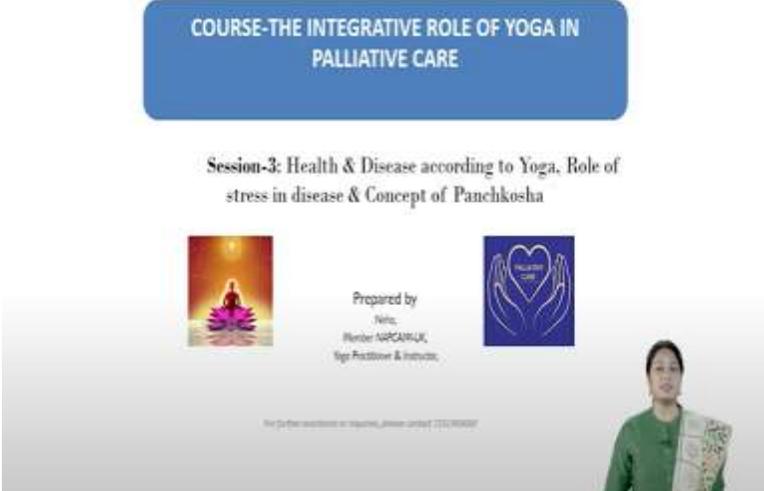


Certificate in Integrative Palliative Care – 3
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Week-03
Lecture 22: Health and Diseases According to Yoga

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COURSE-THE INTEGRATIVE ROLE OF YOGA IN PALLIATIVE CARE

Session-3: Health & Disease according to Yoga. Role of stress in disease & Concept of Panchkosha

Prepared by
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Yoga Practitioner & Instructor.

For further information or queries, please contact: 011-26095000

In this session, we'll understand about health, disease according to yoga and the role of stress in disease and finally the concept of Panchakosha. Now that we've explored the concept of Ashtang Yoga for holistic health, let's examine how neglecting these practices in your daily life can result in significant stress, ultimately leading to various health issues. For that, let's understand health first.

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Understanding Health

- The Sanskrit word for health defines good health in just one word-**Swastha**. This word is made up of 'swa' meaning the self and 'stha' meaning 'to be established in'. One whose consciousness is established in the self is the possessor of good health. In order to peacefully establish awareness in one's inner core or center, there should be no disturbances in the bodily functions, mental faculties, emotions or interactions with the external world and there should be perfect contentment with one's life situation. **WHO also defines good health as, 'good health is a sense of well-being at physical, psychological, emotional, social and spiritual levels.'**
- Yoga defines good health as harmony in all the five koshas or bodies. These five bodies are Annamaya Kosha (physical body), Pranamaya kosha (energy body), manomaya kosha (mental body), vijyanamaya kosha (wisdom body) and the anandmaya kosha (bliss body).



Dr. Saffron Swamini of YogaVeda, phone: +91 9220000000

The Sanskrit word for health is very apt. It defines good health in just one word, swastha. This word is made up of swa meaning the self and stha meaning to be established in.

So one whose consciousness is established in the self is the possessor of good health. In order to peacefully establish awareness in one's inner core or center, there should be no disturbances in the bodily functions, mental faculties, emotions or interactions with the external world and there should be perfect contentment with one's life situation. This short definition of health fulfills all the criteria of the modern definition of good health given by World Health Organization, which describes health as good health is a sense of well-being at physical, psychological, emotional, social and spiritual levels.

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According to the World Health Organization (WHO), good health encompasses well-being across physical, psychological, emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions. Yoga aligns with this holistic view, defining good health as harmony within the five koshas (sheaths or bodies):

- Annamaya Kosha (Physical Body)
- Pranamaya Kosha (Energy Body)
- Manomaya Kosha (Mental Body)
- Vijnanamaya Kosha (Wisdom or Intuitive Body)
- Anandamaya Kosha (Bliss Body)

For further questions or inquiries, please contact 0227920000

The yogic view is exactly the same.

In yoga, good health means harmony in all the five koshas or sheets or layers of the bodies. Annamaya kosha, which is the physical body, Pranamaya kosha, the energy body, Manomaya kosha, mental body, Vigyanmaya kosha, the wisdom body and Anandmaya kosha, the bliss body. We will discuss this concept later in detail.

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Ayurveda, the Vedic science of health, considers health to be a state where all three doshas (biological humours) of the body, Vata (wind or gas), pitta (bile) and kapha (mucus) are well balanced in harmony. Sushruta Sushruta defines a person, a person in good health, as one whose doshas, somatic and psychic humours, are in a state of equilibrium, the digestive capacity is uniformly balanced, the fundamental tissues of the body and waste excretion are functioning normally, and the soul, cognitive organs and mind are in a lucid state.

Health depends upon the way we live our life. If we do not take the rubble of the best of our lives in our hands consciously, the best will end in any direction inviting various diseases. The essence of Yoga is about re-establishing the dormant link between the individual and the cosmic will. In order to establish this link the bodily functions, mental faculties, emotions and social interactions need to be balanced through yoga practices. And the key is a feeling of contentment and inner joy. This restores the balance. The positive energy of this state radiates in the area where there is a voidness, whether it be an organ, the mind or the emotions, and mends it.

Medical science now accepts that there are different stages of disturbances or imbalances before the state of health changes into a manifest disease. It is much easier to stay healthy than to change the state of disease into good health. The quality of life, whether in health or in sickness, is completely in our own hands. So whenever one is stricken, then the journey must begin. Once the journey begins, it definitely takes us towards the destination.

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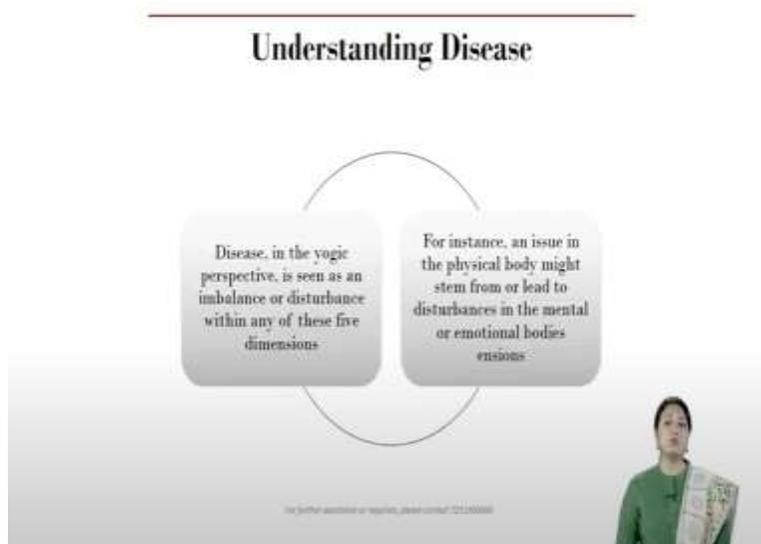
mucus are well balanced in harmony. Sushruta Samhita defines a swastha, a person in good health as one whose doshas, somatic and psychic humours are in a state of equilibrium.

The digestive capacity is uniformly balanced, the fundamental tissues of the body and waste excretion are functioning normally and the soul, cognitive organs and mind are in a lucid state. Health depends upon the way we live our life. If we do not take the rudder of the boat of our lives in our hands consciously, the boat will sail in any direction inviting various diseases. The science of yoga is about re-establishing the dormant link between the individual and the inner self. In order to establish this link, the bodily functions, mental faculties, emotions and social interactions need to be balanced through yogic practices.

And the key is a feeling of contentment and inner joy. This restores the balance. The positive energy of the state rushes to the area where there is a weakness, whether it be an organ, the mind or the emotions and mends it. Medical science now accepts that there are different stages of disturbances or imbalances before the state of health changes into a manifest disease. It is much easier to stay healthy than to change the state of disease into good health.

The quality of life, whether in health or in sickness, is completely in our own hands. So wherever one is stationed, there the journey begins. Once the journey begins, it definitely takes us towards the destination.

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So we'll understand what is disease according to yoga, how yoga describes disease.

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Understanding Disease according to Yoga

The absence of good health is ill health. Disease, i.e. dis+ease, is a state of ill health where the symptoms start manifesting at the level of the body and/or mind. The state of disease itself can be classified into four stages. In the first or psychological stage, the symptoms are only at the level of the mind. The second stage is psychosomatic, where mental symptoms percolate into the body occasionally. In the third or somatic stage, the physical symptoms outweigh the mental symptoms, but the disturbance in the body is reversible. In the final organic stage, there are irreversible structural changes in the body, making the disease a permanent guest.



The absence of good health is ill health disease.

That is, dis plus ease is a state of ill health where the symptoms start manifesting at the level of the body and or mind. The state of disease itself can be classified into four stages.

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Stage I
Psychic Stage
↓
Stage II
Psychosomatic Stage
↓
Stage III
Somatic Stage
↓
Stage IV
Organic Stage

Fig. DEVELOPMENT OF DISEASE



In the first or psychological stage, the symptoms are only at the level of the mind. The second stage is psychosomatic where mental symptoms percolate into the body occasionally. In the third or somatic stage, the physical symptoms outweigh the mental symptoms, but the disturbance in the body is still reversible.

In the final organic stage, there are irreversible structural changes in the body, making the disease a permanent guest.

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• However, on the other hand, Yoga defines disease as an imbalance or disturbance within any of the five dimensions as mentioned i.e. Annamaya Kosha (physical body), Pranamaya kosha (energy body), manomaya kosha (mental body), vinyanamaya kosha (wisdom body) and anandmaya kosha (bliss body). This imbalance can originate in any kosha or sheath and, if not addressed then & there, can percolate to other dimensions progressively. For instance, an issue in the physical body might stem from or lead to disturbances in the mental or emotional bodies.

• In addition to this, stress plays a significant role in the development and progression of disease.

• Stress is a ubiquitous aspect of modern life, often perceived as a mere response to challenges or pressures. However, its implications extend far beyond everyday discomfort, significantly impacting both physical and mental health. Understanding the relationship between stress and disease is crucial, as chronic stress can exacerbate a range of health conditions, from cardiovascular diseases to autoimmune disorders. This exploration delves into the physiological mechanisms through which stress influences health, highlighting the importance of recognizing stress not only as a psychological phenomenon but also as a critical factor in disease development and progression.

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However, on the other hand, yoga defines disease as an imbalance or disturbance within any of the five dimensions as mentioned i.e. Annamaya kosha, Pranamaya kosha, Manomaya kosha, Vinyanamaya kosha and Anandmaya kosha. This imbalance can originate in any kosha or sheath and if not addressed then and there can percolate to other dimensions progressively.

For instance, an issue in the physical body might stem from or lead to disturbances in the mental or emotional bodies. In addition to this, stress plays a significant role in the development and progression of disease. Stress is a ubiquitous aspect of modern life often perceived as a mere response to challenges or pressures. However, its implications extend far beyond everyday discomfort, significantly impacting both physical and mental health. Understanding the relationship between stress and disease is crucial as chronic stress can exacerbate a range of health conditions from cardiovascular diseases to autoimmune disorders.

This exploration delves into the physiological mechanisms through which stress influences health highlighting the importance of recognizing stress not only as a physiological phenomenon, but also as a critical factor in disease development and progression.

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The Role of Stress in Disease



Stress arises when a situation demands more from an individual than they can readily provide

'eustress' is beneficial

'distress' is harmful (both in short term & long term)

chronic stress affects genetic behavior and can contribute to mutations and diseases



Usually stress arises when a situation demands more from an individual than they can readily provide, impacting the body, mind and consciousness. If our recuperative abilities can counteract the stress and restore balance, it results in eustress which can be beneficial for us. However, when stress overwhelms our capacity to recover, it leads to distress causing harm both in the short and long term. Distress can affect any of the koshas or sheets of our existence, potentially leading to severe conditions like cancer as well.

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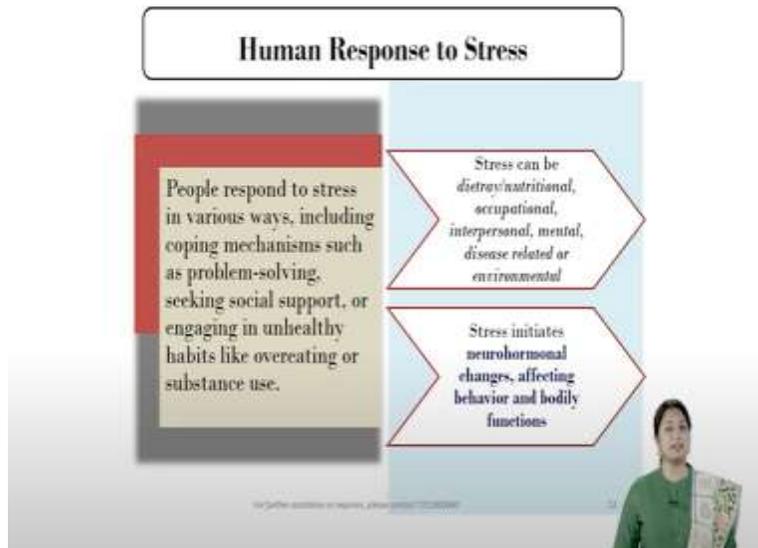
Stress arises when a situation demands more from an individual than they can readily provide, impacting the body, mind, and consciousness. If our recuperative abilities can counteract the stress and restore balance, it results in 'eustress,' which can be beneficial. However, when stress overwhelms our capacity to recover, it leads to 'distress,' causing harm both in the short and long term. Distress can affect any of the koshas, potentially leading to severe conditions like cancer.

Research indicates that chronic stress affects genetic behavior and can contribute to mutations and diseases. Studies have shown that stress impacts the immune system and can influence the progression of cancer. For example, stress can slow healing process, impair immune responses, and potentially increase cancer risk.



Research indicates that chronic stress affects genetic behavior and can contribute to mutations and diseases. Studies have shown that stress impacts the immune system and can influence the progression of cancer. For example, stress can slow healing process, impair immune responses, and potentially increase cancer risk as well.

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So what should be the human response to stress? Stress impacts humans similarly to other living beings, but is compounded by our unique ability to repair, regenerate, and adapt. Stress can be categorized into various types such as dietary or nutritional stress, occupational stress, interpersonal stress, mental stress, disease-related stress, and environmental-related stress, etc.

These stressors can cumulatively weaken an individual's ability to cope with and overcome disease. Stress initiates neurohormonal changes affecting behavior and bodily functions. Both external and internal stresses trigger similar responses in the body and mind involving neurotransmitters that coordinate the body's reaction to maintain internal balance. Stress initially activates the immune system to combat perceived threats but can weaken it over time with prolonged exposure.

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Effects of Stress

Immune System Response Stress initially activates the immune system to combat perceived threats but can weaken it over time with prolonged exposure.	Sympathetic Nervous System Activation Stress increases sympathetic nervous system activity, affecting the whole body.	Hyperarousal Chronic stress leads to hyperarousal in neural pathways, raising blood glucose levels.	Hormonal Changes Stress results in the release of hormones that increase blood glucose and metabolic rate, affecting cell repair and regeneration.
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Stress increases sympathetic nervous system activity affecting the whole body.

Chronic stress leads to hyperarousal in neural pathways raising blood glucose levels and stress results in the release of hormones that increase blood glucose and metabolic rate affecting cell repair and regeneration. So, it is important to mention the body mind system learns from stressful events creating memories that influence future responses. Repeated stress can condition the body-mind to respond automatically even when such responses are no longer appropriate. In summary, we can say that understanding stress and its impact on the body is crucial for managing health and preventing disease. In such a case, yoga offers practices to address these imbalances and enhance overall well-being, highlighting the interconnectedness of physical, mental and emotional health alongside our discussions on health, disease and stress.

To achieve a more holistic understanding of health,

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Inside the Pancha Kosha: Uncovering the 5 Layers of Self

This concept outlines five layers of human existence: the physical body (Anamaya Kosha), the vital energy (Pranamaya Kosha), the mental body (Manomaya Kosha), the wisdom or intellect (Vijnanamaya Kosha), and the bliss or spiritual layer (Anandamaya Kosha). Each of these layers interacts and influences the others, providing a holistic view of health.

Without a deeper understanding of this yogic framework, we may miss crucial aspects that contribute to an individual's well-being. Recognizing how imbalances in one kosha can affect the others is vital for developing effective solutions. For instance, addressing physical symptoms alone may not suffice if underlying emotional or spiritual issues are overlooked.

By integrating the principles of Panch Kosha into our approach, we can create more comprehensive and tailored solutions that promote overall health and healing. This holistic understanding empowers practitioners to support individuals on multiple levels, fostering a more complete recovery process.

Dr. Jeffrey Brantley, D.C., Ph.D., M.D., F.A.C.P. | 772.309.9333

let's delve deeper into the concept of Pancha kosha, which encompasses the five dimensions of our being that significantly influence our quality of life. To effectively address a disease, it is important to understand the yogic perspective on a healthy body particularly through the framework of Panchkosha. This concept outlines five layers of human existence, the physical body, the vital energy body, the mental body, the emotional body and at last the bliss body. Each of these layers interacts and influences the others providing a holistic view of health. Without a deeper understanding of this yogic framework, we may miss crucial aspects that contribute to an individual's well-being.

Recognizing how imbalances in one kosh can affect the others is vital for developing effective solutions. For instance, addressing physical symptoms alone may not suffice if underlying emotional or spiritual issues are overlooked. By integrating the principles of Panchakosh into our approach, we can create more comprehensive and tailored solutions that promote overall health and healing.

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Studying the concept of Panch Kosha in relation to palliative care is important for several reasons:

- **Holistic Approach:** Panch Kosha, which refers to the five layers of human existence—physical (Annamaya), vital energy (Pranamaya), mental (Manomaya), wisdom (Vijnanamaya), and bliss (Anandamaya)—provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the multifaceted nature of health and well-being. In palliative care, this holistic perspective is crucial as it addresses not only the physical symptoms of a disease but also the emotional, psychological, and spiritual needs of patients.
- **Personalized Care:** By recognizing the interconnectedness of the five koshas, healthcare providers can tailor interventions that resonate with the individual's unique experiences and needs. This can enhance the effectiveness of palliative care by focusing on improving the quality of life and providing comfort in a more rounded manner.

This holistic understanding empowers practitioners to support individuals on multiple levels, fostering a more complete recovery process. Additionally, studying the concept of Pancha kosha in relation to palliative care is important for various reasons such as holistic approach as Pancha kosha which refers to the five layers of human existence provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the multifaceted nature of health and well-being.

In palliative care, this holistic perspective is crucial as it addresses not only the physical symptoms of a disease but also the emotional, psychological and spiritual needs of patients. Understanding the concept of Pancha kosha also helps in personalizing the care for the subjects by recognizing the interconnectedness of the five koshas. Healthcare providers can tailor interventions that resonate with the individual's unique experiences and needs. This can enhance the effectiveness of palliative care by focusing on improving the quality of life and providing comfort in a more rounded manner.

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Studying the concept of Panch Kosha in relation to palliative care is important for several reasons:

- **Emotional and Spiritual Support** Palliative care often involves navigating complex emotional and spiritual issues, especially as patients face life-limiting illnesses. The kosha framework encourages practitioners to consider these dimensions, fostering deeper conversations and interventions that can lead to greater peace and acceptance for patients and their families.
- **Stress Reduction and Well-Being** Understanding the koshas can also guide stress management techniques that support emotional and mental well-being. Practices such as meditation, breathing exercises, and mindful movement—integral to yoga—can help alleviate anxiety and improve the overall experience of care.
- **Integrative Practices** The integration of Panch Kosha principles into palliative care can enhance the use of complementary therapies, creating a more holistic treatment plan that aligns with patients' values and preferences.

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We also get to understand that the emotional and spiritual support for the subject is really important as palliative care often involves navigating complex emotional and spiritual issues especially as subjects face life limiting illnesses.

The kosha framework encourages practitioners to consider these dimensions, fostering deeper conversations and interventions that can lead to greater peace and acceptance for patients and their families. It also helps reducing the stress and promoting general well-being as understanding the koshas also guides stress management techniques that support emotional and general practices such as meditation, breathing techniques, yoga nidra which is integral to yoga can help alleviate anxiety and improve the overall experience of the care. The integration of Pancha kosha principles into palliative care can enhance the use of complementary therapies, creating a more holistic treatment plan that aligns with patients values and preferences. So to conclude, linking Pancha kosha with palliative care promotes a more comprehensive approach to healing that respects and addresses the entirety of a person's experience. This synergy can lead to improved patient outcomes, greater satisfaction, and a more compassionate care environment.

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The pancha koshas are not simply a theoretical concept but a practical tool for self-discovery and transformation. By understanding these different layers of our existence, we can better navigate our life experiences, cultivate holistic well-being, and ultimately unlock the doorway to our deepest self – the self that is an eternal source of bliss and tranquility.

Kosha, a Sanskrit term meaning 'envelope' or 'sheath,' when combined with Pancha, 'five,' gives us Pancha Kosha, the 'Five Envelopes' or 'Five Sheaths.' This concept takes us on a journey through the continuum of our being, from the tangible layers of our physical body to the intangible depths of our unconscious mind, sparking a sense of wonder and curiosity.

Pancha Kosha comprises of:

- Annamaya kosha - the Food sheath
- Pranamaya kosha - the Vital Energy sheath
- Manomaya kosha - the Mental sheath
- Vijñanamaya kosha - the Intellect sheath
- Anandamaya kosha - the bliss sheath

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Annamaya Kosha (Physical Sheath):

The body's outermost layer related to food is the "annamaya kosha." We can see and touch it. The five elements, earth, water, fire, air, and space, form this outermost kosha or layer. The food we digest forms the annamaya kosha, which is why it's called the food sheath.

- Once we die, this layer returns to its original form of food or other plants and animals.
- This is the most primitive form of all the layers or sheaths, and the pleasures the human body gains at this layer last only a short while. [Yoga asanas](#) help us transcend the constraints imposed by this sheath.
- Yoga asanas have many health benefits and help maintain optimal physical function. A yoga practice helps treat problems arising in the body, such as chronic [lower back pain](#) and injury.
- Regular yoga also increases strength and flexibility, improves breathing, increases energy, balances metabolism, and promotes heart health and weight loss.
- Generally, people who adopt a yoga practice report feeling more in touch with their bodies. Yoga poses help maintain the balance of the annamaya kosha since they leave a practitioner feeling physically grounded. Try a Mountain Pose (Tadasana) variation to connect with your physical body, a foundation for many other yoga poses.

18

Let us understand the first Kosha, the first dimension of our existence, which is known as Annamaya Kosha, the food sheath. The body's outermost layer related to food is the Annamaya Kosha. We can see and touch it. The five elements, earth, water, fire, air and space form this outermost Kosha or layer. The food we digest forms the Annamaya Kosha which is why it is called the food sheath.

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Generally, people who adopt a yoga practice report feeling more in touch with their bodies. Yoga poses help maintain the balance of the Annamaya Kosha since they leave a practitioner feeling physically grounded. Try a mountain pose or Tadasana variation to connect with your physical body, a foundation for many other yoga poses.

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Pranamaya Kosha (Vital Sheath)

The life-force energy that supports the other koshas

Pranamaya kosha is the energy body, it regulates the flow of prana, life-force energy, through the body.

The next sheath is the pranamaya sheath or the sheath of vital life force. Ordinarily, mortals cannot see the vital sheath as it's much finer compared to the more basic food sheath.

It's the pranamaya kosha and the anamaya kosha through which humans express themselves. Therefore, pranamaya kosha is the breath and the life that comes with breathing.

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Pranamaya Kosha (Vital Sheath)

Ordinary mortals cannot see the vital sheath as it's much finer compared to the more basic food sheath. It's the pranamaya kosha and the anamaya kosha through which humans express themselves. Therefore, pranamaya kosha is the breath and the life that comes with breathing.

The pranamaya kosha separates our beings, alive and dead. While prana brings us life, its absence indicates life ending or death. Since the pranamaya kosha is closely tied to life and death, its link with the anamaya kosha is also profound. The anamaya kosha falls apart when prana departs from the body or once we die.

The five pranas: prana, udana, vyana, samana, and apana form this pranmaya kosha layer. These also create the 5 organs through which we perform actions: the "karmindriyas," or the mouth, hands, feet, rectum, and genitals. We nurture the pranamaya kosha by offering it nutritious food and the other essentials of life, like breath and sunlight. Performing pranayama helps yogis move out of the confines of this layer or kosha.

In yoga and meditation, pranayama practice directs the breath and is advised to address the pranamaya kosha. To bring this sheath into balance, try a three-part breath (Dirga Pranayama), a pranayama exercise.

The Pranamaya Kosha separates our beings alive and dead. While Prana brings us life, its absence indicates life ending or death. Since the Pranamaya Kosha is closely tied to life and death, its link with the Annamaya Kosha is also profound.

The Annamaya Kosha falls apart when Prana departs from the body or once we die. The five pranas are prana, udana, vyana, samana and apana form this pranamaya kosha or the layer of vitality. These also create five organs through which we perform action, the karmindriyas or the mouth, hands, feet, rectum and genitals. We nurture the pranamaya kosha by offering it nutritious food and the other essentials of life like breath and sunlight. Performing pranayama helps yogis move out of the confines of this layer or kosha.

In yoga and meditation, pranayama practice directs the breath and is advised to address the pranamaya kosha. To bring this sheath into balance, try a three-part breath or dirgha pranayama, a pranayama routine to practice.

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Now, we will understand the third layer of pancha kosha which is manomaya kosha.

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Manomaya kosha, the mental sheath, forms the third layer. Apart from the mind, the subconscious and five organs help gain knowledge that forms this kosha or sheath. These five organs, referred to as the jnana indriyas, are the organs that help us feel sensations; these essential organs are the eyes, skin, nose, tongue, and ears. Our minds receive information through these five sense organs, and these very organs are behind us, feeling our desires.

The manomaya kosha is formed by our thoughts, emotions, imaginations, feelings, and memories embedded in our subconscious mind. If we fail to control our minds, we may take noxious action that harms our well-being. To strengthen ourselves, we must follow the yamas and niyamas and practice selfless service or karma yoga.

Practicing meditation provides insights into specific patterns that a person can learn to recognize and eventually break free from. Try a simple mindfulness meditation exercise to connect with your manomaya kosha and observe your emotions and thoughts. Mindfulness teaches us to recognize our thoughts by paying attention to the present moment.



Manomaya kosha which is also known as the mental sheath forms the third layer. Apart from the mind, the subconscious mind and five organs help gain knowledge that forms this Kosh or Sheet.

These five organs referred to as the Jnana Indriyas are the organs that helps us feel sensations. These essential organs are the eyes, skin, nose, tongue and ears. Our mind receives information through these five sense organs and these very organs are behind us, feeling our desires. The Manomaya Kosha is formed by our thoughts, emotions, imaginations, feelings and memories embedded in our subconscious mind. If we fail to control our minds, we may take noxious action that harms our well-being.

To strengthen ourselves, we must practice selfless service or Karma Yoga. Or you can try a simple mindfulness meditation exercise to connect with your Manomaya Kosh and observe your emotions and thoughts. Mindfulness teaches us to recognize our thoughts by paying attention to the present moment.

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Vijnanamaya Kosha (Wisdom Sheath)

contains knowledge and discernment. It governs intellect and ego, distinguishing humans from animals



COMPONENTS OF THE INTELLECT SHEATH



Fourth sheath is the intellectual sheath which is also known as Vijnanamaya Kosha. This sheath is also known as the knowledge sheath or the sheath of wisdom.

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Vijnanamaya Kosha (Wisdom Sheath)

Known as "the knowledge sheath" or "the sheath of wisdom", this layer of wisdom gives us good sense and separates humans from animals. Both humans and animals are bestowed with emotions, feelings, memories, and thoughts, but only humans can tell right from wrong.

The vijnanamaya kosha also includes our ego, making us conscious of our identities and self-centered. We can strengthen this layer through the pursuit of knowledge or [jnana yoga](#). We must understand ourselves through meditation and by studying spiritual texts and scriptures.

Meditation is the key to reaching this deeper layer. Accessing the vijnanamaya kosha, a meditation that opens the third eye (ajna) chakra, brings you closer to your innate wisdom & intuition.

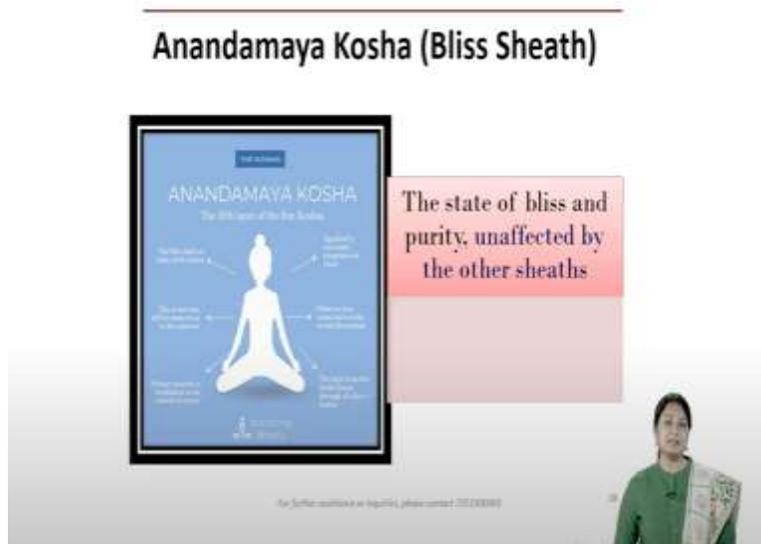


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We must understand ourselves through meditation and by studying spiritual texts and scriptures. Meditation is the key to reaching this deeper layer. Accessing the Vijnanamaya Kosha, a meditation that opens the third eye or the Ajna Chakra brings you closer to your innate wisdom and intuition.

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The last sheath or kosha is the Anandmaya kosha.

This is the outermost layer of our existence.

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Anandamaya Kosha (Bliss Sheath)

It bears the vasanas or the desires our personalities nurture and manifests what our souls have experienced through the multiple rebirths.

It's through anandamaya kosha that we connect with the eternal power. We remain trapped in the rebirth cycle till we successfully transcend this layer. Once we have attained that, we reach self-realization or the state of Samadhi. What lies beyond these 5 layers is our atma or the self. While the anandamaya kosha brings you close to the soul or the atma, the atma remains outside the five layers of koshas.

The blissful self reminds us that life is still good even when things are difficult and that being alive is a gift. Yoga posits that we all are born blissful beings and preserve the capacity to be blissful even in adulthood. This means that the anandamaya kosha is always available to you and is reachable through consistent practice of yoga, where a deep state of meditation is reached. Connection to the blissful body can be experienced in practices where prayer and mantra are invoked.

Yoga practitioners say feeling blissed out during Corpse Pose (Savasana), the last resting pose that culminates in a yoga practice. You can recite a simple mantra in meditation: "I am blissful".



Anandamaya kosha is the most refined layer out of the all other layers. It bears the vasanas or the desires our personalities nurture and manifests what our souls have experienced through the multiple rebirths. It's through anandamaya kosha that we connect with the eternal power. We remain trapped in the rebirth cycle till we successfully transcend this layer. Once we have attained that, we reach self-realization or the state of samadhi, which is the ultimate goal of yoga.

What lies beyond these five layers is our Atma or the Self. While the Anandamayi Kosha brings you close to the Atma or the Soul, the Atma remains outside the five layers of the Koshas. The blissful Self reminds us that our life is still good even when there are things that are difficult and that being alive is a gift. Yoga considers that we all are born blissful beings and preserve the capacity to be blissful even in adulthood. This means that the Anand Mayakosh is always available to you and is reachable through consistent practice of yoga where a deep state of meditation is reached.

Connection to the blissful body can be experienced in practices where prayer and mantras are invoked.

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So with that we have completed understanding the concept of Panchakosha. Here is a review. The first Kosha is the Annamaya Kosha, the physical sheath which is the outermost tangible layer composed of the five elements earth, water, fire, air and space. It is the most gross of the five sheaths and is primarily addressed through physical practices like asanas.

The next sheath is Pranamaya Kosha or the vital sheath. This sheath is finer than the physical body and is associated with life force energy. It supports and energizes all other sheaths making its presence essential for their functioning. The third Kosha is Manomaya Kosha or the mental sheath. This layer encompasses the mind including thoughts, emotions and memories. It plays a crucial role in processing information and making decisions.

Fourth Kosh is Vijnanamaya Kosha or the Wisdom Sheet. This Sheet holds accumulated knowledge and past experiences including karmas from previous lives. It governs discernment, intellect and ego, distinguishing humans from animals. The last Kosha is the Anandamaya Kosha or the Bliss Sheet. This is the most subtle sheath.

It represents our original state of bliss and purity. It remains a passive observer untouched by the fluctuations of the other sheath. While we are familiar with the Annamaya Kosha through physical awareness, the deeper layers remain less accessible. Yoga emphasizes awareness as a tool to explore these dimensions. Through practices like asanas, pranayama and meditation, we sharpen our awareness on bodily sensations, breathing processes and inner experiences, enhancing our understanding of ourselves and

our interactions with the environment. Even those not practicing yoga can gain some insight into their body and mind.

But yoga practices offer a profound means to shape personality and improve quality of life by cultivating a deeper awareness and balanced perception. Thank you.