

# AYURVEDA

## INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the science of life which deals with advantages and disadvantages as well as the happy and unhappy status of life along with what is good & bad for life, its measurement & the life itself. Ayurveda believes that positive health is the basis for attaining four cherished good of life viz. Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha. All these four goals cannot be achieved without sound positive health. Positive health is defined as Doshā Dhatu Samya (well-balanced metabolism), Prasanna Atma Indriya Manah (happy state of the soul, senses & the mind).

According to Ayurveda, everything in Universe is made of the Panchamahabhutas (five basic elements of life) – Akasha (Space), Vayu (Air), Teja (Fire), Jala (Water) and Prithvi (Earth). They are combined in an infinite variety of relative proportions such that each form of matter is distinctly unique. Vata, Pitta, and Kapha are called *Tridosas*, which are three bodily humors. These Doshas are responsible for the physiological and psychological functions within the body and mind as dynamic forces that determine growth and decay. In Ayurveda, the structural and supporting units of the body are called Dhatu; these are seven in numbers (*Saptadhatu*). They are the basic tissues that play an important role in development, nourishment, sustaining the body, and they support the formation of the basic body structure. Ojas is an essence present in every Dhatu (tissue) and considered as Sara of all the seven Dhatus, starting from Rasa to Shukra. Ojas is responsible for consciousness, purity in thoughts, health, positivity in feelings in every situation, better immunity, longevity, intelligence, and memory. The three primary *Malas* (waste products) are Purisha (faeces), Mutra (urine), and Sveda (sweat). These are the waste products of food and the Dhatus (tissues) produced during the normal digestive and metabolic process. The biological fire that governs metabolism is called *Agni*, which is responsible for all the transformations in the body and mind. The digestion, absorption of food, cellular transformations all depend on Agni. So, Agni is responsible for whole sequences of chemical interactions and changes in the body and mind. *Srotas* are the inner transport system of the body that provides a platform for activities of important bio-factors like three Doshā, seven Dhatu, Ojas, Agni, thoughts, and emotions. Proper functioning of Srotas is necessary for transporting different materials to the site of their requirement. The blockage of Srotas causes many diseases.

## BRANCHES OF AYURVEDA:

Ayurveda is divided into eight components; these components are:

- ❖ Kaya Chikitsa (Internal Medicine)
- ❖ Bala Chikitsa (Treatment of Children / Pediatrics)
- ❖ Graha Chikitsa (Demonology / Psychology)
- ❖ Urdhvaanga Chikitsa (Treatment of disease above the clavicle)
- ❖ Shalya Chikitsa (Surgery)
- ❖ Agada Tantra / Visha Chikitsa: Toxicology
- ❖ Jara / Rasayana Tantra: Geriatrics

❖ Vajikarana: Reproductive sciences

## **TREATMENT MODALITIES:**

### **Nidan Parivarjan(Avoidance of the disease-causing and aggravating factors)**

Nidan Parivarjan is to avoid the disease-causing factors in the diet and lifestyle of the patients. It encompasses the idea of refraining from the precipitating or aggravating factors of the disease.

### **Shamana Therapy (Palliative Treatment)**

Shamana therapy suppresses vitiated humour (Doshas). The process by which vitiated humour subsides or returns to normal without creating an imbalance of other humours is known as Shamana. This treatment is achieved by using appetizers, digestives drugs, exercise, exposure to sun and fresh air, etc. Palliatives and sedatives are used in this form of treatment.

### **Shodhana therapy (Purification Treatment)**

Shodhana therapy aims at the removal of the causative factors of somatic and psychosomatic diseases. The process includes internal and external purification. The usual practices involved are Panchkarma & Pre-panchakarma procedures.

### **Satvavajaya (Psychotherapy)**

Satvavajaya treatment concerns with psychological disorders. This includes restraining the mind from the desires for unwholesome objects and the cultivation of courage, memory, and concentration. In Ayurveda, the studies of psychology and psychiatry have been developed extensively and have a wide range of approaches in the treatment of psychic disorders.

### **Pathya Vyavastha (Prescription of diet and activity)**

Pathya Vyavastha comprises indications and contraindications in respect of diet, activity, habits, and emotional status.

## **SPECIALTIES OF AYURVEDA:**

### **Panchakarma (Fivefold Therapy)**

Panchakarma is the purification treatment used in Ayurvedic science. Panchakarma refers to five types of procedures intended to cleanse and restore balance to the body, mind, and emotions. Before panchakarma treatment, pre-panchakarma procedures like Snehana karma (external & internal oleation therapy) and Swedana Karma (induced sweating) are applied to liquefy vitiated Doshas. The fivefold procedures are: -

- (a) Vamana (Emesis therapy)
- (b) Virechana (Purgation therapy)
- (c) Anuvasana Basti (Oily enema therapy)
- (d) Asthapana Basti (Decoction enema therapy)

(e) Sirovirechana (Nasal insufflation therapy)

**Indications of Panchakarma:**

Osteoarthritis, Rheumatoid arthritis, Gouty arthritis, cervical spondylitis, Lumbosacral radiculopathy, Frozen shoulder, Hemiplegia, Bell's palsy, Paraplegia, Bronchial asthma, Irritable bowel syndrome, Hypothyroidism, Hyperthyroidism, Diabetes mellitus, Obesity, Psoriasis, Leucoderma, Oligozoospermia, Dysmenorrhoea, Leucorrhoea, etc.

**Rasayana Therapy (Rejuvenation Therapy):**

Rasayana is defined as a therapeutic measure that promotes longevity, prevents aging, provides positive health and mental faculties, increases memory, and imparts resistance and immunity against diseases.

**Vajikaran Therapy (Aphrodisiac Treatment):**

Vajikarana treatment improves the function of reproductive systems and vitalizes reproductive tissues increasing sperm count, strengthen sperm motility in men, and making the eggs more viable for conception in women. This process improves not only the quality and longevity of individual life but also the health and vitality of his or her offspring.

**Ksharasutra Therapy (Medicated caustic thread)**

Ksharasutra therapy is a minimal invasive Ayurvedic para-surgical procedure & time tested Ayurvedic technique in the management of anorectal disorders.

**Indications of Ksharasutra:** Fistula in Ano, Haemorrhoids, Sentinel piles, Pilonidal sinus, Rectal & anal polyps, etc.

**Jalauka Avacharana (Leech Therapy):**

Jalauka Avacharana (Leech Application) is defined as a gentle method for the removal of Pitta Dosa vitiated blood in a sophisticated person.

**Indications of Leech Therapy:** Skin diseases like Psoriasis and Eczema, Varicose veins, Thrombosed piles, Diabetic ulcer, Chronic non-healing ulcer, Burger's disease, etc.

**KriyaKalpa (Ocular Therapeutics):**

Kriyakalpa is the main therapeutic process for Ophthalmology in Ayurveda. Locally applied medication reaches conjunctival sac, fornices, inner & outer canthus, nasal cavity & blood vessels & alleviates the disease both locally as well as systemically. Kriyakalpa comprises seven distinct procedures, namely Netra Pariseka, Aschyotana, Anjan, Netra Tarpan, Putapaka, Pindi, and Vidalaka.

**Indications of Kriyakalpa:** Chronic conjunctivitis, Uveitis, Glaucoma, Diabetic retinopathy, Central serous retinopathy (CSR), Refractive errors, Computer vision syndrome, Styte, Chalazion, etc.

**Gynaecological Care:**

Ayurveda plays an important role in women's life to prevent the morbidities and help her in a journey towards better health. Awareness of Paricharyas (daily regimen) for Rajaswala (menstruating women), Garbhini (antenatal), Sutika (Postnatal) is vital for preventing various gynaecological diseases. *Uttarabasti* (per vaginal administration of medicated oil) is considered as an alternative to artificial reproductive techniques. *Garbhasamskara* (antenatal care) techniques and prenatal counseling for couples planning for healthy progeny through Ayurveda minimize the complications during and after delivery. Polycystic ovarian disease, psychosexual problems, menstrual irregularities are successfully treated through Ayurveda.

### **Paediatric Care (Kaumarabhritya)**

*Kaumarabhritya* deals with the healthy upbringing of infants, purification of mother's milk, and also cure for diseases of infants caused by intake of vitiated breast milk or Balagraha (various infections). *Swarnaprasana* (Ayurvedic Immunization) is helpful for Medhavaradhana (improving intellect), Agnivaradhana (promoting digestion and metabolism), Balavaradhana (promoting immunity and physical strength), Ayushyam (Promoting longevity), Grahapaham (protection against infectious organisms).

### **Immunity and Ayurveda:**

The Ayurveda pays a larger emphasis on building the strength of mind and body to cope with various stress factors, including infections. In Ayurveda, several treatment options are available for enhancing immunity against diseases; these include certain immune-modulators known as Rasayana. *Amla* (*Phyllanthus emblica*), *Guduchi/Giloya* (*Tinospora cordifolia*), *Aswagandha* (*Withania somnifera*), Chyavanprash and Brahmarasayan are used as Rasayan and for preventing many infectious diseases.

### **Cancer treatment in Ayurveda**

Ayurveda defines cancer as a chronic imbalance of Tridosha (Three bodily humours), Dhatus (tissue), and Triguna (Satwa, Raja & Tama) and can be treated without any side effect. Ayurveda can reduce the side-effects of chemotherapy and/or radiotherapy, as well as assist the body in its recovery process. Psychoimmunological rehabilitation and palliative care of advanced cancer patients can be possible through Ayurveda therapeutic procedures and medications.