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& Health Tourism

**Rethinking
Autism:**
Sadhguru

**Health
Beyond Fashion**
Vaidya Lakshmi Lakshmanan

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HAS TREATMENT IN AYURVEDA

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Embracing Ayurveda for a Fulfilling Life

What is the greatest form of wealth one can aspire to attain? It is undoubtedly health. Maintaining good health throughout one's life is the most significant blessing one can receive. According to the Vedas, individuals are encouraged to pursue four Purusharthas during their lifetime - Dharma (righteousness, moral values), Artha (prosperity, economic values), Kama (pleasure, love, psychological values) and Moksha (liberation, spiritual values, self-actualization). In essence, this means leading a virtuous and harmonious life that is in tune with Nature, allowing one to experience health, prosperity and worldly pleasures while ensuring the well-being of others. As highlighted by Dr. Induchoodan in his insightful article in this issue, the primary goal of Ayurveda, as described in the Charaka Samhita, is to aid individuals in achieving these Purusharthas through the promotion of health. This perspective emphasizes that Ayurveda's core mission is to assist people in realizing their Purusharthas.

This edition's cover theme centers on Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). Vaidya Dr. Prasad M. and Dr. G.S. Lavekar explore this topic thoroughly, emphasizing that Ayurveda offers effective treatments for Autism. Sadhguru, the Founder of the Isha Foundation, begins his highly informative and wise commentary with the statement: "There are no autistic children. There are children with varying capabilities and diverse physical and mental attributes. Labeling is unnecessary. Children manifest in unique ways, and nature's processes do not always align with our expectations."

The origins of Autism remain unclear, but research suggests there is a complex interplay between genetics and environmental factors. Autism diagnoses have surged in recent decades, with the CDC reporting a current prevalence of 1 in 36 children in the U.S. (2.8%), up from 1 in 44, two years ago. This increase is partly due to better diagnostic methods and greater awareness, but it also reflects a genuine rise in cases. Globally, the WHO estimates that 1 in 100 children are affected by Autism.

As always, we have an abundance of valuable content for our esteemed readers. This edition features remarkable stories that provide significant insights, covering topics from the integration of AI in Ayurveda to the influence of 'prakriti' in human resource practices. Dr. Pallatheri Nambi Namboodiri discusses strategies for preventing drug addiction through Ayurvedic methods. Our regular segments, including Yoga, Beauty Zone and Food Court etc., are sure to captivate you.

We take great pride in announcing that Ayurveda & Health Tourism Magazine will serve as Media Partner for six prominent events: the Global Ayurveda Summit in Cochin, Kerala, Ayurveda Calling in Chennai, Sanjeevani 2024 in Chennai, Med Tour Health Expo in Kenya, KTM in Cochin, and Global Health in Riyadh.

It has been over two decades since we embarked on our modest mission to share the wisdom of Ayurveda and Yoga across the globe. We are immensely grateful for your ongoing support and are committed to continuing this journey of connecting individuals worldwide through the promotion of India's authentic and natural healthcare.

AP Jayadevan,
 Editorial Coordinator

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Monsoon Wellness: Ayurveda for Delhi Zoo Wildlife



The growing appeal of Ayurveda is transcending biological limits and making its way into the realm of animal care. At the Delhi Zoo, officials plan to implement traditional remedies such as neem oil, turmeric, and quicklime to ensure the well-being of the animals throughout the monsoon season.

"The monsoon season is upon us, and we must take all necessary precautions to maintain the health and safety of the animals during this time. We will be utilizing various Indian home remedies, including neem oil, turmeric, and quicklime, which are effective in protecting the animals from prevalent biting insects like mosquitoes, midges, and fleas," stated Sanjeet Kumar, Director of Delhi Zoo.

Neem oil, derived from the leaves and seeds of the Neem tree, serves as a powerful antiseptic and insect repellent. It possesses anti-inflammatory, antifungal, antibacterial, and antiviral properties, making it suitable for use as a herbal disinfectant and a deterrent against external parasites.

Turmeric, renowned for its anti-inflammatory and healing attributes, can be employed to address itchy skin conditions, infections, and wounds in animals. When turmeric powder is applied to lesions and foot sores, it can significantly accelerate the healing process.

Quicklime (Calcium oxide) is effective in curbing mosquito breeding. This is particularly useful during the monsoon when heavy rainfall can result in water accumulation in various areas of the zoo. By sprinkling quicklime in these water-logged regions, the growth of mosquitoes can be inhibited, thereby safeguarding the animals.

The Delhi Zoo, officially known as The National Zoological Park, spans 176 acres and operates under the jurisdiction of the central government. The integration of Ayurveda in ensuring the safety of the animals during the monsoon conveys a positive message about the relevance of Ayurveda in diverse aspects of life, including the welfare of animals.

India's Ministry of Ayush participated in 3 day WHO South East Asia Regional Consultation in Bangkok



The Ministry of Ayush represented India at the three-day WHO South-East Asia Regional Consultation held in Bangkok from August 20 to 22, 2024. The focus of the meeting was on shaping the future of Traditional Medicine by developing a global strategy and establishing research priorities for the WHO South-East Asia region.

The Indian delegation was led by Vaidya Jayant Deopujari, Chairperson of the NCISM, and included notable members such as Prof. Rabinarayan Acharya, Director General of CCRAS; Dr. Kashinath, Director of the Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY); and Dr. Ashwin Chandra, Research Officer.

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India has pledged \$85 million to support the WHO Global Traditional Medicine Centre



The Government of India has pledged a substantial investment of US\$ 85 million over a decade, from 2022 to 2032, to bolster the initiatives of the WHO Global Traditional Medicine Centre. This

agreement was formalized in Geneva on Wednesday by Arindam Bagchi, India's Permanent Representative to the UN, and Dr. Bruce Aylward, WHO's Assistant Director-General for Universal Health Coverage and Life Course.

This donor agreement with WHO is part of a larger US\$ 250 million commitment from India aimed at establishing the WHO Global Centre of Traditional Medicine in 2022, which encompasses funding for the Centre's operations, temporary facilities, and the construction of a new building.

"Traditional medicine has the potential to reach those who are often overlooked. Merging

traditional practices and knowledge is essential for achieving health equity," stated Dr. Bruce Aylward. "India's dedication and leadership in enhancing the evidence-based role of traditional medicine for the health and well-being of all individuals and the planet is timely."

"India is steadfast in its support for WHO's mission to enhance traditional medicine systems worldwide, aiming for universal health coverage and benefiting all of humanity, particularly through the Global Centre in Jamnagar, which will concentrate these efforts for the advantage of all Member States," remarked Ambassador Arindam Bagchi.

India's decade-long financial commitment will facilitate a comprehensive program designed to strengthen the evidence surrounding traditional medicine by gathering data and insights on policies, practices, products, and public utilization. This initiative is anticipated to enhance WHO's capabilities in traditional medicine across various technical divisions and regions, fostering global collaboration and solidarity.

Ayurveda one step closer to inclusion in Ayushman Bharat scheme

In a pivotal advancement for the integration of Ayurveda within the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY), a detailed report on the standardization of Ayurveda package pricing was presented to the Ministry of Ayush on Wednesday.

This report, crafted by the Strategic Purchasing Committee of the Ministry of Ayush, chaired by Prof. Bejon Kumar Mishra and supported by faculty from the FITM at the RIS, was delivered to Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha, Secretary of the Ministry of Ayush, as announced in a post by the Ministry on the social media platform 'X'.

The findings of this report are anticipated to play a crucial role in the Ministry of Ayush's initiatives to provide comprehensive healthcare services to beneficiaries enrolled in the AB-PMJAY program. The Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY),



widely recognized as the Ayushman Bharat Yojana Scheme, serves as the flagship initiative of the Government of India. It functions primarily as a health insurance program aimed at supporting the economically disadvantaged, lower-income groups, and vulnerable populations.

This scheme provides financial security in the event of hospitalization due to medical emergencies, offering cashless hospitalization services through the Ayushman Bharat Yojana e-card, which can be utilized for healthcare services at any empaneled hospital nationwide.



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The National Ayush Mission, in collaboration with State and Union Territory governments, is committed to providing accessible and high-quality healthcare services across the nation. The implementation of the Ayush Entry Level Certification and the establishment of Geriatric camps are significant milestones in achieving this objective.

The Ministry of Ayush, through the National Ayush Mission, seeks to ensure that quality healthcare reaches the grassroots level of Indian society. In partnership with the Quality Council of India (QCI), the Ministry has launched the NABH Ayush Entry Level Certification (AELC) for government-operated Ayush Health and Wellness Centers, now referred to as

Ayushman Arogya Mandir (AAM). This initiative marks a vital step towards the standardization of healthcare quality throughout India.

Recently, the Ministry initiated a special program aimed at certifying 1,000 Ayushman Arogya Mandir (AAM) facilities to obtain the NABH Entry Level certification by September 2024, with 750 certifications already achieved.

The primary objective of AAM camps is to conduct health assessments for senior citizens through simple clinical evaluations. Each elderly participant undergoes initial screening based on a specifically designed proforma, with records kept for future reference. Participants receive personalized guidance on managing chronic

conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, bronchial asthma, osteoarthritis, hernia, prostate issues, and skin and vision-related disorders, along with dietary advice for continued care at local Ayush healthcare facilities.

A dedicated portal has been created to streamline the organization of these camps, with over 9,673 centers registered and 2,957 camps currently underway. These camps are conducted in collaboration with State/UT Ayush Colleges, Research Councils, and National Institutes under the Ministry of Ayush, along with other stakeholders actively participating in this initiative.



Sukumara Ghritam and Brahmi Churnam can enhance menopausal well-being, CCRAS confirms



The inaugural edition of the CCRAS Bulletin, published by the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Studies, seeks to disseminate information regarding recent advancements in Ayurvedic research. It highlights the effectiveness of Ayurvedic herbal formulations, Sukumara Ghritam and Brahmi Churnam, in improving the quality of life for women experiencing menopause.

Menopause signifies a pivotal phase in a woman's life characterized by the end of ovarian function and permanent

cessation of menstruation. This transition can lead to various distressing symptoms such as hot flashes, night sweats, and mood fluctuations, which can considerably diminish quality of life.

A study conducted at the Dr. Achanta Lakshmiapati Research Centre for Ayurveda (ALRCA) in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, involved 49 women aged between 40 and 55 who were experiencing specific menopausal symptoms. The research focused on the use of Sukumara Ghritam and Brahmi Churnam as a safe method for alleviating these symptoms.

Participants adhered to a regimen of taking Sukumara Ghritam before meals and Brahmi Churnam after meals, both administered twice daily with warm water, over a period of 84 days, followed by an observation period of 28 days without treatment.

Evaluations were performed at the start, on the 84th day, and on the 112th day of the study. Findings indicated a significant decrease in menopausal symptoms and marked improvements in menopause-specific quality of life.

Crucially, liver and kidney function tests remained stable throughout the study, with no adverse drug reactions or events reported during the treatment phase, underscoring the clinical safety of Sukumara Ghritam and Brahmi Churnam for managing menopause-related symptoms.

The outcomes of this research provide encouraging evidence for the potential of Ayurveda as a safe and comprehensive approach to menopausal care. The study suggests that further investigation in this field could yield valuable insights into effective and holistic strategies for managing menopause.

Enhancing Osteoarthritis Treatment with Ayurveda

Osteoarthritis, a common arthritis type, leads to joint cartilage deterioration, affecting quality of life, particularly in the hands, knees, hips, and spine. Treatment focuses on pain relief through medications, physical therapy, and surgery.

In response, the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) studied the safety and efficacy of traditional Ayurvedic formulations for managing Osteoarthritis. The formulations included Vatari



Guggulu, Yogaraj Guggulu, Punarnava Guggulu, Maharasnadi Kwatha, Dashmoola Ghrita, Narayan Taila, Kottamchukkadi Taila, Gandharvahasta Taila, Dhanwantara Taila, and Ksheerbala Taila.

The study assessed these formulations in diverse patients, conducting liver and renal function tests before and after the trial. Results showed all parameters remained normal, indicating no adverse effects on liver and kidney functions, with no reported side effects.

These findings suggest that the ten Ayurvedic formulations are clinically safe for Osteoarthritis patients, highlighting their potential as effective treatment options. This research contributes to the growing evidence supporting Ayurvedic treatments for Osteoarthritis.

Live demonstration of Ayurveda Surgical Procedures held as part of Saushrutam 2024



The Department of Shalya Tantra at the All-India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) in New Delhi hosted the second national seminar titled 'Saushrutam' in celebration of Sushruta Jayanti on July 15. The seminar commenced on July 13 and concluded on the following Monday. During the event, live demonstrations of 25 intricate surgical procedures were effectively showcased.

Prof. Sandeep Kumar, the founding director of AIIMS Bhopal, served as the chief guest. The live surgical demonstrations offered participants a valuable opportunity to observe and learn various techniques from esteemed surgeons. The procedures included treatments for bhagandar (fistula-in-ano), arsha (hemorrhoids), pilonidal sinus, gall bladder stones, and hernias, among others. Both traditional Shalya methods and modern techniques such as VAAFT, laparoscopy, and laser technology were utilized. Over the past year, approximately 1,500 patients have benefited from the surgical interventions at AIIA.

"Since its establishment, AIIA has been dedicated to promoting Ayurveda on a global scale. The Saushrutam seminar, organized by the Department

of Shalya Tantra, highlights our commitment to merging Ayurveda with advanced surgical technologies, equipping future Ayurvedic surgeons with the skills and confidence necessary for integrated surgical practices," stated Prof. Tanuja Nesari, Director of AIIA.

Prof. (Dr) Yogesh Badwe, Head of the Shalya Tantra Department, commended the efforts of the Saushrutam team. "The team has shown remarkable enthusiasm and dedication, working tirelessly alongside their professional responsibilities to ensure that Saushrutam 2024 is a successful platform in every regard," he remarked.

The event also featured distinguished guests, including Padamshri Prof. Manoranjan Sahu, Founder Director of AIIA Delhi; Prof. Anurag Srivastav, former Head of Surgical Disciplines at AIIMS New Delhi; and Dr. MC Misra, former Director of AIIMS. More than 160 participants, including postgraduate and Ph.D. scholars, resident doctors, surgeons, and faculty members from across India, attended the seminar.



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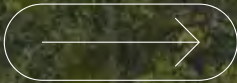
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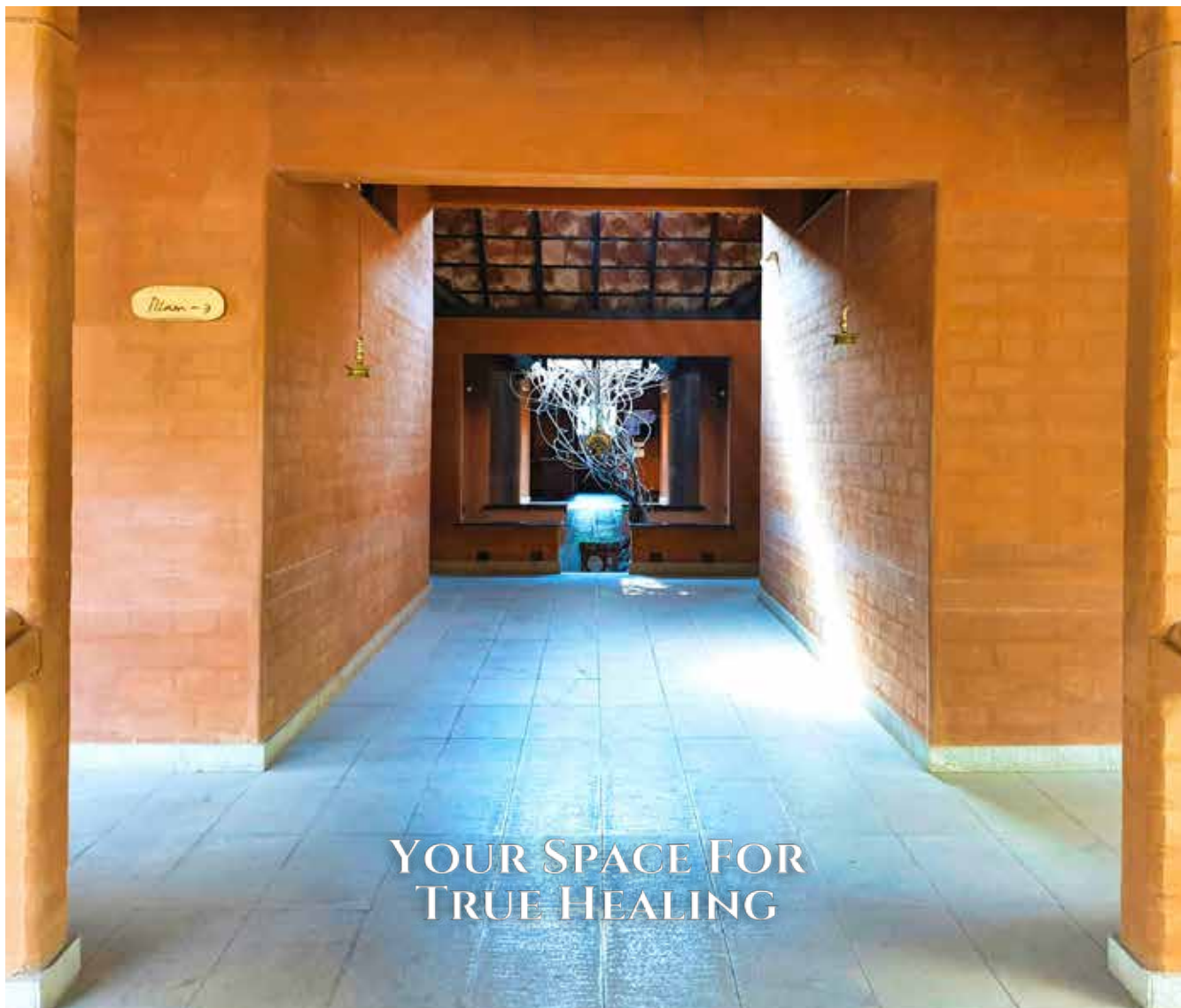
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Rethinking Autism: From Labels to Acceptance

Sadhguru, Founder of the Isha Foundation, shares his perspective on children who are born with autism.



Sadhguru: There are no autistic children. There are children with different types of capabilities, different kinds of bodies and minds.

There is no need to label them.

Different children come in different ways. Nature's process is not always coming out the way you think it should. The production line is not automated, fortunately.

Compared to a person of great intelligence, even people who consider themselves normal and who can be medically certified as normal would look autistic. Similarly, compared to an international athlete, the way you walk and run, you are disabled. If a human body is capable of such heights and yours can only do so little, it is a certain level of disability. But because you have so many people around you who are in the same level of disability, you call this normal.

If you set up things in such a way that every human being must be capable of doing some particular activity, and when someone cannot, you label them, then it is not the child who is sick, it is society which is sick. It is not necessary to label children. Maybe the intention is to provide them with the necessary care and assistance, I understand that, but still the label causes more damage than help.

Every human being has come with different possibilities. You do not know what they are capable of. But because we have set up production lines to serve our industry, corporate sector, schools, political systems and all these things, we need cogs

that fit into this system. So, we reject some human beings as unfit. This process of labeling children is a horrible crime. If these children were born in a tribal society, the elders would have had the wisdom to see, "This child can only do this," and they would have put them into that kind of activity. They would not have tortured them with any other kind of activity. It would have been very simple without having to label them. But because we have created standard systems for everyone today, society wants to put everyone through the same extruder – everyone should come out with the same shape, same degree, same nonsense. A lot of people do not fit in.

Many children manage to come through but the process of learning causes so much suffering for most of them. For a lot of children, going to school is suffering. I would say, only about 30-35% of children can actually fit into the present education system without too much crushing. Another 15-20% will fit in with a little bit of kneading, but the rest are definitely suffering. This is simply because you want everyone to come out in the same shape, which is a horrible crime against humanity.





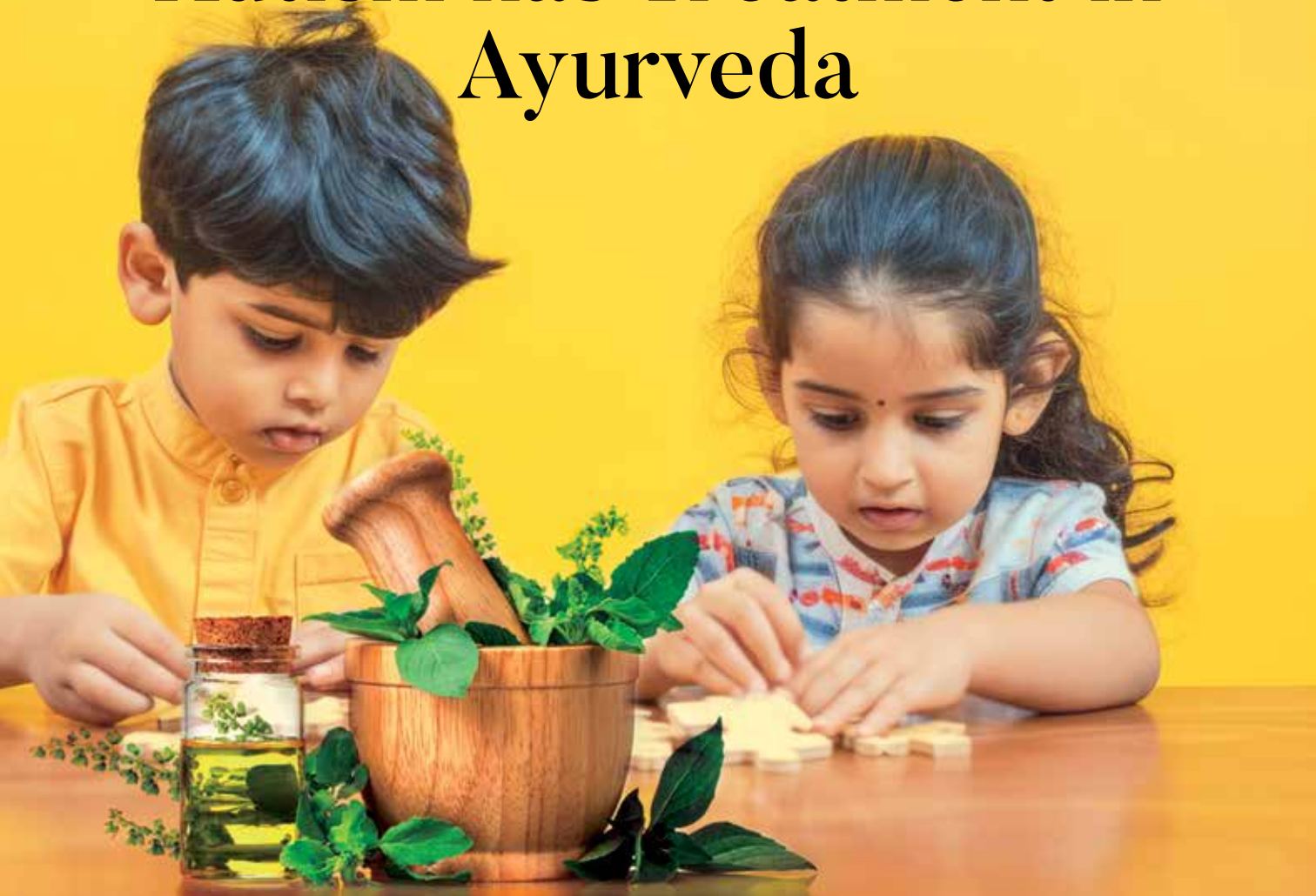
A child is the most exploited being in the world. When I say exploit, you putting all your nonsense – your ideas, emotions, philosophies, belief systems and religion – into them is the worst crime. Just because they are helpless and receptive and are looking up to you, you are loading them up with all the nonsense that your parents gave you, and which never worked for you.

Instead of labeling children, if we see what part of life they can easily fit into and encourage them to do that joyfully, they will be fine. Maybe the child will

not run a company, but maybe they will play an instrument. Each child has to be attended to as it is necessary for them. If someone has the time, the patience, the love and wisdom, they must attend to that child as that child needs. You cannot treat a rosebush like a coconut tree. What they need is care and a wiser and more compassionate way of looking at them. It is not treatment. It is about structuring our societies and our lives in such a way that every kind of human being can fit into some part and play their role.

Ranked amongst the fifty most influential people in India, Sadhguru is a Yogi, mystic, visionary and a New York Times bestselling author. Sadhguru has been conferred the Padma Vibhushan by the Government of India in 2017, the highest annual civilian award, accorded for exceptional and distinguished service. He is also the founder of the world's largest people's movement, Conscious Planet – Save Soil, which has touched over 4 billion people.

Autism has Treatment in Ayurveda



Dr. Vaidya M. Prasad
Director,
Sunethri Ayurvedashramam,
Thrissur.

Ayurveda, the ancient treatment system of India, offers a holistic approach to managing Autism, which is a neurological and developmental disorder. There are many Ayurvedic centers in and outside India which provide systematic treatment programs to help autistic children. Some of them are standalone programs whereas some of them are part of an integrated treatment protocol.

In this insightful story, **Dr. Prasad** looks at the Ayurvedic perspective of autism, its causes and the treatment.



It is very interesting and having some unique philosophical concepts behind it. According to Ayurvedic understanding, a human being is a union of four units, viz. Sareera (body), Indriya (sensory organs), Manas (mind) and Atma (soul). These four components, sometimes, are considered as a set of two for the sake of easy communication. In that case, the components are Sareera and Manas. The Indriyas work as a bridge between them and the Atma manifests in both Manas and Sareera as the basic principle of life. A perfect blend of all the components makes a human being brilliant by all means, physically and mentally.

There are multiple levels of intensive learning process, enforced as well as spontaneous, in the 'normal' development of a person. Here 'normal' is an arguable term. For all practical purposes, it means nothing but 'socially appropriate'. In this process of learning, all the four components mentioned above are crucial.

Manas is the tool of Atma to connect it with the external world through the sense organs. It is a character with desires/likes: desire to experience pleasure and the desire to keep sorrows away. It has the capacity to do many functions like thinking, imagination, discrimination, inferential skills, introspection, retrospection, predictive skills, anticipation, judgment, comprehension, etc. In short Manas represents the cognitive sum of the individual.

Protocol of perception and response

For any stimulus from the environment, the Indriyas (sense organs) are the primary portals to receive them. It can be a smell, a touch, a change in temperature, a sound and so on. A stimulus is an object to a sense organ. From Indriya, the information is transferred to the Manas. Manas processes this information by different faculties of evaluation. Then, Atma gets this 'processed information' from Manas. Most crucial stage in this entire operation is the processing by Manas. Actually it works as the tool/instrument of Atma to decode the information from the Indriyas and to feed the knowledge centers for further processing. Manas has three faculties for processing the information:

- **Dhee** : the faculty to appraise an event or situation logically
- **Dhruthi** : the faculty to act or restraint and
- **Smruthi** : the faculty to register and recollect appropriateness of an act/event

These three faculties together are known as Prajna.

Prajna is the most crucial principle which decides the behavioural pattern of an individual. Environment has a crucial role in deciding the way in which Prajna is built and delivered. Here the environment is internal as well as external. The external environment is multifactorial where the climate, food, lifestyle, etc. are all involved. The internal environment is decided by two principles namely Agni and Ojas.

AGNI: The fire-principle

Ayurveda identifies the principle called Agni as the most important determinant of health and illness, both physical and mental. It is the all-pervading life-fire, the principle which facilitates all sorts of transformations/processing/maturation/changes in the body. It resides in the GUT and has decisive role in defining the functional status of all other principles of the body. It has many roles to play like maintaining a healthy network of functional pathways (Srotas), segregation of essence and waste from the food one eats, dissemination of the essence for further utilization, syncing different systems of the body, fueling, sharpening and fine-tuning all cognitive faculties and the like. It prevents the entry of toxins from outside and eliminates or neutralizes internally generated ones. It is also very crucial in maintaining the 'vyadhikshamata', the capacity to resist diseases occurrences.

OJAS: The fineness and richness of resources

In Ayurveda, Ojas is the principle which represents the quality and quantity of bodily components called Dhatus. It circulates all within a living body. It is consumed continuously and parallel, replenished as well. It, along with Agni, mirrors the internal atmosphere which facilitates the functional optimum of all other principles of the body. It works in tandem with Agni and Manas. Ideas like vitality,

Indications of Faulty AGNI
Poor /altered appetite
‘Fuzzy eater’
Bloated, gassy stomach
Constipation/Diarrhoea
Frequent burps/belching
Colic/Pains
Nausea/vomiting
Irritability/hyperactivity
Inertia/ lethargy
Attention/ memory issues
Prone to infections

resistance, tolerance, potential, power, brilliance, immunity, etc. are all can be considered as the representations or the derivatives of Ojas.

These three principles, i.e., Agni, Ojas and Manas, work as a functional triangle, a system, influencing one another, the precision of which is essential for a proper body-mind balance. They are the foundation on which Autism is understood and managed in Ayurveda.

AGNI: The master tool

Among the three, Agni is considered as the master tool because of its superior capacity to keep the internal environment clean. Obviously, Agni is given the topmost priority in all levels of management of autism. A body with weak Agni fails to stop the entry of toxins from outside causing their accumulation inside. This toxic load alters the internal atmosphere and disrupts the harmony between different systems. This may end up in a cognitive standstill or turbulence based on its intensity. When Agni is malfunctioning, obviously, Ojas and Manas also will malfunction.

Sunethri Protocol for Autism (SuPrA)

The Sunethri Protocol for Autism is developed by Sunethri Centre for Autism Research and Education, a dedicated centre working in this line in Thrissur, Kerala. The processes involved in Sunethri Protocol are as below:

1) Initial assessment by means of two methods:

Ayurvedic and using Indian Scale for Assessment of Autism (ISAA). The Ayurvedic assessment is to understand the status of Agni, Ojas and Manas. For this standard Ayurvedic methodology is employed. ISAA is an objective assessment tool developed by National Institute for the Mentally Handicapped for persons with autism. It sees observation, clinical evaluation of behaviour, testing by interaction with the subject and information supplemented by parents or caretakers to diagnose autism.

2) Parent counseling: In this the details of the protocol are explained to the parents. All the possibilities and challenges in following the protocol are explained thoroughly and they are encouraged to follow the tasks effectively.

3) Generating the initial prescription for those parents who are willing to follow.

4) Timely reviews, assessments and changes in the prescriptions.

Norms of ISAA for Diagnosis of Autism	
Score	Level
<70	Normal
70 – 106	Mild
107 – 153	Moderate
>153	Severe

Sunethri Protocol has three phases in its intervention

■ **Phase 1:** *Correct the AGNI*

■ **Phase 2:** *Cleanse the body*

■ **Phase 3:** *Augment the Ojas and fine-tune the Mind (body-mind relationship)*

Phase 1.

This is a home-based program that can last up to 3 months. Correcting the AGNI is the main target here. Diet is the most important part of this phase. The diet will be as traditional and regional as possible. Home-made food is advised. All junks, chemicals, additives, taste-makers, and food colors are avoided. ‘Zero added sugars’ is the ideal target to follow.

Medicines: Some medicines are also a part of this phase. General Ayurvedic preparations which are



beneficial to enhance the Agni are used here. Medicines having Vishahara (Detox), Krimihara (Deworm), Anulomana (which makes the function of Vayu proper) and Agnideepana (enhancing agni) properties are the worthiest ones here.

Phase 2.

This is a hospital-based program. The child and care taker stay in the hospital for a period of 2-3 weeks. This is for doing treatments which helps in cleaning the body environment. The treatments include standard procedures like Abhyangam, different types of dhara, vasthi, fume inhalation etc. There will be internal medicines as well.

Phase 3.

This is again a home-based program in which medicines to enhance the Ojas and fine-tune the mental functions are used. The diet and the basic medicines will be continued strictly. Additional to that special Ayurvedic medicines called Medhya Rasayanas are introduced at this stage. Medicated cow ghee, cow butter, and classical Ayurvedic preparations containing gold are special medicines here.

Follow up

Regular follow up visits and assessments are essential components of the protocol. Without a proper follow up and assessments, the process cannot be taken forward. In each visit, parent interviews and the observations of the examiner are documented. The ISAA format is also employed. The Phase 2 is repeated at regular intervals or as and when essential.

Other therapies and trainings

The Ayurvedic protocol explained is no way an alternative to standard interventions like speech therapy, occupational therapy special education etc. They are all of commendable positive outcome when introduced propely. The interesting observation is that the children under Ayurvedic protocol show remarkable and immediate reduction in the major problem areas like hyperactivity, temper tantrums, constipation, sleep disorder, aggression, poor sitting tolerance, eating disorder etc. This makes them better students in the therapy sessions and obviously, the outcome becomes superior. So the prents are encouraged to enroll



their children in suitable therapies parallel to the ayurvedic intervention.

Importance of diet

Food is one of the most important aspects of healthy existence, mentally as well as physically. As far as Sunethri Protocol is concerned, its foundation is healthy diet. The whole protocol can be told as spinning around the special diet that we suggest.

Mobile Screens: The post-COVID villain

The children born or grown during the COVID lockdown period is seen to be severely and seriously addicted to screens of some sort, mainly mobile phones. This has created a big threat in the recovery of autistic kids. This is more established in the urban set up where the parents are more dependent up on screens for some reason; sometimes job-related and some other times, for entertainment. The tender, delicate, brains of the infants get easily damaged by the screens. They are exposed to the screens for the first time for different reasons, the most important being the parents assigned in working from home. The child sees or experiences nothing else but screens of various sorts. The fast moving programs, the jingles and rhythms on screen make them easily addicted to it and they find no reason to get connected to the real world.

During the lockdown period, there were no chances for social exposure as well. This has pushed a huge number of potential children to the clutches of ASD.



Food Vs Nutrition

Food is not just nutrition

Memory of the system is familiar with food not nutrition

Culture, tradition, geography, season...all are crucial in food

In Indian knowledge traditions food is considered as a tool for achieving higher levels of consciousness

Inertia/ lethargy

Attention/ memory issues

Prone to infections

They deny socializing, they lack empathy and they lag behind in developing socially appropriate behavioral patterns including speech and communication. Parents also found the devices and screens as good alternatives to spending time with their children. Phones are used widely as alternatives to toys. It is difficult to find a parent or caretaker today who can feed their child without the help of a mobile phone.

Is Autism curable?

This is a tough question to give a yes/no answer. But definitely, there are possibilities of a recovery. That is what our experience taught us. Definitely, the severity of symptoms and the level of dependence are important points which define the recovery chances. But still, with a dedicated team of caretakers, the chances of reversal of symptoms are very high. But there are many constraints as well. The advantages of Ayurvedic protocol are:

Ayurvedic tools are 'active', requiring full involvement of the parents, caregivers, teachers and the other stakeholders. It is not a quick fix. So input from all parts are available to assess the child and to modify the interventions accordingly.

- The management program does not contradict with any other trainings and therapies
- Focus on environmental factors and their modification give better possibility of symptom management
- Management of the core symptoms like

hyperactivity, sleep disorder, digestive issues etc. can improve other areas as well

Meantime, the challenges are:

- Complex presentations of the condition
- Late reporting
- Comprehensive evaluation
- Proper understanding and classification of symptoms based on Ayurveda
- Socioeconomic issues of the parents
- Competence and involvement of parents
- Educational challenges
- Sensory issues
- Dietary modifications

Tainted Gut

The guts of children in the spectrum are ‘tainted’ for many reasons

- The reasons may be different and often debatable. But it is our experience that once the issue of gut is settled, most of the kids are comfortable
- AGNI in ASD kids is either under-performing or mal-performing
- This loads the system with toxins which then affects the Ojas
- This ends up in inappropriate mental faculties
- So, taking care of DIET is very important

Causation of ASD: Our observations

We have made many observations related to the causation of ASD. Of course, there may not be scientific evidences to claim that these are entirely correct. But, based on long years of experience we are pretty confident to present these observations.

- Other members with same / related conditions in the family tree
- Parents with similar (may be milder versions even, left unattended if not specifically elicited) symptoms in their childhood
- Food and lifestyle during pregnancy (including mental activities): unhealthy, unfamiliar, junk food/



bad eating habits like late dinner, intermittent snacking, untimely eating, stress eating, mental stress and anxiety, emotional trauma, sleep deprivation, lack of exercise, etc.

- Increased Screen time/ screen addiction
- over exposure to radiations?
- Maternal and paternal age
- First child with ASD
- Parental habits like smoking, alcohol and other intoxicants
- Lack of emotional support during pregnancy
- Overwork, lack of rest and relaxation
- Overload of medicines and supplements
- Toxic exposure of various types: medications, Certain types of vaccines(?)*, toxic industrial wastes including heavy metals, Fortification of foods with chemicals(?)*, air/water/soil pollution, chemical pesticides, artificial food additives, etc., etc. (*doubted, but arguable)

Factors positively influencing the treatments

We have observed many factors that can influence the treatment program positively.

- Early diagnosis and intervention
- No comorbidities
- Not on psychiatric medicines
- Strict compliance to the protocol
- Parents with patience, commitment and enthusiasm
- Parents with good observational and reporting skills
- Family support
- Optimal social exposure
- Proper therapies and trainings
- Proper support from imaginative therapists
- Prioritizing the concerns and working on that basis
- Neurotypical elder kids, especially girls, who can work with the affected child
- Rural mothers

Factors negatively influencing the treatments

- There can be many adverse influencers for the treatments. We have observed some of them.
- Late diagnosis/ reporting
- Parents who are on psychiatric medication
- Over-informed parents who keep on googling, and trust everything
- Over-informed parents who keep on googling, and distrust everything
- Over-anxiety/ depression of parents who deny to recover from the trauma of diagnosis
- Poor family support
- Poor/ partial compliance of the protocol
- Looking for quick fixes
- Unrealistic expectations
- Overburdening the child with therapies and training sessions (many of them come as packages)
- Opting multiple protocols simultaneously
- Opting multiple systems without proper assessment
- Highly structured living/ educational environment (or lack of spontaneity) of children.



Author:

Dr. Vaidya M. Prasad is the founding director and honorary chief physician of Sunethri Ayurvedashram & Research Center, Thissur, Kerala. Dr. Prasad has been working with ayurvedic treatment of autistic children since 2002 and developed a new protocol "SuPrA" for the management of Autistic children, which was presented at World Ayurveda Congress 2010, and Swadeshi Science Congress 2011. A regular resource person in subjects related to health and Ayurveda, he has published several papers in popular as well as scientific journals and magazines. The magazine DOC N DOC, in its Feb.2011 issue, highlighted him as a pioneer in ayurvedic system work with autistic children.



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Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Ayurveda at a Glance



Dr. G.S. Lavekar,
Former Director General CCRAS-AYUSH Ministry

Autism is a complex neurodevelopmental condition that disrupts the brain's normal functioning, leading to considerable difficulties in a child's growth, especially in areas like language, communication, social skills, and emotional control. It is often marked by strong, focused interests and repetitive behaviors. While advancements in Western medicine and research regarding autism management have been somewhat limited, early intervention and behavioral therapies have shown promising results. On the other hand, Ayurveda presents a unique viewpoint on brain function, differing from modern psychiatric and physiological frameworks. The traits associated with autism closely align with the Ayurvedic condition known as Unmada. This condition may stem from imbalances within the Srotas (channels) that nourish the Manas (mind), influenced by various Agantuja (epigenetic and environmental) and Sahaja (genetic) factors. Among the various treatment methods, Yuktivyapashrya Chikitsa stands out as particularly effective in reducing autism symptoms in children.



Advanced paternal age can negatively impact the mental health of children, raising the likelihood of neuropsychiatric disorders.



Numerous factors contribute to this issue, but the most significant is genetic defects. Additionally, the trend of having children later in life plays a crucial role. This phenomenon is increasingly common in developed nations and is also gaining traction in developing countries. Advanced paternal age can negatively impact the mental health of children, raising the likelihood of neuropsychiatric disorders.

1) An inadequate diet and behavior during pregnancy can significantly impact the health of the child. In Ayurveda, there is a concept known as "Garbhini Paricharya," which refers to the dietary and behavioral guidelines that expectant mothers should adhere to. Failing to follow these guidelines increases the likelihood of health issues in the offspring.

2) Ayurveda also embraces the idea of "Punarjanam," or reincarnation, suggesting that our current existence

is shaped by our previous lives. The fundamental principle here is that every action has a corresponding reaction; thus, the outcomes we experience now or in the future are a direct result of our past deeds.

3) Children born with low birth weight are at a higher risk for various health problems, especially concerning mental and neurological conditions.

4) Regularly feeding children processed foods, such as canned and ready-made meals that often contain additives and preservatives, can be detrimental in the long run, potentially leading to health issues, particularly mental disorders.

5) Psychological stress is a significant factor in the competitive environment faced by school-aged children, often stemming from pressures imposed by both parents and teachers.



The sign and symptoms in general are observed as below.

Communication - A significant communication gap exists, hindering easy expression and often resulting in feelings of loneliness.

Interaction - Interactions are often marked by confusion, making it hard for individuals to grasp the situation or know how to engage effectively.

Learning - Learning tends to be sluggish, with a lack of comprehension that calls for innovative strategies and games to boost learning potential.

Behavior - Behavior can sometimes seem unpredictable and repetitive, influenced by a confused mindset.

Restricted Interest - There is often a lack of defined interests, necessitating efforts from family members or educators to cultivate specific passions.

Additionally, other signs and symptoms may manifest, such as irritability, aggression, hyperactivity, attention issues, and feelings of anxiety and depression.

Treatment

The treatment plan encompasses a variety of approaches, including medication, behavioral therapy, counseling, and Panchakarma, which is a bio-cleansing Ayurvedic treatment. A key component of this therapy is Shiro-Dhara, where medicated oil or liquid is gently drizzled onto the forehead. Another important technique is Shiro-Pichu Dharan, which involves placing pads soaked in medicated oil on the scalp. The duration of these treatments varies based on the severity of the condition. This therapeutic process effectively eliminates toxins that may hinder cognitive functions, calms excessive Vata—an irritant in the nervous system—and alleviates issues like memory fatigue, anxiety, and depression, promoting restful sleep that enhances mental clarity. Additionally, a full-body massage using medicated oils such as Bala, Ashwagandha, and Maha Narayan is crucial for maximizing the benefits. Ayurveda teaches that the Vatavani, or nervous network, resides in the skin, and soothing these areas can positively influence brain function and cerebral activity.

Medications:

The following are some research-supported herbs and compound drugs recommended for treatment.

Bacopa Monniera (*Scrophulariaceae*), also known as Brahmi or Nir-Brahmi, exhibits memory-enhancing, neuroprotective, and antidepressant properties.

Centella asiatica (*Umbelliferae*), commonly referred to as Mandukaparni, has been recognized in India since ancient times for its memory-enhancing, strength-boosting, immune-boosting, anti-anxiety, and anti-stress effects.

Tinospora Cordifolia (*Menispermaceae*), known as “Amrita” or “Guduchi,” is a significant Ayurvedic remedy used for centuries, noted for its ability to enhance learning and memory.

Glycyrrhiza glabra (*Fabaceae*) roots and rhizomes promote circulation in the central nervous system, enhance memory, improve learning capacity, and reduce anxiety.

Acorus Calamus (*Araceae*), commonly called Sweet Flag or Calamus, is utilized for memory loss in conjunction with other nootropic herbal remedies;



Bacopa Monniera
(Scrophulariaceae)



Centella asiatica
(Umbelliferae),



Tinospora Cordifolia
(Menispermaceae)



Glycyrrhiza glabra
(Fabaceae)



Acorus Calamus
(Araceae)



Zingiber officinale
(Zingiberaceae)

applying a paste of this herb to the forehead is also beneficial.

Zingiber officinale (Zingiberaceae), or Ginger, is known to significantly enhance learning and memory while providing protection against focal cerebral ischemia; in India, it is commonly added to tea decoctions.

While the herbs mentioned are significant for addressing Autism, they represent only a portion of the available options. Additionally, classical compound drugs such as Suvarna Bhasma, Rajat Bhasma, Smruti Sagar Ras, and various medicated ghee and liquids are also noteworthy. Furthermore, while medications and Panchakarma therapies are essential, incorporating “Karmabhyas,” or game therapy, can yield greater benefits. Engaging in simple, friendly games such as Carom, Chess, Sap-shidi, Playing Cards, and various outdoor games can be particularly effective in numerous ways.

Author:

Dr. G. S. Lavekar, the former Director General of CCRAS under the AYUSH Ministry, played a pivotal role in the development of drugs, nutraceuticals, and cosmeceuticals while working with the ministry. He contributed significantly to the Ayurvedic Pharmacopoeia, focusing on the quality standards of both single and compound classical formulations and drugs, and has published numerous research and scientific findings. Currently, the main areas of focus include the development of pain relief solutions, wellness products for women and men, as well as cosmetic formulations for skin and hair care. Email: gslavekar@gmail.com

The Intersection of Ayurveda and Osteoporosis Care



Ayurvedacharya
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FAIP (USA),
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Fellow of Rashtriya Ayurveda Vidyapeeth
(Ministry of AYUSH, GoI)

Osteoporosis is expected to affect around 200 million women globally, impacting 10% of those aged 60, 20% of 70, 40% of 80, and 66% of 90. A survey by the International Osteoporosis Foundation found that many postmenopausal women underestimate their risk, have limited discussions with healthcare providers, and face barriers to diagnosis and treatment before fractures occur, leading to significant underdiagnosis and undertreatment. The aging global population is likely to increase osteoporosis cases among postmenopausal women. **Dr. G. G. Gangadharan** provides an in-depth analysis of this pressing issue in their enlightening article.



Established in 1996 by the UK National Osteoporosis Society, World Osteoporosis Day is celebrated each year on October 20. This day marks the beginning of a year-long initiative aimed at enhancing global awareness regarding bone health, as well as the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of osteoporosis and metabolic bone diseases. Since 1997, the International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF) has organized the World Osteoporosis Day campaign, which features community events and local initiatives led by national osteoporosis patient organizations across more than 90 countries.



Osteoporosis, often referred to as porous bone, is a medical condition marked by a reduction in bone mass and the deterioration of bone structure, resulting in fragile bones that are more prone to fractures, particularly in the hip, spine, and wrist. Both men and women can be affected by osteoporosis, which is a condition that can be both prevented and treated.

The aging process naturally leads to gradual changes in the body's homeostatic mechanisms, resulting in noticeable alterations in structure and function, as well as an increased vulnerability to environmental stressors and diseases. The interplay between aging and disease may exacerbate each other. Osteoporosis is a notable age-related condition characterized by diminished bone mass and a heightened risk of fractures. This disorder predominantly impacts middle-aged and older individuals, with hip and spine fractures being of particular concern. A hip fracture typically necessitates hospitalization and significant surgical intervention, potentially hindering a person's ability to walk independently and leading to extended periods of disability or even death.

AYURVEDA AND OSTEOPOROSIS

It is encouraging to recognize that Ayurveda offers effective strategies for managing osteoporosis, and it is crucial for Ayurveda to highlight its role in addressing this condition.

There is a pressing need to raise awareness about the importance of consuming nutritious foods aligned with Ayurvedic principles, as well as to showcase Ayurveda's ability to deliver micro-nutrition specifically to bone tissue. This distinctive aspect of Ayurveda is noteworthy. The Ayurvedic approach focuses on enhancing Dhatwagni (tissue metabolism) across all seven levels, beginning with the improvement of Jataragni (digestive fire). Enhancing Jataragni subsequently boosts the function of other agnis.

The ideal treatments should be those that effectively penetrate all tissue layers and ultimately nourish the Asthi dhatus (bone tissue). Administering such treatments following basti karma (medicated enema) can facilitate their reach to the bone tissue, thereby addressing the underlying issues.

FOOD

Ayurveda says:

Pathye sathi gatarthasya kimoushadha nishevane

Pathye asathi gatarthasya kimoushadha nishevane

(There is no need for any medicine if proper nutrition is given according to the given condition)

And Siddha system says:

Unave marunthu... .. marunte unavu (Tamil verse)

(Food itself is medicine and medicine itself is food)

This indicates the importance of appropriate nutrition in all conditions.

According to this principle, individuals with Osteoporosis who follow a non-vegetarian diet should prioritize foods derived from bone tissue or similar materials. Substances such as conch shell are particularly beneficial in this context. Additionally, foods rich in components akin to Asthi are advantageous. It is recommended to include fruits and vegetables that correspond to Asthi dhatu thulya, such as the leaves, flowers, and fruits of drumstick, as well as the pith and flowers of plantain.

Given that Vaata is a significant factor, incorporating foods that mitigate Vaata into the diet is essential. Ghee, milk, and dairy products are excellent choices, along with mamsa rasa and tender tissues, as well as anything that enhances agni. Consuming foods with sweet, sour, and salty flavors, along with warm oil baths and enema therapy using medicated fats that stimulate appetite and improve digestion, can also be beneficial. Our current dietary habits should align with nutritional principles that emphasize a balanced intake of carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, and minerals. Therefore, it is crucial to develop a nutritional profile for food and processing practices rooted in Ayurvedic principles.

Osteoporosis may develop as a physiological degenerative condition characterized by weakened bone density, often exacerbated by dietary and lifestyle changes that elevate Vaata levels in the individual. This condition can lead to an accelerated aging process, causing individuals to experience the effects of old age prematurely.

Osteoporosis is identified as a major condition linked to Vata imbalances. The conventional approach to treatment includes oleation (Snehana), sudation (Swedana), and mild purificatory methods (Mrudu Sodhanam). In this disorder, the ability of bone tissues to absorb calcium is hindered, even when there is an adequate supply of bio-available calcium, resulting in a reduction of calcium levels within the bones. The root cause of this issue lies in

the breakdown of calcium from the bone tissues (dhatu) due to metabolic irregularities, which interfere with the ionic exchange process. This situation arises when Vata is aggravated, subsequently affecting the Asthi dhatu.



SYMPTOMS OF OSTEOPOROSIS

- Limb Pain
- Severe joint pain
- Weakness
- Lack of sleep
- Permanent pain
- Pricking pain in the bone
- Falling of teeth
- Falling of hair
- Brittle nails
- Falling of body hair
- Falling of eye lashes
- Cracking of teeth
- Cracking of nails
- Joint splitting pain
- Bone pain
- Joint pains
- Feeling of emptiness of bones
- Hunch back
- Lame
- Vertigo
- Black outs

- Bone degeneration
- Weakness of the bone
- Lightness of bone
- Appearance of Vaata diseases
- Dryness of mouth
- Anaemic condition
- Tiredness
- Loss of elasticity of joints
- Dryness of skin
- Looseness of major joints
- Emaciation of muscles

The Ayurvedic treatment methodology functions through two main mechanisms:

1. It guarantees that calcium is available in a form that the body can readily absorb.
2. It calms the vaata by utilizing oral medicinal oils.

This combined strategy promotes balance, enabling the smooth exchange of calcium ions (Ca^{++}) within cells, which in turn stabilizes the body's calcium absorption mechanisms.

Osteoporosis, a degenerative condition closely linked to vaata, is notably common among women over 45, particularly after menopause, highlighting the significant influence of vaata. In contemporary physiological terms, this can be interpreted as a disruption in the ion exchange between bone and blood tissues.



Calcium absorption in the body occurs in two phases: initially, from digested food into the bloodstream, and subsequently, from the bloodstream into the bone tissues. For optimal absorption, calcium must navigate through seven stages of digestion, from Rasa to Majja.

Throughout this process, calcium is converted into a bio-available form and into Ca^{++} ions, which can then be incorporated into bone tissues, contributing to the bhutas. This exemplifies the concept of Pachakagni in the gastrointestinal tract, where calcium undergoes partial transformation into a biologically active form, aided by Bhutagni, leading to the production of Ca^{++} ions that can be absorbed by the bones.

To facilitate this, it is essential to reduce vaata and ensure the presence of Asthi thanmatras (calcium). Both of these needs can be effectively met through Gandha thailam, a traditional formulation available in South Indian pharmacies.

Gandha thailam exemplifies the profound knowledge of our Acharyas. This formulation effectively targets the three key elements that contribute to Osteoporosis.

1. Vaata: The oil base of Gandha thailam naturally alleviates Vaata Kopa.
2. Agni Deepana: Ingredients such as Nagabala, Sarala, Shatahva, Kushta, Kunkuma, and Pathra boost digestive fire at both the Koshta and Dhatu levels.
3. Asthi Dhatu Vridhi: Components like Nalada, Nagabala, Manjishta, and Madhuka help restore calcium levels in the Asthi dhatu.

No other combination rivals Gandha thailam in the fight against Osteoporosis. It is essential to recognize that while this formulation may alleviate symptoms, it does not provide a complete cure.

Author:

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Preventing Drug Addiction through Ayurveda:

Detailed Insights into Diet, Lifestyle and Remedies



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Drug addiction is a global epidemic that devastates individuals and societies alike. Conventional approaches to treatment often involve pharmacotherapy and psychotherapy. However, Ayurveda, the ancient system of medicine from India, offers a comprehensive and holistic approach to addiction prevention by focusing on achieving balance and harmony in all aspects of life. This article delves into how Ayurvedic principles - encompassing diet, exercise, meditation, therapy, and herbal remedies - can play a crucial role in preventing and managing drug addiction.



Susruta Samhita defines optimal health in the following verse:

*“samadosha samagnischa
samadhatu malakriya*

*prasanna-atma-indriya-mana
swastha iti abhidheeyate”*

- This means an individual is considered to be in optimal health when the three doshas—vata, pitta, and kapha—along with the digestive fire, which encompasses digestion, assimilation, and metabolism, function harmoniously. Additionally, all bodily tissues and components, known as dhatus, as well as the excretory functions related to urination and defecation, must operate effectively. This state of well-being is complemented by a mind, senses, and spirit that are pleasantly balanced and content.

A balanced physical, mental and spiritual well-being is health. It is not only the mere absence of a disease. Ayurveda while managing any condition, approaches it in 3 steps in the order of priority.

1. Ahara (food/diet)
2. Vihara (lifestyle)
3. Oushadha (treatment)

The same applies to drug addiction.

Ahara (Food/Diet)

AYURVEDIC DIET FOR ADDICTION PREVENTION

In Ayurveda, diet is crucial for maintaining dosha balance and overall well-being. Food choices can significantly impact mental and emotional health, potentially influencing addictive behaviors. Here's how Ayurvedic dietary principles can help prevent addiction:



1. Balancing Doshas:

Vata Types: Those with a predominance of Vata dosha are prone to anxiety and restlessness. To balance Vata, the diet should include warm, moist, and nourishing foods. Examples include cooked grains like rice and oatmeal, root vegetables like sweet potatoes, and healthy fats from ghee or nuts. Spices such as cinnamon and cardamom also help ground Vata.

Pitta Types: Pitta dosha, which is fiery, can lead to irritability and intense cravings. To soothe Pitta, one should consume cooling and calming foods. These include fresh fruits like melons and cucumbers, leafy greens, and dairy products like yogurt and milk. Cooling herbs such as mint and cilantro can also be beneficial.

Kapha Types: Kapha dosha is associated with lethargy and emotional heaviness. To counteract Kapha, one should eat light, stimulating foods. Opt for foods with astringent, bitter, or spicy qualities, such as leafy greens, beans, and spices like turmeric and black pepper. Reducing heavy, oily, and sweet foods is also recommended.

2. Detoxification: Regular detoxification, known as Panchakarma, is a cornerstone of Ayurvedic practice. This includes:

- **Virechana (Purgation):** Helps cleanse the digestive tract, eliminating toxins that can affect mental health and increase susceptibility to addiction.
- **Vamana (Emesis Therapy):** Induces controlled vomiting to expel excess mucus and toxins from the body.
- **Basti (Enema Therapy):** Uses medicated enemas to cleanse and rejuvenate the colon, improving digestion and overall health.



3. Mindful Eating: Ayurveda also emphasizes mindful eating practices, which involve eating with awareness and avoiding overeating or eating in response to emotional triggers. This can help prevent the compulsive behaviors often associated with addiction.

Vihara (Lifestyle)

EXERCISE AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Regular physical activity is essential in Ayurveda for maintaining dosha balance and overall health. Exercise helps manage stress, enhances mood, and supports the body's natural detoxification processes:

1. Yoga: Yoga is highly recommended in Ayurveda for its physical and mental benefits. Specific yoga practices can help balance doshas:

- **For Vata Imbalance:** Gentle and grounding poses like Child's Pose and Forward Bends can calm the nervous system and reduce anxiety.

- **For Pitta Imbalance:** Cooling and calming poses such as Forward Fold and Legs-Up-The-Wall can help reduce irritability and stress.

- **For Kapha Imbalance:** Stimulating and energizing poses, including Sun Salutations and Warrior Poses, can counteract lethargy and promote emotional vitality.

2. Regular Exercise:

Apart from yoga, other forms of exercise such as walking, swimming, or cycling can support overall health. Regular physical activity improves circulation, boosts endorphins, and reduces stress—all of which are important for preventing addiction.

MEDITATION AND MINDFULNESS

Meditation and mindfulness are integral to Ayurvedic practices for mental health and addiction prevention. These practices foster emotional balance, self-awareness, and resilience:

1. Meditation:

- **Guided Meditation:** Utilizing

guided imagery or focused breathing exercises can help individuals manage stress and reduce cravings. Techniques such as visualization can assist in breaking the cycle of addiction.

■ **Mantra Meditation:** Repeating calming mantras or affirmations helps center the mind and create a sense of inner peace. This practice can reduce anxiety and enhance mental clarity.

2. Mindfulness Practices:

■ **Mindful Awareness:** Practicing mindfulness in daily activities—such as eating, walking, or interacting with others—can help individuals stay present and avoid the compulsive behaviors associated with addiction.

■ **Breathing Exercises:** Techniques like Pranayama (controlled breathing) can reduce stress, balance the doshas, and improve emotional regulation.

Oushadha (Treatment)

AYURVEDIC THERAPY AND TREATMENTS

Ayurveda offers several therapies and treatments aimed at balancing the body and mind, which can help in preventing addiction:



1. Abhyanga

(Oil Massage): Regular oil massage with medicated oils helps relax the nervous system, reduce stress, and promote overall well-being. It also aids in detoxifying the body by enhancing lymphatic flow.

2. Shirodhara: This therapy involves pouring warm, medicated oil over the forehead in a steady stream. Shirodhara calms the mind, reduces stress, and improves mental clarity, making it beneficial for those dealing with anxiety and addictive tendencies.

3. Nasya (Nasal

Administration): Nasya involves administering medicated oils or powders through the nasal passages. This therapy helps in clearing mental fog, enhancing cognitive function, and supporting emotional balance.

4. Rasayana Therapy:

Rasayana, or rejuvenation therapy, includes a range of practices designed to enhance vitality and longevity. This includes the use of specific herbs and dietary recommendations aimed at rejuvenating the body and mind, thereby supporting resilience against addiction.

HERBAL REMEDIES

Ayurvedic herbs play a crucial role in preventing and managing addiction by supporting mental and physical health. It is mandatory that these herbs and treatments should be undergone only after consulting a qualified Ayurveda physician.



1. Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*): Known for its adaptogenic properties, Ashwagandha helps the body adapt to stress and promotes emotional stability. It reduces anxiety and supports overall mental health.

2. Brahmi (*Bacopa monnieri*): Brahmi is renowned for its cognitive and calming effects. It enhances mental clarity, reduces stress, and supports emotional balance, making it beneficial for addiction prevention.

3. Shatavari (*Asparagus racemosus*): This herb supports the nervous system and helps in managing emotional imbalances. It is particularly useful for individuals dealing with stress and emotional instability.

4. Jatamansi (*Nardostachys jatamansi*): Jatamansi is used to calm the mind and reduce mental agitation. It supports restful sleep and emotional stability, which are important for preventing addictive behaviors.

5. Gotu Kola (*Centella Asiatica*): Gotu Kola enhances cognitive function, supports emotional balance, and reduces anxiety. It is beneficial for maintaining mental clarity and preventing addiction.

Preventing drug addiction through Ayurveda involves a multifaceted approach that integrates diet, exercise, meditation, therapy, and herbal remedies. By focusing on balancing the doshas, supporting mental and emotional health, and incorporating holistic practices, Ayurveda offers a comprehensive strategy for addiction prevention. While modern medicine provides valuable tools for treating addiction, integrating Ayurvedic principles can enhance overall well-being and resilience. As we continue to explore and validate these approaches, Ayurveda stands out as a powerful ally in the fight against addiction, promoting a healthier and more balanced life.

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is a distinguished Ayurvedic physician with over 27 years of experience in the field. He comes from a traditional Vedic family with deep roots in Ayurveda, particularly the Yajurveda tradition. He is currently the Director of Nagarjuna Ayurveda iKerala, where he is actively involved in the development and propagation of Ayurvedic medicine. He consults from Nagarjuna Ayurveda Treatment Centre from Tripunithura, Kochi.

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Prakriti' can take on HR Challenges



Dr. Sajith Varma

One of the most pressing challenges faced by HR professionals worldwide is the art of placing the right individual in the right role. Despite having a well-defined job description, working with reputable recruitment agencies, and reviewing impressive CVs, many organizations still struggle to make accurate hiring decisions. But In Ayurveda, the Prakriti Analysis is a powerful tool to assess an individual's personality traits and nature, writes **Dr. Sajith Varma**



- Skill
- Knowledge
- Experience
- Personality
- Attitude
- Sensibility

While various methods are used to evaluate the person using these criteria, such as interviews, tests, and assessments, a seasoned candidate can often leverage their experience to influence the outcome and potentially bypass the interview process. In contrast, fresh candidates may be more easily evaluated based on their skills, qualifications and perspectives. However, assessing other criteria, such as personality and attitude, can be more challenging and prone to subjective bias.

While a candidate may excel in many of the key criteria, such as skill, knowledge, and experience, he may still fail to meet the expectations. Often, the root cause of this under performance

Wrong hires often lead to under performance, which can result in costly terminations, lost productivity, and significant financial burdens associated with training and induction. A flawed selection process can have far-reaching consequences, making it essential for HR teams to develop effective strategies to ensure the right fit from the start.

Despite the diverse approaches employed by organizations to evaluate candidate capabilities, a common thread runs through most selection processes: the assessment of key criteria, including:

lies in issues such as attitude, inability to cope with work pressure, and poor interpersonal relationships.

In Ayurveda, the Prakriti analysis is a powerful tool used to assess an individual's personality traits and nature. This process can be adapted to support the recruitment process in HR, providing a valuable tool for evaluating candidates' fit for a particular role. By using Prakriti analysis, HR professionals can gain a deeper understanding of a candidate's personality, strengths, and weaknesses, enabling them to make a more informed hiring decision and ultimately improve the overall performance of their employees.

WHAT IS PRAKRITI (Ayurvedic constitution)

In one word Prakriti denotes Ayurvedic genotype.

Ayurveda, the ancient Indian system of healing, emphasizes the balance between different elements of the human body and nature. According to Ayurveda, most characteristics of an individual can be linked to his Dosha, which is derived from the five fundamental elements. Vata (composed of space and air) controls movement, Pitta (a combination of fire and water) governs metabolism, and Kapha (made up of earth and water) is responsible for bodily assimilation. These Dosha are dynamic forces that continuously interact with a person's thoughts, emotions, environment, and actions.

DOSHA	FUNCTIONAL CHARACTERS
VATA	Life force, Movement, Creativity
PITTA	Energy, Transformation, Metabolism, Intelligence
KAPHA	Assimilation, Growth, Wisdom

Prakriti refers to the inherent nature of the body in relation to Dosha and is determined at the moment of conception based on the dominant Dosha.

It remains constant throughout a person's life and influences their physical and mental traits.

The ancient texts of Ayurveda mention specific properties of Dosha and how they affect a human being's physiology or Prakriti based on the



dominance of one or more Dosha. The Prakriti of a person is quite capable of providing a fair indication of physiological strengths and weaknesses, mental tendencies, and susceptibility to illnesses of various types

Ayurveda's concept of Prakriti, or individual constitution, is a distinctive feature that sets it apart from other medical systems. Each Prakriti has its unique characteristics, which are taken into account when selecting treatment and medications for an individual. In Ayurveda, the selection of diet and lifestyle recommendations is also tailored to each Prakriti, acknowledging the unique needs and vulnerabilities of each person. The assessment of Prakriti is a critical component of Ayurvedic diagnosis, treatment, and prevention. By analyzing an individual's Prakriti, healthcare practitioners can gain a deeper understanding of their physical and mental constitution, making it an essential tool in prognosis, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of various diseases.

Numerous research studies have been conducted to empirically validate the Prakriti concept at the modern genomics level, yielding positive results. These studies have successfully correlated the ancient Ayurvedic understanding of individual constitution with modern genetic and biological markers, providing a strong foundation for the scientific validation of Prakriti.

Identifying an individual's Prakriti typically involves a comprehensive assessment. In a clinical setting,

physicians typically use a combination of physical examination and direct questioning to determine a person's Prakriti. For those without medical expertise, online questionnaires are also available. However, these questionnaires often require answering 100 to 120 questions, and even then, the results may not be entirely accurate, as the importance of each characteristic can vary. This highlights the complexity of the Prakriti concept and the need for a nuanced understanding of an individual's unique characteristics to accurately determine their Prakriti.

By understanding the following key characteristics, Prakriti assessment can be simplified and a fair appraisal can be achieved.

CHARACTERISTICS	VATA	PITTA	KAPHA
Body built	Thin / poor musculature	Medium built / well defined musculature	Fleshy/ plump
Body response to heat	Like warm climates / food	Like cold climate and food	Moderate, no extreme heat or cold
Eating habits	Frequent	Regular	Irregular
	Poor / irregular water intake	High quantity water	Regular/Normal water intake
	Fast eating / gulping	Finishes food fast with proper chewing	Takes time to finish food
	Cannot stand hunger	Acidic tendency if fasts	Good hunger tolerance
	Indigestion tendency	Normal digestion	Low digestion
Skin Nature	Dry / tendency for cracks & cuts	Sensitive to heat / pimples & boils	Oily /Tendency for water retention/ Cellulite
Bowel movements	Irregular	Frequent stools	Normal
	Hard stools	Soft / semisolid	Normal
Movements / physical activities	Fast	Normal	Slow / Less mobile
Weight gain tendency	Less	Fluctuating	Tendency to obesity
Endurance to exercise	Cannot last long	Good stamina	Medium
Proneness to infections	Frequent	Moderate	Strong resistance
Healing ability	slow	good	excellent
Communication	Talkative, drifting from one to other	Sharp, inclusive with analytical abilities	Less vocal with good communication
Initiation capability	Quick, Responsive and Enthusiastic	Moderate, upon conviction and understanding	Slow to initiate new things
Concentration / memory	Quick grasping but poor retention	Moderate grasping and retention	Slow grasping but good retention
Creativity / intelligence	Creative / versatile	Intelligent / focused	High vision/ poor in execution



It is rare to find an individual with a single dominant Dosha personality, as most people will exhibit a combination of two or three Dosha. As a result, we identify individuals based on the predominance of their characteristics, using labels such as Vata-Pitta (VP), Vata-Kapha (VK), and Pitta-Kapha (PK), among others. The unique permutation of these Dosha in each individual's Prakriti (natural constitution) results in distinct physical and mental characteristics, making every person different from one another.

Application of *Prakriti* in HR

It will be interesting to note that most of the characters mentioned here are of physical nature and tend to be confidential. Assessing these characters in an interview or even through a questionnaire may not be possible. Hence evaluation by an Ayurveda expert will be the best possibility.

It is noteworthy that individuals with specific Dosha type qualities will exhibit certain positive and negative characteristics that may limit their ability to perform at a higher level. For example, an individual with a Vata-Pitta (VP) personality type may struggle to demonstrate leadership or managerial qualities, making them more suitable for front line or back end executive roles. They may require clear instructions and ongoing motivation to perform effectively. In contrast, an individual with a Pitta-Kapha (PK) personality type is likely to possess strong leadership qualities, driven by focused goals and timelines. By understanding these personality traits, HR professionals can make informed decisions about job assignments, leading to enhanced productivity and organizational performance.

PRAKRITI chart; DOSHA type characteristics and best job assignments

DOSHA Type	CHARECTERISTICS	BEST JOB ASSIGNMENTS
VP	Good starters, but need continuous monitoring. Easily distracted. Keeps timelines, but faults on long term assignments. tries new methods to achieve goals.	Front line / back end executives/ call centre & sales executives / customer care/ creative artists
VK	Team player, helping nature, dreamy, drifting nature, good communicator, reasonable memory	Teaching/ training / planning / HR / executive assistants
PK	Good leadership quality, focused, understands the situation, adapts quickly, poor in money management	Middle and senior level managers / good entrepreneurs / project managers
PV	Good leaders, innovative, ambitious but sometimes careless, energetic, good interpersonal relations	Lower and middle level managers/ jobs involving physical work/ travelling/ operational managers
KV	High vision, poor execution, changing decisions, good communicators, socialiser, highly emotional, good in memory, likes to be in the limelight, analytical skills	Public relation/ writing/ Documentation/ creative functions/ Data analyst/ planning/ non executive senior management
KP	Highly focused, good in execution, high vision, sets high goals and achieves, slow in new initiations	Good entrepreneurs/ senior executive level jobs/Head of department



When the wrong person is assigned to a specific role, it can lead to conflicting outcomes. From my experience, individuals with a PV or PK profile often struggle to sustain themselves in a front line job, as they are naturally inclined towards leadership or aspire to take on more responsibility. As a result, unless they are offered opportunities for growth and advancement, they may be compelled to leave. Conversely, when we promote a front line leader solely based on seniority, rather than their managerial capabilities, they may not be effective in their new role unless they develop the necessary skills to excel in management.

Interestingly, most of the characters discussed here are of a physical nature and tend to be private. Due to their confidential nature, it may be challenging to assess them through traditional methods such as interviews or questionnaires. Therefore, it is essential to rely on the expertise of an Ayurveda professional to evaluate these characters accurately.

Prakriti, a fundamental concept in Ayurveda, can be leveraged to enhance the effectiveness of HR

functions in recruitment and job assignments. By analyzing an individual's Prakriti, organizations can make informed decisions about job placement, leading to improved employee satisfaction and productivity. Furthermore, a collaborative effort between Ayurveda enthusiasts and HR experts can lead to innovative applications of this ancient knowledge in modern HR practices, ultimately yielding significant organizational benefits.

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Dr. Sajith Varma, a graduate of the esteemed GURUKULA' model Ayurveda College in Coimbatore, completed his degree in 1989. Leveraging his extensive experience in management, he has held leadership positions in various organizations. Currently, he serves as a senior clinical faculty at the University of Tunku Abdul Rahman Hospital in Kampar, Malaysia, where he shares his expertise with the next generation of healthcare professionals.

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The Ayurveda sector is witnessing a change unseen in recent times. While the world at large has been embracing the holistic effects offered by Ayurveda on an increasing scale, the progress of technology, especially the advent of AI, promises a platform where the efficacy of Ayurveda can be documented and promoted in an evidence-based manner.

This has resulted in a vibrant start-up culture where more and more players and investors are putting money, technology and human intelligence into developing and promoting Ayurveda products with tremendous success. Alappuzha-based Pramana AyurTech Solutions Pvt Ltd is one such start-up involved in developing deep-tech products and solutions for enhancing the clinical evidence-building capabilities of the Ayurveda healthcare system.

Dr O.V. Abhilash is the Founder-Director and Clinical Head of Pramana AyurTech Solutions. In an exclusive talk with 'Ayurveda', Dr O.V. Abhilash talks about the opportunities and challenges faced by Ayurveda in this AI-driven world and the future one can expect from it.

“Not just AI, but machine learning and IoT are all bringing forth tremendous change in Ayurveda and the healthcare sector as a whole,”



says Dr Abhilash. “In Ayurveda, the effects will be felt in three ways - first is the increased efficiency in the documentation process, second is enabling faster clinical decisions and the third is the development of new drugs.”

While Ayurveda as a sector is in the growth phase, the number of individuals who can identify herbs just by looking at them is becoming less. Liberal documentation of the ayurvedic herbs, as well as their effects on people, is necessary to overcome it. Unlike modern medicine, treatment in Ayurveda varies from person to person depending on their body nature. The advent of AI technology will help quicken such clinical decisions. While the development of new drugs is a time-consuming process, the pilferage of time due to human efficiency in the process can be negated using AI.

However, this does not mean all is well with AI in Ayurveda. Many factors in AI can create problems for doctors and manufacturers alike. According to Dr Abhilash, the industry players are not being optimistic about the emergence of AI, but rather are being pragmatic.

“AI platforms like ChatGPT draw conclusions from existing data. It does not actually think and analyse. So, one cannot blindly trust AI to bring correct results. Also, there is the chance of misuse of the personal information of patients on these platforms. In Ayurveda, like with every other sector, people should be the driving force behind growth and technology should be the tool, and not the other way around,” he says.



Dr Abhilash would also like Ayurveda practitioners and the community itself to become more proactive in bringing growth into the sector.

“In the case of Ayurvedic start-ups, most of the entrepreneurs are product manufacturers and not practitioners. While this brings some benefits to the Ayurveda community, for better results, Ayurveda doctors and practitioners should come together and join hands with key technology players for better

promotion of the sector and make more people aware of the efficacy of Ayurvedic medicines with documented evidence to back the claims,” he says.

The Ayurveda sector is growing at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of around 19%. The central government is in the process of creating an Ayushman Bharat digital platform where the medical data of every citizen will be stored and updated. Health ID cards on the lines of Aadhar Cards will be distributed, which will change the complexion of the healthcare sector in India. When it comes to future career prospects, Dr. Abhilash has some pragmatic words for budding doctors and practitioners in the field.

“Ayurveda used to be an individual-driven sector. It was veterans in the field who trained and brought up the new generation. That will change. Ayurveda will become more corporate. It brings immense possibilities and new challenges. Future doctors will have to adapt and thrive in an ever-changing world where new drugs, new treatment procedures and mechanisation of the treatment process will be the norm,” says Dr Abhilash.

The advent of AI is expected to speed up the data-enabled growth of Ayurveda and make it an evidence-based form of medicine. This will bring more trust into the sector and help in the country's march towards ensuring health for all. While AI, as such, will not be a solution to the problems faced by Ayurveda today, it can be the means to a solution that is wholesome and effective.

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Building Confidence in Autistic Children Through Yoga



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Every child possesses distinct qualities that set them apart. They can be likened to uncut diamonds, poised to reveal their radiant brilliance. Autism, or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), is a complex and lifelong condition characterized by a range of challenges, particularly in communication and specific behavioral patterns.

Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder often face considerable obstacles in their ability to communicate. They may find it difficult to understand the thoughts and emotions of others, which can hinder their own emotional expression. This challenge can manifest in their spoken language as well as in non-verbal communication, such as gestures, facial expressions, and physical interactions.

Those on the autism spectrum may also struggle with their learning experiences. However, despite these communication hurdles, many exhibit exceptional talents in areas such as art, music, mathematics, and memory tasks. They often excel in assessments that evaluate analytical thinking and problem-solving skills.

It is crucial to recognize that autism is not a disease. It is not something that can be contracted or passed on. Individuals with autism have brains that develop in a distinctive way, resulting in a unique perspective on the world. This difference in perception can create challenges in communication and in forming social connections.

Parents frequently encounter challenges in acknowledging that their child may have a problem, particularly when the issue is not readily apparent to others. Timely diagnosis is crucial for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their families, as it facilitates access to essential support services efficiently.

Bharat, commonly referred to as India, has a rich tradition of prioritizing education and knowledge. Our diverse cultural heritage reflects the wisdom of ancient practices such as Yoga, which embodies a holistic approach to living, merging art and science to foster balance and peace. The core of Yoga is its capacity to harness profound insights, allowing us to manage

our restless minds. It transcends mere physical postures or flexibility; Yoga is instrumental in guiding us toward a happier, healthier, and more fulfilling existence free from stress.

Despite remarkable advancements in modern science that have unraveled the complexities of the human body, including cells, genes, and biochemical processes, it still faces challenges in fully curing or preventing numerous psychosomatic disorders and societal issues.

While modern science tends to regard the human body as a machine, concentrating on physical components and their breakdown into smaller elements, Yoga philosophy perceives human existence as an integrated whole, highlighting the importance of knowledge and the concept of unity.

By truly embracing and practicing Yoga, we can gain a comprehensive understanding of the human experience. This engagement can foster improved health, happiness, and a sense of balance both within ourselves and within our communities. Numerous studies have demonstrated that Yoga is effective in preventing and alleviating stress, a primary contributor to psychosomatic illnesses and disorders. It can greatly enhance the quality of life for older adults and those facing health challenges, improve both the quality and duration of sleep, aid in overcoming various addictions, promote overall well-being, enhance cognitive abilities across all age groups,





and strengthen immunity against various infections.

Yogic philosophy underscores the importance of acknowledging each individual's uniqueness. It fosters self-acceptance and encourages respect for the distinctiveness of others. While the physical symptoms associated with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) may appear minor at first, they can significantly impact an individual's health and overall quality of life. Children with ASDs benefit from participating in enjoyable and suitable exercise programs. Yoga can serve as a beneficial and enjoyable activity for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder, providing a supportive environment that allows them to embrace and express their unique traits and behaviors.

Children tend to absorb knowledge more effectively through personal experiences

rather than through traditional teaching methods. Research has shown that games offer several significant benefits, particularly their capacity to engage and hold a child's attention. In fact, games often outperform many conventional educational tools in this regard. Moreover, they present an excellent opportunity for children to develop social skills and enhance their understanding of group interactions.

When yoga is integrated with games, it transforms into *Kreeda* (playful) yoga, which proves to be highly advantageous for children. This approach fosters the development of skills such as awareness, intelligence, memory, focus, harmony, and group dynamics, while also helping them manage emotions like ego and anger—all without them realizing how much they are learning while enjoying themselves! Notably, these games

require no special equipment or financial investment; the only essentials are one's body and mind.

Engaging in activities such as planting seeds and watering plants allows children to express respect and care for the environment, fostering a sense of connection with nature. This experiential learning deepens their understanding of ecology and their place within it.

Research suggests that yoga may contribute to reducing inflammation by decreasing levels of pro-inflammatory cytokines and the expression of the soluble interleukin IL-2 receptor gene. It also enhances the body's innate antiviral response and promotes brain health by activating natural defense genes. Additionally, yoga stimulates telomerase, which is linked to increased cell longevity, and encourages the expression of nitric oxide synthetase and neuroprotective genes, indicating potential benefits for eye health. Furthermore, yoga supports DNA repair and helps maintain cellular integrity.

Yoga focuses on the synergy between the body and mind. It incorporates breathing techniques, various postures known as *asanas*, and mental practices such as relaxation and meditation to enhance both physical and emotional well-being. Ideally, yoga should be embraced as a lifelong journey rather than a temporary solution to specific issues. For children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), maintaining a consistent yoga practice throughout their lives is crucial.

Yoga practice enables one to achieve higher levels of performance, bringing out the hidden potentials from within. Systematic Yoga practice will increase the physiological and psychological well being. The spine is stiff, thus producing much pain, which limits movement, imbalances co-ordination. They also have difficulty in concentration.

When Yoga is implemented as Therapy, it is best when done on a one-to-one basis. There is limited human study of yoga therapy in children with autism. Better trials are needed to confirm these results.

SUGGESTED ASANAS

Asanas engage the muscles and joints, facilitating the creation of space within the body's framework to enhance circulation and boost flexibility. This leads to a more integrated and less stressful physical functioning. Postures that promote blood flow to the head include Viparitkarani, Sarvangasana, Matsyasana, Halasana, and Suptavajrasana, which can be alternated with standing postures like Padahastasana, Trikonasana, and Padangushtasana. These practices may enhance blood circulation to the cranial area and stimulate brain activity. Additionally, Balasana or Nikunjasana, Mehruasana, and Dharmikasana are beneficial as well.

Postures aimed at enhancing concentration include one-legged balancing poses such as Vrikshasana, Rathacharya, Natarajasana, and Ekapada Asana. It is important for parents

or instructors to assist children in maintaining these positions.

To boost confidence and improve body posture, back-bending postures like Bhujangasana, Ushtrasana, Chakrasana, and Dhanurasana are effective as they open the shoulders and chest. Simhasana can aid in addressing stammering, stuttering, and certain ear, nose, and throat issues in children. Pavanamukta Asana also provides an enjoyable experience.

Starting with simple movements and dynamic postures, children can gradually progress to static postures, embodying the principles of Sthira and Sukha, leading to a sense of satisfaction. Demonstration tends to be more impactful than verbal explanation, a principle that applies to all Yogic techniques. Postures should be customized according to each child's individual capabilities.

Pranayama:

Pranayama is a technique that regulates and controls breathing, offering significant benefits for individuals with autism. This practice enhances stamina, balance, and strength, while also promoting better sleep through improved circulation of vital energy. Effective breathing techniques can alleviate deeply rooted physical and emotional tension within the body. Additionally, Pranayama can assist in managing seizures, which may be prevalent among these children.

Engaging with animal sounds makes the practice more enjoyable for them. Kukkriya Pranayama, known as the dog panting breath, is particularly popular among children. Other techniques such as Mathangi Pranayama, Vyaghra Pranayama with Cheeri, and Sharabha Kriya are also beneficial. Kapalabhati is effective for students who may be





slower in their learning, but it is not recommended for those who are hyperactive. Shitali and Sitkari Pranayama are valuable for individuals experiencing speech difficulties.

Nada Pranayamas, including Pranava and Bhramari, can help normalize brain function, while Nadi Shuddhi promotes calmness and improves coordination between the right and left hemispheres of the brain. Chandra Nadi Pranayama and Surya Nadi Pranayama can be utilized based on whether the goal is to activate or relax the child, as well as which brain function requires enhancement. The right nostril is associated with the left brain, while the left nostril corresponds to the right brain. Mukha Bhastrika, referred to as the 'cleansing breath,' aids in expelling stale air from the lungs and purifying the bloodstream of excess carbon dioxide.

Regular practice of these techniques can reduce response times and improve memory and comprehension. Research indicates that Pranayama may be beneficial in addressing learning disorders, attention deficit disorder (A.D.D.), and intellectual disabilities (Bhavanani AB et al., 2003). It may also be advantageous for training children with intellectual disabilities who exhibit prolonged reaction times.

Author:

Dr B. R. Ramakrishna is the Vice chancellor of S-VYASA Yoga University, Prashanthi Kuteeram, Bangalore-from 6th February 2019.

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- Vice-President of the Central Council of Indian Medicine (CCIM), Government of India, New Delhi, since March 27, 2018.
- Editor-in-Chief of "RAJAS" – AYUSH Journal, RGUHS, Bangalore, since August 2019.
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Unraveling the Links Between Yoga and Ayurveda



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Ayurveda and Yoga are two interconnected and essential disciplines within the Vedic knowledge system, established by Indian sages. Originating from the same foundational principles and creator community, they align in their ultimate objectives, yet they diverge in their methods for reaching these goals.

HISTORICAL AND CONCEPTUAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AYURVEDA AND YOGA:

The ancient Ayurvedic text, Charaka Samhitha, reveals that thousands of years ago, revered sages who fully embodied the principles of Yama and Niyama, radiating self-illumination akin to fire through the Tejas gained from their Tapas, convened in the Himalayan valley. Their purpose was to find solutions to diseases that undermine health and hinder the pursuit of Purusharthas - Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha (Charaka Samhitha Soothrasthana 1/13 - 14). This gathering





and subsequent actions led to the development of Ayurveda. The text indicates that the Acharyas who systematized Ayurvedic principles were yogis who practiced Yama, Niyama, and other aspects of Ashtangayoga, thereby attaining significant yogic powers.

Additionally, there is a belief that Patanjali, the Yoga Master; Charaka, the esteemed Acharya of Ayurveda; and Panini, the authority on Sanskrit grammar, are incarnations of the divine serpent Anantha, upon which Lord Vishnu rests. According to this belief, Anantha manifested in these three forms—Patanjali, Panini, and Charaka—to purify mental, vocal, and physical activities, respectively (Yogavarthikam- Vijnanabhikshu). This narrative underscores a shared foundational concept among these three disciplines: the purification of the individual through various forms of practice. Therefore, it can be concluded that both Yoga and Ayurveda ultimately lead to the same goal.

PHILOSOPHICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AYURVEDA AND YOGA:

Ayurveda is recognized as an Upaveda, primarily derived from the Rigveda and Atharvaveda, while Yoga is classified as a Seswara Darsana, which aligns with Vedic philosophies. This indicates that both disciplines share a compatible philosophical foundation. The Samkhya philosophy has significantly influenced the foundational principles of Ayurveda. Additionally, Yoga is regarded as Seswara Samkhya, which is reflected in the Bhagavad Gita's assertion that "Samkhya Yogau prithak bala pravadanthi na panditha" (Bhagavat Gita 5/4)—only the uninformed, not the learned, perceive Samkhya and Yoga as separate. Furthermore, "Ekam samkhyam cha yogam cha ya: pasyathi sa pasyathi" (Bhagavat Gita 5/5)—those who see Samkhya and Yoga as one

truly understand reality. The philosophical connection between the two is evident from these statements.

In the context of Pramana, Ayurveda employs specific philosophical tools to assess universal substances, which include Prathyaksha (Observation), Anumana (Inference), Aptopadesa (teachings from enlightened Rishis), and Yukthi (Logical reasoning). When discussing pramanas in relation to chithavrithi, the Pathanjala Yogadarsana categorizes them into three groups: Prathyaksha (Observation), Anumana (Inference), and Agama (which encompasses both the Vedas and the teachings of enlightened Rishis) (Pathanjala Yogadarsana 1/7). It is noteworthy that Yoga recognizes the same pramanas as Ayurveda, with the exception of Yukthi, for evaluating universal subjects. This suggests that Yoga may interpret Yukthi as a subset of Anumana, while Ayurveda treats it as a distinct tool for practical application.

The ultimate objective of Ayurveda, as outlined in the Charaka Samhita, is to facilitate the attainment of Purusharthas by promoting health. The text recounts how esteemed Rishis gathered in the Himalayas to seek remedies for ailments that hinder the pursuit of these goals. This narrative underscores that the primary focus of Ayurveda is to support individuals in achieving their Purusharthas. Among the four pillars of Purusharthas, Moksha stands out as the ultimate goal of Yoga.

THEORETICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AYURVEDA AND YOGA:

The term "Yoga" originates from the root "Yujir," which signifies concepts such as unity and amalgamation. As Yoga is fundamentally a Mokshasasthra, its etymological roots and objectives suggest that it represents the union of the Jeevathma (individual soul) with the Paramatma (Universal Consciousness). It is important to recognize that two entities can achieve perfect unity when they are either parts of the same whole or share similarities. A core principle of Ayurveda is the alignment of the individual with the Universe. The Charakasamhitha articulates this idea with the phrase "Yavantho hi moorthimantho loke bhavavishesasthavantha: purushe, yavantha: purushe thavantho loke," (Charaka Samhitha Sareerasthana 5/3) which translates to the notion that the individual embodies the universe, as all material and spiritual phenomena are mirrored in both. This principle is referred to as 'Loka Purusha Samanyavada.' Various physical and mental practices, including Dinacharya (daily regimen) and Ritucharya (seasonal regimen), prescribed by Ayurveda aim to sustain samyakyoga (equilibrium) between the individual and the universe, ultimately promoting health and the pursuit of Purushartha (including Moksha). Therefore, it is evident that both Ayurveda and Yoga, while following distinct paths, ultimately strive for the same objective.



Ayurveda is rooted in Sankhya Darsana, while Yoga is regarded as Seswara Sankhya, leading both philosophies to recognize Panchabhootha as the fundamental components of the observable universe. As previously noted, Aptavakya or Aptopadesa serves as a pramana, a conceptual framework for assessing and treating patients. In Ayurveda, the term Apta is defined as "Rajasthamobhyam nirmuktha thapojnana balena ye, yesham thrikalam amalam jnanam avyatham sada, Aptha Sishta vibudhasthe thesham vakyam asamsayam," which translates to "the words of those who (Rishis) are liberated from mental impurities such as Rajas and Tamas through Tapas (Meditation), possessing knowledge of the past, present, and future, are considered authoritative without any doubt." In discussing Moksha, Ayurvedacharya Charaka describes it as the elimination of Rajas and Tamas, stating, "Moksho Rajasthamo abhavath balavath karma samkshayath viyoga sarvasamyogairapunarbhava uchyathe" (Charaka Samhitha Sareerasthana 1/142). This indicates that Aptas are Yogis who have attained the highest mental states according to Charaka, who regards their teachings as authoritative within the field of Ayurveda.

Charaka describes yoga as the process through which the mind, when united with the Atma, allows for the detachment of the Atma from the mind and sensory organs. This detachment leads to a state devoid of happiness and suffering, which is recognized as Yoga by the sages. In light of Patanjali's definition, "Yoga Chitta Vritti Nirodha," (Pathanjala Yogadarsana 1-2) it becomes evident that both Charaka and Patanjali convey a similar concept using different terminology. Furthermore, the primary objective of all medical systems, including Ayurveda, is to alleviate individuals from pain and suffering. Charaka articulates, "Yoge Mokshe cha Sarvasam vedananam avarthanam Mokshe nivritthir nisheso yogo moksha pravarthaka," meaning that relief from all forms of pain and suffering is achieved through Yoga and Moksha; while Moksha offers complete liberation, Yoga serves as a pathway to Moksha. This underscores that Acharya Charaka, a revered figure in Ayurveda, regards yoga as the ultimate means to transcend all forms of pain and suffering.



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AYURVEDA AND YOGA IN PRACTICAL CONTEXT:

Ayurvedic treatments are generally categorized into three main types: Daiva Vypasraya, Yukthi Vypasraya, and Satwavajaya. Daiva Vypasraya involves rituals aimed at removing the root causes of illnesses. Yukthi Vypasraya focuses on the rational application of food and medicinal substances. Satwavajaya is described as “Ahithebhyo arthebhyo mano nigraha”(Charaka Samhitha Soothrasthana 11/54) which translates to the discipline of the mind away from negative influences. The effective application of various aspects of Ashtangayoga is crucial for the successful execution of these treatments.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AYURVEDA & YOGA AND REASON FOR DIFFERENCE IN APPROACH:

It is clear that while the overarching goal of Ayurveda encompasses that of yoga, Ayurveda

employs distinct methods to achieve this objective. These variations in approaches towards a shared ultimate aim give rise to different Bharatheeya Sasthras, contributing to their uniqueness. By examining the reasons for these diverse methodologies, we can appreciate that they represent various perspectives of the same concept, leading to overlaps at certain junctures, with some encompassing others. This principle also applies to the relationship between Ayurveda and Yoga. To illustrate this, we can refer to the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita.

According to Swami Vivekananda, the Bhagavad Gita conveys two distinct messages tailored to different groups or stages of individuals in society. The first group, known as Mokshakama, consists of those who have fulfilled their social responsibilities and are now concentrating on achieving Moksha. The second group, Dharmakama, includes individuals who are currently engaged in maintaining societal order in a Dharmic manner, with the aim of eventually elevating themselves to the Mokshakama stage. The well-known verse “Sarvadharmam Parithyajya mamekam saranam vraja” (Bhagavat Gita 18/66) indicates that “Lord Krishna will free from all sins those who forsake all duties and surrender to Him,” which is directed towards the Mokshakama group. In contrast, the verse “Tasmat twam uthishta yaso labhaswa, jithwa sathroon, bhungshwa rajam samrudham” encourages individuals to “Arise, achieve glory by defeating your enemies, and enjoy the pleasures of the world,” and is intended for the Dharmakama group. Historically, yoga was developed as a Mokshasasthra for Mokshakamas, but over time, its physical and mental health benefits have also been recognized and promoted. Given that yoga is fundamentally a Mokshasasthra, its perspective, approach, and goals reflect this focus. Conversely, Ayurveda is designed for the Dharmakama, who must lead a Dharmic life on Earth while balancing Artha and Kama (Ashtanga Hridaya, Soothrasthana- 2/30), and thus emphasizes health to support their responsibilities.

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Erectile Dysfunction & Ayurveda



Dr. Ankur Kumar Tanwar
M.D. Ayurvedic Physiology

At some point in life, around half of married couples struggle with sexual issues of one kind or another. Erectile dysfunction (ED) is one of the most common sexual issues, described as the inability to respond sexually satisfactorily as a result of recurring and chronic partial or total failure to achieve or maintain an erection until the sexual act is completed.

Dr. Ankur Kumar Tanwar, M.D. Ayurvedic Physiology, insists that there is proper treatment for Erectile dysfunction (ED) in Ayurveda.

Erectile dysfunction is the major cause of impotence and infertility. Its prevalence is higher in India, as one out of every 10 men suffers from ED. One of the main reasons behind this higher prevalence is unawareness about the severity of the disease and keeping it a secret due to social stigma. Its prevalence is enhanced with age, especially after 40 years of age. It also occurs as a comorbidity in other diseases like diabetes and obesity.

Causative factors

The main causative factors for the occurrence of ED are psychological, physical causes, or both. Psychological causes include stress (family, marital, occupational, and social), while organic causes include anatomical and physiological disturbances.

Ayurveda description of the disease

The science of Ayurveda helps people live long and healthy, which is necessary for achieving the ultimate aim of humanity. Sexual fulfillment and healthy progeny are crucial for achieving the ultimate happiness of life. Sexual dysfunction and infertility can negatively impact one's quality of life. Ayurveda, the ancient Indian system of medicine, describes this disease condition under the heading of *Klaibya*. Ancient Ayurveda scholars define *Klaibya* as a condition in which a person's inability to perform a sexual act with a partner due to looseness of the penis, despite a strong desire to do so. Attempts to perform sexual acts may result in breathlessness, fainting, and failure without ejaculation due to penis flaccidity.

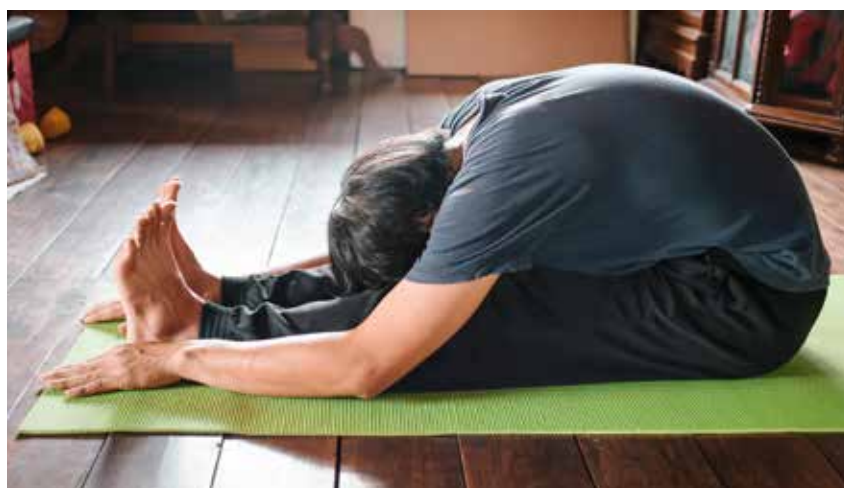
Treatment modalities for *Klaibya*

Ayurveda describes its management under the *Vajikarana* specialty. *Vajikarana* has been specifically characterized for improving sexual health, enhancing *shukla* (semen) status, and pleasing the mind. This therapy increases the possibility of having children and promotes quick sexual excitement, allowing him to perform the sexual act and satisfy himself as well as his partner.

Vajikarana therapy is indicated after the *Sodhana* treatment for better results. *Sodhana* therapy includes *panchakarma* - *Vamana*

(emesis), *Virechana* (purgation), *Basti* (medicated enema), and *Nasya* (nasal instillation) for the purification of *Srotas* or channels. *Uttar Basti* (Insertion of medication into the urinary system) is one of the common *Panchakarma* procedures described by many Ayurveda practitioners for the treatment of ED. After the *Sodhana*, *Shamana* therapy is prescribed considering the patient's *prakriti*, age, season, and habitat. *Shamana* therapy includes oral medications for balancing the *Dosha* (functional entities) within the body. This treatment involves the use of *Vrishya* herbs and formulations, which can enhance sexual arousal, support the *shukla* (semen and sperms), or both. Ancient *acharyas* also described the importance of counseling in ED. Some of the *Vrishya* herbs commonly used in practice are *Kapikacchu* (*Mucuna pruriens*), *Amalaki* (*Phyllanthus emblica*), *Masa* (black gram), *Gokshura* (*Tribulus terrestris*), *Madhu*.

Yoga and exercise for ED



Yoga helps in better prognosis of the disease for quick recovery. Yoga enhances the blood flow to the penile tissues, decreases overall stress, regulates hormones, and increases sexual confidence. Some of the yogic postures useful in managing ED are *Paschimottasana*, *Dhanurasana*, and *Bhujangasana*. Kegel exercise is best for patients with ED. For better results, patients should follow yoga and exercise regularly.

Diet and lifestyle for ED

- Intake of Cow Ghee, milk.
- Intake of sweet, unctuous food items.
- Addition of *Khajura* (dates) in the diet.
- Avoid salty, pungent, and sour food items.
- Avoid anger, sorrow, and stress.
- Practice meditation and yoga.
- Avoid suppressing the natural urge of urination and defecation.

Health Beyond Fashion: Ayurveda Facts on Adornments



India is popular all over the world for its unique culture, and its ancient healthcare system. Indian women love to wear jewelry and other adornments. They are, in fact, an integral part of our lives as they are worn not only for beauty enhancement, but also for good health in daily life.



Vaidya Lakshmi Lakshmanan
Senior Ayurveda Physician at
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According to Ayurveda, there are 107 Marma (vital energy) points in the body through which Prana (life force) energy flows. Gentle stimulation of these marma points through mild pressing or gentle tapping or application of herbal pastes help improve the flow of prana which helps to improve one's health and prevent obstruction to the flow of energy. Stimulation of marma points is also the reason behind women wearing ornaments. While doing daily chores, the ornaments touching the body create friction and stimulate the marma points thereby keeping the body in good health. That is why the belief among Indian people that ornaments should not be worn outside the clothes, if done so, it will be only for beauty purpose and will not render health benefits.

Common Indian adornments, their marma points and health benefits

Wearing Solah Shringar or the 16 bridal / beauty accessories is a ritual in ancient Indian culture which is still practiced by many communities. They are worn during weddings, major festivals and spiritual ceremonies. Other than their beauty benefits, the 16 adornments bring good health and prosperity. And the Jewelry are mostly made of gold or silver.

Gold is normally used to adorn the upper part of the body, like bangles, necklace, earrings, etc. because it reacts well with body's energy. Silver reacts well with earth's energy; hence it is worn on lower part of the body, that is as anklets, toe rings, etc.. It is believed that women who beauty themselves with the 16 adornments will be blessed with good health, wealth, beauty and fertility.

1. Gajra

Gajra is hair decoration crafted from fresh jasmine flowers placed on the back of the head just above the neck. It is a symbol of purity and beauty. Marma: Krikatika. Benefits: It acts as a mood enhancer, helps maintain healthy body temperature, radiates positivity and provides subtle aromatherapy thereby promoting relaxation.

2. Maang Tikka

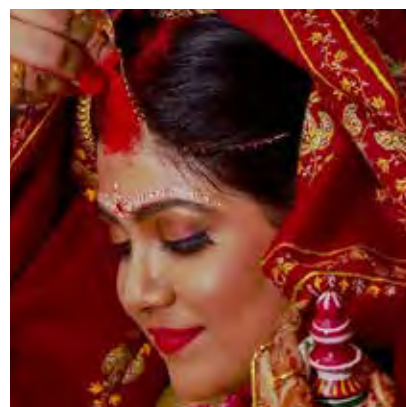
It is a hair accessory having a chain with a hook at the back and pendant at the front. The central pendant rests on the forehead just below the hairline and the chain is hooked up onto the hairs at the vertex. Marma: Simanta. Benefits: It gently applies pressure on the Ajna Chakra that controls concentration and helps retain energy of the body, improve focus and concentration. It also facilitates good blood supply to the facial muscles.

3. Sindoor

An ornamental mark of marriage applied on the middle and top of the forehead at the parting line of the hair. Unmarried women and widows do not wear Sindoor. **Marma:** Adhipati. **Benefits:** It helps regulate blood pressure, prevent damage due to UV radiation, relax the mind and protect the brain. As it is applied upto the vertex, where the pituitary gland that regulates all bodily functions is present, it helps stimulate hormone secreting glands thereby boosting fertility.

4. Bindi

Bindi is a colored dot applied on the middle of the forehead, just below the pendant of Maang Tikka. Traditionally only married women applied Bindi. Marma : Sthapani. Benefits: The center of the eyebrows is known as the 'Third eye energy center of the body' because energy reaches from base of the spine to this spot during meditation. So, this spot is very important and the gentle pressure exerted on this region while applying bindi helps increase concentration, clears up sinuses,





improves eye health, relieves stress, boosts energy levels and maintain mental balance.

5. Anjana / Kajal

It is an herbal collyrium prepared from Soot or Antimony that is applied to the inner part of the lower eyelids to give a deep black color to your eyelids and improve your eye health. Marma: Apanga. Benefits: As eyes are exposed to pollution such as heat and dust which affects the eye health and application of Kajal will help to prevent and treat many eye problems such as dryness, itching, burning sensation, irritation etc.

6. Nath (Nose pin)

Nath, once an identity for marital status, has become a global fashion trend now. Nose piercing is done on the left nostril in

women after puberty and nose pins made of gold or silver studded with precious / semi-precious stones are generally worn. Marma: Phana. Benefits: It helps to enhance smell perception and other sensory perception, prevent respiratory problems, improve emotional strength and relieves excess body heat.

7. Karn Phool (Earing)

Ear piercing is done in the ear lobules of both the ears. Jhumka's (little bell-shaped earrings) are the oldest style earrings. There are different styles. According to Ayurveda, ear piercing is done for both sexes. Marma: Vidhura. Benefits: Helps nourish and strengthen the ear, improves speech, intellect, power of thinking, memory and brain development.

8. Mangalsutra (Auspicious thread / chain)

Mangalsutra is a chain with a sacred locket, long enough to reach the woman's heart which is put around the bride's neck by the groom at an auspicious time on the wedding day and is worn by the bride throughout her life. Marma: Hridaya. Benefits: Generally, it is made of gold and worn inside the dress so that it touches the body and the constant friction it creates help regulate blood pressure level and balance emotions. As it is worn near heart, it attracts the surrounding cosmic waves and makes it beneficial to the heart health.

9. Haar (Necklace)



It is handcrafted in gold / silver and sometimes studded with precious / semi-precious stones and worn around the neck, especially on special occasions. Marmas of the neck: Manya and Sira Matrika. Benefits: Wearing a necklace helps improve thyroid health thereby regulating menstruation and improving reproductive health.

10. Bajuband (Armlet)

It is a snug fitting jewelry worn on both the upper arms, around the biceps. Marma : Bahvi. Benefits: It improves blood circulation to the arms and strengthens the upper arm by creating right amount of resistance.

11. Choodiyan (Bangles)

Bangles are worn by many women on a daily basis. They are made of gold, silver or glass. It is recommended to wear glass bangles during



the 7th month of pregnancy as the fetus starts recognizing different sounds. It helps stimulate brain cell development of the baby. Sound of bangles also gives sense of security to the newborn. Marma: Manibandha. Benefits: As women generally tend to have low bone density and are susceptible to arthritis, bangles act as wrist weight and strengthen the wrist. Friction caused by bangles on the wrist increases blood circulation in hands thereby regulating blood pressure. They also help prevent inflammation in the arms by dilating the blood vessels. Bangles also act as first line of shield in case of injury to the wrist and absorb jerks and impacts.

12. Hathphool and Aarsi

It is a jewelry worn on the hands, an ornate hand connector on the back of the hands. Marma: All marmas of the hand – Kshipra, Kurcha, Talahridaya, Kurchashira; and Manibandha. Benefits: It stimulates all the marmas of the hand.

13. Mehndi

A natural dye from henna leaves that is primarily used to create temporary art on the hands. Marma: All marmas of the hand – Kshipra, Kurcha, Talahridaya, Kurchashira and Manibandha. Benefits: It has antiseptic and cooling properties. Regular use of Mehndi has a cooling and healing effect, thereby helping heal wounds and prevent itching, roughness of hands, skin allergies and other skin infections. It also helps reduce body heat and cool down the body during menstrual period.

14. Kamarbandh (waist / belly chain)

Women wear these mainly at spiritual ceremonies or festival times. Marma: Nabhi, Katikataruna and Basti. Benefits: Apart from beauty enhancement, it helps prevent accumulation of belly fat especially after delivery. It strengthens the low back region and prevents backache..

15. Payal (Anklets)

Anklets are like bracelets, worn in feet. Gold / silver anklets are generally worn and silver is considered superior. Apart from enhancing feet's look, anklets are also of heavy significance. Marma: Gulpha. Benefits: Anklets provide support to ankle joint. They help reduce tension in ankles and prevent swelling / inflammation and pain in ankles caused due to long stationary standing.

16. Bicchiya (Toe rings)

Toe rings are usually worn on the second toe preferably in silver. Marma: Kshipra. Benefits: When we walk, the toe rings create friction below the second toe, the nerves of which are connected to the uterus. Hence wearing toe rings will improve circulation to the reproductive organs and strengthen them.

Although adornments are seen as style quotient nowadays, they are glorified in India and symbolize one's identity, social and cultural norms. Worn daily, touching your skin and impacting your health, they make us aware of the subtle energies around us, stimulate energy channels and promote physical, mental and emotional health.

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Biggest Challenges Faced by Women in the Beauty Industry



Shahnaz Husain

The beauty industry has influenced the lifestyle of all; whether men, women or kids and is present at every stage of life, from applying kajal at a young age to selecting the lipstick you wish to wear at your wedding. This industry is all about appeal, and it strives to improve your natural qualities with new products that are also safe to use. It continues to expand worldwide, cranking out brand after brand and

most of which are based on user input. Without any doubt, women have made significant contributions to the beauty industry's success.

Although, growing up in the beauty industry can be gratifying and stressful, regardless of how simple styling has become. However, the beauty business has many problems, ranging from products to their effect on mental health. Women have been brainwashed into believing that

beauty is defined by one's external appearance from the dawn of time and was compelled to adopt the fairer, better philosophy through numerous marketing tactics by cosmetics businesses.

It would not be incorrect to say that the beauty industry significantly impacts how women in society view the phrase "pretty." However, the beauty industry has evolved from a distorted notion of beauty to a more holistic one as time has passed. The business, which formerly exploited women's insecurity over their skin tone and colour, now emphasises beauty as a blend of looking and feeling beautiful.

But even today also, women face many challenges in the beauty industry. Below are the challenges faced by the Women in the beauty industry.

1. Revolving Body Expectations

Every time, it seems like there are new regimens and routines to try in order to keep up with ever-changing body demands. Sometimes, society tells you that you need thick thighs and a

large butt, and another time, society tells you that you need to be stick thin. Working to meet these standards is exhausting, and it may be harmful to our dietary and mental health. Being healthy is attractive, yet many women associate health and beauty with a number on a scale rather than what makes us healthy in the first place.

2. Idealized Beauty and low Mental Health

At some stage, the marketing efforts, social media, cosmetic stores, and publications provide false images of beauty. As in professional photoshoots and editing portrayed beauty as pristine, airbrushed skin with no flaws or scars. Likely it shows Lips that are thick, lashes that are heavy, brows that are broad, hair that is voluminous and lustrous, and so on. Body dysmorphia, social anxiety, poor self-esteem, psychological stress, eating disorders, and other mental health illnesses have been linked to repeated exposure to unattainable beauty standards.





3. Closure of Stores

The closure of cosmetic shops and salons during the epidemic was another challenge for the industry, especially for women, as they control a large portion of the beauty industry. The coronavirus epidemic resulted in sedentary lives as a

result of restrictions on mobility and social gatherings imposed by the government. As a consequence, the number of people visiting cosmetic stores and salons has decreased, resulting in the temporary or permanent closure of beauty businesses.

4. Maintaining Sustainability

The beauty industry creates products that have a combination of inorganic ingredients, and as the public is still concerned about the safety of beauty products, demand for organic, sustainable, and ecologically friendly personal care products will continue to grow.

Consumers have grown more conscious of the degree of skincare they require, as well as the

harmful consequences that harsh substances included in cosmetic products may have. This understanding, along with heightened environmental awareness, means that pharmaceutical companies and manufacturers will need to embrace more environmentally friendly production techniques and components in order to attract customers and flourish in the business.

5. Women of forties or above are neglected

Women in their forties and fifties are an underserved demographic in the beauty and cosmetics industry. When they are advertised by manufacturers and merchants, it is almost always with anti-ageing products designed to make them seem younger. Older women, on the other hand, want to look better as they age, and they want to age in a more natural way. Plastic surgery has reached its apex, and consumers are increasingly turning to non-invasive technologies that produce more natural effects. If beauty and cosmetics firms neglect the forties population market, then they will risk being left behind.

6. Balancing Responsibilities

A large proportion of women have families, spouses, and other obligations and are entrepreneurs or working professionals. Some women can manage these two aspects of their lives, while others cannot do so. Personal and professional commitments might force a woman to choose between her career and her family. It is particularly challenging for women who lack social support because they must bear the entire load independently.

There are several ways that we can all work together to promote more female leadership from the ground up and solve the above mention issues. We should provide an example of equality demonstrating justice and support for women, which will reaffirm to young people what healthy gender dynamics should look like. This will help in establishing a basis for a more equitable future for future generations. Also, to accomplish substantial change in this industry we better meet the demands of today's modern woman. They should be in leadership positions where they can guide brands to manufacture products and spread the messages of empowerment.



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Exploring the Connection Between Food and Health



Ayurveda views food as a form of medicine, emphasizing that consuming nutritious and appropriate quantities of food tailored to one's body type and seasonal conditions can lead to optimal health and immunity against diseases. A balanced diet is essential for maintaining equilibrium in both body and mind. The holistic perspective of Ayurveda on nutrition is further illustrated in the Yajnavalkya Smriti, an ancient text on human conduct, which states that eating should resemble the performance of a yagna, symbolizing sacred offerings to the vital and spiritual energies. Such nourishment is believed to eradicate ailments and weaknesses in both body and mind.

The essential principle is that food should serve to nourish and cleanse us internally and externally. Ayurveda categorizes food into three components, each with distinct effects: the gross part, which is metabolized and excreted; the subtler aspect, known as *rasa*, which contributes to the formation of bodily tissues; and the most refined, invisible part that nourishes the mind. Neglecting these subtleties in favor of mere sensory pleasure can lead to various health complications, shedding light on the origins of what are now termed lifestyle diseases.

In Ayurveda, the concept of *agni*, or digestive fire, plays a crucial role in the digestion of food. Dr. Vasant Lad, a prominent figure in the field of Ayurveda, explains that “various enzymes facilitate the conversion of food into energy, and Ayurveda refers

to these enzymes and metabolic activities collectively as agni.” Therefore, when preparing meals, it is essential to take into account one’s digestive capacity (agni). Generally, individuals with a Pitta constitution possess the strongest digestive power, while those with a Vata constitution experience weaker digestion, and individuals with a Kapha constitution tend to have a slower digestive process.

Ayurveda categorizes different life stages based on the dominance of the three doshas and recommends dietary choices that align with both age and dosha predominance. The initial phase of life (up to 20 years) is identified as the Kapha stage, the active years (20 to 50 years) as the Pitta stage, and the later years as the Vata stage. During the Kapha phase, it is advisable to limit the intake of cold dairy products, as they can lead to increased mucus and congestion. In the Pitta stage, a diverse range of foods can be consumed, but moderation and timely meals are key. As individuals transition into the Vata stage, digestive capacity diminishes, necessitating a diet rich in warm soups, stews, and softer foods. On chilly winter days, incorporating warm spices and hearty grains is beneficial, whereas lighter options such as fruits and vegetable salads are preferable during the summer months.

The digestive capacity is at its peak around noon, making it the optimal time for the main meal. Consuming food late at night, when digestive strength is diminished, can result in the accumulation of ama, or undigested toxins. An increase in ama can lead to health issues.

SIX TASTES

According to Ayurveda, there are six distinct tastes: sweet, sour, salty, pungent, bitter, and astringent. Each taste is associated with a combination of two of the five elements: earth, water, fire, air, and ether.

Sweet (Elements: Earth and Water)

Characterized by its cool, heavy, and viscous nature, the sweet taste enhances beauty and longevity while supporting overall bodily growth and strengthening ojus (vitality). It contributes to improved complexion, a pleasant voice, and a cheerful demeanor. Additionally, it nourishes the sense organs, balances excess Pitta, and alleviates imbalances in Vata. Sweet flavors also promote

healing and are beneficial for nursing mothers.

Examples include whole grains, fruits, and sweet root vegetables.



Sour (Elements: Earth and Fire)

This taste is viscous and stimulates the salivary glands, thereby enhancing appetite and aiding digestion. It also acts as a carminative and can aggravate Kapha and Pitta doshas.

Examples include yogurt made from seeds or nuts, lemons, and tamarind.



Salty (Elements: Water and Fire)

This taste is characterized by its lightness and lack of viscosity. Its pronounced flavor stimulates salivation and enhances the taste of various dishes. Additionally, it serves as both a carminative and a laxative.

Examples include sea salt, rock salt, and kelp.



Pungent (Elements: Fire and Air)

This flavor is both light and warming. It functions as an anthelmintic, expands the body's channels, and helps to balance Kapha. It alleviates intestinal dropsy and aids in the removal of waste from the body. Charaka notes that the pungent taste promotes gastric secretions and sharpens the clarity of the sensory organs.

Examples include onion, radish, ginger, and chili.



Bitter (Elements: Ether and Air)

This taste is characterized by its dryness and lightness. It possesses properties that combat parasites and reduce fever, while also acting as a carminative.

Examples include dandelion root, rhubarb root, and bitter melon.



Astringent (Elements: Earth and Air)

Astringent substances are primarily composed of earth and air elements. They have the ability to absorb moisture and help to balance aggravated Kapha and Pitta. According to Charaka, the astringent taste has a calming effect and aids in the healing of injuries and fractures.

Examples include plantain, pomegranate, and apples.



Ayurveda approaches the concept of food through two additional perspectives. The first perspective examines the food's action—whether it is heating or cooling. The tastes categorized as sweet, bitter, and astringent are considered cooling, while sour, salty, and pungent tastes are classified as heating. The second perspective focuses on the post-digestive effect, which refers to how foods influence the tissues during and after digestion. Sweet and salty tastes are perceived as sweet in this context, sour remains sour, and pungent, bitter, and astringent tastes are recognized as pungent.

In Sanskrit, these concepts are referred to as rasa, virya, and vipaka, respectively. In Ayurveda, they serve as essential tools for comprehending the properties of food and herbs. By grasping this knowledge, individuals can navigate the intricate energetic interactions of food, enabling them to make informed dietary choices. Understanding one's body type allows for the creation of a personalized diet that promotes a sense of balance and harmony.

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Green Tea :

An Ayurvedic Elixir for Fitness, Radiance and Wellness

In the hustle and bustle of modern life, finding a simple yet powerful habit to boost your health and beauty might seem like a dream. Enter green tea – the ancient elixir with a modern twist, celebrated for its myriad benefits that extend beyond just a morning pick-me-up. From enhancing metabolism to fighting diseases and promoting radiant skin, green tea has captured the attention of wellness enthusiasts worldwide.



Dr. Nita Sharma Das
Founder of NitaNaturale
(www.nitanaturale.com)



Unlocking the power of green tea

Green tea originates from the *Camellia Sinensis* plant and boasts a history dating back to the 10th century BC, revered for its medicinal properties. What sets green tea apart is its non-fermented leaves, packed with potent phytochemicals known as polyphenols. These include flavonols, flavandiols, and phenolic acids, which not only provide antioxidant protection but also support cardiovascular health and aid in weight management.

The Weight Loss Wonder

For those striving to shed pounds, green tea offers a natural solution. Studies have highlighted the role of epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG), a powerful polyphenol in green tea, in boosting metabolism and enhancing fat oxidation. Research findings suggest that regular consumption of green tea extract can lead to significant reductions in body weight and abdominal fat, making it a trusted ally in your fitness journey.

A beauty boost from within

Beyond its slimming effects, green tea nurtures beauty from the inside out. Its antioxidant properties combat free radicals that contribute to aging, helping to maintain youthful skin and a vibrant complexion. Green tea's ability to enhance skin health is bolstered by its anti-inflammatory benefits, which can soothe skin conditions and promote a clear, glowing complexion.

- **Photoaging and UV protection:** Solar radiation, especially UV light, accelerates skin aging through oxidative stress and inflammation. Green tea extracts rich in antioxidants like catechins show the potential to mitigate UV damage and improve skin resilience.
- **Acne treatment:** Green tea's antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties offer promise as a natural treatment for acne, though further research is needed to validate its effectiveness and optimize formulations.
- **Genodermatosis:** Studies exploring green tea extract's role in treating genetic skin disorders like recessive dystrophic epidermolysis bullosa (RDEB) have shown modest benefits, yet larger trials are required to confirm efficacy due to current limitations.
- **Skin health and antioxidant protection:** Green tea, enriched with polyphenols, supports skin antioxidant defenses that enhance skin texture and health, although existing studies lack robustness.

Guarding against disease

The benefits of green tea extend to disease prevention, with studies indicating its potential to lower the risk of chronic illnesses such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Catechins, another key component of green tea, play a crucial role in these protective effects by modulating lipid metabolism and improving insulin sensitivity.

Energize your day

Need energy boost without the jitters? Green tea, with its moderate caffeine content, provides a gentle lift that enhances alertness and endurance. Whether you're gearing up for a workout or powering through a busy day, green tea supports sustained energy levels without the crash associated with other caffeinated beverages.



A weapon against cancer

Perhaps most impressively, green tea has garnered attention for its anti-cancer properties. The high concentration of EGCG has been linked to inhibiting cancer cell growth and promoting apoptosis (cell death) in various types of cancers including breast, prostate, and skin cancers. Incorporating green tea into your daily routine may offer a protective shield against these life-threatening diseases.

Safety considerations

Oral green tea preparations generally show good tolerability but have been linked to rare cases of hepatotoxicity, suggesting a need for cautious use and further investigation into safety profiles.





Embrace the green tea advantage

From weight management to disease prevention and beauty enhancement, green tea stands out as a multifaceted elixir for modern wellness seekers. By cultivating a morning tea habit, you're not just starting your day right – you're nurturing a lifestyle that supports your health, happiness, and natural beauty.

Make green tea a cornerstone of your morning ritual and reap the rewards of its centuries-old wisdom combined with cutting-edge scientific validation. Your journey to a fitter, disease-free, and more beautiful you begin with a simple cup of green tea each morning.

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Ayurvedic Hair oil

INGREDIENTS

- 20 Shallots
- 1 small red onion
- 8 amla fruit
- 1 big Aloe Vera leaf
- 2 fistful curry leaves
- 1 fistful henna leaves
- 15 peppercorns
- 2 tbsp. soaked overnight fenugreek seeds
- 10/15 Tulsi leaves – optional
- 1 fistful Hibiscus flower - optional
- 1 fistful Hibiscus leaves - optional
- ½ litre coconut oil

METHOD OF PREPARATION

1. Start by washing the Aloe Vera leaf thoroughly. Remove the thorns and cut the leaf into small cubes. Chop the large onions into small pieces and deseed the amla, cutting it into small sections as well.
2. Combine the Aloe Vera, shallots, onion, amla, peppercorns, and fenugreek seeds in a grinder to create a coarse paste.
3. Add the curry leaves and henna leaves, then blend until the mixture is smooth.
4. Heat coconut oil in a cast iron kadai and add the blended paste, mixing it thoroughly.

5. Turn the heat to low and stir the mixture continuously to prevent it from sticking to the bottom of the kadai.

6. Stir gently, as the paste may splatter due to its water content.

7. Once the paste is frying and has changed to a brown color, take it off the heat.

8. Allow the mixture to cool before transferring it to a glass jar. This hair oil can be used two to three times a week and is beneficial for both children and adults. It aids in reducing hair fall, encourages healthy hair growth, and can also help with dandruff issues.



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Pathimugam Herbal Drink

Recipe (Serves – 2)

INGREDIENTS

- Water – 1 litre
- Pathimugam – 1tsp

METHOD OF PREPARATION

1. Heat water in a pot for 2-3 minutes, then introduce the pathimugam.
2. After it reaches a boil, turn off the heat and strain the mixture to eliminate the wood fragments.
3. Serve while warm. In Kerala, this beverage is commonly referred to as red water.

AYURVEDIC PROPERTIES

Guna (qualities)-Rooksha – Dryness

Rasa (taste) – **Kashaya** – astringent, **Tikta** – bitter, **Madhura** – sweet

Vipaka- Katu – Undergoes pungent taste conversion after digestion

Veerya – Sheeta – Coolant

Effect on Tridosha – Balances Kapha and Pitta

Part used - Heart wood

Dosage - Decoction 50-100 ml

MEDICINAL QUALITIES

- It is very good in healing mouth ulcers.
- Burning sensation, as in gastritis, neuropathy, burning sensation in eyes etc.
- It is also used in blood disorders such as abscess, skin disorders, bleeding disorders such as menorrhagia, nasal bleeding etc.
- It is useful in white discharge (leucorrhea), heavy periods and shortened periods
- It is an anti-oxidant and anti-inflammatory. It is scientifically proven to have hepato- protective activity. Hence, useful in fatty liver changes and liver damage caused by excess of caffeine,

paracetamol, alcohol etc.

Few ayurvedic medicines made with *Caesalpinia sappan* as ingredient

- **Patrangasava** – used mainly in gynecological conditions such as heavy menstrual bleeding, leucorrhea, fever etc.
- **Kumkumadi Tailam** – an Ayurvedic oil to improve skin complexion and glow.
- **Khadiradi Vati** – used in Ayurvedic treatment of bad breath, oral ulcers,
- Diseases of teeth etc.

(*Biancaea sappan* is a species of flowering tree in the legume family, *Fabaceae*, that is native to tropical Asia. Common names in English include sappanwood and Indian redwood. It was previously ascribed to the genus *Caesalpinia*.)



Author:

An IT professional turned Ayurvedic enthusiast, **Divya Neeraj** is on the path of holistic healing and natural living. Embracing the wisdom of ancient India and harmoniously blending it with modern living, she seeks self-discovery through science, philosophy, and the art of mindful cooking. Founder and CEO of Anantaveda, where Divya along with her team harness the power of nature to create holistic health and wellness solutions. Currently she is pursuing an Ayurvedic Practitioners course at Ayurved Sadhana Vidyalaya, Colorado, USA.



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