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Ayurveda
& Health Tourism

Vol.12 | Issue No. 1 | Jan - Mar 2017 ₹100 US$5 AED18

Cover Story

FERTILITY PROBLEMS
Ayurvedic Perspectives

FERTILITY IS THE KEY
We live through our progeny

SWITZERLAND
Role model for the globalisation of Ayurveda

INSURANCE
A boon for Ayurveda patients

HERBS
To overcome male infertility

GLOBAL INFERTILITY
Multibillion dollar industry

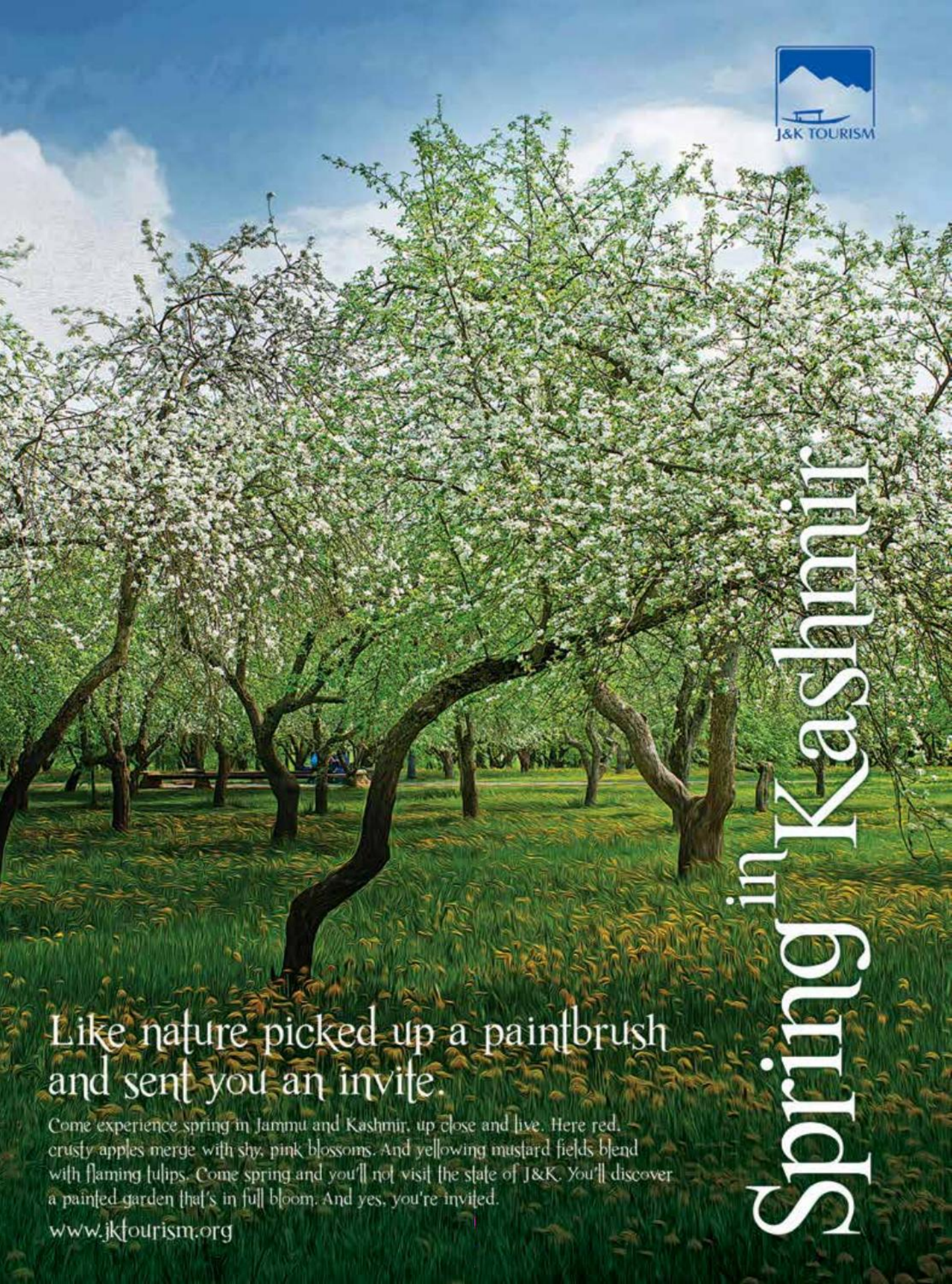
WELLNESS TOURISM
Holistic Wellness Holiday

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Ayurveda can cure infertility

Infertility is a daunting problem across the world. Young infertile couples run haywire in order to get fertile. Allopathy prescribes a lot of medication that is usually accompanied by many side effects. It is at this point of time that Ayurveda comes into rescue. Ayurveda is known to fulfil the urge of both young and old infertile couples to have healthy progenies. It gives meaning and contentment to the life of these couples when they see children of their own blood finally in their hands after a long battle against the inability to conceive. It shows how important is the role of our children and family in life. In fact, most parents live their life for the wellbeing of their offspring.

Ayurveda ,which means 'Science of life', prescribes comprehensive solutions for all sorts of ailments and disorders. Most of these Ayurvedic treatments are based on lifestyle solutions that include proper food, physical and mental health that are inexpensive and simple to follow. Ayurveda also stresses on meditation and yoga so as to induce power and energy balance in the human body and to get rid of critical ailments which Allopathy, unfortunately, fails to address.Ayurveda understands the human being as an inseparable entity of body, mind and spirit and as the microcosm made of the same constitutional elements and ruled by the same functional principles and laws than the macrocosm of which it is an integral part.

According to World Health Organization, about one in 10 couples has difficulty in conceiving naturally. However, this dismal scenario is changing and Ayurveda is seen to have a major role in it.Through this issue we would like to discuss in a comprehensive manner regarding the medico-philosophical approach that Ayurveda has towards fertility. It takes physical, mental and emotional planes of the being into consideration. Allegorically, in Ayurveda the male fertility is regarded as lunar (related to the moon) in its content and female as solar or fiery. It also considers the meeting of the sun and the moon as crucial climax for procreation. Even though there is so much goodness mentioned about Ayurveda for treatment of infertility, it is still rare to find Ayurveda practitioners trained in Ayurveda medicine in the West and generally outside India practise these treatment methods.

Our Cover Story explains the reasons for infertility and how Ayurveda with the help of herbs and medicines and disciplining lifestyle can help both men and women overcome this problem. Through this issue experts in the subject stress on the lifestyle that one needs to adopt in order to get fertile easily. Ayurveda stresses that to get fertile mere union of the body is not enough but a union and compatibility of the mind too is necessary. Ayurveda, considers the physical union for procreation as sacred and not merely a ritual. Ayurveda practitioners even advice couples with fertility problems to get in communion at a time and date that they instruct. This most ancient medical practice thus assures that there is no reason to lose hope in case of infertility as the remedies available are aplenty.

More than that, this issue will carry many interesting and educative articles on Yoga, Ayurvedic cuisine,Beauty, Herbs, Fruits, Grandma's Remedies, Ayurveda Overseas, Letter from Cambridge etc.

In all aspects, this special edition of the magazine will be a collector's delight. It has many articles by prominent Ayurveda experts, practitioners, scholars, researchers etc.

Our magazine, Ayurveda and Health Tourism, is fast catching up with people in India and the rest of the world with all major hospitals providing services in this niche area. This trend is reflected in our steadily expanding readership base. Like our previous issues, this edition showcases authentic and credible information on the Ayurveda's solution to infertility.

Also, we are happy to inform you that, Ayurveda & Health Tourism is being published in Association with Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India. This number will also be coming out as a special Issue during ITB, Berlin, as in the previous years. Our magazine has also won the Kerala State Tourism Award for the year 2014-2015 in the category of Best Tourism Related Magazine in Kerala.Enjoy reading.

- Editor

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Chairman & Managing Director of Somatheeram Ayurveda Group, Mr. Baby Mathew & Mrs.Sarah Baby Mathew receiving National Tourism Award 2014-15 & Kerala State Tourism Awards 2014-2015.

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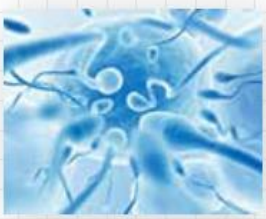
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Switzerland
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For a
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Ayurveda & Health Tourism bags Kerala Tourism Award



Chief Minister, Pinarayi Vijayan gives away the award of Ayurveda & Health Tourism magazine to Editor and Publisher, Benny Thomas (second from right), Swapna Benny and Sunil Nair, as Tourism Minister Kadakampally Surendran, Excise and Labour Minister T P Ramakrishnan, K. Dasan MLA and other dignitaries look on.

Ayurveda & Health Tourism, premium publication on Ayurveda and health tourism from FM Media Technologies Private Limited, Cochin, has been adjudged the best tourism magazine for the year 2014-15 by the Department of Tourism, Government of Kerala. The magazine is published in seven languages-- English, Hindi, German, Spanish, Russian, Arabic and Italian.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan presented the prestigious award to Benny Thomas, editor and publisher of Ayurveda & Health Tourism at a function organized in Kozhikode on December 18.

Tourism Minister Kadakampally Surendran presided over the event and Excise and Labour Minister T P Ramakrishnan delivered the keynote address. K Dasan MLA delivered the welcome address. Kerala Tourism Principal Secretary Dr Venu V and Tourism Director U V Jose were among the host of dignitaries at the event.

A high power committee under the chairmanship of Tourism Principal Secretary Dr Venu V picked the 27 winners under three categories for the awards. Other awards in the media category went to Dr K C Krishnakumar, Chief Sub Editor, Mathrubhumi for best tourism related report and Arun Sreedhar, Chief Photographer, Malayala Manorama for best tourism photography.

FM Media Technologies Private Limited is a fast growing publishing group based in Kochi, Kerala, which publishes Sanghamam, a popular tabloid in Malayalam, from New York, Chicago, Texas and Toronto, Ayurveda& Health Tourism, an authoritative magazine on India's ancient medical practices and Medical Tourism, a trusted source of information on medical tourism.

Punarnava gets Health Excellence Award

Punarnava Ayurveda Hospital gets the Excellence in Health Care Management award from the World Health and Wellness Congress. The award was handed over in Mumbai where 20 doctors from foreign countries participated in the congress.

The award was handed over to the managing director of Punarnava, Dr. A M Anwar and Dr. Jaseela Anwar by Dean and Director of Manipal Hospital, Dr. Sanjeev Bagai.



Padma Shri Prof. Dr. Sanjeev Bagai, Chairman, Nephron Clinics & Vice-chairman & Director - Dean Manipal Hospital presents award to Dr. AM Anwar & Dr. Jaseela Anwar

National AYUSH Council proposed

Government of India is pondering over a proposal to have a National AYUSH Council, on the lines of Medical Council of India, so as to establish and maintain the standard of education of traditional medicine as well as recognise the qualification and register AYUSH practitioners in the country, said Indian news agency, PTI.

"We have received a proposal. The final decision will be taken at a higher level," said Dr Manoj Nesri, Adviser (Ayurveda) in the AYUSH Ministry. The ministry is currently preparing a white paper on the matter, which once whetted by MoS AYUSH, Shripad Yesso Naik, it will be sent to NITI Aayog, he added.

As the proposal is still in its nascent stage, senior officials are debating whether there should be an independent National AYUSH Council or whether it should be part of the National Medical Commission, mooted by NITI Aayog as a replacement for Medical Council of India.

"When there is one national health policy let us have one regulatory body as well, which can have different boards for different medical systems," a senior ministry official said. He also cited the example of China, where there is one medical body for both traditional Chinese medicine as well as allopathic medicine.

If this happens, officials said, AYUSH practitioners will be recognised at par with allopathic medical practitioners and have greater acceptability.

The National Medical Commission Bill in its current form only covers allopathic medicine as it defines "medicine" as "all branches of allopathic medicine such as surgery, paediatrics and obstetrics and gynaecology but does not extend to Indian systems of medicine such as homeopathy or to veterinary medicine, veterinary surgery and dentistry."



India to provide affordable, safe healthcare facilities

The Indian government is committed to the promotion of Ayurveda and other forms of traditional medicines and have formed policies for that purpose, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for AYUSH Shripad Yesso Naik said, while inaugurating the 7th World Ayurveda Congress and Arogya Expo in Kolkatta in December 2016.

"The Centre wants to provide accessible, affordable and safe healthcare facilities to the people," he said inaugurating the 7th World Ayurveda Congress and Arogya Expo in Kolkatta's Science City on December 1.

Speaking on the occasion, Naik said this event and seminars which brings together worldwide experts, patrons, practitioners and enthusiasts of Ayurveda and traditional medicines provides an appropriate stage for discussing the strengths and weaknesses and also promoting Ayurveda at national and international levels.

"AYUSH is set to meet healthcare needs throughout the world," Naik said, adding the Prime Minister Narendra Modi took a great step by announcing the formation of a separate ministry of AYUSH.

AYUSH was earlier a department and the PM laid great importance to the practice and study of traditional medicines and also for conducting more research on them. AYUSH treatment facilities have, therefore, been provided at all levels of healthcare, right from primary health centre to super-speciality hospitals like AIIMS, the Minister added.

About AYUSH

The Department of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy, abbreviated as AYUSH, is a governmental body in India purposed with developing, education and research in ayurveda (Indian traditional medicine), yoga, naturopathy, unani, siddha, homoeopathy, Sowa-rigpa (Traditional Tibetan medicine), and other Indigenous Medicine systems.

The department was created in March 1995 as the Department of Indian Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy (ISM&H). AYUSH received its current name in March 2003. That time it was operated under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

The Ministry of AYUSH was formed with effect from 9 November 2014 by elevation of the Department of AYUSH.

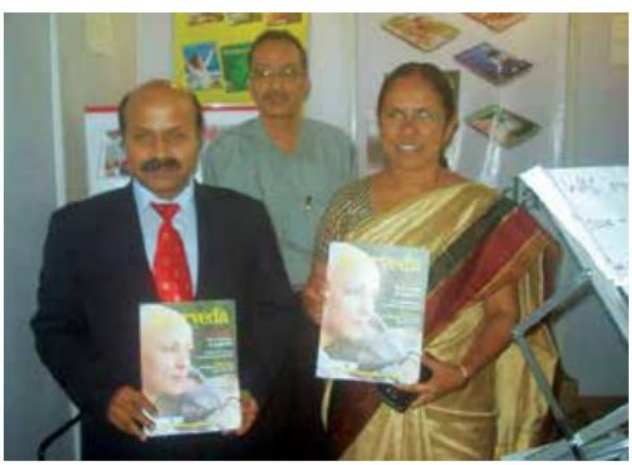


7th WAC and Arogya Expo

The 7th World Ayurveda Congress (WAC) took place from 2nd – 4th December, 2016 at Science City, Kolkata. As always, this time too the event was organised by the World Ayurveda Foundation with the support of Ministry of AYUSH, and the State Government of West Bengal. The Ministry of AYUSH had also organised AROGYA Expo at Science City along with the Ayurveda Congress to facilitate development and growth of AYUSH system of medicine. The Minister of State for AYUSH, Shri Shripad Yesso Naik inaugurated the Arogya Expo.

The focus of the 7th World Ayurveda Congress was – 'Strengthening the Ayurveda Ecosystem' and the congregation brought together stakeholders in the Ayurveda sector from India and abroad. There were three major components of the programme: (1) Public Outreach session which comprised the Ayurveda Expo, the Ayurveda Clinics for the general public and Public Lectures. (2) Influencing Policy and (3) Promoting Science. The 7th WAC held 5 plenary sessions, 25 parallel sessions and a large number of paper presentations, complemented by a series of associated events.

More than 1893 scientific papers of international calibre were presented in over 30 multi-track scientific sessions. Earlier, pre-congress workshops were conducted on Scientific Writing, Panchakarma, Ksharkarma, Afforestation of Medicinal Plants, Mental Health and other matters concerning Ayurveda. For the Ayurvedic industry the B2B meet, Conclave on Ethno Seminar and Scientific Lectures were some of the added attractions.



Kerala Minister of Health, KK Shailaja Teacher releases Ayurveda & Health Tourism Magazine at 7th World Ayurveda Congress, Kolkatta.



Padma Bhushan Dr. Vijay Bhatkar visiting our stall at the 7th WAC, Kolkata

Kerala voted Best Leisure Destination in India by Conde Nast Traveller readers

Spectacular Kerala, with its rich culture, lush vistas, healing Ayurveda therapies and delicious cuisine, has been selected as best destination in India for leisure by readers of the Conde Nast Traveler magazine.

The 'God's Own Country' was voted the 'Favourite Indian Leisure Destination' for the year 2016 by readers who responded to a survey conducted by the international travel magazine.

This is the third in the series of popularity awards that Kerala has received in the recent past, with Lonely Planet citing it as the best family destination in India and Travel + Leisure magazine listing it as a top honeymooners' destination.

Kerala Tourism Deputy Director K. Radhakrishnan received the award at a glittering ceremony held at The Lodhi Hotel in New Delhi hosted by actress Aditi Rao Hydari and attended by Chief Guest Vinod Zutshi, Union Tourism Secretary, among other important industry leaders, influencers and marquee names from travel, tourism and government bodies.

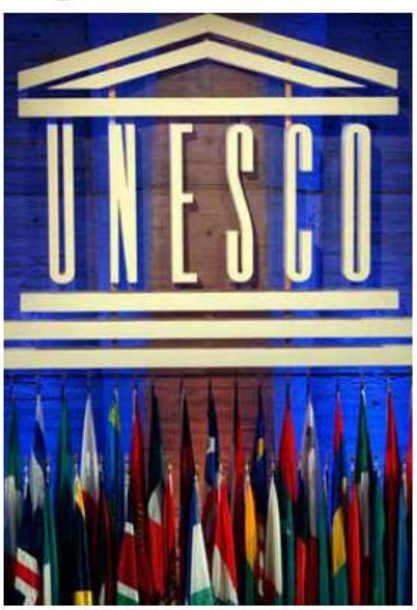
The annual awards, in their sixth year, honour the best in travel, tourism and hospitality with winners in various categories picked by readers of **Conde Nast Traveller** magazine through a voting process spanning across two months. "We are honoured to be recognised as a place to relax and rejuvenate by travellers to our state. Kerala is known for its natural beauty and the state's historical connections with many other parts of the world have contributed to its popularity as a top destination for leisure," Kerala Tourism Minister Kadakampally Surendran said.



Kerala Tourism Deputy Director K Radhakrishnan receiving the Conde Nast Traveller Reader's Travel Awards 2016 in New Delhi on December 1, from Union Tourism Secretary Vinod Zutshi.

Kerala Principal Secretary (Tourism) Dr Venu V. said the award reaffirmed the state's reputation for being a tourist's paradise. "Be it a stay on a houseboat on one of its numerous serene backwaters, relaxing on the pristine beaches, experiencing the bliss of village life, watching traditional art performances or relishing its lip smacking cuisine, Kerala offers a perfect all-in-one leisure experience to travellers from near and far. The options for leisure travel in Kerala are limitless," Dr Venu said. Kerala, which had won the runner-up prize in the same category in 2015, shared the top honour with Goa this year.

Yoga enters UNESCO Humanity List



Yoga, the mind-body discipline, is added to the intangible cultural heritage list of UNESCO along with Cuba's Rumba and Peruvian Scissors dance.

Yoga is now practised all over the world. According to a statement from the world heritage committee, the addition of Yoga to this prestigious list was based on its impact on Indian society, right from health and medicine to education and arts.

"Designed to help individuals build self-realisation, ease any suffering they may be experiencing and allow for a state of liberation, yoga is practised by the young and old without discriminating against gender, class or religion," UNESCO added in a tweet. The UNESCO list of intangible cultural treasures was compiled 10 years ago to increase their awareness. UNESCO is also known to offer financial or technical support to countries struggling to protect them. The Paris-based UN body has also added Cuba's Rumba dance and Belgium's Beer culture to this list. Others in this list include the Mediterranean diet, Peking opera and the Peruvian scissors dance.

UNESCO began compiling a list for cultural and natural world heritage – physical properties such as Cambodia's Angkor Wat or the Grand Canyon in the United States – in 1972. The list now comprises 814 cultural sites, 203 natural ones and 35 with both natural and cultural qualities such as Australia's Uluru National Park, formerly known as Ayer's Rock.



2nd International Ayurveda Congress (IAVC) 2017 - London

International Academy of Ayurved, Pune India; International Maharishi Ayurveda Foundation, Vlodrop, The Netherlands and All India Ayurvedic Congress, New Delhi, India are organising the 2nd International Ayurveda Congress (IAVC) 2017 – London, which is scheduled to happen from April 1 this year. This is after the first conference in Roermond (Holland) 2015 which was attended by 500 delegates and 80 vaidyas from India. The theme of the coming congress is - The Pursuit of Health, Happiness and Long Life. The event will happen at the Hotel Novotel London West, 1 Shortlands, Hammersmith International Centre, W6 8DR LONDON – UK.

Indian Ayurvedic Physicians will be offered special packages that includes conference registration fee, 3 days stay in Hotel Novotel (Arrival 31st March departure 3rd April 2017), breakfast, lunch, and London sightseeing on 3rd April including a cruise on the River Thames river that will cost 500 GBP. His Excellency, Minister Shripad Yesso Naik from the Minister of AYUSH of the Government of India will attend the Congress along with a high level delegation from the Ministry. The online registration for delegates is on. Please log on the link -

http://internationalayurvedacongress.com/register/

Contact -*Prof. Dr.GunvantYeola, Congress secretary & Director - International Academy of Ayurved– gunvantayurved@gmail.com or what's app no. 9028321955*

India, Israel sign MoU to promote Ayurveda



As traditional treatments gain traction, India will help Israeli HMOs (Health Management Organisations) to adopt the ancient Indian healing methods. Last November, the Indian Ministry of AYUSH — the government body that promotes Ayurveda — signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Israeli health institutions, including Ichilov Hospital in Tel Aviv, the Technion in Haifa, and HMOs Meuhedet and Clalit, to begin incorporating Ayurveda medicine into Israeli medical research. In coming years, they hope it may even form part of the holistic treatment options offered by the major HMOs.

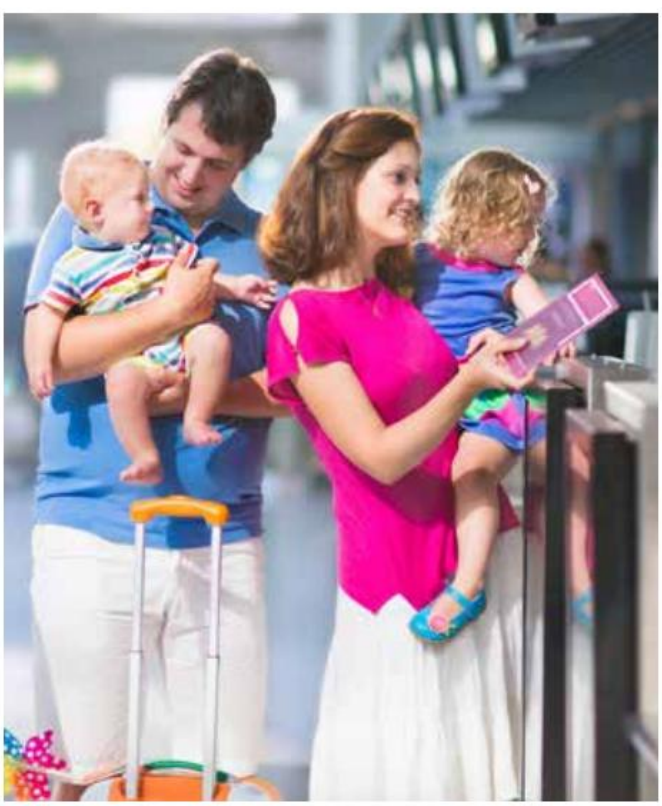
"Ayurvedic medicine has huge potential, which is not realised or validated in scientific research," said Lev-Ari, the director of Integrative Medicine Research Laboratory at Ichilov Hospital/ Tel Aviv Sourasky Medical Center. Schwartz, attended the World Ayurveda Conference in Kolkatta last November as a guest of the Indian Embassy.

Shahnaz Husain part of Harvard curriculum

Shahnaz Husain attends Harvard Conference in Mumbai, of which she was a 'subject'. Shahnaz Husain attended the Harvard Conference in Mumbai on Creating Emerging Markets, held at Taj Lands End Hotel recently. Harvard Professor Geoffrey Jones participated in the Conference, which was built around video interviews of business leaders. Shahnaz Husain's video interview conducted by Harvard will be part of the curriculum for management students. Shahnaz Husain had spoken at Harvard Business School on how she created an international brand. Her story will soon be part of the Harvard Case Study on Brand Creation.



Shahnaz Husain, who was a 'Case Study' and now a 'Subject' and part of the Curriculum on Emerging Markets at Harvard, Boston, seen with Prof. Geoffrey Jones at the Harvard Conference held in Mumbai



E-visa facility gets popular

Thiruvananthapuram and Kochi international airports have reported the arrival of over 50,000 foreign tourists in 2016 using the e-visa facility. These airports reported 25,395 tourists from 71 countries arrived in 2015.

In 2016, after the number of countries that got the permit to use e-visa increased to 125, the number of foreign tourists visiting Kerala has increased to 57,140.

Last year, around 16,848 people from 91 countries reported at Thiruvananthapuram airport using this facility. In the same year, Kochi airport reported the arrival of around 40,292 people from 110 countries using e-visa facility.

According to Kerala Tourism Director, UV Jose, Kerala Tourism plans to chart programmes to promote different uses of the e-visa facility across the world.

He said that this might attract more tourists to visit 'God's own country'.

Also, according to a data collected, the highest number of people who visited Kerala using the e-visa facility was from the UK, 26.92 per cent, while visitors from the US and Germany formed 11.9 per cent and 8 per cent respectively. December had the highest number of people who used e-visa to visit the state while June had the least number of people using facility.

Vaidyaratnam: 75 years of excellent service



*Smt. K.K. Shailaja, Minister for Health, Govt. of Kerala, inaugurating '**Vajra 2016**'. Vaidyaratnam Chairman and Managing Director Ashtavaidyan E.T Narayanan Mooss, Dr. P.K. Warrier, Dr. M.S.Valiathan, Dr. E.T. Neelakandan Mooss, Dr. P.M. Warrier, Dr. B. Ashok, Dr. N. Vimala and A.N. Radhakrishnan looks on.*

As part of the Vaidyaratnam Platinum Jubilee Year celebrations, Vajra – 2016 was planned as an international conclave on Ayurveda which took place on January 13, 14 and 15 at Lulu Convention Centre, Thrissur, Kerala, India. The focal theme of the event was "Lifestyle Disorders & Ayurveda". The event commemorated the 75 years of service that the Vaidyaratnam Oushadhasala has rendered to Ayurveda medicine manufacturing and Classical Ayurveda treatment services.

In connection with the Platinum Jubilee celebrations of Vaidyaratnam Group, several activities were undertaken to propagate the importance of medicinal plant cultivation and the relevance of Ayurveda to address various health issues. International seminars were also conducted in various parts of India, which were attended in large numbers by the Ayurveda fraternity. Scientific sessions were addressed by eminent faculties.

Smt. K.K. Shailaja, Minister for Health, Govt. of Kerala, inaugurated the Ayurveda conclave. Viaidyaratnam Chairman and Managing Director Ashtavaidyan E.T Narayanan Mooss,



VAIDYARATNAM
PLATINUM JUBILEE YEAR

Dr.P.K. Warrier, Dr.M.S.Valiathan, Dr. E.T.Neelakandan Mooss, Dr. P.M. Warrier, Dr. B. Ashok, Dr.N.Vimala and A.N.Radhakrishnan were present on the occasion.

The event was divided into six sessions and the speakers included Padma Vibhushan, Dr. MS Valiathan, Dr. Rema Jayasundar, Additional Professor, AIIMS, New Delhi

The valedictory function was inaugurated by A.C.Moideen, Minister of Industries, Govt.of Kerala

Adv. V. S.Sunil Kumar, Minister of Agriculture, Govt.of Kerala, Prof. C.Raveendranath, Minister of Education, Govt.of Kerala, .Adv.K.Rajan, MLA, Ollur, Adv. Therambil Ramakrishnan, ex- MLA, Dr.D.Ramanathan, Secretary AMMOI, Smt.Sheela Vijayakumar, President District Panchayath, Thrissur, Dr.Sheela Karalam, DMO Thrissur, Vaidyaratnam Chairman and Managing Director Ashtavaidyan ET Narayanan Mooss, Vaidyaratnam directors, Ashtavaidyan ET Neelakandan Mooss and KK Vasudevan, K.Sreekumar, General Convenor, Programme Committee Vajra 2016 & GM Marketing Vaidyaratnam, were also present on the occasion.

Vaidyaratnam group of institutions was set up in the year 1941 by Ashtavaidyan Padmashree E.T. Neelakandan Mooss. Now, Vaidyaratnam Group comprises three manufacturing units, Ayurveda College, Nursing Home, Ayurveda Museum and a R&D Lab with most modern facilities.

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Fertility is the key:
We live through our progeny from one generation to the other

God is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient on His own, but then human beings are also in a lesser way like the Almighty in these aspects by way of transferring their genes, their powers and knowledge through generations down the line. That way one's identity is kept afloat from time immemorial to the present day.

*By **O.J. George** (Consulting Editor)*

Our forefathers live through us and it is a sort of immortality in bits, one can argue. We may not have seen our great-great-great grandpas and grandmas, but their souls see from afar their presence through their progeny. They have left their imprint for all times to be felt through their offspring. The descendants are in fact copycats of their prowess, their character, wisdom, and performance.

God had said He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, self-created. But then the scriptures say the Almighty in His image created human beings, only a little lesser than him. I sometimes conjecture the image that a little lesser than Him means He has allowed His creation to remain immortal through labyrinths of births and deaths and again births in the succeeding generations. Maybe Adam and Eve, the first citizens, have their human vibrations permeating Planet Earth, transcending dimensions of time and space in the form of his myriad generations of posterity keeping alive the ancestral cycle.

God may not have wanted Adam and Eve to be literally mortal, but in spite of their disobedience, the Almighty may have been munificent to them to keep up their identity through their offshoot.



That means if we want to leave our footprints on the globe we must plan to have our little ones to roam around the very sphere who in a way function as our own clones and perpetuate our existence and memory.

Fertility is the watch word for preserving our alter ego, the other "I", which only helps to procreate new generations. Fecundity thrives to breed our own self in the form of children.

Which means we are nothing without the power of procreation, ending in a generational cul-de-sac, causing an abrupt end to our persona. That situation is in fact terrible and disastrous. Maybe not knowing these aspects in fine print, human beings have the wisdom to hand down their stamp from one generation to the other and this function acts as an ever-flowing river.

Human beings subject themselves to renunciation of all sorts for grooming up their brood of young ones.

The act of preserving our existential reality is so pungent that we go to any extent to ensure survival of the succeeding generations, even the mad rush to grab money, properties and wealth could be for the well-being of the next generations. In this context, the importance of child-bearing could be underscored when in many cultures across the world, childless couples are looked down upon with contempt and disdain, even though the situation does not arise on account of any of their fault.

All said and done, child birth should not be an accident, on the contrary one should yearn for a chirpy, bubbly boon of a baby. Conception, gestation and actual child birth are in a way celebratory stages in the life of a human being.

Even in the uncivilized dark ages, there were festivals to harness fertility which was considered a sacred function.

Vedic scriptures speak about the Brahmamuhurtam, roughly 3 am to 5 am, when the woman should have a bath, embellish herself in full beauty and entice her husband for the act of procreation, to have a perfectly healthy and intelligent infant, even taking cognizance of the birth star and moon sign.

If one consults the Vedic pundits for proper days of procreation, it may be such that there may not be many days conducive for the act intended to carve out a perfectly fit and healthy baby.

However, in modern times, synonymous with fast life bordering on stress, binge eating, lasciviousness and audacity to go to any extent for instant gratification, guarded anticipation and resort to careful ways to produce the progeny of one's liking are few and far between, no doubt.

In my frolicking days of youth, friends used to poke fun at each other about having children of our own .and how many of them we should have. I used to say I wanted a dozen of my own, but in the end, when I got married, the first two attempts at child bearing ended up in miscarriage before three months. The third one had an extremely premature birth, before completing seven months of pregnancy, and the surviving kid with many child- related woes has grown up into a full grown man, now schooling for his postgraduate professional degree in the most prestigious institute.

What I want to drive home to friends and families is the fact that progeny procreation is not that simple and straightforward.

I have seen the other extreme as well, as I know a couple who in hardly seven years had four deliveries of whom three survived and three boys are booing around in gay abandon. Perfectly happy couple who did not care a wee bit about longing and waiting for their progeny, for the children came into being without any complication and health hurdles.

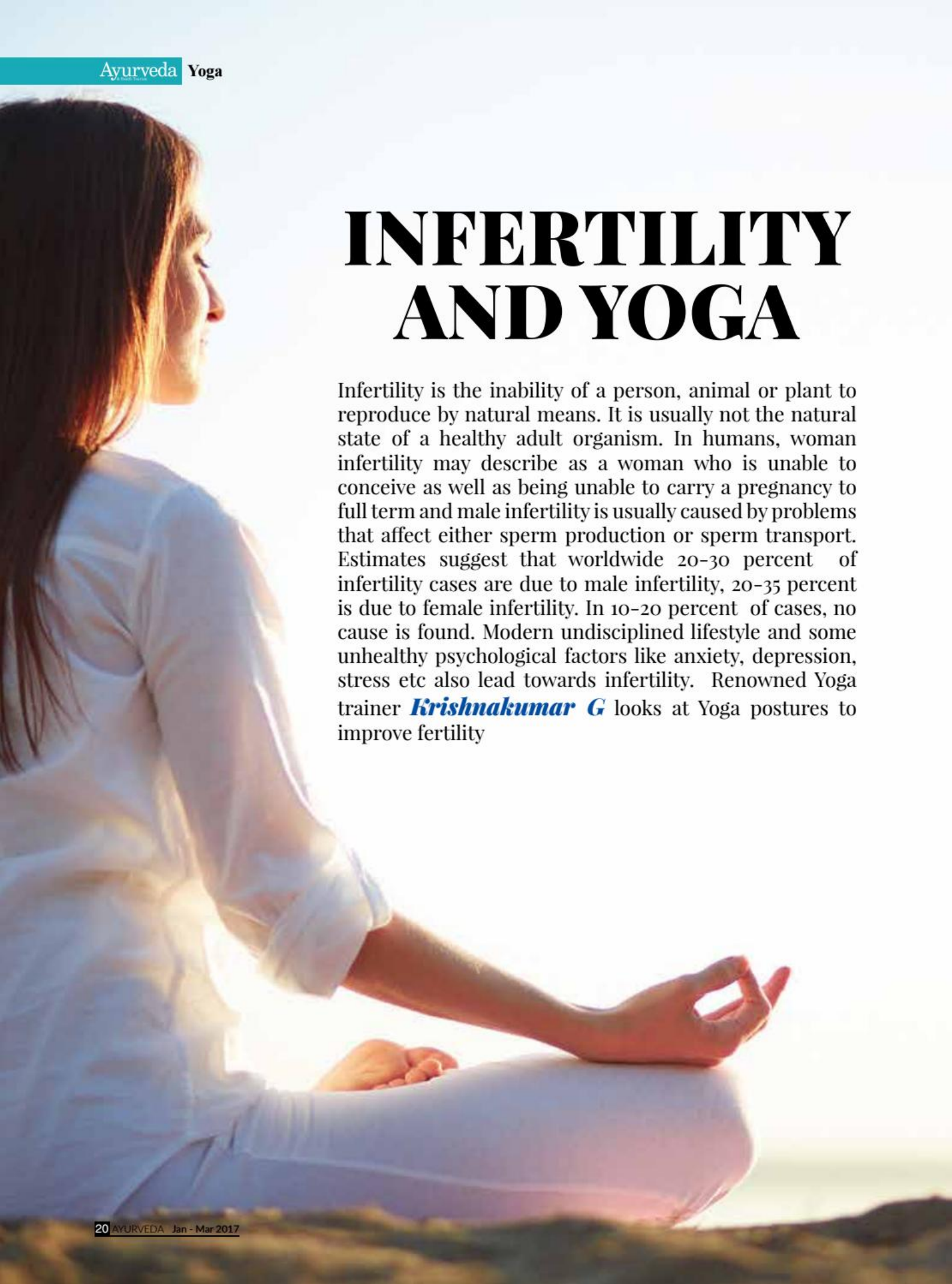
Believe in fate or not, generational survival is a blessing, for God had said:"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart".

Definitely there is something more to it than meets the eye, for have you not seen dime a dozen couples without children parading themselves on the portals of infertility clinics in the fond hope of fetching a babe of their own? And in the bargain they spend fabulous amounts of money on various methods of insemination, fertilization and probable child bearing, for quick conception and easy delivery are quite uncommon these days. Some of the working men and women keep their semen and eggs in frozen condition to be used at a later stage, when they want to have their own babes, or go in for surrogacy. All these methods require trial by fire and are not on automatic mode of functioning.

In the circumstances, why not take recourse to Ayurvedic stream of alternative medicine which offers tremendous scope for childless couples to undergo a rigorous mode of lifestyle, food intake, healthy habits and renunciation for cocksure birthing? It is simply transformation in the way of life at the micro level that works wonders for the barren couple culminating in their fondling their own flesh and blood in the form of a cuddly babe.

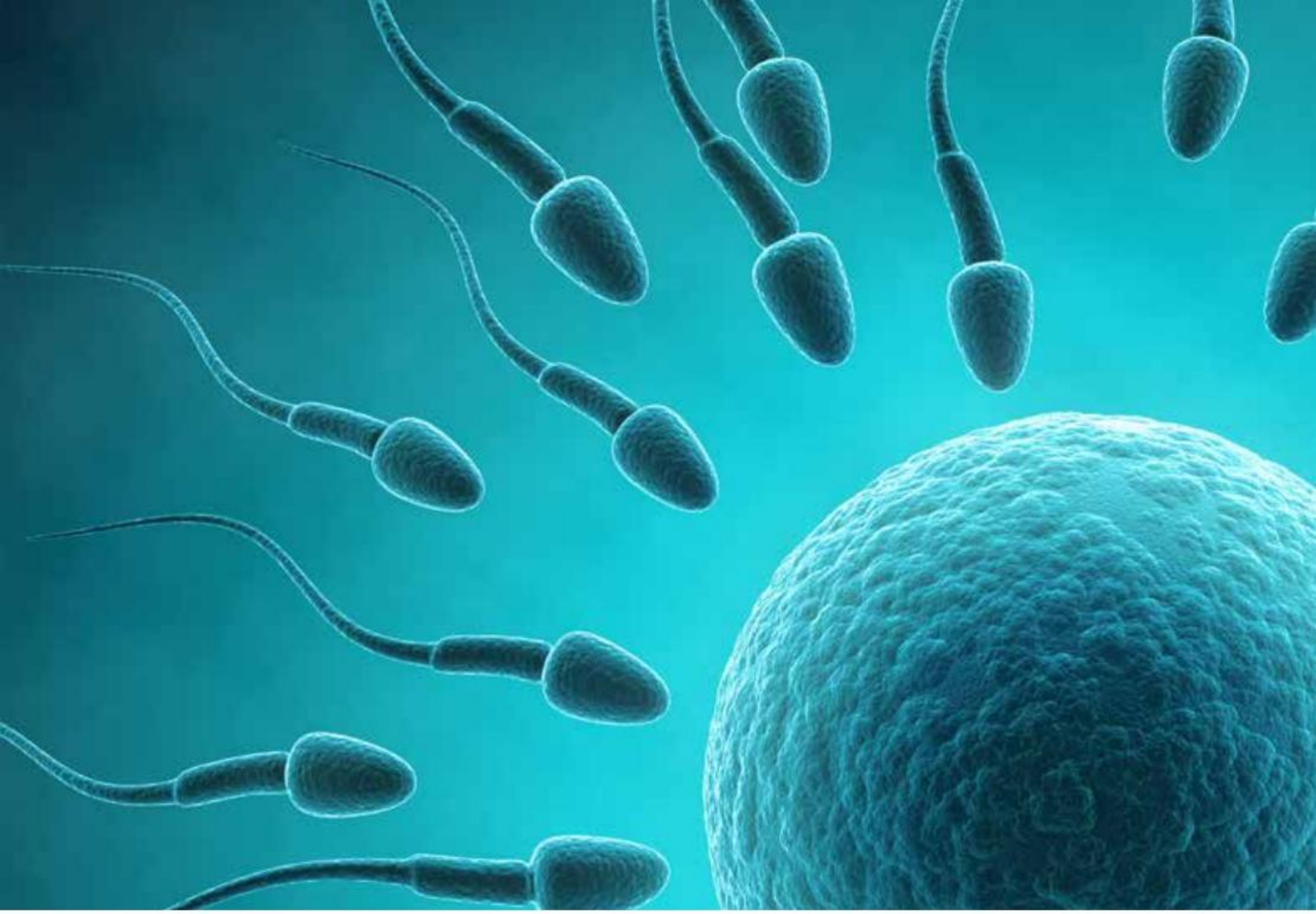
(ojgeorge@gmail.com)





INFERTILITY AND YOGA

Infertility is the inability of a person, animal or plant to reproduce by natural means. It is usually not the natural state of a healthy adult organism. In humans, woman infertility may describe as a woman who is unable to conceive as well as being unable to carry a pregnancy to full term and male infertility is usually caused by problems that affect either sperm production or sperm transport. Estimates suggest that worldwide 20-30 percent of infertility cases are due to male infertility, 20-35 percent is due to female infertility. In 10-20 percent of cases, no cause is found. Modern undisciplined lifestyle and some unhealthy psychological factors like anxiety, depression, stress etc also lead towards infertility. Renowned Yoga trainer ***Krishnakumar G*** looks at Yoga postures to improve fertility



CAUSES OF INFERTILITY:

At least 10 percent of all cases of female infertility is caused by an abnormal uterus. Conditions such as fibroid, polyps, and adenomyosis may lead to obstruction of the uterus and fallopian tubes. Blocked or damaged fallopian tubes prevent sperm from getting to your egg and also prevent the fertilized egg from getting to your uterus. Another major cause of infertility in women may be the inability to ovulate. Malformation of the eggs themselves may complicate conception. For example, polycystic ovarian syndrome is when the eggs are only partially developed within the ovary and there is an excess of male hormones. Some women are infertile because their ovaries do not mature and release eggs. Other factors that can affect a woman's chances of conceiving include being overweight or underweight or her age as female fertility declines after the age of 30. Sometimes it can be a combination of factors, and sometimes a clear cause is never established.

The main cause of male infertility is low semen quality. In men infertility can be caused by low sperm count due to endocrine problems, drugs, radiation or infection. There may be testicular malformations, hormone imbalance, or blockage of the man's duct system. It is estimated that one in 20 men has some kind of fertility problem with low numbers of sperm in his ejaculation. Drinking alcohol can lower testosterone levels, cause erectile dysfunction and decrease sperm production. Liver disease caused by excessive drinking also may lead to fertility problems. Men who smoke may have a lower sperm count than do those who don't smoke.

WHY YOGA?

Yoga is a science and technique in the form of mental and physical discipline that can be followed to avoid, prevent and restrict the problems and diseases mentioned above. Simple techniques like proper breathing, relaxation and stretching body parts result in removal of common ailments and help to manage the stress resulting to function at the optimum of abilities. It is not only resistance to emotional storms but the best kind of health (mental, physical, spiritual), insurance starting a beneficial cycle with improved functioning of glands leading better metabolism, better vitality and vigour, a pleasant appearance. Yoga helps complete integration with self, control of thoughts and thus living a full healthy life. According to medical scientists, Yoga is successful because of the balance it creates in the nervous and endocrine systems, which directly influences all the other systems and organs of the body. Experts also say that by doing very specific Yoga poses you can encourage the flow of blood to the groin, thereby stimulating your reproductive organs, as well as releasing any muscle tension.

YOGA POSTURES TO IMPROVE FERTILITY

1. PADAHASTASANA



This posture stretches all the muscles of the back and improves blood supply to the pelvic region and makes the spine more flexible. But people with spinal problems should avoid this posture.

2. BUTTERFLY POSE OR BADDHAKONASANA POSE



This is a seated posture as well as a forward bend pose, which stimulates the pelvic region. We all tend to carry a lot of tension in our hip areas. For many people this pose can be quite difficult at first, because the hip area is 'tight' and needs to be opened out so that the tension can be released. With practice, this pose can help to release any negative energy that we hold in the hip and groin area. Hold this pose from one to five minutes.

3. PASCHIMOTTANASANA



This asana is beneficial for stimulating blood flow to the pelvic region. Do not force yourself forward. Gently bend forward as far as you can, even if it means you can only put your hands on your knees.

4. BHUJANGASANA



This pose does wonders for your back and pelvis. It is known for stimulating the hormones while bringing energy to the uterus and ovaries. Hold this pose for several seconds, adding to the time with each practice.

5. SETU BANDASANA



This is a fairly strenuous posture as it requires you to use your buttock muscles to hold yourself up. In this pose you are lifting your pelvic region, allowing energy to circulate to the uterus and ovaries.This is also slightly stimulating the thyroid gland in the throat. Stay in this pose anywhere from 30 seconds to a couple of minutes, depending on your strength.

6. NADI SHODHAN PRANAYAMA



This breathing technique helps to calm the mind and body by releasing accumulated stress. It purifies the subtle energy channels (nadis) and enables smooth flow of prana (vital energy). As a result of this distressing the body and mind is much relaxed which makes the body more fertile and ready to conceive. A relaxed mind and body improve the fertility.



KRISHNAKUMAR G
Certified Personal Trainer from American College of Sports Medicine
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Yoga Can Help PCOS Treatment



"I was diagnosed with PCOS almost 15 years back. When the doctor first told me, I was scared. I had doubts whether I would ever have kids. My friend was a yoga teacher and I started learning the practice from her. Slowly, my acne was gone and I didn't have too many mood swings as before. I'm now 30 and a mother of 2 healthy kids. Life has never been so beautiful." – RUCHIKA AHUJA, homemaker

Ruchika is just one of the many women in the world with PCOS (Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome). The condition isn't as scary though as the name suggests. PCOS is common occurrence today in women at reproductive age. At least 5-10 percent of the young women (as suggested by the National Institutes of Health research) are diagnosed with this condition. And many have started acknowledging the role of yoga as a safe PCOS treatment option.

If you too have PCOS, read on to know how yoga can help you. Even if you don't, continue reading because yoga will always help you, irrespective of whether you have any problem or not!

Interestingly, PCOS has not yet been attributed to any specific cause. Most doctors believe it to be a result of stress, a fall out of modern-day unhealthy life style.

As Dr. Pratima Malik, Gynaecologist, Apollo Hospitals, states, "The highly ambitious, stressed-out working woman of today is likely to be more prone to PCOS".

Although it is impossible to eliminate stress completely from our day-to-day life, we can surely build up our capacity to deal with it. This is where yoga and meditation help.

What Role Does Yoga Play In PCOS?

The science of yoga works at levels much more subtler and deeper than just the physical body level. Yoga helps release deeply stored stress in the system, which can help improve PCOS symptoms.

How To Find Out If You Have PCOS?

- **Irregular or no menstrual cycles at all**
- **Frequent hair loss and heavy hair growth on the face, back, stomach, arms and legs**
- **Heavy acne**
- **Frequent mood swings**
- **Weight gain**
- **Infertility**

Asanas (yoga postures) designed for PCOS help open up the pelvic area and promote relaxation and *pranayama*s (breathing exercises) are powerful techniques that help calm the mind. Coupled with these are some soothing meditations that work at a very deep level and help de-toxify and de-stress the entire system. And last, the powerful mantra of Sudarshan Kriya, designed by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar himself, which helps take care of negative emotions and mood swings.

Yoga postures for PCOS (as recommended by Dr.Sejal Shah, Art of Living Yoga teacher)

Relaxation is the key in PCOS. You can relax in the asana by coordinating it with breathing. Breathe long and deep as you perform each posture.

Note: All asanas should be carried out at a professional yoga class, under the guidance of a certified Art of Living Yoga teacher. Postures that put extreme pressure on the abdomen should not be done by women with PCOS. Make sure you relax while carrying out each of these asanas.

These poses are also helpful in losing weight (which PCOS women have a tendency to put on). Dr.Sejal Shah says, "Even if you manage to lose just 5-10% of the body weight through regular yoga and meditation practices,you will feel a lot better. It relaxes your mind and eases you of the stress of weight gain which in turn helps in regularizing your monthly cycles. It is important in PCOS to give sufficient time every day to yoga and meditation."

Relaxation is the key word in PCOS; *pranayama* helps Breathing exercises, or *pranayama*s, are a good way to relieve stress naturally. Dr.Sejal Shah says that for PCOS women, it is a good idea to do a few minutes of Nadi Shodhan (alternate nostril breathing) and Bhramri (bee *pranayama*) daily for a few minutes. Through the medium of breath, these *pranayama*s help release stress in the mind.

Meditate and see the difference

Since stress starts in the mind and slowly its effects can be seen on the body as well, it is very important to address this issue at the mind level. This can be done with meditation. The American Medical Association has conducted scientific research which establishes numerous health benefits of this practice.

"When we introspect deeply, healing happens from within," says Dr.Sejal Shah. A few minutes of sitting still with eyes closed is extremely relaxing and also gives you the right perspective to find solutions to the problem than keep worrying about it.

Most women, when diagnosed with PCOS at a very young age right after they attain puberty, become confused and frustrated. Integrating yoga and meditation at an early age in life can help us attain a disease-free body and a healthy mind.

Sudarshan Kriya Has Helped Many PCOS Women

Shares Sarina Mahboobani, a PCOS patient for nine years, "For me, the main problem has been acne all over my face and it is so frustrating! But I never took to any medication. I only take care of my diet, have lots of fresh food and salads, drink lots of water, and exercise. On days my body feels bloated and heavy and I feel extremely inert, my daily practice of Sudarshan Kriya helps. It gives me energy and enthusiasm and I feel so much better."

Sarina adds that Sudarshan Kriya also greatly helps in handling mood swings, irritability and negative emotions. A healthy diet, exercise, yoga and meditation has helped Sarina control her symptoms and prevented the problem from getting worse. She also has less acne to worry about now!



Science And Spirituality: Hand-in-Hand

Modern science has also started accepting the growing importance of yoga and meditation in treating several lifestyle disorders such as diabetes and PCOS. Doctors now recommend a few minutes of *pranayama* and meditation practice to their patients along with prescribing medication for the PCOS treatment. Says Dr.Chhaya Patil, Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, Fortis Hospitals, "In today's age, you need to combine science with spirituality for better results. Both need to run parallel."

Although the exact cause for PCOS remains unknown, thankfully you have treatment options available. With yoga and a natural, holistic way of life, you can make a choice to do something about it. However, you will need to be regular with your practice in order to reap its benefits.

And, the good news is the amount of benefits you reap is directly proportional to the amount of effort you put into your yoga practice. So even if you start with a little effort, it will pay off!

Long and consistent yoga practice is all you need to quit worrying over PCOS.

1. **Butterfly Pose** can be very helpful in PCOS. Don't flap your legs too much; instead try holding the posture for long.

2. Even more helpful is **SuptaBadhakonasana** (Reclining Butterfly Pose), which works just like the Butterfly Pose,this time lying down. This is what makes it extremely relaxing. To enhance the experience, play some soft music and place cushions under your hip. For beginners, it is a good idea to use cushion support while doing this posture.

3. **Bharadvajasana** (Bharadvaja's Twist) is a seated spinal twist that helps PCOS patients.

4. **Chakki Chalanasana** (moving the grinding wheel) is a very simple exercise with several benefits. It helps massage the liver, kidneys, pancreas, uterus and the reproductive organs.

5. **Shavasana** (Corpse Pose) is another useful posture to try. In PCOS, the more you relax, the better you feel and this posture will help you completely relax at the end of your yoga session.

6. **Padma Sadhana** practice is also considered very effective for PCOS patients.

7. Make sure you don't hold the postures that put pressure on the abdomen (Bow Pose, Superman Pose, Cobra Pose and Boat Pose) for a long time.

8. A few rounds of Sun Salutation at a faster pace can be good for weight loss; however, it is a good idea to practice only a few slow rounds daily for more relaxation.



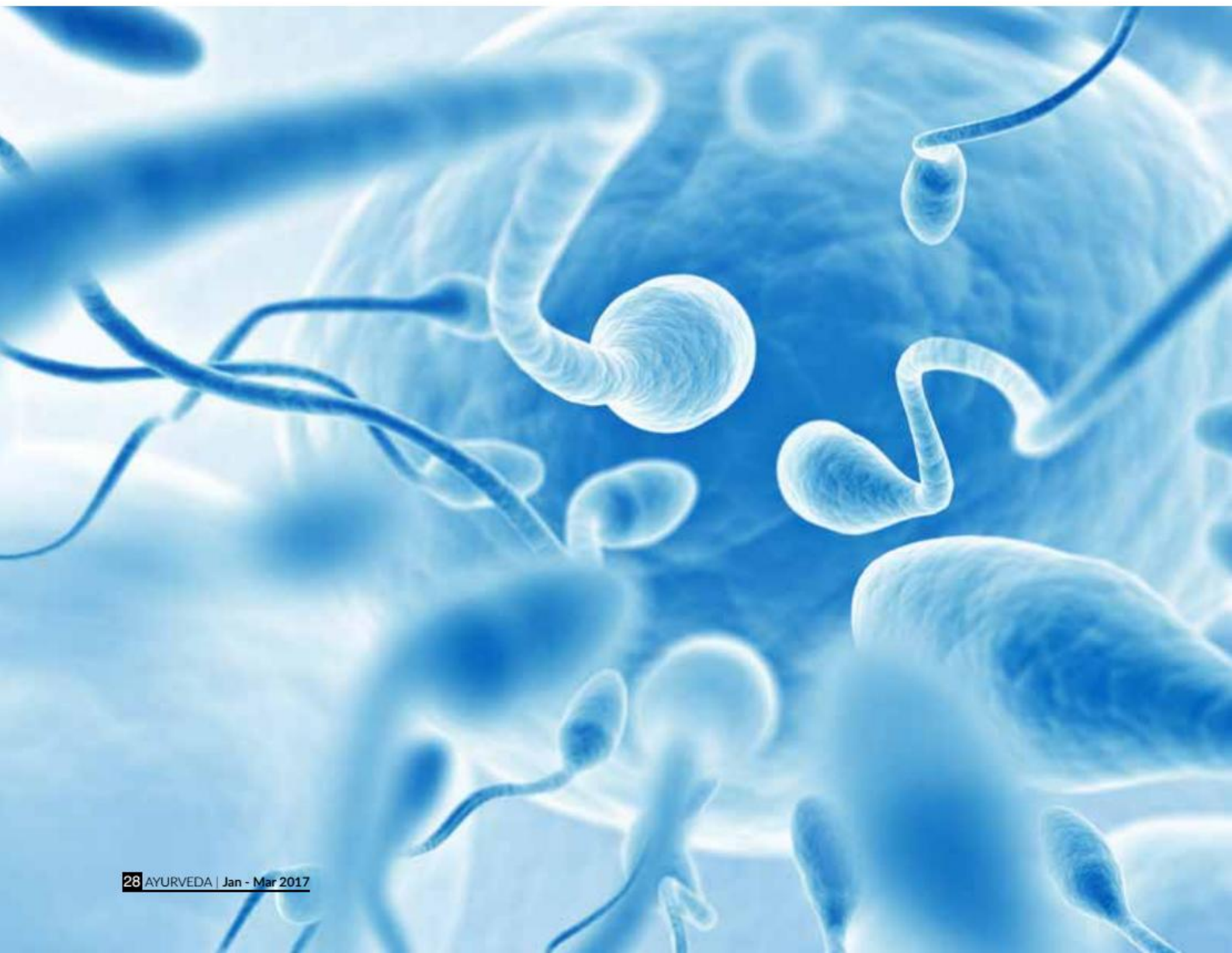
TIPS TO RECONNECT WITH NATURE

- **Eat organic food. Avoid junk.**
- **Drink lots of water.**
- **Exercise regularly. Brisk walking is a good idea to keep weight under control.**
- **Visit nature places and spend time alone.**
- **Take steps to calm your mind. Worrying about the problem can only make it worse – listen to music, read or spend time gardening.**

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FERTILITY Problems: AYURVEDIC Perspectives

Ayurveda visualises the physiology and pathology in terms of the status of three elements called doshas, each one entitles specific area of responsibility. Tridoshas represent functions in the body as a whole. Any deviation from the physiological state of doshas can be manifested in definite areas depending on the specific cause and susceptibility in that particular area. Similarly, reproductive health is a reflection of overall health status. Fertility is the prime and ultimate function of reproductive entity in the body and it will be a natural outcome when body physiology ensures the total wellbeing, writes ***Dr. Jeena Aravind. U***



Ojas is described as the essence of all the dhathus (the supporting and nourishing entities in the body) and it is crucial to maintain the optimal state of ojas to maintain perfect health. In fact, ojas provides immunological and psychological stability in a human being. The presence of adequate ojas in the couple at the time of copulation has a decisive role in fruitful coitus and healthy pregnancy.

Innovations made in the lifestyle seem to provoke the disease pathogenesis culminating in various disabilities in the aspects of normal physiology taking place in the body. Unhealthy eating habits like untimely food, inadequate or excess intake of food, intake before the digestion of previous meal, daily intake of pickles or pungent foods, masala, bakery foods, fried items, the food stuffs which are refrigerated and reheated etc. can hamper the whole functional health status of body, including the reproductive system. Stress, which is now a global epidemic, invites various health issues, including fertility problems. There is direct relationship of stress and metabolic issues with adverse reproductive outcomes. The increasing incidence of such issues demands much more emphasis on management through lifestyle interventions. Ayurveda emphasises the need for pleasant psychological status in healthy conception which is very evident in the present scenario. Quality of sperm and ovum, the status of female reproductive system, appropriate period etc. are also relevant in conception. Vaidyas (physicians) are supposed to address these reproductive issues on a broader platform wherein healthy dietary habits, mental status etc. are also given due importance.



Menstruation often signals the health status, especially the reproductive health status of a lady. Habitual causative factors like suppression of urges along with changes in the menstrual pattern eventually end up in reproductive morbidity. Unhealthy lifestyle is the provoking factor in the long run that invites menstrual disorders as well. Proper care at the bleeding phase is very essential. Physical activities, including jumping, running, dancing and even excessive travelling on uneven roads, may better be avoided during bleeding phase. Fasting/ skipping food, suppression of urges like micturition etc. may interfere with menstrual flow and also present as dysmenorrhea very often. Suppression of urges like urination, defecation etc. is very common in the present busy world. This in the long run can definitely have an adverse effect on the menstrual pattern and reproductive health.

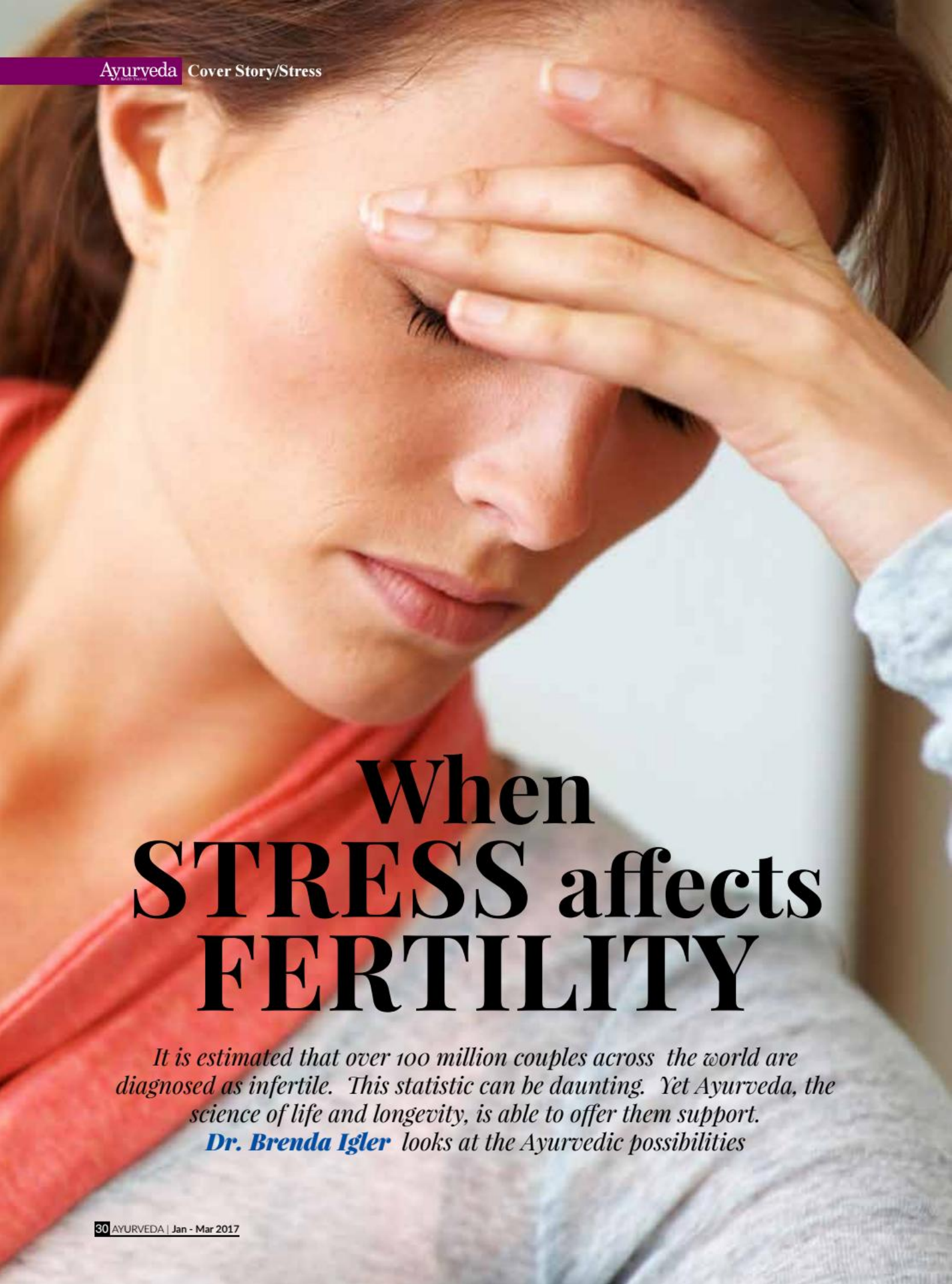
Deviations from the normal menstrual pattern with respect to amount of bleeding, pain, interval, staining the cloth etc. should be noted and managed accordingly. Today's teen agers do not get the proper healthcare they deserve, barring some vitamins or iron supplements. Indulgence in junk foods is increasing among youngsters. Sedentary behaviour is associated with various health issues. It should be given core importance to healthy food habits and lifestyle, including the food timing, the quality of food, frequency of defecation and micturition etc. Stress and strain during the bleeding phase interfere with proper menstrual flow and may favour abnormal menstruation with an underlying pathology. These habits in the long run may hamper the normal functional and/or structural integrity even in case of reproductive health and thereby fertility also.

Changes in the reproductive life conclude to a perception that infecundity increases even by utilising the ovulation period only and target oriented sexual intercourse rather than a normal sexual play among the couple. Ageing of the couple will be reflected in the quality of gametes too. Recurrent infections among the couple often hinders with fertility. Now-a-days, even leisure time activities are also sedentary. Physical activity either in excess or less can often be related with adverse fertility outcomes. Physical activity helps to improve overall wellness.

Normal menstruation is a part of well-being of the woman during reproductive age. Moreover, it is an important indicator of reproductive health and essential factor of healthy conception also. Any deviation from the normalcy in case of menstrual pattern and vaginal discharge should be treated at the earliest. Financial constraints and emotional burdens have also to be taken into account as they can affect the outcome. In the province of fertility care, irrespective of the stunning array of various treatment options, individualised lifestyle intervention may be considered as the best way out.



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When STRESS affects FERTILITY

It is estimated that over 100 million couples across the world are diagnosed as infertile. This statistic can be daunting. Yet Ayurveda, the science of life and longevity, is able to offer them support. ***Dr. Brenda Igler*** *looks at the Ayurvedic possibilities*



Stress and its role on fertility

When a couple is facing difficulty conceiving they may find the physical diagnosis compounded with incredible stress of the heart and mind, and the complex matrix of the endocrine system directly impacted. The hormones which stimulate our bodies' ability to defend itself from internal or external stress can also block our sex hormones and alter reproductive function. By treating our five senses of sight, sound, taste, touch and smell in the most harmonious way possible we will have the best opportunity at reducing this impact stress has upon one's fertility.

Fertility and sight

We are as much what we see as what we eat… Consider how much we digest through our sense of sight and the vibrations of light and colors on a daily basis. Ayurveda values creating a sattvic, or peaceful, environment around oneself to optimize wellbeing. Beyond the obvious forms of beauty it is also important to be incorporating colors that are soothing and building to the reproductive system. Recommended colors to emphasize are gold and browns to build healthy tissue and vitality. Cooler colors such as white, blue and green bring balance to the excess intensity of Pitta dosha, reducing the excess element of fire present and thus potential burnout that is typically associated. Warm colors such as red, orange and yellow softened with white and in their pastel form balances the air and ether of Vata dosha and the subsequent coldness, sterility and depletion that may be connected. Five to ten minutes of meditating upon, and incorporating into one's wardrobe or environment, is effective to experience the benefit of colors.

Fertility and sound

Much like color, sound vibrates at specific frequencies that interact with us. This can be either harmonious or disharmonious. In Ayurveda, we use harmonious sound to promote healing through the incorporation of mantras, prayers, and chanting. The simple sound of "aum" repeated softly for just 3-5 minutes can decrease internal and external stress. Other sounds that may be beneficial are the sounds of "lum" and "vum". These are bija mantras, or seed sounds, and relate to the energy channels of earth and water respectively. The repetition of these sounds increases the stabilizing quality of earth and the nourishing quality of water, providing vitality to the reproductive system.

Fertility and taste

Diet is a vital factor in the physical function of fertility. Improvements to the diet include focusing energy on fresh, whole, organic foods. The value herein cannot be emphasized enough. These foods are rich in prana, our life force vitality. Quality prana is necessary to invigorate our cells and all the systems of our body that relate to conception. When Vata and/or Pitta doshas are affected by stress there are certain tastes to avoid, others to emphasize. With Vata dosha, having excess movement and depletion, reduction of the bitter, pungent and astringent tastes is recommended. Equally important is to emphasize the sweet, sour and salty taste. With Pitta dosha, pertaining

to excess intensity and burnout, it is important to reduce the pungent, sour and salty taste. Focus on the sweet taste primarily, with smaller amounts of bitter. To nourish the strength of the reproductive system overall, the sweet taste is paramount. This taste is found abundantly in whole grains, root vegetables, dairy, nuts and meat.

Fertility and touch

In our skin there are over 3,000 nerve receptors that correlate to feelings such as pleasure or pain. In Ayurveda, the practice of Abhyanga, or oil massage, is revered for soothing the nervous system. Also called Snehana, meaning self love, this practice involves the daily application of warm oils to the body. Through this our skin is nourished, our lymphatic system stimulated for cleansing, and nervous system balanced. Stress reduces and the body is more prepared for conception. Common recommended oils are sesame, ghee or coconut depending on the season.

Fertility and smell

Similar to sound and color, aromas also carry unique frequencies. In addition to affecting our subtle body, they also have a powerful impact on the parasympathetic and sympathetic nervous system of our body. This is the "fight or flight" and "rest and digest" governing parts of our brain. The sense of smell further has a strong connection to our deeper memories and emotions. Therefore, smells can greatly alter how we feel and the hormones we in turn secrete. Essential oils to consider incorporating for promoting fertility, decreasing stress and balancing the hormones are Rose, Geranium, Clary, Sage, Lavender, Ylang Ylang, Sandalwood, and Jasmine. These oils are typically applied topically and/or diffused in the environment.

Herbal medicines and Pranayama

Supporting a healthy Shukra dhatu, or reproductive tissues, can also be done with the supplementation of herbal medicines. In Ayurveda, herbs serve as an ally to the adjustments in our diet and lifestyle which support long- term balance. Specific herbs that may be incorporated to nourish the female reproductive system and/or improve our ability and withstand stress are Asparagus racemosus, Dioscorea villosa, Ipomoea digitalia, Rosa centifolia and Centell asiatica.

Pranayama, the practice of consciously- controlled breath work, influences the nature of Prana, or energy flow in the physical and subtle bodies. For the purposes of reducing stress and building fertility focus should be placed on two types of pranayama: Ujjayi and Anuloma Viloma. Ujjayi breath serves to slow down the breath and focus the mind while Anuloma Viloma serves to balance the functions of the left and right hemisphere of the brain.

Whether one has been given a medical diagnosis, or is seeking to still understand their infertility these basic tools may serve to support stress reduction, in turn, creating optimal potential in the physical and subtle factors of conception.





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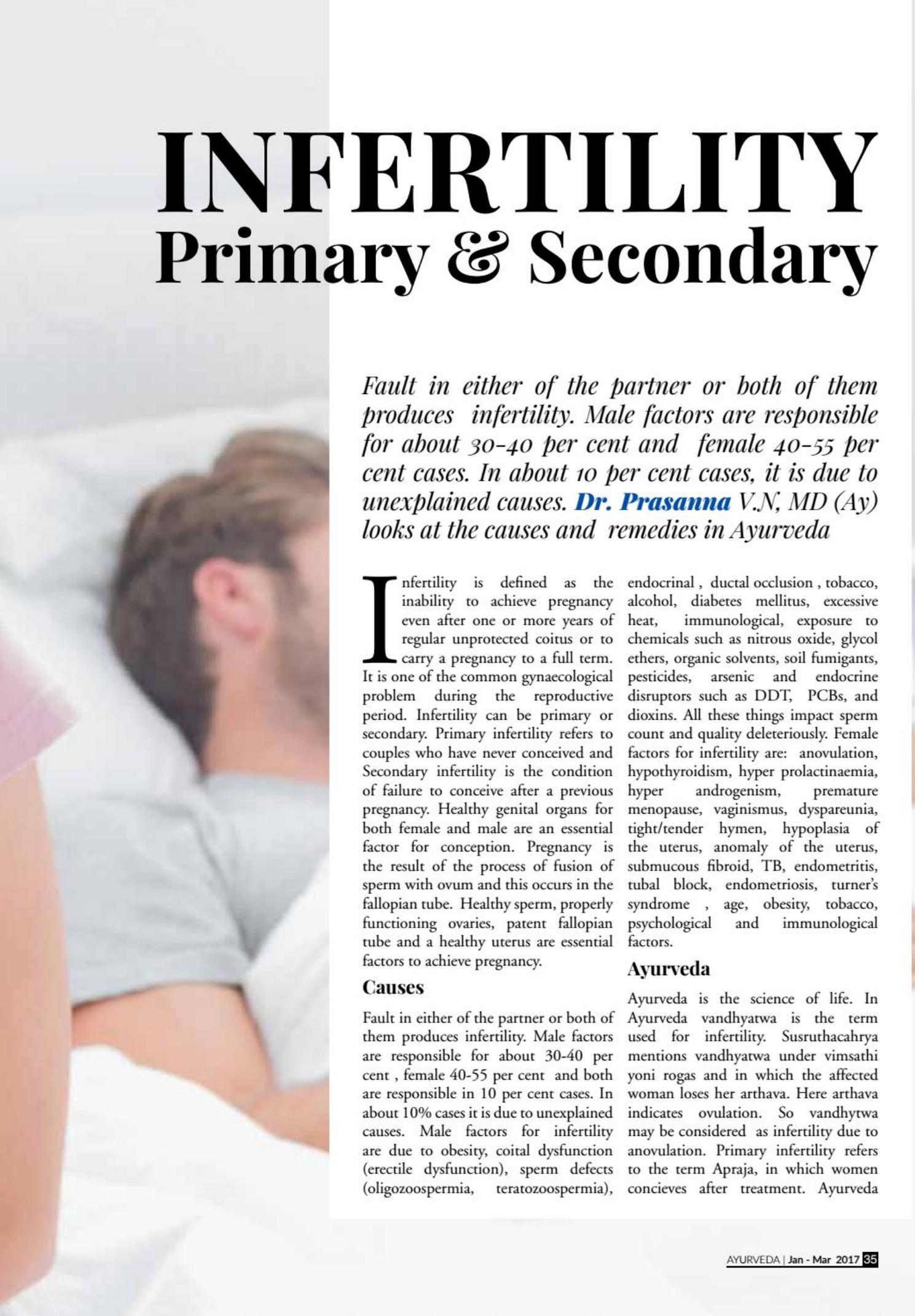
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INFERTILITY
Primary & Secondary



Fault in either of the partner or both of them produces infertility. Male factors are responsible for about 30-40 per cent and female 40-55 per cent cases. In about 10 per cent cases, it is due to unexplained causes. ***Dr. Prasanna*** *V.N, MD (Ay) looks at the causes and remedies in Ayurveda*

Infertility is defined as the inability to achieve pregnancy even after one or more years of regular unprotected coitus or to carry a pregnancy to a full term. It is one of the common gynaecological problem during the reproductive period. Infertility can be primary or secondary. Primary infertility refers to couples who have never conceived and Secondary infertility is the condition of failure to conceive after a previous pregnancy. Healthy genital organs for both female and male are an essential factor for conception. Pregnancy is the result of the process of fusion of sperm with ovum and this occurs in the fallopian tube. Healthy sperm, properly functioning ovaries, patent fallopian tube and a healthy uterus are essential factors to achieve pregnancy.

Causes

Fault in either of the partner or both of them produces infertility. Male factors are responsible for about 30-40 per cent , female 40-55 per cent and both are responsible in 10 per cent cases. In about 10% cases it is due to unexplained causes. Male factors for infertility are due to obesity, coital dysfunction (erectile dysfunction), sperm defects (oligozoospermia, teratozoospermia), endocrinal , ductal occlusion , tobacco, alcohol, diabetes mellitus, excessive heat, immunological, exposure to chemicals such as nitrous oxide, glycol ethers, organic solvents, soil fumigants, pesticides, arsenic and endocrine disruptors such as DDT, PCBs, and dioxins. All these things impact sperm count and quality deleteriously. Female factors for infertility are: anovulation, hypothyroidism, hyper prolactinaemia, hyper androgenism, premature menopause, vaginismus, dyspareunia, tight/tender hymen, hypoplasia of the uterus, anomaly of the uterus, submucous fibroid, TB, endometritis, tubal block, endometriosis, turner's syndrome , age, obesity, tobacco, psychological and immunological factors.

Ayurveda

Ayurveda is the science of life. In Ayurveda vandhyatwa is the term used for infertility. Susruthacahrya mentions vandhyatwa under vimsathi yoni rogas and in which the affected woman loses her arthava. Here arthava indicates ovulation. So vandhytwa may be considered as infertility due to anovulation. Primary infertility refers to the term Apraja, in which women concieves after treatment. Ayurveda

mentions that getting pregnant is equivalent to planting a tree for which four essential factors are needed ie. seed, field, time and water, like that giving birth to a healthy child requires healthy state of all four factors such as Ritu (time), Kshetra(field), Ambu(water) and Beeja(seed) are necessary

Ritu denotes the fertile period of the menstrual cycle, Kshetra, the female genital organs especially uterus, Ambu implies proper nutrition which is required for the healthy state of fetus, Beejas are ovum and sperm. Healthy ovum and sperm are the crucial factors for conceiving, maintaining pregnancy and in attaining a healthy feotus. Abnormality of any one of these factors may result in Vandhyatwa.

In Hareetha samhitha, Vandhya is classified as kakavandhya, anapathya, garbhasravi, mruthavatsa, balakshaya and garbhakosabhanga. In which Anapathya refers to the condition of a lady who has never conceived and this may be considered as primary infertility.



Vandhyatwa occurs due to many reasons

1. Abnormality of the corresponding part of beeja which is responsible for the development of uterus
2. Abhighatha of arthavavaha srothas
3. Different types of yonirogas
4. Ashtaarthavadushti
5. Marriage at too young age or before menarche (the first occurrence of menstruation)
6. Injury to genital tract
7. Dhathukshaya causing arthavakshaya - anovulation.
8. Psychological factors
9. Abnormalities of sukra(sperm) and arthava (ovum)
10. Ahithahara and ahithavihara
11. Akalayoga (coitus in improper time)

Management

Ayurvedic treatment will enable the couple to become fertile, improve overall health and conceive naturally. Various types of treatment modalities are explained in Ayurveda for infertility. Mainly two different types of treatment therapies are described for all diseases. Samsamana chikitsa and Samsodhana chikitsa.

In Ayurveda chikitsa refers to "नदिान परविर्जनम्." Eradication of causative factors is the foremost treatment for any disease.

In Vandhyatwa also treatment depends upon the cause of infertility. The male should be given milk and ghritha (ghee) medicated with madhura dravyas and for women oil & masha should be given, this will increase the fertility of both partners along with other medicines for infertility.

Shodhana chikitsa

Panchakarma plays significant role in treating the disorders responsible for infertility by various methods like, Vamana, Virechana, Anuvasana vasthi, Niruhavasthi, Nasya and Utharavasthi followed by proper Snehapana and Swedana. Panchakarma therapy before conception helps purify the seeds (sperm & ovum), the body is cleaned and the ability to absorb nutrients is increased. Consequently the quality and strength of the sperm and ova are greatly improved. Vajeekarana chikitsa helps to build healthy reproductive organs and produce a healthy sperm. This facilitates conception and implanatation of the embryo, and ensures a smooth pregnancy and good health for the child to be born.

According to Ayurveda Yonirogas develop mainly due to vitiation of Vata. Vasthi is the best Samsodhana treatment for Vata. So Vasthi is like nectar to all infertile women. As it is introduced into the rectum and large intestine directly, its action is very quick. The active ingredients from the medicine are directly absorbed into the body. Vasthi helps to normalize Apanavata which is responsible for menstruation and ovulation and good production of sperm. Vasthi stimulate ENS , causes stimulation of hypothalamus and pituitary gland.which in turn is responsible for the normal function of ovary.

Utharavasthi is an important Ayurvedic therapy in which medicated oil is directly introduced into the uterine cavity. This is most effective treatment for all gynecological diseases especially in infertility. It helps to purify and strengthen the arthavavahasrotas, pacifies vitiated Vata, and improves follicular development and ovulation. It might be acting through the endometrium. Implantation defect can also be corrected by Utharavasthi with different types of ghrithas. Utharavsthi for male partner will promote sperm production and motility. Nasya is an important therapy to promote fertility by direct action on Hypothalamo Pttuitary axis.

If infertility occurs due to PCOS, Kaphamedohara therapies and medicines are ideal. Udwarthana therapy is helpful to reduce Kapha and Medus. Ksharavasthi is having the property of Kaphamedoharatwa. Local treatments like Yonikshalanam with Kashayas and Yonipooranam with ghrithas or tailas can be done in associated conditions like vaginitis, cervicitis and PID. There are various Ayurvedic treatments, that increase a person's fertility, but the solution for infertility is its prevention by practicing Dinacahrya and Ritucharya and proper intake of Hitaahara at proper time.



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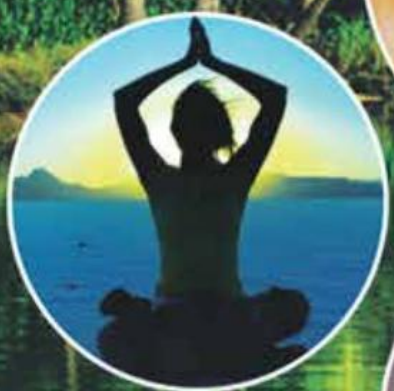
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AYURVEDA for a HEALTHY PROGENY

In today's stressful and fast- paced life, quality of life and health has taken a back seat. Subsequently, this is known to adversely affect the health of an offspring. Here, ***Dr. Kunal*** *guides us through how Ayurveda can assure us of a fit progeny by following a healthy diet and lifestyle*

Conception – How it happens?

Conception occurs when a sperm manages to burrow its way through the surface of egg and fertilize it. Once this happens, the outer layer of egg gets thickened rapidly. This fertilized egg finally reaches the uterus and further development occurs.

It is said in Ayurveda that to obtain good quality farm product, proper season, soil, water and seeds are needed together in commune. Similarly, for a healthy baby/ child, healthy male-female, healthy sperm and healthy uterus are essential.



Factors involved for a healthy child:

Food:

According to the concept of Ayurveda, there are a total of seven dhatus(tissues) in the human body.

1. **RASA (Plasma)**
2. **RAKTA (Blood)**
3. **MAMSA (Muscle)**
4. **MEDA (Fat)**
5. **ASTHI (Bone)**
6. **MAJJA (Bone marrow and nerve tissue)**
7. **SHUKRA (Reproductive tissues)**

Whatever food/medicine a person consumes it nourishes the body by the above mentioned dhatus in the stated sequence. Quality and nature of food greatly affects the body as well as mind. Thus, to achieve healthy state of mind and body, the fundamental requirement is – Good Quality Food.

Consumption of poor quality food could easily harm both mind and body. The results of this may not be immediate but it is sure to slowly deteriorate the health of a person starting at the very minute level in the body. This kind of diet thus will surely deteriorate the quality of sperm, egg and uterus preventing the reproduction of a healthy child.

It should be noted that even, packed or processed food materials are also not beneficial for the body. Fresh and natural food are considered best for the human body.

Processed foods

Processed foods usually contains high amount of sugar that are not good for the health.

Packed food stuffs have different types of artificial ingredients. Such ingredients are used as flavoring agent, coloring agent, stabilizers, preservative, etc. However, these are not FOOD materials. Hence, regular consumption of such foods will definitely lead to low health of the body.

It is also understood that even processed junk foods have very low nutritional value. Most often, synthetic vitamins and minerals are added to these food materials to compensate for the nutrients that are lost during processing. However, one should understand that these synthetic nutrients can never replace the nutrients found in natural, fresh and whole foods. Let's also, remember that real foods contain much

more nutrients than just the standard nutrients that we are familiar with. The more one eat processed foods, the less would be the vitamins, minerals, anti-oxidants and other trace elements being absorbed in their body.

High nutritional food is food that contains soluble, fermentable fiber. But most processed food materials are low in fiber because it is either lost or intentionally removed during preparation.

Processed food materials are high in processed vegetable oils which are extremely unhealthy and many people are known to consume a lot of these processed foods not knowing the disastrous effect it can have on their health.

Thus, such food should be deliberately avoided as it will deteriorate not just the health of the person but also the offspring that they wish to have.

Natural food for healthy Sperm and Egg:

- *Watermelon*
- *Chili pepper*
- *Apple*
- *Ginger*
- *Banana*
- *Oats*
- *Garlic*
- *Various types of nuts (Walnuts, pistachios, etc.)*
- *Pomegranate*
- *Beets*
- *Spinach*
- *Basil*

Mental health:

Today's lifestyle has become so stressful, that a person faces a lot of difficulty in having some 'me' time. Unhappiness in a person is sure to reflect on the body and mind of the person. A stressful condition may lead to depression of the mind. This is an unhealthy state of mind and a depressed person can never produce a healthy child. Following are some factors that can lead to depression:-

- *Unhappy job*
- *Long working hours*
- *Burdened with responsibilities*
- *Dangerous working conditions*
- *Insecurity*
- *Fear*
- *Joblessness*
- *Financial crisis*
- *Chronic disease*
- *Emotional shock, etc.*
- *The list goes on and on…*





Also, prolonged depression can lead to:-

- ***High blood pressure***
- ***Cardiac arrhythmia***
- ***Atherosclerosis***
- ***Cardiac failure***
- ***Irritable bowel syndrome***
- ***Skin disease***
- ***Infertility***
- ***Dramatically drastic change in body weight***
- ***Fatigue***
- ***Insomnia***
- ***Irritability, etc..***

Stress Management:

Stress thus can be managed by two different ways:-

By yoga/pranayama/exercise/other activities

Through medication

By yoga/pranayama/exercise/other activities:

- Get fresh free air (visit gardens, seashore, hill station, etc.)
- Enjoy your favorite recreation
- Practice deep breathing/pranayama
- Meditate for about 15-20 minutes
- Listen to music (Indian classical music works a lot, particularly melodies of Gandharva Veda)
- Indulge in hobbies (Games, music, comedy movies, reading novels, etc.)

Through medication:

Following drugs are helpful to manage stress:

- Brahmi (Bacopa monneiri)
- Ashwagandha (Withania somnifera)
- Vacha (Acorus calamus)
- Shankhapushpi (Convolvulus pluricaulis)
- Arjuna (Terminalia arjuna)
- Twak (Cinnamomum zeylanicum)
- Mandukaparni (Centella asiatica)
- Sarpagandha (Rauwolfia serpentina)
- Shatavari (Asparagus racemosus)

Healthy sperm:

Male sperm performs one of the most important role in conception. Health of a child is largely affected by the health of the sperm. The quantity and quality of sperm has to be up-to-the mark.

- ***What is sperm count?***

It is defined as the concentration of sperm in an ejaculation. WHO specifications say that a count of over 15 million sperms per milliliter is considered normal.

- ***How to increase quality in quantity of sperm?***

Following drugs helps to improve the sperm count by improving and increasing the sperm production and sperm number. It helps to improve stamina and endurance in a healthy natural way.

GOKSHURA (Tribulus terrestris)
SHILAJIT (Asphaltum)
ASHWAGANDHA (Withania somnifera)
SHWET MUSALI (Chlorophytum boriviliaum)
KRISHNA MUSALI (Curculigo orchioides)
SHATAVARI (Asparagus racemosus)
AKARAKARA (Anacyclus pyrethrum)
VIDARI KANDA (Pueraria tuberosa)
VARAHI KANDA (Dioscora tuberosa)

Besides the above mentioned drugs, there are other therapies like panchakarma, abhyanga, yoga, etc. as mentioned in Ayurveda.

Healthy egg (Ovum):

Egg is another fundamental part of healthy fertility. Health of eggs can affect the possibility of fertilization, implantation and viability of pregnancy. To protect egg cells - healthy diet, intake of herbs, supplements and increase in circulation to the reproductive organs are important. Egg cells have a cycle of 90 days.

Following are the factors that might affect the health of eggs:

- **PROPER OXYGENATION**
- **NUTRITIONAL INTAKE**
- **STRESS**
- **HORMONAL BALANCE**
- **BLOOD FLOW**

Below are some dietary and lifestyle habits that might harm egg cells:

- **CIGARETTES SMOKING**
- **ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION**
- **TRANS FAT DIET**
- **PROCESSED FOOD**
- **EXCESSIVE AMOUNT OF SUGAR**

Following are some supplements that can help you to keep your eggs healthy:

- **MULTIVITAMIN**
- **ANTIOXIDANTS**
- **IRON SUPPLEMENTS**
- **CALCIUM SUPPLEMENTS**

Herbs mentioned below are beneficial to both the health of egg cells as well as uterus:

ASHOKA (Saraca asoka)
LODHRA (Symplocos racemosa)
SHATAVARI (Asparagus racemosus)
KUMARI (Aloe vera)
PUGA PHALA (Betel nut)

A diligent practice of the above can result in a healthy child. However, these are just suggestions and one should take medicines only under the supervision of a certified practitioner. Self - medication is not at all advisable.





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Of Nourishing Diet and Health

Ayurveda proposes healthy diet for a healthy living. Most of the Ayurvedic treatments are based on dietary solutions that are inexpensive and simple to follow. ***Dr. Madhavi Rabadia*** *looks at the importance of nourishing food in upkeeping good health*



Popularity of Ayurveda has revived in recent times due to its holistic approach that owns a heritage of 5,000 years in medicine. 'Ayurveda, which means 'Science of longevity,' prescribes comprehensive solutions for all sorts of ailments and disorders. Most of the Ayurvedic treatments are based on dietary solutions that are inexpensive and simple to follow. Ayurveda also stresses on meditation and Yoga so as to induce proper energy and balance in human body and to get rid of critical ailments, which allopathy fails to address. Likewise, underweight people can enjoy some of the best effective treatments of Ayurveda in order to reach a standard bodyweight.

Aahar (food) plays prime role. Krushata (emaciation) is a pre-stage. It is to be treated with proper care and attention, which otherwise would lead to Atikarshya. Karshya (Leaness) and Atikarshya are two forms of malnutrition that is mild or moderate and severe respectively. Pharmacotherapies like Brimhana (therapy aimed to improve the nutritional level of the body), Rasayana (path of essence) and Vrishya (medicine or therapy by which a man becomes capable of copulating with a woman) have been advocated in the classics for the patients of Karshya (Leaness). The ultimate aim of treating karshya (leaness) is to achieve a proportionate body. Probable mode of action of brimhana dravya (improve nutritional level of the body) can be accessed on the ground of its Guna panchaka. It is found that majority of Brimhana (improve nutritional level of the body) have predominance of guru, snigdha (smooth or tender), sheet and mandaguna (slow or dull character), madhurarasa (sweet taste) and madhurvipaka (most subdued of all the substance present in the same category) causing Brimhana (therapy aimed to improve the nutritional level of the body) effect.

Many people who diet and exercise claim to be so for health reasons, but they are known to envy and mimic stick-thin models in the media that fuels the multi-billion dollar diet and fitness industry. The problem with trying to achieve a certain super-thin ideal is that it's not the natural, healthy body size for all women. You may be well-versed on the potential dangers of sthaulya (ayurvedic perspective of obesity), but you rarely hear about the reverse. Being krush comes with its own health consequences. A person's ideal, healthy body weight varies depending on a variety of factors, including age, height, gender, bone density and frame size. Maintaining a weight below one's ideal weight range poses a number of risks, including increased risk for infection, anemia, osteoporosis and other conditions. The news is often filled with stories of health issues for those who are overweight or sthula, but being krusha poses its own set of health risks. Men, women and children who are krusha are more prone to some diseases, illnesses and problem during or after surgery, and krusha women may have difficulty becoming pregnant or having healthy pregnancies. Being krusha causes nutritional effects that concern both physical and mental health.

In this context, I would like to mention the natural Ayurvedic herbal weight promoters explained in the classics.

That, which brings about an increase in the body dimensions or which increases weight is called BRIMHANA. According to Acharya Charaka these medicaments increase the quantity of tissues (Rasadi Dhatu) in the body and hence bring about increase in weight. Thus the Brimhaneeya dravyas can be considered as natural weight promoters. Our body is immensely made up of Mamsa Dhatu or muscle tissue. The Brimhana Dravyas specifically increase the muscle tissue also.

Charaka enlists 10 such medicaments which can be used as Brimhaneeya. They can be considered for usage either individually or collectively or in permutations and combinations as per the knowledge and recommendation of the physician in charge.

1. **KSHIRINI**
   Ipomoea digitata (Morning Glories)
2. **Dugdhika**
   Euphorbia hirta (Asthma Plant)
3. **Aswagandha**
   Withania somnifera (Ashwagandha)
4. **Kakoli**
   Roscoea procera (Kakoli)
5. **Ksheerakaakoli**
   Lilium polphyllum (White Lilly)
6. **Bala**
   Sida cordifolia (Flannel Weed)
7. **Atibala**
   Sida rhombifolia (Arrow leaf Sida)
8. **Vankapasha**
   Thespesia lampas (Indian Tulip Tree)
9. **Vidarikanda**
   Pueraria tuberosa (Indian Kudzu)
10. **Vriddhadaru**
    Argyreia speciosa (Elephant Creeper)

SHUSHRUT MENTIONED:

1. **Kakoli**
   Lillium polyphyllum(White Lily)
2. **Ksirakakoli**
   Lillium Sp. (Polish Lily)
3. **Jivaka**
   Micostylis wallichii (Jeevak)
4. **Rusabhaka**
   Microstylis mucifera (Risabhak)
5. **Meda**
   Polygonatum verticillate (Whorled Solomon's seal)
6. **Mahameda** *Polygonatum Sp.*
7. **Mudgaparni**
   Phaseolus trilobus (Wild bean)
8. **Masaparni** *Teramnus labiali*
9. **Guduchi** *Tinospora cordifolia (Heart leaved Mooseed)*
10. **Karkatashringi**
    Pistacia integerrima (Crabs Claw)
11. **Tugakshiri**
    Bambusa arundinacia (Bamboo)
12. **Padmaka**
    Prunus cerasoides (Bird cherry)
13. **Prapoundarika**
    Nelumbo nucifera (Indian Lotus)
14. **Riddhi** *Habenaria Sp.*
15. **Vriddhi** *Habenaria Sp.*
16. **Mrudvika**
    Vitis vinifera (Common Grape Vine)
17. **Jivanti**
    Leptadenia reticulata (Jiwanti)
18. **Yashtimadhu**
    Glycyrrhiza glabra (Licorice)

AcharyaCharaka also clarifies that the mamsa or flesh is the best weight promoter and should be undoubtedly used as a substitute to replace the loss in the body. Nothing nourishes the muscles as is done by the flesh.

Benefits of AyurvedBrimhan Therapy or healthy weight gain therapy:

Rasayanatantra is one of the eight specialties of Ayurveda. It is a specialised practice in the form of rejuvenative recipes, dietary regimen, special health promoting behaviour and drugs. Properly administered Rasayana (path of essence) can bestow the human being with several benefits like longevity, memory, intelligence, freedom from diseases, youthful age, excellence of luster, complexion and voice, optimum strength of physique and sense organs, respectability and brilliance. Various types of plant based Rasayana recipes are mentioned in Ayurveda. Review of the current literature available on Rasayanas indicates that anti-oxidant and immuno-modulation are the most studied activities of the Rasayana drugs. Querying in published medical database on Rasayanas reveals that research has already been done on single plants as well as poly herbal formulations. This article reviews the basics of Rasayana therapy and the published research on different Rasayana drugs for specific health conditions. It also provides the possible directions for future research.

Ageing, a physiological state in which there is a progressive decline in organ functions, delay in regeneration, and development of age-related diseases, is a multifactorial process. Free radicals are proposed to initiate/enhance ageing and antioxidants and phytochemicals have been shown to possess anti-ageing properties. These drugs are also believed to be good tonics, rejuvenators, immune stimulators and adaptogens.

Regular consumption of these drugs is considered to enhance physical strength, increase sex drive and improve the complexion. They are mostly polyherbal in composition and are comprised of medicinal plants, minerals, pearls and coral. This article addresses, commonly used Rasayana drugs such as Amalakaya Rasayana (Gooseberry rejuvinator), Triphala(equal parts of three myrobalans, taken without seed: Amalaki (Goose berry), Bibhitaki (Belleric), and Haritaki (Chebulic)), Chyawanprash, Aamalaki Rasayana, Amrita Rasayana, Brahm Rasayana, Ashwagandha Rasayana, Narasimha Rasayana, Brahmi RasayanaAmrita prasham, Amala churna, and Amalkadi Ghrita.

Steps involved in Brimhana therapy:

1. Ayurveda physicians advise usage of herbs and other ingredients which have earth (Prithvi) and water (Apa) elements in large proportions.
2. Vata causes emaciation or weight loss in body. Hence these ingredients and methods must alleviate vata and balance all three doshas.
3. Massaging whole body with vata balancing herbal oil (ksheerbala taila) is recommended for those who are willing to gain healthy weight.



4. Usage of Ayurvedic herbal preparations called Brimhana Rasayanas help to increase healthy body weight.

5. Inclusion of ghee, milk, meat and other nutrient foods in diet helps to increase body weight. These foods must increase kapha and reduce vata.

6. Reducing stress level, sleeping comfortably for long hours and afternoon naps are very essential to increase body mass.

7. Restriction of strenuous physical activities also contributes to weight gain.

Charaka Samhita, says: "For all living beings, meat soup is nourishing and refreshing. This is regarded as nectar for the dehydrated, during convalescence, for the emaciated, and for those desirous of strength and lustre. Meat soup prepared accordingly alleviates many diseases. It promotes voice, youth, intelligence, power of sense organs and longevity. The persons indulged in physical exercise, sex and wine do not fall ill or become weak if they take diet with meat soup regularly." Notice that rather than eating large quantities of meat by itself, the preferred method is to make soup where the meat can be balanced by vegetables, herbs and spices. In a similar way, fresh raw milk can be diluted and boiled with herbs and spices and then cut with raw honey to provide a nourishing easy-to-digest drink.

Grains: Whole grains are preferred, especially wheat, oats, brown rice, and kitcharee (a well-known combination of spices, ghee, basmati rice and split mung beans). Gruels are recommended during convalescence. They range from thick to thin, with thin considered the easiest to digest. They are sometimes combined with digestive spices and/or medicinal herbs and roots.

Beans: Beans are good for their heavy quality if tolerated. They need to be soaked and well-cooked with some oil or oil added after cooking to counteract their dryness. Their husks can be removed and be split or ground to improve digestability. Good choices include mung beans, bean sprouts, chick peas, and black gram.

Oils: High quality oils are one of the keys to a nourishing and balanced diet. This diet should emphasize on high quality proteins, carbs, and fats which are known as the heavy food groups. They need to be taken according to one's comfortable digestive capacity and balanced by appropriate veggies, fruits, herbs and spices (the light food groups). Essential fatty acids should be added from fresh fish, fish oil, flax oil, and walnuts. Other choices are organic ghee, butter, sesame oil, olive oil and almond oil. Fresh nuts and seeds of all kinds are excellent in small portions. Oil can also be applied topically to bolster the body, lend strength, nourish the skin, and provide lustre. An old saying is "you can pay the oil-man now or the doctor later."

A classic ayurvedic preparation is to soak 10 almonds overnight, then peel them, chew thoroughly, and enjoy!

Vegetables: Good choices are starchy veggies, root veges, and unctuous veges. Organic veggies and fruits contain a fuller spectrum of trace minerals which are missing in many diets. Try organic sweet potatoes, yams, potatoes, cucumbers, beets, lotus root, okra, and onions cooked in ghee. Fresh vegetable juices can be taken between meals for their enzymes and prana. Occasional salads are acceptable especially if well-oiled.

Fruits: The heavier, more nourishing fruits are organic fresh figs, dates, mangoes, papaya, raisins, bananas and avocadoes. Also good are berries, grapes, and cooked apples.





Spices: Fresh ginger, black pepper, cinnamon, cardamom, garlic, fennel, and cumin are especially helpful to support digestion and balance the heavy nature of the above foods. They are best added to ghee and cooked with veges, grains, and/or beans.

Sweeteners: The sweet taste is one of the keys to the nourishing diet. This taste is included in all the proteins, grains, beans, oils and sweet fruits and veges listed above. In general, the sweet taste is said to give coolness, moisture, heaviness and satisfaction. For added sweeteners, complex sugars are recommended. Try raw unrefined sugar, jaggery, barley malt, honey, and rice syrup. Simple sugars are not recommended.

Supportive recommendations: The nourishing diet is supported by taking time off to rest more, relax and enjoy. Sleep freely. Spend time in nature. Walk barefoot on the earth, spend time in gardens, green places, and the woods. Take a vacation by the seashore or visit the mountains. Gaze into the starry sky at night and bask in the moonlight. Turn off the computers and the phones. Slow down.

Ayurvedicmedicine for weight gain:

1. Chyavanprash:

Chyavanprash is the most popular and well-known tonic for weight gain. It is a fine combination of various nutritious herbs which help strengthening the bones and muscles of the body. These ingredients improve the immunity of a person to a great extent and it is possible to gain weight with regular intake of Chyavanprash. This tonic is suitable for people of all ages and both sexes. Consuming two spoons of Chyavanprash ensures better blood circulation and helps to revitalize the worn-out vital elements inside the body. Chyavanprash makes the digestion process fast and therefore makes you feel hungry soon.

2. Vasant Kusumakar Ras:

Vasant Kusumakar Ras is a popular Ayurvedic medicine available in powder or tablet form. This is a drug that is normally taken only after prescription from dotors under medical guidance. Vasant Kusumakar Ras is considered as an excellent rejuvenator for the nerves and blood vessels. It also helps increasing memory, skin complexion, immunity and body weight. An ideal dosage of Vasant Kusumakar Ras is 125-250 mg once early in the morning on an empty or full stomach. Traditionally, the medicine should be administered with sugar, ghee, or honey.

3. Ashwagandha Churna:

This is a well-known herb having miraculous effects on weight gain. The churna (powder) is used in several medical preparations for its rich nutritional benefits. For its multifaceted benefits, the herb is also known as 'Indian Ginseng'. When consumed with a high calorie diet, ashwagandha churna helps in weight gain. Ideal dose of this herb is 100 mg a day.

4. Shatavari:

This is popularly helpful for pregnant women and lactating mothers as it helps to increase body weight. This herb is an excellent hydrator that helps to maintain the fluid balance inside the body. In addition, shatavari also improves digestion to a significant extent.

5. Annonna Squamosa:

Annonna squamosa is the scientific name of custard apple, which is considered as the best fruit for increasing body weight. This fruit promotes body weight successfully by counteracting anorexia and strengthening the body muscles effectively. A custard apple a day is sufficient for achieving the desired goal.

6. Yashti Madhu:

Yashti madhu is an effective remedy for people with very weak immunity system. A person with weak immunity will never be able to increase their bodyweight. Yashti madhu provides people with the strength and stamina for the said purpose.

7. Ksheerbala Taila:

It cures morbidities in semen and menstruation.

Thus, in addition to the foods and herbs, the practice of the eight rungs of yoga - yamas, niyamas, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, concentration, meditation, and silence - is recommended for rejuvenation of the body, mind and spirit. In what is known as brimhana rasayana, a spiritual retreat of at least one month is recommended.

The knowledge mentioned above refers to the realization that we are part of the whole, that we have the source of life within us, and that the life of the spirit is immortal. So here is to the constant renewal of good cheer and joy from that well-spring of life within. With the support of nourishing food, fresh air, and loving-kindness may you be glad always.



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UTTARAVASTHI
in genitourinary disorders

Ayurveda is a branch of medicine that approaches disease in a systematic manner albeit considering the human as a whole. This holistic vision of Ayurveda and its advantages are well appreciated by all other medical branches as well. Also, Ayurveda is the first ever known medical system with its eight specialties that existed even before 5000 years. Among these, the genito-urinary disorders and their management have been well explained under the branch of kayachikitsa, in Ayurveda, says ***Dr. Jithesh MD***



In Ayurveda, the approach towards any disease is aimed at balancing the three *Doshas- Vatha, Pitta* and *Kapha* such that their equilibrium is restored. Also, as per the depth of the pathogenesis and an assessment by the physician, either the *Sodhana chikitsa* or *Samana chikitsa* will be administered. *Sodhana* procedures are administered in the initial stages and this is followed by local therapies. *Uttaravasthi* is one such specific local technique mentioned in the management of genito-urinary conditions.

As per published studies, it is understood that fertility problems are on the rise. The contributory factors for this are many and include the dietary, psychological, endocrine factors, comorbid conditions, along with the genitourinary pathologies. A detailed protocol has to be framed after the real assessment of the condition, which ends with *Uttaravasthi*.

UTTARAVASTHI

Uttaravasthi is one of the classifications of the *panchakarma* procedure *"Vasthi"* in Ayurveda. Here, the only difference is that the treatment is administered through the genitourinary route. The nomenclature mentions that, it is administered through a route which is anterior to the usual route for *Vasthi*. This is done for both males and females with separate clinical indications. This technique is very useful but is only practiced after much hesitation from Ayurveda professionals. Here, we shall discuss how *Uttaravasthi* is administered in males and its further uses.

This is a method of inserting selected medicines through the genitourinary tract with a prescribed technique. Like any other *vasthi* procedure, it also has a *Uttaravasthi netra* and a *putaka*, which varies in the case of male and female.

INDICATIONS

- **Derangement in seminal parameters**
- **Dysuria** (mootrakrichra)
- **Asmari** (Vesical calculus)
- **Vasthisoola** (Cystitis)
- **Klaibya** (sexual dysfunction)
- **Mootra grandhi** (Benign Prostate Hypertrophy)

PROCEDURE

The procedure includes preparatory phase, actual procedure and post procedural care.

PREPARATION

Classically *snehapana, sweda, sodhana* and *nirooha* are to be administered before planning to perform *Uttaravasti.* But without all these; we can perform *Uttaravasti*, as per the demand from the condition. A prior counseling and explanation of the procedure is usually given to the subject to alleviate the anxiety, if any. A detailed examination of the genitourinary tract is done, to rule out any obstructive lesions or structural alterations.

Oil application and fomentation is done all over the body. The patient is asked to clear the natural urges and take bath. Yavagu with milk or ghee is given. The procedure is performed with the patient on lithotomic position in the minor theatre. All the instruments necessary for the procedure are sterilized properly, so as to be aseptic. The sterilized syringe is filled with the selected drug and kept aside. Usually *grithas, tailas or kwathas* are used.

MAIN PROCEDURE

The patient is initially instructed to evacuate the bladder. The genital area is cleaned thoroughly with an antiseptic solution. The prepuce is also retracted and cleaned with cotton. Warm oil is applied over the genital region. The penis should be made straight and steady. Rubber catheter of the selected size smeared with ghee is slowly pushed through the urethra till it reaches the bladder. A syringe, with the medicine is attached to the base of the catheter. The medicine is pushed inside with the syringe, gently. The catheter is removed slowly with utmost care.

The patient is now laid on the back and is advised to move into the lateral positions waiting for the drug to come out. After the expulsion, the patient is advised to take boiled rice with milk, vegetable soup or meat soup. He is also advised to avoid day sleep and also to avoid sexual contact. The procedure is to be repeated daily upto 3 days or as per the condition.

Medicines such as Dhanwantara taila, Ksheerabala taila, Nalpamaradi Kwatha, Veerataradigana kwatha, Vasthyamayantaka gritha etc. are used as per the condition.

DISCUSSION

This is a unique technique of drug administration mentioned in Ayurveda. It is acting on the primary site of *Vatha*, ie *Vasthi* and normalizes the physiology over there. By altering the drug used for *Uttaravasthi*, it can also alleviate *Kapha* and *Pitta* as well. To a certain extent, it also results in a local *sodhana* and also results in neural activation. It is possible to contribute to the rectification of many types of genitor urinary disorders including male subfertility. If performed under expertise, the complications will be less. We the Ayurvedic professionals have to take extreme effort to popularize such techniques, so as to make it effective as well as useful, for the suffering community.



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HERBS to overcome MALE INFERTILITY

Like any other systemic disease, Infertility is a clinical condition where various psychological and pathological factors play key roles. Here, ***Dr. Jyolsna G Krishna*** *MD (Ay) explores some of the effective herbal medicines from Ayurveda that are used to cure Male infertility....*



Infertility has traditionally been bestowed on women but as advanced medical systems unveil, it was understood that many men too are infertile and hence the reason for childlessness is not just the fault of the women. It has been found that about one out of every three cases of infertility is due to the man alone and the diagnosis of male infertility is one of the greatest challenges a man can face. For some it can be ravaging and devastating. To believe that he cannot father a child can make him feel like he's failing at one of his most primal responsibilities.

Medically, male infertility is a clinical condition in which a person is unable to get his wife to conceive even after one year of regular planned unprotected sex wherein his female partner is declared clinically normal.

The common reasons for male infertility are either low sperm count (Oligospermia), or no sperm count (Azoospermia) or normal count with low or no motility of sperms. Another problem is the inability to have intercourse which may be due to penile erection problem or low or no urge (impotency).

Other causes of male infertility are consanguinity, genetic inheritance of chromosomal mutation, toxic synthetic drugs used in other diseases, cancers and anti-cancer drugs and secondary DM.

The above reasons of male infertility can be summerised in two points

1. Defective spermatogenesis and poor quality of semen
OR
2. Inability to place semen high up in the female reproductive canal
Both are due to the local or systemic problems

Although many synthetic drugs are available and /or used to treat these problems, the drawbacks are many. These drugs are usually very expensive and are known to have serious side-effects.

Ayurveda has a separate branch for studying problems related with reproduction and eugenics. This branch of Ayurveda deals with the management of defective semen and sperm along with sexual potencification and is called Vajeekarana tantr. This is one among the eight specialities of Ayurveda.

According to Ayurveda, sukra or sperm is the last vital tissue produced in the body. None of the classical texts of Ayurveda mentions about the count of sperm or motility of sperm but clearly mentions about the quality of the sperm (sudha sukra lakshanam).

Generally the vajeekarana/Vrushya medicines can be classified into:-

1. **Sukra janaka that which promotes spermatogenesis**
2. **Sukra rechaka that which promotes ejaculation**
3. **Sukra sodhaka that which purifies the semen**
4. **Sukra sthambhaka that delay premature ejaculation**
5. **Kamothejaka that enhances sexual vigour.**

Ayurveda suggests many herbs to overcome male infertility. This list is endless. Research is ongoing in this branch of Ayurveda. But these medicines can be consumed only after careful selection and under the supervision of a qualified medical practitioner.

Below are the names of some drugs which are frequently used in treating male infertility. Before selecting these drugs, the physician should analyse many factors of the patient, like condition of the patient, condition of the disease, dispensing form, many other external factors like the seasons, climate etc. Only after the above assessment can a drug be administered so that treatment can be done to achieve the final goal.

Below is the description of some common drugs used to cure male infertility.

Amalaki or Gooseberrry *(Emblica officinalis)*



This is one of the most familiar and admirable herbal drug of Ayurveda found around the globe. Amalaki is a good natural anti-oxidant and supports healthy metabolism. Amalaki promotes healthy heart, eyes, skin and digestive fire. It is a well known immuno modulator and memory enhancer. Amalaki can support a healthy reproductive system and can improve sperm motility and sperm count.

Sathavari *(Asparagus racemosus)*



This is an armed climber with sickle shaped cladodes, minute leaves and spines. The tuberous succulent root of Satavari is a well known aphrodisiac and rejuvenator in Ayurveda. The milk decoction of Sathavari is often used in the treatment of various infertility conditions. Even though Sathavari is the epitome of herbs for gynaecological cases, the drug has wonderful results in case of male infertility too.

Kali Musali *(Curculigo orchioides)*



This is a small herb having elongated fleshy roots that are black in colour. These roots have the same aphrodisiac property of Safed musali (Chlorophytum spp.), so Curculigo orchioides is better known as Kali musali.The dried root of this plant is a tonic that strengthens vigour and vitality.

Aswagandha *(Withania somnifera)*



The shrub, Withania somnifera, is a well-known sasayana drug mentioned in the Ayurveda classics.The dried root of this plant has multi-system action that include anti-stress, anti-ageing, antioxidant, tranquilising and many other neuromuscular properties. Through these wide arrays of pharmacological actions Aswagandha can enhance sexual vigour.

Kokilaksha *(Asteracantha longifolia)*



This is a shrub growing on marshy fields with sharp spines and purple flowers. The seeds of Kokilaksha are highly effective in various conditions of erectile dysfuntions and can increase sperm count.

Kapikacchu *(Muccuna pruriens)*



This climbing shrub is commonly seen among hedges and bushes in Kerala. The ovoid black seeds of this plant are well known aphrodisiac in Ayurveda. Kapikacchu increases libido and endurance, sperm quality and sperm count. Studies have proven that Kapikacchu can fight against psychological stress and is neuro protective in nature. Kapikacchu is also a revitaliser of female and male reproductive organs alike.

Kupeelu *(Strychnos nux vomica)*



The discoid- shaped seed of Kupeelu is ideal for patients suffering from anxiety and mood disorders which adversley affects sexual drive in males.The drug can also be recommended for genitor- urinary infections, which are often the underlying cause for conditions like erectile dysfunction. Irrational use of this drug may cause convulsions and severe muscle spasms so strict medical guidance is required before using it.

Gokshura *(Tribulus terrestris)*



This small herb with prickly fruits is a member of the famous Dasamoola group (ten roots). Even though the main therapeutic use of Gokshura is on urinary system, the root and fruit of this herb is widely used to improve libido and sexual well being especially in males.

Vidari *(Ipomoea mauritiana)*



The root tuber of Ipomoea mauritiana is taken as raw food in many places in India. The drug is good for enhancing lactation, is an anti-convulsant, analgesic and has anti-inflammatory properties. Studies have proved that Vidari can improve sperm density, can correct sexual debility and is a good drug of choice in the case of infertility.

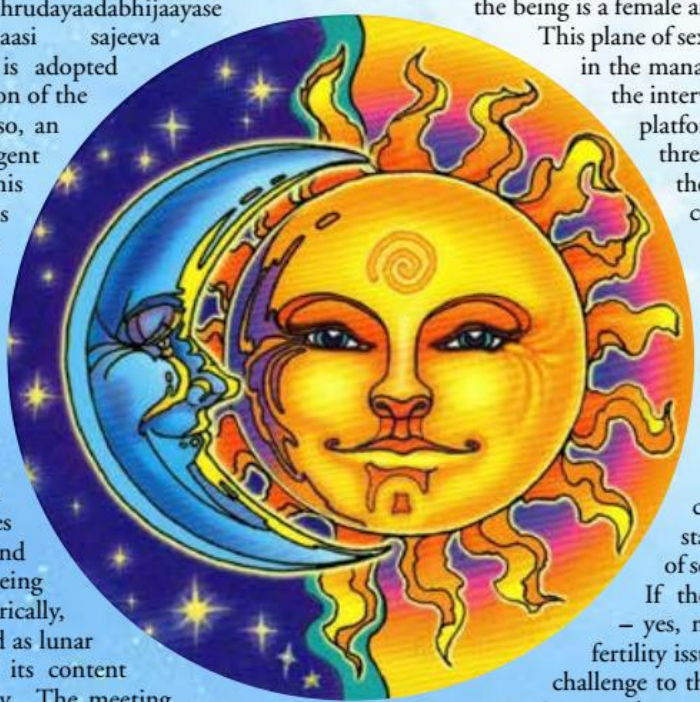


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FERTILITY
The Moon and the Sun Story

By Vaidya Prof. M. Prasad

Fertility is the capacity to reproduce. In turn, it reflects the instinct of a being to attain immortality. From one generation to the other, it transcends the limits of lifespan which may be otherwise limited to a few years. The parent is reborn as the child. It is an extension of one's own body to the infinite time and space. There is a mantra in Ashtangahrudaya, the great work of Sage Vagbhata, which is to be chanted in the ears of a newborn. That mantra 'angaadangaath sambhavasi hrudayaadabhijaayase aathmaa vai puthranamaasi sajeeva saradaam satham' which is adopted from the Vedas, is a reflection of the desire to be immortal. Also, an offspring is regarded as an agent who is capable of ferrying his father through the streams of worldly commitments and obligations to the heavenly abode. Due to this reason, fertility is always attributed with more dimensions than just a medical crisis.



Ayurveda has a medico-philosophical approach towards fertility. It takes physical, mental and emotional planes of the being into consideration. Allegorically, the male fertility is regarded as lunar (related to the moon) in its content and female as solar or fiery. The meeting of the sun and the moon is the crucial climax of procreation. The dualism representing the hot-cool, sun-moon, fire-water is an integral part of the explanation of fertility in Ayurvedic literature. Hot and fiery sun receives the cool moon in an optimal environment to facilitate conception. This metaphorical idea has tremendous influence in all interventions related to fertility. The quality and willingness of the solar and lunar elements and the optimisation of the environment are considered as the most critical elements in the treatment of fertility-related medical problems.

It is considered that the basic elements of the living body, called by the name dhathus, are in a state of continuous transformation and in this process they get refined from the inferior levels of fattiness* to further superior levels. (*please do not read it as cholesterol, lipids, or adipose. Due to the limitations of proper translation, such a word is used. The original Sanskrit word used by the authors here is Sneha). The last state of this transformation network is Sukra which is the element of procreation. The solar-lunar dualism is attributed to this element in female and male respectively. The sex determination in human beings is based on this metaphorical dualism of sun and moon; if the sun dominates the being is a female and if it is moon, it is a male. This plane of sex is of primary consideration in the management of sub-fertility. So, the intervention should focus on this platform. If the transformative threshold or force is erred, the element of Agni needs correction. Agni is the responsible element for all sorts of transformation. If the propulsive movement through the channels of transformation is at stake, the correction should be focussed on Vayu. If there is a faulty supply of material, Kapha needs correction. Above these standard rules, the specificity of sex should also be considered. If the femininity is challenged – yes, many of the current female fertility issues are nothing but an open challenge to the femininity itself – it may require an enhanced support to the sun in the body. Obviously, if it is the masculinity which is at stake, the moon in the body needs additional push. Even the drugs used for fertility crisis exemplifies this concept. Chitraka, Trikatu, Kulatha, thila, thaila, masha etc are medicines which boost the solar segment where as those like Ksheera, Navaneetha, Ghritha and the like make the lunar segment more active. So, in short, if you are a woman who prefers to escalate the femininity, allow the sun inside you to burn and if you are a man, who loves to be fertile till the dusk of your life, let the moon in you shine without waning to a crescent.



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AYURVEDA helps improve MALE FERTILITY

Infertility is the inability to conceive after at least one year of unprotected intercourse. In men hormone disorders, illness, trauma and obstruction can temporarily or permanently affect sperm and prevent conception. Some disorders become more difficult to treat, the longer they persist without treatment. ***Dr Satheesh K*** *MD (Ay) looks at the reasons and remedies*

Male infertility in Ayurveda

Male without progeny is blamed as simile to tree without fruits. Male was blamed repeatedly in the context of vajeekarana in Ayurvedic literature. This is in contrary to the modern society that blames female for not conceiving, without looking into the facts that about 35 per cent of cases are involved with male factors and 35 per cent of cases with both male and female factors. Ayurveda is the first medical science which recognised this fact and always emphasised the treatment of male infertility.

It is noticed that the terms like Klaibya, Napumsaka, Shanda are used synonymously to indicate impotence and infertility in most of the references. The conditions like sukradoshas, sukradoshajaklaibya etc reflect the male infertility conditions, but generally the terms shandatwa and klaibya are used to denote male infertility and impotence respectively.Acharya Charaka's view of vandhya can also be considered here.

Shanda/ Shandatwa

Acharya Charaka states that Shandatwa is mainly caused by Virudhahara sevana (Overusage of Incompatible foods)

AETIOLOGY OF SHANDATWA

Ahara (Dietary factors) & Oushadha (Drug induced)

a) Kshara (corrosives) is considered as the causative factor for infertility. Kshara is described as sukraghna and avrishya and its long term usage may lead to Shandatwa.

b) Different rasa will have different effects on spermatogenesis Eg: Tikta rasa is Sukrasoshana and Kashaya rasa is Retonaasana.

c) Madya (Alcohol) can lead to Sukranaasana.

VIHARA (ACTIVITIES)

a) Excessive indulgence in sex may lead to emaciation and reduction in sperm count and infertility.

b) The diseases related to medhra (penis) due to excessive intercourse.

Types of Shanda

There are different types of Shanda explained in Ayurveda.
1) Bijopaghaataja Shandatwa or Sahaja Shandatwa – (infertility due to defects in genes)

2) Doshaja Shandatwa – This condition is due to vitiation of Sukra by tridoshas. Excessive intake of certain dietary factors like Katu-amla- lavana atisevana is responsible for dhatu kshaya and may lead to infertility.

3) Vyadhijanita Shandatwa- Diseases affecting Medhra (penis) and some diseases like Rajayaskma and Vata roga are involved with Sukrakshaya can lead to infertility.

4) Jarasambhava Shandatwa – Jara or old age is expected to cause infertility due to senile changes.

Ayurvedic management

Ayurveda emphasises the usage of Vrishya (Vajeekarana) and Rasaayana therapies for the management of Sukradoshas and



Shandatwa (male infertility). When the etiology is associated with rasadhatu then rasaayana is more useful and when it is associated with Sukradhatu then Vajeekarana plays major role. Vajeekarana is considered as the treatment for the management of sukradoshas and for enhancing the capacity to perform well in sexual activities and which is useful in oligospermia and/or azoospermia.

Classification of Vajeekarana dravya:

1) SUKRA JANAKA- which nourishes sukra dhatu (enhancing spermatogenesis) Eg: mamsa, ghrita etc

2) SUKRA PRAVARTAKA – which helps in ejaculation Eg: ksheera, ghrita etc

3) SUKRA JANAKA PRAVARTAKA- (enhancing spermatogenesis and ejaculation) Eg: go-ghrita, godhuma (Wheat), masha (urad dal)

Some commonly used herbs in infertility

1) Vidari(Pureriatuberosa DC)
2) Akaarakarabha (Anacyclus pyrethrum DC)
3) Aswagandha (Withaniasomnifera)
4) Gokshura (Tribulusterrestris Linn)
5) Bala (Sidacordifolia Linn)
6) Kapikacchu (Mucunapruriens Linn)
7) Masha (Phaseolusmungo Linn)
8) Satavari (Asperagusracemosus)
9) Yasthimadhu (Glycyrrhizaglabra)
10) Jatiphala (Myristicafragrans Houtt.)

Shandatwa (infertility) Samanya Chikitsa

I) SODHANA CHIKITSA:

Sodhana procedures mainly Virechana and Vasti are described under the management of Sukradosha and Shanda. It is essential to perform Sodhana procedures before administering vajeekarana drugs, then only the person would be benefitted with the desired effects of vajeekarana, i.e, brimhana and balya.

Virechana – can be done with Eranda taila as it is itself vrishya in nature

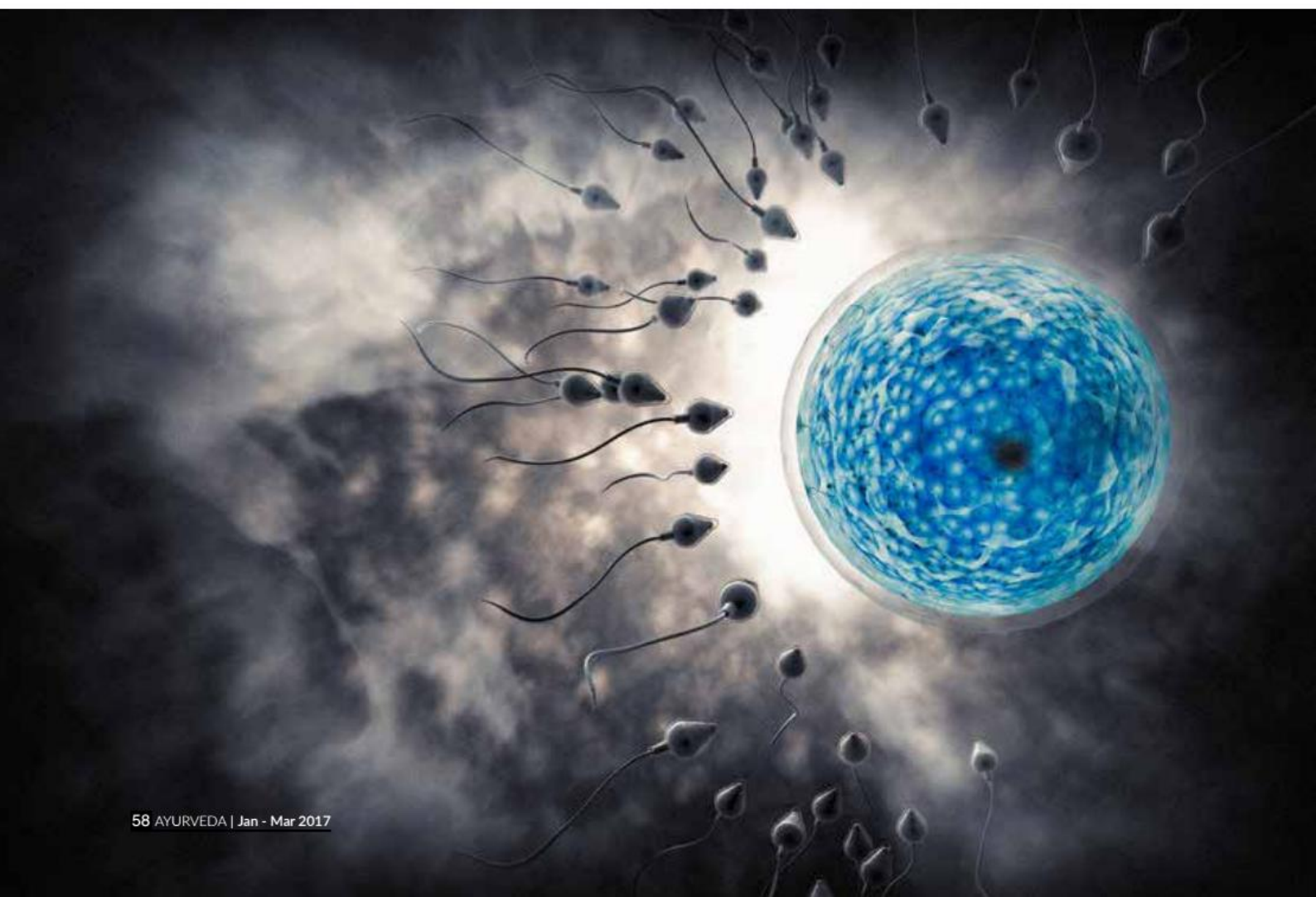
VASTI:

a) Mustadi and Saliparnyadi Yapanavasti are the two major vasti yogas found to be effective in infertility.

b) Yapana vasti with brihat pancha moolak watha is useful in Sukrak shaya.

c) Yapana vasti is specially indicated in Sukra doshas as well as in klaibya.

d) Uttara vasti is found to be effective in sukra dusti, sukra smari etc..





II) SAMANA CHIKITSA

Samana chikitsa includes ahara (diet), oushadha (drugs) and vihara (behaviours/exercises).

a) Ahara (Diet)

Some important ahara dravya which is useful in the management of infertility:

- Salidhanya (brown rice)
- Godhumam (Wheat)
- Masha (Urad dal)
- Milk and ghee
- Navaneeta (Butter)
- Erandataila
- MahishaMamsa (Buffalo's meat)
- Guda (Jaggery)

b) Oushadha (drugs)

- Single drugs like Aswagandha, Satavari, Kapikacchu etc
- Akara karabhadivati
- Vasanta kusumakararas
- Madana kameswariras
- Satavari ghrita
- Mustadi choorna
- Balaswagandhadi taila
- Kalyanaka ghrita

III) VIHARA (EXERCISES/ACTIVITIES)

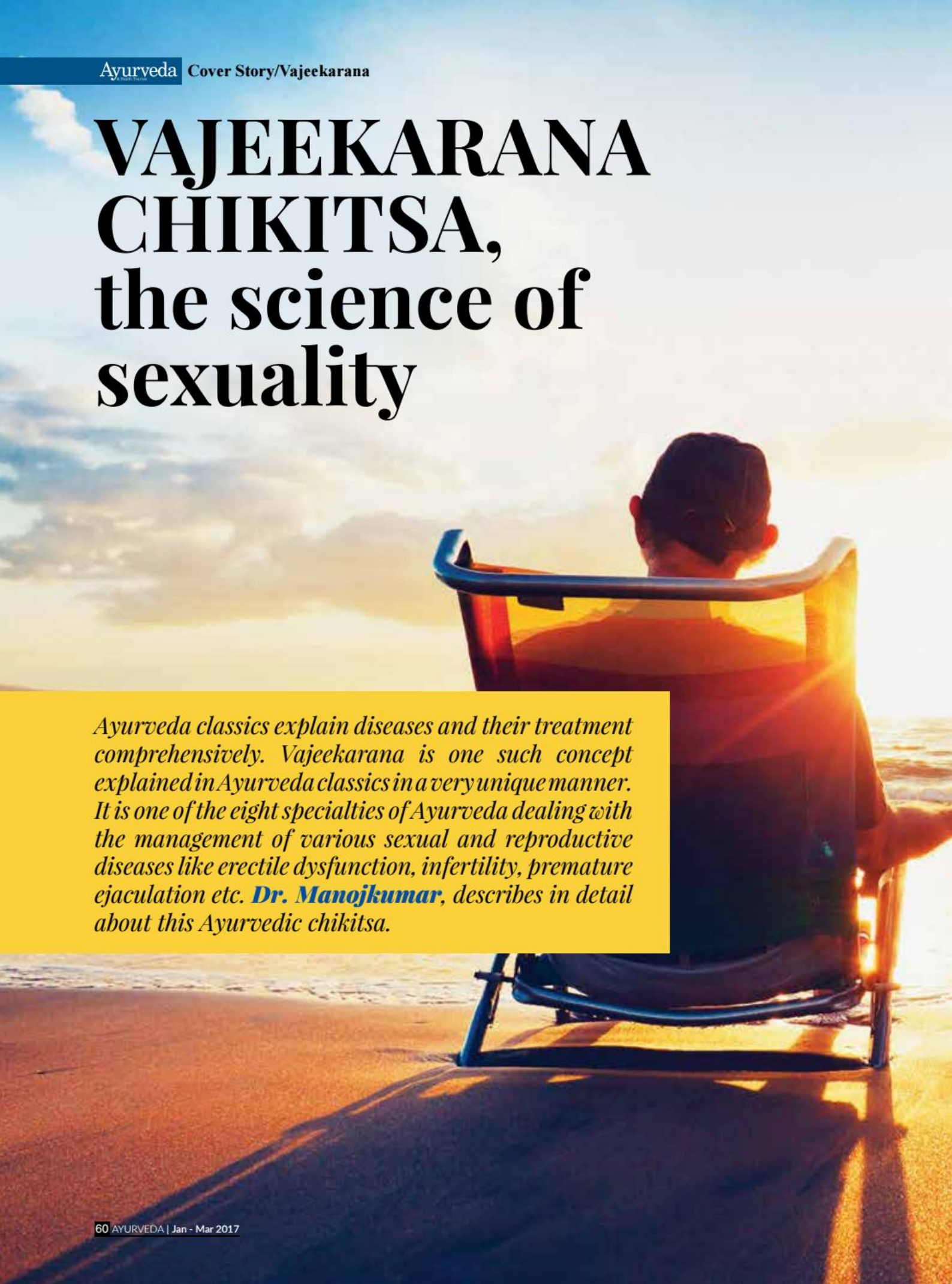
- Regular Abhyanga and Vyayama provides excellency in performance and prevents Jara (old age)
- Brahmacharya is considered for proper behaviour in sexual practices and ethics in sexual life.
- Proper sleep is very much essential for Vrishata in an individual.
- Regular snana should be done in order to achieve Vrishata.
- In short, one should follow the principles told in dinacharya and ritucharya to achieve the excellence in sexual life.

Male infertility can be well managed by the principles of Ayurveda like Sodhana, Samana and Rasayana and Vajeekarana. Moreover, diet and regular exercises also got important role in the management of infertility. But we should remember that the person's mental health has to be improved in order to attain the full benefits of vajeekarana therapy.



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VAJEEKARANA CHIKITSA, the science of sexuality



Ayurveda classics explain diseases and their treatment comprehensively. Vajeekarana is one such concept explained in Ayurveda classics in a very unique manner. It is one of the eight specialties of Ayurveda dealing with the management of various sexual and reproductive diseases like erectile dysfunction, infertility, premature ejaculation etc. ***Dr. Manojkumar****, describes in detail about this Ayurvedic chikitsa.*

Vajeekarana Chikitsa is a treatment procedure in Ayurveda that focuses on the sexual health of a person. Currently, the importance of this branch has increased manifold, as more and more people are turning to Ayurveda for reporting various disorders relating to seminal parameters and sexual dysfunction.

Today's competitive and stressful environment exhibits a negative impact on the sexual life of people. There have been various references regarding Vajeekarana therapy in the different Ayurveda texts. All these point to various solutions in Ayurveda for problems related to sexual life and procreation.

According to Ayurveda, a healthy life has three main pillars. They are a balanced diet, proper sleep and healthy sexual and married life. The eighth branch of Ayurveda which is known as Vajeekarana chikitsa deals with the third pillar. This branch deals with the management of defective semen and spermatogenesis along with treating sexual weaknesses.

A study conducted in Mumbai in the year 2012-14 shows the increase in incidence of the problem of erectile dysfunction in India. This problem is seen to increase drastically to about 6% in the age group 20-29 years and 50-70% in the age group 40-79 years. Its incidence has been projected to increase significantly to over 320 million by the year 2025.

India has been dubbed as the impotent capital of the world due to the high incidence of lifestyle diseases which in turn is one of the biggest reasons for impotency. Also, India is dubbed as the country with the largest male population in the world.

Here, erectile dysfunction (ED) is a common occurrence among males and its incidence is expected to increase significantly along with the increase in various lifestyle diseases.





Times of India in 2012 August reported that All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) calculated three decades ago and found that the average sperm count of Indian male was 60 million per ml and now this has decreased to 20 million per ml. This study also revealed that the majority of men who were exposed to high temperature at their work place like welders, dyers, blast furnace workers and those employed in cement and steel factories were the ones most prone to infertility. Continuous sitting during driving a car or other vehicles and in office also contributes to a low sperm count since a one degree elevation in testicular temperature leads to 14% depression of spermatogenesis. 12-18 million couples in India are diagnosed with infertility every year. Not only has quantity of sperm production declined in males across the world, there has been a decrease in motility (sperm movement) and morphology (shape and structure) of the sperms. There has been a 2% decrease in quality of male sperm annually. Also, 40% men in reproductive age group have recorded a quantitative and qualitative decline in sperm quality. Stress also decreases the hormones that stimulate spermatogenesis.

The Ayurvedic vajeekarana chikitsa has solutions to this emerging problem of erectile dysfunction and disorders relating to seminal parameters.

In Sanskrit, Vaji means horse, the symbol of sexual potency and performance. Thus, Vajikaran means producing a horse's vigour. The medicine or therapy by which one man can gain great strength like a horse is known as Vajikarana chikitsa. This branch is also known as vrushya chikitsa. Vrushya stands for bull, which competes with his fellow bulls and co-habits with multiple partners on the same day. The word vrushya indicates the substances by virtue of which a person is capacitated to act sexually like vrusha(Bull).

Vrushya (vajeekarana) drugs are divided into sub-types as follows according to sharngadhara samhita (a treatise on Ayurveda).

1. Sukrala:- The drug which facilitate and increase the production of semen (spermanogogues) for example ksheera, masha, aswagandha, shatavari, musali, sharkkara etc. These drugs are used to improve spermatogenesis and androgen synthesis. (sukra or sukla means semen)

2. Sukra janakam and suhkra rechakam: - Increase the semen and promotes ejaculation for example bhallataka bhala majja.

3. Sukra rechanam:- Promote the expulsion of semen for example fruit of bruhathi

4. Sukra pravarthini :- The stimulator of semen for example sthree. Various psychological factors play an impotent in sexual stimulation. Beautiful woman is considered as vajeekarana par excellence. In contrast, grief, anger, anxiety, fear, suspiciousness towards women partner has an adverse influence.

5. Sukra sthambhakam:- Drugs which help to withhold semen for longer time for example jati phala. Drugs in this group are useful in treating premature ejaculation.

6. Sukra soshakam:- Drugs which dry up semen or reduce quantity for example hareetaki. This can only be used to reduce the sexual desire and not as a vajeekarana.

Charakacharya mentioned the following group of drugs called mahakashaya for treating the diseases relating to sukra.

1. Sukra Sodhana Mahakashaya:- the drugs which will do the sukra sodhana (semen cleansing) eg:- kushta, elavaluka, katphala, samudra phena etc.

2. Sukra janaka mahakashaya:- The drugs which help in production of sukra is called sukra janaka eg:- jeevaka, rushabhaka, kakaooli, ksheera kakoli, mudga parni, masha parni.etc.

3. Prajasthapaka mahakashaya:- The drugs help prajasthapaka (maintaining the garbha) eg:- eimdri, brahmi, shataveerya, lakshmana, bala etc.

Acharyas also mentioned the benefits of different food items for vajeekarana chikitsa. Among them are tender coconut water, milk, milk products like ghee, curd and butter (except butter milk), gingili oil, castor oil, honey, jaggary, rakta sali, shashtika rice, masha, ginger, meat of chicken, buffalo, fish, fruits like dates, grapes, ripe mango, etc.

Different formulations of the above mentioned drugs are described in Classical Ayurveda texts like Charaka, Susruta and Vagbhata. In Charaka Samhita, chikitsa sthana vajeekaran adhyaya oushadha yogas like brumhana gulika, vajeekarana gulika, vajeekarana pindirasa, vrushya ghrita, apathyakara ksheera, vrushya payasa etc are only some among them.

In the same way susrutacharya describes oushadha yogas like vajeekarana utkarika, vajeeekarana shashuki, vajeekarana basthanda etc. and acharya vagbhata explains about athmaguptadi yoga, sathavari yoga etc. Yoga ratnakara, Bhavaprakasha and Bhaishajyaratnavali describes more oushadha yogas for vajeekarana chikitsa.

These oushadha yogas are mentioned to improve sexual vigour and vitality and to treat different types sexual issues and defects of semen.

In Panchakarma treatment vasthi chikitsa (enema therapy) is commonly used for vajeekaranam. In vasthi, medicated enemas are given through the anal route (vasthi) or urethal rout (Uttara vasthi). Sthiradi yapana vasthi (Charaka), Musthadi asthapa vasthi (Susrutam), kukkudanda rasadyo sukrakrit vasthi (Vagbhat) are only some examples for kashayavasthi. Different taila or ghrita yogas like narayanataila are used for uttara vasthi.

By properly understanding the semen analysis and problems related to intercourse, the physician can select the appropriate oushadha yoga or their modifications according to the condition of the patient.

Even though most of the treatments explained are for male patients there are treatments for vandhyata (infertility) in women and their problems related to loss of libido. The reason for the importance given to male infertility in the ancient Ayurveda texts may be due to the social setup of those days.

So many researches have already been conducted in vajeekarana chikitsa in different PG centres and research institutes. Some examples are given below.

- ***Vajeegandhadi yoga in skheena sukla and spermatogenesis by Dr.B.M.mulkipatil (DGM.AMC- Gadag)***
- ***Effect of vanari gulika in Oligospermia by Dr.V.M.Prabhakar (Govt.AMC.Mysore).***
- ***A comparative study of vajeekarana drugs administered orally and by vasthi in the management of erectile dysfunction by Dr. BhattedSanthosh (Jamnagar)-2002***
- ***Effect of ardhamatraka vasthi in oligospermia by Dr. Lande Prashant (SDM.Hassan)- 2005***
- ***Role of uttaravasthi in anovulation (vandhyata) by Dr.Prathibha.C.K (SDM. Hassan)-2006***
- ***Management of sukra gata vata with vidaryadi ghritha with special reference to premature ejaculation by DR. Naik Praveen D.G.M. Ayurveda medical college Gadak (2009)***

All researches and experiences from expert ayurveda doctors reveal that the problems related to impotency and qualitative improving of semen and ovulation can be effectively managed by Ayurvedic treatment. These treatments, apart from correcting the problems, improve the general health and immunity of the individual because most of vajeekara drugs have rasayana properties also. Literatures from ayurveda classics provide solutions to current and future problems in this field of science.



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For the ultimate bliss



"A wee bit of heaven drifted down from above.....
A hand full of happiness.....a heart full of love...."
(Helen Steiner Rice)

Even a quote as wonderful as this cannot fully express the joy a mother holding her baby for the first time. For a woman, having a baby is considered one of the greatest gifts of God. It is only natural then, that being deprived of this gift causes immense stress to those faced with the problem of infertility, which unfortunately has become a critical issue today across the globe. ***Dr. Divya P*** *writes about what Ayurveda, the ancient treatment system in the world, can offer the affected couples who are eagerly waiting for the ultimate bliss in their life.*

The World Health Organization considers infertility as a disease of the reproductive system, defined by the failure to achieve a clinical pregnancy after 12 months or more of regular unprotected sexual intercourse. More than 20 per cent of the cases reported are what could be called as unexplained infertility, where a definite cause for the problem cannot be identified.

Ayurveda gives profound importance to maternal and child health, and there is an elaborate description on how to prepare the body to have a healthy baby. Although not explicitly mentioned as a treatment of infertility, these are guidelines to be followed by all to beget a healthy progeny. Preparing the body accordinglyfor conception has clinically shown good results in infertility.

Several factors influence the physical and mental well being of a, couple which in turn have a significant bearing on fertility. Of these, four aspects are given prime importance and their role in the process of conception is explained in the classics of Ayurveda througha beautiful simile. It is equated to the germination of a seed, which is caused by the union of ritu (season), bija (seeds), ambu (water) and Kshetra (field). Here ritu is equated to the fertile period, bija to sperm and ovum, ambu to the nourishing substances including food and kshetra to female body or female reproductive system. Besides these, factors such as age, menstrual health, psychological state etc also contribute to having a healthy progeny.

The age for conception is considered to be 16 and above for females and 20 and above for males as per Ayurveda. The ages mentioned reflect the social setting of the period in which the Ayurvedic principles were formulated, when child bearing was considered the primary objective of a woman's life and little importance was given to her education and social life. In any case, the conception below this age is considered unhealthy to child as well as mother. In early teen years, girls often have irregular ovulation resulting in irregular menstrual cycles. But by age of 16, regular ovulation is established in them, resulting inregular menstrual cycles. However, for women, it is advisable to have a baby in their twenties, to give them enough time to attain physical and emotional maturity.Nowadays the social situation has changed and many women start their family by early thirties. Even though women today are healthier and take better care of them than ever before, the fertility does get affected with age. Fertility gradually declines in the thirties, particularly after thirty five. The age related loss of fertility here implies a decline of both the quality and quantity of eggs of the female. Sperm quality also declines with age, however, it is generally not a problem until the man reaches his sixties.

Ayurveda strongly advocates for non-consanguineous marriages. In many communities, marriages between blood relatives are seen as promoting family stability and having significant socio economic advantages over marriages between non-related individuals. However, the children from such marriages are prone to genetically transmitted disorders.

Ayurveda attaches great importance to the mental state of the couple, especially the female. Hence sex is discouraged with a woman who is hungry, thirsty, frightened, averse, sad, angry or diseased. Studies have proven that relief from stress promotes fertility, and thereby the contribution of psychological stress to infertility even in normal women.

Preparation for a healthy progeny

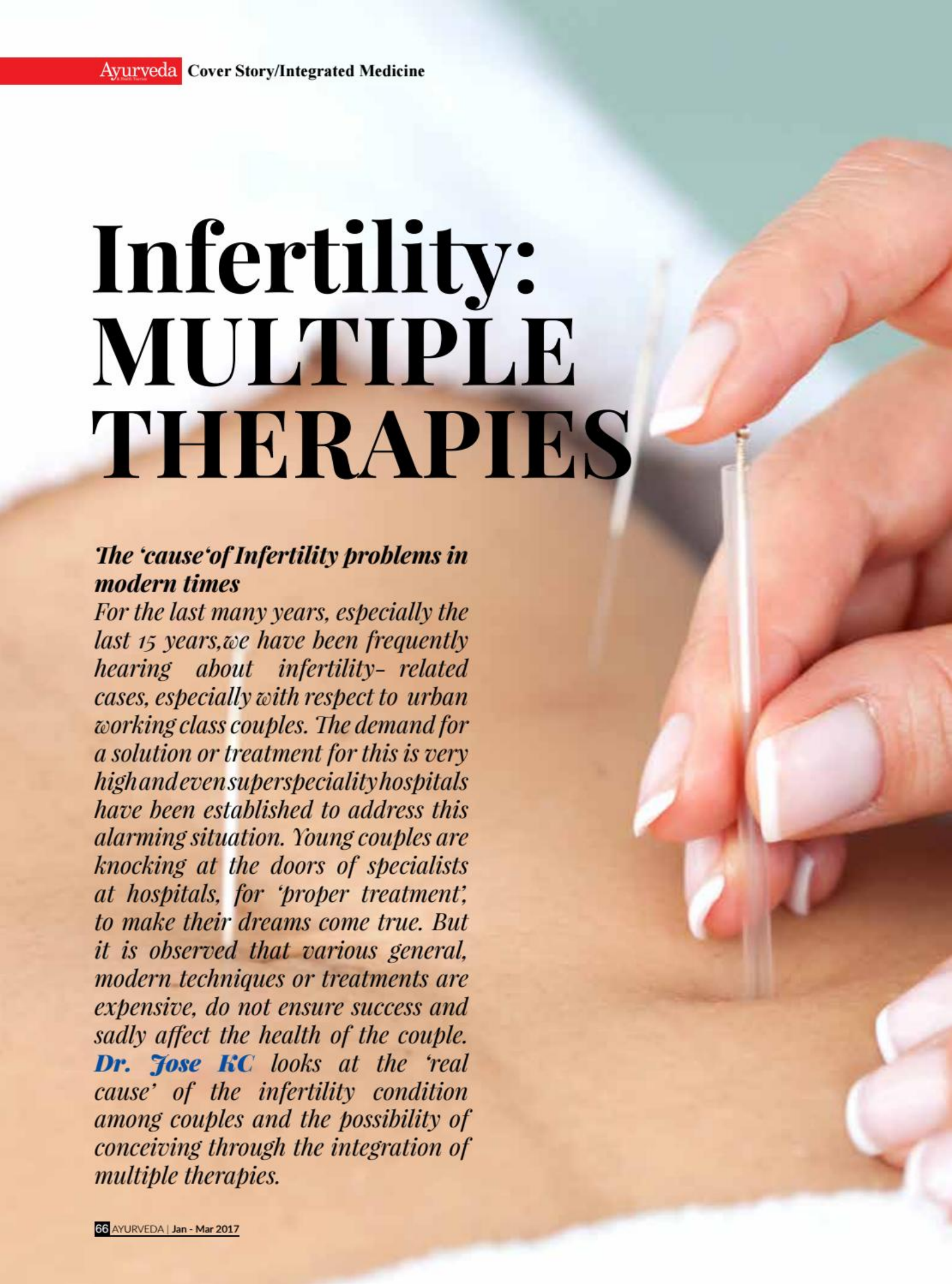
Woman should have a normal menstrual cycle with neither scanty nor excessive bleeding. Though not proven conclusively, Ayurvedic classics suggest that the conduct of woman during menstruation could have an impact on the health of child born to her. Except for a few aspects, the code of conduct explained in the classics is not socially relevant today. But the intention seems to be reducing physical and mental exertion and pacifying pitta, since menstruation is a pitta dosha predominant phase. The woman should have light food and avoid pungent salty acidic food. Sleeping during the day, sex and anything that might cause mental stress must be avoided during menstruation. After a menstrual period, the female and her partner must undergo oleation therapy (use of oil or ghee internally and externally), sudation therapy, Vamana (Emesis), Virechana (Purgation), Asthapanavasthi (Non lubricant enema) and Anuvasanavasthi (Lubricant enema) as per the advice of a physician. These procedures help correct the balance of Vata, Pitta and Kapha in the body prior to having a child. They ensure the production of healthy gamates,which will further result in a healthy pregnancy and child. The male and female partners are advised to observe one month of celibacy. Both should have suitable food as per their health status, predominantly curd, honey, ghee etc for male and sesame oil and black gram for female. The male gamete or sukra is considered to have saumyaguna (like water) and female gamete has agneyaguna (like fire). The diet mentioned here helps promote these qualities in the gamates. Once the procedures are done the couple should engage in intercourse when they desire.

Ayurveda does not attach importance to the sexual pleasure of women, perhaps due to the prevailing social situation of the period in which the practice was developed. However, when it comes to the context of reproduction, the emotions of women are given equal or more importance than men, which shows its importance in fertility.Ensuring a favourable and happy environment physically and emotionally might thus create wonders. In such a scenario, it is important to let nature lead the trail and we only give a supporting hand.



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Infertility: MULTIPLE THERAPIES



The 'cause' of Infertility problems in modern times

For the last many years, especially the last 15 years, we have been frequently hearing about infertility- related cases, especially with respect to urban working class couples. The demand for a solution or treatment for this is very high and even superspeciality hospitals have been established to address this alarming situation. Young couples are knocking at the doors of specialists at hospitals, for 'proper treatment', to make their dreams come true. But it is observed that various general, modern techniques or treatments are expensive, do not ensure success and sadly affect the health of the couple. ***Dr. Jose KC*** *looks at the 'real cause' of the infertility condition among couples and the possibility of conceiving through the integration of multiple therapies.*



Major factors causing infertility among the young couples:

- Late marriages
- High level stress at work and domestic front
- Junk food habits
- Sleep deprivation
- Physical unfitness at various levels
- Lack of exposure to sunlight creating Vitamin D deficiency
- Sperm quality and quantity problem, erectile dysfunction (ED), general weakness, obesity etc., in males
- Thyroid problem, polycystic ovarian disease (PCOD), fibroid uterus, irregular menstruation, obesity, indigestion, back pain etc.,in females
- Above all, a major percentage of couples are suffering from diabetes, BP, depression, anaemia, insomnia etc

How to address the infertility problem:

Today, the infertility phenomenon is very high in our society. The complexity of infertility is not just physical. It is mental, emotional and spiritual also.To address this multi-level problem, what we need is to first change the 'Attitude'. This issue can't be tackled by a Gynaecologist or an Andrologist alone. What is needed is nothing but a systematic self approach. ie. a physical check up followed with multiple lab tests. What modern medicine observes in the tests, will be tackled with medication. This is called 'Symptomatic approach'. It is little difficult to identify the real 'Cause' of these symptoms. This is then the real complexity and challenge. It should be addressed holistically, individually and metaphysically.

In this section, we will explain our clinical experience and how we approach this challenge by correcting the body at various levels.

Firstly, creation of a cellular level ambience, through appropriate food corrections, as per individual body prakruthi.This helps in the cellular re-engineering of the organs and resets organ functions.Secondly, rescheduling of sleeping/resting habits. Thirdly, the very important, structural integration of the body for the perfect organ / body functioning. All these can be achieved by integration of multiple therapy systems which ultimately create the perfect ambience for Conceiving.

Ati-Chrysalis Healthcare, we use our AcuMatrix Therapy, consisting of very advanced Yogic science procedures to improve physical fitness standards. We also provide advanced Acupuncture therapy to reset the Marma Points for the better biological functions at organ level, such that conception occurs at the earliest. We have observed that the advanced Acupuncture techniques are capable of addressing any challenging situation in the area of infertility.



"According to the Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Theory, there is an intimate connection between the kidneys, the uterus, blood and menstruation. The vessel of uterus connects to the Kidneys. By the age of 14, uterus is fully matured, the conception vessel flows and the penetration vessel fills, the menstruation comes according to their times,thus the conception is possible. Normal development of uterus, the conception vessel and

penetrating vessel, depends upon healthy functioning of the kidneys and the maturation of kidney essence. Again, harmonious menstruation depends on adequate formation of blood in the body, especially the liver blood which flows to the conception and penetrating vessels to form the menstruation blood. When the kidney essence is not discharged, it will return to the liver and transform into clear blood. In fact kidneys play a vital role in the formation of blood. The source of blood is the kidneys"

TCM science also says , "if the Kidney energy is deficient, the function of the Conception and Penetrating vessels will be disturbed, and formation of blood impaired. So variety of menstruation disorders like amenorrhoea, irregular menstruation, dysmenorrhoea and delayed menstruation, fibroid uterus, cyst formation etc, will occur".

AcuMatrix Therapy is a personalised therapy using multiple disciplines. The symptoms and problems may be the same in the patients. But the cause of these issues varies from person to person, depending upon their individual body constitution. In such a situation, a person with skills, knowledge and experience is required to develop the individual therapy system to match with the requirement to address the specific issues. These procedures are time tested, scientific, logical and very practical in its approach, which can be used as complementary therapy to modern medicine. Once the couple understandsands practices the new lifestyle, they are fit enough physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually and socially to have a baby in due course of time. The same knowledge and experience can be used to have a second baby too, if they want.

What the couple should do to conceive a baby?

- Positively change their attitude to importance of change in lifestyle
- Improve knowledge of their own body and the related problems
- Practice correct food habits
- Maintain correct sleeping hours
- Adopt a physical game to improve the physical fitness
- Develop healthy habits to reduce the stress level
- Make more time to spend together
- Make sure you are physically, mentally and emotionally fit enough to conceive a baby
- Find a balance between the work and social life. This will contribute to a perfect mental balance and energy level in the body.

Ancient wisdom is natural but complex to understand. Our decades of research, studies and experience break all that mysteries and secrecy. We have simplified the procedures through the integration of multiple therapies. Today, many couples vouch for us. – The pure joy of having their own children.



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GLOBAL INFERTILITY:
POWERING A MULTIBILLION-DOLLAR FERTILITY INDUSTRY

By Dr. Madan Thangavelu Ph.D

Global Infertility statistics estimates that over 100 million heterosexual couples worldwide who would like to have children but are physically unable to do so. Infertility affects both women and men. Genetic disorders, infectious and non-infectious diseases, and exposure to certain chemicals are among the causes.

According to the American Pregnancy Association (http://americanpregnancy.org/infertility/female-infertility/) infertility is a condition that affects approximately 1 out of every 6 couples. An infertility diagnosis is given to a couple that has been unsuccessful in efforts to conceive over the course of one full year.

Public Radio International's (www.pri.org/) Global Fertility / Infertility data offers some fascinating pointers: 1) The total fertility rate has been steadily falling around the world. 2) Over 100 million heterosexual couples worldwide would like to have children but are physically unable to do so. 3) Infertility affects both women and men. (http://globalfertilitymap.com/)

Infertility prevalence across nation states of the world is difficult to determine because of the involvement of both male and female factors. Besides genetic disorders, and diseases (both infectious and non-infectious) environmental factors including certain commonly found and used chemicals are among the causes. Some of the common chemicals that affects could include cosmetics & fragrances, pesticides, vehicle exhaust, plastics, artificialsweeteners, coffee, cigarettes and alcohol and food additives all of which can affect different individuals both men and women in different ways to damage the reproductive process and system (http://www.chem-tox.com/infertility/).

WHO's Sexual and Reproductive Health Programme recognises that... "Infertility and subfertility affect a significant proportion of humanity. WHO has calculated that over 10% of women are inflicted – women who have tried unsuccessfully, and have remained in a stable relationship for five years or more. Estimates in women using a two-year time frame, result in prevalence values 2.5 times larger. The burden in men is unknown. The overall burden of subfertility/infertility is significant, likely underestimated, and has not displayed any decrease over the last 20 years".

The three D's of infertility ... distress, depression and discrimination. These in turn, in many conservative societies and communities of the world leads to ostracisation. Because of these and related factors, infertility has grown to become a multi-billion-dollar industry globally. Attempts to solve this problem has also yielded Cambridge a Nobel Prize in recent years. One of the recipients of the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2010 was Robert Geoffrey Edwards (27 September 1925 – 10 April 2013) for the "development of human in vitro fertilization (IVF) therapy." His work which began in the 1950s, culminated in the first child born in 1978 as a result of IVF. Globally, approximately five million children have been born as a result of IVF, an innovation defined as "a milestone in modern medicine."

SMOKING is injurious to FERTILITY

A cigarette contains over 4,000 chemicals and so by smoking these chemicals are circulating round your body. In women, components of cigarette smoke may cause oxidative stress and DNA damage in the ovarian follicle. Ovarian ageing is thought to be a major contributor to unexplained infertility.

This can lead to fertility problems, including the following:

- OVULATION PROBLEMS
- DAMAGE TO YOUR REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS
- DAMAGE TO YOUR EGGS OR PREMATURE MENOPAUSE.
- INCREASED RISK OF CANCER AND INCREASED RISK OF MISCARRIAGE
- GENETIC PROBLEMS

In addition, smokers who undergo fertility treatments tend to take longer to get pregnant. Smokers are also more likely to give birth to babies with health problems. Research has shown that passive smoking is as bad as smoking a cigarette, because the smoke exposes you to poisonous chemicals which affect fertility. Passive smoking is also a known cause of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). So, if you do become pregnant, you and your partner must stop smoking to protect the health of your baby.

Smoking can also cause fertility problems in men. Smoking can lead to lower sperm counts and sperm motility problems, as well as contributing to erectile dysfunction and hormonal imbalances. Male smoking is also associated with decreased IVF success rates. Studies have found that sperm concentration, as well as the quality of sperm, are affected by smoking in the following ways:

Sperm concentration: Sperm concentration refers to the number of sperm found in a measured quantity of semen. Studies have shown a 23% decrease in sperm concentration in men who smoke.

Sperm motility: If sperm cannot move properly, they may have trouble reaching and fertilizing the egg. In men who smoke, researchers found a 13% decrease in sperm motility.

Sperm morphology: Having unusually shaped sperm may mean that they cannot swim well enough to reach and fertilize the egg. Male smokers have fewer healthy sperm than non-smokers.

Sperm DNA: Some studies have found that the sperm of smokers has increased DNA fragmentation. DNA damaged sperm may lead to problems with fertilization, embryo development, embryo implantation, and increased miscarriage rates.

Secondary effect on female fertility when the man smokes: Another factor to consider



is the effect male smoking has on the female partner. Studies have shown a possible decrease in female fertility when women are exposed to secondhand smoking. If you are going to smoke, be sure to do so away from your partner, so not to negatively affect her fertility.

Effect of smoking on female fertility: There are several ways that smoking can affect female fertility. Smoking may affect the way that hormone estrogen is released. Some studies suggest that smoking reduces the amount of estrogen that a woman's body produces. Smoking may cause a decrease of blood flow to the genital organs, which can cause dryness of the vagina and other sexual issues. Smoking may contribute to the destruction of eggs while they are in the ovaries, before they reach maturity. This results in a lower egg count. Smoking can negatively impact the fallopian tubes, and can even lead to disease of the fallopian tubes. Smoking can cause a woman's eggs to be more prone to genetic problems, as well. Finally, some research has suggested that smoking may even negatively affect the ability of an embryo to implant in the uterus.

Therefore, if you are trying to conceive, most of the doctors would advise both the male and female partners to cease smoking at least two months prior to conception. Besides improving fertility, smoking cessation will definitely impede the onset of other deadly dziseases like cancer, heart attacks, strokes etc. Quitting smoking makes sense for many reasons, so quit today before smoking kills you and probably the new life to come!

Compiled by Ayurveda & Healthtourism Desk

Drink COCONUT WATER to improve fertility



Coconut water is a natural, nutrient- rich isotonic drink. Coconut palms are found naturally in tropical coastal areas around the globe. Top coconut producing countries are Indonesia, the Philippines, India, Brazil, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

Coconut water is the sweet, clear liquid found in freshly opened coconuts. Coconut water has so many amazing health benefits that it is often referred to as a 'fluid of life'. This is because it contains key nutrients needed to strengthen our cardiovascular, muscles, nervous and immune systems. It is low in kilojoules (calories), sugar and is 99 percent fat-free. It is rich in potassium, magnesium, chloride and has a moderate amount of sodium, calcium and protein.

Coconut water aids digestion and weight loss, plus it's very nutritious and hydrating; helping to prevent dehydration and relieving tiredness by replenishing the natural salts lost by the body when we sweat. It is also a very good source of B-complex vitamins, such as riboflavin, niacin, thiamine, pyridoxine, and folate, essential if you are trying to conceive. Coconut water carries a very good amount of electrolyte potassium. 100 ml of coconut water has 250 mg of potassium and 105 mg of sodium. Together these electrolytes help to replenish any electrolyte deficiency in the body due to diarrhoea.

Fresh coconut water contains a small amount of vitamin C, which provides about 2.4 mg or 4 percent of RDA. Vitamin C is a water-soluble vitamin and anti-oxidant. These vitamins (water soluble) are essential in the sense that the human body requires them from external sources to replenish each day, and are very important prior to conception, throughout any fertility treatment, as well as during pregnancy.

Coconut water is thought to provide many medical benefits for women. Many women around the world drink coconut water in order to boost their fertility and to aid a healthy pregnancy. Aside from the important nutrients it contains, these are some of the following ways in which coconut oil is thought to benefit women in particular:

HELPS IN THE TREATMENT OF URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS – These are common infections which many women experience. Coconut water is a natural diuretic and so helps to remove bacteria from the urinary tract. It has been found that drinking coconut water twice a day if you suffer from these infections may help.

HYDRATION – to keep all body cells hydrated. This is particularly important in the 90 days before conception to ensure that all chemical reactions within cells can work as they are meant to. Many women who are trying to become pregnant and those that are pregnant living in tropical countries drink coconut water each day. Women can drink coconut water during pre-conception to gain the nutrients and hydration from the coconut water, and once pregnant in order to ease morning sickness, vomiting and constipation. Coconut water contains electrolytes, chloride, calcium, potassium, sodium and riboflavin.

IT IS RICH IN VITAMINS WHICH ARE NEEDED DURING PREGNANCY. Coconut water also contains lauric acid which helps to balance hormones and also has antibacterial and antimicrobial properties, which strengthen the immune system to help protect against infections.

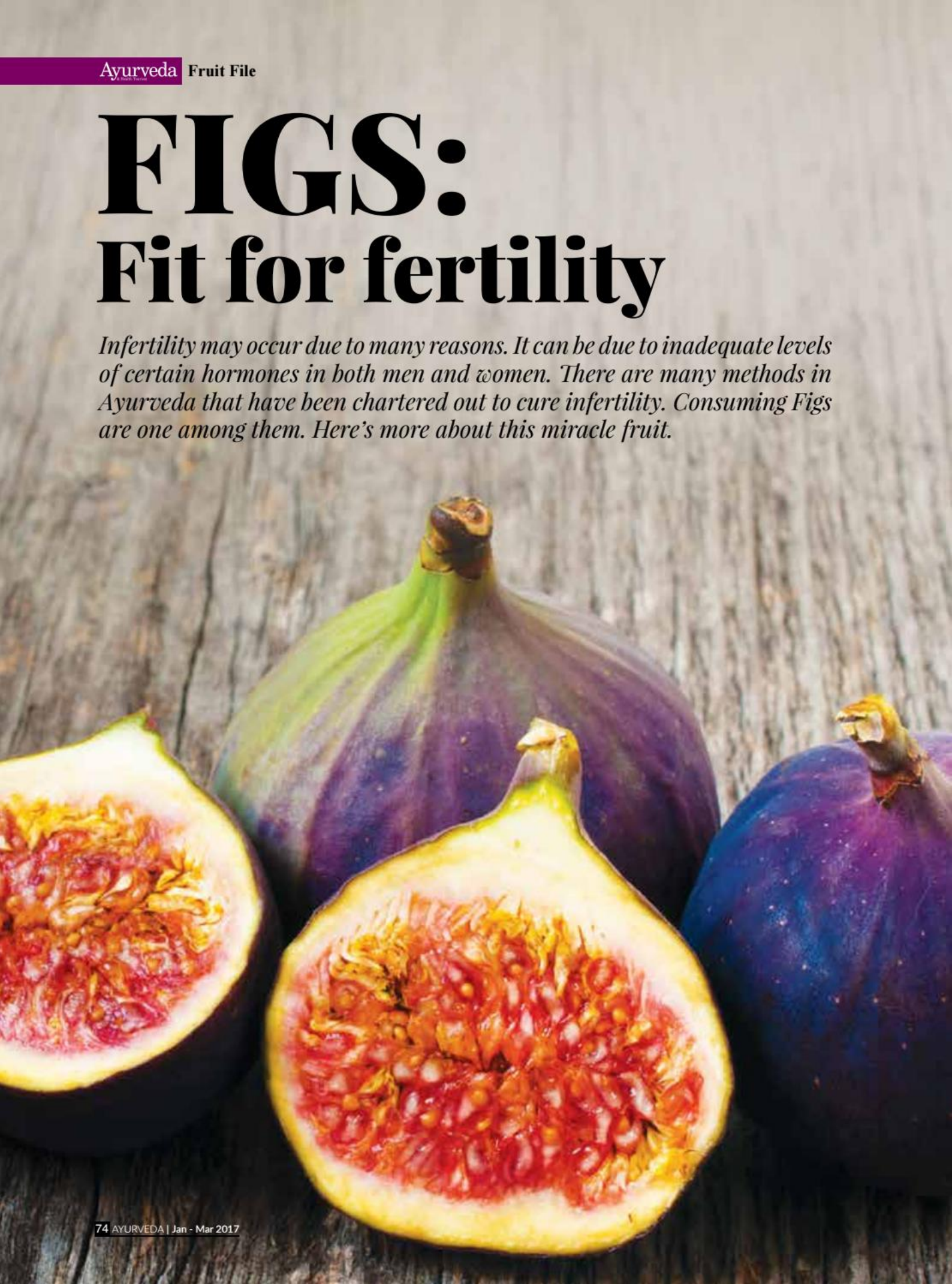
COCONUT WATER AND OIL IS VERY GOOD FOR THE SKIN. Drinking coconut water benefits the skin as it hydrates it and leaves it feeling soft. And coconut oil is great for rubbing into dry, itchy skin associated with hormone imbalance.

The liquid extracted from green coconuts contains far more electrolytes than an average sports drink. Coconut water is also a natural source of calcium, potassium and magnesium, which brings us to the aphrodisiac part. With its powerful punch of minerals and its ability to balance pH levels in the body, coconut water can help raise energy naturally. It also raises metabolism, which boosts sex. Best of all, coconut water is proven to boost circulation, and this is where its ancient, aphrodisiac reputation probably comes in.



FIGS: Fit for fertility

Infertility may occur due to many reasons. It can be due to inadequate levels of certain hormones in both men and women. There are many methods in Ayurveda that have been chartered out to cure infertility. Consuming Figs are one among them. Here's more about this miracle fruit.



Figs have been believed to increase fertility since the time of ancient Greeks, and now we have proven scientific evidence for this. Figs contain a lot of iron, which are important for healthy eggs and ovulation.

These small round fruits resembling ovaries and testes are full of small seeds just like the eggs and sperm and are regarded as sacred by Romans. It is a known fact that the ancient Greeks outlawed the export of Figs. That's how precious they were in the ancient times. During the days of yore, Figs were a symbol of prosperity and peace. They were considered to be rich in nutrients like calcium and fibre which is necessary for mopping up excess oestrogen and xenoestrogens from our digestive system.

Figs also protect one from breast cancer, promote bone density, protect the cardiovascular system and lower high blood pressure. They are not just healthy but divine in taste too.

Figs are an extremely good source of fibre, vitamins and essential minerals, and are a sweet way to boost your fertility nutrition. They grow on the ficus carica tree which is a member of the mulberry family and are thought to have been first cultivated in Egypt. Today, California remains one of the largest producers of Figs, in addition to Turkey, Greece, Portugal and Spain.

Whether Figs are fresh or dried they are a good source of calcium, manganese, fibre, potassium, zinc and vitamin B6. Fully ripened fresh Figs contain the most antioxidants. They help to protect the heart and lower blood pressure because they contain a good amount of potassium. Figs can help with male fertility in that they have been shown to increase the motility and number of sperm.

Soft and sweet, fresh Figs are gorgeous when eaten with meat, salads and desserts. They are also great in rejuvenating fertility in women.

The Fig tree has a mild laxative effect and is a rich source of calcium and thus can easily replace milk products.

It is understood that a half cup full of Figs equals to that amount of calcium that is stored in a half cup of milk. It is simply amazing all that is packed within the little Fig fruit.

It is also understood that milk from the Fig tree has the ability to eliminate warts. There are people who are allergic to Figs, so one should be careful while consuming them.

It is said that even before the United States was located on the world map, there were Figs. Figs in the past days symbolized fertility, abundance and sweetness. A Fig in a painting or in a home was there to show that those who had the Figs were kind hearted people who were prosperous in their lives. For this reason, amongst others, many people always tried to acquire Figs.

Some of the other noteworthy uses of Figs are expounded below:-

Improves digestion: Anjeer (dried Figs) is rich in dietary fibre. It's a natural laxative for preventing constipation and other digestive problems like irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).

Helps in weight loss: Apart from being rich in fibre, dried Figs are low in calories. One piece of dried Fig gives you just 47 calories. So, dried Figs are an ideal snack for people who want to lose weight. If you are actively trying to lower your BMI (Body Mass Index) in preparation for fertility treatment or if you are just watching your weight, Figs are very useful to include in your diet as they are high in fibre and help to keep you feeling full.

Prevents hypertension: When you eat more salt, the level of sodium in your body increases. This disturbs the sodium-potassium balance and in turn results in hypertension. Anjeer is an ideal fruit to restore this balance. One dried Fig gives you 129mg of potassium and just 2mg of sodium. This helps prevent hypertension.

Rich in antioxidants: Dried Figs are rich in antioxidants. A study suggested that processed, dried Figs are superior to natural Figs when it comes to antioxidants. The study also mentions that dried Figs have superior quality of antioxidants, called phenols, compared to other fruits that attribute their antioxidant property to vitamin C and E.



Prevents heart disease: The high levels of antioxidants in dried Figs help to eliminate free radicals that can damage blood vessels and result in heart disease. And, as mentioned earlier, they prevent hypertension, a huge risk factor for development of coronary heart disease (CHD).

Prevents cancer: Antioxidant-rich dried Figs also help in preventing cellular DNA damage due to free radicals that can make a cell cancerous.

Good for diabetes: The high fibre content in Figs makes them good for people with diabetes. However, dried Figs are high in sugar content. So you should consult a diabetologist about the quantity of dried Figs you can consume. It is not just the fruit of this tree that is useful for diabetic patients even their leaves have insulin lowering properties.

Cures iron-deficiency anaemia: Dried Figs are a rich source of iron. One dried Fig can give you 2% of your daily iron requirement. Iron is an important mineral that carries haemoglobin throughout your body. So eating anjeer is a natural way to raise your haemoglobin levels indirectly by increasing the levels of iron in your body.

Improves reproductive health: According to ancient literature, the Greeks used Fig as a natural aphrodisiac. Figs were considered sacred fruit and were closely associated with fertility and love. Scientifically, Figs improve fertility and libido because they are loaded with minerals like zinc, manganese and magnesium which play an important role in boosting reproductive health ♦

Ayurveda Desk



MORINGA Tree: A Storehouse of Minerals

This is a tree that grows in the wild, often unnoticed and disregarded. Have we ever been told that this is a store house of minerals, proteins and highly nutritious? It's high time we take this tree seriously and include all parts of it in our daily diets. Here's about the goodness of the Moringa tree that will not allow you to take this tree for granted anymore.

Meet the Moringa tree known for its unique value to feed poor and undernourished populations of the dry land tropics, especially in an era of climate change. If cultivated in large scale this tree could become a staple food source in the dry tropical regions all over the world. The tree is known to survive profusely in hot and dry conditions and is known for its several properties like tenacious, resilient, versatile, generous and flat-out eccentric. Nothing else in the plant kingdom can be compared to the nutritional benefits of this tree.

Although the Moringa is neither striped nor candy-colored, it does bear a certain resemblance to the Truffula tree, with its smooth, skinny trunk and affably chaotic branches, which protrude like hands waving hello. And not only does it succeed in harsh conditions, it also grows weed-fast—about a foot per month, to a height of as much as 20ft. Moringa oleifera, the most commonly farmed species, is a nutritional Swiss Army knife: it produces edible leaves that are unusually rich in protein, iron, calcium, nine essential amino acids, and Vitamins A, B, and C. Its seedpods, which are as thick as the meaty part of a drumstick and about a foot long, are also high in protein and omega-3 fatty acids.

It is also found that the leaves and pods of this tree have strong anti-inflammatory and anti-diabetic properties, and may also contain enzymes that protect against cancer. Mature Moringa seeds can be pressed for vegetable oil, and the seed cake that is left over can be used to purify drinking water. (It contains a protein that makes bacteria glom together and die.) When dried, crushed seeds can also serve as a good fertilizer.

In India, where Moringa was first domesticated, two thousand years ago, the pods are commonly used in a popular dish called *sambhar,* which subdues their flavor in a rich gravy.

It is termed by many as a famine food and a last resort. Off late, the Moringa tree is gaining more popularity among wealthy, Western super-food enthusiasts than among the underserved populations of the dry tropics. Powdered Moringa leaves have become a trendy ingredient in power bars and smoothies in recent years. The Moringa tree is also now termed as a "miracle tree" and a "supergreen," plant due to its high nutritional value.

Although there is very little data on this plant to support its nutritional claims , its qualities does rival or exceed that of milk, yogurt, and eggs. Another interesting observation of this plant is that when we look at the maps of the areas in the world where Moringa grows, and then at maps where populations are undernourished, it's amazing to see that they almost exactly overlap. And, considering the pressures of climate change, this correlation is predicted to strengthen in the coming decades.

Many of the tree's practical challenges can be solved by breeding a more genetically consistent, user-friendly variety—selecting for milder flavor and maximum protein and vitamin content, for heartier leaves and more tender stems.

The tree is also well-known for its mechanisms for harnessing and storing groundwater, and for moving water into its leaves. This research may help climate scientists and forest ecologists to understand how other trees will and could behave in increasingly water-scarce conditions. Finally if not for anything this tree may hold a key to surviving the hotter, drier days to come.

Source: Ayurveda Research Team



TOMATOES:
A Natural Fertility Booster

Ever heard about tomato being a natural fertility booster? If yes, then you are right. Studies have pointed out that eating plenty of tomatoes enriches one's body with the powerful antioxidant, lycopene. Lycopene has great beneficial effects on male fertility and helps to protect the developing sperm from free radical damage and possible DNA damage. Also, a diet rich in tomatoes can elevate sperm count, morphology, motility and concentration for men who struggle from a low sperm count.

In women, it is seen that lycopene maybe useful in reducing the abnormal activity of cells and as a result may reduce the adhesion effects of endometriosis (is a disorder in which the tissue that forms the lining of your uterus grows outside of your uterine cavity). One of the major complications of endometriosis is that it causes inflammation which induces adhesions. The inflammation basically causes scarring. Lycopene works to reduce the abnormal activity of these cells. Thus, lycopene helps to reduce the adhesion effects of endometriosis.

Cooked tomatoes release more lycopene from the cell walls of the tomato when compared to raw tomato. Also, roasting tomatoes and making sauces and soups is the best way to get the maximum intake of lycopene. Lycopene is also fat-soluble, so for maximum absorption olive oil can be added to it when cooking them. Other good food sources of lycopene are pink grapefruit, watermelon, guava and rosehip.

Also, fresh ripe tomatoes have a considerably- high lycopene content than that of under ripe tomatoes. Imported tomatoes are also not as fresh as one might think since they are believed to have travelled great distance. Also, cooking meals using tomato puree has a lower water content than fresh tomato and hence the nutrients here are more concentrated. In recent studies it has been discovered that lycopene is more bioavailable from tomato paste than from fresh tomatoes.

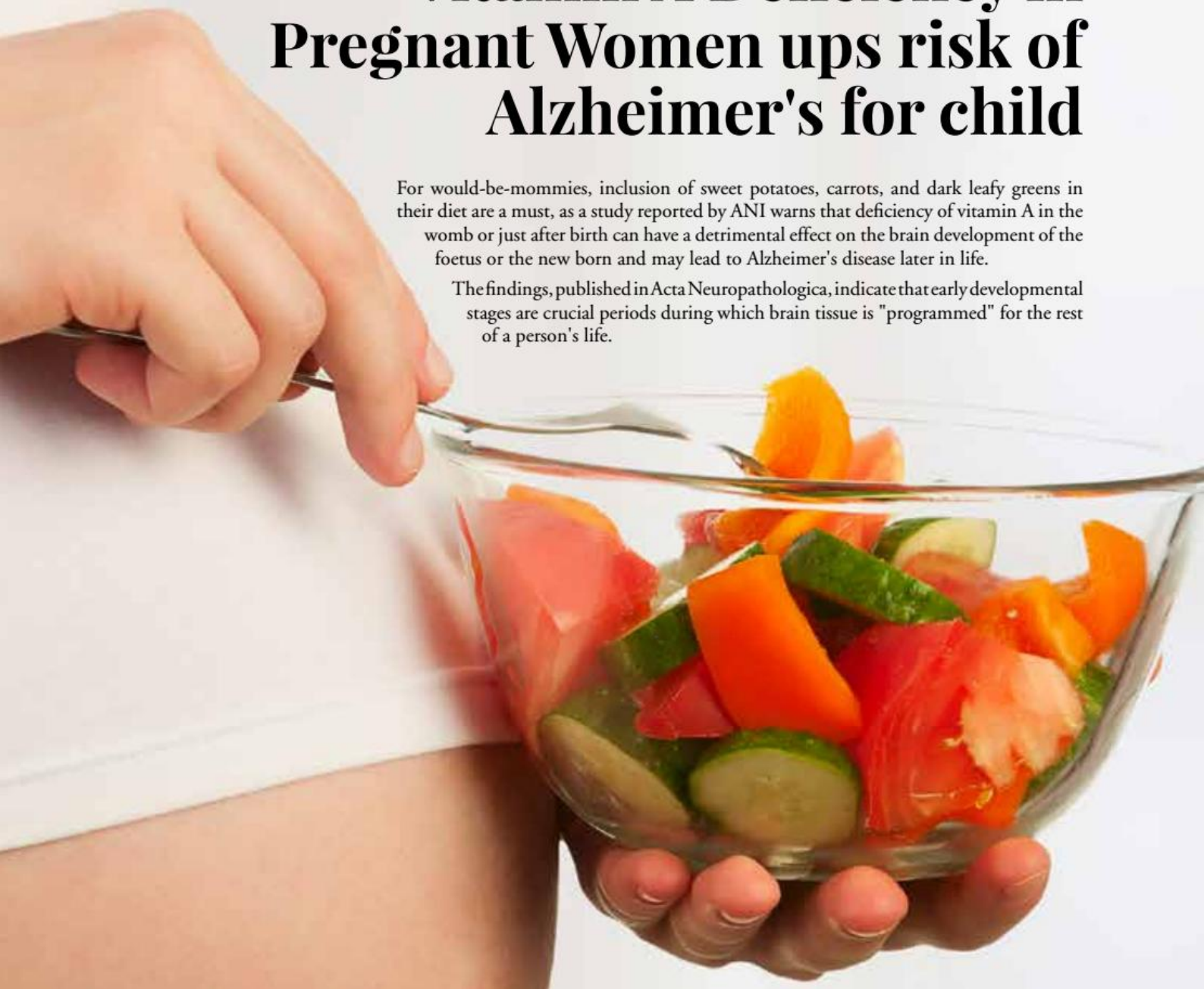
Tomato is known as the love apple, pomaamoris or pomme d'amour depending on region. Red in color with sweet, tangy flesh, it became the perfect symbol for the aphrodisiac qualities of food. The tomato has been linked to the Garden of Eden. Some even call it the "other" forbidden fruit. It earned a place on the brethren's list of forbidden dishes, along with any other food that put into question the ability of lust-filled young members of the church to maintain self-control.



Vitamin A Deficiency in Pregnant Women ups risk of Alzheimer's for child

For would-be-mommies, inclusion of sweet potatoes, carrots, and dark leafy greens in their diet are a must, as a study reported by ANI warns that deficiency of vitamin A in the womb or just after birth can have a detrimental effect on the brain development of the foetus or the new born and may lead to Alzheimer's disease later in life.

The findings, published in Acta Neuropathologica, indicate that early developmental stages are crucial periods during which brain tissue is "programmed" for the rest of a person's life.



According to researchers from the University of British Columbia genetically-engineered mice, also demonstrate that supplements given to new borns with low levels of vitamin A could be effective in slowing the degenerative brain disease.

"Our study clearly shows that marginal deficiency of vitamin A, even as early as in pregnancy, has a detrimental effect on brain development and has long-lasting effect that may facilitate Alzheimer's disease in later life," said Dr. Weihong Song.

The study also included new evidence in humans of the vitamin A-dementia connection in later years.

Pregnant women in particular should not take excessive vitamin A supplements. A balanced diet is the best way to ensure adequate levels of the nutrient.

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Get rid of DARK CIRCLES naturally



Dark circles around the eyes have become part and parcel of the lives of many youths now-a-days. Stress, accompanied by high demanding jobs, is one of the many reasons for this. As with a solution to all problems, here are a few home-made remedies for dark circles. Try it, to feel the difference.



Almond Oil

A completely natural ingredient that benefits skin around your eyes, almond oil helps lighten dark circles. Combine almond oil with vitamin E oil and your dark circles will be history. Plus, these ingredients should really be something which are a staple in every household.

Usage

- Before hitting the sack, apply some almond oil over your dark circles and massage it gently into the skin.
- Leave the oil on overnight.
- Wash it off with cold water next morning.
- Repeat this every day until your dark circles are gone.

Cucumber

Remember those Hollywood movies where women are seen relaxing at a spa with cucumber slices on their eyes? Well, there's a reason beyond gloss. With skin-lightening and mild astringent properties, cucumbers are completely equipped to fix those raccoon eyes. Better yet, they are soothing and refreshing too.

Usage

- Cut a fresh cucumber into thick slices and chill it for about 30 minutes.
- Place the slices on the dark circles for about 10 minutes.
- Wash the area thoroughly with water.
- Repeat this process twice a day for one week to see results.

Raw Potato

Potatoes contain vital natural bleaching agents and when used raw, they help lighten dark circles and reduce excess puffiness around your eyes.

Usage

- Grate a couple of chilled potatoes to extract the juice.
- Soak a cotton ball in the juice and place it on your closed eyes.
- Make sure the juice covers the dark circles entirely.
- Allow the juice to sit for about 15 minutes and rinse your eyelids well with cool water.
- Repeat once or twice daily for 2 - 3 weeks to see results.

Rose Water

- There's a reason mothers always advise their children to rinse their eyes with Rose Water when they're sore. It not only rejuvenates skin and reduces dark circles but also has a soothing effect on tired eyes. Due to its mild astringent properties, it also works well as a skin toner.

Usage

- Soak cotton eye pads in rose water for a few minutes.
- Place the soaked pads on your closed eyelids.
- Leave them on for about 15 minutes.
- Follow this remedy twice daily for 2 - 3 weeks to see results.

Tomato

- Tomato, the fruit that's used like a vegetable, is known to naturally possess powerful bleaching properties that can lighten skin very effectively.

Usage

- Mix one teaspoon of tomato juice with one and a half teaspoon of lemon juice.
- Gently apply this mixture on your dark circles and allow it to sit for 10 minutes.
- Rinse it off well with cool water.
- Follow this remedy twice a day for 2 - 3 weeks to see results.

- They say. "A person travels the entire world in search of something that he ultimately finds at home". So don't go looking elsewhere for expensive cures to dark circles, they're all right there in your kitchen.

Source: rewardme.in

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SCIENCE OF HEALTHY SLEEP IN CHILDREN

Sleep is an inevitable physiological process in human life. Children require more hours of sleep compared to grown–ups. Most parents are aware of this fact but are ignorant about the necessity of increased hours of sleep and also the total hours of sleep that are scientifically required. Through this article ***Dr. Shyny Thankachan*** *takes our readers through a journey of the necessity of healthy sleep in children and the science behind it.*



According to poets, sleep is the sweetest thing in the world, but if its balance is not maintained one could face adverse effects. Apart from adults, sleep is very necessary and crucial in children. Adequate sleep in children influences proper growth, physical and mental functioning of a child whereas inadequate sleep leads to physical and mental fatigue. For proper brain development during childhood sufficient sleep is necessary.

Usually, the sleep of a person is controlled by circadian rhythm or sleep-wake cycle. It depends on the falling of light over retina of the eyes. In children, this circadian rhythm attains development within 6 weeks after birth. Hence, it is better not to interfere with the sleep of newborn babies for upto 6 weeks of age. Thus, new- born babies usually sleep 10–18 hours a day which can be slightly varied depending on the frequency of breast feeding, defecation and micturition.

Usually an adult passes through a series of sleep stages that can be classified into the following two stages:-

1. NREM Sleep (Non Rapid Eye Movement)
2. REM Sleep (Rapid Eye Movement)

In childhood we can simply classify this into Quiet Sleep (NREM Sleep) and Active Sleep (REM Sleep).

These two stages occur at regular intervals. A person is said to fall asleep first with Non-REM Sleep, followed by a shorter period of REM Sleep, and this cycle is known to repeat. Each of these stages comprises 50% of their sleep in new born babies. Duration of each stage is about 50 minutes.That means a new born baby spends about 7- 9 hours a day in REM sleep. Gradually by 6 months, REM sleep comprises about 30% of total sleep. By the age of 5 years sleep cycle duration becomes 90 minutes and the child spends about 2 hours in REM sleep.

NREM Sleep (Non Rapid Eye Movement)/ Quiet Sleep: This is the first stage of sleep. This period is characterized by decreased body temperature, heart rate, breathing rate and energy use. At this time there is an increased supply of blood to the muscles, energy is restored and growth and repair of the tissues of the body takes place. At this time, there is an increased release of growth hormone in children.

REM Sleep (Rapid Eye Movement) /Active Sleep: NREM stage of sleep is followed by REM Sleep. During this stage eyes move back and forth rapidly,heart rate, breathing rate and body temperature become unregulated, muscles become paralyzed (muscles become prepared for activities but body remains inconsistent). Dreams typically occur during REM sleep. Functioning of the brain is increased in this stage. It collects the glimpses of events of that day and stores as memories in this stage of sleep. Hence proper memory depends on sound REM Sleep. Then afterwards the person again enters into NREM Sleep.

Sound sleep in children boost their memory power, physical activities and ability to perform. Children who get proper sleep are found to excel in educational and social fields. This pronounces the necessity of healthy sleep in childhood that parents should be aware of.

According to Ayurveda, nidra /sleep is one of the triopasthamba (3 pillars) which supports physical and mental well-being. Nidra is a process which recreates and refreshes the body and mind. Thus it provides energy, strength, physical and mental well-being for the body.

Ayurveda says sleep occurs when the mind becomes thamoadhikya or body becomes kaphadhikya or both, associated with inactiveness of indriyas (sense organs). It is a temporary withdrawal stage from all the universal process.

Sleep is produced by tamoguna and kaphadosha. In childhood kaphadosha is predominant. Because of the predominance of kaphadosha in childhood sleep is relatively more, which is very essential for the growth and development. So practice healthy sleep culture from the childhood itself. Ayurveda says, early to bed and early to rise provides good health and longevity.



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INFERTILITY: Stop blaming women always

Infertility is an issue affecting couples spanning centuries. As before, even today, society blames the reason for infertility on women. Even in case the problem is with the men, it is usually a highly guarded secret and is often hushed behind closed doors.

Life has always been partial especially in the case of women. Jst after few days into marriage a woman is bombarded with questions on whether she has conceived and is qualified enough for procreation. If the answer is affirmative, she is lauded and made a fuss of. If not, she is pressurised to go fertile soon disregarding the plans the couple have about when they should go fertile. In case she fails to get fertile soon, she is very soon dubbed as infertile.

And even among all this drama, if she gives birth to a little angel the story suddenly takes another twist. The birth of a girl child as before is often considered a bad omen in certain parts of the world. And the blame for this automatically goes to the women and the men are usually not seen within this frame at all.

Here, we are not trying to mud sling at each other but would like to bring to notice the basic fact that affects society. It is a true fact that society has always been fair to men. At least in some cases.

This is a fact that has been accepted since ages and even though much has been done to tear this apart, very little progress has been made to make sure that women shares an equal space with men.

Actually, a lot should be blamed on the male-female hormone. This is what makes a man different from women and this is what dispels the notion that man can never be equal to women however hard one tries and vice-versa. This a manufacturing problem designed by the SUPREME and very little can be done to change this fact. These so called hormones decide what men and women are efficient at. And if take into consideration the action of these hormones we can conclude that women are good at certain things which men are not. So, it is their team work that usually results in many wonders. The world itself is the result of their togetherness and there no bigger miracle that has happened in this world.

The world is also seen to be progressing due to their union of mind and body. Procreation has been one of the biggest mysteries of life itself.

It is somehow sad to note that despite the fact that women possess such angelic qualities of forbearance, submissiveness and other qualities to love and take care of the family, she is often ostracised and abused. Her vulnerability, which is one her greatest asset is often misused and manipulated. Her courage in times of desperation is highly noteworthy. She stretches her abilities beyond her capacity level in order to be there for her kith and kin. She is often so sacrificial and this is one of the biggest reasons that hold her family together. She can be often compared to a female dog when it comes to her children. As in case of everything in this case too there can be exceptions. We cannot conclude that all women are like the above.

But the burden on today's women has made her life highly demanding. She stretches herself beyond her capacity. She is expected to be domestic and at the same time a career woman. She juggles many roles and this is seen to exhaust her soon. She should be given allowance at work and at home. Earlier we lived in a society that respected women and treated them as equal to God. They were revered and considered sacred. Today, this datum is changing and now she is spied, hunted down and abused so that her confidence takes a toll. But most women today shows extraordinary courage and goes on to survive even the most painful situations with a smile on her face. Their attitudes make us believe that they are truly one of the most beautiful, mysterious and fascinating creations of God.

So, it is cruel to even hurt them with a wrong look. Let us thus not blame the women alone for all problems especially infertility. Let us accept the fact that sometimes the man is also a reason for infertility issues. This is not something to be ashamed of as this is just a disorder that can be easily treated. Ayurveda's remedial solutions for infertility are vast and covers both the sexes. It is also interesting to note that some of the ancient Ayurveda texts discussed male infertility more that female infertility. Through this we may conclude that infertility was more a male problem than a female, at least years back.

Nīnu Susan Abraham
Editorial Co-ordinator



A BOON FOR AYURVEDA PATIENTS

In a country like India where a large part of the society still depends on Ayurveda for various ailments, the central government decision to include the ancient treatment system under insurance coverage is a great boon for the patients as well as the industry. ***Dr. D. Induchoodan****– who is trying for insurance coverage to Ayurvedic treatments for several years and was part of its official deliberations– Convener, Treatment Standardisation Committee, AHMA, looks at the major features of the insurance guidelines*



The Ayurveda community at large and the citizens of India have been demanding for the inclusion of Ayurvedic treatments under Health Insurance coverage for a long time. Large to small Ayurveda hospitals have also been demanding and trying for this approval for several years through their organisation - Ayurveda Hospital Management Association (AHMA). However, the personalised treatment approach of Ayurveda was the main barrier for inclusion of its treatments under insurance coverage. Because of that approach, treatments for the same disease in different individuals are variable and thus also the cost. Hence, the difficulties in standardising treatment costs in such individualised but highly effective treatment discouraged and prevented insurance firms from calculating total expense, developing insurance premiums and designing policies. Unhelpful skepticism about the curative aspects and misbranding of Ayurvedic therapies under wellness treatments in the society also added to these problems.

There were some efforts in this direction few years before itself. Under the initiative of Department of AYUSH with active involvement of Ayurveda Hospital Management Association (AHMA), I, as its Treatment Standardisation committee convener had prepared a treatment protocol and costing method for Ayurvedic treatments for its inclusion under Insurance coverage. It was unanimously approved by the meeting of Ayurveda Hospitals convened by AHMA followed by its submission to Department of AYUSH by AHMA General Secretary Dr. Babykrishnan and its presentation in General Insurance Council in the same year. Even though IRDA suggested for the inclusion of Ayurvedic treatments under insurance coverage in 2013, since different insurance firms insisted various conditions, Ayurvedic community was not able to obtain the required benefits.

AHMA continued its struggle through all possible ways to avail the benefit to patients taking treatments in all Ayurveda hospitals. When existing Central Govt. under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi formed a separate AYUSH Ministry to focus on the development and promotion of AYUSH systems, AHMA channelised the follow- up through that. AHMA officials met AYUSH Minister Shripad Yasso Naik, explained the details and submitted the request. The Minister assured them to take necessary action.

Realising the significance of inclusion of AYUSH systems under insurance coverage, Ministry of AYUSH contacted various stakeholders and convened a meeting on 12th July 2016 under the Chairmanship of AYUSH Secretary Ajit M.Sharan to discuss and consolidate AYUSH information document for the same. This author was also invited for the meeting considering AHMA's & his personal activities for this purpose earlier. The modified treatment protocol with updated treatment rates (considering expenses in 2016) submitted by the author to AYUSH was accepted by the stakeholders in this meeting.

Ministry of AYUSH on 30th September 2016 released the 'Guidelines for reimbursement/settlement of Ayurvedic treatment expenditure claims under insurance coverage' which includes criteria of eligible hospitals for insurance coverage, tentative list of diseases/disease conditions needing hospitalisation of the patients, indicative therapies and likely duration of hospitalisation and benchmark costing of Ayurvedic therapies/interventions. etc.

Major features of the guideline:

Eligible Hospitals:

1 Central or state Govt. Hospitals

2 NABH Accredited Ayurvedic Hospitals

3 Teaching hospitals attached to Ayurvedic colleges recognised by Central Government/ Central Council of Indian Medicine

4 Ayurvedic hospitals having registration with a Government Authority under appropriate Act in a State/ UT, minimum fifteen beds, minimum five qualified and registered Ayurvedic Doctors, adequate number of qualified paramedical staff, dedicated Ayurveda therapy sections and daily maintenance of medical records.

Tentative list of diseases/disease conditions needing Hospitalisation

Twenty well recognised and properly described disease categories in Ayurveda and known to respond well to

Ayurvedic treatment are included in this proposed protocol and costing. Diseases like Greeva Sthambha (Cervical spondylosis, Cervical disc prolapse etc.), Kateegraha (Low Back Ache..etc) and Gridhrasi (Sciatica etc), Apabahuka & Viswachi (Frozen Shoulder, Brachial Neuralgia etc), Pakshaghata (Paralysis, Hemiplegia etc), Kampavata (Neuro-spastic conditions etc), Ardita (Facial Paralysis..etc), Vataraktha & Kroshtukasheersha (Rheumatiod Arthritis..etc) Amavata (Rheumatic fever etc.), Sarvanga vata & Supthi (Motor-Neuron diseases, Fibromyalgia etc.), Sandhigatavata & Vathakandakam (Degenerative Joint disorders, Tennis elbow, Calcaneal spur), Twak Vikara (Skin diseases, Psoriasis, Eczema.. etc), Visarpa (Cellulitis, Erisepelus..etc), Grandhi & Arbuda (Benign & Malignant Growths..etc), Arsha, Bhagandara & Parikarthika (Hemorrhoid, Fistula in Ano, Fissure in Ano..etc), Nadeevrana (Pilonoidal Sinus etc.), Moothraghata, Moothrakruchra & Asmari (Renal dysfunction, Renal/ Urinary calculi etc.), Arthava dushti, Kashtarthava, Kruchrarthava, Yonee roga & Rakthapradara (Amenorrhoea, Dysmenorrhoea, DUB, PCOD/PCOS.. etc), Mamsagata Vikara & Mamsakshaya (Muscular dystrophy..etc), Drishti Dosha (Refractive errors, Chronic allergic & inflammatory diseases, Chronic conjunctivitis, Dry eye syndrome, Retinitis pigmentosa, Night blindness, Retinopathy etc.), Sirasoola, Sooryavartham & Ardhavabhedakam (Headache, Migraine..etc), Swasa roga & Kasaroga (C.O.P.D, Bronchial Asthma.. etc), Abhighataja Vikara (Restricted movements due to fracture/dislocation etc) are included. This provides clarity for hospitals, patients and insurance firms about the extent of insurance coverage for Ayurvedic treatments.

Clinical conditions for hospitalisation

The clinical symptom of each disease category which necessitates In-patient admission is clearly defined. This helps to ensure the truly essential clinical conditions for I.P.D admission and to avoid unnecessary I.P.D admission & fraudulent insurance claims.

Indicated therapies required as per condition of the patient.

List of therapies for each disease category is specified which helps the physicians, patients and insurance firms to avoid disputes regarding the significance of particular therapy for a specific disease.

Duration of hospitalisation

Normal duration of hospitalisation for each category of disease is also mentioned which helps the patients to get insurance claims for their total treatments days satisfying this criteria. At the same time, it helps the insurance firms to avoid false/exaggerated claims.

Benchmark costing of Ayurvedic therapies/interventions

Cost of 97 therapy procedures/interventions (per session) is specified. The rate includes cost of materials, medicines, accessories, equipments maintenance and manpower



(medical, paramedical and nursing) used in imparting therapies except room rent of the hospitalisation. Room rent shall be chargeable as per insurance company/insurance policy norms. Pre & post procedure cost will be chargeable @ Rs 75 per day. Twenty five percentage hike of the benchmark rates shall be applicable for the treatment taken in NABH accredited hospital or if the hospital is located in metropolitan city. The benchmark rates shall be considered for revision in every three years if required.

National and global impact

Inclusion of Ayurveda under insurance coverage is the victory of a team work. AYUSH Minister. Shripad Yasso Naik, Government officials, especially- A.M.Sharan (Secretary-AYUSH), A.K.Ganeriwala (Joint Secretary-AYUSH), P.N.Ranjith Kumar (Joint Secretary –AYUSH), Dr.D.C.Katoch (Advisor Ay.–AYUSH), Dr.Pradeep Kumar Dua Research officer (Ay) – AYUSH, Dr.Janardan Pandey (Former Joint Advisor –AYUSH), Dr.S.K.Sharma (Former Advisor –AYUSH) ..etc, Ayurveda Hospital Management Association, industrial leaders like Dr.P.M.Varier (Kottakkal Arya Vaidyasala), eminent physicians like Dr.S.G.Ramesh Varier (Kottakkal Arya Vaidya Sala)..etc had taken great efforts at different stages to obtain this great achievement.



Dr.Muhammed Bappu, Dr.Sanal Kurinjikkattil, Dr.Rahmathulla, Dr.Anwar, Dr.B.G.Gokulan, Dr.C.S.Krishnakumar (Nagarjuna), Dr.I.Unnikrishnan Namboothiri, …etc from industrial side supported this activity well. From this it is clear that if Ayurvedic experts, concerned associations and officials stand together, great victories are possible even in future.

In a country like India where a large part of the society still depends on Ayurveda for various ailments, this is a high-impact decision. Since the costs of Ayurvedic treatments for specific diseases are comparatively less, it may be financially helpful for insurance firms in this "era of insurance for all". Additionally, since several Ayurvedic treatments offer preventive benefits (through cleansing of the system through panchakarma… etc) along with its intended curative results, chances of other diseases decreases while being treated for one disease and hence the chances of further insurance claims also decreases.

If the possibility of this important decision is correctly utilised, it can contribute much to the Medical Value Travel (Medical Tourism) sector in India. As far as global scenario is concerned, a perfect insurance Protocol – satisfying Ayurvedic science & insurance norms- can be considered as inevitable for extending and promoting Ayurveda in those countries where insurance coverage is essential for a Medical system to survive.

Suggestions:

Total costs of individual diseases to be covered are essential for insurance firms to introduce new policies since they need that cost to fix premium and to design the policy. Considering this necessity of insurance sector, protocol submitted by AHMA had included that also which is missing in the published Guideline. Hence, to get more insurance policies from insurance sector to Ayurveda, that part also to be included.

Maybe unknowingly, some discrepancies occurred in the eligibility criteria of Hospitals. That is- since the number of Doctors, criteria of qualified paramedical staff, number of beds.. etc in private hospitals (mentioned in section 'd' under Eligible hospitals) is more complex than criteria for NABH accreditation (which is considered as the standard of quality) and since NABH accredited hospitals are made eligible without these terms, conditions for NABH accreditation regd. this points to be made applicable to other hospitals also.



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SWITZERLAND:

Role model for the globalisation of Ayurveda as a medical system



The globalisation of Ayurveda for sustainable global health has been the vision of the members of the Indo-Swiss Ayurveda Foundation (ISA) ever since the beginning of the process. It materialises today in the form of a regulatory model that eases the institutionalisation of Ayurveda as a medical system in other countries, writes ***Dr. Simone Hunziker***

Ayurveda is based on probably the finest knowledge system that humanity ever knew, the Veda. It is rooted in the fundamental principles of the most elaborate philosophical concepts of universal value that transcend time and space: the Darshana. Here rational and material approaches go naturally alongside with subtle realities and concepts. Ayurveda understands the human being as an inseparable entity of body, mind and spirit and as the microcosm made of the same constituent elements and ruled by the same functional principles and laws than the macrocosm of which it is an integral part. Not only does it protect the natural and social environment but can contribute to restore imbalances at a macro-level.

Ayurveda's potential in the field of preventive medicine has for long been identified and acknowledged but what about its curative potential?

Internationally and in India, Ayurveda has so far been mainly developed in the fields of wellness, tourism, esotericism and beauty. The New-Age movement followed world over by the Wellness era has naturally absorbed Ayurveda in their ideological and commercial spread without ever developing Ayurveda's full potential as a medical system for the sake of global health.

Ayurveda naturally addresses most of the global health needs: it is based on primary care, prevention, root cause treatment

and eco-friendliness. It understands the pathological processes underlying metabolic, chronic degenerative and immune related diseases and disposes of tools for early diagnoses and treatment.

Be it merely the successful treatments of discus hernia, avoiding spine surgery, of dis-obstruction of coronaries after a myocardial infarction, preventing from relapses or of various rheumatological diseases getting cured or stabilised, Ayurveda's medical potential to address global health issues is substantial.

Yet today, it is still rare to find Ayurveda practitioners trained in Ayurveda medicine in the west and generally outside India. Ayurvedic medicines are sold as food supplements and cosmetics instead of as therapeutic products. This is a serious loss for mankind's global health capital and while it is a generally accepted fact that modern western medicine does not hold the keys for sustainable global health, the considerable potential of Ayurveda in both specific preventive and curative medicine need to be developed and become accessible outside India in a meaningful model of integrated medicine, where Ayurveda is practiced in its full span as a complete medical system.

Switzerland has since 2005 offered a platform for the regulation of Ayurveda in government recognised professions and the Swiss Ayurveda community has ever since been instrumental in creating a role model for the institutionalisation of Ayurveda in the West.

Ayurveda being recognised in Switzerland, known as a global trend setter, for having the highest standards in medicine, education and safety, and for being home to European pharma industries, the door has been opened for Ayurveda to be recognised in any other country.

In 2016 the Government of India has recognised the Swiss regulatory model for the spread of Ayurveda as a medical system.

Milestones

1996: The Swiss Supreme Court decided that traditional medical systems do not need to have any proof of efficacy not just according to criteria of modern medicine but with regard to their own system.

2009: Switzerland, through a popular vote, had become the first and so far only country in the West to recognise Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) in its public health system.

2010: WHO has published the benchmarks for professional training in Ayurveda.

2005-15: the Swiss government has created two new professions for CAM which are compliant with WHO benchmarks and which will be reimbursed by complementary insurances

2015: Ayurveda has become the first and so far only discipline of traditional and complementary medicine to be recognised in both professions, namely Ayurveda Medicine and Ayurveda Therapy.

2015: The Swiss law on therapeutic products has been revised and voted by the parliament to give simplified access to therapeutic products.

What remains to be done is to bring a selected range of Ayurvedic therapeutic products in the market and the Government of India is ready to collaborate in the process. While clinical research projects between Swiss and Indian prime institutions are in the pipeline the recognition of Ayurveda as a specialisation of physicians in "Complementary Medicine" reimbursed by basic insurances would be the ultimate goal.

The globalisation of Ayurveda for sustainable global health has been the vision of the members of the Indo-Swiss Ayurveda Foundation (ISA) ever since the beginning of the process. It materialises today in the form of a regulatory model that eases the institutionalisation of Ayurveda as a medical system in other countries.

The unique values of this regulatory system reside in the fact that it respects the founding principles of Ayurveda and the rules of clinical practice from antiquity till recent times.

Ayurveda medicines do not have to be sold as food supplements or cosmetics anymore but are recognised as therapeutic products.

For the sake of patient safety, therapists trained in Ayurveda therapy who, in the Western context work independently, have well defined competences with regard to their training, knowledge and skills. Their role is clearly distinct from wellness practitioners on one hand and to medical practitioners on the other.

After a 3 -year part- time training program with a federal diploma, they contribute through simple massage techniques from Svasthavrtta (prevention in Ayurveda) as well as through elaborate individualised coaching in nutrition, lifestyle and psychological support to restoring and maintaining the health of the population. They play an important role in the health awareness development of the modern society. If associated with an Ayurveda doctor or a practitioner in Ayurveda medicine, they can under the supervision of the latter practice all Ayurveda medical treatment techniques.

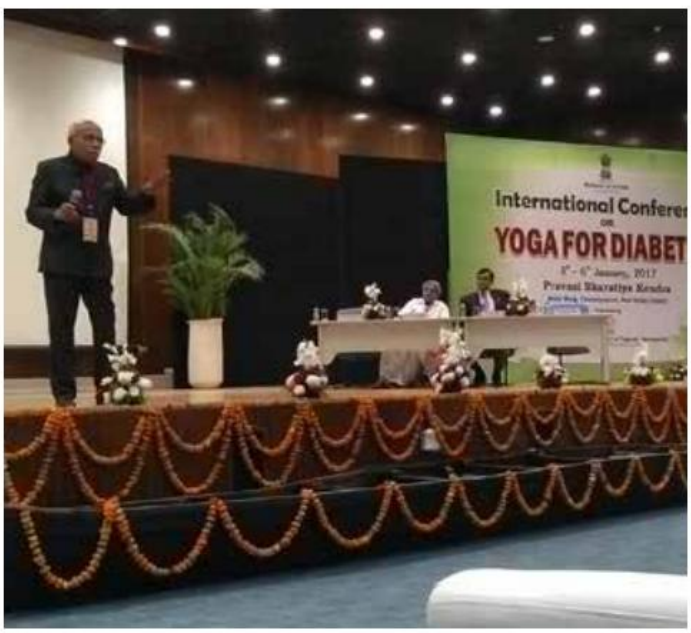
Safe foundations have been laid for Ayurveda to be recognised in public health systems around the world which will allow Ayurveda to make its unique contribution to sustainable global health.



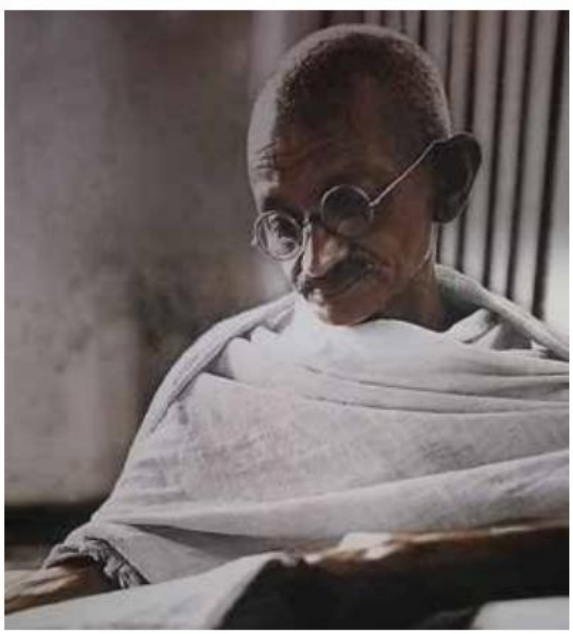
Dr. Simone Hunziker Founding President
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SAMA-Swiss Ayurvedic Medical Academy

OF EVENTS, Ayurveda and infertility

By Dr. Madan Thangavelu Ph.D









Yoga and Ayurveda events in 2017

Two recent events of some significance resonate with themes presented in the past issues of Ayurveda & Health Tourism. The first International Conference on Yoga for Diabetes – 4 to 6 January was held at the Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra, New Delhi, ahead of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, 9 January2017 (https://pbdindia.gov.in/). Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is a day of celebrations to commemorate the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to Bombay on 9 January 1915 and also to mark the role and contribution of the overseas Indian community to India's development. Ayurveda was celebrated again at the 75th Annual Conference of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Latvia. The full day of events saw presentations from Joint Secretary, PN Ranjit Kumar of the Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India, New Delhi. The session on Integrative Medicine started with the book release of the Latvian translation of Asthanga Hridaya – one of the three major classics of Ayurveda (details are at: http://www.mf.lu.lv/zinas/t/44622/). Ayurveda followers and practitioners in Europe will have another opportunity to share their knowledge and experiences. London, in April will host The International Ayurveda Congress, 1 – 2 April 2017 (internationalayurvedacongress.com/).



Ayurveda and infertility

After the Yoga for Diabetes Congress in January at New Delhi, I had the opportunity to visit Jaipur – briefly the National Institute of Ayurveda and also to meet some Ayurveda stalwarts. My hosts, Drs. Pardeep Sharma, an Ayurveda Vaidya and an alumnus of the National Institute of Ayurveda and Vinay Sharma, a PhD in Ethanopharmacology & Medicinal Plants from Gujarat Ayurved University, Jamnagar. The Sharma's have over many years developed a very successful specialisation for treatment and management of spinal disorders in particular Ayurveda and Yoga for disc prolapses (Sukhayu Ayurveda: sukhayuayurved.com/). The evidence the Sharma's have gathered over the years' points clearly how in many instances one can recover from a prolapsed disc, a spinal disc herniation, without surgery. Ayurveda vaidyas in many locations across the country offer relief and cure for many cases of the above and the work in Jaipur confirms it.



During my visit I was also introduced to a 29-year old man who had come for spine-related treatment but was also diagnosed with idiopathic infertility.The results I saw was fascinating! Changes observed over as little as four weeks were almost like magic: sperm count improved from nothing to 2 million between 24 October 2016 to 25 November 2016. This number more than doubled over the following four weeks. The evidence that sperm counts could be improved from nil to 5 million per ml over an eight-week treatment and a deeper biology between sperm county and sperm biology was further supported by sperm motility scores; sperm motility scores which was 0% is now up to 10% and perhaps enough for the couple to conceive. The "sperm midpiece" is a store house of mitochondria and powers sperm motility. In this instance the data points to an error that improves both spermatogenesis and also motility perhaps mediated by some error in mitochondrial dynamics during spermatogenesis. The treatment continues and Vaidya Sharma is confident that the couple will soon conceive!

In my exchanges with Vaidya Pardeep Sharma I could gather his vision and thinking. In brief, ... many case of infertility can be viewed as a nutritional disorder. "If we follow this approach with "balanced fat intake" for harmonized production of, for instance, corticosteroid hormones and related factors, we can solve this, ..." says Vaidya Sharma. Traditionally, Trivanga Bhasma, a herbometallic preparation containing bhasmas of Naga (lead), Vanga (tin) and Yashada (zinc) is used in the treatment of impotency, diabetes, urinary disorders, infertility and leucorrhea. That there could be a link between zinc and idiopathic male infertility is based on overt evidence of diminished zinc in seminal fluid samples. About zinc as an important micronutrient and as a co-factor in many important protiens, this from my exchanges with Vaidya Pardeep Sharma:

"When Sir Aaron Klug (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aaron_Klug) and his team here at the Medical Research

Council Laboratory of Molecular Biology in Cambridge made these early discoveries of zinc-binding proteins, I was just a very young and a very enthusiastic PhD student fascinated and amazed by how they discovered such amazing aspects of biology. I never knew much about Ayurveda then nor there will ever be a link with Ayurveda and rasashastra. And now, three decades later, we know that zinc-binding proteins are involved in so many crucial functions particularly as zinc-finger containing transcription factors that control gene activity. And even more fascinating is what you have provided - which suggests that rasashastra and the rasa principles of Ayurveda (derived from Sankhya) has the potential and can / will guide contemporary biology and future research if approached correctly."

Female infertility

Female infertility offers even more complexities and errors. The most common causes of female infertility include problems with ovulation, damage to fallopian tubes or uterus, or problems with the cervix. Ovulation problems may be caused by one or more of the following: A hormone imbalance, a tumour or cyst, eating disorders such as anorexia or bulimia, alcohol or drug use, thyroid gland problems, excess weight, stress, extremely brief menstrual cycles, significant loss of body fat because of intense exercise. Anatomical errors including damage to the fallopian tubes or uterus can be caused by one or more of the following: Pelvic inflammatory disease, a previous infection, polyps in the uterus, endometriosis or fibroids, scar tissue or adhesions, chronic medical illness, a previous ectopic (tubal) pregnancy, birth defect. Abnormal cervical mucus can also cause infertility. Abnormal cervical mucus can prevent the sperm from reaching the egg or make it more difficult for the sperm to penetrate the egg. Ayurveda has approaches to handle many of such issues too.

Revolutionary organic approach to having an extraordinary child

Vaidya Sharma's comments, based on the ancient Ayurveda texts, are echoed in offerings in contemporary texts too. Roy Dittmann's (Irvine California, USA) "Brighton Baby a Revolutionary Organic Approach to Having an Extraordinary Child" – in excess of 1000 pages - offers comprehensive reviews and also recommendations similar to what is in the ancient Ayurveda texts. The new addition and insights that our ancients might not have had to worry about is one of the unfortunate predicaments of our times, and one of the major causes of reduced fertility … "Xenoestrogens, estrogenic chemicals in plastics, food additives and pesticides are today linked to fertility problems". Ayurveda's panchakarma procedures promises ways for eliminating such persistent chemicals from the human body. Research into panchakarma is now the subject of a collaboration and understanding between the Ministry of AYUSH and the World Health Organisation. Further research will reveal more about the mode of action of one of Ayurveda's most treasured treatment modality. Clearly, there is much, much more to come out of the recommendations offered in Ayurveda's Ancient Samhitas and also the related Ancient Indian Sciences.





Dr. Madan is a genome biologist with an unusally diverse academic background and range of research interests. He is an Inlaks Foundation Scholar (1982 Trinity Hall) and has a Ph.D. in Molecular Genetics. His current primary research interest is the development of single DNA molecule and single cell techniques for genome analysis. He is the inventor of the Molecular Copy Counting technique - very high resolution and high sensitive technique for describing genomic variation at the level of single cell and single DNA of molecules.

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For a Holistic Wellness Holiday

A lot of foreigners are visiting India seeking holistic wellbeing as the country, the land of Ayurveda or the science of life, offers a perfect wellness system, evolved through generations of wisdom. The holistic approach, stemming from an ancient civilisation, is enshrined in a medical system that ensures everyone a much needed physical, physiological and psychological stability, balance and self development

By T K V Mani

Who doesn't want a break from the daily nerve-wracking fast pace of modern life and escape to a quiet and serene place to relax? There is no place like lap of mother nature. Enjoying the pristine beauty and taking in the clean air will wash away the accumulated toxins and sooth the nerves. Unwinding in such pristine places detoxifies and strengthens regenerates the body cells contributing to total rejuvenation.

With the growing awareness about wellness and the negative effects due to pollution and synthetic drugs that treat only symptoms and not the disease, people are constantly on the lookout for the best places to stay and relax. This trend is reflected in the surge in the number of people embracing wellness travel.

People wanting to leave the madding crowd and stressful life, realise that it is mother nature alone that can give the right environment and ambience for good health. Although such places are shrinking, there are still places that offer opportunities for holistic healthcare, introspection and rejuvenation of the body, mind and soul.

Amid rising demand, many institutions offer detoxification regimes provided by various traditional healthcare therapies. They include vegan food made from pesticide-free plants and herbs, yoga and meditation. It has also become an essential requirement for patients who are recuperating after major medical procedures like surgery and need complete relaxation for body and mind for speedy recovery.

A lot of foreigners are visiting India seeking holistic wellbeing as the country, the land of Ayurveda or the science of life, offers a perfect wellness system, evolved through generations of wisdom. The holistic approach, stemming from ancient

civilisation, is enshrined in a medical system that ensures everyone a much needed physical, physiological and psychological stability, balance and self development.

The spiritual discovery through meditation and yoga retreats offers unparalleled and sublime solution to many of the modern ailments. Here we take general look at some of the most sought-after wellness destinations and holistic centres in India, which offer relaxation, meditation, spas, spiritual pilgrimages and other forms of authentic wellness therapies.

From the snow-capped Himalayas in the north to the lush green southern coastal state of Kerala, India is a treasure trove of mesmerising natural beauty, peace and calmness that can sooth tired nerves, body and mind. Millions of wellness seekers are visiting the country every year seeking to revitalise their body and soul.

It's no wonder that over the years India has become the most sought-after place for wellness and rejuvenation therapies. Its sea shores, undulating green mountains, valleys, flora and time-tested pilgrim centres provide the perfect ambience for wellness retreats.

Rishikesh: The Yoga Capital



Called the yoga capital, Rishikesh is known for its cool and serene environment, where every seeker is assured peace and tranquillity. Practise yoga on the banks of the holy river Ganga. Join the meditating crowds by the side of the revered river which is an inexplicable experience.

Ananda in the Himalayas, with its scenic setting on the foothills of Rishikesh, is the best-rated wellness retreat, ideal for Ayurvedic massage and yoga. Satya Spa&Wellness Retreat and Anandlok are two other popular retreats. It's also a Himalayan trekking gate-way. The evenings offer inexplicable experience with ringing of temple bells, sadhus or holy men chanting mantras and the spectacular Ganga Aarati (worshipping River Ganga with thousands of lighted oil lamps). It's an indescribable visual treat.

Goa: A holistic wellness hub



Known for its long-stretched beautiful beaches, Goa is a favourite place for international crowds. Yoga Magic Eco-Retreat, Little Cove Yoga Holiday Retreat and The Mandala are the most attractive traditional healthcare retreats there.

Bengaluru (formerly Bangalore): India's Silicon Valley



Bengaluru is well-known for its yoga-based treatments, meditation, herbal spa and body massage. Highly experienced therapists perform the treatments. Ayurvedagram and Shreyas Yoga Retreat are among the best that offer wellness regimes and beauty treatments. The cosmopolitan city of Bengaluru is one of the most developed in India, where foreigners will not feel isolated.

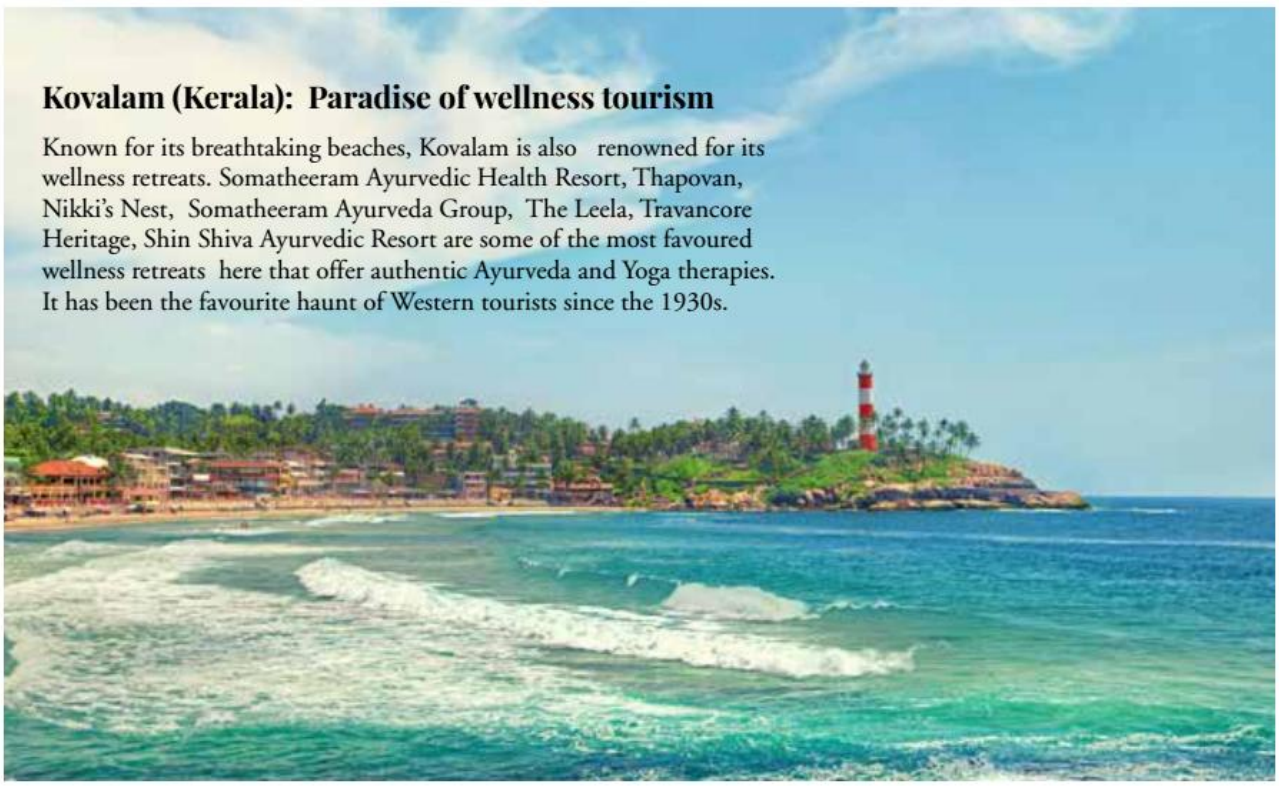
Palakkad

There are an array of traditional wellness retreats in Palakkad. Kalari Kovilakom and Poomully Mana, a heritage Ayurvedic treatment centre, are among the favourite haunts for celebrities.



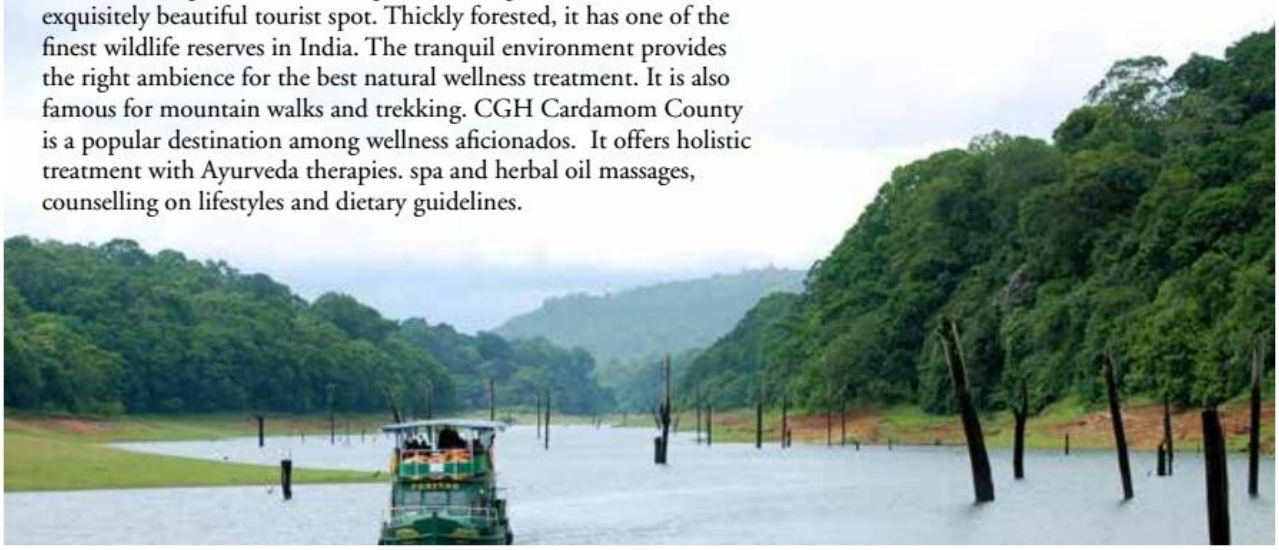
Kovalam (Kerala): Paradise of wellness tourism

Known for its breathtaking beaches, Kovalam is also renowned for its wellness retreats. Somatheeram Ayurvedic Health Resort, Thapovan, Nikki's Nest, Somatheeram Ayurveda Group, The Leela, Travancore Heritage, Shin Shiva Ayurvedic Resort are some of the most favoured wellness retreats here that offer authentic Ayurveda and Yoga therapies. It has been the favourite haunt of Western tourists since the 1930s.



Thekkady (Kerala):

Known for elephants, hills and spice-scented plantations, it is exquisitely beautiful tourist spot. Thickly forested, it has one of the finest wildlife reserves in India. The tranquil environment provides the right ambience for the best natural wellness treatment. It is also famous for mountain walks and trekking. CGH Cardamom County is a popular destination among wellness aficionados. It offers holistic treatment with Ayurveda therapies. spa and herbal oil massages, counselling on lifestyles and dietary guidelines.



T K V Mani - Executive Editor



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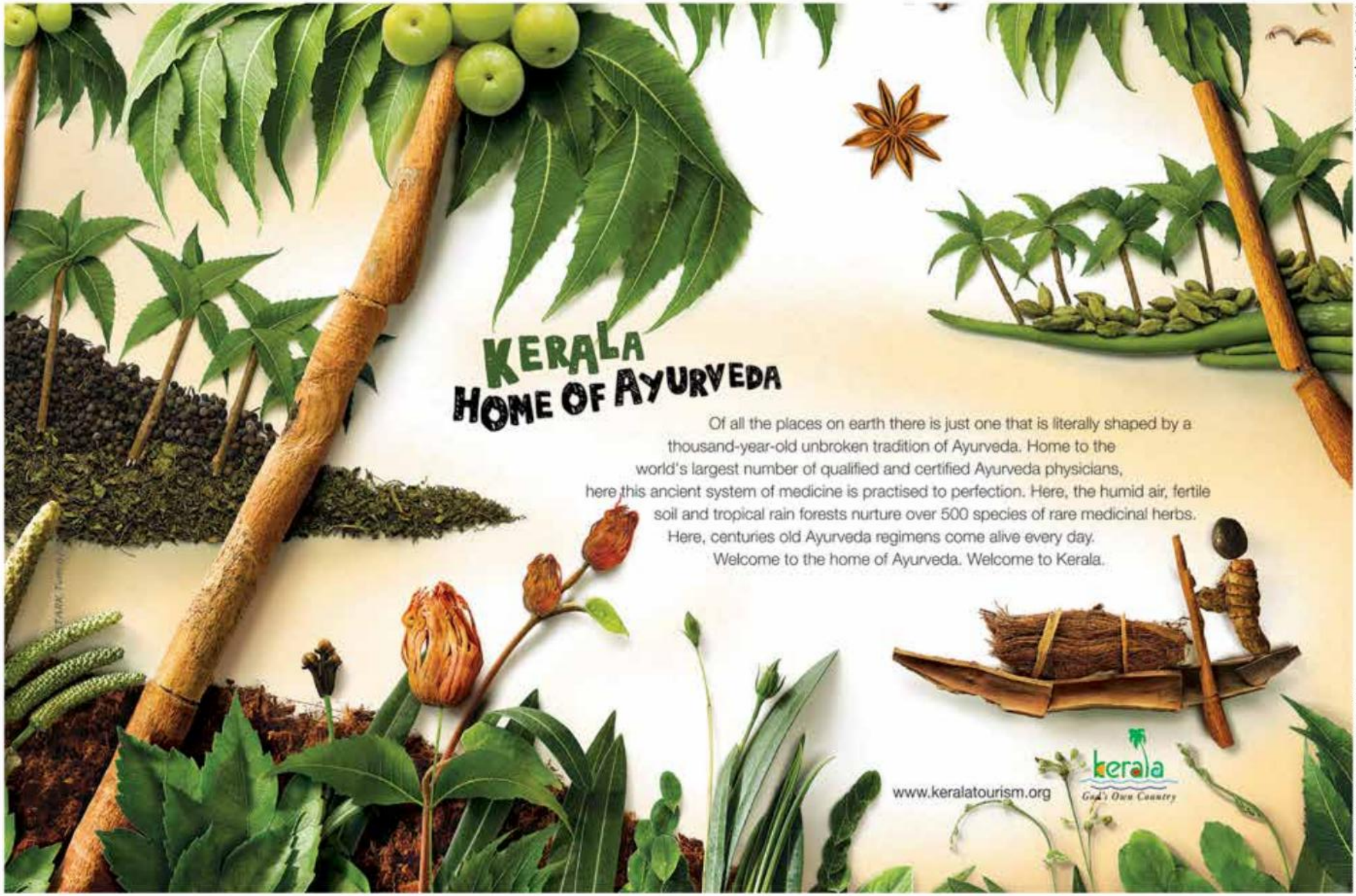
AYURVEDA - THE AUTHENTIC WAY

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