

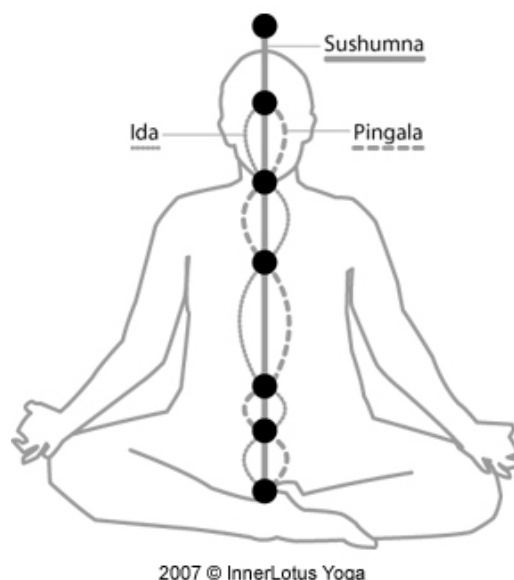
Nadis

Nadis are energy channels that enable prana to flow around the body. This concept is also seen in Chinese medicine where the energy channels are called meridians, linking different parts of the body together. If one area has blocked energy it can directly affect other parts of the body. Therefore, unblocking the nadis or energy channels is a truly holistic path to follow towards wellbeing. Nadis can be compared to the tiny blood vessels that carry blood around the body, instead though the Nadi channels are not visible and they carry prana, energy.

The Hatha Yoga Pradipika (HYP) describes a nadi as 'a flow of energy' (P58), it goes on to talk about how impurities can block the nadis, which decreases the circulation of energy.

Impurities could be physical and mental trauma as causes of blocked energy; however, they are also very likely to be everyday issues of 'sensuous living and desires'. I am guessing here that they refer to rich food and drink, stress in the body and mind by striving for worldly desires, not enough exercise, the desire to have a new watch/job/car...whatever it is these attitudes will eventually deplete energy as they go against our true nature.

The three most prominent nadis are called ida, pingala and sushumna (see diagram). Ida represents the female intuitive energy and the moon and pingala the masculine, action orientated sun energy. Each of these energy flow channels operate different hemispheres of the brain, ida the right and pingala the left and these two nadis crisscross at the chakras (energy wheels or centres) up the body. Sushumna is the central channel that enables prana to travel directly up the spine.



'Normally prana cannot reach sushumna but only flows through the ida (ha) and pingala (tha) nadis. When it is possible for the prana to enter the sushumna nadi, the prana of ha and tha unite, which is why we call the process of getting there, hatha yoga.' (Heart of Yoga by Desikachar)

This is at the heart of our yoga practice, allowing energy to flow freely, balancing the whole of our system and keeping us healthy.

Sushumna	Ida	Pingala
androgynous	feminine	masculine
sunrise/sunset	night	day
tao	yin	yang
kundalini shakti	chitta shakti	prana shakti
supramental	mental	vital
neutral	negative	positive
cosmic light	moon	sun
temperature	cold	hot
wisdom	intuition	logic
knowledge	desire	action
unconscious mind	subconscious mind	conscious mind
centred	internal	external
balanced	passive	active
awareness	subjective	objective
central nervous system	parasympathetic nervous system	sympathetic nervous system
Saraswati	Ganga	Yamuna
yellow	blue	red
Rudra (in dormancy)	Brahma	Vishnu
tamas	sattwa	Rajas
sattwa (after awakening)	tamas	rajas
'M'	'U'	'A'
nada	bindu	beeja
pratyaya	shabda	artha

The table above is from the HYP and sums up all the properties of the nadis perfectly.