colours and massage with stimulating oils such as lemongrass and orange. Body scrubs and clay is great to decongest your skin.

Your mantra is MOVE **NH**



### TAKING TIME OUT FOR YOUR TYPE

Sukhavati Ayurvedic Retreat & Spa in Bali offers full, authentic Ayurvedic rejuvenation programs to bring balance to your Ayurvedic body type: Vata, Pitta or Kapha.

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