The causes of digestion and elimination conditions vary according to the underlying imbalances behind them. The easiest way to categorize these conditions is in terms of Vata imbalance (treatment = reducing Vata), Pitta imbalance (treatment = reducing Pitta), Kapha imbalance (treatment = reducing Kapha) and Agni weakness (treatment = strengthening Agni).

**Conditions Associated with Vata Imbalance**

**Contraindications**
Avoid practicing too vigorously without grounding, which agitates Vata.

**Physiological Approach**
- Pranayama that uses abdominal muscles.
- Emphasis on grounding in all asana.
- Back bends.
- Side bends.
- Poses on the belly that massage the organs of digestion.
- Slow flows like sun salutations, while emphasizing grounding.
- Walking.

**Chakra Approach**
Balance 1, 5 (if hypothyroidism). Always assess chakras to get a full picture.

**Meridian Approach**
- Triple Warmer.
- Spleen.
- Large Intestine.
- Bladder (if hemorrhoids).

**Constipation**

**Description**
Difficult or infrequent bowel movements (going more than 3 days without a bowel movement. According to [www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com), “you are considered constipated if you have two or more of the following for at least 3 months:
- Straining during a bowel movement more than 25% of the time.
- Hard stools more than 25% of the time.
- Incomplete evacuation more than 25% of the time.
- Two or fewer bowel movements in a week.”

**Causes (also from [www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com))**
- Inadequate water intake.
- Drinking too many caffeinated drinks
- Inadequate fiber in the diet.
- A disruption of regular diet or routine; traveling.
- Inadequate activity or exercise or immobility.
- Eating large amounts of dairy products.
- Stress.
- Resisting the urge to have a bowel movement, which is sometimes the result of pain from hemorrhoids.
- Overuse of laxatives (stool softeners) which weaken the bowel muscles.
- Hypothyroidism
- Neurological conditions such as Parkinsons Disease or multiple sclerosis.
- Antacid medicines containing calcium or aluminum.
- Medicines (especially strong pain medicines, such as narcotics, antidepressants or iron pills).
- Depression.
- Eating disorders.
- Irritable bowel syndrome.
- Pregnancy.
- Colon cancer.
- Lack of good nerve and muscle function in the bowel.

**Symptoms**
- Infrequent bowel movements and/or difficulty having bowel movements.
- Swollen abdomen or abdominal pain.
- Pain.
- Vomiting.

**Mind-Body Connection**
According to Shapiro constipation may relate to fear of facing feelings, moving forward, or of the future. She also relates constipation to attachment to the familiar, fear of letting go of control, and fear of surrender.

**Mind-Body Approach**
Encourage acknowledgement of emotions, taking the next step in life with courage, letting go, and surrender. AffORMation questions may include
- Why is it safe for me to acknowledge my emotions?
- Why is it safe for me to feel and stay with my emotions?
- Why is it safe for me to move forward in my life?
- Why is it such a relief for me to let go of my tension?
- Why do I find it so easy to surrender to what is?
- Why is it safe for me to relinquish control?

**Diverticulosis**

**Description**
Diverticulosis is the condition of having multiple small pouches (diverticula) in the lining of the colon or large intestine that bulge outward through weak spots.
About 10 percent of Americans older than 40 and about half of people over 60
have this condition. When these pouches become inflamed it is called diverticulitis (see below under Conditions Associated with Pitta imbalance.

**Causes**
The theory is that the diverticulosis develops out of the straining involved in constipation. Thus the same factors that lead to constipation can lead to diverticulosis. These include lack of exercise and a low fiber diet.

**Symptoms**
May be asymptomatic or there may be tenderness over the affected area or abdominal cramps.

**Mind-Body Perspective**
According to Shapiro difficulties in the large intestine may have to do with “clinging to what has already served its purpose.” This may lead to prolonged grief or sadness. She may have a fear of letting go because of a lack of trust in what may come next.

**Mind-Body Approach**
Focus on themes around “releasing what no longer serves you,” recognizing the need to let go, releasing grief and sadness, and trusting that she will always have what she needs. AFFORMations may include

- Why do I easily release what no longer serves me?
- Why is it easy for me to see when I need to let go?
- Why do I release my grief and sadness now?
- Why do I trust that I always have what I need?

**Ayurvedic Approach**
Balance Pitta if inflammation is present in the form of diverticulitis (see Conditions Associated with Pitta Imbalance). Then balance the original Vata imbalance.

**Sample Class for Conditions Associated with Vata Imbalance**
(YTT = Yoga Teachers Toolbox and TPM = Therapeutic Pose Manual).

- Pranayama – Bastrika (TPM).
- Pranayama – Kapalabhati (TPM)
- Pranayama - Agnisar Kriya (TPM)
- Pranayama – Nadi Sodhana (TPM)
- Repetitive Mulabandha (TPM)
- Repetitive Uddiyana Bandha (TPM)
- Mountain (YTT 13)
- Vinyasa Sequence (YTT 10)
- Sun Salutation (YTT 12)
- Triangle (YTT 18)
- Separate Leg Head to Knee (YTT19)
• Frog (YTT 38)
• Seated Spinal Twist (YTT 43)
• Marichi Twist (YTT 46)
• Knee Down Twist (YTT 47)
• Cobra (YTT 41)
• Locust (YTT 52)
• Seated Boat (YTT 29)
• Prone Boat (YTT 53)
• Bow (YTT 54)
• Shoulderstand (YTT 84)
• Seated Forward Fold (YTT)
• Yoga Mudra (YTT 67)
• Head to knee (YTT 68)
• Reclining Bound Angle (YTT 34B)
• Reclining Hero (TPM or YTT 58)
• Plough (YTT 85)
• Hasta Mudra 1 (pinkies touching)
• Hasta Mudra 2 (ring fingers touching)
• Interlaced Mudra 1 (Interlaced pinkies)
• Interlaced Midra 2 (Interlaced ring fingers)
• Kanishtha Sharira Mudra (web space of hands on waist)
• Adho Merudanda Mudra (fingers curled into palm, thumbs facing each other)

**Conditions Associated with Pitta Imbalance**

**Contraindications**
Poses that stimulate the bowels such as prone back bends, twists, deep forward bends and standing postures. Most of the poses presented for constipation will be contraindicated here. Though core strengthening is a major part of applying yoga to these conditions, be careful not to allow the client to become overheated, which agitates Pitta.

**Physiological Approach**
Inversions and supported poses that slow down the elimination process and calm the nervous system.

**Chakra Approach**
Balance 1 and 3. Assess all chakras for a full picture.

**Meridian Approach**
Large intestine, Stomach, Spleen, Bladder, Kidney, Triple Warmer.
Diarrhea

Description
Diarrhea is a bowel movement that is loose and watery. While it is a common condition that most people have once in a while, it can also be a symptom of irritable bowel syndrome or other disease processes.

Causes (from www.webmd.com)
• Intestinal flu caused by a virus
• Infection by bacteria (the cause of most types of food poisoning)
• Infections by other organisms
• Eating foods that upset the digestive system
• Allergies to certain foods
• Medications
• Radiation therapy
• Diseases of the intestines (Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis)
• Malabsorption (where the body is unable to adequately absorb certain nutrients from the diet)
• Hyperthyroidism
• Some cancers
• Laxative abuse
• Alcohol abuse
• Digestive tract surgery
• Diabetes (and diabetic medication)
• Competitive running
• Diarrhea may also follow constipation, especially for people who have irritable bowel syndrome.

Symptoms
• Abdominal bloating or cramps
• Thin or loose stools
• Watery stool
• Sense of urgency to have a bowel movement
• Nausea and vomiting

In addition to the symptoms described above, the symptoms of complicated diarrhea include:
• Blood, mucus, or undigested food in the stool
• Weight loss
• Fever

Mind-Body Perspective
In Shapiro’s view if the diarrhea is due to an infection a good question to ask is if the client is feeling infected or poisoned by a situation or person. If the diarrhea is more stress-related it may be related to wanting a situation to be over as quickly as possible or wanting to run away from something or someone. It may also indicate an inability to assimilate feelings like panic or grief or literally being
“scared shitless” about something. Diarrhea prevents the absorption of nutrients in the body – on the the level of mind it may be that the client is having difficulty absorbing the love and nurturing that is being offered to her.

**Mind-Body Approach**
Use themes around immunity from poisonous situations, staying present and breathing into what is happening right now, facing with strength and courage any difficulty she is experiencing – embracing it as teacher, acknowledgment and assimilation of feelings, readily receiving the love and nurturing that is available to her. AfFORMations may include:
- Why am I able to feel truly strong in poisonous situations?
- Why am I able to face whatever is going on right now?
- Why am I able to acknowledge and assimilate my feelings?
- Why am I able to receive, absorb and use the love and nurturing available to me?

**Sample Class Diarrhea**
*Note that YTT = Yoga Teachers Toolbox and TPM = Therapeutic Pose Manual*
- Pranayama – Alternate Nostril Breathing
- Pranayama – Follow the breath between the naval and the throat
- Reclining Bound Angle (YTT 34B)
- Reclining Hero (TPM or YTT 58)
- Full Bridge (TPM)
- Supine Hand to Toe (YTT 22)
- Doorway Stretches (TPM)
- Headstand (YTT 87)
- Shoulderstand on Chairs (TPM)
- **Inverted Staff Pose (on chair) (TPM)**
- Reverse Process (YTT 86)
- **Supported Savasana (TPM)**
- **Restorative Inversion (TPM)**
- Mudras – Interlaced Mudra 2 (ring fingers interlaced)
- Mudras – Adho Merudanda (fingers curled into palm; thumbs toward each other)

**Diverticulitis**
**Description**
See the description of diverticulosis above. When the diverticulae become inflamed it is called diverticulitis.

**Causes**
See diverticulosis above.

**Symptoms**
- Alternating diarrhea with constipation.
- Painful cramps or tenderness in the lower abdomen.
- Chills or fever.
**Mind-Body Perspective**
According to Shapiro difficulties in the large intestine may have to do with “clinging to what has already served its purpose” leading to prolonged grief or sadness. She may have a fear of letting go because of a lack of trust in what comes next. Inflammation is indicative of anger or an internal war going on inside.

**Mind-Body Approach**
Focus on themes around “releasing what no longer serves you,” recognizing the need to let go, releasing grief, sadness, and anger, trusting that she will always have what she needs. Affirmations may include

- Why do I easily release what no longer serves me?
- Why is it easy for me to see when I need to let go?
- Why do I release my grief and sadness now?
- Why do I trust that I always have what I need?
- Why am I angry?
- Why are the issues of my anger clear to me?
- Why am I able to address the issues around my anger directly?
- Why is it safe for me to address my anger?
- Why am I now able to release my anger?

**Celiac Disease**

**Description ([www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com))**

- A digestive condition triggered by the consumption of the protein gluten found in bread, pasta, cookies, pizza crust and any foods containing wheat, barley or rye.
- People with celiac disease who eat foods containing gluten experience an immune reaction in their small intestines, causing damage to the inner surface of the small intestine and an inability to absorb certain nutrients.
- Celiac disease can cause abdominal pain and diarrhea.
- Eventually, the decreased absorption of nutrients (malabsorption) that occurs with celiac disease can cause vitamin deficiencies that deprive your brain, peripheral nervous system, bones, liver and other organs of vital nourishment.

**Causes**
No definitive cause has been identified but it appears to have a genetic component. It is more common in those with

- Type 1 diabetes
- Autoimmune Diseases
- Thyroid disease
- Down syndrome
- Microscopic colitis
Symptoms
No typical signs and symptoms exist. Common complaints are

- Intermittent diarrhea
- Abdominal pain
- Bloating

Some less obvious symptoms may be

- Irritability or depression
- Anemia
- Stomach upset
- Joint pain
- Muscle cramps
- Skin rash
- Mouth sores
- Dental and bone disorders (such as osteoporosis)
- Tingling in the legs and feet (neuropathy)

Indications of malabsorption of nutrients that may result from celiac disease are:

- Weight loss
- Diarrhea
- Abdominal cramps, gas and bloating
- General weakness and fatigue
- Foul-smelling or grayish stools that may be fatty or oily
- Stunted growth (in children)
- Osteoporosis

Heart Burn

Description

- A burning sensation in your chest, just behind your breastbone, that gets worse when you lie down or bend over.
- Frequent heartburn that interferes with your daily routine may be a symptom of something more serious that requires help from a doctor.

Causes

Stomach acid backing up into your esophagus due to the lower esophageal sphincter — a circular band of muscle around the bottom part of your esophagus — relaxing abnormally which allows stomach acid to flow back up into your esophagus.

Symptoms

A burning sensation in your chest, just behind your breastbone, that gets worse when you lie down or bend over.
Mind-Body Perspective
According to Shapiro, heart burn may be indicative of swallowing down bitter emotions like anger or having aggressive feelings toward someone rise up from within.

Mind-Body Approach
Focus on themes such as soothing, flowing, cooling, releasing anger, opening the heart, forgiveness, acceptance. AfFORMations may include:
  - Why do I allow myself to slow down?
  - Why am I able to allow myself to be soothed on all levels of being?
  - Why am I finding it easier to flow with life?
  - Why am I finding it easier to move toward less anger?
  - Why is it safe to have a soft and open heart?
  - Why am I able to accept people the way they are?

Indigestion/Dyspepsia

Description
A collection of symptoms, including belching, bloating, and nausea that cause discomfort in the upper abdomen.

Causes
- Overeating
- Eating too quickly
- Fatty or greasy foods
- Spicy foods
- Too much caffeine
- Too much alcohol
- Too much chocolate
- Too many carbonated beverages
- Smoking
- Nervousness
- Emotional trauma
- Medications, including antibiotics, aspirin and nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)
- Stomach inflammation (gastritis)
- Pancreas inflammation (pancreatitis)
- Peptic ulcers
- Gallstones
- Stomach cancer

Symptoms
- Fullness after eating very little.
- Fullness lasting longer than it should after a meal.
- Pain in the upper abdomen between the bottom of your breastbone (sternum) and your navel.
• Burning in the upper abdomen between the bottom of the breastbone and navel.
• Nausea.
• Bloating.

**Contraindications**
Inversions after eating (although the client shouldn’t practice yoga too soon after eating anyway), too intense, heating, or competitive of a yoga practice or any asana that produces symptoms of her indigestion.

**Mind-Body Perspective**
According to Shapiro, indigestion may be indicative of swallowing down bitter emotions like anger or having aggressive feelings toward someone rise up from within.

**Mind-Body Approach**
Focus on themes such as soothing, flowing, cooling, releasing anger, opening the heart, forgiveness, acceptance. AfFORMations may include:
- Why do I allow myself to slow down?
- Why am I able to allow myself to be soothed on all levels of being?
- Why am I finding it easier to flow with life?
- Why am I finding it easier to move toward less anger?
- Why is it safe to have a soft and open heart?
- Why am I able to accept people the way they are?

**Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD)**

**Description**
Acid reflux occurs when the valve at the entrance to your stomach fails to close after food passes through it. This allows acid produced by your stomach to move up into your esophagus, causing heartburn. If it happens more than twice a week, it is indicative of GERD.

**Causes (from www.webmd.com)**
- Hiatal Hernia (when the upper part of the stomach and the valve at the entrance move above the level of the diaphragm).
- Eating large meals or lying down right or bending over after a meal
- Being overweight
- Snacking close to bedtime
- Eating certain citrus, tomato, chocolate, mint, garlic, onions, or spicy or fatty foods
- Drinking alcohol, carbonated drinks, coffee, or tea
- Smoking
- Being pregnant
- Taking aspirin, ibuprofen, muscle relaxers, or blood pressure medications
**Symptoms (from www.webmd.com)**
- Heartburn -- a burning pain or discomfort that may move from your stomach to your abdomen or chest, or even up into your throat
- Regurgitation -- a sour or bitter-tasting acid backing up into your throat or mouth
- Bloating
- Bloody or black stools or bloody vomiting
- Burping
- Dysphagia -- a narrowing of your esophagus, which creates the sensation of food being tuck in your throat
- Hiccups that don't let up
- Nausea
- Weight loss for no known reason
- Wheezing, dry cough, hoarseness, or chronic sore throat

**Mind-Body Perspective**
According to Shapiro, indigestion may be indicative of swallowing down bitter emotions like anger or having aggressive feelings toward someone rise up from within.

**Mind-Body Approach**
Focus on themes such as soothing, flowing, cooling, releasing anger, opening the heart, forgiveness, acceptance. AfFORMations may include:
- Why do I allow myself to slow down?
- Why am I able to allow myself to be soothed on all levels of being?
- Why am I finding it easier to flow with life?
- Why am I finding it easier to move toward less anger?
- Why is it safe to have a soft and open heart?
- Why am I able to accept people the way they are?

**Chronic Pancreatitis**

**Description**
The function of the pancreas is to secrete digestive juices that aid in digestion. It also releases hormones to help regulate blood sugar. Normally, the digestive enzymes secreted by the pancreas do not become active until they reach the small intestine. However, in pancreatitis, the enzymes begin to attach the tissues that produced them. This condition can be acute or chronic.

**Causes**
- Gallstones passing through the common bile duct.
- Chronic heavy alcohol use.
- Abdominal trauma.
- Medications.
- Infections.
• Tumors.
• Genetic abnormalities of the pancreas.

**Symptoms**

**Acute Pancreatitis**
- Usually begins with gradual or sudden pain in the upper abdomen that sometimes extends to the back.
- It may start out mild and get worse after eating.
- The pain may become severe and constant and last for several days.
- Other symptoms may include swollen and tender abdomen, nausea, vomiting, fever, and rapid pulse.

**Chronic Pancreatitis**
- May have no pain
- Or may have upper abdominal pain that spreads to the back.
- The pain worsens when eating or drinking and can become constant and disabling.
- Other symptoms may include nausea, vomiting, weight loss, diarrhea, oily stools.

**Mind-Body Connection**
According to Shapiro, trouble with the pancreas may indicate feeling overwhelmed and having difficulty maintaining balance between work and play, giving and receiving, fear and love. Inflammation indicates anger or being fired up about something. Is difficulty finding balance making your client angry?

**Mind-Body Approach**
Focus on themes around ebb and flow, having more than enough stamina and energy to meet the challenges of her life, easy balance between work and play, giving and receiving, and fear and love. AfFORMation questions may include:
- Why am I easily able to meet the challenges of my life?
- Why do I easily balance work and play?
- Why do I enjoy an easy balance between giving and receiving?
- Why do I trust the ebbs and flows of life?
- Why do I easily release anger?

**Crohn’s Disease**
Description (from www.mayoclinic.com)
- An inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) that causes inflammation of the lining of the digestive tract.
- It can lead to abdominal pain, severe diarrhea and even malnutrition.
- The inflammation caused by Crohn’s disease often spreads deep into the layers of affected bowel tissue.
Like ulcerative colitis, another common IBD, Crohn's disease can be both painful and debilitating and sometimes may lead to life-threatening complications. While there's no known medical cure for Crohn's disease, therapies can greatly reduce the signs and symptoms of Crohn's disease and even bring about long-term remission. With these therapies, many people with Crohn's disease are able to function well.

**Causes (from www.mayoclinic.com)**
- Immune Response: One theory is that a virus or bacterium is responsible. “When the immune system tries to fight off the invading microorganism, the digestive tract becomes inflamed. Currently, many investigators believe that some people with the disease develop it because of an abnormal immune response to bacteria that normally live in the intestine.”
- Heredity. Mutations in a gene called NOD2 tend to occur frequently in people with Crohn's disease and seem to be associated with a higher likelihood of needing surgery for the disease. Scientists continue to search for other genetic mutations that might play a role in Crohn's.”

**Risk Factors**
- Being white or an Ashkenazi Jew
- Having a close relative with the disease
- Cigarette smoking
- Living in an urban, industrialized region.
- Using Accutane for acne treatment.
- Use use of NSAIDS, like Ibuprophen, can make it worse.

**Symptoms**
- Range from mild to severe
- May develop gradually or come on suddenly.
- May go into remission at times with no symptoms.

During active times symptoms may include
- Diarrhea.
- Abdominal pain and cramping.
- Blood in your stool.
- Ulcers on the surface of the intestine that eventually become large ulcers that penetrate deep into — and sometimes through — the intestinal walls. Ulcers in the mouth similar to canker sores may also develop.
- Reduced appetite and weight loss.

People with severe Crohn's disease may also experience
- Fever
- Fatigue
- Arthritis
• Eye inflammation
• Skin disorders
• Inflammation of the liver or bile ducts
• Delayed growth or sexual development, in children

Mind-Body Perspective
According to Shapiro difficulties in the large intestine may have to do with “clinging to what has already served its purpose.” Prolonged grief or sadness may be present because the client is holding on. She may have a fear of letting go because of a lack of trust. Ulcers appear when worry, negativity, emotions, or situations begin to eat away at the client leaving her feeling raw and exposed. This creates a deep need to be nurtured and soothed.

Mind-Body Approach
Focus on themes around “releasing what no longer serves you,” recognizing the need to let go, releasing grief and sadness, and trusting that she will always have what she needs. Affirmations may include

Why do I easily release what no longer serves me?
Why is it easy for me to see when I need to let go?
Why do I release my grief and sadness now?
Why do I trust that I always have what I need?
Why do I choose situations and people that help me feel soothed and nurtured?
Why do I deserve to be soothed and nurtured?
Why do I trust that all will turn out exactly as it should?
Why do I feel protected and safe?

Peptic Ulcers
Description
• Occurs when acid in the digestive tract eats away at the inner surface of the esophagus, stomach or small intestine.
• The acid can create a painful open sore that may bleed.
• Your digestive tract is coated with a mucous layer that normally protects against acid.
• If the amount of acid is increased or the amount of mucus is decreased, you could develop an ulcer.

Causes
Ulcers occur when the mucous layer of the stomach and small intestine is disrupted and the lining of the stomach or duodenum becomes inflamed. This may occur due to
• H. pylori bacteria living and multiplying within the mucous layer of the stomach and small intestine.
• Taking NSAIDs like ibuprofen, naproxen, and ketoprofen on an empty stomach.
• Taking osteoporosis medications like actonel and Fosomax.
• Smoking cigarettes.
• Alcohol abuse.
• Any of the above + uncontrolled stress.

**Symptoms**
The most common is intermittent burning pain anywhere from the naval up to your breastbone that is worse on an empty stomach, at night, and which is relieved by acid buffering foods and acid-reducing medication.

Less common symptoms are
• Vomiting blood — which may appear red or black
• Dark blood in stools or stools that are black or tarry
• Nausea or vomiting
• Unexplained weight loss
• Appetite changes

**Mind-Body Connection**
According to Shapiro, ulcers appear when worry, negativity, emotions, or situations begin to eat away at the client leaving her feeling raw and exposed. This creates a deep need to be nurtured and soothed.

**Mind-Body Approach**
Focus on themes around soothing, nurturing, trusting, protection. AfFORMation questions may include:

- Why do I choose situations and people that help me feel soothed and nurtured?
- Why do I deserve to be soothed and nurtured?
- Why do I trust that all will turn out exactly as it should?
- Why do I feel protected and safe?

**Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD)/Ulcerative Colitis**

*Description (from www.mayoclinic.com)*

- An inflammatory bowel disease that causes chronic inflammation of the digestive tract.
- Usually affects only the innermost lining of your large intestine (colon) and rectum.
- It occurs only through continuous stretches of your colon, unlike Crohn's disease, which occurs in patches anywhere in the digestive tract and often spreads deep into the layers of affected tissues.
- Can be debilitating and sometimes can lead to life-threatening complications.
- Has no known cure but can be managed and even brought into long-term remission.
Causes
• Exact cause is unknown
• Stress exacerbates it, but does not cause it
• One theory is that the digestive tract becomes inflamed by the immune system fighting microorganisms there.
• Another thought is that it is caused when the immune system reacts even when there is no pathogen present for it to fight (as in an autoimmune disease).
• Heredity may also play a role.

Risk Factors
• It often affects people in their 30s.
• Caucasian and Jewish people are at greatest risk.
• Having a family member who has it.
• Use of Accutane for acne treatments.
• Use of NSAIDs, like Ibuprophen.

Symptoms (directly from mayoclinic.com)
Symptoms may range from mild to severe to include
• Rectal bleeding and pain.
• An inability to move the bowels despite the urge to do so.
• Bloody diarrhea.
• Abdominal cramps.
• Unintended weight loss.
• Fatigue.
• In extreme form dehydration, shock, colon rupture and toxic megacolon, which occurs when the colon becomes severely distended.

The course of ulcerative colitis varies, with periods of acute illness often alternating with periods of remission. But over time, the severity of the disease usually remains the same. Most people with a milder condition, such as ulcerative proctitis, won't go on to develop more-severe signs and symptoms.

Mind-Body Perspective
According to Shapiro difficulties in the large intestine may have to do with “clinging to what has already served its purpose” leading to prolonged grief or sadness. She may have a fear of letting go because of a lack of trust in what comes next. Issues pertaining to the rectum may have to do with anger, abuse, violation, or sitting on one’s feelings. Ulcers appear when worry, negativity, emotions, or situations begin to eat away at the client leaving her feeling raw and exposed. This creates a deep need to be nurtured and soothed.

Mind-Body Approach
Focus on encouraging your client to release what no longer serves her, recognize the need to let go, release grief, sadness, and worry, acknowledge and voice her feelings, and trust that she will always have what she needs.
AfFORMations may include
Why do I easily release what no longer serves me?
Why is it easy for me to see when I need to let go?
Why do I release my grief and sadness now?
Why do I trust that I always have what I need?
Why do I choose situations and people that help me feel soothed and nurtured?
Why do I easily acknowledge and share my feelings?
Why do I deserve to be soothed and nurtured?
Why do I trust that all will turn out exactly as it should?
Why do I feel protected and safe?

Sample Class for Conditions Associated with Pitta Imbalance
Please note that YTT indicates Yoga Teachers Toolbox and TPM Therapeutic Pose Manual.

During a flare-up, do the practices for either diarrhea or constipation, depending on which symptom is dominant. Between flare-ups incorporate the following into a balanced yoga practice.

- Cat Cow – (YTT 8)
- Wind-Removing Pose (Knee to Chest YTT 31)
- Seated Spinal Twist (YTT 43)
- Twist from Hero Pose (TPM)
- Seated Forward Bend from the edge of a chair with belly supported on bolsters (YTT 69)
- Head to Knee with head on bolster and hand holding sides of chair (YTT 68)
- Downward Facing Dog with head on block (YTT 26)
- Separate Leg Forward Fold with head on block (YTT 72)
- Standing Forward Bend with head on block (YTT 73)
- Triangle Pose (YTT 18)
- Lateral Angle (YTT 17)
- Balancing Half Moon (YTT 77)
- Standing Twist (TPM)
- Twist Seated in a chair (TPM)
- Sage Bharadvaj (YTT 44)
- Marichi’s Pose (YTT 46)
- Reclining Supported Bound Angle (YTT 34B)
- Reclining Supported Hero (TPM or YTT 58)
- Shoulder Stand off chair (TPM)
- Plough with chair support (TPM)
- Supported Supine Boat (TPM)
- Full Bridge (TPM)
- Supported Legs Up the Wall (YTT 86)
- Hasta Mudra 1 (pinkies touching)
- Hasta Mudra 2 (ring fingers touching)
• Interlaced Mudra 1 (Interlaced pinkies)
• Interlaced Midra 2 (Interlaced ring fingers)
• Kanishtha Sharira Mudra (web space of hands on waist)
• Adho Merudanda Mudra (fingers curled into palm, thumbs facing each other)
• Ganesha Mudra – Interlace all fingers in front of the chest. Extend the middle fingers and wrap the index fingers around behind them. Place the thumbs together at the base of the middle fingers.
• Pranayama - Kapalabhati Breath (TPM)
• Pranayama Breath - Bhastrika Breath (TPM)
• Pranayama – Surya Bhedi Breath (TPM)
• Pranayama – Agni Sara (TPM)
• Pranayama – Nauli Kriya (TPM)
• Pranayama - Nadi Shodana
• Pranayama – Ujjayi Breathing
• Pranayama – Viloma Krama Breath
• Supported Savasana (TPM)

**Conditions Associated with Kapha Imbalance**

**Gastroparesis**

**Description**
- Delayed gastric emptying due to the stomach muscles not working to crush and move the food into the small intestine.
- This leads to food fermenting in the stomach, bacterial growth, or food hardening into hard masses that prevent it from passing into the small intestine.

**Causes**
The root cause is the vagus nerve, which innervates the muscles that crush food and move it through the stomach to the small intestine, becoming damaged and nonfunctioning. This may occur due to complications of:
- Diabetes, especially Type 1
- Anorexia nervosa
- Prolonged post-viral syndrome (“a condition after a viral infection of chronic muscle fatigue unrelieved by rest. Other symptoms may include visual and hearing difficulties, low-grade fever, stiff neck, urinary frequency, and insomnia” - [http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/postviral+syndrome](http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/postviral+syndrome))
- Small intestine or stomach surgery.
- Lupus or Scleroderma (autoimmune diseases)
- Neurological conditions like Parkinson’s or abdominal migraine.
- Metabolic disorders like hypothyroidism.
Symptoms
- Heartburn or stomach pain
- Nausea
- Vomiting, especially vomiting pieces of undigested food
- Feeling full after only a few bites of food
- Bloating
- Lack of appetite
- Unintended weight loss
- Unstable blood sugar levels (in people who have diabetes)

Contraindications

Contraindications for gastroparesis are those associated with the root condition responsible for it so will be covered under each condition.

Mind Body Connection
To Shapiro issues with the stomach may indicate a lack of knowing what is good for us or difficulty receiving from others or giving to ourselves. In addition we may harbor worry in the stomach so that we have a “hard time stomaching” what is happening to us.

Mind Body Approach
Use themes around inner wisdom, attracting that which contributes her highest good, receiving her good with ease, receiving from others with ease, giving to herself, accepting what is, surrender.

Questions to have your client ask herself in AfFORMation form.
- Why can I trust my own inner wisdom to make the best choices for myself?
- Why do I attract that which is for my highest good?
- Why do I easily receive from others?
- Why do I generously give to myself?
- Why do I so easily accept what is?
- Why do I find it so easy to surrender?

Physiological Approach
- Pranayama that strengthens and moves the stomach muscles.
- Back bends

Chakra Approach
Balance 3. Assess all for the full picture.

Meridian Approach
- Liver, Stomach
- Triple Warmer, Bladder, and Kidney (for Diabetes)
- Spleen (if vomiting or indigestion)
Sample Class for Conditions Associated with Pitta Imbalance
Please note that YTT indicates Yoga Teachers Toolbox and TPM Therapeutic Pose Manual.

- Basically all Poses for Kapha in the YTT done is vinyasa style and focusing on core strengthening and upward movement of energy.
- Boat to Kayak (TPM)
- Hasta Mudra #2 – Tips of ring fingers touching.
- Hasta Mudra #3 – Tips of middle fingers touching.
- Hasta Mudra #4 – Tips of index fingers touching.
- Hasta Mudra #5 – Tips of thumbs touching.
- Hasta Mudra #6 – Tips of all fingers touching.
- Adhi Mudra – Curl fingers around thumbs with palms down.
- Merudanda Mudra – Fingers curled into the palm with thumbs up.
- Pranayama - Kapalabhati Breath (TPM)
- Pranayama Breath - Bhashrika Breath (TPM)
- Pranayama – Surya Bhedi Breath (TPM)
- Pranayama – Agni Sara (TPM)
- Pranayama – Nauli Kriya (TPM)
- Pranayama - Nadi Shodana
- Pranayama – Ujjayi Breathing
- Pranayama – Viloma Krama Breath
- Supported Savasana (TPM)

Conditions Associated with Weak Agni (Digestive Fire)
Irritable Bowel Syndrome

Description
- A large intestine (colon) disorder that causes cramping, abdominal pain, bloating gas, diarrhea and constipation.
- Causes no permanent damage to the colon.
- Symptoms improve with dietary and lifestyle changes and better management of stress.
- Sometimes the muscles in the intestines that contract and relax to move food through the intestinal tract may be stronger and last longer than normal.
- This forces food through the intestines too quickly which causes gas bloating and diarrhea.
- At other times the opposite occurs, and food passage slows.
- This causes the stool to become hard and dry leading to constipation.
- Having the condition can make it hard to socialize (especially when you don’t know if there is a bathroom nearby), can cause many missed work days, and impact one’s sex life.
Causes
The exact cause is unknown but abnormalities in the nervous system or colon may play a role. Some people have triggers that increase symptoms, which may include:

- Gas
- Pressure on the intestines
- Foods like chocolate, milk alcohol, carbonated beverages, some fruits and vegetables.
- Emotions
- Stress
- Hormonal changes around the menstrual cycles
- An acute episode of infectious diarrhea.

Risk factors
- Being under 35 – most people who get it are young.
- Being female makes one 2x more likely to get it.
- Having a close family member with the condition makes one more likely to get it.

Symptoms
- Abdominal pain or cramping
- A bloated feeling
- Gas (flatulence)
- Alternating bouts of constipation and diarrhea
- Mucus in the stool

Contraindications
No one is supposed to practice yoga for at least two hours after eating, but this is crucial for the person with IBS. Physical activity too soon after eating can cause diarrhea.

Mind-Body Connection
According to Shapiro, IBS is connected to maintaining power and boundaries and with letting go of control. The person with IBS may experience fear, lack of confidence, or nervousness when confronting unknown situations or may be having difficulty in a relationship.

Mind-Body Approach
Focus on themes around courage, confidence, empowerment, healthy boundaries, and surrender. AfFORMation questions may include:

- Why do I face new situations with courage and confidence?
- Why am I so powerful?
- Why am I clear about my boundaries?
- Why do I respect and stand up for my own boundaries?
- Why do I so easily surrender to what is?
**Chakra Approach**
Balance 1 and 3. Assess all for the full picture.

**Ayurvedic Approach**
Unlike some of the other conditions, irritable bowel syndrome is not tied definitively to one dosha imbalance. Rather it is caused by a weakened Jathara agni (digestive fire) found in the small intestine which breaks down the food into smaller molecules to be digested easily. This weakness leads to indigestion, malabsorption, and the build up of ama (toxins). This affects all the doshas and their role in digestion. “Aggravation of doshas leads to deranged digestive fires.” Addressing IBS Ayurvedically then involves strengthening the digestive fire through dietary changes, pranayama, and asana. (From [http://contentdig.com/health/alternative-medicine/irritable-bowel-syndrome-ayurveda-treatment.html](http://contentdig.com/health/alternative-medicine/irritable-bowel-syndrome-ayurveda-treatment.html)).

**Physiological Approach**
Strengthen and tone Semana Vayu (solar plexus, 3rd chakra) through focused pranayama, twists, forward folds, and prone back bends. Samana Vayu unites upward flowing energy (pranavayu) and downward-flowing energy (apanavayu) at the navel center “to awaken and enhance the prana of transformation… Semana Vayu is a concentrating, absorbing, and consolidating force. Its main function is assimilation of prana in all its forms—like a power station, samana collects energy absorbed through breath, food, sensory perception, and mental experiences and processes it to empower all aspects of life. (Sandra Anderson, [http://www.himalayaninstitute.org/yogaplus/article.aspx?id=3654](http://www.himalayaninstitute.org/yogaplus/article.aspx?id=3654)).

**Chakra Approach**
Balance 1 and 3. Assess all chakras for the full picture.

**Meridian Approach**
Large intestine, Stomach, Spleen, Bladder, Kidney, Triple Warmer.

**Sample Class for IBS and Increasing Agni**
*(YTT = Yoga Teachers Toolbox; TPM = Therapeutic Pose Manual)*

During a flare-up, do the practices for either diarrhea or constipation, depending on which symptom is dominant. Between flare-ups incorporate the following into a balanced yoga practice.

- Table/Cat (YTT23)
- Sunbird (YTT 24)
- Plank (YTT 25)
- Downward Dog (YTT 26)
- Chair Pose (YTT 27)
- Rotated Lateral Angle (20)
- Seated Boat (YTT 29)
• Supine Plank (YTT 30)
• Reclining Supported Bound Angle (YTT 34 with cross bolsters behind back)
• Reclining Hero (TPM)
• Seated Spinal Twist (43)
• Sage Bharadvaj (YTT 44)
• Marichi Twist (YTT 46)
• Reclining Abdominal Twist (TPM)
• Functional Abdominal Strengtheners (TPM)
• Cobra (YTT 51)
• Prone Boat (YTT 53)
• Bow (YTT 54)
• Seated Forward fold with bolster support on belly (YTT 69)
• Hasta Mudra 3 (middle fingers touching)
• Interlaced Mudra 3 (middle fingers interlaced)
• Merudanda Mudra (fingers curled into palms and thumbs up)
• Shivalingam Mudra (right fingers curled into palm sitting on top of cupped left hand – integrates prana, udana, and seman vayus).
• Pranayama - Kapalabhati Breath (TPM)
• Pranayama Breath - Bhastrika Breath (TPM)
• Pranayama – Surya Bhedi Breath (TPM)
• Pranayama – Agni Sara (TPM)
• Pranayama – Nauli Kriya (TPM)
• Pranayama - Nadi Shodana
• Pranayama – Ujayi Breathing
• Pranayama – Viloma Krama Breath
• Supported Savasana (TPM)

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