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Ayurveda – A Nature's Gift

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda, the traditional medicine of India is one of the oldest scientific medical systems of the world with a long record of clinical experience. It is our ancient living medical heritage. It not merely a kind of antiquated medicine. It is science based upon the observation of living thing and their actual response and reactions to their environment. It encompasses not only science but religion and philosophy as well. It tackles the whole subject of life in its various ramifications. It speaks to every element and facet of human life offering guidance that has been tested and refined over many centuries, to all those who seek greater harmony, peace and longevity. It is based not on constantly changing research data but on the eternal wisdom of the *Acharyas*, who received this science, expressive of the perfect wholeness of cosmic consciousness through religion introspection and meditation.

Key words: *Ayurveda, Traditional medical science, Panchmahabhoota, Nature.*

INTRODUCTION

More than a medical system, *Ayurveda* is a way of co-operating within nature and living in harmony. It concerned with eight principle branches of medicine - *Kaya Chikitsa* (General medicine), *Shalya Chikitsa* (surgery), *Shalaky Chikitsa* (ENT and Ophthalmology), *Maanas Roga Chikitsa* (Demoniael science), *Balaroga Chikitsa* (paediatrics), *Visha Chikitsa* (Toxicology), *Rasayana Chikitsa* (Rejuveniation and aphrodisiacs).^[1] Each of this medical specification is addressed according to the theories of five elements - *Panchamahabhoota*,^[2] The three *Doshas*, seven *Dhatus*, three *Malas*, *Satva*, *Atma*, *Mana*, *Shareera* and *Indriyas* – the 3 basic biological pillars of *Ayurveda* are 3 subtle energies known as *Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*,

these are commonly called as *Trigunas* in health and *Tridoshas* in ill health. These energies account for all forms of matter, the force and the direction. The purpose of *Ayurveda* is to bring these forces into harmony, so that they promote physical, emotional and spiritual health.^[3]

Health in *Ayurveda* means harmony and there is really no end to the degree of harmful. One can achieve if one set himself to the task. This method of living emphasizes prevention over cure without neglecting cure. *Ayurveda* focuses on causes rather than symptoms. *Ayurvedic* treatments are person specific rather than disorder specific and such approach has proven effective over centuries. It has the greatest variety of pharmaceutical preparations, special clinical methods and most importantly, it also has a whole science of self-care including an entire methodology of right living for optimum health and promotion of greater awareness and creativity. In this way it classifies not only individuals but also foods herbs, emotions, climate and life styles.^[4]

Treatment modalities in Ayurveda

Treatment according to *Ayurveda* is not only relief from disease but brings the patient back to his normal constitution.^[5] It includes not only medicine but diet,

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atmosphere and mental health as well , and it covers vast field. *Ayurveda* balances and rejuvenates an organisms reducing its susceptibility and encounters and empowering its immunity to prevent new disease from developing.^[6] The *Ayurvedic* remedies are represented by its vast pharmacopeia of herbs, minerals and products of animal origin.^[7] These remedies are deep acting including metabolic changes through various systems to bring about cure or long term regression from the ailments.

Speciality treatments in Ayurveda

In addition to the general line of treatment, there is a special form of treatment in *Ayurveda*, which is known as *Panchakarma* therapy, *Shalya Chikitsa*, *Shalaky Chikitsa* etc. out of these *Panchakarma* i.e five fold purification procedures are *Vamana* (herb induced vomiting), *Virechana* (herb induced purgation), *Basti* (medicated enemas), *Nasya* (nasal intake of medicine) and *Raktamokshana* (blood letting).^[8] This entire group of purification procedure based upon promoting the body's natural methods of elimination of unwanted substances. Before initiating *Panchakarma* two preoperative procedures namely *Snehana* and *Swedana* are restored to, which brings out vitiated *Doshas* localized in tissues to *Koshta* from where they can be eliminated easily.^[9] Thus the *Panchakarma* therapies of *Ayurveda* form a unique system of physiotherapy which not only aims of physical correlation and rehabilitation but also aims at imparting local medication trans dermal nourishment of the tissue.

Modern method of treatment

Modern medicine view disease in a pure materialistic physical ways. So the treatment is compartmental. The physician is sarcastic of and has contempt for these metaphysical or spiritual concept. Modern medicine is not bother about primary prevention or treatment at ethical level. The efficacy of any materialistic treatment is temporary and as the cause is not removed the illness can recurrence with different manifestations. If we focus our attention on physical levels alone, the apparent cure may be

temporary and may even be harmful as the real basic factor may grow up in strength.

Modern medicine de-links mind from body. But *Ayurveda* offers a deeper awareness of how the body and mind are a microcosm of the great universe and relationship in between inner and outer worlds.

Western medicine believes, illness is what happens to person and disease is what happen to organs. But *Ayurveda* holds that normally must be evaluated individually, because every human's constitution manifests its own particular and spontaneous temperament and functioning. The western mind generally trusts objectively while the eastern gives more emphasis to subjectively and teaches one to go beyond the division between subjectivity and objectivity.

DISCUSSION

With increasing scientific and technological achievement modern man is caught up in the hurry – worry of life and has neither time or patience for anything. Everything has to be instaneous. None is prepare to follow the natural course of the disease and rational therapy merely because it is time consuming. Even today the cause of many diseases is not known, for some others their pathology and for some more their effective therapy. Most of the wonder drugs are too powerful for the body, that they have become more dangerous than the diseases itself, with their toxic effects on human systems are often for reaching. This fact has scared many people all over the world and more than ever, today it is universally debated to find an alternative integrated system of medicine which will minister to human body as a whole.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda today is recognized world wide as a system of medicine that provides sound mind in sound body. This traditional system of medicine of India has an unenviable position in the field of providing remedies for the ailments, as it provides satisfactory answer to all the problems the world is facing today bulk of its

materia medica is of vegetables origin and animal origin which are quite harmless even if consumed over long periods, Ayurvedic classics have many an efficacious herbs to be evaluated for its own identity. It bias great emphasis on individual health; diurnal seasonal regimen, proper diet, good social behavior and such other principles of personal hygiene enumerated in ancient classics are exemplary and sure to prevent many ills of modern society.

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