

# ARTICLE: Your Subtle Energy System

By Dr. Susan Shumsky

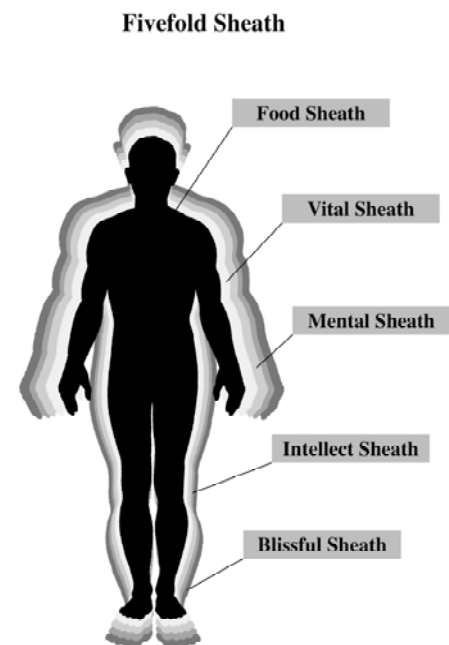
(920 words)

You are a multidimensional being of light, living in a multidimensional universe. Although this statement sounds fantastic, it entirely concurs with the latest findings of modern physics—this universe and all that abides therein consists of vibration and light in multiple dimensions.

Similarly, your own body is made of light and sound. And this physical shell is not the only form you inhabit. In fact, your body is multilayered and multidimensional. According to yogis of ancient India, several sheaths (called "koshas" in Sanskrit language) surround and permeate your body. These sheaths are invisible to ordinary human sight but visible to clairvoyant sight. These radiant, brilliant, multicolored sheaths of pure crystalline light make up your "aura" or "auric field."

Your fivefold sheath consists of:

1. Your *annamaya kosha* (physical body or food sheath), so-named because it is a product of food, requires food, dies without food, and, after death, becomes food for plants and animals.
2. Your *pranamaya kosha* (vital sheath), through which your vital life energy ("prana") flows.
3. Your *manomaya kosha* (mental sheath), a mental body that stores your thought-forms, habits, conditioning, beliefs, and experiences.
4. Your *vijnanamaya kosha* (intellect sheath), which consists of higher mind, your intellect, as well as your ego, or sense of I-ness.
5. Your *anandamaya kosha* (blissful sheath), a mere reflection of the true radiance of your real "atman" (higher self).



Each subsequent sheath is larger than and permeates the former sheaths. In addition to these five sheaths, you also have three higher bodies of immeasurable beauty, bliss, truth, and glory: your "'I AM' body," your "God body," and your "Absolute body."

The fundamental component of your being is consciousness, and the life force called "prana" is the medium through which consciousness expresses in this universe and in your individual life. The life energy in prana flows through your subtle bodies, sustaining all levels of your being. Without prana, you would cease to live.

Pranic energy flows through your pranic sheath (pranamaya kosha) in fixed pathways called "nadis" (conduits or channels). In your pranic body are hundreds of centers of concentrated vital energy where many nadis intersect, called "chakras" (literally "wheels"). However, the nadis and chakras are by no means physical. If you dissected a corpse, you would detect no nadi or chakra anywhere.

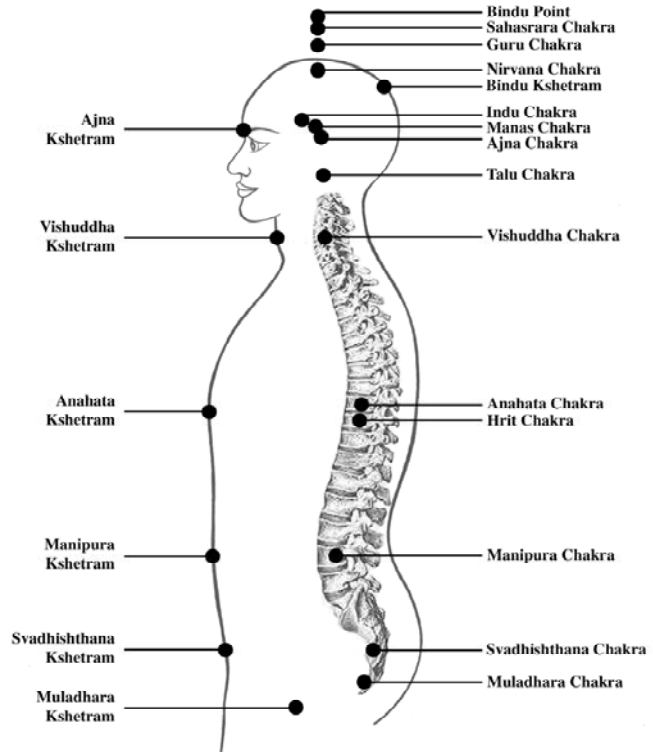
The three most important nadis through which prana flows are "sushumna," "ida," and "pingala." Sushumna is the median channel reaching from the base of your spine, near the tailbone, all the way up to the top of your skull. Ida and pingala coil around this central canal. These two nadis govern your sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. Sushumna nadi is the conduit of "kundalini," often called "serpent power" or "mystic coil"-- a special spiritual cosmic pranic energy that remains dormant until it is awakened, usually through spiritual practices.

The term "kundalini" derives from the Sanskrit root "kundal" (curled up), because, in ordinary humans, it remains dormant, coiled at the base of your spine. As kundalini wakes up and rises up your spine, it opens specific chakras while traveling to its destination at the top of your skull. Opening your chakras brings greater health, well being, energy, and, ultimately, spiritual enlightenment.

The fourteen main chakras through which kundalini energy flows are as follows:

1. Muladhara, the root chakra located at the base of your spine near the tailbone, is responsible for excretion, sense of smell, and earth element.
2. Svadhishtana, the sacral chakra in the coccyx region, governs sexuality, procreation, sense of taste, and water element.
3. Manipura, the navel chakra in the lumbar region, oversees digestion, sense of sight, and fire element.
4. Anahata, the heart chakra in the thoracic region, is the seat of consciousness and your soul. It is the gateway to higher consciousness. This chakra manages the sense of touch and air element.

5. Hrit chakra, right below the anahata chakra, is the seat of devotion to God and fulfillment of all desires.
6. Vishuddha, the throat chakra in the cervical region, deals with sense of hearing, and ether element, and creative expression.
7. Talu, the nectar chakra in medulla oblongata, is related to the uvula, the current of pranic energy, and the flow of "soma" (nectar of immortality).
8. Ajna, the third eye chakra, in the pineal gland, seat of the self (atman), is responsible for higher wisdom and clairvoyant sight.
9. Manas chakra, in the upper part of ajna chakra, is the center of your lower mental vehicle: instincts, impressions, and habits.
10. Indu chakra, in the front part of the brain, is the seat of your intellect and higher mind.
11. Nirvana chakra, at the top of your brain, is associated with the annihilation of your ego.
12. Guru chakra, above your head in the lower part of sahasrara chakra, is the center in which divine light dispels the darkness of ignorance.
13. Sahasrara chakra, the thousand-petaled lotus above your head, is the center of divine union, integration, and illumination.
14. The Bindu point, in the upper sahasrara chakra, is a center of infinitely concentrated energy, the fountainhead from which your entire subtle energy system springs.



**Location of Chakra Points and Kshetram**

© Dr. Susan Shumsky. Dr. Susan Shumsky has been a spiritual teacher for more than 45 years. She has 10 books in print. Her latest book is *The Power of Chakras* published by New Page. ISBN: 978-1-60163-290-6 List Price: US \$16.99. Her website is [www.drSusan.org](http://www.drSusan.org).