

## Concept of vegAs - some points

The natural urges of the body and mind are an extremely important aspect of the living body and crucially determine the health or diseased state of the individual as the case may be. This facet of health has been unfortunately undermined in the present day where the body and mind are largely taken for granted.

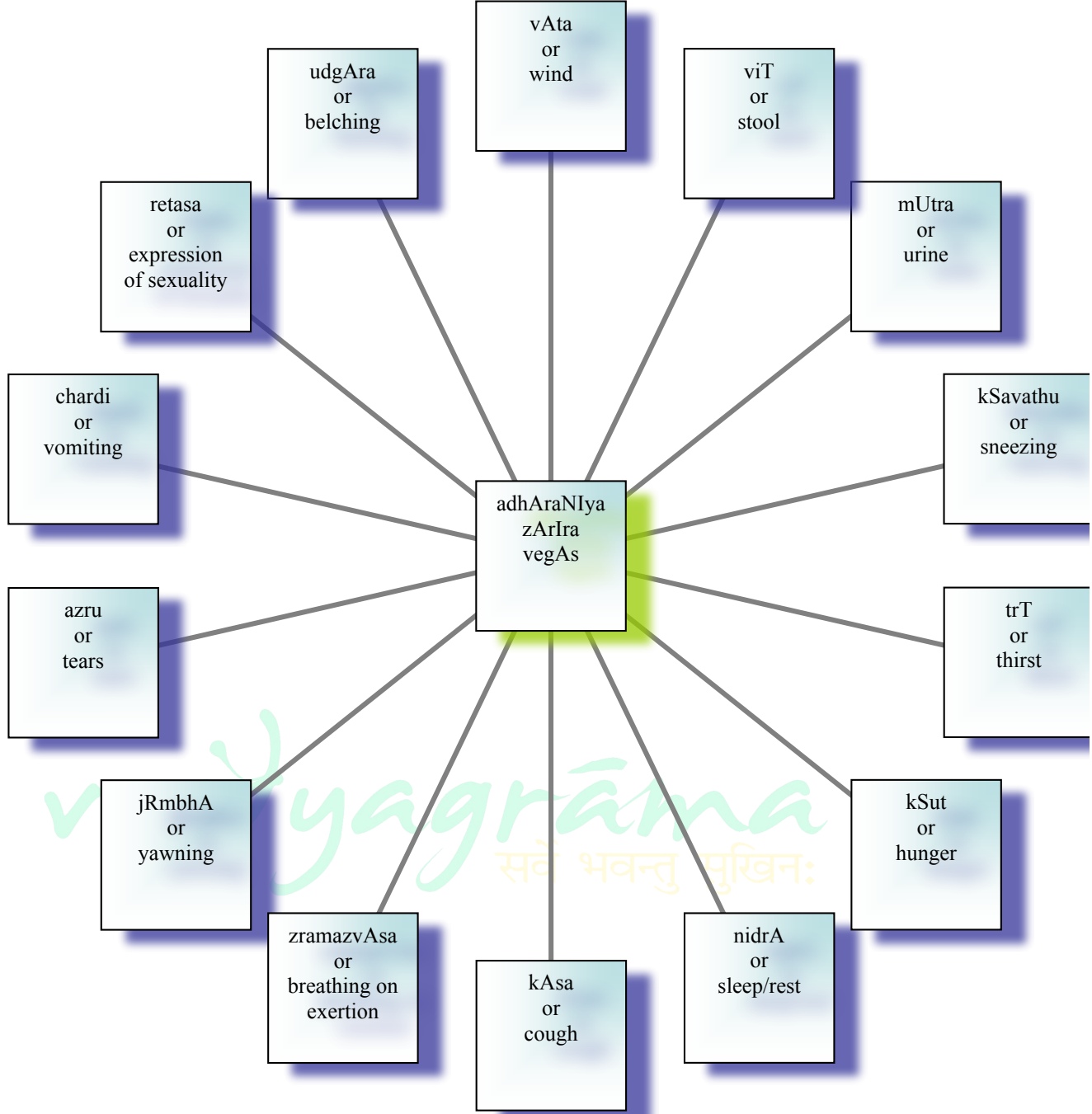
These urges are warning signs given by the body periodically indicating the need to let out some particles to maintain the balance within. If they are ignored, then these unwanted particles can cause havoc and hence it is extremely important that one gives sufficient and immediate attention to these warning signs as and when they arise. At the mental or emotional level however there is a slight difference. Here the vegAs are an indication of a pro-active or indolent state of mind as the case may be - both these states are certainly not healthy over a period of time and excessive attention paid to these vegAs can only result in stress and consequent disease in due course. Hence one needs to gain control over the mental urges and the senses by engaging in practices specifically meant to enable the same - meditation and yoga are two such practices. Thus the vegAs are described to be playing a very important role in protecting the health - any suppression or over exertion of these urges over a period of time tell upon the health of the individual. With this introduction, let us go over and see what these vegAs are.

The physical vegAs are

वेगान्न धारयेद्वातविण्मूत्रक्षवतृटक्षुधाम् ।  
निद्राकासश्रमश्वासजृम्भाश्रुच्छर्दिरेतसाम् ॥

A.H.Su.4/1

The urges of flatus, faeces, urine, sneezing, thirst, hunger, sleep, cough, breathing on exertion, yawning, tears, vomiting, and expression of sexuality are the fourteen urges of the body and should not be unnaturally suppressed (or forcefully expressed).



इमांस्तु धारयेद्वेगान् हितार्थी प्रेत्य चेह च ।  
साहसानामशस्तानां मनोवाक्कायकर्मणाम् ॥

Ch.Su.7/26

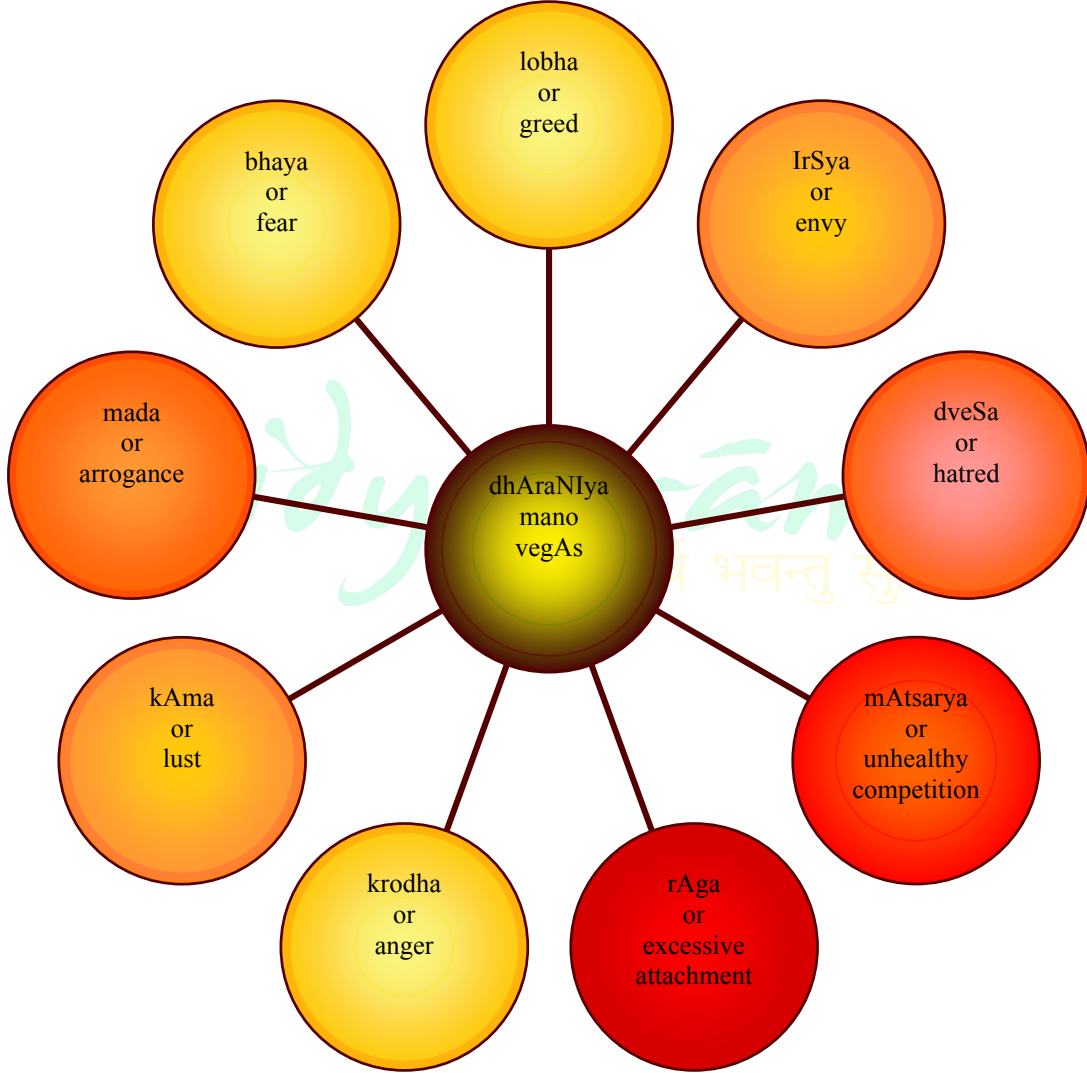
One desirous of wellbeing here and hereafter should restrain the unwanted urges relating to thought, word and deed.

The mental vegAs are

धारयेत्तु सदा वेगान् हितैषी प्रेत्य चेह च ।  
लोभेर्ष्याद्वेषमात्सर्यरागादीनां जितेन्द्रियः ॥

A.H.Su.4/1

The urges of greed (lobha), envy (IrSya), hatred (dveSa), unhealthy competition (mAtsarya), excessive attachment (rAga), anger (krodha), lust (kAma), arrogance (mada) and fear (bhaya) are the urges of the mind. He who is desirous of happiness both in this world and the other, should control these urges and thus gain control over one's sense organs.



परुषस्यातिमात्रस्य सूचकस्यानृतस्य च ।

वाक्यस्याकालयुक्तस्य धारयेद्वेगमुत्थिम् ॥

Ch.Su.7/28

One should check the impending urge of speech which is harsh, betraying, false and untimely used.

देहप्रवृत्तिर्या काचिद्विद्यते परपीडया ।

स्त्रीभोगस्तेयहिंसाद्या तस्या वेगान्विधारयेत् ॥

Ch.Su.7/29

Whatever bodily action causes pain to others like adultery, theft and violence should be checked in its impending stage.

Thus on one hand, we have the physical urges which are neither to be unnaturally suppressed nor forcefully expressed and on the other, we have mental or emotional urges which are to be restrained in order to gain control over one's sense organs. Please do remember that it is not the forceful suppression of the mental urges that is being advocated here - it is the practice of exercising restraint that is being emphasized here so that over a period of time, one is able to gain control over these mental urges. Unnatural suppression only leads to deep rooted scars which only increase these emotions over a period of time. It is the practice of such methods as what aSTAGGa yoga mentions (like yama, niyama, Asana, prANAYama and pratyAhAra) that enables one to develop the qualities of patience, tolerance, forbearance, and detachment through the years.

Now let us look at some of the bad effects of ignoring two important natural physical urges namely that of micturition and defecation. All too often, most of us tend to suppress these two very important urges either due to being engrossed in our work or due to embarrassment while in the midst of a meeting. Suppression of the urge to urinate over a period of time can lead to pain in the urinary bladder and passage, difficulty in urination, headache, and stiffness of the groins. Suppression of the urge of defecation causes colic pain, headache, cramps in the calf muscles

and flatulence. As can be seen from the above symptoms, headaches are a common symptom of the suppression of these urges; thus it may now not be a surprise to most of you when people complain of severe headaches which do not have any apparent cause. Hence it is very important that we train our children from a very young age about the importance of timely micturition and defecation. In fact, they should be trained to empty their bowels as soon as they wake up in the morning - if this becomes a practice at a very early age, then many health problems can be easily averted.

The effects of the continued suppression of the different natural urges are -

Flatus	abdominal tumor, disturbed upward movement of gas and pain in the abdomen, obstruction to the movement of flatus, urine, faeces, loss (decrease) of vision, cataract, loss of appetite and heart diseases
Bowel movement	twisting pain in the calf muscles, running nose, headache, upward movement of air, cutting pain in the rectum, oppression in the region of the heart, and all other symptoms of flatus suppression
Urine	splitting pain all over the body, urinary stones, pain while passing urine, pain in the lower abdomen and urinary bladder, & groins and all the above symptoms of flatus and faeces suppression
Belching	loss of appetite, tremors, heaviness in the heart and chest, cough and hiccough
Sneezing	headache, weakness in the functioning of the five sense organs, stiffness of neck and facial paralysis

Thirst	weakness and emaciation of body, general debility, deafness, giddiness and heart diseases
Hunger	pain all over the body, loss of appetite, exhaustion, emaciation, pain in the abdomen and giddiness
Sleep	fainting, heaviness of head and eyes, general weakness, yawning and body ache
Cough	increase in cough, breathing difficulty, loss of appetite, heart diseases, emaciation and hiccough
Heavy breathing after exertion	abdominal tumor, diseases of heart and delusion
Yawning	headache, inability and weakness to use all five sense organs, stiffness of neck and facial paralysis
Tears	running nose, pain in the eyes, headache, heart pain, stiffness of neck, loss of appetite, giddiness, abdominal tumors
Vomiting	skin diseases, herpes, rashes, eye diseases, anemia, fever with cough, breathlessness, nausea, chest discomfort, black discoloration of the face
Sexual urge	increased flow, pain and swelling of genital organs, fever, heart pain, body pain, impotence