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*Traditional*

## HEALTHCARE

### for Building Healthy Consumers



#### INTERVIEW



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**RESEARCH FEATURE**  
What Makes Ayurveda  
What It Is?

**OUT OF THE BOX**  
Journey of Ayurveda  
with COVID-19

**PLUS**

**ROUND UP • MY MARKET • THE PRESCRIPTION**



# NATIONAL ACCREDITATION BOARD FOR TESTING AND CALIBRATION LABORATORIES



Traditional medicine is the sum total of the knowledge, skill, and practices based on the theories, beliefs, and experiences indigenous to different cultures, whether explicable or not, used in the maintenance of health as well as in the prevention, diagnosis, improvement or treatment of physical and mental illness.

**Composition, quality and efficacy of the components used in traditional medicine are crucial for its effectiveness and safety in use.**

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# VIEWPOINT



MESSAGE FROM PUBLISHER & EDITOR

## Traditional Medicine is the Key to Universal Healthcare



**INDIA HAS ALWAYS** been home to varied traditional healthcare practices with strong historical and cultural roots. Our indigenous medicinal systems have been carefully developed and nurtured through centuries of observation and experience. Both the preventive and curative approaches have an overarching aim of treating diseases, restoring good health and preserving life. They are based on medicinal plants and other natural remedies that tackle the root cause of an ailment while also delivering physical, psychological, philosophical and spiritual well-being.

In fact, Ayurveda is considered the oldest system of medicine in the world. It is based on the cardinal principle of maintaining a balance between the mind, body and spirit. This is not just about taking treatment from an Ayurvedic doctor – it encompasses all our age-old *dadi maa ke nuske*, traditional practices and dietary customs as well. Similarly, the practice of Ayurveda is not only limited to medicines and treatments using leaves, flowers and other herbs. It actually takes a more dynamic and comprehensive approach in the form of health-oriented habits that serve as a foundation for a happy, wholesome and disease-free life.

Alas, we have gradually gravitated to relying more on modern medicine to cure our ailments and maintain our health. However, it should be noted that 60% to 70% of Indians are still confined to rural areas and a significant percentage of them lack access to even primary healthcare. In this scenario, traditional medicine practitioners can serve as the last mile contact, especially in the remote areas. Going a step further, why not consider educating the rural folks on easy health and wellness remedies that they can actually find in their kitchens itself?

This kind of a holistic approach to therapeutic and prophylactic health is what will enable India to truly achieve universal health coverage, that too without relying on the constraining crutches of chemical drug preparations!

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THE POWER OF

**AYURVEDA**

FOR YOUR FAMILY'S HEALTH



EFFECTIVE  
RELIEF FROM  
CONSTIPATION



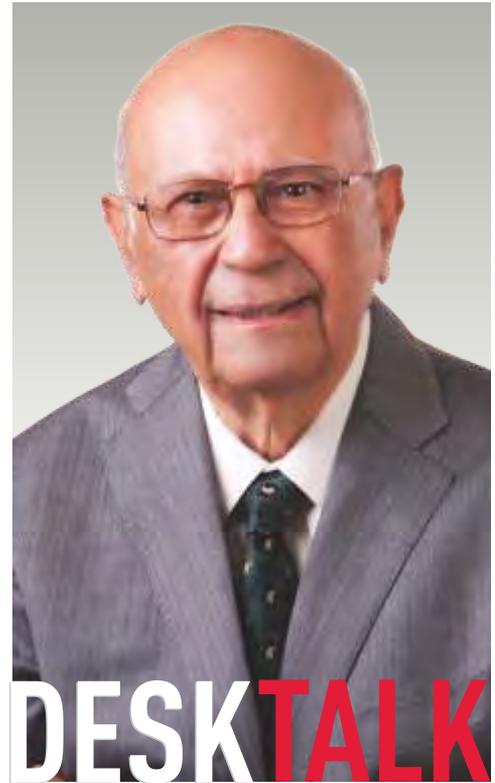
ENERGY  
AND IMMUNITY  
SUPPLEMENT



APPETITE AND  
IMMUNITY STIMULANT  
FOR CHILDREN

# PRAFULL D. SHETH

Editorial Board Member



## INTEGRATING TRADITIONAL HEALTHCARE INTO MODERN MEDICINE DESK TALK

**INDIA IS DEFINED** by pluralistic health traditions since the days of yore. Every little village had its own set of medicinal practices that are rooted in physiological compatibility. Folk healers have abounded in every nook and corner of the country who collect varied *jadi bootis* to formulate *ushadis* that have an astonishing effect on the patient's health. With the passage of time and shift to allopathic medicines, these practices have mostly been consigned to blind faith with many of the 'educated urban' society dismissing them as quacks propagating superstitious beliefs.



Well, you will be surprised to know that Ayurveda – our oldest and most popular form of traditional healthcare – is actually a comprehensive and scientific medicinal system with a well-defined conceptual framework that has remained consistent throughout the ages. Yet, it is not limited to medicine, cure or therapy alone; this opens the doors to a composite approach to life and living!

The other indigenous healing practices have also proved to be holistic even as they succeed in providing basic healthcare to the populace. In general, they present gentle and secure alternatives for attaining health and wellness all through life.

So, why do we still consider traditional medicine as a last-ditch attempt and hesitate to adopt it in a more wholesome manner? What is keeping alternative medicine from becoming a more integral part of

modern healthcare?

In 2013, the World Health Organisation launched the 'WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2014-2023' for integrating traditional and complementary medicine to promote universal healthcare as well as to ensure the quality, safety and effectiveness of such medicines.

India is on the right path, but we still need more concerted and combined efforts from the government and public to promote the traditional healthcare activities. Integrating them into clinical practice is what will fill the yawning gaps in primary healthcare and provide quality healthcare to all! ▶



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### RESEARCH FEATURE

WHAT MAKES AYURVEDA WHAT IT IS?



Ayurveda originated as a Vedic science. It is not just a way of treatment, but a science and a philosophy of life. Therefore, it is universal and can yield immense benefits to mankind.



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### HORIZON

REGULATION FOR QUALITY, SAFETY AND RELIABILITY IN AYURVEDA



The main hindrance for Ayurvedic formulations is the lack of regulation in the sector. We need a central body to check the quality of new Ayurvedic products before they are launched in the market.



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### INTERVIEW



**PROF. K. N. DWIVEDI**  
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BHU, VARANASI



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### MY MARKET

THE WAY FORWARD FOR THE AYURVEDIC DRUG MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY



Ayurvedic drugs are giving the allopathic medicine market a run for its money. However, this competitive alternative faces certain inherent limitations that can destabilise the sector in the years to come.



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### OUT OF THE BOX

JOURNEY OF AYURVEDA WITH COVID-19



The time proven formula of Ayurveda has managed to stand the test of time since centuries.



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### IN FOCUS

**RASAYANA CHIKISTA FOR REJUVENATING THE BODY**

Rasayana is one of the eight branches of Ayurveda.

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL  
HON'BLE CABINET MINISTER, MINISTRY OF AYUSH & MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS  
The AYUSH system of medicine is playing a big role globally and the Ministry under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken a lot of initiatives to promote and also develop the strength of the AYUSH system of medicine globally.



# ROUNDUP



Former Kenyan PM Raila Odinga at Sreedhareeyam Ayurvedic Eyecare Hospital for follow-up treatment and to thank the team

## Daughter of Former Kenyan PM Regains Eyesight with Ayurvedic Treatment

### DATA BRIEFING

It is estimated that there are over

**7 Lac**

registered practicing vaidyas in India (with BAMS or MD Ayurveda qualification).

**FOR MOST OF** us, it would take a huge leap of faith and an extensive stretch of the imagination to believe that our age-old Ayurveda can actually restore someone's vision! The seemingly implausible has become a headline reality with Rosemary Odinga, daughter of former Kenyan Prime Minister, Raila Odinga regaining her eyesight at Sreedhareeyam Ayurvedic Eyecare Hospital & Research Centre in Koothattukulam, Kerala.

The Odingas arrived in India in 2019 after she had endured the ordeal of failed surgeries in Africa and other parts of the world. She had suffered secondary optic atrophy due to a brain tumour in 2017 which left her with almost nil vision.

Within four months of undergoing various traditional ayurvedic procedures at Sreedhareeyam, her eyesight had improved a great deal. Rosemary exclaims now, "After two years of treatment, I am able to even read messages on the phone!"

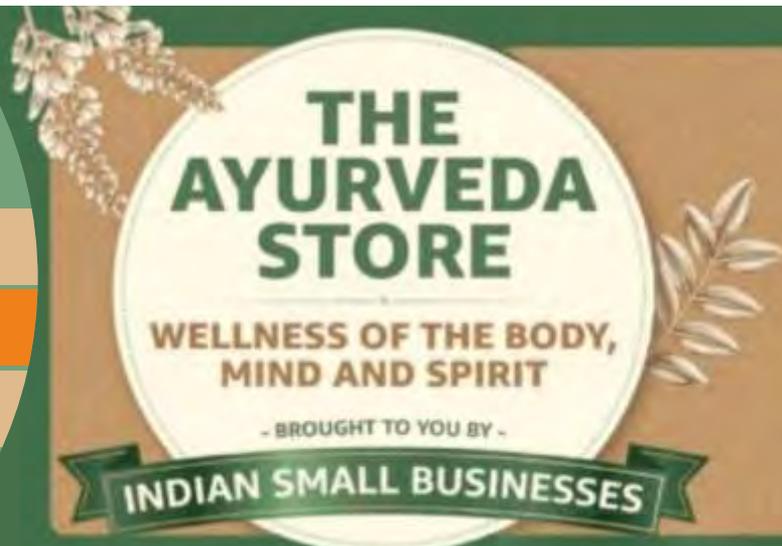
The happy and relieved father was all praise for the medical services received at the state-of-the-art ayurvedic centre. He announced that if elected as the next President, he will make it a priority to set up a facility on the lines of Sreedhareeyam in Kenya's capital, Nairobi.

He also urged PM Modi to help spread ayurvedic eye care across the world! The Prime Minister recently remarked that the former Kenyan Prime Minister wants take the knowledge and science of Ayurveda to his country. The type of plants that are used in Ayurveda will be cultivated by them and he will do his best to get more people to benefit from it!

"Ayurveda is not just a pack of few ready-made procedures. Ayurvedic treatments vary from person to person, depending on what medicines to use, when and how," Narayanan Namboodiri, Chief Physician who treated Rosemary Odinga. ▶

amazon

**LAUNCHES  
A DEDICATED  
STOREFRONT FOR  
AYURVEDA PRODUCTS**



**With enhanced visibility and direct access on Amazon, Ayurveda products are now just a click away!**

AMAZON INDIA NOW has a dedicated storefront for Ayurveda products on its marketplace – [www.amazon.in](http://www.amazon.in). Launched by the Union Minister of Ayush, SarbanandaSonowal in February 2022 through video conferencing, the storefront will exclusively showcase products from emerging Indian brands.

It features unique Ayurvedic products like juices, skincare supplements, immunity boosters, oils and more. These have been organised by focus areas and health benefits - pain management, immunity boosters, blood purifiers, women's health, weight management, mental wellness etc. – so as to make the selection easier for consumers trying out Ayurveda products for the first

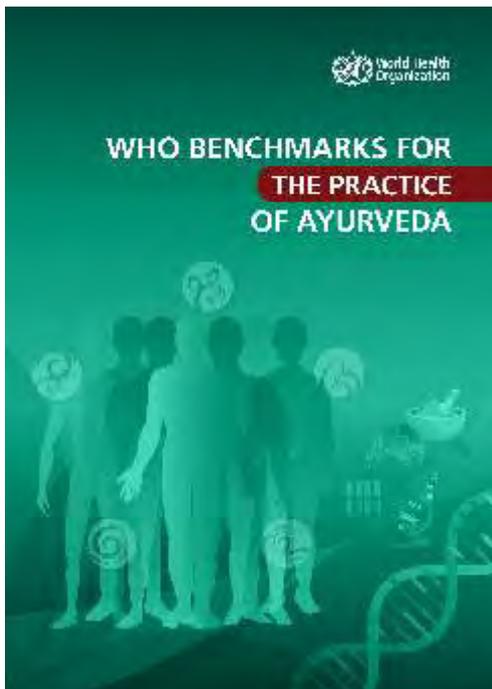
time. The sellers also detail the various herbs and ingredients used in their products along with the specific health benefits which empowers shoppers to make an informed choice.

Speaking at the launch, the Honourable Minister said, "Ayush is the most traditional approach of healing and is part of our rich heritage. Ayush can play a foundational role in maintaining a healthy and disease-free lifestyle, it is more relevant than ever in the ongoing times.

Manish Tiwary, Country Manager, India Consumer Business, Amazon India remarked, "Ayurveda has always been a part of the Indian way of life and we are happy to launch this dedicated storefront. It will not only

showcase a large selection of Ayurveda products from sellers across the country, but also help spread awareness about a healthier lifestyle. The Government of India is putting a special focus on creating awareness about Ayurveda and this storefront is a part of our efforts to contribute to this vision and make Ayurvedic products more accessible to customers."

It is a fact that more and more Indians are falling back on Ayurveda and its natural wellness products amidst the ongoing pandemic in the pursuit of healthy living. The e-commerce giant claimed that there has been a marked increase in demand for Ayurveda products by nearly 3 times in the last two years on Amazon.in. ▶



# WHO Benchmarks for the Practice of AYURVEDA

*Document on general and minimum technical requirements for quality assurance and regulation of Ayurveda practice has just been released by the WHO*

**THE WORLD HEALTH** Organisation (WHO) is always cognisant of the role of traditional medicine in strengthening primary health care. Accordingly, it keeps striving to explore new ways to integrate safe and evidence-based traditional and complementary medicine services within national or sub-national health systems.

As part of its functions, the WHO aims to provide policy and technical guidance on traditional and complementary medicine to Member States while also promoting their safe and effective use through appropriate regulation of products, practices and practitioners. Consequently, it has released a series of benchmarks, covering various systems and interventions, that serve as a reference point for evaluating the actual practice and practitioners of these systems of medicine.

Ayurveda was officially recognised by the WHO way back in 1976. But it was only in 2010 that it published the Benchmarks for Training in Ayurveda comprising of appropriate training programmes for Ayurvedic practitioners as compiled by professional experts and health regulators. However, a standardised protocol to ensure the safety, quality and effectiveness of Ayurveda was lacking till now.

Last month, the WHO Benchmarks for the Practice of Ayurveda were released. The document defines:

- Minimum requirement/criteria for establishing practice in Ayurveda
- Minimum reference standards for safety and quality of Ayurveda practice
- Models of practice and the practice profile of providers
- Levels of practice in Ayurveda

- Different categories of Ayurveda health service providers
- Requirements for infrastructure and facilities
- Relevant requirements and considerations on practice of the Ayurveda health interventions
- Relevant requirements and considerations of the health products and medical devices used in Ayurveda practice
- Key elements for the safe practice of Ayurveda
- Process for management of health data
- Requirements and relevant considerations of regulatory, legal and ethical aspects of Ayurveda practice

This document is designed to serve as a reference for national authorities to establish or strengthen regulatory standards to ensure qualified practice of Ayurveda and to assure patient safety.

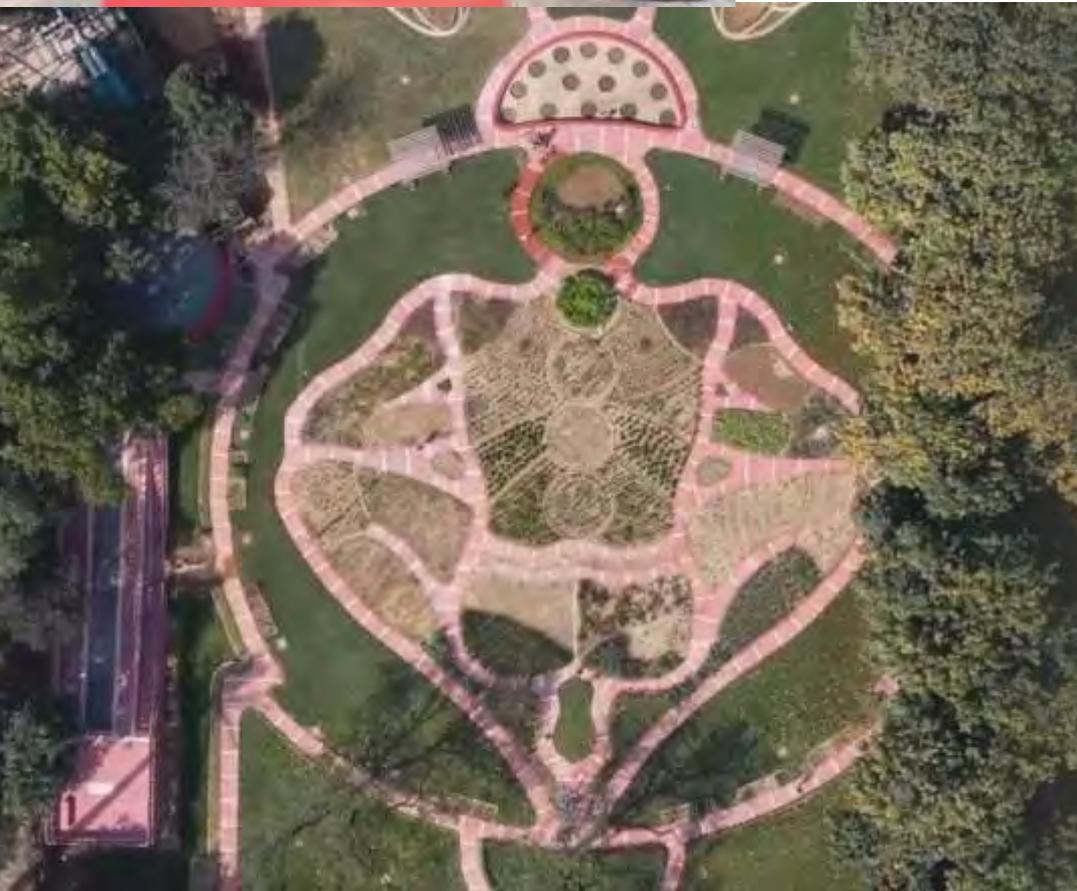
The international benchmarks have been developed in collaboration with the Indian Ministry of Ayush through a series of working group meetings while following existing WHO methodology and processes. They reflect consensus from the community of practitioners in Ayurveda, health service providers, academics, health system managers and regulators. They will support countries to establish appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks in this arena and together with the training benchmarks, will become a reference toolkit for the members.

Furthermore, these standards consider consumer protection and patient safety as core to the professional practice of Ayurveda. WHO will not only assess the quality of the normative products but also streamline systems and plans for monitoring and evaluation. ▶

“Traditional Medicines are an integral part of Universal Health Coverage Programme specially under Sustainable Developmental Goal-3 (SDG-3)” - Dr. Soumya Swaminathan, Deputy-Director General, WHO.



# President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurates 'AROGYA VANAM' at Rashtrapati Bhavan



**PRESIDENT OF INDIA,** Ram Nath Kovind, inaugurated 'Arogya Vanam' at the President's Estate (Rashtrapati Bhavan) in New Delhi in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Spanning 6.6 acres, this Vanam is designed in the shape of a human seated in the Yoga Mudra. It consists of approximately 215 herbs and plants that are used in Ayurveda for therapeutic purposes. Water fountains, a Yoga platform, a water channel, a lotus pond and a viewing platform are some of the additional characteristics.

The objective of Arogya Vanam is to raise awareness about the importance of Ayurvedic plants and their positive impacts on the human body and lifestyle. It is open to the public who can visit and learn more about the magnificence of Ayurveda. ▶



Government of India  
**MINISTRY OF AYUSH**

## Ayush Gets Push in Budget 2022-23

**THE MINISTRY OF** Ayush has been allocated Rs 3,050 crore in the Union Budget 2022-23 as compared to Rs 2,970 crore in the preceding year. Of this, around Rs. 800 crore is earmarked for the centrally sponsored scheme of National Ayush Mission (NAM), an increase from Rs 553 crore in 2021-22.

The Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences is estimated to get an allocation of Rs. 358.50 crore in this year while Rs. 227.10 crore has been allocated to All India Institute of Ayurveda.

There are specific allocations for development of Ayush systems in North Eastern areas and even for promotion of international cooperation in Ayush systems. ▶



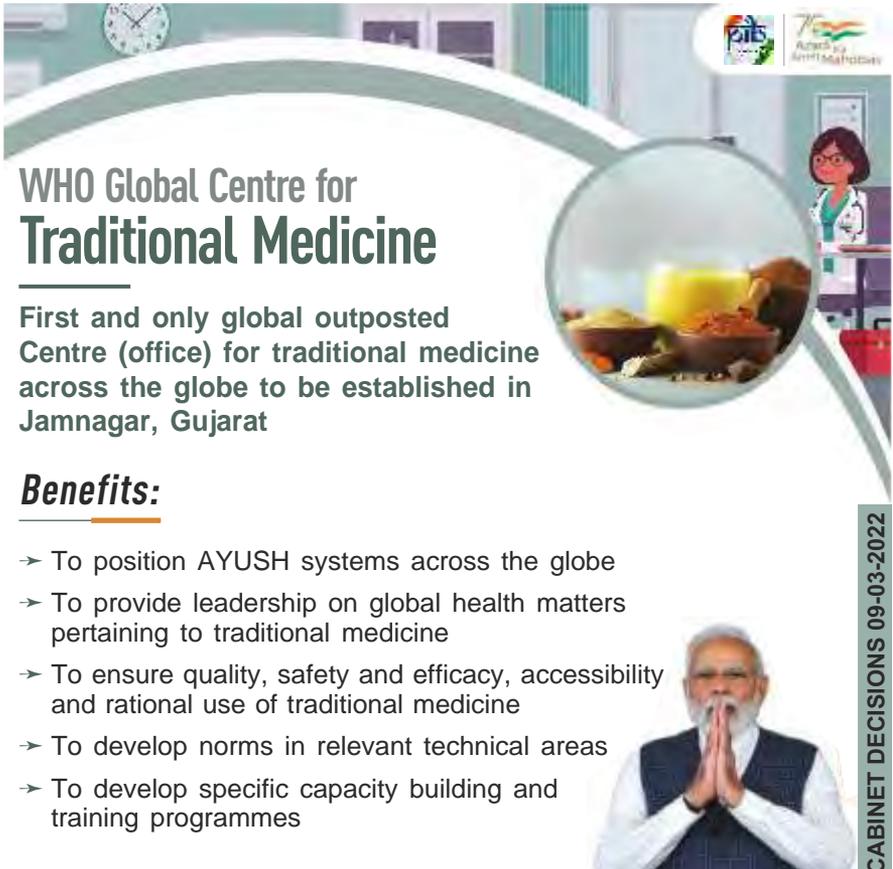
# Cabinet approves establishment of **WHO Global Centre** for Traditional Medicine in India

**LAST MONTH THE** Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, approved the establishment of the WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine (WHO GCTM) in Jamnagar, Gujarat by signing a Host Country agreement between the Government of India and the World Health Organization (WHO).

The WHO GCTM will be established in Jamnagar under the Ministry of Ayush. This would be the first and only global outpost Centre (office) for traditional medicine across the globe.

## **Benefits:**

- i. to position Ayush systems across the globe.
- ii. to provide leadership on global health matters pertaining to traditional medicine.
- iii. to ensure quality, safety and efficacy, accessibility and rational use of traditional medicine.
- iv. to develop norms, standards, and guidelines in relevant technical areas, tools and methodologies, for collecting data undertaking analytics, and assess impact. Envisage WHO TM Informatics Centre creating a collaborative of existing TM Data banks, virtual libraries, and academic and research institutes.
- v. To develop specific capacity building and training programmes in the areas of relevance to the objectives and conduct training programmes in campus, residential, or web-based, and



## WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine

**First and only global outpost Centre (office) for traditional medicine across the globe to be established in Jamnagar, Gujarat**

**Benefits:**

- To position AYUSH systems across the globe
- To provide leadership on global health matters pertaining to traditional medicine
- To ensure quality, safety and efficacy, accessibility and rational use of traditional medicine
- To develop norms in relevant technical areas
- To develop specific capacity building and training programmes



**CABINET DECISIONS 09-03-2022**

through partnerships with the WHO Academy and other strategic partners.

A Joint Task Force (JTF) is constituted for coordination, execution and monitoring of activities for the establishment of this Centre. JTF comprises representatives from the Government of India, Permanent Mission of India, Geneva and the World Health Organization. Under the ambit, an interim office is being established at the ITRA, Jamnagar,

Gujarat to execute the identified technical activities and planning of fully functional WHO GCTM.

The WHO GCTM will provide leadership on all global health matters related to traditional medicine as well as extend support to member countries in shaping various policies related to traditional medicine research, practices and public health. This along with various other initiatives in collaboration with WHO will aid India in positioning traditional medicine across the globe. ▶



#65YearsOfSuccess

# 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Thank you to everyone who has helped make this possible.  
We hope to continue serving you for many more years to come.



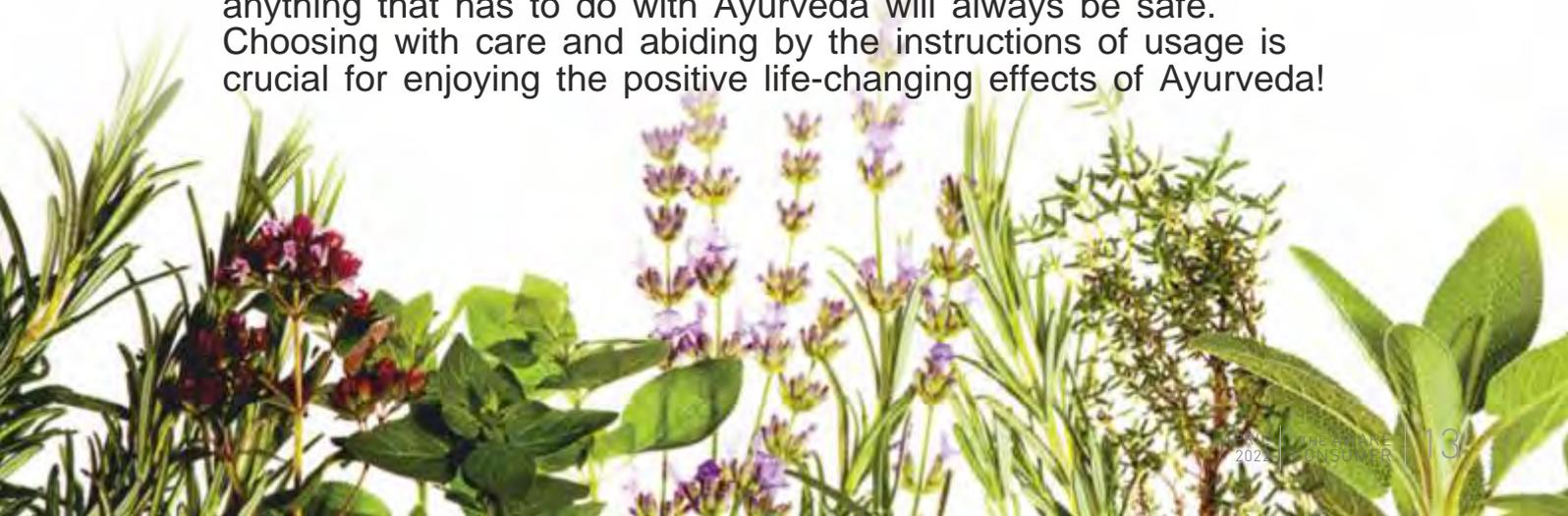
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**Consumers, Beware**

# The Right Way to Use AYURVEDA!



Ayurveda is all about simple remedies using ingredients that are common in almost every home. But do not delude yourself that anything that has to do with Ayurveda will always be safe. Choosing with care and abiding by the instructions of usage is crucial for enjoying the positive life-changing effects of Ayurveda!



**AYURVEDA IS BEING** lauded around the world as an amazing ancient science of natural healing which delivers both curative and preventive benefits to human health. This is considered a safe and effective alternative to modern biomedicines which contributes a huge chunk to the growing popularity of Ayurveda among the masses. The pure, natural and herbal ingredients are free of chemicals and artificial preservatives, making it a holistic approach to healing and staying healthy.

But does this mean that anything to do with Ayurveda will automatically become a panacea sans any side effects?

There are a few things that you should keep in mind when going the Ayurveda way:

- Whilst it is true that Ayurveda will not cause any harm as such, a personalised approach based on your persona, lifestyle and *doshas* is essential for treating specific symptoms and ailments. A Vaidya or practitioner will study your metabolism, digestion, tolerance and psychosomatic constitution before starting a customised and comprehensive line of treatment.
- An herb may be safe by itself, but it may not be tolerated by a body with certain health conditions. For instance, *pippali* or *guggul* can cause harmful reactions in people with peptic ulcer disease. Similarly, certain herbs have to be avoided in pregnancy or when breastfeeding. Allergic reactions are also quite common. This is why self-administering Ayurvedic medications is not advisable. Even when consulting an Ayurvedic practitioner, discuss the ailment in detail along with other medications/treatments that you are taking. The same goes when you approach a conventional doctor as well.
- Ayurvedic treatment is based on specific protocols which involve timing, food combinations and so on. It is not just about what you are taking but also when and how. Following the 'anupan' i.e., the manner and vehicle of taking the medicine is equally important. Some medications have to be taken on an empty stomach, some with warm water, some mixed in milk and so on. Similarly, there are certain things that should be avoided when taking the medication. For instance, Ayurvedic pain medications are hot in potency, but warm items are still advisable as they can help manage the pain. *Amla* should not be taken in the night as it can harm the teeth. Therefore, it is important to follow the dietary recommendations and even lifestyle changes to enjoy the best results.
- Most Ayurvedic ingredients are commonly used in the kitchen and we imbibe them regularly as part of our food. But this does not mean that you can pop them at will or overuse them without any consideration. Going overboard with anything is not good and this applies to Ayurveda as well. In fact, the classical text of Ayurvedic medicine, the *Charaka Samhita* states that, "A potent poison also becomes the best drug on proper administration. On the contrary, even the best drug

becomes a potent poison if used badly." The dosage plays a critical role and has to be followed to the letter. For instance, consuming too much of turmeric or ginger can cause heat in the body. *Triphala* delivers a host of benefits, but overdoing it can lead to abdominal discomfort and even diarrhoea. What's more, the appropriate dosage, timing and food combinations can vary from person to person depending on the constitution, ailment and so on. So, what worked for your friend will not necessarily be right for you!

- On a more serious note, the probable drug interactions call for caution. Certain Ayurvedic formulations can alter the pharmacodynamics when administered with allopathic drugs. Some may even turn toxic!
- Then again, the Ayurvedic drug may be safe and effective, but what if the manufacturing process involves using polluted raw plant materials, adulteration of the drugs with steroids or lacks quality controls? This is why it is better to stick to trusted and reliable brands that are known for quality.
- And what about the Vaidya? There are scores of instances of unqualified and fake 'healers' who dupe gullible consumers by giving their own personal concoctions which often lead to adverse reactions.
- Last but not the least; do not expect an instant fix from Ayurveda. It works on the entire body and takes time to deliver results. You have to be patient and stick to the treatment for the specified duration to be able to reap the long-lasting rewards.

We are seeing a negative backlash in the media regarding the use of Ayurvedic herbs during COVID-19. For instance, while the Ayush ministry is promoting *guduchi* (giloy) as an immunity booster, there were reports of the herb causing liver damage. However, the ministry reiterated that giloy is safe and does not produce any toxic effect as per available data. It quoted a study where *guduchi* powder increased the life span of fruit flies, but higher concentrations of the same powder actually reduced their life span!

So, who is to blame when Ayurvedic therapies are used incorrectly, administered improperly or abused in any other manner - the Vaidya, the medicine or the person taking it?

On the other hand, the preparation of the drug also comes into play. Many Ayurvedic formulations feature fixed drug combinations or phytoconstituents that may not interact well with each other. For instance, an Ayurvedic drug was banned when studies showed that it can cause cancer in rats. But did the authorities consider the genesis of the drug which caused the adverse reaction?

## Conclusion

Ayurveda comes with its own share of contraindications and potential for adverse effects. Do not fall prey to the utopian misconception that 'Even if it fails to have an effect, it will always be safe!' Use Ayurveda wisely to stay well! ▶



**AYURVEDA IS ONE** of the greatest gifts of the sages of ancient India which dates back to around 5000 years ago. The term Ayurveda comprises of two Sanskrit words, *Ayu* (life) and *Veda* (knowledge or science). Therefore, it literally means the knowledge or science of life!

### Origin

It is commonly believed that Lord Brahma, the creator of the universe, memorised the knowledge of Ayurveda and passed it on to Lord Daksha Prajapati. Both the Ashwini Kumars (physicians of God) learnt this science from Lord Daksha. It was then passed on to Lord Indra and then the Maharshis before coming into practice for mankind.

Our four great Vedas contain scattered references to Ayurvedic concepts, natural remedies and allied aspects of health. However, it is the last of these great bodies of knowledge, the *Atharvaveda*, which contains 114 hymns related to several diseases along with formulations for their treatment. This is considered the predecessor of Ayurveda.

The vast body of material from the Vedas was systematically assimilated into different scholarly and authoritative texts called the 'Samhitas'. The *Charaka Samhita* focuses on internal medicine. Delving into different aspects of medicine and related subjects, it mentions around 600 drugs of plant, animal and mineral origin. *Susruta Samhita* deals with the fundamental principles and theory of surgery. It gives a vivid description of several operative techniques (including a classical description of rhinoplasty) and describes more than 100 types of surgical instruments along with their use. This treatise also contains descriptions of over 700 drugs while discussing different aspects of anatomy, embryology, toxicology and therapeutics. *Astanga Sangrah/Hridaya* is another major treatise which contains vital details of the other two texts along with additional updates.

The above three documents are considered the classical texts of Ayurveda and are popularly known as 'Brihat Trayees' (the big three). They are now identified worldwide as an important early resource of medical understanding and practice.

### Branches

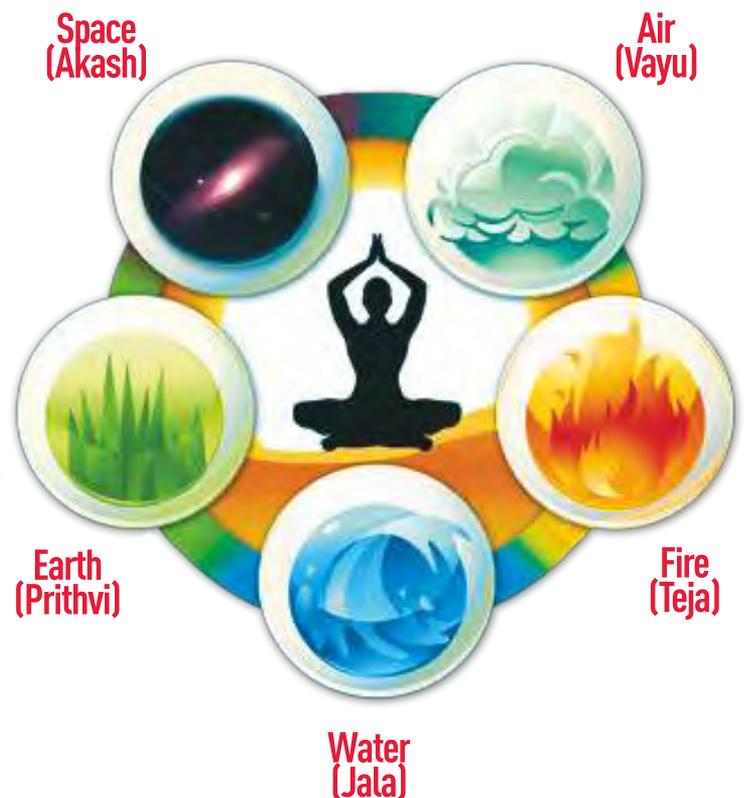
Apart from general medicine and surgery, these great texts also detail the principles of eight different specialities of medical science (*Ashtanga*):

1. Kaya Chikitsa - Physical Medicine
2. Kaumar Bhritya – Paediatrics and Obstetrics
3. Shalaky Tantra - Diseases of Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat
4. Bhut Vidya - Psychiatry
5. Shalya Tantra - Surgery
6. Agad Tantra - Toxicology

7. Rasayana – Rejuvenation and Geriatrics
8. Bajikaran – Sexology (including Aphrodisiacs)

### Basic Principles

Ayurveda believes that the human body has a lot in common with the surrounding universe. It is composed of five elements which correspond with the five basic elements of nature or the *Panchamahabhoot* – Earth (*Prithvi*), Water (*Jal*), Fire (*Agni*), Air (*Vayu*) and Space (*Akash*). Every physical body features a permutation of these five elements. It is the principal element - which is most prevalent in the formation of a particular body - that defines the person's physical existence.



## Panchamahabhoot Siddhant

### Tri-Doshas

It is a combination of these elements which forms the three *doshas* (biological humours or energies) in the body.

- *Vata* - Air and Space
- *Pitta* - Fire and Water
- *Kapha* - Earth and Water

*Doshas* can be considered as all pervasive, subtle entities. They are present in every cell, tissue and organ; they govern and control the basic psycho-biological



functions in the body. *Vata* regulates movement and is represented by the nervous system. *Pitta* is the principle of biotransformation and is the cause of all metabolic processes in the body. *Kapha* is the principle of cohesion and functions through the body fluids.

However, these energies tend to vary in intensity and combination from person to person. In fact, every individual has a unique combination of the constituent elements which determines the physiological constitution (*Prakriti*) based on the predominance of the different qualities (*Gunas*).

Ayurveda defines a healthy person as one who has all the *Doshas* in equilibrium along with normal functioning of *Agni* (metabolism and digestion), *Dhatu* (body tissues/elements that provide nourishment) and *Mala* (excretion) as well as the wellbeing of the *Indriyas* (senses), *Mana* (Mind) and *Atma* (soul). Therefore, Ayurveda deals not only with soundness of the body, but also soundness of the mind.

When any imbalance occurs in this equilibrium (congenial homeostasis) due to any reason, it manifests as a disease. And Ayurveda seeks to remove this imbalance, to regain a healthy state. In fact, Ayurvedic treatments are primarily based on restoring the displaced *doshas* to their original equilibrium.

**Health is order; disease is disorder!**

## Food

The foods we eat are also considered to be composed of the same basic five elements. This is why specific foods are consumed or avoided to nourish/soothe particular components of the body.

Ayurveda believes that it is the different tastes which affect the *doshas*. Sweet, sour, and salty foods pacify *Vata*. Sweet, pungent and bitter foods decrease *Pitta*. Pungent, bitter and astringent foods calm *Kapha*. Therefore, intelligent consumption is essential for maintaining *Vata-Pitta-Kapha* balance.

## Concept of health

Ayurveda takes a holistic view of man, his health and illness. It is all about living in harmony with nature. At the simplest level, it is awareness about oneself and maintaining one's immunity so as to achieve this harmony.

The goal of Ayurveda is always first to preserve life and then to restore health and well-being. It follows that Ayurveda addresses both the preventive as well as curative aspects of medicine. But it advocates the preventive aspect over the curative one!

## Diagnosis

When it comes to treatment, Ayurveda always focuses on eliminating the root cause of an illness. Therefore, it is focused on establishing balance of the life energies in the body, rather than just treating individual symptoms. This empowers it to even cure chronic diseases which is sorely lacking in allopathy.

Ayurvedic physicians always consider the patient as a whole rather than a symptom, organ or part of the body. They will examine the patient's internal physiological characteristics as well as mental disposition apart from the daily routine, dietary habits, humors, digestion, immunity, vitality, etc. Even the social, economic and environmental situation of the patient will be taken into consideration. This involves a ten-fold examination covering the following parameters:

1. Psychosomatic constitution
2. Disease susceptibility
3. Quality of tissues
4. Body build
5. Anthropometry
6. Adaptability
7. Mental health
8. Digestive power
9. Exercise endurance
10. Age

Accordingly, Ayurvedic practitioners examine the *naadi* (pulse), *shabda* (voice), *jivha* (tongue), *sparsha* (skin), *drik* (eyes), *aakriti* (body build), *mutra* (urine) and *mala* (stool) to understand the *doshas*, diagnose the disease and design a complete cure for the patient.



Moreover, Ayurveda is primarily a plant-based science. It relies on different medicinal herbs to improve immunity and ward off infections. In fact, plants remain the key source of drugs and treatments in different traditional medicinal systems.

The treatment will not only involve drug and non-drug therapies, but also regulate the diet and lifestyle to restore balance in the body. The most popular and effective therapies are *Panchkarma* (five process) and *Rasayana* (rejuvenation).

In fact, Ayurveda has the power to cure chronic diseases – like skin issues, allergies, asthma and rheumatoid arthritis - that still remain incurable by modern medicine. Late Vaidya Chandra Prakash even scientifically developed *Rasaushadhi* as an effective cure for acute promyelocytic leukaemia, a type of blood cancer.

### Panchakarma

*Panchakarma* is a purification process that cleanses and detoxifies the body to restore the person's natural healing capacity and improve quality of life. It consists of five major therapeutic procedures – a combination of *panch* (five) and *karma* (procedures).

The body has to be first prepared to let go of the toxins before embarking on the purification operations. This is done with the help of *snehan* and *svedana* procedures. The former is an oil massage while the latter involves sweating by way of steam.

The five main *karmas* to cleanse the body are:

- *Vamana* - therapeutic emesis which induces vomiting to eliminate toxins through the mouth
- *Virechan* - inducing purgation with the help of laxatives

- *Basti* - enema with medicated oil to eliminate toxins through the anus
- *Nasya* - nasal insufflation of medicated substances to eliminate toxins through the sinuses
- *Rakta Moksha*: detoxification of the blood through bloodletting

Post-therapy involves a dietary regimen that will restore the body's digestive and absorptive capacity to its normal state. The complete regimen serves to dissolve the vitiated and accumulated doshas and reinstate stable equilibrium. It serves as a preventive, preservative, promotive, curative and rehabilitative therapy.

### Conclusion

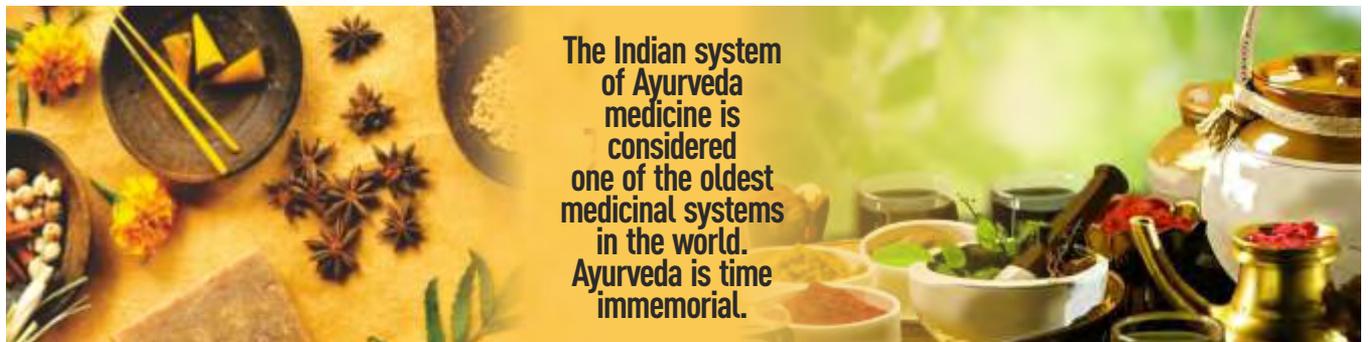
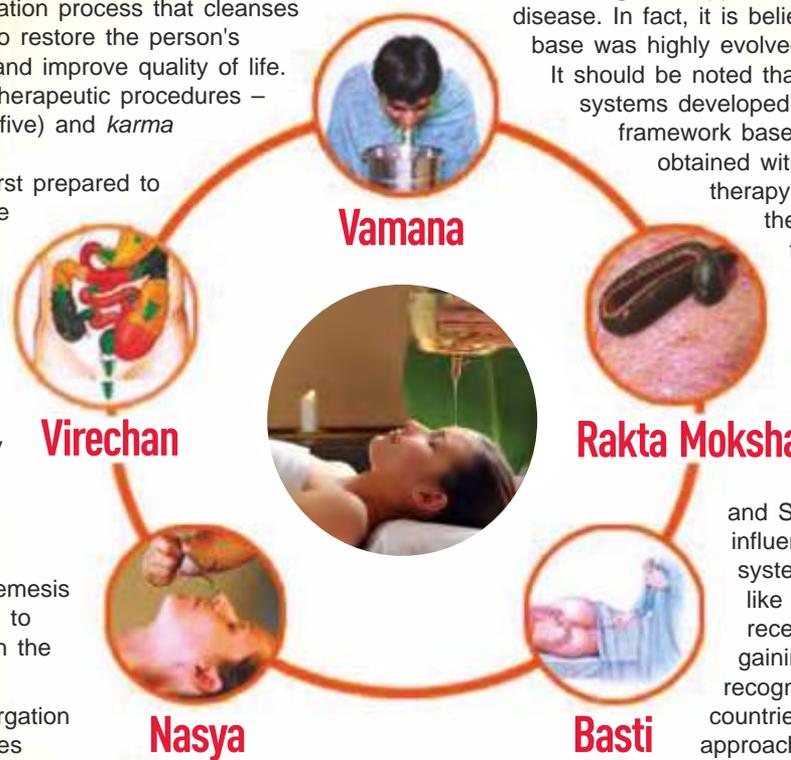
Ayurveda was established as a fully-developed, rational and scientific medicinal science with a comprehensive and dynamic understanding of health. It has always advocated an integrated approach towards health and disease. In fact, it is believed that the conceptual base was highly evolved and ahead of its time.

It should be noted that while other medical systems developed their conceptual framework based on the results

obtained with the use of drugs and therapy, Ayurveda first provided the philosophical framework that determined its therapeutic practice with effective results.

No wonder Ayurveda was not only commonly used in India but also spread to Nepal

and Sri Lanka while influencing other traditional systems in other countries like Thailand and Tibet. In recent years, Ayurveda is gaining popularity and recognition even in western countries as an alternative approach to modern medicine. ▶



The Indian system of Ayurveda medicine is considered one of the oldest medicinal systems in the world. Ayurveda is time immemorial.

## Corroborating Effectiveness of Traditional Interventions in **COVID-19**

The government has been making dedicated efforts for evidence-based integration of Ayush systems in the public health delivery system. While there have been numerous research and studies on various Ayurvedic and other interventions, AYUSH 64 deserves a special mention.



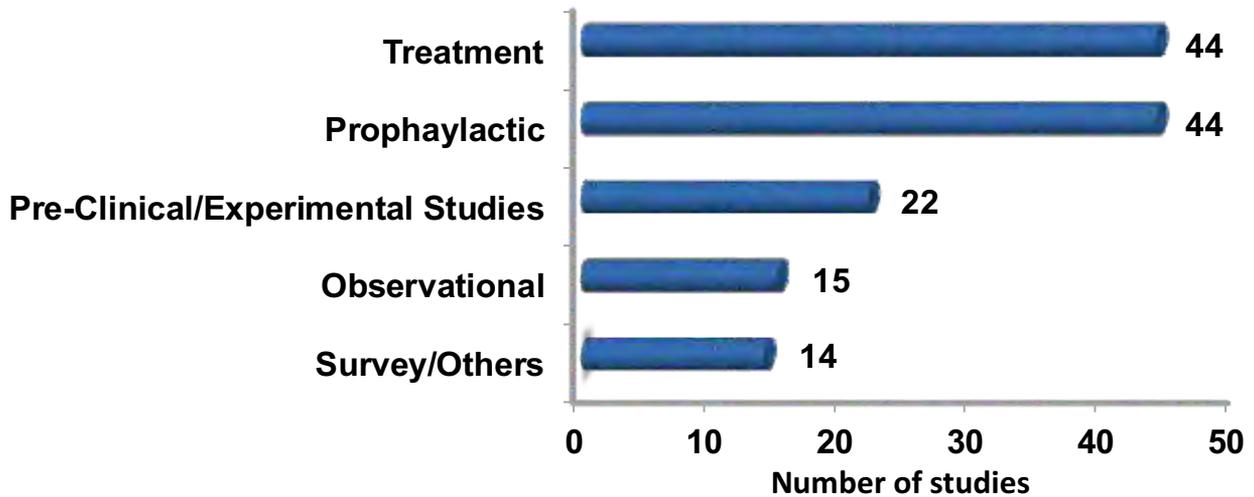
**THE MINISTRY OF** Ayush is committed to evidence-based integration of Ayush systems and modern medicine to address the public health challenge of COVID-19. Even Prime Minister Modi has been stressing on the importance of developing evidence-based research structures for Ayurveda for a leading global role in the 21st century.

An inter-disciplinary Ayush R&D Task Force was instituted – comprising of experts from premier institutions and research organisations such as AIIMS, ICMR and AYUSH institutions – to formulate clinical research protocols for prophylactic and add-on intervention studies in COVID-19. The Task Force constituted seven working

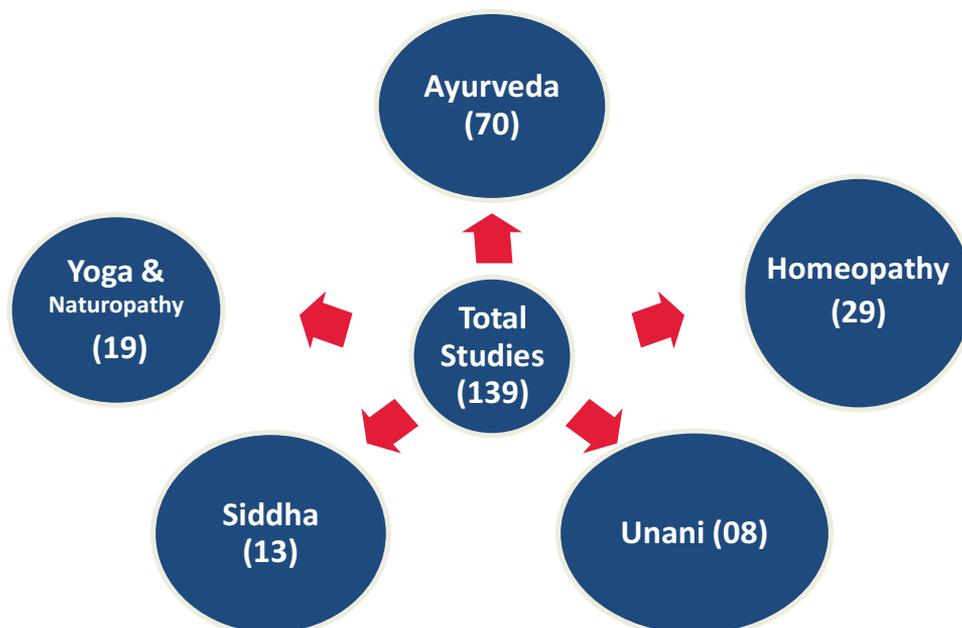
groups to deal with the different aspects of research and public health. It also drafted the guidelines for 'Ayush Clinical Studies in COVID-19' covering various aspects of clinical trial protocols.

Following the recommendations, the Ayush Ministry has initiated as many as 139 clinical research studies and basic experimental studies on COVID-19 through Ayush systems at approximately 159 centers by Research Councils and National Institutes under the Ministry through the intra-mural and collaborative research mode. Of these 70 studies relate to Ayurvedic interventions. (see Figure 1 and 2).

**Figure 1: Distribution of Ayush studies on COVID-19 as per study design**



**Figure 2: Ayush System-wise COVID-19 Studies**



In the first four months of the pandemic itself, India undertook more than 50 clinical trials to test the benefits of traditional medicine systems. In the following months, the Ayush Ministry also took up systematic studies on different possible solutions through multiple channels.

There was a clinical study to assess the role of medicinal herbs - *vasa* and *guduchi* - in the therapeutic management of symptoms in COVID-19 cases. Another one titled 'Ayurveda Botanicals in COVID-19 Management' explored the immunomodulatory and anti-SARS-CoV-2 potential of 31 phytoconstituents from *Ashwagandha*, *Guduchi* and *Shatavari*. It was found that several phytoconstituents possessed good affinity for the three targets of the virus, suggesting their application for the termination of the viral life cycle.

A community case study on 'Ayurvedic Response to COVID-19 Pandemic in Kerala and its Impact on Quarantined Individuals' (released in October 2021) examined how the state's decentralised organisational framework was effectively used to facilitate the delivery of Ayurvedic services. More than a lakh quarantined individuals were administered polyherbal Ayurvedic formulations in varying dosage forms, including decoctions, tablets, pills and powders, for internal use and as herbal fumigations. After this, only 347 individuals (0.34%) tested positive for COVID-19 during their quarantine course while government sources showed that 1.61% of the general quarantined population tested positive during the corresponding period. Moreover, all the 347 positive cases recovered fully without any serious complications or requiring intensive care or ventilator support. There was no reported incident of adverse drug reactions arising from Ayurvedic medicines.

It was further observed that Ayurvedic programs implemented systematically, under an organised framework with social participation, enabled wider utilisation of the services. This can easily be replicated even in resource-poor settings. Moreover, instead of a pluralistic approach, an integrative health system approach will be more viable for public health emergencies.

Then there are varied case reports, like that of a 55-year old man from Delhi who was a high-risk COVID-19 positive patient with comorbidities including diabetes, hypertension, hypothyroidism and chronic kidney disease. After seven days of exclusive modern western medical treatment during which he was displaying varied COVID symptoms, he was treated successfully using an integrative therapy plan based on Ayurveda and yoga, along with the conventional medications. By the 19th day, he had not only recovered from the symptoms and tested negative, but his sugar levels were normal and he reported a sense of overall well-being!

Another year-long study is being conducted on 2,000 candidates in three cities of the UK to assess if the

antioxidant and anti-inflammatory herb, 'Ashwagandha' can alleviate the symptoms of long COVID like chronic fatigue, stress and sleeplessness. This is a collaborative effort between the All India Institute of Ayurveda (an autonomous body under Ministry of Ayush) and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) with the World Health Organisation being a knowledge partner to the study. The results will go a long way in promoting Ayurveda abroad for COVID-19 recovery.

## AYUSH 64: Evidences On Clinical And Pre-Clinical Safety

AYUSH 64 is a polyherbal formulation developed by the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) through extensive pharmacological, toxicological and clinical studies and has proven its safety and efficacy in infective febrile conditions such as malaria and influenza. This has been repurposed for asymptomatic, mild and moderate COVID cases as an adjunct to standard care (based on empirical evidence).

AYUSH 64 has four ingredients having immunomodulatory, anti-inflammatory, antipyretic, antioxidant and anti-viral activities. It can arrest the extreme inflammatory responses in COVID-19 that causes progression to significant morbidity.

A total of 10 studies - in-silico, in-vitro and clinical studies - had been conducted to evaluate the therapeutic potential of AYUSH 64 in collaboration with CSIR, DBT, ICMR and reputed hospitals. They cover evidences on symptom management (ILI)/Anti-viral/Immunomodulatory activity.

Accordingly, it has also been incorporated in the 'National Clinical Management Protocol based on Ayurveda and Yoga Quality Standards' by the Government of India. It was included in the 'Guidelines for Ayurveda Practitioners for COVID-19 Patients in Home Isolation' issued by the Ministry of Ayush during the second outbreak of COVID-19 in the country.

Let us take a look at some of these studies:

### In-silico Molecular Docking Study for Evaluation Of Compounds Of AYUSH 64 For Its Action Against SARS-CoV-2in Main Protease

- Evaluation of different compounds available in AYUSH 64 against SARS-CoV-2 Main Protease (Mpro) via computational molecular docking
- Study site: ICMR-National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad
- Study Outcome: Out of 36 compounds of AYUSH 64 screened, 35 exhibited good binding energies than the published positive co-crystal compound of N3 peptide
- Anu taila showed better result in combating the effect of SAR-CoV-2 infection as seen by low viral load in lungs in the Golden Syrian hamsters challenged with SARS-CoV-2



**The Ayush Ministry has initiated as many as 139 clinical research studies and basic experimental studies on COVID-19 through Ayush systems at approximately 159 centers by Research Councils and National Institutes under the Ministry.**

### In-Vitro and In-Vivo Antiviral Screening Assay Of AYUSH 64

- Pre-clinical and pharmacokinetics evaluation of select Ayush herbal extracts/formulations for mitigating SARS-CoV-2 based on the concept of reverse Pharmacology (PH)
- Study site: Ministry of Ayush – Department of Biotechnology (DBT) collaborative study at Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI)
- Preclinical studies include nine priority interventions of oral use viz. *Ashwagandha, Guduchi, Guduchi + Pippali, Yashtimadhu, AYUSH 64, Swertia chirata, Picrorrhizakurroa, Alstoniascholaris, Ceasalpinia bonduc* and four intranasal administrations (*Anu Taila, Shadbindu Taila, Sesamum oil, Cow Ghee*)
- Study Outcome: Demonstrated reduction of viral load of SARS CoV-2. The ingredients of AYUSH64 have the potential to control the initial symptoms of COVID-19 and the cytokine storm, inhibition of the Angiotensin-Converting Enzyme II (ACE2) and Reactive Oxygen Species (ROS) and thereby prevent the progression of COVID-19.

- Study site: KGMU Lucknow, DMIMS Wardha and BMC COVID Centre, Mumbai
- Sample size: 140
- Study Outcome: Participants treated with AYUSH64 recovered early (maximum within one week) compared to standard care (see Figure 3). Mean time to negative RT-PCR for COVID-19 was lesser in AYUSH64 group. No study drug related SAE reported.

### AYUSH 64 as Adjunct Treatment to Standard of Care (SOC) in Mild to Moderate COVID-19 (Multi-Centre Trial)

- AYUSH-CSIR collaborative study
- Randomized, open label, active control, multi-centre exploratory drug trial to evaluate efficacy and safety

### Evaluation of Efficacy and Safety of AYUSH 64 Add-On Therapy For Patients With COVID-19 (Stage-I)

- Randomized controlled trial
- Trial Site: Government Medical College, Nagpur
- Sample Size: 60
- Study Outcome: The clinical recovery rate was better at 15th day in the add-on intervention. Complete clinical recovery was noted in all the participants of the add-on intervention group on 30th day whereas it was 85.2% in the control group (see Figure 4). Statistically significant reduction in the levels of IL-6, D-Dimer and TNF- $\alpha$  in the add-on intervention group.

### AYUSH 64 as Adjunct Treatment to Standard of Care for the Management of Mild to Moderate COVID-19 (Single Centre)

- A randomized, open label, active control, exploratory clinical trial to evaluate efficacy and safety

Figure 3

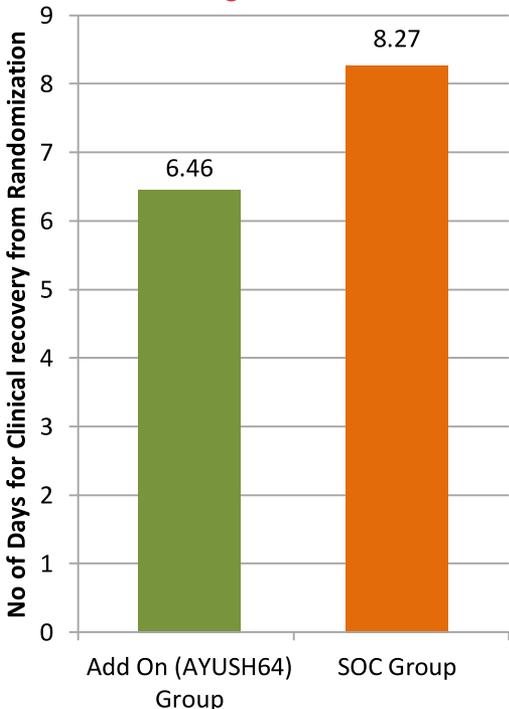
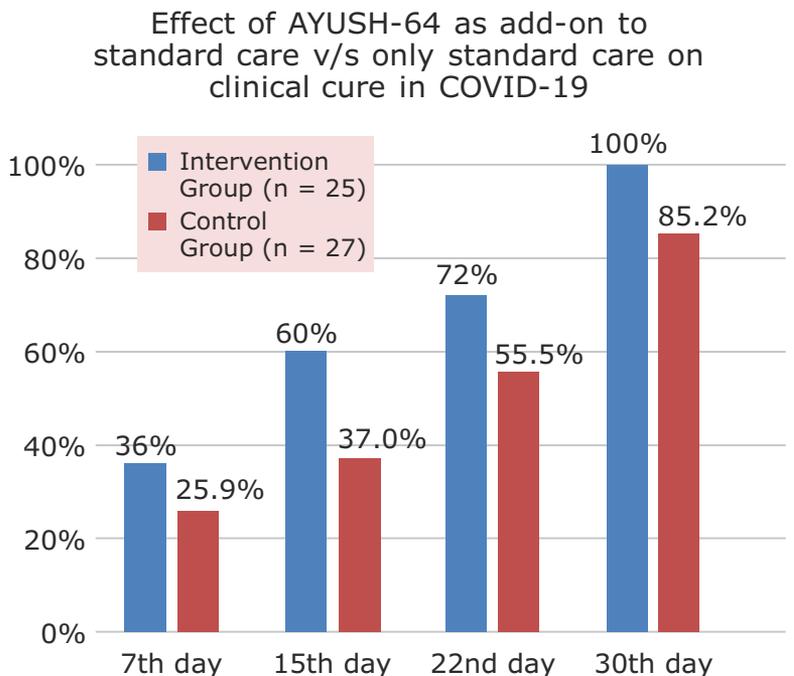
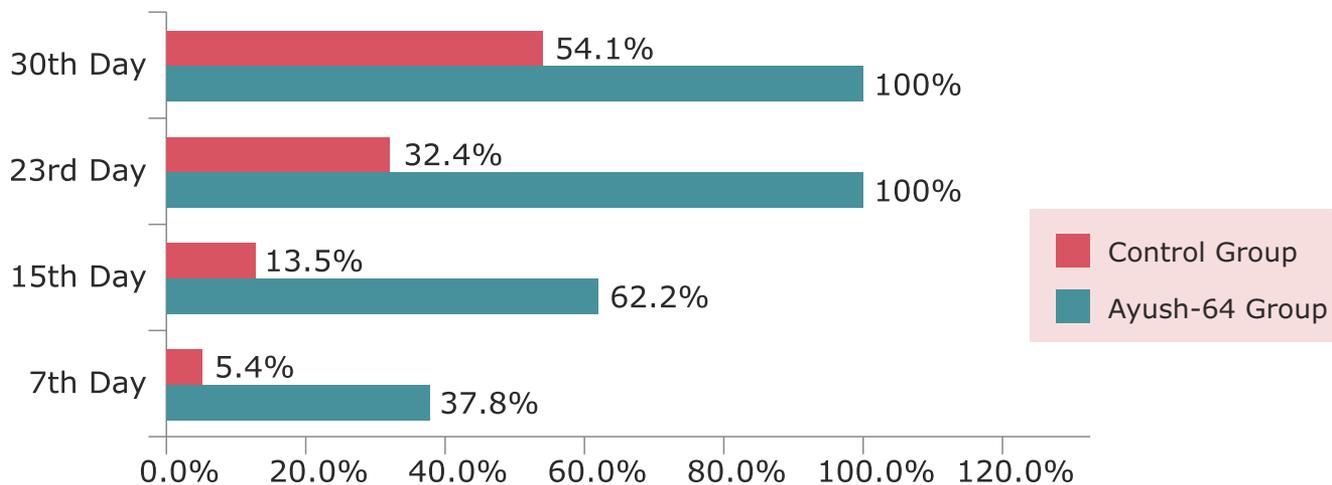


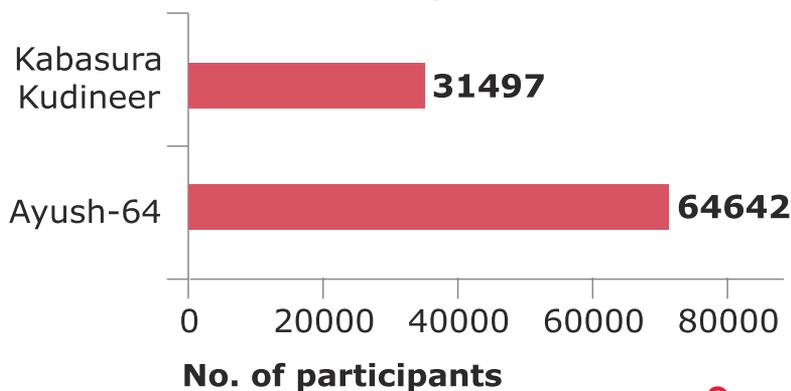
Figure 4



**Figure 5: Proportion of participants clinically recovered**



**Figure 6: Community-based study on Ayush Interventions for management of COVID-19**



- Trial Site: Shri Dhanwantri Ayurvedic College, Chandigarh
- Sample Size: 80
- Study Outcome: Statistically significant difference in the proportion of participants with clinical recovery in AYUSH 64 group (see Figure 5). Proportion of participants with negative RT-PCR was also better in AYUSH 64 group. Proportion of participants with improvement in HRCT chest was also statistically significant in the AYUSH 64 group. AYUSH64 significantly reduced the levels of pro-inflammatory markers.

In fact, seven such clinical studies were conducted at nine reputed medical institutions. All of them reported early clinical recovery and reduced duration of hospital

stay without any progression of the disease to the severe or critical stage of COVID-19. Additionally, there was an improvement in quality of life parameters too.

Therefore, AYUSH 64 was found to hasten clinical recovery, be superior to standard care alone and a safer option as well in mild to moderate COVID-19. It was also well tolerated in all the studies. This has proved its efficacy as a standalone treatment for asymptomatic and mild cases.

The tangible evidence generated through these robust studies led to positioning of AYUSH 64 as potential adjunct to standard care in COVID management.

**Community-Based Study For Mass Distribution Of AYUSH 64 And Kabasura Kudineer (a Siddha multi-ingredient formulation)**

Of the 96,139 participants who received AYUSH 64 and Kabasura Kudineer (see Figure 6), clinical recovery was observed in 89% and 88.5% participants respectively by 21st day. And 95% and 78.8% participants turned RT-PCR negative by 21st day respectively.

Following the excellent results, the Ministry of Ayush launched a nation-wide campaign for mass distribution of AYUSH 64 and Kabasura Kudineer across the country through 87 clinical units of Research Councils and National Institutes to asymptomatic, mild to moderate COVID-19 patients in home isolation to reduce the burden on the hospital-based health care delivery system.

# COVID-19 SUCCESS STORIES IN AYUSH

## COVID Health Centre – All India Institute of Ayurveda

Total patients received treatment: **592**

Patients completed treatment: **532**

**34** patients were referred

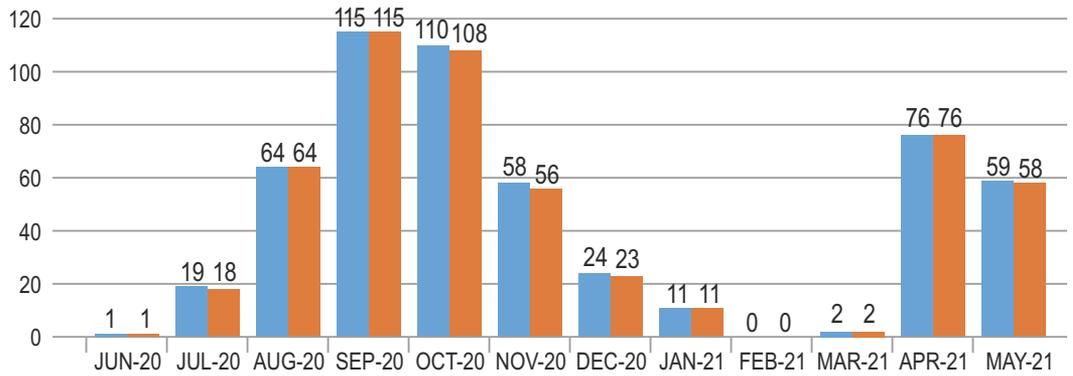
**92%** of people administered Ayurveda standalone treatment

Average recovery period observed: **10 days**

RAT/RT-PCR tested negative after treatment in **99%**

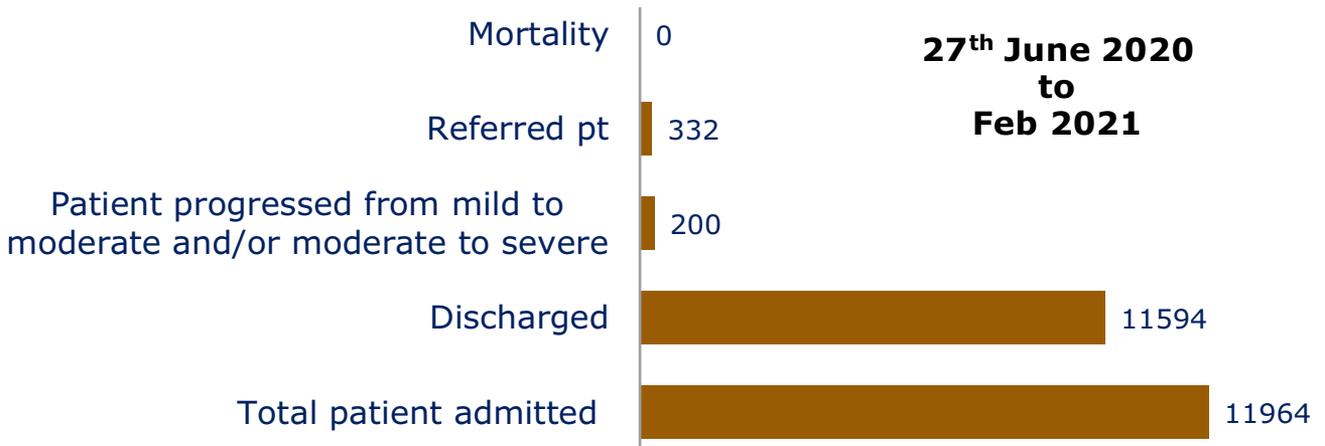
### Only one mortality recorded during second wave of COVID 19

**ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF AYURVEDA (AIIA)-CHC**  
Data till 19/07/2021



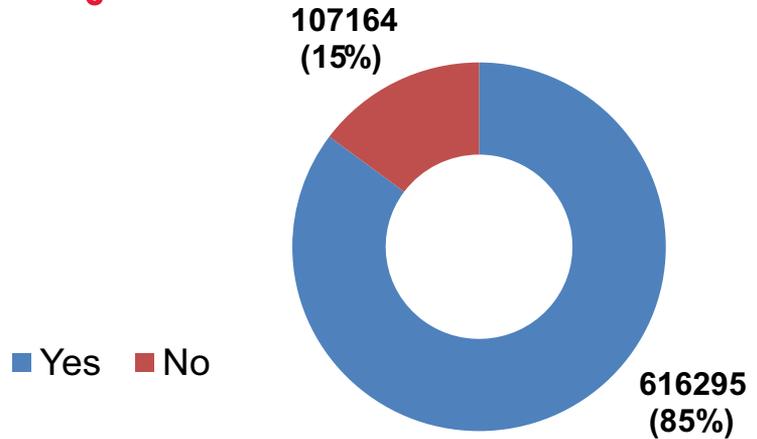
	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21
■ No. of Patients who completed treatment	1	19	64	115	110	58	24	11	0	2	76	59
■ No. of Patients cured (Tested Negative)	1	18	64	115	108	56	23	11	0	2	76	58

## Status of COVID 19 cases treated at Sardar Patel COVID Care Centre (SPCCC) under Ministry of Home Affairs

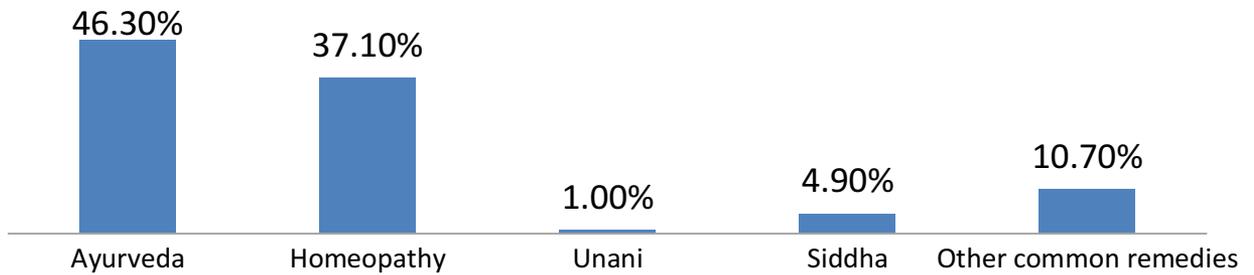


**Figure 7**

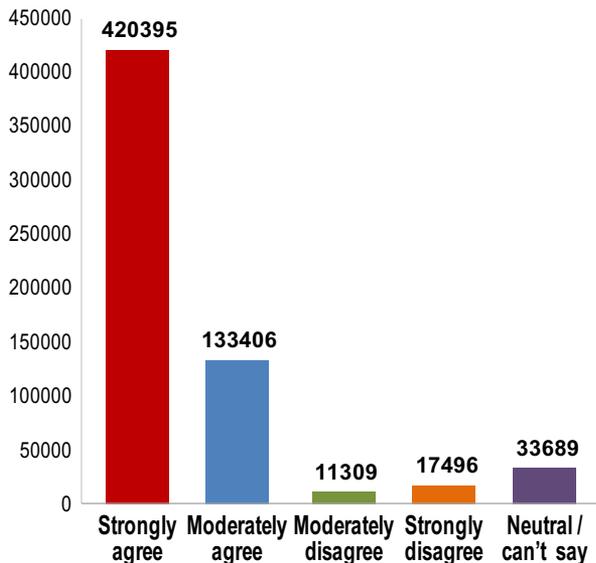
Among public feedbacks received (n-723459), usage of AYUSH based preventive measures for COVID-19



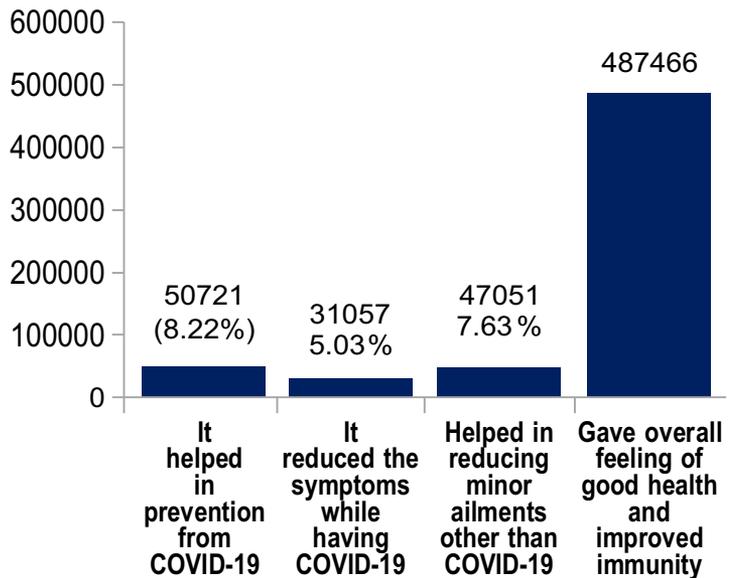
Ayurveda was used by maximum public among Physician feedback submitted for patients



Public Feedback: 89.8% agreed that AYUSH measures helped during the pandemic



Response of participants submitted by AYUSH Physicians



## Impact Assessment Of Effectiveness, Acceptance And Usage Of Ayush Advisories & Measures In Prevention Of COVID 19: A Mobile App Based Population Study

The Ministry of Ayush developed and launched Ayush Sanjivani mobile application to generate data on the acceptance and usage of Ayush advocacies among the population and its impact in prevention of COVID-19.

- A cross-sectional analysis was done to evaluate the pattern and extent of utilisation of Ayush-based measures, benefits obtained, association between the use of Ayush-based measures and incidence of COVID-19, symptomatic status, and duration of use of Ayush measures.

- Sample Size:

- ❖ Public Feedback: 7,23,459
- ❖ Physician (feedback submitted for patients): 1,35,21,245
- ❖ Physician feedback (self): 74,567

More than 1.35 crore cumulative data of Ayush beneficiaries has been collected through this application. Further, 7,23,459 individual responses by general public and 74,567 individual responses submitted by Ayush physicians of their self-use has also been captured through this application during this study bringing the total responses to about 1.47 crore (from May 4 to July 31, 2020).

- Study Outcome:

- ❖ 85.2% of the respondents reported that they had

been using Ayush measures for maintenance of health during the COVID-19 pandemic. (see Figure 7)

- ❖ Of the above, 89.8% respondents either strongly or moderately agreed to have benefitted from the practice of Ayush advisory.
- ❖ Ayurveda and homeopathic measures and interventions were the most preferred by respondents across India.
- ❖ 79.1% of the users responded that the Ayush measures gave an overall improvement in general health. Of these 40.3% rated the improvement as good, 8.6% as moderate, and 40.3% as slight.
- ❖ 63.4% reported improvement in parameters of wellbeing like sleep, appetite, bowel habits, stamina and mental wellbeing.

The findings revealed that a good proportion of the population across different regions of the country not only utilised Ayush measures but also gained considerable benefits in terms of general well-being and reduced incidence of COVID-19.

Moreover, respondents who had been using Ayush measures for less than 30 days were more likely to be COVID-19-positive among those who were tested (odds ratio 1.52, 95% CI 1.44-1.60). The odds of non-users of Ayush measures being symptomatic if they tested positive were greater than those of Ayush users (odds ratio 4.01, 95% CI 3.61-4.59).

## Conclusion

There is ample proof why the time proven formula of Ayurveda has stood the tests of time and is going strong in the testing times of today. ▶



आयुष मंत्रालय  
MINISTRY OF  
AYUSH



The “National Clinical Management Protocol based on Ayurveda and Yoga for the management of COVID-19” released by the Ministry of AYUSH on 6th October 2020 is a milestone in the rapidly evolving scenario of COVID-19 responses in the country.

The Protocol is based on the following three considerations:

- Knowledge from Ayurveda and Yoga classics and experience from clinical practices.
- Empirical evidences and Biological plausibility.
- Emerging trends of ongoing clinical studies related to COVID-19.

## Regulation For Quality, Safety and Reliability in



# AYURVEDA

The main hindrance for Ayurvedic formulations is the lack of regulation in the sector. We need a central body to check the quality of new Ayurvedic products before they are launched in the market. This kind of transparency and quality control along with evidence-based research will augur faith in the safety and efficacy of Ayurveda.

**A GROWING FASCINATION** for Ayurvedic traditional medicines and natural remedies is growing around the world. On the other hand, Ayurveda is also embroiled in controversies over the risks of many formulations. Not to mention that the lack of scientific validation is a major roadblock for the global recognition and acceptance of Ayurveda.

Since the last couple of years, the Ministry of Ayush has been contemplating instituting a Central Technical Authority by amending Section 158(B) of the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules to bring in the central government's direct oversight over the Ayush sector.

The proposed regulations for streamlining the system include:

- Defining a new drug clearly
- Enumerating specific licensing terms
- Performing basic minimal testing of any new Ayurvedic drug on a small sample size of patients
- Requiring all Ayurvedic pharmacies to periodically submit data on raw material consumption for formulating Ayurvedic drugs.
- Creating a digital database of manufacturers, medicines being produced and raw materials being consumed

While the country is clueless about when such a central regulatory body will see the light of day, it is an abhorring fact that the government's existing guidelines for the development and manufacture of Ayurvedic drugs are also not being enforced properly, leading to systemic non-compliance.

## Ayurveda Aahar

The Draft Food Safety and Standards (Ayurveda Aahar) Regulations, 2021 were notified in July 2021. The Food Safety and Standards Association of India (FSSAI) is in the process of finalising the regulations with the help of the Ayush ministry and will be released soon. Once they come into force, no person will be allowed to manufacture, pack, sell, offer for sale, market or otherwise distribute or import Ayurveda Aahar unless the product complies with the requirements laid down in the regulations. This does not include Ayurvedic drugs or proprietary Ayurvedic medicines and medicinal products.



## Need for Regulation

Back in 2005, the Canadian government had banned the sale of Indian Ayurvedic medicines on account of the high levels of metals like lead, mercury and arsenic, which pose grave health risks. Patanjali's 'Coronil' was in the eye of the storm last year with unsubstantiated claims about not only protecting people from COVID-19 but also curing the disease!

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) still refuses to consider Ayurvedic products as medicines. They are deemed as food supplements and health wellness products in USA and many European countries. The FDA has even issued warnings against the use of certain Ayurvedic medicines.

Alas, Ayurveda in India is defined by a glaring lack of quality controls and trials. It is being accepted that Ayurvedic formulations use heavy metals because of their therapeutic properties. However, many of the commercially available Ayurvedic products have been found to contain dangerously high level of heavy metals due to improper manufacturing processes. Many Ayurvedic drugs fail quality tests; many brands are charged with making exaggerated claims and misleading advertisements.

In fact, India's exports of Ayurvedic medicines is sorely limited by the fact that they fail to meet the regulatory standards of the importing countries! Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha, Secretary, Ministry of Ayush himself remarked, "With a proper regulatory system, India stands to gain enormously as a producer of traditional Ayurvedic goods in the global market!" They even noticed that many states are indiscriminately doling out licenses for new Ayurvedic drugs.

To add to this, some unscrupulous manufacturers add allopathic drugs (especially steroids) to Ayurvedic

formulations to deliver quick or better results. A 2011 study by King Edward Memorial Hospital in Mumbai tested 244 Ayurvedic drugs over a period of five years. It was revealed that 96 (or around 40%) of them contained steroids and toxic metals.

The regulatory authority should prescribe best practices for manufacture and quality parameters. It should also have a mechanism for reporting adverse events so that notices, alerts and notices can be issued in a studied manner.

## Need for Clinical Trials

Ayurveda can treat many chronic and autoimmune diseases like diabetes, arthritis, spondylosis, asthma, allergies, eczema and even cancer. While a significant percentage of the population is grappling with such disorders, modern medicine does not have a cure for them. All it does is prescribe a host of drugs to manage the condition – drugs that are quite expensive and come with a lot of side effects.

On the other hand, Ayurveda is largely based on textual claims and anecdotal evidence. The effects of Ayurvedic interventions on viability and wellbeing need to be backed by clinical information. While some documented proofs do exist and research is ongoing in the field, the therapeutic efficiency has to be revalidated with advanced scientific procedures, rigorous experimentation, systematic reviews and proper research methodology.

Clinical trials are the holy grail of evidence-based medicine as they research new tests and treatments even while evaluating their safety, efficacy and other effects on human health outcomes. Allopathic medicine allows for determining the right dosage that will elicit a response, which can then be tested on human subjects. However, as Ayurvedic formulations do not isolate the active substance, it is difficult to determine the dose at which they will deliver the intended therapeutic benefits.

Last year, new portals of CTRI (Clinical Trial Registry of India) and RMIS (Research Management Information System) were launched for the Ayush sector. The creation of Ayurveda dataset in CTRI facilitates the usage of Ayurveda terminologies to record clinical study meta data based on Ayurveda interventions which was otherwise dependent on terminology borrowed from modern medicine. This is a significant step towards worldwide visibility for Ayurveda-based clinical trials. Similarly, RMIS will be a one stop solution for research and development in Ayurveda-based studies.

## Conclusion

Bringing in proper regulation for Ayurvedic medicines is essential not only to ensure safety and efficacy for protecting patients, but also to establish a sense of trust that will promote Ayurveda as a safe and effective system of medicine around the world! ▶

## Government Measures to Mainstream Traditional Medicine



## राष्ट्रीय आयुर्वेद दिवस

Our ancient systems of medicine were in dire straits when India gained independence. Over the years, the governments have been taking several steps to bring Ayurveda in the limelight and promote holistic health of Indians.

**IN THE ANCIENT** times, Indian society relied on the traditional system of medicines. There was Ayurveda, Naturopathy, Unani, Sidha, Yoga and many more folk healing practices that co-existed in harmony. This rich culture of varied indigenous healing systems had developed over centuries and featured skilled physicians, sophisticated medical therapies and extensive knowledge of the substances used in the remedial treatments.

Ayurveda was always the most popular therapeutic approach. In fact, Ayurveda was poised to become the forerunner of India's great medical heritage. However, the colonial rulers relegated our indigenous medicine to secondary status and introduced western allopathic drugs in the country. Western medicine became dominant during the British era which led to the gradual erosion of Indian traditional medicines.

Successive governments of independent India initiated a series of measures to revive our alternative healthcare approaches and bring them on par with allopathy. The Traditional Systems of Medicine were officially recognised and became a part of the national health care network for catering to the primary health needs of the country with Ayurveda being promoted as one of the major healthcare systems.

Some of the key steps taken to promote therapeutic traditions and integrate them into clinical practice include:

- Establishing the Indian Medical Central Council Act to standardise Ayurvedic teaching institutions, their curriculum and their diplomas.
- Forming a government body to set up norms for the manufacture and control of the quality of traditional medicinal preparations.
- Establishing hospitals and colleges for Ayurveda and other traditional systems of medicine.
- Publishing the first official list of Ayurvedic medicines or pharmacopoeia.

The most notable move was the setting up of the Department of Indian System of Medicine which was later renamed to AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy,

Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy) to support research and development of traditional medicine, set standards and regulate the activities related to practice.

After this, the National Rural Health Mission envisaged the concept of 'mainstreaming of AYUSH and revitalisation of local health traditions' to strengthen public health services. This helped in utilising the untapped AYUSH workforce, therapeutics and the principles for the management of community health problems at different levels.

## A New Lease of Life

The current Modi government is according extensive attention to reviving our traditional systems of medicine and making them mainstream once again.

**Ayush Ministry** - The Department of AYUSH was upgraded into a full-fledged eponymous ministry. The Prime Minister took the bold and visionary step of appointing an Ayurvedic doctor – rather than the customary IAS officer - as Secretary of the Ministry of AYUSH which led to extraordinary results.

The annual budget of the ministry has been increased five times between 2014 and 2022. The outlay has almost tripled, starting from only Rs. 1,069 crore in 2014-15 to Rs. 2,122 crore 2020-21 and Rs. 3050 crore in the current budget.

Recently, the acronym AYUSH was accorded as a word in itself and turned to Ayush!

The Ministry of Ayush (MoA) has been working to create awareness about simple Ayush measures that can improve immunity and health. It is encouraging both small and big companies to focus on Ayush which will also contribute to Aatmanirbhar Bharat. Ayush Gram promotes Ayush-based lifestyles through behavioural change communication, training of village health workers towards identification and use of local medicinal herbs and provision of Ayush health services. It also operates a Drug Control Cell to deal with matters pertaining to Drug Quality Control and regulation of Ayurveda drugs.



**“The disciplines covered under Ayush are not mere traditions, it is a science. All disciplines not only treat but also maintain health. Disciplines under Ayush could be considered as health science and not as medical science.”**

**– Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha, Secretary of Ayush.**

He is a Padmashri awardee and former Vice Chancellor of Gujarat Ayurveda University, Jamnagar. He was also awarded the Global Ayurveda Physician Award in 2007, the Ayurveda Ratna Award in 2008. He founded the Chakrapani Ayurveda Clinic & Research Center in Jaipur in 1998. As Secretary of Ayush, he has established new standards in education, medicine and research of Ayurveda.



“We want the priceless culture that India had for ages should be known to the young generation of the country. We should teach them how our ancestors, *rishis* and *munis* dedicated their lives to make our country strong.”

– Sarbananda Sonowal,  
Union Minister for Ayush

Additionally, the Ministry is striving to promote international cooperation for the development of Ayush systems of medicine including Ayurveda by:

- Signing country to country Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs)
- Setting up Ayush academic chairs in foreign institutes
- Organising/participating in international exhibitions/conferences/workshops/ road shows/trade fairs, etc.
- Offering incentives to Ayush drug manufacturers, entrepreneurs, institutions, etc.
- Setting up Ayush Information Cell in different countries to disseminate authentic information about Ayush systems

In 2016, the Ministry declared Dhanwantari Jayanti (Dhanteras) as Ayurveda Day to celebrate the historic roots of this alternative medicinal practice in the Indian subcontinent. Since then, it is being celebrated every year with a specific theme and awareness programs.

**National AYUSH Mission** - This was launched to promote Ayush medical systems through cost-effective Ayush services, strengthen educational systems, facilitate the enforcement of quality control of ASU&H (Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani & Homoeopathy) drugs and sustainable availability of ASU&H raw materials. The overarching objective is to revitalise and strengthen the Ayush systems making them prominent medical streams in addressing the health care of the society. It is also persevering to complement allopathic medicine, especially in remote rural areas with poor access to conventional health facilities through the state and UT governments.



The Mission has been actively working to promote our old and traditional medicinal systems while setting up and upgrading Ayush wellness centres, medical colleges, hospitals and dispensaries, thus enabling access to better education, manpower, medicines and healthcare facilities in the Ayush genre.

It is planned to set up 12,500 dedicated Ayush health and wellness centres under the Ayushman Bharat scheme. Accordingly, the Ayush Mission is also

converting many Ayurvedic dispensaries into Ayush Health and Wellness Centres (AHWCs).

In 2021, the government extended the National Ayush Mission as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for another five years till 2026 to further expand the Ayush sector and address the gaps in health services.

**All India Ayurveda Institute** – A number of colleges, hospitals and research institutes dedicated to Ayurveda have been established over the years. However, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) never had any dedicated space for Ayurveda or other traditional sciences.

In 2017, the All India Ayurveda Institute (AIIA) was set up in Delhi on the lines of AIIMS which brought a dedicated identity to this discipline. Conceived as an apex institute for Ayurveda, it aims at bringing a synergy between traditional wisdom of Ayurveda

and modern tools and technology. It offers postgraduate and doctoral courses in various disciplines of Ayurveda while focussing on fundamental research of Ayurveda, drug development, standardisation, quality control, safety evaluation and scientific validation of Ayurvedic medicine.

Recognising the role of traditional healing practices, the World Health Organisation (WHO) announced in November 2020 that it will set up a Global Centre for Traditional Medicine in India to strengthen the evidence,



Let Ayurveda be a driving force, which brings the world to our land. May it also create prosperity for our youth!

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi

research, training and awareness of traditional and complementary medicine. Following this, the government inaugurated two Ayurveda institutions - The Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda (ITRA), Jamnagar (Gujarat), and the National Institute of Ayurveda (NIA), Jaipur (Rajasthan). The former has been conferred the status of an Institution of National Importance (INI).

**Ayurvedic Pharmacopoeia** – India is one of the few countries that has established the pharmacopoeial standards of its traditional medicines. The Ayurvedic Pharmacopoeia of India (API) is a unique book of standards describing the quality, purity and strength of selected drugs that are manufactured, distributed and sold by the licensed manufacturers across India. This serves as the quality standards for the safety and efficacy of these drugs. The book has been developed in two parts; part one comprises of mono-monographs of single drugs of plant, animal and mineral origin and part two covers monographs on compound formulations. The ministry also formulates the Ayush Essential Drugs Lists and updates them from time to time.

In 1964, Ayurvedic drugs were brought under the purview of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940. But, traditional practitioners and other stakeholders have been clamouring for a separate regulation since quite a few years.



**Dr. D. Ramanathan, General Secretary of Ayurveda Medicine Manufacturers Organisation of India (AMMOI) welcomed the government's decision saying that till now the government was only supporting the production side of Ayush**

**medicines, especially Ayurveda drugs, but now it is initiating the marketing side also. This will open avenues for consumers to pursue the Indian system of treatment through Ayurveda.**

**Additional measures** - The government is encouraging farmers to grow Ayurvedic plants in various states to diversify agriculture and boost farm income. Recently, the authorities even decided to sell Ayurvedic medicines in Jan Aushadhi stores at very nominal prices. Therefore, these stores will now also offer *amla*, *triphala*, *ashwagandha*, *chyawanprash*, etc. alongside the generic allopathic medicines and surgical equipment.

The MoA created a list of 20 'prioritised' Ayurvedic medicines that is divided into six categories — Ayurvedic fermented formulations (*asava* and *arishta*), liquid formulations (*avaleh*), gum-based products (*guggulu*), powdered medicines (*churna*), oil-based products (*taila*) and tablet-based products (*gutika*).

Government think tank, NITI Aayog has constituted an Advisory Committee to propose a framework of a comprehensive integrative health policy to achieve inclusive, affordable, evidence based healthcare; and roadmap for disease prevention and health promotion in national programmes based on modern and traditional integrative approaches.

After the pandemic, the Ministry of Tourism is planning to register all wellness centres in the country and create a database with separate hubs for Ayurveda and allopathy to help tourists make the right choices.

The AYUSH Start-up Challenge was started in February this year with a goal of identifying and supporting start-ups working in this field.

PM Modi is keen on making Ayurveda more scientific and employment-oriented. He constantly encourages Ayurveda practitioners to combine their fundamental principles with some of the diagnostic methods and standards of modern medical science. Even during his messages to the citizens during the ongoing pandemic, he has repeatedly stressed on the beneficial impacts of Ayurvedic practices on the immune system. He also emphasised on the need to come up with a new international standard curriculum in Ayurveda.

Ayurveda has been trending across the world for the last couple of years thanks to the efforts of the government. Italy's Medical Act recognises Ayurveda and other non-conventional medicines (since 2002). More and more people are adopting these centuries-old methods in their daily life. But we still have a long way to go.....

“**During & post pandemic, Ayurveda Science got very high mileage and it has risen to the occasion by proving its ability to contribute in social health care.**”



## **Prof. K. N. DWIVEDI** (M.D. (Ay.), Ph.D.)

is currently the Dean, Faculty of Ayurveda, IMS (The Institute of Medical Sciences), BHU, Varanasi. He is also an esteemed member of leading organisations like Research Society for Study of Diabetes in India, Diabetic Association of India, Indian Society of Wound Management, National Integrated Medical Association and Editorial Board, Allied Ayurvedic Medical Research Abstracts (AAMRA).

In this interview with The Aware Consumer, Prof. Dwivedi elaborates on the importance of Ayurveda and Ayurvedic medicines and how it is poised in the future.

**Q What role can Ayurveda play in the health and wellbeing of people in the 21st century? Where do you see Ayurveda in the future - will it remain an alternative system or will it get integrated with conventional medicine?**

Ayurveda is not just a medical system; it is an experience-based science that was established thousands of years ago. It advocates healthy life style through Dinacharya and Ritucharaya. The focus is on understanding your body and balancing it in the best possible manner. It promotes eating the right foods that can be digested easily and propagates detox processes whenever toxins are interfering with the normal routine of the body. This approach nourishes all the tissues including the extremely vital immune system.

Ayurveda has always played a predominantly preventive role in the society. It is not just limited to the physicians but can be used by lay persons, households, and communities very easily. The well-being comes from building harmony between our mind, body and spirit.

Today, with the help of modern scientific drug development platform and consumer friendly remedies, it will be helpful for day to day health issues. Thus, Ayurveda has the potential to contribute to the primary health care system for building a healthy society. In any health care program, integration of sciences always provide extra miles so when we work together collectively, definitely it will deliver excellent result in health care areas.

**Q What are the challenges in the mainstreaming of Ayurveda in the modern times?**

Although Ayurveda is backed by thousands of years of user based knowledge, evidential data in modern scientific ways is the main challenge along with lack of standardisation of treatment protocols and medicines. These need to be relooked. Moreover, Ayurveda is customized and tends to differ from region to region. We always see that the treatment recommended by Ayurveda practitioners varies across the country, but this is a strength of the system which should be mobilised properly!

**Q Has the pandemic caused people to start having more faith in natural remedies and immunity boosters that Ayurveda has been promoting since ages?**

Yes, I agree both during & post pandemic, Ayurveda Science got very high mileage and it has risen to the occasion by proving its ability to contribute in social health care. This stems from the fact that Ayurveda system of healthcare takes a holistic approach towards disease management and preservation of health. Maintaining optimum health and immune status always remains a primary feature of the practice of Ayurveda.

**Q Do people really trust Ayurveda or only use it as a last resort?**

In spite of a number of hurdles, the traditional Ayurvedic medicine of India is accepted widely around the world and the demand is increasing continuously. In 2018, 88% of WHO Member States acknowledged the use of traditional and complementary medicine!



Nowadays people really trust Ayurveda and are using it for various chronic disorders. I know so many people who now prefer to choose plant based medicines or products to improve their health conditions. Many even opt to go the Ayurveda route for curing their ailments, either alone or in combination with other medicines. This is primarily because Ayurveda eliminates the root cause of the problem which is inherently lacking in modern biomedicine. Therefore, it cannot be denied that traditional systems of medicines have always played an important role in the society. They are continuing to do so at present and shall play a major role in the future also.

**Q What would you advise people who want to learn Ayurveda?**

In the last few decades there has been growing interest in studying alternative forms of medicine. A career in Ayurveda is an emerging and promising proposition. An Ayurvedic practitioner can start an own practice; get employment as a medical officer or doctor with government and private Ayurvedic hospitals; become a professional or supervisor in a health centre; or pursue



**“Ayurveda is customized and tends to differ from region to region. We always see that the treatment recommended by Ayurveda practitioners varies across the country, but this is a strength of the system which should be mobilised properly!”**

**– Prof. K. N. DWIVEDI**

a career in academics. Then there are options in the field of research and development, pharmaceutical industry, herbal drug cultivation and even hospitality and more.

There are many premier institutes that undertake teaching, training, research and development in the field of Ayurveda with regulated standards for medical education, like All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA), New Delhi, National Institute of Ayurveda (NIA), Jaipur, Rashtriya Ayurveda Vidyapeeth (RAV), New Delhi, North Eastern Institute of Ayurveda and Homeopathy (NEIAH), Shillong and Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda Gujarat Ayurveda University, Jamnagar. Hard work, logical thinking, data collection and compiling to create evidence-based Ayurveda will surely go a long way.

**Q What measures is the Ministry taking to promote the trust and usage of Ayurveda?**

Propagation of Ayurveda through social media, digital media and other platforms are some of the initiatives taken by the Ministry to make Ayurveda reach global audiences. There is a focus on promoting Ayurveda at the grassroots level by improving outreach and quality of

its health delivery in rural areas. The functional integration of quality Ayush services in the public health care system by co-locating them with allopathy is providing patients with a choice of treatments, especially those who are dependent on government health facilities. Moreover, there are measures for educating people that apart from our codified traditional medicinal system, the uncoded folk medicine can also be used to maintain health and cure diseases, especially for people in rural, indigenous and ethnic communities.

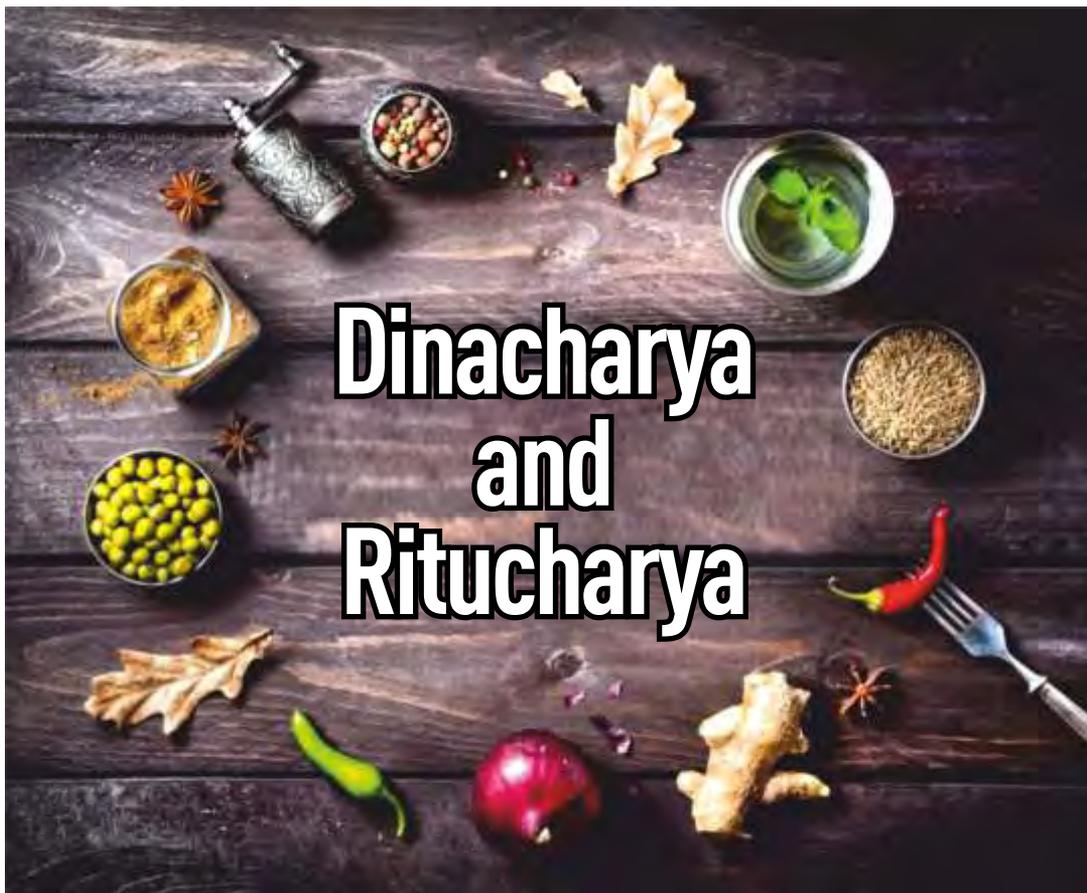
**Q What message would you like to give to the consumers for their overall well-being?**

Ayurveda urges us to focus on our health on a daily basis. People should open their eyes to the fact that Ayurveda is safe, cost effective, easily available and better physiologically compatible. This holistic approach can avert health problems even while providing basic healthcare to all. As Ayurveda has a huge user based skill of caring and curing various challenging health issues, consumers should take benefit of the science by adopting its principal and practices. You should use it and also promote others to use it! ▶



**Pyush Misra**  
Trustee,  
Consumer Online Foundation

## THE WHEELS OF AYURVEDIC LIVING



“Ayurveda advocates the importance of a healthy lifestyle. The two main cornerstones are Dinacharya and Ritucharya. Following these regimens will lead to potent and powerful internal adjustments in the body, paving the way for wholesome and balanced well-being”

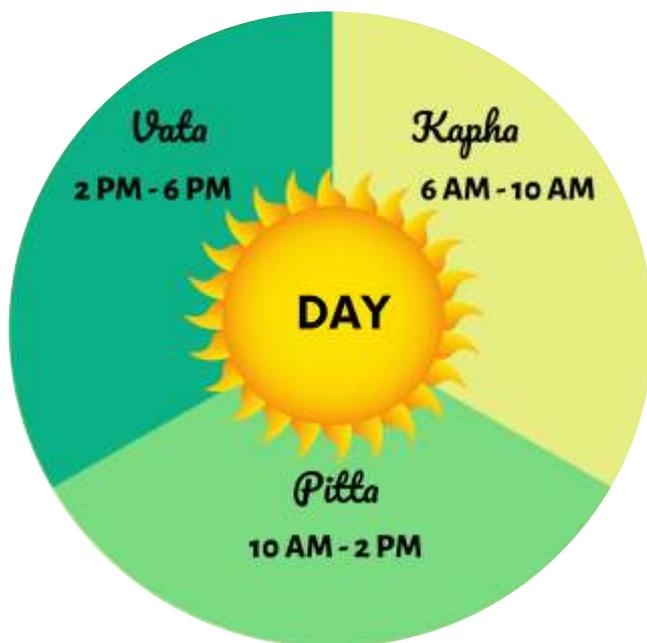
– observes *Pyush Misra*

**AYURVEDA IS THE** science of life that propagates healthy and happy living by inculcating correct daily and seasonal regimes. These are based on sound therapeutic principles and have a proven history of empirical use. *Dinacharya* is the daily principle or routine while *Ritucharya* is the seasonal principle or routine which together maintain a balance of the life energies within us.

This ancient science upholds that different times of the day and different seasons influence the dominance of *doshas* in the body. Accordingly, it associates every season and in fact, every period of the day with certain healthy habits, diets and lifestyles that can conserve our health.

## Dinacharya

The concept of *Dinacharya* seeks to regularise our biological clock based on the sun and moon cycles along with the prevalence of the three main energies – *vata*, *pitta* and *kapha* – at different points of each cycle. The major practices that *Dinacharya* promotes are:



- Wake up early every morning during Brahma Muhurta (usually between 4.00 a.m. and 5.30 a.m.)
- Cleanse the senses by rinsing the face with cold water, performing Jalneti, Nasya and Dantadavana (brushing)
- Drink warm water (Ushapana) and do Kavala (gargling), Gandush (holding water in the mouth) before evacuating the natural wastes (Mala-Mutra Visarjana)
- Massage the body with essential oils (Abhyanga) – the choice of oil will depend on the season and climate
- Vyayam is exercising the body by doing yoga or any other physical activity
- Take a bath with normal or hot water (Snana) depending on the season

- Dry massage with herbal powders (Udwarthanam)
- Meditation for some time
- Unwind in the evening and sleep soon after the sun has set

We have a busy and demanding lifestyle and making time for these healthy habits in our daily regimen may seem improbable. However, all it takes is a bit of planning and effort to incorporate the healthy activities that will maintain equilibrium in the body and keep lifestyle disorders – like obesity, diabetes and hypertension - at bay!

## Ritucharya

Bio-life undergoes a change with every season – flowers bloom in spring, leaves shed in autumn and animals go into hibernation in winter. It follows that the change in the energies of nature will impact the human body as well. In fact, our body tries to adjust to the environmental changes by desiring specific types of food and altering our sleep/wake cycle. Therefore, just like we change our wardrobe to suit the season, our diet and lifestyle should also shift to acclimatise with the season.

Ayurveda divides the year into six seasons – *Shishira* (winter), *Vasanta* (spring), *Grishma* (summer), *Varsha* (monsoon), *Sharata* (autumn) and *Hemanta* (late



**Shishira**  
(winter)



**Vasanta**  
(spring)



**Grishma**  
(summer)



**Varsha**  
(monsoon)



**Sharata**  
(autumn)



**Hemanta**  
(late autumn)

autumn). The first three occur in *Uttarayan* (ascent or northward movement of the sun) while the latter feature in *Dakshinayana* (descent or southward movement of the sun).

Ayurveda prescribes specific diet and lifestyle regimens for each season based on the energy of the sun, wind and earth which in turn impact the strength and *doshas* of the body.

The spring weather leads to an accumulation of *kapha* in the body which calls for a bitter, hot, pungent and astringent diet while avoiding cold, salty, sour and sweet foods. Wheat, barley, honey syrup, fruits like mango, jackfruit, etc. and meat of forest animals along with chilli, ginger, cinnamon and garlic is recommended. Sweets, oil, ghee and seafood are better avoided. Use warm water



### **Vasantika Vamana (therapeutic emesis in spring season)**

Gudi Padwa or Ugadi falls in the spring season and marks the beginning of the Hindu calendar. Apart from indulging in the traditional cuisine and festivities, *Vasantika Vamana* is also performed in different parts of Maharashtra. This is one of the five therapies of Ayurvedic Panchakarma which involves inducing multiple rounds of vomiting so as to eliminate the vitiated *kapha* dosha. This therapeutic exercise is done through medicated emesis which dislodges toxins from the respiratory and gastrointestinal tract to deliver varied benefits to the body. This is a preventive and curative treatment which will keep you healthy throughout the year.

Anyone in any part of the country can undergo the Vamana therapy, but it should be carried out under the strict supervision of an Ayurveda practitioner.

for bathing, exercise in the mornings and avoid sleeping in the day.

In summer, the hot climate aggravates the *pitta*. Therefore, you should eat *pitta* pacifying cold, liquid, sweet and oily foods like rice, dals, ghee, milk, buttermilk, fruit juices, coconut water and meat of forest animals. Excessive hot, spicy, sour and salty foods are better avoided. Wear light clothes, sleep in the day, apply pastes on the body and stay in cool places.

The rainy season aggravates the *vata* dosha, calling for *vatashamaka* sour and salty food and drinks. The food should be hot, dry, fatty and easily digestible, like preserved rice, wheat, barley and mutton soups. It is best to avoid heavy foods and excessive liquids. Bathe with boiled water and perform enema if possible.

In autumn, the *pitta* accumulates again, making a diet dominant in bitter, sweet and pungent foods ideal. Wheat, lentils and honey are good. Hot, bitter, sweet and astringent foods like fat, oils, meat of aquatic animals, curds, etc. should be avoided. Eat only when hungry and bathe with water that is purified by the sun/moon rays. Taking ghee processed with bitter drugs and performing purgation and bloodletting therapies will be good.

In late autumn, the *vata* is aggravated calling for hot, sweet, sour and salty food like new rice, flour, milk, sugarcane, til, oils and fats. Stay away from cold, light and dry foods. Massage the body, use warm water, exercise regularly and wear heavy clothes.

The winter atmosphere is cold, dry and chilly which aggravates the *kapha* dosha in the body. Imbibe hot, sour and salty foods like rice, pulses, cereals, corn, ginger, garlic and milk. Avoid bitter and pungent foods. Additionally, massage the body, expose it to sunlight and wear warm clothes while avoiding excessive walking or sleeping at late night.

This kind of a connect with nature will aid digestion and absorption, release stress and prevent diseases apart from building physical strength and mental capacity.

### **Conclusion**

*Ritucharya* and *Dinacharya* are the main tools of preventive Ayurveda. Vitiating these regimens will not lead to ill-effects immediately. But the imbalance in the *doshas* continues to accumulate and will show up as a serious disorder in the long run. On the other hand, regularly following these routines will promote well-being, peace, happiness and longevity. ▶



**Ayurveda is not just about taking herbal medicine; it's also about following a strict lifestyle regimen. Experts say that following Ayurvedic concepts such as Dinacharya and Ritucharya can go a long way in ensuring a host of health benefits. The basic idea behind these principles is to prevent diseases by making lifestyle changes in accordance with cycles of Nature.**



## The Way Forward for the Ayurvedic Drug Manufacturing Industry

Ayurvedic drugs are giving the allopathic medicine market a run for its money. However, this competitive alternative faces certain inherent limitations that can destabilise the sector in the years to come.



**AYURVEDA PROPAGATES THE** gifts of nature. This indigenous system of medicine is primarily based on medicinal plants which deliver various prophylactic and therapeutic benefits to the body.

In ancient times, Ayurvedic medicines were prepared by the *vaidyas* using conventional tools and methods keeping the disease and patient in view. Many people also made the concoctions in their own homes based on their local health traditions. At the turn of the 19th century, some households around the physician's residence started producing and distributing Ayurvedic drugs.

It was the rampant spread of epidemics at the end of the same century which led to the shift from the decentralised household production - which was no longer economically viable or convenient - to bulk production of the medications. This kind of large-scale, centralised and mechanised production made the medicines more palatable, improved their shelf life and also provided information of the contents on the labels. Therefore, Ayurvedic drug manufacturing moved from small-scale physician outlet to petty/cottage production, but it was still under the control of the *vaidyas*.

It took another century for manufacturing firms to make inroads in the form of industrialised production by adopting or innovating on existing conventional pharmaceutical technologies. Scientific manufacturing

methods, clinical testing, state regulations and market dynamics started dominating the Ayurvedic drug sector.

Today, the organised Ayurvedic manufacturing industry is defined by both big brands operating modern factories as well as numerous small manufacturers, making it a strong parallel to the biopharmaceutical industry. While there are large players like Dabur, Zandu, Himalaya and Patanjali, the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) capture as much as 80% of the market share.

### Types of Ayurvedic formulations

Ayurvedic medicines are based on plants, animal extracts and minerals, both in single ingredient drugs and compound formulations. Accordingly, they are divided into two groups:

- *Kasthausadhi* - predominantly plant drugs
- *Rasausadhi* - predominantly metals and minerals

These are manufactured in different forms, including both:

- Classical powders, decoctions, medicated oils, medicated ghee and fermented products
- Modern drug formats of tablets, capsules, lotions, syrups, ointments, liniments, creams, granules, etc.

Then again, the Ayurvedic market has two major divisions - health care and personal care products. While the former comprises of nutraceuticals, pharmaceuticals and dietary supplements, personal care incorporates oral care, skin care, hair care, aromatics and fragrances.



*The organised Ayurvedic manufacturing industry is defined by both big brands operating modern factories as well as numerous small manufacturers, making it a strong parallel to the biopharmaceutical industry.*

## Comparing Definitions of Different Wellness Products



*[Source: Ayurveda Industry Market Size, Strength and Way Forward, a 2018 report by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)]*

It should be noted that the industry as well as the consumers have a tendency to not just use the terms natural, herbal and organic interchangeably, but also blindly deem all of them as 'Ayurvedic'. This practice has to be curbed for Ayurveda to get its rightful place in the sun.

### Market Entry and Regulation

Ayurvedic drug manufacturing is regulated by the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and the accompanying Rules (1945). The Drug Technical Advisory Board, Drug Consultative and the Drug Controller General of India administer the Act and Rules. At the state level, the Food and Drug Administration enforces the laws and licensing requirements.

Setting up an Ayurvedic manufacturing unit requires a license from the Ayush ministry. They also have to abide by the manufacturing standards set by the government to ensure that the medicines are safe for consumption. Additionally, pharmacopoeias and formularies have been developed that provide quality standards for ingredients and formulations. Obtaining a Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) certificate has recently been made mandatory for manufacturing Ayurvedic products.

Apart from this, manufacturers should first understand the scientific rationale and dosage forms of Ayurvedic formulations to use the existing modern technologies as they have been specifically designed for allopathic medicines. This is primarily because while modern medicines are mostly a singular entity with an active



Setting up an Ayurvedic manufacturing unit requires a license from the Ayush ministry. They also have to abide by the manufacturing standards set by the government to ensure that the medicines are safe for consumption.

ingredient, the Ayurvedic ones are usually concoctions of two or more ingredients. Moreover, the active ingredient is not isolated as the entire leaf, flower or root of the plant is used in the preparation.

## Market Potential

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), about 70% to 80% of the world relies on non-conventional medicines for health-related benefits. The COVID-19 pandemic has put our Ayurvedic medicines in the limelight once again and renewed faith in this traditional system of healthcare. This can translate into a substantial increase in income for both the farmers and the manufacturing companies.

The Indian Ayurveda market was valued at approximately US \$1 billion in 2020 with a projected growth rate of 10% to 15% over the next ten years. At the same time, the global Ayurveda market was valued at US \$6.50 billion and is projected to reach US \$21.12 billion by 2028, growing at a CAGR of 15.63% from 2021 to 2028.

The government announced a huge package for Ayurvedic drug manufacturing and medicinal plant cultivation in the SME sector. The Ayush Ministry also signed an MoU with the MSME Ministry to extend all schemes of the MSME industry to the Ayush sector.

"To be competitive in the global market, the industry must take steps that will lead to global excellence. To achieve excellence, the management concepts must be changed to define parameters of excellence. The processes industry must adopt are innovation, quality system, supply chain, visual management and orderliness, these processes will yield productivity, cost, and morale."

– **Mr. Shyam Bang**, Chair, FICCI Manufacturing Excellence Taskforce, Chairman, NACCB, Quality Council of India and Director at Jubilant Life Sciences Ltd.

## The Raw Material Side of Things

Herbal and medicinal plants are the primary ingredients of all Ayurveda products. India has a rich biodiversity, with a wide range of medicinal plants, herbs and shrubs growing in the hilly/forest regions. Around 1100 medicinal plants are used as medicine.

The quality of Ayurvedic products depends on the quality of raw materials apart from the manufacturing processes. However, in the face of the rising demand, the sustained availability of raw materials is becoming a challenge in itself. Moreover, the yield of medicinal plants is falling steadily. The excessive use of insecticides and pesticides is further degrading the quality of herbs with medicinal properties. This shortage of high-quality plants is deteriorating the quality of Ayurvedic products.

"An important issue that Ayurvedic industry faces today is the non-availability of genuine herbs in required quantities leading to adulteration and unauthorised institution that affects the quality of medicines adversely.....Despite the efforts taken by the authorities to promote the cultivation of medicinal plants, the problem of raw material scarcity leading to adulteration remains a concern to the industry."

– **Dr Sulaiman CT**, Senior Scientist & Head, Phytochemistry Division, Centre for Medicinal Plants Research (CMPR), Arya Vaidya Sala Kottakkal.

The government has to step in and take strict action to regulate the supply of medicinal plants. The cycle of raw material collection, right from the harvesting and processing to transportation and storage before use has to be carefully monitored. The Ayush ministry is striving to develop an efficient supply chain management in the plantation of medicinal plants – Mission Vriksh Ayush and a Rs. 4000 crore scheme of herbal cultivation is in the works.

Then again, Ayurveda lacks pharmacopeial standards for each of the active ingredients on the lines of allopathic medicines. In fact, this abhorring lack of quality standards is limiting the reach in the global market - developing herbal monographs will boost the industry and facilitate exports.

Therefore, Ayurvedic manufacturers should follow other steps like physical description, physical tests, pharmacognosised techniques etc. to identify and analyse the crude drug for the purpose of standardisation and quality control.

## Conclusion

The performance of the Ayurvedic drug manufacturing sector is impressive - it is growing at a much higher rate than that of overall manufacturing! However, better regulation, control and promotion is crucial for it to continue to stay relevant in the modern times. ▶



**Payal Agarwal**  
Editorial Consultant

# JOURNEY OF AYURVEDA WITH COVID-19

“The time proven formula of Ayurveda has managed to stand the test of time since centuries. The immensely persecuting COVID-19 pandemic has actually emerged as an unanticipated vehicle that is not only attesting the efficacy, but also bringing back faith in this age-old science!”

– Payal Agarwal



*Ayurveda has become an unexpected beneficiary of the pandemic with people realising the importance of traditional medicines for maintaining good health during these tough times!*

**THE WORLD HAS** been grappling to tackle the devastating fallout of the SARS-CoV-2 infection which has gripped us in an unprecedented pandemic that is claiming lives and health all around. During this global health crisis, modern medicine is relying on repurposed antivirals, steroids and immunomodulators for the symptomatic treatment and critical care of the affected patients. Effective management of this highly contagious disease is still evolving and a specific cure is not yet in sight. Furthermore, allopathy is grossly limited when it comes to preventing COVID-19 or even improving the quality of life.

Scientific understanding of this deadly infection upholds that having a good immune system not only helps in preventing COVID-19, but can also safeguard the inflicted from progression of the disease. Given that Ayurveda is packed with home remedies and natural food supplements that can build immunity and promote well-being, millions of people in India and across the globe have come to rely on this ancient science as an effective, safe, accessible and affordable prophylaxis for the management of COVID-19. After all, what can be better than boosting our immunological and mental status in a natural way?

Prime Minister Modi has also been stressing on repeated occasions about the importance of Ayurveda and traditional medicines during the pandemic. He firmly espouses that this crisis is the right time for the world to embrace Ayurveda!

### What the Government is Doing

Right since the very beginning of the pandemic, the Ministry of Ayush has been proactively issuing several self-care guidelines and prophylactic advisories for

improving the respiratory health and enhancing the body's natural defence system. They are steeped in Ayurveda, have been vetted by eminent Ayurveda experts and vaidyas, and are supported by Ayurvedic literature and scientific publications. These are preventive health measures and do not claim to be treatment for COVID 19.

The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare's guidelines on managing post-recovery symptoms of COVID-19 also include medicinal herbs and concoctions like *Mulethi* (licorice root) powder, *Giloy* (*Tinospora cordifolia*) powder, *Chyawanprash* and warm turmeric milk. Again, these should be taken under strict medical supervision.

"Despite our nation being very populous, the COVID-19 situation is under control because every household is consuming immunity boosters like turmeric milk, the ashwagandha herb, kaadha etc."

– PM Modi



The Ministry of Ayush also set up an Interdisciplinary Committee for Integration of Ayurveda and Yoga Interventions in the 'National Clinical Management Protocol: COVID-19', chaired by Dr. V.M. Katoch (former Director General, ICMR). The experts formulated a report and recommendations based on detailed scientific rationale - like acceptable experimental and clinical published data with references of the interim trends of ongoing and completed clinical studies, safety studies and in-silico studies.

## RECOMMENDED MEASURES

### I General Measures

1. Drink warm water throughout the day.
2. Daily practice of Yogasana, Pranayama and meditation for at least 30 minutes as advised by Ministry of AYUSH (#YOGAatHome #StayHome #StaySafe)
3. Spices like Haldi (Turmeric), Jeera (Cumin), Dhaniya (Coriander) and Lahsun (Garlic) are recommended in cooking.

### II Ayurvedic Immunity Promoting Measures

1. Take Chyavanprash 10gm (1tsf) in the morning. Diabetics should take sugar free Chyavanprash.
2. Drink herbal tea/decoction (Ayush Kadha or Kwath) made from Tulsi (Basil), Dalchini (Cinnamon), Kalimirch (Black pepper), Shunthi (Dry Ginger) and Munakka (Raisin) - once or twice a day. Add jaggery (natural sugar) and/or fresh lemon juice to your taste, if needed.
3. Golden Milk - Half tea spoon Haldi (turmeric) powder in 150 ml hot milk - once or twice a day.

### III Simple Ayurvedic Procedures

1. Nasal application - Apply sesame oil/coconut oil or Ghee in both the nostrils (Pratimarsh Nasya) in morning and evening.
2. Oil pulling therapy- Take 1 table spoon sesame or coconut oil in mouth. Do not drink; swish in the mouth for 2 to 3 minutes and spit it off followed by warm water rinse. This can be done once or twice a day.

### IV During dry cough/sore throat

1. Steam inhalation with fresh Pudina (Mint) leaves or Ajwain (Caraway seeds) can be practiced once in a day.
2. Lavang (Clove) powder mixed with natural sugar/honey can be taken 2-3 times a day in case of cough or throat irritation.
3. These measures generally treat normal dry cough and sore throat. However, it is best to consult doctors if these symptoms persist.

**"National Clinical Management Protocol based on Ayurveda and Yoga for management of Covid"**

**Using preventive and prophylactic measures from Ayush to combat Covid-19**

Measures for symptomatic management of mild Covid-19 cases

- Take Guduchi + Pippali with warm water
- Take AYUSH 64 with warm water
- Follow General and Dietary measures

Read the full Protocol by clicking on the URL given in the caption

Take the help of Ayurveda and Yoga to manage the COVID 19 complications.

Please check out the Protocol in the link in the caption above.

**NATIONAL CLINICAL MANAGEMENT PROTOCOL**  
BASED ON  
**AYURVEDA AND YOGA**  
FOR MANAGEMENT OF  
**COVID-19**

Released in October 2020 by Govt. of India

Following this, the 'National Clinical Management Protocol Based on Ayurveda and Yoga for the Management of COVID-19' was formulated and released in 2020. It advocates specific Ayurvedic medications along with the dosage and timing for both prophylactic care as well as management of asymptomatic, mild COVID-19 positive and post COVID patients. Again, it was underlined that the interventions and measures proposed in the Clinical Management Protocol only provide relief and alleviate some of the symptoms; they should not be considered a cure.

Then there is the 'AYUSH for Immunity' campaign, Ayush COVID-19 Dashboard, National Repository on Ayush COVID-19 clinical and other R&D initiatives and the Ayush Sanjivani mobile app to name just a few of the other initiatives.

The Ayush Ministry is also promoting the Ayu-Raksha kit, Bala-Raksha kit and Swasthya Raksha kit – combination packs of Ayurvedic medicines like *Samshamanivati*, *Anu Taila*, *Ayush Kwathand Chyawanprash* - developed by All India Institute of Ayurveda for protecting people from COVID-19.

More than 8 lakh Ayush doctors, paramedic staff and students offered their services for the clinical management, surveillance and management of COVID isolation centres and quarantine wards by enlisting themselves as COVID warriors on the government portal. The MoA and MoHFW jointly provided training to 33,000 Ayush master trainers. Total 1.06 lakh Ayush personnel had obtained training at Integrated Government Online training (iGOT) portal on continual basis.



"Our protocol is not from illness to wellness but it is illness to happiness and we have been working for the immunity of the 80,000 Delhi Police workforce"

- Prof. (Dr.) Tanuja Manoj Nesari,  
Director, All India Institute of Ayurveda  
at a webinar on  
*'Integrated Approach to Combat COVID-19 Pandemic'*

Various Ayush institutions and facilities have been remodelled as COVID Care Centres with Ayush human resources on hand and yielded excellent results. Like All India Institute of Ayurveda; National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur; National Institute of Siddha, Tamil Nadu; Dhanvantri Ayurvedic College, Chandigarh; Chaudhary Brahm Prakash Ayurveda Charak Sansthan, New Delhi; A&U Tibbia College, New Delhi; and Naiminath Ayurvedic College, Agra.

The Ayush Ministry operationalised a dedicated community support helpline (toll-free number 14443) to provide Ayush-based approaches and solutions for the challenges raised by COVID-19. The experts not only providing counselling and feasible remedies to the patients but also guide them about the availability of nearby Ayush facilities. It is operational pan-India from 6 am to 12 midnight - all seven days of the week and has received a total of 1,67,920 calls since its inception from all across India (till December 2021).



Karnataka's COVID-19 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) actively recommends administering AYUSH64 for asymptomatic, mild and moderate COVID cases as an adjunct to standard care.

Then there are the Ayur Raksha Clinics and associated Task Forces in Kerala that are persevering to improve the reach and penetration of Ayurvedic preventive, therapeutic and convalescent care strategies for the COVID-19 pandemic. The state government even allowed Ayurvedic doctors to treat category A and B COVID patients while restricting them from treating severe patients with 'red flag signs' and other serious symptoms (category C).

### Rising Demand Among the Consumers

The demand for Ayurvedic products has spiked during the pandemic; especially the sales of Ayurvedic medicines for respiratory problems and for boosting immunity have literally hit the roof. A consumer market research group reported 283% growth in the sales of *Chyawanprash* across the industry between April to June 2020 itself. Exports of herbal products have also increased manifold.

The PM too commented on the growing global interest in Ayurveda and observed that the demand for Ayurvedic products has gone up globally during the pandemic. He said, "The current situation presents the right time for Ayurveda and traditional medicines to become even more popular globally. There is growing interest in them. The world is seeing how modern and traditional medicines are important to further wellness. People are realising the benefits of Ayurveda and its role in boosting immunity."

Prior to this, on National Ayurveda Day, 2020, he had rightfully observed, "Everything is being integrated in today's era and this approach has made Ayurveda play an important role in the medical world. Allopathic and Ayurvedic practices will now go hand in hand. For the first time, the science of our ancient India is being integrated with the science of the 21st century."



Government health workers hand out Ayurvedic medicine to people who are getting tested for COVID-19

Another Health and Lifestyle Survey, 2022 by a D2C Ayurvedic brand in collaboration with CrownIt, a trusted market research platform reveals a 95% uptick in the awareness and adoption of Ayurveda in the aftermath of the pandemic. 4 out of 5 respondents stated that COVID increased their willingness to embrace Ayurveda and 90% people believe that Ayurvedic preparations have no side effects. They uphold that an easy-to-use format that can fit in their daily lifestyle will increase the usage of Ayurvedic products in life.

### Conclusion

It is widely believed that one of the possible causes for lower rates of COVID-19 morbidity and mortality in India is the use of immunity promoting interventions and home remedies based on the traditional knowledge of Ayurveda. Even from the scientific angle, this ancient system is displaying enough potential and possibilities to be employed both for prevention and treatment of COVID-19! ▶



**Dr. Umesh Mishra**  
BAMS, CRAV, D.Ac. PGCRP, MBA  
Sr. Ayurvedic Physician

## Rasayana Chikista for Rejuvenating the Body

Rasayana (rejuvenation) is one of the eight branches of Ayurveda. It deals with the prolongation of life besides maintaining a perfectly healthy condition. Sr. Ayurvedic Physician, Dr. Umesh Mishra elaborates on Rasayana Chikitsa which is a unique specialty of Ayurveda.



**AYURVEDA, THE OLDEST** health science has eight branches and *Rasayana* (rejuvenation) is one of them which deals with the aspects of rejuvenation. The term *Rasayana* literally means making a way of achieving good status of *Rasadi dhatu*. *Rasa* has different meanings like 'juice', 'taste', 'essence', 'flavor' and 'emotion', but is not limited to any of these. In therapeutic process, *Rasa* is concerned with the conservation, transformation and revitalisation of energy. It nourishes our body, boosts immunity and helps to keep the body and mind in best of health.

Thus, by virtue of the above qualities, *Rasayana* therapy plays a very important role in the maintenance of positive health and in curing diseases.

### Definition of Rasayana

#### *Yajara Vyadhi Vidhwansi Bhesajam Tad Rasayanam*

The above sutra define *Rasayana* as a *Bhesajam* (meaning medical therapy which destroys) *Jara* (meaning old age) and *Vyadhi* (meaning diseases). In other words, the therapy which keeps old age and disease away is called *Rasayana*. It follows that *Rasayana* can be utilised to promote health, serve as defence against disease and promote longevity.

### The Therapeutic Object of Rasayana

The *Rasayana* therapy enhances the qualities of *rasa* and enriches it with nutrients. With such enriched excellent *rasa*, one attains longevity, memory, intelligence, freedom from disorder, youthfulness, excellence of luster, complexion and voice, optimum development of physique and sense organs, mastery over phonetics, respectability and brilliance. These things are well documented in the 'Charaka Samhita'.

*Rasayana* therapy is that which enriches the nutritional quality of *rasa*, enhances digestion and metabolism by normalising *Agni* or body fire, and promotes the competence of channels.

*Rasayana* is further divided into two main divisions:

1. *Kuti Pravesika* (Indoor Management) and
2. *Vatatapika* (Outdoor Management)

### Kuti Pravesika Rasayanam

In this method, the *Rasayana* therapy is conducted in an isolated place, inside a special chamber constructed with the purpose of providing rejuvenation. This type of *Rasayana* will come with its package of restrictions and special instructions, following which the patient has to consume *Rasayana*.



### Vatatapika Rasayana

*Vatatapika* means *vata* + *atapikai*.e. The person living their normal life and while living or getting exposed to the

*vata* (meaning air) and *atapa* (meaning heat of the Sun). *Rasayana* therapy which will be given is called *Vatatapika Rasayana*.

In this method, the rejuvenation therapy is conducted in the place of the person who is to be rejuvenated. There will be no isolation, no special constructions or instructions and restrictions to be followed. The person can lead a normal day-to-day life and yet take the *Rasayana*.

### Types of Vatatapika Rasayana

- *Aushdha Rasayana* – drug and herb based *Rasayana*
- *Ahara Rasayana* – diet and nutrition based *Rasayana*
- *Achara Rasayana* – conduct and behaviour based *Rasayana*

*Aushdha Rasayana* is sub-divided into *kalp* (drugs) and herbs.

*Kalp* (drugs) includes therapeutic concoctions like:

- Chavanprash
- Dhatri *Rasayana*
- Swarn Brahmi Vati
- Mahayograj Guggul
- Brihatvatchintamani Ras
- Jawaharmohar
- Suvarna Sutshekhar Ras etc.

Examples of some *Rasayana* herbs with benefits:

#### **Amalaki:** *Amla (Amlica Embillicus)*

is the fruit of a small leafy tree which grows throughout India. This fruit is highly valued for its high Vitamin C content. It also acts as an immunomodulator, a cardiac tonic, is beneficial for skin and more.



#### **Haritaki:** *Terminalia Chebula* is a potent antioxidant and anti-inflammatory herb. It is also very helpful in dealing with obesity as it can reduce excessive fat from the body. It improves

digestion, assimilation and gently clears the bowel movements. It also detoxifies every system in the body, regulates and vitalises metabolism, and balances the *vata* doshas. *Haritaki* – also known as *Mata* - means Mother Herbs which will never give an adverse effect to the consumer, just like a mother can never cause harm to her child.



#### **Guduchi:** Ayurveda refers to Guduchi (*Tinospora Cordifolia*) as 'Amrita'. The term 'Amrita' is attributed to this drug in recognition of its ability to



impart youthfulness, vitality and longevity as well as induce immunity-stimulant action. Thus, Guduchi - which is also known as Giloy - is a well-known immunity building herb.

**Ashwagandha:** The root of ashwagandha has been used since thousands of years as a powerful Rasayana (a tonic for greater vitality and longevity). The herb serves well for calming the mind, relieving weakness, nervous exhaustion and arthritis, and for building sexual energy. Ashwagandha herb has also been used for strengthening the female reproductive system.



**Arjuna:** According to Ayurveda, Arjuna is an astringent, haemostatic, tonic and anthelmintic. The same also proves useful for fractures, ulcers, heart diseases, urinary discharges, asthma, anaemia, excessive perspiration etc. It is also an excellent tonic for the heart.



**Mulethi:** This serves as an excellent tonic, diuretic, demulcent, expectorant and laxative. It is commonly used for alleviating coughs and catarrhal infections and also proves to be useful in irritable conditions of mucous membrane of urinary organs. The herb gives good results in sore throat, anorexia and persistent low fever. It is beneficial in abdominal pain, debility (general), hyperacidity, laryngitis, ulcers, muscle spasms, and painful urination. It also acts as a heart tonic, anti-inflammation, laxative, mucus membrane toner and soother.



**Brahmi:** *Bacopa Monnieri* has been used in Ayurvedic medicine to improve memory and intellect. It also produces significant improvement in the level of anxiety, depression and mental fatigue. The drug also caused significant improvement in symptoms of nervousness, palpitation, headache, insomnia, etc.



**Shatavari:** This herb is known to increase *Sattva*, or positivity and healing power. It also enhances the feelings of spiritual love, and increases *ojas*. Shatavari is also quite effective for stomach



**Rasayana or rejuvenation therapy is one of the eight specialized branches of Ayurveda. Rasayana is defined as the means of achieving the finest quality of body tissues, thereby improving the quality of life.**



ulcers, hyperacidity and diarrhea. It is believed to bring all the body fluids into balance and nourishes all the vital components.

**Pipali:** *Piper Longum* acts as a tonic, sedative, vermifuge and rejuvenator. It is used in cough, chronic bronchitis, gout, rheumatism, lumbago, insomnia, epilepsy, anorexia, asthma, piles and dyspepsia, etc.



**Shilajit:** In Ayurveda, Shilajit (*Asphaltum*) is considered as the most important drug for many diseases. It was used as a drug in pre-historic periods too. There is evidence of Shilajit (Silajatu) in the Indus civilisation. Traditionally it is used as a power increasing tonic. The following health properties are found in Shilajit:



- Helps accelerate processes of protein and nucleic acid metabolism and stimulates energy providing reactions
- Counteracts diabetes and regulates the blood sugar level
- Purifies blood, improves functioning of pancreas and strengthens digestion
- Reduces fat, dissolves tumours and counteracts thirst
- Promotes the movement of minerals, especially calcium, phosphorous, and magnesium into muscle tissue and bone
- Stimulates the immune system and improves restoration (recovery) after exercise

### Conclusion

Rasayana therapy includes drugs, dietary regimens and codes of conduct that can be employed together to protect/promote health and also cure diseases. ▶



सत्यमेव जयते  
Ministry of Ayush  
Government of India

# WHAT IS आयुर्वेद ?



One of the oldest systems of healthcare in the world. The Sanskrit word Ayurveda means 'knowledge of life'.



Diseases are considered the results of imbalances among the body, mind, consciousness, and environment. The treatment would therefore aim at eliminating or minimizing the causes of imbalance.



Treatment is personalised – combination of internal purification, special diets, herbal remedies, massage therapy, yoga and meditation.





**Dr. Alka Mukne**  
Ph.D. (Tech.)  
Board Member-PSAIF

## Medicalisation of Ayurveda Keeps it On The Back Foot

“It is extremely unfortunate that the holistic perspective of Ayurveda - which makes it stand head and shoulders above conventional allopathy - is being lost to the rampant medicalisation of the system. We need to bring the focus back on the health and well-being philosophy of Ayurveda to keep it resilient and sustainable.”

– Dr. Alka Mukne

*The practice-based evidence  
has to be better synthesised with  
evidence-based practice!*



**AYURVEDA IS A** 'life science' which prescribes a composite approach to living a healthy life. It is not as much about curing a disease as maintaining a healthy state to prevent the disease in the first place. This calls for inculcating the right diet and lifestyle based on the principles of Ayurveda that will maintain equilibrium in the body. Medical interventions are used only when needed!

In fact, western allopathic medicine considers health as the 'absence of disease'. However, Ayurveda takes a much more sweeping approach which encompasses the very rhythm of life while considering an individual's interrelation with other beings, the biosphere and even the environment.

Now we are seeing that Ayurveda is being 'modernised' on the lines of biomedical sciences. Sadly, this kind of medicalisation is ignoring the ancient multidisciplinary and holistic approach of Ayurveda and constraining it to an extremely narrow focus of treating the ill and diseased.

### The Fallout

Unfortunately, the process of streamlining the ancient systems of medicine is diluting the emphasis on the erstwhile focal points of *Svasthya* (health) and *Soukhya* (sustainable happiness). It is also threatening the state of mindful self-awareness even as it fragments the traditional wisdom. This loss of important knowledge and practice to medical imperialism and capitalism is becoming pervasive and profound.

Before you dismiss it as a mere hogwash, consider the growing

medicalisation which is visible in the current practice of Ayurveda. Everything is being treated as a medical problem today. Healthcare providers mindlessly 'integrate' the medical aspects of Ayurveda in their strategy without taking the multidisciplinary nature into account. The practice of Ayurveda has become limited to clinical/hospital care alone.

Ayurvedic therapies are confined to massages and cleansing treatments for detoxification, relaxation and leisure. The current commercialisation is further propagating a simplified and modified version of Ayurvedic culture and practice to the world.

Why are we looking at humans in isolation now? Can we afford to tune out the interdependence of man with the environment? What about overlooking the fact that Ayurveda deems every individual to be unique in terms of body composition, thus prescribing non-standard treatments to suit the constitution, diet, familial background, race, season, climate and geography?

Alas, bio-medicalisation is permeating how Ayurveda is taught, learnt and practised, thus affecting the knowledge, teaching and practice of Ayurveda.

### Standardisation of Education

The *Gurukul* system is a thing of the past as Ayurveda is now taught in medical schools with the aim of producing 'qualified Ayurveda physicians'. The curriculum and

pedagogy mimics the norms of standard medical courses. In medical schools of traditional systems, the original terms and techniques are being replaced by the vocabulary and diagnostic tools of modern medicine to the extent that students are largely unfamiliar with classical references and methodologies.

Many critical elements of Ayurveda - like *tattva* (principles), *sastra* (science) and *vyavahaa* (practice) - are glaringly absent in the academics. We have also lost out on varied branches like *Vrukshayurveda* (health of plants), *Pashuayurveda* (health of farm animals) and *Hasti ayurveda* (health of elephants) which no longer find any place in either the study or the practice of Ayurveda. Meanwhile, topics of study that never existed in Ayurveda – like anatomy and physiology – have been introduced by translating these words into Sanskrit.

Moreover, the study curriculum is 'standardised' across the country on the lines of the rational philosophical approach of modern biomedicine. But how can we overlook the fact that Ayurveda is all about local adaptation – the health care approaches are diverse, region-specific and adapted to local conditions? As a result, various regional texts and local practices have disappeared from both Ayurveda education and practice.

“Because the modern Ayurveda education system is modelled on the process of nationalisation, standardisation, institutionalisation and scientisation of traditional medicine, Ayurveda practitioners are trained using a biomedical curriculum with a biomedical perspective of healthcare delivery.”

– Excerpt from the study on 'Ayurveda and medicalisation today: The Loss of Important Knowledge and Practice in Health?'

Again, Ayurveda involves diverse pharmacological medications with the preparations even being defined by local use. The powders, juices and decoctions were mostly prepared at

Tools of knowledge	Level of application
<b>Aptopadesa:</b> Knowledge through teachings of seers who are one with nature	<b>Tattva</b> (principle) <b>Vyavahara</b> (practice)
<b>Anumana:</b> Knowledge through inference including <b>Yukti</b> – causal relations, and <b>Upamaan</b> – comparative reasoning	<b>Sastra</b> (codification of knowledge – science)
<b>Pratyaksa:</b> Knowledge through direct perception including <i>yogajapratyaksa</i> or intuitive cognition	<b>Vyavahara</b> (practice) <b>Tattva</b> (principles)

*Tools of knowledge and its application at various levels as explained in Ayurveda philosophy (Source: Journal of Ayurveda and Integrative Medicine)*

home using local herbal ingredients. The rich treasure trove of natural remedies is falling victim to standardisation.

Pharmaceuticalisation of Ayurveda is also robbing it of the basic forms of medicine and its preparation. The inherent diversity is being sacrificed at the stake – while more than 10,000 formulations are mentioned in the classical texts, the *Ayurvedic Pharmacopeia of India* legalises only 976 compound formulations and 540 mono-mono-graphs.

### Skewed Health Policy

Fundamental Ayurvedic concepts related to achieving and maintaining equilibrium in the body are completely disregarded now. The Ayurveda and Medicalisation study further critiques that, “There are currently no public health and preventive health care programmes being developed with Ayurveda knowledge, wisdom and perspective. For example, concepts like *Achara rasayana* (which is the strategy for regulating behavioural and social conduct to ensure a healthy life in a healthy society) and the use of non-pharmacological interventions related to lifestyle and diet which Ayurveda advocates, have been neglected in current practice and are not being used to develop public health programmes.”

We need to stop restricting the ancient knowledge and practice of Ayurveda to the medical system alone and apply it at the healthcare provider, community and individual levels once again.

The Foundation for the Revitalisation of Local Health Traditions (FRLHT) has scientifically demonstrated community based solutions for prevention and management of diseases like malaria. The Institute of Applied Dermatology in Kasaragod, Kerala provides research-based evidence of the effective management of skin diseases at the community level using Ayurveda knowledge.



## BAN ON MERCURY

Mercury is considered a highly toxic material leading to a ban in western countries followed by India. However, the same mercury is commonly used in the formulation of various herbal drugs which makes them very effective.

Metals and minerals form an integral part of Ayurvedic medicines as they have therapeutic properties. In fact, the unique processing of mercury and other metal-containing medicines, as per Ayurvedic principles, has shown to convert the heavy metal from its toxic free form to a non-toxic and bio-efficacious nano-form of the metal oxide.

So, did the government consider the Ayush sector before the kneejerk reaction of imposing the ban which is proving to be an irrational incumbrance? Instead of such a blanket ban, a stringent adherence to the processing conditions of the *bhasmas*, in accordance with the procedures specified in Ayurvedic classical texts, ought to be the way ahead.

Furthermore, the modern system of medicine is now beginning to move away from the atypical 'one size fits all' approach by exploring avenues of personalisation with pharmacogenomics to suit individual patients. Allopathic researchers are persevering to understand how medical treatment can be tailored to each person or at least a group of people to deliver improved outcomes and better health. However, this kind of personal customisation based on patient's unique conditions has always been the mainstay of Ayurveda!

### Conclusion

Ayurveda is about the 'knowledge of life', it cannot be considered as limited to curing of diseases. We are losing out a lot in the current process of standardising the education, training, pharmaceuticals of Ayurveda which is leading to a disconnect with the community and nature. The holistic philosophy and perspective of Ayurveda has to be brought into focus once again!

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is spelling out clearly that the world needs a new global pluralistic health system which is aligned with nature! ▶



“Mr. Anil V Kaushal, Business Head at LupinLife Consumer healthcare Business (OTC) shares his studied views on the important role that Ayurvedic medicines can play in preserving health and wellness of consumers today and in the future.”

# AYURVEDIC MEDICINES IN MODERN TIMES



**AYURVEDA HAS A** legacy of thousands of years. This is a traditional medicine system with historical roots in India. It means knowledge of life. It views health as not merely the absence of disease but a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being. So natural wholeness of the body, mind and spirit is called health.

In India, during olden times, complete health care was entrusted to Ayurveda. It prescribed three ways of treating any disease - they are diet, discipline and medicines. This was a unique approach as it works for the system and not for the symptoms. And when the root cause of a problem starts getting cured, other symptoms are cured as well. This approach of Ayurveda is very holistic as it delves deeply into the body, mind and soul. It is the perfect combination of science and the art of living a healthy life.

Ayurvedic treatment continues to be popular for its comprehensive natural healing methods and holistic approaches that work on ailments while improving the well-being of the body and mind. In fact, Ayurveda is globally recognised for its preventive healthcare abilities and curative remedies for many chronic lifestyle disorders.

Today's consumers are well aware that they need efficacious and safe remedies to deal with their health issues. Ayurveda is well suited to this selection criteria. Ayurveda has efficacious remedies with safety; therefore Ayurveda is able to build trust among consumers. Nowadays consumers look for '100% Ayurvedic' claim on products and feel reassured.

It is essential to scientifically prove the efficiency of these medicines. The logic behind use of plants in medicines is - as life exists in plants too, and hence, they will be useful for preserving the health of human beings. So, Ayurveda is a unique stream of science based on nature's foundation of living things.

As Ayurveda has user experience of thousands of years, it offers assurance of safety along with efficacy. Nowadays, the industry is also working on this line to generate safety and efficacy data in modern scientific ways. The science of Ayurveda is also being documented as per the available resources.

In the modern scientific era, Ayurvedic scientist, academicians and industry are adopting contemporary methods and protocols to make Ayurvedic science more appealing, presentable and backed by scientific studies to suit the demands of today's aware consumers.

Ayurveda is touching every area of our lives for its healing and immunity boosting properties. Giloy, which is also known as 'Amrita' in Ayurveda, has potent immunity

building properties. Therefore, it has garnered huge acceptance and is the most demanded herb during the pandemic.

## India's Wellness Industry

The Indian wellness industry is estimated at Rs. 49,000 crore (US\$ 6.70 billion) and is gaining impetus backed by the government's focus on building a healthy society.

The Indian wellness and Ayurveda industries go hand in hand. The Indian Ayurveda industry has several large players, with the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) capturing 80% market share. What we need is players who invest in evidence, science and studies to present Ayurveda backed with science.

Herbal healthcare manufacturers have introduced a range of Ayurveda products in their portfolio containing herbs, juices, powders, health tonics and green teas. FMCG outlets are critical in showcasing Ayurveda products such as herb-infused energy drinks, Ayurvedic shakes, herbal powders and juices and other immunity boosters.

India has the potential to become a health and wellness hub, attracting investments and creating opportunities. The government has set a target of increasing spending on healthcare from the current 1.3% to 3% of its GDP by 2022. With continuous support from the government and various industries shifting towards a healthy Ayurveda-based approach, the Indian wellness and Ayurveda market is on its way to touch the lives of millions of people at both domestic and global levels.

Lupin Limited is also committed to improving the health and quality of life of people. It has made

a foray into the over the counter (OTC) segment under the 'Lupin Life

Consumer Healthcare' umbrella with LupinLife. This has been one of the first healthcare company to invest in Ayurveda. One of the many products in our portfolio, a unique Ayurvedic product for immunity and energy, has been tested with the Defence Institute of Physiology & Allied Sciences (DIPAS) with clinical evidence and published in a leading medical journal.

In fact, in keeping with the motto of our new division, 'Life inspired by Science', all the products in our portfolio are backed by scientific studies. We uphold that good health is the foundation for happiness and are committed to delivering more such clinically-established Ayurvedic products to the people.

When more such players enter the Ayurveda industry and promote the science, we will definitely attain unreachable milestones! ▶





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# Integrating Traditional Ayurveda With Modern Medicine

Why do we always have to choose between allopathy and traditional systems of medicine like Ayurveda, Unani or Homeopathy? Why can't they come together to benefit the ailing in the most comprehensive way possible?



*We need a healthy amalgamation of Ayurveda  
with modern medical science*

**AYURVEDA IS RENOWNED** as a holistic system that focuses on healing the human body as a whole. This is focused on understanding the human physiology for maintaining and restoring health. It can treat a wide range of physical and psychological conditions like cold, cough, constipation, ulcers, acne, obesity, hypertension, diabetes, arthritis, osteoporosis, heart disease, chronic fatigue, memory loss, anxiety, depression and other nervous disorders. There are remedies for ailments and diseases where modern therapy fails to offer any effective medicines.

Then again, Indian systems of medicine are inherently diverse, flexible, accessible, affordable and enjoy a broad acceptance by a large section of the general public. They are also free of the scores of side effects of modern drugs, albeit when used properly and under supervision.

Conversely, the western system of medicine is based on a cure model that is defined by potent medications that deliver quick results. In the process it can even end up suppressing symptoms with many side effects. However, it cannot be denied that this proves to be highly effective in the fields of emergency medicine, diagnostic techniques and surgery, where the existing practice of Ayurveda cannot compete.

### Can They Become Two Parts Of The Same Whole?

The term 'Integrated System of Medicine' is being thrown around since years as a platform for incorporating the best of traditional and modern healthcare systems and procedures.

In reality, there has always been a sharp status gap between modern and traditional systems of medicine. Ayurveda is always considered subservient and becomes the last resort for a majority of the people.

True and wholesome amalgamation of Ayurveda and allopathy calls for healthy cross-learning and collaboration. Practitioners of traditional medicine require training and exposure to contemporary concepts like genetics, molecular biology, developmental biology, etc. Modern medicine also has to be open to appreciating the human body's systems organisation and the holistic philosophy of Ayurveda.

Dr. Soham D. Bhaduri, a renowned doctor and editor of 'The Indian Practitioner' details, "This would entail substantial groundwork with respect to the prerequisites of such integration: namely, building a strong traditional medicine evidence corpus; delineating the relative strengths, weaknesses, and role of each system; negotiating the philosophical and conceptual divergences between systems; standardising and regulating Ayush practices and qualifications; and addressing the unique issues associated with research into Ayush techniques."

Developing Integrative Medicine – a multidisciplinary approach with integrative healthcare practices will bring manifold benefits. Patients can not only enjoy cost-effective and potent remedies for non-communicable and

lifestyle-related diseases, but this can even open novel paradigms of personalised medicine!

### Bringing Ayurveda into the Integrative Fold

There is a steady policy support to integrate the traditional medicines in India with the overarching aim of harmonising all medical disciplines and offering them under one roof.

The National Health Policy 2017 acknowledges the pluralism in the Indian health sector and envisaged a 'One Nation, One Health System' by 2030. This will be centred on an Integrative Health System that assimilates all the modern and traditional systems of medicine in practice, education and research. The policy "recognises the need for integrated courses for ISM (Indian Systems of Medicine), modern science and Ayurgenomics (a combination of Ayurveda with the study of all the genes of an organism, called genomics)". Consequently, when someone is sick or ailing, he/she will be treated with the most suitable and appropriate method depending upon the ailment and health condition irrespective of the medicinal system.

Hence, the Union Health Ministry launched 'The Bridge Programs on Certificate in Community Health for Nurses and Ayurveda Practitioners' to generate Community Health Officers. The Central Council of Indian Medicine (CCIM) – a statutory body of the Ministry of Ayush - even developed a 9 month bridge course to train Ayurveda practitioners to treat common health ailments in the rural population.

The National Ayush Mission is promoting the co-location of Ayush facilities at primary health centres, community health centres and district hospitals. Under another scheme, Ayush practitioners are posted as the only doctor of primary contact in Health and Wellness Centres in remote rural villages. They are even permitted to practice modern medicine in some states.

The National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 also stresses on the need to integrate modern medicine with Ayush systems. It states that, "Given that people exercise pluralistic choices in healthcare, our healthcare education system must be integrative, meaning thereby that all students of allopathic medical education must have a basic understanding of Ayush and vice versa."

The centre even amended the Indian Medicine Central Council (Post Graduate Ayurveda Education) Regulations, 2016 to introduce formal training for 58 specific surgical procedures for Ayurvedic doctors and postgraduate (PG) students. This includes shalya tantra (general surgery), shalakyatantra (diseases of ear, nose, throat, ENT, eye, head, oro-dentistry), cataract operations and removal of benign tumours.

NITI Aayog has set up committees to propose a framework for an integrative health system. Four working groups were also to be constituted – in core areas of education, research, clinical practice, and public health and administration – to study how other countries have

# Strategy to include traditional medicine in regular healthcare service in India



fostered legitimate inclusion of traditional medicine into mainstream health care.

The Chinese healthcare system has always persevered to strike a balance between modern and traditional Chinese medicine. About 95% of China's Department of Traditional Medicine is working in their government hospitals, thus making the traditional medicinal system globally recognised and acceptable everywhere.

## Challenges in the Path

There has been heavy criticism and opposition from various sources against translating integrative medicine into the health system. The Indian Medical Association (IMA) is vociferously protesting against including modern medicine in the Ayurveda syllabus and allowing Ayurvedic practitioners to perform surgeries.

While the allopathic lobby fears the dilution of standards of medical care, the Ayush stakeholders are worried about loss of identity following such integration. This kind of an isolationist approach is fuelling mutual

mistrust between practitioners of traditional and modern healthcare systems. The right integrated framework will be one that can create a middle path – it should fuse the two diverse therapeutic modalities while still permitting autonomy for each. Sustaining them alongside each other will especially help in maintaining integrity of Ayurveda while proving beneficial for meeting international requirements too..

## Conclusion

A concrete harmonising strategy for fair and legitimate inclusion of Ayurveda into mainstream health care offers high potential of predicting disease risk, preventing progress of disease and managing treatments more efficiently. But, for this, both the systems have to complement each other. The perfect amalgamation will be when Ayurvedic doctors not only check the naadi (pulse) of the patient, but also the diagnostic reports and vice versa. Only then can we meet the challenge of universal health care! ▶

## Keeping Ayurveda Relevant in Modern Times

India is pluralistic in its food, medicine and health traditions. We respect our traditional remedies and respect the practitioners even as we rely on modern medicine for our ailments. Consumers share their views on the hurdles littering the path of Ayurveda.

**AYURVEDA IS A** popular system of traditional Indian medicine while the bio-medical system is now universal. Both have their own set of pros and cons. We have to accept that many myths are inherently present in any age-old tradition and knowledge base. Separating myths from facts is what will make Ayurveda a truly global traditional system of medicine. So why are our Ayurvedic scientists trying to compete with western medicine? Why don't they work on enhancing the core competency of Ayurveda instead? But this should be done without compromising on the fundamental principles!

– Amit Kishore, Ghaziabad

Ayurveda is a comprehensive scientific medicinal system indigenous to India. But it cannot afford to live in the past anymore. There is a grave risk of it losing its identity and becoming confined to the pages of history. The world is looking for a natural, sustainable and harm-free form of healthcare. We have to work on evolving this traditional science and making it relevant again. The future lies in complementing and inspiring medical science!

– Rashmi Binrajka, Hyderabad

Ayurveda has a lot going for it. It is non-toxic and non-invasive. It treats the root cause of the problem. It achieves a balance between life and health. It is all about promoting good health and wellness without consuming medicines. This kind of a holistic approach can meet the global health care needs of preventing illness and providing a healthy and long life. With the right strategy and approach, Ayurveda can even dominate medicine one day! After all, who doesn't want a safer alternative to pharmaceutical medications and the attendant side effects?

– Syed Afshaan, Coimbatore

In recent years, people are slowly leaning towards other ways of leading a healthy, happy, stress-free and disease-free life. They have started believing in Ayurveda. The pandemic has further shifted our preferences towards home remedies for curing a cold, dealing with congestion in the chest and building immunity. We are now seeing organised production of medicine, education has been institutionalised and clinical practice is becoming professional. What remains is for this ancient wisdom of using natural substances, medicines and herbs to now be better blended with our modern lifestyle and health-oriented habits. This will increase the popularity even further!

– Caroline Joseph, Itanagar

The knowledge of Ayurveda is not limited to medicine, cure or therapy. The fundamental aim is to restore balance between the mind, body and spirit. This brings about awareness about oneself and harmony for each individual. In fact, the medicine is usually the last mode of treatment and the main focus is on natural healing modalities that remove the disease even before it manifests! But there are umpteen hurdles in the form of myths, confusion, lack of accessibility and more. The simplicity of the system has to be emphasised and it has to be introduced in more clinical settings for it to be able to provide health care to large sections of the population.....

– Rhitu Arora, Ludhiana

Our classical scriptures emphasise on maintaining a symbiotic relationship with nature. This holistic approach is the embodiment of Ayurveda. It supports good health and can cure severe diseases too. The time is most opportune to trigger Ayurveda in the world as the system can maintain immunity in the body. In fact, there are many immunity boosters which even trigger the immune system and improve the health condition.

– Aahaan Agarwal, Jaipur

UPDATE ...



Moving a Step Ahead

Update on the February edition on

# Using Bans As A Substitute for Effective Governance?

• **IN FEBRUARY 2022**, the government once again made a hard-hitting move of banning 54 mobile apps, mainly Chinese, due to data breach of Indian citizens and threat to national security. These apps obtained critical permissions to collect sensitive user data which was then misused and transmitted in real-time to servers located in a hostile country. Some of them could even carry out espionage and surveillance activities via camera/mic, accessing fine location (GPS) and other malicious network activity.

These apps are either the cloned version or have similar functionality, privacy issue and security threats as the apps that were blocked in 2020. 267 apps have already been blocked through various orders and with this fresh ban, the number of Chinese apps blocked in India now stands at 321.

As per sources, "The banned apps were allegedly engaged in activities prejudicial to the sovereignty and integrity of the country, also posing serious threat to security of the state and defence of India."

• In a turnaround from the government's unreasonable stance on clamping down the cryptocurrency sector, it seems to have pulled back and is mulling bringing in the more reasonable alternative of regulation.

The Union Budget 2022-23 levied a 30% tax on gains made on cryptocurrency trades by investors. While this is being interpreted by the various stakeholders as a legitimising of the trading of digital assets, the Finance Minister asserted that a decision on 'banning or not banning' cryptocurrencies will be taken after consultations. ▶

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Mr. Wajahat Habibullah, IAS (Retd.)  
Former Secy. to the Govt. of India  
Chairman, PSAILF, New Delhi

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# Letters to the



(February issue:  
Using Bans As A Substitute  
for Effective Governance?)

We are truly humbled by the praise and acknowledgment that is flowing in from varied sources. Please feel free to send in your comments, views or feedback on The Aware Consumer magazine at [bejonmisra@theawareconsumer.in](mailto:bejonmisra@theawareconsumer.in) – we will publish your opinions and implement your feedback while ensuring that your voice is heard on the right platforms.



I have now been reading 'The Aware Consumer' for a couple of years, and I always look forward to the next issue. The magazine has always been in the forefront in covering issues of topical interest to the Indian consumer. The articles are well researched and provide a balanced view of the subject. In the current issue I loved the comprehensive coverage on 'bans' in India, along with the special focus on the effectiveness of bans (or lack thereof for medicines) on alcohol, plastics and medicines. All very pertinent and current issues. Keep up the good work.

– **Gautam Majumdar, Bangalore** • [majumdarg@aol.com](mailto:majumdarg@aol.com)



I read your article about lack of proper ban on FDCs. Great article! Nicely written.

I agree and am not a big fan of fixed drug combinations as well. For example, there is a preparation called Symbyax; I have hardly ever prescribed it. It's a combination of Prozac and Zyprexa. It is expensive and patients may experience side effects with the Zyprexa (Olanzapine) component. I'd rather prescribe both separately if needed at doses I deem appropriate for my patient as a clinician rather than get stuck with what someone has put together. One size doesn't fit all.

I'm also finding that a lot of psychiatric patients are very sensitive to medications. So I do a lot of 'micro dosing' and my patients really appreciate it.

– **Dr. Amita Upadhyay, Psychiatrist**  
Roseville, California



Brilliant articles to follow. This magazine should be on top 5 by quality and in every library and university in INDIA. Pity we are now becoming 'Breaking News' addict. Like say this issue is so relevant, so BOLD, so mature. The Govt of India /Ministry of Education should have a close look at this mag and encourage its footfalls in places where public opinion can be nurtured for the good of our country. This magazine to me represents a real 'Made in India'.

– **Dr Arup Ratan Bandyopadhyay, Mumbai**  
• [arupbandyopadhyay@yahoo.co.in](mailto:arupbandyopadhyay@yahoo.co.in)



Very interesting!

Agree Ban is necessary in some places but more importantly it's the enforcement and implementation which is totally lacking in our country. Regulations and Acts are there but we find all the reason for cutting corners and putting consumers at risk.

Needs an overhaul in enforcement. There is no other way to improve our quality - in which ever area we are talking about.

– **Dr. Deepika Gunawant, New Delhi** • [dgunawant@hotmail.com](mailto:dgunawant@hotmail.com)

## The ban on most single-use plastics will take effect from July 1, 2022.

In India, people are seen carrying bags of other materials, mostly cotton for their daily routine and shopping.



for the next issue in May dedicated to 'Education for All Builds Consumer Awareness' with a focus on the National Education Policy, 2020



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