

Characteristics of *Pitta Dosha*, in its aggravated and normal states

Pitta is a force created by the dynamic interplay of the elements water and fire. These forces represent transformation. They cannot change into each other, but they modulate or control each other and are vitally required for the life processes to occur. For example, too much fire and too little water will result in the boiling away of the water. Too much water will result in the fire being put out. Pitta's qualities are hot, light, oily, mobile, subtle, soft, clear, intense and fluid, sour, pungent, salty.

Pitta governs digestion, absorption, assimilation, nutrition, metabolism, body temperature, skin colouration, and the lustre of the eyes; and also intelligence and understanding. Just as with the digestion and assimilation of food it also manages the digestion and assimilation of ideas. Psychologically, Pitta arouses anger, hate, and jealousy. Although throughout the body Pitta is concentrated in the eyes, skin, blood, sweat glands, endocrine glands, and fat. The primary seat of Pitta is the small intestine and stomach.

Pitta predominates during the adult years (from maturation to menopause for women); during the summer season; during the digestion of food; during the day from around 10am to 2pm, and at night from about 10pm to 2am

Note: All characteristics listed below indicate tendencies only, a Pitta person may/may not show these, and there is no law stating that a Pitta person *must* demonstrate a particular characteristic or that another Dosha type may not also demonstrate this.

Typical characteristics of people with a predominantly Pitta constitution:

- Medium height and physique, toned and athletic, moderate weight, gain weight evenly
- Chest not as flat as Vata and muscle development is moderate so the veins and joints are not very prominent
- Skin fair or reddish, often with freckles; sunburns easily; prone to rashes
- Hair usually fine and straight, tending towards blond or red, typically turns grey early, tendency toward balding or thinning
- Eyes are grey, green, or light brown and sharp, with eyeballs of medium prominence and eye-lashes of medium length
- Nails are soft, pink and tender; the shape of the nose tends to be sharp and the tip reddish
- Voice is penetrating and sharp
- Uncomfortable in sun or hot weather, heat makes them very tired
- Body temperature may run slightly high
- Perspire a lot, may urinate a lot
- Strong digestive fire, strong appetite; get irritated if they have to miss or wait for a meal
- Sharp mind, good concentration powers, determined, orderly and focussed, with a strong will
- Assertive, self-confident, and entrepreneurial at best; aggressive, demanding, pushy when out of balance
- Competitive, enjoy challenges, success oriented, lots of energy and initiative, very organised and precise
- Passionate and romantic; sexually more vigorous than Vatas but less so than Kaphas
- When under stress, Pitta tends to become irritated and angry
- Others may find them stubborn, pushy, and opinionated
- Good public speakers; also capable of sharp, sarcastic, cutting speech
- Generally good management and leadership ability, but can become authoritarian
- Like to spend money and exhibit wealth, and to surround themselves with beautiful objects
- Subject to temper tantrums, impatience, anger, even violence
- Emotional tendencies of hate and jealousy



Signs of Pitta Aggravation

- Angry, irritable, hostile, enraged, destructive, violent
- Impatient, critical of self and others
- Argumentative, aggressive, imposing
- Bossy, controlling, self-centred
- Frustrated, wilful, reckless
- Tendency to exert excessive effort to achieve goals
- Overly competitive and intense
- Errors in judgement due to mental confusion or blurred discernment due to emotion or passion
- Greediness and over-eating
- Acidity, heartburn, stomach ulcer
- Fitful sleep, disturbing dreams
- Diarrhoea, food allergies
- Bad breath, sour body odour
- Very sensitive to heat, hot flushes, excessive body heat, hot sensations in stomach or intestines
- Skin rashes, boils, acne, prickly heat, skin cancer
- Weakness due to low blood sugar
- Loss of vitality
- Anaemia, jaundice, sore throats, inflammations and irritations
- Fevers, night sweats
- Vision problems, conjunctivitis, bloodshot or burning eyes
- When stressed may suffer weight loss and insomnia

Indications of balanced Pitta:

- Strong powers of digestion
- Vitality, energy, goal-setting inclinations, determination
- Good problem solving skills, keen powers of intelligence
- Decisiveness, boldness, courage, leadership, vision
- Precise, orderly, efficient, adaptable
- Athletic abilities
- Bright complexion, enthusiasm
- Successful
- Sleep well for a moderate length of time

Ways to balance Pitta:

- Follow the dietary guidelines for Pitta (Pitta Pacifying Dietetics)
- Avoid excess oils, fried foods, salt, alcohol, red meat and hot spices
- Get plenty of fresh air and fresh fruits, vegetables, milk, and whole grains
- Keep cool physically and mentally
- Apply an attitude of moderation in all things
- Avoid situations of excessive heat, steam, or humidity
- In hot climates or seasons take cool baths, stay out of the sun in the hottest part of the day, wear loose light coloured cotton clothing (especially white and pastel shades like pale blue), take enough fluids, wear a hat
- Be considerate and patient with others
- Engage in quiet and contemplative activities
- Avoid situations of potential conflict
- Choose cooler times of day to take part in physical activities

