



## **Knowledge of Ayurveda: Conceptualization to Medical Science and Surgery in Ancient India**

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### **ABSTRACT**

India has presented extraordinary approach to the field of medical science especially in the field of drugs and surgery from very ancient period. The ancient Physicians and health care taker like Maharshi Charaka, Maharshi Sushruta and Vagbhatta pioneered the Indian medical science and surgery through their strong researches and reached to the best height in the field of medical science. Ayurveda as the word reflects itself decodes to knowledge of life. It is based on the idea that disease in our body is due to an imbalance or stress in a person's consciousness. As a precaution or remedies Ayurveda encourages firm lifestyle interventions and natural therapies. All it is to regain a balance between the body, mind, spirit, and the environment.

An individual takes help of Ayurveda in different ways. In present time many people follow Ayurvedic practices to preserve their health, reduce stress, and improve flexibility and the others to strengthen themselves. The elements of the practices like yoga and meditation can be helpful for people with diseases such as asthma, high blood pressure, and arthritis. Not even this balanced life style, balanced food habits and balanced schedule in our daily life like daily walk, exercise also help the people to get rid of many health issues in their lifetime.

There is no matter of adornment that Ayurveda has no side effects and Ayurvedic medicine become a more preferable option for the people with proper care and prescribed precautions. The ingredients are purely herbal, suitable to body and do not contain artificial preservatives. The treatment is holistic and brings together the mind, body, and soul. This research paper is a study of the emergence of Ayurveda as a science of good health and benefit of Ayurveda as an art of happy and healthy life.

**Key Words:** technology, universe, chhaya, treatment, rheumatoid.

### **Introduction:**

Ancient Indian Medical Sciences deal with healthcare of all human being and animals. Ayurveda is considered as one of the oldest of the traditional systems of medicine accepted worldwide. The ancient wisdom in this traditional system of medicine is still not exhaustively explored. The junction of the rich knowledge from different traditional systems of medicine can lead to new avenues in herbal drug discovery process. The lack of the understanding of the differences and similarities between the theoretical doctrines of these systems is the major hurdle towards their convergence apart from the other impediments in the discovery of plant based medicines. This review aims to bring into limelight the age old history and the basic principles of Ayurveda. This would help the budding scholars, researchers and practitioners gain deeper perspicuity of traditional systems of medicine, facilitate strengthening of the commonalities and overcome the challenges towards their global acceptance and harmonization of such medicinal systems.

Ayurveda is attributed to Dhanvantari, considered as physician to the gods in Hindu mythology. He is considered to be, received it from Brahma himself. As according to the Hindu mythological beliefs God himself has created the universe and universal powers for maintain peace and order on the earth and Brahma himself is a creator. With the emergence of different living species on earth, the nature has left remedies for it's easily survival without any loose points. The earliest concepts of Ayurveda were set out in the component part of the Vedas known as the Atharvaveda, dedicated to the knowledge of black magic and medicine. From 800 BCE to until about 1000 CE, was marked as the golden age of Indian medical science, especially by the production of the medical treatises known as the Charak Samhita and Susrut Samhita, attributed respectively to Caraka, a physician, and Susruta, a surgeon. Ayurveda plays its major part through its branches; diagnosis and medication system of Charak, Surgery technology of the sage and physician Sushrut, formulas of preparing medicine by Vagbhatta. In a historical perspective long before blood tests, MRIs, (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) CT (Computed Tomography) scans, ECGs, (Electrocardiogram) and x-rays, there was the eight fold examination process called *ashtavidha pariksha* in the field of health care science. (Ashta means eight, *vidha* means fold or process or knowledge, and *pariksha* means exam or test). This check-up is still practiced today by Ayurvedic medical doctors and certified consultants. In ancient India in the beginning of medical technology Ayurveda has contributed a lot. It is one of the oldest medical disciplines emerged in India and spread all over the world through visitors and scholars. It was developed more than 3500 years ago in India and still practiced

The Ayurveda Philosophy is based on the belief that health and wellness of a person depend on a delicate balance between the mind, body, and spirit for which again yogic practices and healthy diet play an important part. It is a practice of healthy mind to keep the body and human environment healthy. The main focus of the Ayurveda is to upgrading oneself with good health, fight with disease, but treatments may be geared toward specific health problems for having healthy and wealthy future. Because healthy mind and body could work in positive direction. It was very enchanting to the outer world due to its positive results. Therefore this practice was also followed by the people of other countries too. Even today in the United States, it's considered a form of complementary and alternative medicine and curing system.

According to the system of Ayurveda, everything in the universe – dead or alive – is interconnected. Even our mind and body is canopy of universe. Therefore it is taken that if your mind, body, and spirit are in harmony with the universe, you have good health. When something disorders this balance, you get sick and weak. Many times it is also accepted observed that among the things that can upset this balance are genetic or birth defects injuries, climate and seasonal changes, age, and your emotions.

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## Basic Elements of Human Body

Through the ages those who practice Ayurveda, believe that every person is made of five basic elements found in the universe: i.e. space, air, fire, water, and earth. These are known as five *mahabhutas* and these are *Akasa*, *Vayu*, *Agni*, *jala* and *Prthivi* viz – sound, touch, vision, taste and smell are their properties respectively. According to Ayurveda everything in the Universe is composition of the *Pancamahabhutas* and these are: *Akasa* (Space), *Vayu* (Air), *Teja* or *Agni* (Fire), *Jala* (Water) and *Prithvi*.

Charak Samhita is an oldest and finest work on health science. According to Charak Samhita, these combine in the human body to form three life forces or energies called *doshas*. These are actuality the main forces of our body. They control how your body works. They are *Vata dosha* (space and air); *Pitta dosha* (fire and water); and *Kapha dosha* (water and earth) and access of any of the one mentioned above, creates problem in our body. Though this are the life sources of our body in positive sense and if balanced but become 'dosha' if imbalanced. Each 'dosha' is responsible for creating problem in our body if there is any imbalance due to some other kind of food or intake. In a proper source or proper channelization it works as source of energy, but it can also suffer if not channelized through diet or changed condition of environment. The Ayurveda mentions remedies of curing these *doshas* of our body.

It has eight branches of treatment known as "Ashtanga Ayurveda". "Ashtanga" literally means "eight parts or limbs of the body." They have been developed to treat the particular needs of the medical world. Although the system has eight branches of treatment, the basic mode of all these eight disciplines is the same. Sage and Physician Charak has described about the eight different branches of Ayurveda which are as follows:

1. *Kaya Chikitsa* : *Kaya Chikitsa* is related to general medicine and diagnosis of problems.
2. *Shakya Chikitsa* speaks about diseases of ear, nose and throat.
3. *Shalyahartuk* converses the methods of surgery.
4. *Vishpramashan* tells about poison and antidotes.
5. *Bhoot Vidya* contains the knowledge of possessions and *chhaya*.
6. *Koumaryabharutya* includes pediatrics.
7. *Rasayana* is related to medicine.
8. *Bajeekaran* describes about body 'Rejuvenation.'

Charak Samhita defines human body as a micro model of the universe along with five physical elements and mind Brahma, intelligence and ego.

Everyone inherits a unique mix of the three *dosha* i.e. *vat*, *pitta* and *kapha* (cough). *Dosha* is taken as imbalances of body. They control how our body works or they are the auto controller of the body. *Vata (vayu)* is related to space and air. *Pitta dosha* inherits through fire and water. *Kapha* or cough emerges through water and earth. Disease is a result of eminence of anyone of these element and polluted air or water. Everyone inherits a unique mix up of the three *doshas* or imbalances. But one is usually stronger than the others. Each one controls a different body function. It's believed that your chances of getting sick -- and the health issues you develop -- are linked to the balance of your *doshas*.

Charak Samhita mentions the diseases of body and provides a description that mainly the parts of our body affected by these *Dosa*:

1. *Vaat dosha* (Gas): Urinary tract, liver, waist, bones of feet and small intestine.
2. *Pitta dosha* (Acidity): Blood, sweat and Stomach.
3. *Kaf dosha* (Cough): Head, neck, body joints, chest and obesity.

Together these three *doshas* determine the physiological balance and constitution of the individual which is called as *Prakriti* in Ayurveda. Every person has all three *doshas* (physical humors – *vata*, *pitta*, *kapha*) and *trigunas* (psychological qualities – *Satwa*, *Rajas*, *Tamas*) in different proportions.

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## Vata Dosha

This is the most powerful of all three *doshas* (health problem). It controls very basic body functions, like how cells are divided for better functioning. It also controls mind, breathing, blood flow, heart function and ability to get rid of waste through your intestine. The main things that can disrupt it include eating again too soon after a meal, fear, grief and staying up too late in the night or lack of sleeping. It depends on the body type of an individual. If *vata dosha* is main life force, a person is thought to be more likely to develop conditions like anxiety, asthma, heart disease, skin problems, and rheumatoid arthritis. The basic features of Vata are as follows:

- Thin body (mean body does not gain weight)
- Dry and rough skin, dark complexion, cracked etc.
- Dry hair and continuously splitting of hair
- Quick recital of activities run
- Variable and/or poor or no appetite.
- Less physical working capability and resistance to disease usually poor
- Always prefers warm, hot food and climate.
- Scanty perspiration and variable thirst
- Mostly tendency for constipation
- Very light sleep with many dreams or no sleep
- More often prone to anxiety, worry and depression, unpredictable nature, always in stress

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## Pitta Dosha

According to the Ayurveda, body heat is source of human life. Human energy, skin complexion, muscle power etc. are dependent on it. This heat depends upon the food intake and its digestion system. It is the main feature of our body functioning that useful part of the intake is supplied to blood, flesh, tissues, bones etc. and waste part is thrown out through urine and excreta. The body has different tracks for circulation of oxygen, water and nutrients etc.

This energy controls your digestion, metabolism (how well you break down foods), and certain hormones that are linked to your appetite system. According to Ayurveda the main things that can disrupt it are eating sour or spicy foods and spending too much time in the sun.

If it is your main life force, you're thought to be more likely to develop conditions like Crohn's disease, heart problem, high blood pressure and other internal infections. It is described as below:

- Medium body structure
- Skin slight, reddish complexion and warm to touch
- Good or excessive appetite
- Feels warm or hot sensation
- Prefers cold food and climate and intolerance to hot food and climate
- Inclination for loose motion
- Excessive thirst and perspiration
- Bright eyes, reddish sclera, yellow iris, sharp penetrating vision
- Hair soft, premature graying, baldness
- Intelligent, sharp memory, hot tempered brave, jealous, aggressive, commanding nature.

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## Kapha Dosha

According to Charak Samhita this life force controls muscle growth, body strength and stability, weight, and your immune system. You can disrupt it by sleeping during the day, eating too many sweet foods, and eating or drinking things that contain too much salt or water. If it's your main life energy, practitioners believe you may develop asthma and other breathing disorders, cancer, diabetes nausea after eating and obesity.

- Large, board body frame, tendency to gain weight very easily.

- Skin thick, soft, smooth, firm, glossy and fair complexion
- Good stamina, but slow in physical activities
- Deep and pleasant voice
- Moderate appetite
- Moderate perspiration and low thirst
- Deep and sound sleep
- Large eyes, calm, stable with whitish sclera
- Hair thick, oily, wavy dark colored
- Calm, cool, joyful, polite good nature

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## Conclusion:

Ayurveda has remained the life giving science throughout the ages. It had emerged through the centuries practices made by our saints and sages of ancient India. No doubt all types of knowledge and technology in ancient India is emerged or developed through the human action made by saints and sages. Ayurveda is one of them. It gives the knowledge of our body, it's functioning, the illness emerged through different causes and then proper remedies through medicine and surgery. According to the illness emerged through all these *dosha*, an Ayurvedic practitioner creates a treatment plan specifically designed according to illness. They'll take into account all the unique physical and emotional makeup, your primary life force, and the balance between all three of these elements.

The goal of treatment is to cleanse your body of undigested food, which can stay in your body and lead to illness. The cleansing process—called “*panchakarma*”— is designed to reduce patient's symptoms and restore harmony and balance of body. To achieve the goal, an Ayurvedic practitioner might rely on blood purification, massage, medical oils, herbs, and enemas or laxatives.

For sound health Charak recommends, eye ointment, medicated smoking, nasal & ear drops, brushing of teeth, gargling, head and hair massage with oil, cutting of nails and hair, use of clean clothes, footwear, regular exercise and proper diet etc. The daily routine has to be modified

but according to the seasons. Physical health depends upon geographical conditions, climate and food and change in these factors can lead to a disease. For a good health diet is a major part of Charak Samhita. It mentions many items such as cereals, green vegetables, meat, fish, eggs, fruits, milk, milk products, and oils. But Charak is against no vegetarian, food and liquor. It also groups them into complementary and non complementary items. Rejuvenation of body is possible with certain medicines provided these are taken at some sanatorium, under the guidance of an expert. For public health, polluted water, unhygienic food, urination etc at public places has to be strictly avoided. Importance pure, UN-adulterated water is stressed again and again. The text provides detailed information on types of diseases, symptoms, treatment there of etc. Fever is a precursor of disease or ailment. The doctor should note down the history of a patient and his family. Charak Samhita includes various zoological classifications systems, based on birth, physical features etc. The text has enlisted 177 medicines derived from animals, 241 from herbs and 64 from minerals, 33 types of bones, and 103 technical terms.

Most important thing was that a physician had to provide medicines and other services to the patient. Text also mentions the restrictions about diet, various methods of taking the medicine, such as oral, ointments, Gargling, smoking, with dressing bandages, the types of enema and washes, artificial sweating, tying of veins with cloth or wooden stick are the most common methods used in Ayurvedic treatment. The text has separate chapter on poisons, their types and antidotes. It also mentions certain clinical processes through which Ayurvedic remedies or treatment works such as flame test, sterilization, freezing, vaporization etc, which are followed in modern pathology laboratories.

The second branch is the surgery and for this Sushruta Samhita is among the most important ancient medical treatises and is one of the basic texts of the medical tradition of surgery in India along with the Charak Samhita. Sushruta is known to be the father of surgery. There are five main parts of Sushrut Samhita and the sixth part is a sort of summary cum appendix of additional information. The first five parts has 120 chapters and 66 chapters in the sixth part. The first printed version dates back to 1835 CE. The first printed version dates back to 1835. As proper diagnosis and medicines are essential to control and cure any disease, surgery is also an important option. Surgery was practiced from the very ancient period and the earliest reference of surgery is found in Veda and Puranas. According to a verse of Rig Veda, Ashvini Kumar known to be as Divine Physicians of Gods, provided a wooden leg of Vishpal, who lost his leg during a war mentioned in a verse of Rig-Veda. According to another tradition God Indra cured a wound on the neck of Etasha without oozing of blood. Similarly names of various inner parts of a human body are mentioned. This seems impossible without the knowledge of human anatomy and surgery. Similar references can be found in Upanishadas and Puranas, but the most authentic reference is Sushrut Samhita. They were using six types of instruments of a surgeon, most significant were *Nadi yantra* (Stethoscope) and *shalaka yantra* (injection syringe) is mentioned in chapter seven. The Operation Theater details are given in Chapter ten. *Karanchedan* –piercing of ears-is the subject matter of Chapter sixteen. Wounds and their dressings are discussed in chapter Eighteen and Nineteen. In chapter thirty seven details of plantation of medicinal trees, plants and herbs are given. Identification and collection of five parts of medicinal trees is the subject matter of Chapter thirty Nine. If we discuss the titles of few important chapters are, Piles, Kidney stone, Eczema etc. In Part 3-Sharir Sthan -Physiology is mentioned in 10 chapters). Titles of few important chapters are conception,

veins and nerves, pregnancy etc. Part 4-Chikitsa Sthan –Treatment is described in 40 chapters. Titles of few important chapters are, Treatment of piles, fistula, diabetes etc. Part 5-Kalpa Sthan-Treatment of poisons can be seen in total 8 chapters). Sushrut had knowledge of plastic surgery and cataract surgery. He has mentioned about 100 surgical instruments. A Chinese traveler had witnessed a plastic surgery operation and mentioned it in his diary written 2000 years ago. It can be concluded that Sushrut Samhita is not restricted to surgery alone. It contains other valuable information on ancient Indian Medical science also.

The third branch of Ayurveda is related to preparing the medicines and for this Vagabhatta has given different formulas. Ayurvedic medicine is one of the world's oldest medical systems and remains one of India's traditional health care systems. Ayurvedic treatment combines products (mainly derived from plants, but may also include animal, metal, and mineral), diet, exercise, and lifestyle also play an important role in maintaining and losing health. Vāgbhaṭa is one of the most influential writers, Scientist, Doctor and advisor of Ayurveda. Several works are associated with his name as author, principally the Ashtāṅgasaṅgraha and the Ashtāṅgahridayasaṃhitā. Ashtanga Hridayam (AH) is the most legitimate and wide-ranging summary of Ayurvedic philosophy. It is neither a very brief nor an elaborate form of Ashtanga Samgraha. Ashtanga Hridayam is divided into six *sthanas* with a total of 7471 verses.

Ayurveda is not a system but a discipline. It is not only for cure the diseases but more than this focus upon prevention through natural ways. Ayurveda gives us formula of living simple and healthy life through adoption of simple life style. With less side effects, it provides a wide range of healthy and sound well being and care to the society.

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