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POST-PANDEMIC TRAVEL

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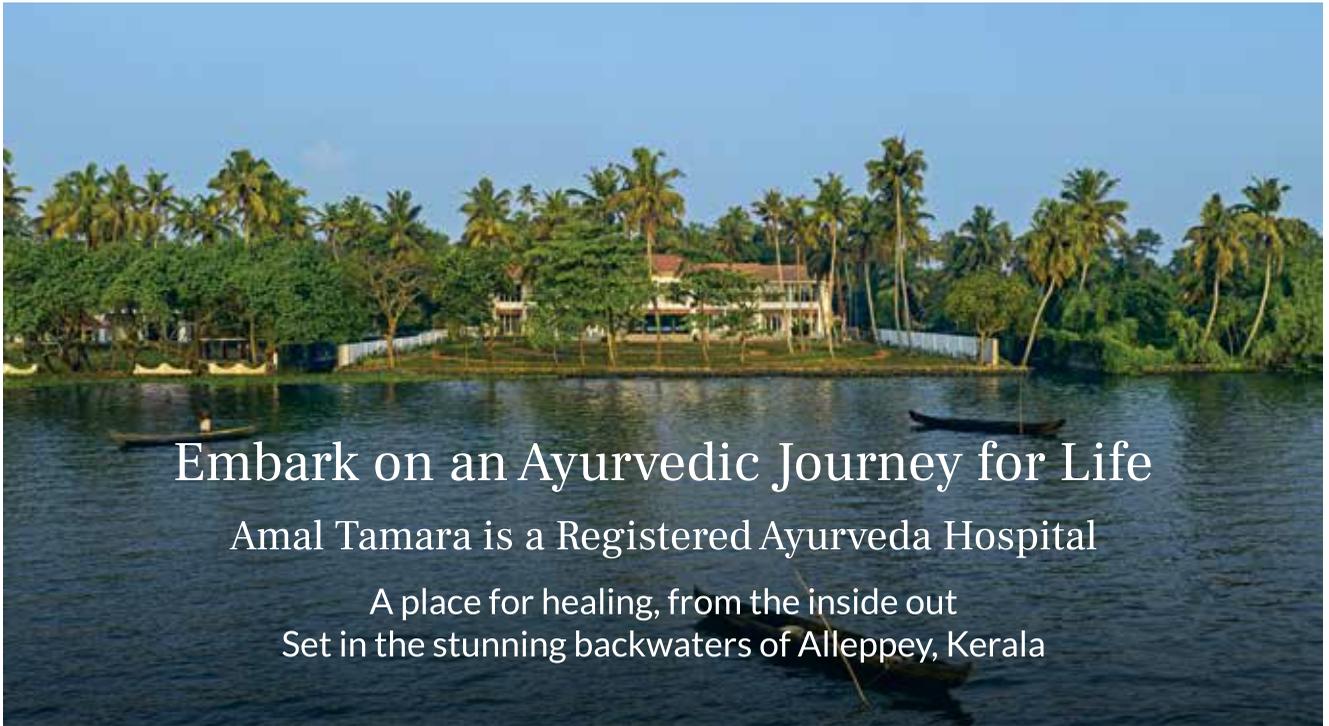
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## For that healthy vacation

The world is not discussing power or glory these days. At a time when a major war drags on for more than a year after two years of Covid-19 induced darkness, health and wealth are the major concern of the serious minded everywhere. Or, to put it another way, the informed discussion now is about how global health has impacted global wealth

We are just back from the abyss to which the Covid-19 pandemic too us. National governments and global collectives are now hard at work to nurse the global economy back to health. Parallely, scientists and medical experts are at work to nurse populations in the far corners of the world to health and well-being. The signs of recovery are strong and people who were confined to homes, villages, towns, cities, States and nations during the pandemic are now packing their bags and catching the first flight out to their most longed-for destinations. For the young, it is travel for travel's sake. But for the old, such journeys are about satisfying more than sensory pleasure. To many of them, it is all about restoring physical health after the pandemic.

That is where Kerala, the abode of the ancient healing system of Ayurveda in south India, presents itself as a healthy option. Kerala is among the few regions in the country where Ayurveda in its pure essence is still practiced. Kerala is a treasure-house of riches with its amazingly diverse flora, bright but benign sun, bewitching greenery, long beaches, rituals, folk and traditional art forms and, to top it all, Ayurveda.

Our cover story of this issue is about how the elderly whose health has been devastated by Covid-19 can make their vacations an opportunity to heal and rejuvenate their bodies and restore peace and tranquility in their minds.

The Rasayana therapy, one of the core practices of Ayurveda, has the unique ability to promote longevity, preserve youthful vigour, ensure optimum strength of physique and calm down the senses. Any visitor to Kerala would be spoilt for choices when it comes to centres of Ayurvedic treatment and rejuvenation therapies.

**C. Gouridasan Nair**  
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# 9<sup>th</sup> World Ayurveda Congress, Goa PRIME MINISTER INAUGURATES 3 AYUSH INSTITUTES

## National AYUSH Research Consortium planned



collaborations and would facilitate affordable AYUSH services for the people.

Developed at a total cost of about Rs 970 crore, these institutes will increase the intake of students by around 400 along with the addition of about 500 hospital beds. The government is also actively considering formation of a 'National AYUSH Research Consortium'.

The Prime Minister expressed happiness that more than 30 countries of the world have given

recognition to Ayurveda as a traditional system of medicine. He called for more sustained work to ensure wider recognition for Ayurveda. He said that the three national institutes inaugurated by him would provide new momentum to the AYUSH healthcare system.

Dwelling upon the philosophical underpinnings of Ayurveda, the Prime Minister said Ayurveda goes beyond treatment and promotes wellness. After going through various changes in trends, the world was shifting towards the ancient way of life propounded by Ayurveda practitioners. The Prime Minister expressed delight that a lot of work with regard to Ayurveda is already underway in India.

Recalling the time when he was the Chief Minister of Gujarat, the Prime Minister said that he had promoted institutions related to Ayurveda and worked towards the advancement of Gujarat Ayurvedic University. As a result, the Prime Minister said, the World Health Organisation established the first and only Global Centre for Traditional Medicines in Jamnagar.

He said the All India Institute of Ayurveda was being set up on the lines of AIIMS. Recalling the Global AYUSH Innovation and Investment Summit that took place earlier in 2022, the Prime Minister said the WHO was full of praise for India's efforts in the field of traditional medicine.

Stressing the need to continuously work toward the documentation of 'data based evidence', the Prime

Panaji: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated three national-level AYUSH institutes, namely the All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA), Goa, National Institute of Unani Medicine (NIUM), Ghaziabad, and National Institute of Homoeopathy (NIH), Delhi.

Formally inaugurating the three institutes, while addressing the valedictory session of the 9th World Ayurveda Congress, the Prime Minister said the three institutes would further strengthen research and international

### Huge participation in WAC

The 9th edition of the World Ayurveda Congress (WAC) & Arogya Expo turned a booming success with hundreds of practitioners, experts, enthusiasts and students from different parts of the country and abroad attending the deliberations.

As many as 400 overseas delegates representing over 50 countries attended the conferences besides international students and various other stakeholders of Ayurveda. The theme of the 9th edition of WAC was "Ayurveda for One Health".

A key highlight of the 9th WAC was the inauguration of the All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA), Goa, National Institute of Unani Medicine (NIUM), Ghaziabad and National Institute of Homoeopathy (NIH), Delhi.

Minister said though Ayurveda gave the right results, the country lacked evidence to facilitate its global acceptance. The medical data, research, and journals have to be brought together to verify every claim based on modern scientific parameters. The government had set up an AYUSH Research Portal for Evidence-Based Research data with this objective. The Prime Minister said data from about 40,000 research studies were already available and the country is moving towards forming a National Ayush Research Consortium, he added.

The Prime Minister said that about 40,000 MSMEs are active in the AYUSH sector. AYUSH Industry which was worth about Rs. 20,000 crore eight years ago. Now

it was worth about Rs. 1.5 lakh crore today. This means that there has been a seven-fold growth during the last 7-8 years, he said. He said the current global market for herbal medicines and spices was worth about 120 billion dollars or Rs. 10 lakh crore.

Goa Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant, Goa Governor P S Sreedharan Pillai, Union Minister for AYUSH Sarbananda Sonowal, Union Minister of State for AYUSH Dr Munjapara Mahendrabhai, Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism Shripad Yesso Naik and President of Vijnana Bharat, Dr Shekhar Mande, were among those present on occasion.

## Head to ITB Berlin 2023 to experience ‘Infinite Hospitality’

- Georgia, the host country of ITB Berlin, presents a wealth of activities and attractions at the World’s Leading Travel Trade Show
- ‘Infinite Hospitality’ is the slogan of the host country of ITB Berlin 2023
- A wealth of displays and events at different venues.



Georgia is all set to stage ITB Berlin 2023, the world’s largest travel trade show, with a bevy of programmes and events from March 7 to 9.

The Georgian National Tourism Administration (GNTA) has put together an impressive array of tour-

ism attractions, many activities and events around the theme ‘Infinite Hospitality’.

Around 80 exhibitors from the tourism, hotel and aviation industries will be represented on Georgia’s stand occupying around 705 square metres and two floors in hub27.

The official opening tour of ITB Berlin will, as always, take place on the morning of the first day of the show, March

7, 2023, on the stand of the host country with an official ribbon cutting ceremony, attended by the Prime Minister of Georgia, the Governing Mayor of Berlin, the Secretary-General of UNWTO and the Managing Director of Messe Berlin.

Daily activities on Georgia's stand will include culinary masterclasses, handicraft workshops and a calligraphy masterclass (10 a.m. to 6 p.m.), at which Georgian Saperavi wine will also be served.

There would also be a Panel Discussion on the theme "Adventurous Georgia – Possibilities, Offers and Challenges" at the Lighthouse Stage in Hall 4.1b.

The event would give the audience the opportunity to get more information about adventure tourism potential of Georgia, new initiatives and opportunities, sustainable development vision, and experience Georgia's gorgeous hiking regions, dense forests and exciting nature parks.

## FOCUS ON MICE

At the MICE HUB in Hall 3.1, the Convention and Exhibition Bureau of Georgia (GCEB) will highlight the country's potential in the MICE sector as well as possibilities for collaboration.

Representatives of the GCEB will hold national presentations twice daily. The Convention and Exhibition Bureau of Georgia (GCEB) belongs to the Georgian Tourism Board and the Georgian Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development.

The GCEB was set up in 2016 and is a member-based organisation which aims to establish Georgia as an attractive MICE destination on the global business travel map. Its main goal is to increase the number of international events, conferences and meetings in Georgia.

## ONLINE ACCREDITATION FOR ITB BERLIN 2023

Media members and bloggers can register for ITB Berlin, subject to observance of the accreditation guidelines. After the application has been processed and approved the applicant will receive an email with a PDF containing the ITB press accreditation, a print out of which can be taken.

Since it will not be possible for press representatives to obtain accreditation at the press counters on the grounds, the ITB Berlin 2023 organisers have requested the media to obtain accreditation online ahead of the event.

ITB Berlin 2023 will take place as a pure B2B event under the slogan 'Open for Change'. Since 1966, ITB Berlin has been the world's leading travel trade show.

The internationally renowned ITB Berlin Convention will take place parallel to the show and will be held live on the Berlin Exhibition Grounds. Select sessions will be streamed on ITBxplore. Additional information on ITB Berlin 2023 can be accessed from [www.itb.com](http://www.itb.com) and from the ITB Newsroom and social media. Join the Official ITB Newsroom on LinkedIn.

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# ITB India 2023 Conference to unveil major trends in South Asia travel market

- Over 100 speakers in 80 sessions, distributed over 3 tracks, united under the motto “Connecting You to the Indian Travel Market”
- Local and international heavyweights representing Agoda, Amadeus, FCM Travel Solutions India, Hotelbeds, HRS Group, ITC Hotels, ixigo, KAYAK, MakeMyTrip, Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings, Society for Incentive Travel Excellence (SITE), SOTC Travel Limited, and many, more to attend.



**Berlin/Mumbai:** ITB India 2023 Conference will bring together travel industry professionals from different parts of the world and India at the Jio World Convention Centre in Mumbai, India, from 26 to 28 April 2023, running alongside ITB India Expo 2023.

Featuring three tracks, the conference will see more than 100 industry leaders in over 80 sessions exchange their insights on the future of the industry, powered by the motto “Connecting You to the Indian Travel Market”.

“South Asia is one of the largest global outbound travel markets. All projections show a dynamic recovery in demand so that travel will reach pre-pandemic levels in 2024 and surpass them in 2025.

“Knowledge exchange platforms such as ITB India Conference are crucial to understanding and harnessing this growth”, commented Ms. Sonia Prashar, Deputy Director General, Indo-German Chamber of Commerce.

The ITB India 2023’s Conference will kick-off with two keynote presentations, focusing on today’s travel

market in South Asia and the opportunities to drive the industry forward.

The keynote will be delivered by two industry heavyweights: Rakesh Bansal, CEO, Amadeus India and Daniel Dsouza, President & Country Head, Leisure, SOTC Travel Limited.

## THREE CONFERENCE TRACKS

ITB India, MICE Show India and Travel Tech India conference sessions would have three tracks.

Knowledge Theatre will be ITB India’s principal conference track, with C-level leaders and renowned industry experts sharing their perspectives on the future of the market.

They will exchange their insights on a broad range of topics, from the latest general trends to challenges and opportunities for sustainability in South Asia’s travel market.

Key speakers at the Knowledge Theatre would include Jayaraj Shanmugam, Chief Operating Officer, Bangalore International Airport; Anil Chadha, Divisional Chief Executive, ITC Hotels; Deepak Ohri, Founder & CEO, Lebuha Hotels & Resorts; Vikramjit Singh, President, Lemon Tree Hotels; Rajesh Magow, Co-Founder & Group CEO, MakeMyTrip; Manoj Singh, Country Head India, Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings, and more.

MICE Show India, the second track, will focus on corporate travel and ways to tap into innovative B2B solutions for meetings, events, and incentives. Speakers will give a comprehensive 2023 outlook of India’s MICE

market, offer new angles on incentive travel, and discuss innovative strategies for travel programme optimisation.

Key speakers at MICE Show India will include Chander Mansharamani, Managing Director, Alpcord Network Events and Conferences Management Company; Harshad Donde, Country Director-India, BCD Meetings &

Events; Manpreet Bindra, President & Head-MICE, FCM Travel Solutions India; Vinita Kripalani, Associate Regional Vice President, HelmsBriscoe; Neelu Singh, Managing Director, APAC, HRS Group; Amresh Tiwari, Vice Chairman, India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB); Barun Gupta, President, SITE India, and more.

Travel Tech India will look at novelties in digital solutions that enhance travel experiences. Main highlights will include leveraging the power of analytics for a better understanding of consumer mindsets and the meta-integration and the synergies it creates, as well as exploring contactless travel in the world still getting over the pandemic.

Key speakers at Travel Tech India will include Anshul Gupta, Managing Director, Travel & Hospitality Industry, Accenture-Advanced Technology Centers in India; Krishna Rathi, Country Director-India, Sri Lanka & Nepal, Agoda; Darshana Shirodkar, Senior Director, Lodging Market Management-Southeast Asia and Indian Subcontinent, Expedia; Bartomeu Gili Prohens, Vice President, Middle East, Africa and India, Hotelbeds; Alope Bajpai, Co-Founder & Group CEO, ixigo; Tarun Tahiliani, Country Manager - India, KAYAK; Kumar Gaurav Gupta, VP & Country Manager-India, SAP Concur, and more.

Registration for Trade Visitor to ITB India 2023 is now open. Interested participants may purchase an early-bird discounted ticket online on: [itb-india.com/visit-register](http://itb-india.com/visit-register).

For more information on ITB India 2023, visit [itb-india.com](http://itb-india.com).



## ITB INDIA

ITB India is an annual 3-day business-to-business trade show and convention curated to connect you to the Indian Travel Market. ITB India brings together key travel industry leaders and international exhibitors from various segments of MICE, Leisure, Corporate, and Travel Technology. Leverage on ITB India to capture the fast-growing Indian and South Asian Markets, forge new partnerships, and strengthen existing business relations with the most important players in India and South Asia.

## ITB GLOBAL BRAND FAMILY

For more than 50 years, the name ITB has stood worldwide for industry knowledge 365 days a year, networking and trendsetting events—in a virtual, in-person or hybrid format alike.

ITB India follows the global trend of leading trade shows returning to their pre-pandemic on-site formats and locations in 2023, including the other offspring of the ITB brand family, ITB Asia in Singapore, which takes the broader regional market into its perspective. It returned as an in-person show last year and will be held again in Singapore from 25 to 27 October 2023.

ITB Berlin, the world's leading B2B trade show for the travel industry, is coming back and will be held from March 7 to 9, and ITB China, the marketplace for China's travel industry, is scheduled from 12 to 14 September in Shanghai.

## Rashtreeya Ayurveda Vidyapeeth to organise National Seminar on Millets on March 16-17



Rashtriya Ayurveda Vidyapeeth (RAV), an autonomous organization under Ministry of AYUSH is organizing a two-day National Seminar on 'Usage of Trina Dhanya (Millets) in contemporary lifestyle' on March 16 and 17 in Delhi.

There would be 5 scientific sessions in the seminar featuring presentation of research paper research scholars and researchers of the field. The seminar is aimed at creating awareness about the usefulness, health benefits of Millets in contemporary lifestyle.

The seminar is being organised to mark the declaration of 2023 as the International Year of Millet by the United Nations. The UN took the decision based on a proposal from India, which wants to position itself as a global hub for Millets.

India is the largest producer of Millets in the world, accounting for 20 % of global production and 80% of Asia's production. According to FAO, the aim for 2023 is to increase awareness about millets in food security and nutrition.

Non-communicable diseases (NCD) have become the major cause of morbidity and mortality in developed as well as underdeveloped countries. Many disorders

under the caption of Santharpanjanya vyadhi resemble NCDs of present era.

According to Ayurveda, Ahara is one of the three important pillars for healthy life. Certain changes in diet have great potential in preventing many diseases. Millets or Trina-Dhanyas, mentioned in Ayurveda, have good nutrition values and are said to be healthier option to maintain the health.

In the recent times, Millets have become important owing to their good nutritional values, numerous health benefits, versatile environmental adaptation. Millets being rich in nutritional content could be used as 'food medicine'. The objective of the seminar is to draw global attention to this aspect of Millets.

## Fourth Dr. CR Agnives Memorial National Ayurveda MD/MS thesis contest held



*Winners, judges and organisers of the Dr CR Agnives Memorial 4th National Ayurveda MD/MS (Ay.) Thesis presentation competition*

The fourth Dr. CR Agnives Memorial Fourth National Ayurveda MD/MS (Ay.) Thesis Presentation Competition-2023 was held under the aegis of the Ayurveda Medical Association of India (AMAI) in the last week of December 2022.

The competition, conceptualized in 2019, commemorates Dr. CR Agnives (1947-2015), an academician par excellence and an author who worked tirelessly for imparting scientific temper and vigour to aspirants of Ayurvedic Sciences.

Dr. CR Agnives who hailed from Thiruvananthapuram, had in-depth knowledge of the fundamental principles of Ayurveda and his vision to translate the concepts to match contemporary intelligence made him the doyen in the field.

The prime objective of the Dr. CR Agnives Memorial Fourth National Ayurveda MD/MS (Ay.) Thesis Presentation Competition-2023 was to acknowledge and award the best Ayurvedic MD/MS(Ay.) thesis work of the year 2022 so as to encourage and vitalize scientific temper in young energetic minds.

The event was paired with 'Dr. Prakash Mangalasseri Memorial National Academic Fair 2023', the two events being conducted in connection with the 44th Annual State Council meeting of AMAI.

# Post-Pandemic Travel

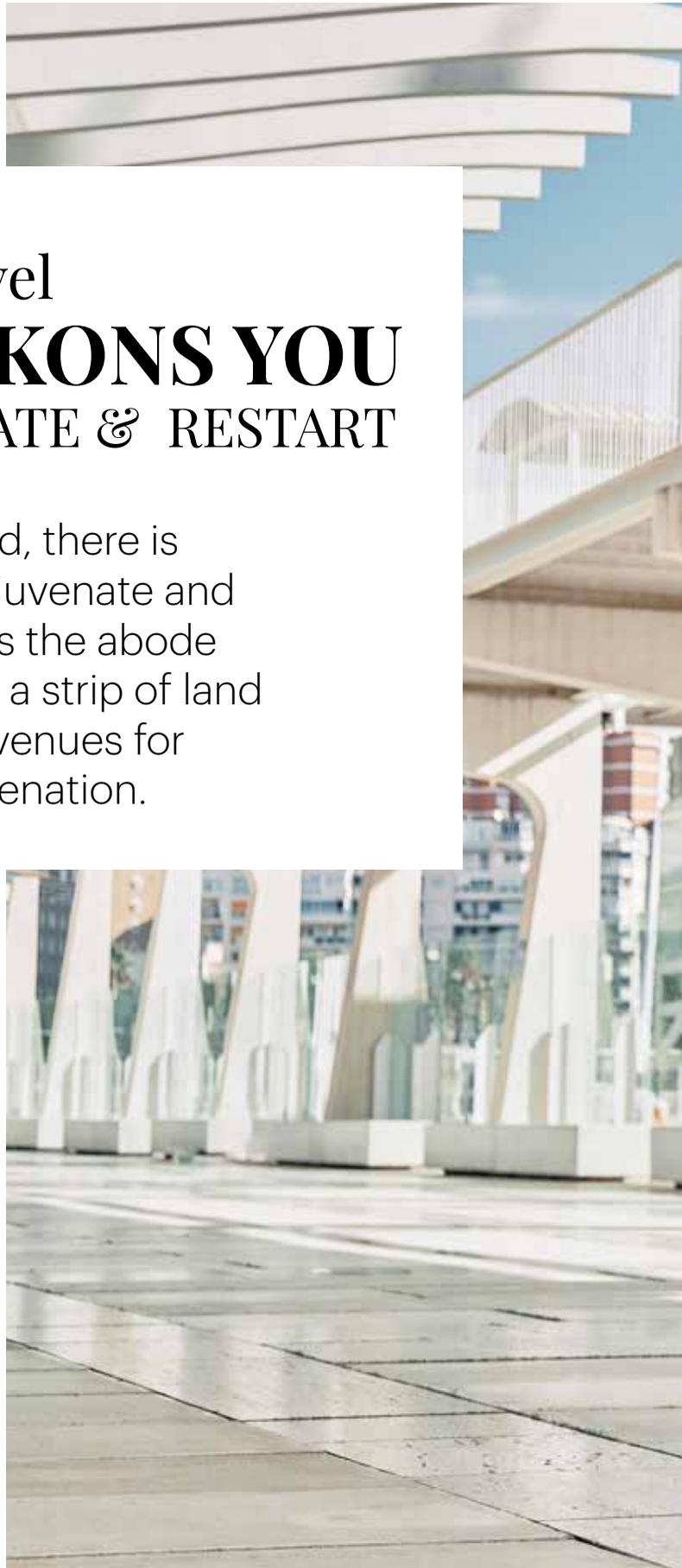
## **KERALA BECKONS YOU TO RELAX, REJUVENATE & RESTART**

In the post-pandemic world, there is no better place to relax, rejuvenate and restart than Kerala, which is the abode of authentic Ayurveda and a strip of land with wondrously diverse avenues for spiritual and physical rejuvenation.

A healthy vacation is for many an oxymoron. Vacations, for most, is about lost sleep, race against time and indulgence. A young body would stand such rushed, often long-haul, travel and food, but not the aged, for whom life is on the slow lane. They must guard against hectic travel schedules and unfamiliar food triggering or aggravating ailments.

There has been a sudden surge in global travel in the post-Covid world. Truth is, much of this travel is for travel's sake or, at best, in search of experiences that remained in dreams during the two years of the pandemic. But, in these times, the travel takes place in against the backdrop of Covid-19 pandemic, the long-term effects of which are still unravelling.

Almost a year after the pandemic graph fell sharply, Post-Covid Syndrome is staring at a large section of humanity. The medical fraternity is yet to come to grip with the gamut of health challenges that Covid-19 has spawned, but the evidences so





# Relax

*You have worked hard to make it in life. Now, for a brief while, forget life on the fast lane, and the extreme cold conditions that you live in. Head to Kerala in south India. Enjoy the sun and the balmy breeze on palm-fringed beaches. Walk through villages and see life move on a slower rhythm. Or make slow progress in country crafts through a network of canals. Listen to the roll of the temple drums, the chime of the Church bells or the whisper of little rivulets that cut through the hilly terrain. Walk through tea plantations where silence is your only companion.*

*Relax! You are in God's Own Country!*

**Ayurveda**  
& Health Tourism



far have already raised fears about the pandemic having left long-term respiratory, vascular, cardiological, musculoskeletal and neurological imprints on many.

The post-COVID-19 condition's management continues to be challenging for healthcare providers, and it may threaten healthcare systems that the pandemic has already overburdened. Evidence with a high or moderate degree of certainty supported the prevalence estimates corresponding to five symptoms of post-COVID-19 conditions, namely depression, fatigue, dizziness, shortness of breath, and headache in the community and hospital settings.

New modelling conducted for WHO/Europe by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the University of Washington's School of Medicine in the United States had shown that in the first two years of the pandemic, at least 17 million individuals across the 53 Member States of the WHO European Region may have experienced post COVID-19 condition, also known as long COVID.

The harsh truth is that a large number of these 17 million people would have to live with diverse symptoms of long Covid for a very long time. The WHO modelling also suggests that females are twice as likely as males to experience long COVID.

An important dimension of these symptoms is that one does not report to a medic or hospital with these or some of the, as yet clearly established, symptoms. The SARS-CoV-2) virus mainly affects the respiratory system, but has indirect effects on multiple organ systems including the musculoskeletal system, but long-term follow-up and their prevalence are still under investigation.

Which means it is left to the individual, by and large, to manage one's health in the post-Covid phase and that cannot be through lifestyle alterations and holistic healthcare that is in tune with Nature. Allopathy cannot go beyond a certain point to address this challenge. That is where a holistic medical system such as Ayurveda gains crucial significance. What Ayurveda can do in such a context is to enhance immunity by rejuvenating body tissues.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Directorate General of Health Services (EMR Division), in India, has issued post-COVID management protocol which includes Immunity promoting AYUSH medicines like Ayush Kwatha, Samshamani Vati or Guduchi powder, Ashwagandha powder, Aamalaki fruit or Aamalaki powder, Yashtimadhu powder, warm milk with Haridra powder and gargling with turmeric and salt under the direction of registered Ayurveda physician.

The procedures such as Abhyanga (therapeutic massage), Swedana (fomentation), Mridu Virechana (mild purgation), Sneha and/or Kashaya Basti (medicated enema), Shirodhara (applying medicated liquid on the scalp), Udvartana (dry massage), Nasya (therapeutic nasal drop procedures), can also be applied taking into consideration the suitability of the patient





# Rejuvenate

*You have lived by the clock. The wear and tear are telling on your body and your mind. It's time to leave the beltway. Head to Kerala in south India. Feel life on a slower lane. Travel by road and see villages where the traditional and the modern clasp hands. Take a boat ride through the backwaters and canals to see water, fish, waterbirds and humans share the same habitat. Feel peace spread all over you as you join a Yoga session. Head to one of the many authentic Ayurvedic spas. Surrender yourself to the caring hands of experts as they give you an oil massage. See how your body get recharged with the massage, Yoga and food regimen.*

*Rejuvenated, you are ready for hectic life back home. Yes, you are in God's Own Country!*

**Ayurveda**  
& Health Tourism



and depending upon various symptomatic conditions.

A number of clinical trials have also suggested Yoga to be effective toward improving pulmonary function. Several mechanistic factors have proposed to underlie the beneficial effects seen in the patients undergoing Yoga such as increasing respiratory stamina, relaxing chest muscles, expanding the lungs, raising energy levels, and calming the body.

Yoga has also been reported to be an effective intervention for stress management and improvement in psychological health, which is affected in most of the COVID long-haulers. Hence Yoga can be formulated as an add-on strategy for the prevention and management of post-COVID syndrome.

Kerala, in the Indian south, is known for its long tradition of Ayurvedic medicine and is a popular destination for people seeking Ayurvedic treatments. Kerala's long history of Ayurvedic medicine, combined with its natural beauty and hospitality, make it an attractive destination for those seeking traditional healing methods in the post-Covid era.

These include rejuvenation therapies, detoxification programs, and treatments for specific conditions such as arthritis, diabetes, and respiratory diseases. The state's natural beauty, calm environment, and skilled practitioners make it an ideal destination for those seeking traditional Ayurvedic treatments.

**THERE ARE SCORES OF AYURVEDA TREATMENT CENTRES, WHICH ALSO OFFER TOP-OF-THE-LINE FACILITIES FOR THOSE SEEKING TREATMENT. SOME OF THESE CENTRES ARE:**

- Keraleeya Ayurveda Samajam, Shoranur, Palakkad.
- Arya Vaidya Sala, Kottakkal, Malappuram.
- Vaidyamadham Vaidyasala und Pflegeheim, Mezhathur, Palakkad
- Somatheeram Ayurvedic Health Resort, Kovalam, Trivandrum.
- Ayurveda-Mana, Thrissur, Kerala.
- Kairali Ayurveda-Heildorf, Olassery Kodumbu, Palakkad.
- Kalari Kovilakom, Kollengode, Palakkad.
- Kalari Rasayana - CGH Earth Ayurveda Hospital, South Paravur, Kollam
- Raha Ayurveda-Krankenhaus, Ernakulam
- Dr.P. Alikutty's Kottakkal Ayurveda and Modern Hospital, Kottakkal, Malappuram.



- Punarnava Ayurveda-Krankenhaus, Edapally, Ernakulam.
- Poovar Ayurveda Dorf und Krankenhaus, Poovar, Trivandrum.
- Duftende Natur, Munnar und Kollam
- Indimasi Heildorf, Vattapara, Nedumangadu
- Krishnendu Ayurveda-Krankenhaus, Chingoli, Alappuzha
- Seetharam Ayurveda Beach Resort, Nattika, Thrissur
- Aarogyamantra Integriertes Heilen, Manjoor South, Kottayam.
- Ayurtheeram, Isola de Cocco, Poovar, Trivandrum,
- Kadapuram, Strandresort, Nattika, Thrissur.
- Nattika Beach Ayurveda Resort, Naattika, Thrissur.
- Jeevees Ayurveda, Kalpetta, Wayanad.



- Amal Tamara, Mannanchery, Alappuzha.
- Kumarakom Lake Resort, Kumarakom, Kottayam.
- Lieblings Kerala, Leela Palace, Kovalam, Trivandrum.
- Krishna Theeram, Varkala, Trivandrum.
- Ayur Bethaniaya, Thrissur.
- Niramayam Heritage Ayurveda Krankenhaus, Thayamkulamgara, Cherpu, Thrissur.
- Ayurgreen, Edappal, Malappuram.
- Shinshiva Ayurveda Resort, Kovalam, Trivandrum.
- Dr. Franklins Ayurveda, Chowara, Trivandrum.
- Poovar Island Resort, Poovar, Trivandrum.
- Tigris Valley-Holistic Wellness Resort, Markaz Knowledge City, Kozhikode.
- Amara Ayurveda Retreat, Kovalam, Trivandrum.
- Nagarjuna Ayurveda, Kalady, Ernakulam.

# Restart

*Has the rush hours, the clock work life, and the weather extremes sapped your energies? It's time you headed to Kerala in south India. Forget the trodden paths and must-see places. Look for places that offer authentic experiences of life in a different geography. Dedicate your time to relax with an unhurried itinerary and a rejuvenating Ayurvedic therapy. Get trained in Yoga. Decide on a package that fits your time schedules.*

*Now, restart your journey with renewed vigor, health and confidence- from God's Own Country!*

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- **River Retreat, Shoranur, Palakkad.**
- **Sudarshanam Ayurvedic Eye Hospital und Panchakarma Center, Thiruvalla,**
- **MVR Ayurveda Medical College, Parassinikkadavu, Kannur.**
- **Parathuvayalil Ayurveda-Krankenhaus, Keezhillam, Perumbavoor, Ernakulam.**
- **Majlis Ayurvedic Health Park, Peramangalam, Thrissr.**

- **Nangeli Ayurveda Hospital, Kothamangalam, Ernakulam.**
- **Maurya Ayurveda Ortho & Neurorehabilitationszentrum, Muvattupuzha, Ernakulam.**
- **Sarathy Ayurveda Hospital, Muppathadam, Aluva, Ernakulam.**
- **Amala Ayurveda-Krankenhaus und Forschungszentrum, Thrissur.**
- **Sreedhareeyam Ayurvedisches Augenkrankenhaus und Forschungszentrum, Koothattukulam, Ernakulam.**
- **Vaidya Ayurveda-Krankenhaus, Kalady,**
- **Anandam, Travancore Heritage, Chowara, Kovalam, Trivandrum.**

This list could go on and on simply because there are so many very good treatment facilities in Kerala, including some that are less widely known. There are also individuals who offer high quality treatment and therapies. The treatment protocols are so well set that those who stray are easily identifiable and avoidable.

The luxuriance of the Kerala locale is another big plus in Kerala. Within a short distance of a few hundred kilometres, one can experience the sunny palm-fronded beaches and the cool pleasance of the Western Ghats as it literally runs into the Arabian Sea. Lying in between, a land where a modern society has flourished over the past several centuries with close links to the developed west, its learning and a highly evolved cultural ethos.

Kerala has always welcomed the visitor with open arms and the result of this has been a cultural confluence on a small strip of land. Thus, every visitor would find something common with her home culture as she travels through Kerala and interacts with its people. It could be a word uttered, a rhythm played, a song sung, or a curve or niche of an edifice. The balmy breeze and the bright days are themselves are uplifting and, when melded with Kerala's Ayurvedic treatment tradition, a trip to Kerala becomes what it should be—meaningful, enjoyable and purposive.

# RELAX REJUVENATE & RESTART



## Visits to Kerala curated by Ayurveda and Health Tourism team

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*And, once you are done with you with the must-dos, join us to enjoy the bounteous diversity of Kerala and its rich tradition of authentic Ayurveda in God's Own Country. Be with us for a week, a fortnight or more. Ayurveda and Health Tourism has been around for nearly two decades documenting the growth of value travel in Kerala. Trust us to provide you the most authentic medical and rejuvenation services and the best places to live and visit.*

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be in touch with our team in Europe:

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# Ayurveda for Cancer meets 'One Health'

## Convergences towards AYUSHomics, AYUSHnomics & AYUSHdost



### Dr. Madan Thangavelu

Dr. Madan is a noted Genome Biologist. Following a Ph.D. in Molecular Genetics from the University of Cambridge, his recent academic affiliations include Research Fellowships at the Department of Oncology, University of Cambridge, Medical Research Council Cancer Cell Unit, Cambridge, and Leverhulme Research Fellow, Medical Research Council Laboratory of Molecular Biology, Cambridge. He is a Member of the Mind-Matter Unification Project of the Theory of Condensed Matter Group at the Cavendish Laboratory, Cambridge, headed by Professor Brian Josephson

**O**ne Health and its science-society underpinning is gaining traction globally. The Science & Technology Clusters, an initiative of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India (<https://www.psa.gov.in/st-clusters>) is one example of India's expression of leveraging the science-society engagements for One Health.

Ayurveda and AYUSH provide both immediate solutions and a canvas for crafting more health-environment-disease narratives. AYUSHnomics, the economics of AYUSH, should inspire and provide investors the confidence in both AYUSH and allied green enterprises for the future. Within such possibilities and needs, cancer and chronic diseases including mental health demands a One Health approach for health, wellness and wellbeing.

Bharathiya Sanskriti Darshan Trust's Integrated Cancer Treatment and Research Centre (ICTRC) hosted their 6th International Conference on Ayurveda for Cancer in Wagholi, Pune, Maharashtra; 9 December to 12 December 2022. The Conference attracted Ayurveda well-wishers and enthusiasts, scholars and vaidyas, oncologists and oncologists, clinicians, academicians, experts and patients from across India and several other nations.

Held once every five years, this edition was a gala and the largest in the series. The aim of these conferences, in the words of Dr S P Sardeshmukh, Chairman of the Trust and Director of the Integrated Cancer Treatment and Research Centre, " ... is to amalgamate under one roof Vaidya, Ayurveda experts, researchers as well as medical oncologist, oncopathologists, oncosurgeons and radiation oncologists and to give all an unbiased and open platform to have a dialogue with various individuals and organisations, an opportunity to share their researches, experiences, and advances done individually or collectively to treat the cancer patients in a better manner".



This was the wish of the founder of the Trust, Reverend Sri Prabhakar Sardeshmukh Maharaj. The Trust was established in 1954 with a vision to serve mankind and The Integrated Cancer Treatment and Research project was started on Gudi Padava Day in March 1994 - the first day of the month of Chaitra as per the Hindu lunisolar calendar.

The aims and progress of the Ayurveda for Cancer projects described by Dr Arvind Kulkarni MD, the founding and current Director of Oncology is "... to evaluate Ayurveda for cancer care in biopsy proven cancer patients. The Trust has clinical centres in Mumbai, Solapur, Kolhapur, Aurangabad, Ahmednagar and New Delhi and is expanding with more researchers, consultants and oncologists joining the effort. Over the past 28 years over 13,000 biopsy proven cancer patients have been examined and the results have been presented in meetings in USA, Europe, Australia and Japan"

The 6th Ayurveda for Cancer conference was inaugurated by Padma Bhushan Vaidya Devinderji Triguna, President of Rashtriya Ayurved Vidyapeeth, Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India. Dr Jeffery D. White, Director, Office of Cancer Complementary and Alternative Medicine, National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health, in his keynote address offered a detailed and comprehensive overview of

'U.S. National Cancer Institute's Traditional-Medicine Related Activities: Focus on Ayurveda and the Potential for Integrative (or Collaborative) Research'.

My call at the Wagholi Cancer Conference was on extending Ayurveda Biology to AYUSH Biology for advancing cancer science and cancer biology research. Powered by contemporary cell and molecular biology methodologies, AYUSHomics is set to offer even more insights about the origins of disease and the impact of the environment and all qualitative aspects of the wider determinates of health on human, animal, plant and microbial including fungal, bacterial and viruses.

Discussions are underway with Dr Shubhada Chip-lunkar, Former Director & Head of Tumour Immunology and Immunotherapy, ACTREC, Tata Memorial Centre Navi Mumbai and Vaidya Dr Vineeta Deshpande, Deputy Director, ICTRC on the microbiome and its influences on improving cancer treatment responses.

Dr. Dilip Gadgil Prabhakar's presentation of panch-karma for cancer patients and survivors and the details in Dr Beena and Prof. Dr. Sudhakar Reddy's (JSS Ayurveda Medical College & Hospital, Mysuru) presentation on the effect of sadyovirechana along with Shivagutika in stage IV cancer patients provide two important messages for cancer investigators and clini-





cians across the globe. Further details of Dr Gadgil's network of activities is at: <https://cancerholisticguidance.com/about-us/>.

Makiko Sato and Cheiko Nakamura from Japan offered their experiences of Ayurvedic cancer treatment offered several touching details of the cancer treatment offered and their experiences in Wagholi. Makiko Sato's introduction to Ayurveda is described in great detail in the Satvik web page (<https://satvik.jp/about-satvik-english/>). A summary of the three-day event in the abstract book of almost 100-pages. Video recording of the 11 sessions, 85 presentations are archived by ICRTC for posterity.

At the time of writing this letter the Centre of Excellence in Cancer Research and Centre for Medicinal Plants Research, Arya Vaidya Saala, Kottakal, Kerala, had hosted another Ayurveda for cancer event. The National Workshop on Cancer Research in Ayurveda, was from Monday 20 February to Wednesday 22 February 2023. With two technical session on each day, the themes included Clinical Research Methodology for Ayurveda (Dr Rajmohan V., Government Ayurveda College, Thiruvananthapuram), Clinical Experience in Ayurvedic Management of Cancer (Dr K M Madhu, Charitable Hospital, Arya Vaidyasala, Kottakal), Quality standardization and validation of traditional knowledge (Dr Sulaiman CT, Centre for Medicinal Plants Research, Arya Vaidya Sala, Kottakal), Cancer research in Ayurveda (Dr P Rammanohar, Amrita School of Ayurveda, Kollam), Recent Trends in Cancer Research (Dr Narayanankutty, MVR Cancer Centre and Research Institute, Kozikode, Kerala)

& Ayurveda and Natural Products (Dr Radhakrishnan KV, CSIR-CSIR- National Institute for Interdisciplinary Science and Technology, Thiruvananthapuram).

Two Ayurveda student competitions under the auspices of the Ayurveda Medical Association of India and organised Ayurveda Medical Association Research Foundation spotlighted the abundance and excellence in the Ayurveda undergraduate, post-graduate (MD/MS) scholarship. "The Role of Ayurveda Practitioner as a family Physician" and "Effective Implementation of One Health – Local to Global Approach" were the themes of the Dr. Prakash Mangalasseri Memorial National Academic Fair and PG & UG Paper presentation competition held on 19 February. For the Dr CR Agnives Memorial 4th National Ayurveda MD/MS (Ay.) Thesis presentation competition (Sunday 26 February), 170 eligible theses were reviewed to identify five meritorious theses.

With health problems in every nation of the world and soaring health budgets yet to achieve better health outcomes, perhaps Ayurveda and AYUSH forces, if harnessed and galvanised, can lead to a Global AYUSH Force to reach the world along the lines of Operation Dost for the world.

India's G20 Presidency till November 2023 and the summit in Delhi in September 2023 provides an opportune platform to reinforce the One Earth- One Family – One Future expressions. A reasonable set of AYUSH-inspired G-20 thoughts would be:

- Recognise and respect the sanctity of planetary health; Reform commercial markets and reduce nega-



tive impact on human, animal, plant and environmental health; Detail policies and grow businesses dedicated to health promotion, health maintenance and disease prevention; Advance cures that are novel, traditional, sustainable; Applaud and reward "Coherent with Life" thinking and solutions for present and future needs; De-commodify human, animal and planetary health; Foster ideas for disease prevention and health maintenance; Develop life-coherent global enterprises to promote health and wellbeing.

These wishes resonate well with The Government of India, Principal Scientific Adviser's Science & Technology Clusters initiative's three objectives: 1) Creation of a shared ecosystem, 2) Becoming a regional solution provide, 3) Becoming nationally and globally competitive (<https://www.psa.gov.in/st-clusters>) "through collaborative applied R&D projects for impact, bringing together multiple science providers (academic organizations, R&D labs, etc.) to provide solutions for end-users (industry, government and others)."

The Bengaluru Science & Technology Cluster (BeST, <https://www.bestk.in/>) is one initiative set up to break new ground in areas related to health, agriculture, urban transportation, climate. The seed funding for BeST was sanctioned in September 2022 to work on three domains: One Health; Digital Health and Precision Agriculture (<https://www.bestk.in/thematic-areas/>). BeST's vision is to "develop and implement frameworks to catalyse interactions between science and society which lead to a long-term competitive advantage to the nation".

The vision "to enable outcome-driven collaborations across sectors by serving as an inclusive science and technology knowledge platform that is driven by alignment local, regional and national goals for an AtmaNirbhar Bharat".

Chaired by Prof. Spenta Wadia, a physicist and a large team of high calibre researchers, BeST's Hexa-Helical model and six activities provide further opportunities for opening new vistas in areas including One Health. Offering health tourists to India incentives



to participate in research projects is one exciting convergence to consider.

Europe is hosting several other events for promoting these wishes. MAP EXPO 2023 - The Global Marketplace for Medicinal & Aromatic Plants in Gorinchem, in The Netherlands on 3rd & 4th March 2023 is expected to bring visitors from around the world. Prague 2023: The 3rd World Health Congress 2023 Prague ([www.whc2023prague.com](http://www.whc2023prague.com)) is scheduled for September this year. The work on TAM, Traditional Ayurvedic Medicines continues under the leadership of Vaidya Harish Verma (<https://ccaycollege.com/>) and the Canada India Foundation (<https://canadaindiafoundation.com/>). The 18th session is scheduled for Sunday 5th March on a traditional preparation Ashwagandhi lehyam claimed to be beneficial for Long-COVID management. In Brussels, The MEP Interest Group on Integrative Medicine event on Mental Health is scheduled for March 28 in the European Parliament in Brussels.

What should be the optimal strategy to ensure sustainable growth of such activities? Better coordination

of the dispersed Ayurveda activities on cancer and others across India, both small and large, is important. AYUSH Leadership content and AYUSH outcomes must be made available free for the world with urgency without fear or guilt.

Demystify by deconstructing AYUSH biology, make the deep and complex simple and inform and empower citizens about health and wellbeing, rollout the AYUSH Fanfare and help build an AYUSHnet for the common man. Follow and innovate models like the ZOE Health Study (<https://health-study.joinzoe.com/>). Network AYUSH with organisations like u3a, the University of the Third Age (<https://www.u3a.org.uk/>).

The u3a announces boldly it is “Proud to have completed “40 years of positive ageing ... The u3a movement has been learning, staying active and having fun for 40 years - showcasing what it means to have a positive later life.”

Refine the AYUSH narratives and mind-set globally by promoting and offering authentic AYUSH. Develop short courses on ‘Marketing AYUSH’, ‘Thriving



with AYUSH - Five Easy Steps', 'Becoming an AYUSH Guru and AYUSH Ambassador' should become global calls.

Language remains a problem and language challenges need to be overcome. The Language Paradox in Globalizing Ayurveda & AYUSH was the subject of my presentation, at the University of Hyderabad, on 6th February. AYUSH systems offer treasures for contemporary and future health, healthcare and wellbeing. Their foundational principles hold algorithms for addressing complex Planetary Health and One Health challenges. Unfortunately, these aspirations are not without difficulties. Contemporary rendition of AYUSH knowledge is far from optimum. The deep concepts and rich insights are either lost in translation or a prisoner of language.

The global diffusion of AYUSH demands linguistic mastery in conveying subtle culturally entwined and nuanced concepts to new lands and cultures. Is it possible today to approach and present the wisdom and benefits of AYUSH using other languages, spoken or speechless, without distorting, diluting AYUSH rationale or disenfranchising or disappointing

AYUSH education and qualified, inspired practitioners?

The sound-less languages of cells, genomics and other areas of contemporary biology provide powerful ways to reinterpret and refresh traditional knowledge to meet contemporary needs. An essentially transdisciplinary approach will be the basis for uncovering more of such 'life-coherent' subtle languages necessary for refining and appreciating AYUSH wisdom. Future revolutions in sustainable living, education, rural development and life-coherent business enterprises which link diverse life forms and biodiversity with humanity, habitat and health will arise from such linguistic innovations.

Legacy, like any object is a discrete bundle of functions and procedures; legacy is both a boon and a curse. Diligence and decades of perseverance, as seen in the Wagholi Cancer Conference and creativity and powerful convergences as in the Government of India, Principal Scientific Adviser's Science & Technology Clusters initiative, when backed by zero-legacy-philanthropy and networks powered by the Internet, AYUSH can be made more open, accessible and better for everyone. (Operation Dost returned from Turkey - AYUSH Dost aligns well with several goals in the G20-thoughts) In the age of value-laden, buccaneering, profiteering, and rapidly dwindling dysfunctional Vaccine Diplomacy, the elegance of such AYUSH Softpower and AYUSH Diplomacy and the power and importance of AYUSHomics and AYUSHnomics is a no-brainer.



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# AGEING THE HEALTHY WAY

Ayurveda has always been realistic about the unchangeable nature of ageing. Its underlying thought is very minimal: a trauma-free life and an easy death, as expressed in the prayer of Drona, the guru of Kauravas, to Lord Krishna.

Childhood is the time of innocence and discovery, youth is the phase of excitement and adventure, middle age is the period of career and concerns and old age is the time to relax and let go.

This is life, as we would like it to roll itself out. But not everybody is blessed with the pleasures of a perfectly balanced life. Very often the overenthusiasm and overexertion of the youthful days take a toll on the body and mind.

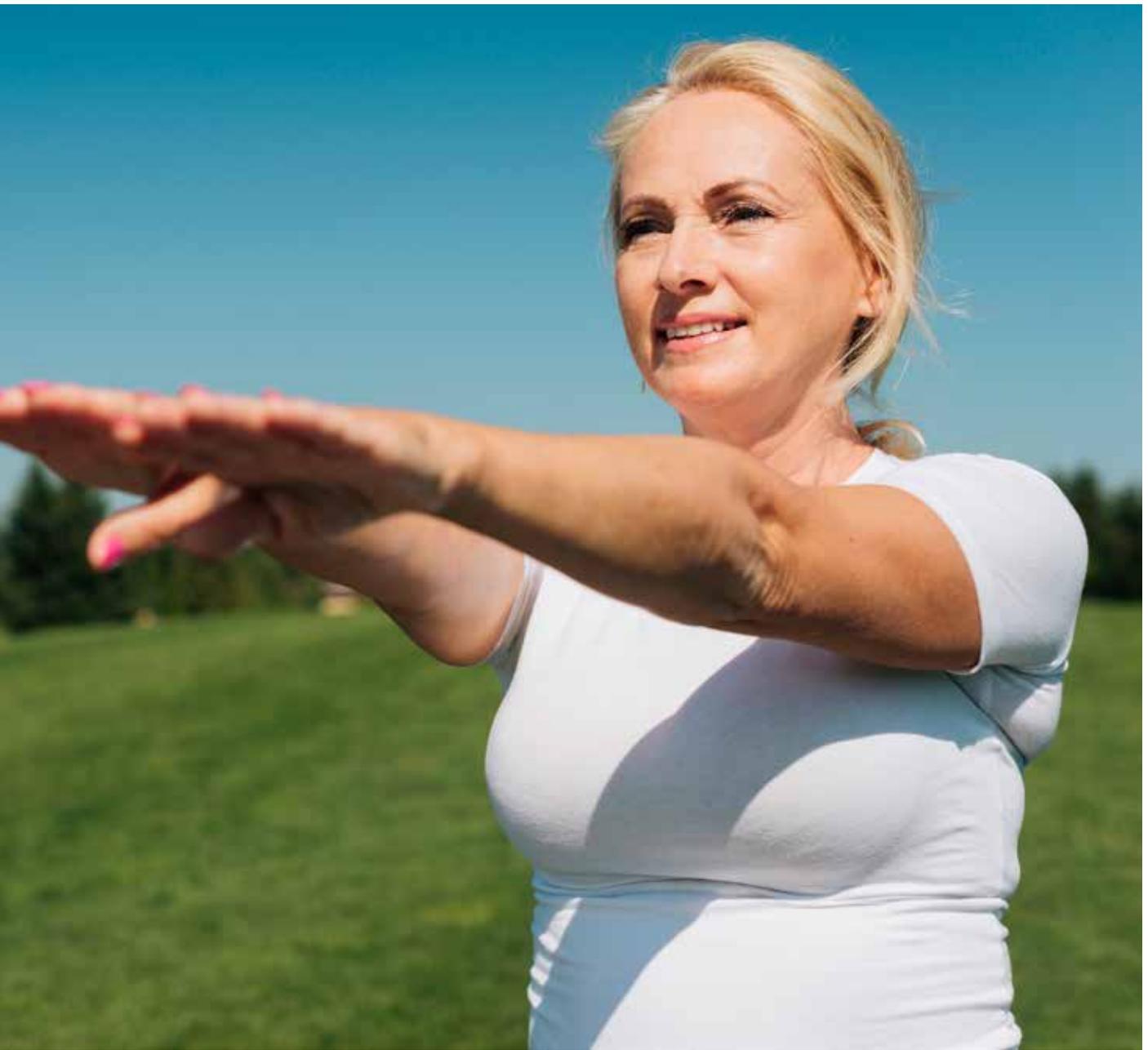
The years of play, adventure, long working hours, stress, etc., slow the body and may cause aches and pains. As one nears the senior citizen mark, the mind and body sometimes turn weak and become an easy prey to health problems. Geriatrics focuses on such ailments.

‘Geros’ in Greek means ‘old man’ and ‘iatros’ means ‘healer’. Thus, geriatrics is that branch

of medicine which deals with the problems and diseases specific to the old age—how to prevent them, if possible, or, if they have already set in, how to manage them.

Jara chikitsa, one of the eight branches of Ashtanga Ayurveda, exclusively deals with measures for retaining agility and vitality during old age. It suggests that it is possible to achieve this feat through a combination of measures—medicines, food and control over the body and mind.





Talking of mind, Ayurveda stresses that the mind exerts the deepest influence on the body. A state of balanced awareness leads to right attitudes, which result in right actions, culminating in a higher state of health. A tough task, but Ayurveda has a way to achieve that goal. To put it a little figuratively, it is possible to have Spring in Autumn.

How would you like to live the twilight years of your life? Downcast, as in a European fall, cold and showing no signs of life? Or like an English Spring with its vibrant life? A choice that is easy to make, but difficult to practise. For, ageing is an unstoppable and irreversible process that Nature has decided for all liv-

ing organisms. As the body ages, degenerative changes follow. What one can do is to prevent some of these changes or slow down them down.

### **TRIDOSHAS AND PHASES**

Ayurveda holds that the three Humours or Tridoshas coordinate and enable the changes that visit the body. While the growth-oriented Kapha oversees anabolism, Pitha ensures sustenance and hence metabolism. Vata, which denotes deterioration, presides over catabolism.

And they exert their influence differently at different phases of life: Kapha dominates in the early years, Pitha takes the upper hand during middle age and



Vata takes over in the old age. Thus, old age is dominated by Vata, wherein the metabolism slows down and energy resources dry up.

Having explained the growth phases of the human body, Ayurveda approaches geriatrics from its own perspective. It seeks to ensure a peaceful entry into the twilight years by helping the body retain its Pitha-Kapha combination and keep Vata from over-exerting itself.

Ayurveda classics by Charaka and Vagbhata begin with chapters named 'How to live long' and 'What prolongs life' that enumerate measures that help prevent diseases and preserve health. Geriatrics or jara chikitsa is one among the eight branches of Ashtanga Ayurveda that focuses on the diseases and conditions associated with old age. Ayurvedic geriatric procedures aim at curing the physical, emotional and behavioural disturbances that set in with age, with the help of well-planned treatment procedures.

Ayurveda, however, has always been realistic about the unchangeable nature of ageing. Its underlying thought is very minimal: a trauma-free life and an easy death, as expressed in the prayer of Drona, the guru of Kauravas, to Lord Krishna.

## DISEASES

Diseases that fall under geriatrics are of various na-

tures: from joint pains to eye diseases to hypertension to mental anxiety. Unlike in other cases, in geriatrics, it is difficult to identify one causative gene or one triggering factor. It is an outcome of many factors, among them are improper food and lack of exercise. Natural degenerative changes in old age accentuated by these factors manifest into old age ailments.

Diseases afflict in two ways: naturally developing degenerative diseases; and crippling diseases developed during young age becoming conspicuous during old age. Among crippling diseases, rheumatic

ailments are one of the most common troubles.

The ageing process may bring along problems like loss of appetite, increased gastric complaints, flatulence, constipation, sleeplessness, difficulty in breathing, dry cough, etc. These complaints develop according to one's innate strength or could be an outcome of one's lifestyle or regimen.

## TREATMENTS

Ayurveda believes that the solution lies in the problem itself. The Ayurvedic way of treatment is based on the theory that Tridoshas, or the structures that perform the basic functions in a cell or tissue, are responsible for their dysfunction as well. Ayurvedic preceptors have studied the causes for proper as well as improper functioning of the doshas and the treatment principles to be employed in specific situations. Ayurveda observes that optimal health can be achieved by cultivating mental, physical, and dietary habits that are conducive to physical and spiritual well-being.

With age, metabolic activity becomes moderate and energy source declines. So, while treating an aged person, the focus is on increasing the digestive and metabolic power to its maximum as well as supplementing energy requirement by internal and external usage of suitable fatty substances.

Rasayana chikitsa is a process used to enhance health

and vitality, thereby re-vitalising tissues that were worn out or are in the process of wearing out due to factors like diseases and ageing. It strengthens the immune system, arrests ageing, gives lustre to the skin, gives youthful energy, nourishes blood and body tissues (Sapta dhatus), and eliminates senility and other diseases of old age.

The therapy also includes immuno-modulation, anti-oxidant action (prevents bio-oxidation by checking age related disorders, auto immune disorders, degenerative disorders), adaptogenic effects, and so on. Panchakarma is a very effective process for age-related health problems.

Nowadays mismanagement, medicines' side effects and iatrogenic diseases have overtaken the natural old age diseases. These not only cause dysfunction of immunity, but also themselves produce metabolic diseases, tumours and a variety of infections in old age. Lack of awareness of healthy food and regimen, fast food, heavy spicy food, artificial environment, etc. have added a new set of diseases under geriatric ailments.

## LIVE LONG, HEALTHY

- Judicious use of ghee, buttermilk, sesame oil, soup, water for drinking prepared with dry ginger and coriander, attending calls of nature on time and regular exercise would definitely increase appetite and energy source and, thereby, enhance immunity.
- Externally applied sesame oil prevents degenerative changes of skin, joints, nerves, blood vessels by its direct action through skin. Proper assimilation takes place when digestive power is normal and so, oil application should be done in empty stomach.
- Regular walking after the onset of appetite and before food increases metabolic power, blood circulation,



proper absorption and energy utilisation.

- Practise wholesome food and regimen during middle age.
- Immune suppressant drugs and treatment should be avoided. Wholesome food and regimen to facilitate cure of disease should be practiced. Never try to interfere with natural body processes.
- Administration of rejuvenation and aphrodisiac medicines during young and middle age helps strengthen body tissues.
- Yogic exercises, listening to music, reading and playing games help attain mental strength and stability. Good friendship reduces stress to much extent.
- Avoid stressful situations, restrain mind from inappropriate acts, avoid intoxicating beverages and non-vegetarian predominant diet.

Ayurveda seeks to ensure a peaceful entry into the twilight years by helping the body retain its Pitha-Kapha combination and keep Vata from over-exerting itself. Unlike in other cases, in geriatrics it is difficult to identify one causative gene or one triggering factor. It is an outcome of many factors, key among them being improper food and lack of exercise.

## HOW THE CELL AGES

Almost all living cells undergo transformation: build up (anabolism), conversion (metabolism) and break down (catabolism) processes occur based on their nature and stage of development. Though all the processes take place in all stages, the respective process dominates.

In the initial stage, structures that form the skeleton of the cell accumulate. Due to increased metabolic activities and unobstructed channels, assimilation and nourishment take place at maximum pace. The nourishment of cells attains a saturation point.

During this stage, cells have maximum nourishment, good metabolic power and easily utilisable energy resource (maximum immune power). As maximum nourishment has taken place, metabolic activities affecting conversion gradually begin to dominate. This finally results in maturation of cells.

As it is not possible to nourish further, metabolic activities become moderate and result in more energy utilisation and depletion of energy source. As more energy is utilised for maturation, metabolic power gradually falls. In the later stage of the cell, energy resource completely gets used up and the cell becomes worn out. As there is no scope for further transformation, metabolic activity begins to fail and, thereby, results in stoppage of energy production, ending up in cell death.

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# AYURVEDA

## Assuring quality during old age



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**Prof. Dr. G.G. Gangadharan**

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Gokula Education  
Foundation (Medical) -  
MS Ramaiah Group

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Ageing is a natural phenomenon that everyone faces. **Prof. Dr. G.G. Gangadharan** takes a look at the answers Ayurveda provides to old age problems.

### **DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS**

The world population of the elderly is increasing and it is estimated that, by the year 2050, adults older than 65 years will comprise one-fifth of the global population. In India 3.8% of the population are older than 65 years of age. According to an estimate, the likely number of elderly people in India by 2030 will be around 134 million, marking a decadal increase of 41%.

### **GLOBAL HEALTH SCENARIO IN GERIATRICS**

The 21st is witnessing a gradual decline in fertility, and with increase in life expectancy, the society will have to grapple with the issues of longevity. Today, the cause of morbidity and mortality the world over is shifting from communicable diseases to non-communicable diseases. Some of the leading causes of mortality among the old are respiratory problems, heart diseases, cancer and stroke.

Significant causes of morbidity among this group are chronic inflammatory and degenerative conditions like Arthritis, Diabetes Osteoporosis, Alzheimer's disease, depression, psychiatric disorders, Parkinson's disease and age-related urinary problems.

### **LIMITATIONS OF CONVENTIONAL MEDICINE**

The stupendous success of conventional medicine in the management of communicable diseases, especially in the West, was due mainly to the identification of a single cause in the form of a parasite/causative organism for all communicable diseases. A systematic plan of action was derived to counter the cause which then cured the disease.

However, the biggest challenge with geriatric problems is that, in most cases, the condition cannot be attributed to a single cause or in certain conditions like neuro-psychiatric disorders {Senile dementia, Alzheimer's depression}, the structural cause is unknown. In such cases, the conventional medical therapy fails to come out with effective management plan and hence is severely compromised.

Another challenge with conventional medical therapy is that it does not have health promoting agents. Ayurveda, on the other hand, has interventions that enhance physiological processes that influence metabolic and immunological status (chyawanaprasha, triphala) and such interventions are significant in the context of geriatric care.

### **AYURVEDIC CLINICAL EXPERIENCE**

Ayurveda has a focused branch of medicine called Rasayana (Rejuvenation), which deals exclusively with the problems related to aging and methods to counter it. Geriatrics or Jara chikitsa or Rasayana in Ayurveda is a method to control/slow down/arrest the aging process in people during the degenerative phase of their life.



## CORE STRENGTHS OF AYURVEDA

Undoubtedly the strength of Ayurveda in the context of geriatric care is the Rasayana therapy, which is unique because of its ability to promote longevity and influence all aspects of health in a positive manner. Describing the effects of Rasayana, the classical texts of Ayurveda say that from Rasayana one

attains longevity, improved harmony and intelligence, freedom from disorder, youthful vigour, excellence of lustre, complexion and voice, optimum strength of physique and senses, command over language, respectability and brilliance.

Ayurveda considers the physical structure to be composed of the 7 dhatus starting from Rasa (Rasadi Dhatus) and Rasayana is the tool to create premium dhatus (body tissues).

The main utility of Rasayana therapy is in functional and degenerative disorders that have a chronic or long standing nature. In such cases, in fact, Rasayana is the only solution from the point of view of effective management in any system of medicine. Rasayana becomes more fruitful and effective if it is preceded with suitable panchakarma (purification therapy).

The reason why we see mixed results in many cases where Rasayana is employed is because of the fact that either this purification is not done or is improperly done.

Panchakarma is a bio-cleansing regimen comprising of the five main procedures that facilitates better bio-availability of the pharmacological therapies, helps to bring about homeostasis of body-humours, eliminates disease-causing complexes from the body and checks the recurrence and progression of the disease.

The five-fold measures comprehended in this therapy are-Vamana (Therapeutic Emesis), Virechana (therapeutic Purgation), Asthapana Vasti (Therapeutic Decoction Enema), Anuvasana Vasti (Therapeutic oil Enema), Nasya Karma (Nasal administration of

Rasayana is normally advised during this degenerative phase which starts from around 45 years in both males and females. The holistic system like Ayurveda approaches this condition through two-fold methods. One is a radical approach in which it recharges the whole metabolic process of the body by eliminating the toxins from the system by a three to four months rigorous and organized process known as Kutipraveeshika Rasayana.

However, this process is seldom practiced due to the extreme intricacy of the physiological process involved and the need for utmost care to be taken by the physician and the subject, including the environment where the treatment is done. Hence, this Kutipraveeshika remains a textual marvel of Ayurveda than a practical process of contemporary relevance.

The second approach of Ayurveda, which is quite popular today, is called Vataatapika Rasayana – which can go along with the normal day-to-day life. This type of Rasayana is particularly important in the current scenario as it has a relatively easy mode of administration without any restrictive pre-conditions.

medicaments). Panchakarma procedures are preceded by Snehana (therapeutic Oleation) and Swedana (Sudation) applications to make the body system conducive for elimination of bio-toxins and cleansing of channels. This is effective in managing autoimmune, neurological, psychiatric and musculo-skeletal diseases of the chronic and metabolic origin.

## SINGLE RASAYANA DRUGS

**Diseases of the Eye:** Jyotishmati (*Celastrus paniculata*), Triphala (Three myrobalans), Satavari (*Asparagus racemosus*), Yastimadhu (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) and Amalaki (*Embelica officinalis*)

**Diseases of Heart:** Prishniparni (*Uraria picta*), Arjuna (*Terminalia arjuna*), Guggulu (*Commiphora mukul*), Pushkaramula (*Inula racemosa*)

**Skin diseases:** Bhallataka (*Semecarpus anacardium*), Vidanga (*Embelia ribes*) and Vakuchi (*prorelia*)

## Rasayana for overall Health:

Guduchi (*Tinospora cardifolia*), Amalak (*Embelica officinatis*), Ashawagandha (*Withania somnifera*), Cow's milk and Takra.

**Asthma:** Sirisha (*Albezia lebbeck*), Agasthya (*Sesbania grandiflora*), Haridra (*Curcuma longa*), Haritaki (*Terminalia chebula*)

**Arthritis:** Rasona (*Allium sativum*), Guggulu (*Commiphora mukul*), Ashawagandha (*Withania somnifera*) and Shunthi (*Genjiverons officinale*).

**Neuropathies:** Rasona (*Allium sativum*), Guggulu (*Commiphora mukul*), Bala (*Sida cordifolia*), Ashawagandha (*Withania somnifera*).

**Diabetes:** Silajitu (Black bitumen), Amalaki (*Embelica officinalis*), Haridra (*Curcuma longa*), Tejpatra (*Cinnamumtamala*), Methika (*Trigonella faenum graecum*).

**Lipid disorders:** Guggulu (*commiphora wightii*), Haritaki (*Terminalia chebula*), Pushkaramoola (*Inula racemosa*), Vacha (*Acorus calamus*)

**Hypertension:** Rasona (*Allium sativum*), Sarpagandha (*Rauwolfia serpentina*), Aswagandha (*Withania somnifera*), Jatamamsi (*Nardostachys jatamansi*).

Brain and Memory Disorders: Brahami (*Becopa munitri*), Mandook parani (*Centella wriatica*), Jyotishmati (*Celastrus paniculata*), Kapikachhu (*Mecuna prurens*), Tagra (*Veleriana Velichai*)

## COMPOUND FORMULATIONS THAT ARE AVAILABLE IN THE MARKET WITH A MULTI-PRONGED ACTION ARE:

- Chyawanaprasha
- Brahmi Rasayana
- Aswagandha lehyam
- Mahatriphala ghrita
- Triphala Churana
- Ashawagandha Churana



- Narsimha Rasayana
- Agastya Rasayana
- Amalki Rasayana

## CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

Ayurvedic treatment as such is very individualistic and one medicine found to be useful in a condition in a particular



person may not work well in another. Hence, it is a challenge to come out with generalized management solutions for a condition that would suit all. It is difficult to bring out management plans for a particular disease condition and then implement the same on a large scale.

It is important that we respect both holism {of traditional medicine} as well as reductionism {of modern bio-medicine} because both are ways of looking at nature and, depending on the purpose, both the views can be extremely useful.

Further, the whole and the part are certainly related but it is not a one-to-one relationship. The understanding that it is not a one-to-one relationship and learning how to relate the whole perspective (the systemic theories of Ayurveda & Yoga) with part (structural theories of western biomedicine) is the outlook that should underline the implementation of trans-disciplinary research projects.

Today, nobody in the academic field has all the answers on how to combine and correlate part and whole perspectives in the context of clinical research design, clinical practice, content of courses on Ayurveda and Yoga in the context of laboratory research in pharmacognosy and product development, and in the assessment of community based local health practices.

It is important to understand that drug trials for evaluating efficacy of Ayurvedic interventions is a

reductionist approach and is an inappropriate design. Instead, clinical trials should evaluate the efficacy of a whole management package which may consist of drugs, diet, Yoga, Panchakarma including differential diagnosis to identify the specific nature of tridoshic imbalance.

## **TRANS-DISCIPLINARY CLINICAL RESEARCH**

The biggest challenge in the contemporary application of Ayurvedic geriatrics would be to come up with protocols to document, diagnose in an integrative frame work and manage geriatric problems. This would require critical investment (the current strategies are subcritical) in establishing advanced research, treatment and teaching centres that have state-of-the art facilities to deal with geriatrics.

## **POLICY ISSUES**

It is important for policy makers to first recognize the fact that geriatric health care has to be managed in a pluralistic way because no single system of medicine has the capacity to address the health care needs of the growing size of the aged population.

Policy, therefore, needs to clearly identify the key areas for support in Ayurvedic geriatrics and make plans and proposals for critical investments in such areas.

A range of both government and non-government institutions with either promising or outstanding leadership need to be identified and encouraged to prepare ambitious proposals that are commensurate with the magnitude of the social problem of old-age care.

It is essential that a multi-dimensional intervention is conceived that will involve (a) trans-disciplinary research (b) advanced treatment centres and (c) specialized post graduate education.

There is a very urgent need to establish centres in the country that would engage in the kind of trans-disciplinary research that would take Ayurveda to the global space and also to bring the clinical services of Ayurveda into the mainstream. This would require generous funding for research and also to establish centres that would provide effective clinical services. There is also the need to support specialized trans-disciplinary PG researches in centres where PG in geriatrics is offered.



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# DENTAL CARE in Ayurveda

**D**entistry was not a specialised branch of Ayurveda, but deformities of the oral cavity such as plaques and infections were managed in ancient India under Shalaky Tantra (system of surgery).

In Ayurveda, dental health (danta swasthya in Sanskrit) was considered individualistic, varying with each person's constitution (prakriti), and climatic changes resulting from solar, lunar and planetary influences (kaala-parinama).



The body constitution is classified based on the predominance of one or more of the three doshas, vata, pitta and kapha. The dominance dosha in both the individual and nature determines health care in Ayurveda, including dental health.

Eating raw food has a natural cleansing action on the teeth. Eating cooked food reduces the need to chew, but they get stuck to dental crevice, creating a good medium for bacterial growth.

Most common dental diseases such as dental caries and periodontal diseases are caused by microbial dental plaque over the tooth surface. It contains millions of different kinds of bacteria.

Toxins and enzymes of these bacteria cause cavities over the hard surface of the tooth. Plaque left over the tooth surface near the gum causes gum infection known as gingivitis. Uncured gingivitis leads to periodontitis (pyorrhea).

## Brushing

Brushing is the best method to remove plaque from tooth surfaces. There are natural tools to brush the teeth.

**Neem datum**, one among them, is very effective as a brush. Fresh stems of banyan and Karanja Pongamia pinnata (Linn.) are also good in removing plaque. Mastication of stems acts as a good exercise for teeth and gums.

- The stems should be healthy, soft, and straight without leaves and knots. They should have been picked from a tree growing in a clean place.
- The stem is normally said to have either bitter, pungent or astringent taste.
- A person with Pitha constitution should use a bitter stem, for eg., Kadunimba or Arjuna.
- A person with Vata or Vata-Pitha constitution should use the stem of banyan, which is slightly astringent.
- A person with Kapha constitution should use Karanja or Arka.





- Children and adults with Vata-Pitha constitution should use stems of glycyrrhiza which has anti-Kapha action.

### **Tooth powders –**

Homemade

Charcoal of acacia – 50 gms

Roasted alum – 20 gms

Black salt – 10 gms

Grind thoroughly and sieve it. Use the preparation twice a day.

Sticks of gooseberry – 50 gms

Alum – 50 gms

Grind them together and sieve. Use this for cleaning of teeth. This will help to keep the teeth strong. It also helps stop bleeding from gums.

One can use Triphala (amalaka, haritaki, bibhetaka) or Trijathaka (dalchini, cardamom and tamala patra) with honey and saindhava salts for persons with Kapha and Pitha constitutions.

Those with Kapha constitution can use Trikatu (ginger, pepper and pimpali) with honey and saindhava salts.

One can also get the teeth and the gum cleaned by brushing softly with lemon juice mixed with little salt.

*Sources: Dr. V.B. Athavale, Health and Vigour Forever, Dr. Vanaja Ramprasad, Green Foundation*

# Ayurvedic massages for a younger YOU



**Dr. Piyush Juneja**

is an Ayurveda doctor with an experience of over 12 years. He is currently a consultant to several national & international organizations for clinical trials, R&D, business development, regulatory affairs and contract manufacturing.

He has effectively managed various diseases like skin disorders, digestive disorders, Hypothyroidism, gynaecological disorders, renal calculi, sexual problems, and all lifestyle related problems in children and adolescents.

Massages are always good for the body as it improves blood circulation. When it is done using medicated oils, the results are more obvious.

**Dr. Piyush Juneja** tells us about the different Ayurveda massages and their benefits.



**A**yurveda recommends different massages for different diseases or disorders. The massages are prescribed after assessing the patient and their complaints.

**A**bhyanga (massage therapy) is an essential and most prevalent Panchakarma procedure for ensuring the health of the patients. This is not an ordinary massage done with the simple local application of oil. It involves therapeutic factors such as dosha (Bio-humors), dhātu (Tissues), body constitution, etc., and pharmacological factors like selection of oils, optimum temperature, frequency and duration of application etc.

Daily oil massage, also known as Abhyangam in Ayurveda, has several health benefits like reduction of stress levels, youthfulness of skin, greater immunity and improved blood circulation. The therapeutic effect of Ayurveda massage also depends on the appropriate selection of drugs/herbs/oils (according to the disease and the patient), skills and experience of the therapists, support of the patient and certain dietary and lifestyle restrictions to be followed by the patient during and after the treatment.

### **BENEFITS OF AYURVEDA MASSAGE:**

- Increases activity of sweat and sebaceous glands
- Mobilizes soft tissues
- Brings down pain
- Increases venous and lymphatic flow
- Breaks soft tissue adhesions
- Increases removal of secretions from lungs
- Removes dead skin cells
- Eliminates metabolic wastes
- Induces sedation
- Lowers stagnation of fluid in tissue space
- Increases growth
- Encourages nutritive exchange between blood and cells

### **MEDICATED OILS TO BE USED ACCORDING TO BODY TYPE OR PRAKRITI:**

**Vata** - (dry skin) - Use a heavy oil such as sesame, almond, avocado, or bhringaraj.

**Pitta**- (sensitive/overheated skin) - Use a cooling oil such as olive, sunflower, coconut, or ghee (clarified butter).

**Kapha** - (oily skin) - Use a stimulating oil like mustard, or a light oil such as flaxseed, corn or canola

Sesame oil, also known as 'King of Oils' is rich in linoleic acid, has anti-bacterial, anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. For increasing strength and stamina, Mahamash or Bala oil is the best. Mahanarayan Oil is made from 20+ Ayurvedic herbs and is traditionally indicated to be beneficial for movement, pain and stiffness of the joints. Prior to the massage, oil should be warmed and some camphor can be added to it. This can then be applied to the affected joints or muscles. This is tremendously beneficial.



• **Jojoba oil** — Appropriate for all skin types. It is not easy for this oil to seep into the skin and therefore absorption of this oil into the skin is a bit difficult. However, this acts as an excellent moisturizer.

• **Almond oil** — Almonds are an excellent source of vitamin E, and this oil nourishes the skin completely.

### **TYPES OF ESSENTIAL OILS**

Addition of essential oils to a carrier oil will enrich the experience of the massage and we can customize it according to our own blend.

Select from a light oil such as grape seed oil or a heavier almond oil and add lavender, rosemary or any other essential oil as desired and the expected benefits.

• **Peppermint** — Helps to improve circulation and provides relief for eczema and other skin issues. It also has anti-inflammatory properties.

• **Eucalyptus** — Has a cooling effect on the body in the summer and hence it is very effective for people with a pitta prakriti and those with over-heated skin types. This is also good for those who want the warmth during the winter months. It has antiseptic properties and helps to reduce the inflammation related to a muscular strain.

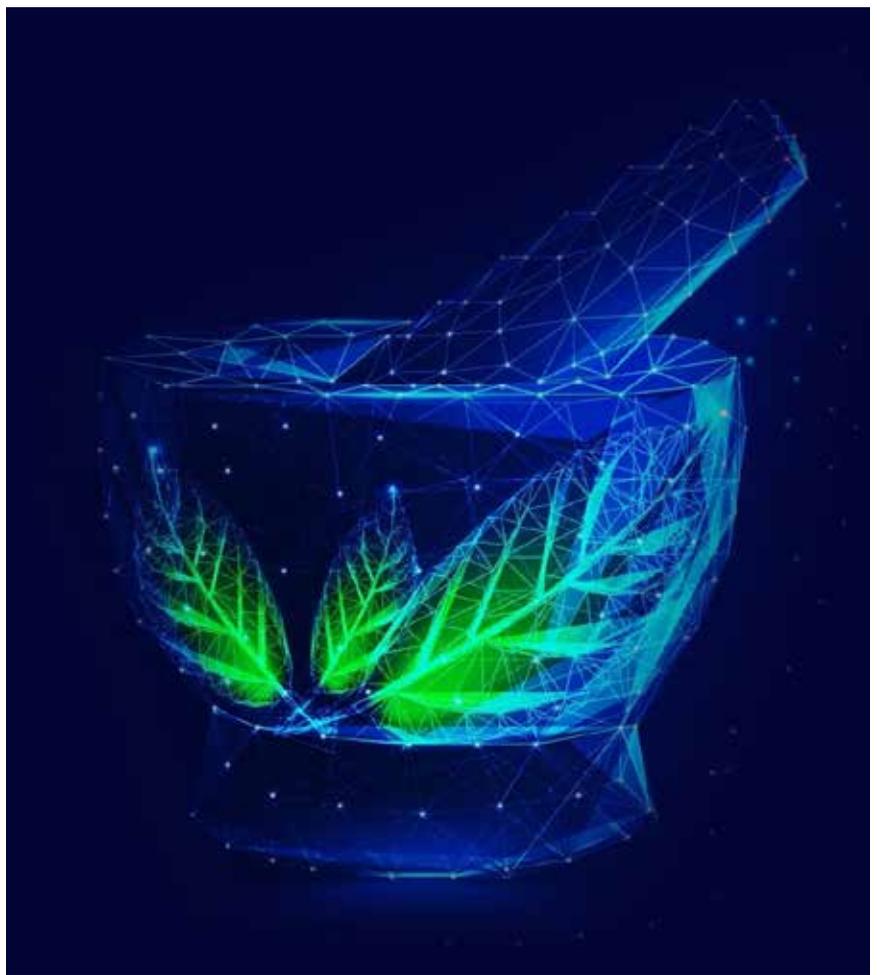
• **Rosemary** — An excellent oil for reducing muscle aches and pains. By mixing with a carrier oil, it is an effective therapy for relief of stress related fatigue, all types of headaches and migraines and also for anxiety and depression.

• **Lavender** — Lavender offers relaxing benefits and the essential oil has been attributed to helping wounds heal faster.



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# Ayurveda A PROMISE OF WELLNESS

Total health is that blissful state where body, mind, senses, emotions and spirit all function optimally and in perfect coordination with one another. **Dr. Krishna Kumar** explains how this state can be attained by practicing the Ayurvedic principles.

**A**yurveda is based on the belief that health and wellness result from ‘a balance between body, mind, and spirit.’ It is a science that helps people to live life to the fullest.

This is attained by following the Ayurvedic guidelines that focus on daily and seasonal routines, diet, behaviour and the balanced use of sense organs and self-control by following yoga and meditation. This mental stability is thus attained by approaching life in a positive manner and by cherishing the goals of life with the help of the different Ayurveda principles.

For attaining this mental wellbeing, one has to follow the main goal of Ayurveda, which is the promotion of good health by understanding the root cause of the disease and eliminating it and not by just fighting the disease.

## AYURVEDA MEDICINES

Ayurveda is one of the oldest healing systems that employs natural ways to bring back health and well-being in a person’s life. Some of the methods of Ayurveda for achieving this goal are as follows:

**Counselling:** Seek counselling and quit brooding as brooding can do more harm than good in your life. The healthy communication through counselling with the help of a counsellor can transform you to become self-reliant and confident.

**Exercise:** With proper diet and exercises like jogging, cycling, etc. one can get great relief from stress. These exercises can also support the body’s natural mechanisms of rejuvenation – and help you get sound sleep, the ability to relax and thus balance the nervous system.

**Other Remedies:** Diverting your mind away from anxieties and stress into something you love to do can make your life peaceful and clutter-free. These activities could be a hobby, talking with family or even listening to music. These hobbies and activities can easily relax your mind.

## YOGA

Ayurvedic yoga helps to balance the vata, pitta, and kapha dosha of one’s body. Yoga is the Vedic system of spiritual prac-



tice, which is known as Sadhana in Sanskrit. Yoga therapy (asana) includes the adaptation of the asanas or asana styles to treat particular diseases and improve health.

## THE YOGA AND AYURVEDA CONNECTION

It is well known that Yoga and Ayurveda are inseparable and both are needed for treating diseases and attaining health. Both treatments focus on physical and mental health that can be attained by:

- Regular practice of pranayama and meditation
- Use of herbs in food, body purification procedures and chanting of mantras
- Keeping the body healthy is vital for fulfilling the four aims of life: dharma (duty), artha (wealth), kama (desire), and moksha (liberation).

Yoga and Ayurveda are thus two vital elements that keep our mind and body healthy. Yoga is also a fundamental aspect of the daily Ayurvedic routine (dinacharya).

## AYURVEDA DIET

Like other diets, the Ayurveda diet focus on promoting balance between the mind and body. One of the main characteristics of an Ayurvedic diet is to identify the dosha. Each dosha has a different quality as explained below:

- Vata (space and air): Vatas are often described as creative, energetic, or expressive.

Diet includes cooked vegetables, sweet fruits, dairy products, peanuts, flax seeds, rice, etc.

- Pitta (fire and water): Pittas are often described as intelligent, joyful, and decisive.

Diet includes almonds, pasta, sweet or bitter vegetables, raisins, watermelon, coconut, etc.

- Kapha (earth and water): Kaphas are often described as calm, loving, or loyal.

Diet includes buttermilk, granola, bitter vegetables, cottage cheese, etc.

Once you know your dosha, you can customize your diet and meals to build energy and maintain the inner balance in your body.



**Dr. Sandeep D. Nair**

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## AYURVEDA Goes Global

Evidence based approach is the only way that a system can gain global acceptance. **Dr. Sandeep Nair**, tells us how Ayurveda which is now the focus of the world, should follow this approach.



tance, let us understand what's happening in the Department of Neurology and Complementary Medicine, Evangelisches (Lutheran) Hospital, Hattingen, Germany.

## **NEUROLOGY AND COMPLEMENTARY MEDICINE**

Complementary medical system is a considerable solution to the challenge to sustain the world's health care. Key to this is integration of medical systems, can be achieved by providing a combination of medicines and treatment methods from two different medical systems, integrating the treatment principle of one system into another, using one system as an associated treatment along with the main stream of approach, or by a combination of all these. This system redefines the health care paradigm and here the emphasis is on what is best for the patient.

It is not so easy to say which treatment helps more. This is no Win or Lose situation because the focus here is on the patient. Rogers and Sheaff remind us that the "justification for integrated delivery systems is to meet the patients' needs rather than those of the providers". Organizations that fail to place the patient at the centre of their integration efforts are unlikely to succeed. Integrated health systems should be easy for patients to navigate and it's a challenge for integrated systems to retain a patient focus.

## **THE VISIONARY**

Our department is currently treating patients with extra pyramidal movement disorders like Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, MND etc. The idea of establishing an integrated department was the great vision of Univ. Prof. Dr. Med Horst Przuntek. He is the Director of this Department. An eminent neurologist and former professor of Neuro-medicine at the Ruhr

**T**his 5000-year-old science of life called Ayurveda, is now the focus of the world and its popularity is increasing day-by-day. According to statistics, there are more than 600 Ayurveda centres in the UK and Germany and around 500 modern medicine doctors have included Ayurveda in their clinical practice.

Also, Ayurveda practitioners are found in nearly every metropolis in the United States. The number of tourists coming to India, especially to Kerala, in search of Ayurvedic cure is also increasing. These facts and figures project the increasing popularity of Ayurveda across the world.

To understand more about this, we need to comprehend the difference between popularity and acceptance. A leader usually becomes popular through his speech, personality and through advertisement. He will be accepted by the masses only if his leadership benefits the common man. All that is needed for being popular is a name and acceptance. This social acceptance then leads to political acceptance which further leads to global acceptance.

Before we discuss the hurdles in the path of Ayurveda for global acceptance and the steps that can initiate or boost the process of global accep-

University, Bochum. He has over 750 certified publications to his credit. He is also a well-known orator, a poet and a great visionary.

### **HOW DID THE IDEA OF INTEGRATING TWO SYSTEMS ORIGINATE?**

In 2003, a renowned German Anatomist Professor Dr. Heiko Braak came up with his theory of Staging in Parkinson's Disease. The theory states that the earliest signs of Parkinson's are found in the enteric nervous system, the medulla and, the olfactory bulb. According to this theory, Parkinson's only progresses to the substantia nigra and cortex over the years. This theory is increasingly borne out by the evidence that non-motor symptoms, such as hyposmia, sleep disorders and constipation may precede the motor features of the disease by several years.

Simultaneously Professor Przuntek learned the importance of Vasthi and

Nasya treatments along with Agni, Ama and Tridosha concepts in Ayurveda. This made him realize that the basic principles of Ayurveda and conventional medicine or modern medicine will help him to find a way to cure his patients.

### **WORKING METHODOLOGY IN INTEGRATIVE NEUROLOGY**

The Department for Neurology and Complementary Medicine founded in 2009 has 40 beds in the Evangelisches Hospital. The team consists of a Professor, Head and Chief Neurologist, Three Senior Neurologists, Two Ayurveda Doctors, Six Assistant Neurologists, Ayurveda therapists, Occupational therapists, Physiotherapists, Speech language pathologists and a psychologist who all work hand-in-hand.

The team of doctors (Allopathy and Ayurveda) have combined discussions on their daily visit to the patients. Once a week the whole complementary team discusses the condition and development of each patient in detail.

Ayurveda treatment principles are applied in the form of external and internal therapies based on individual assessment of Tridoshas, Dhatus, Koshta, Agni and



Ama. Treatments are done by expert therapists under the supervision of Ayurveda doctors. The highest standards of hygiene as per German hospital requirement are maintained. There is a weekly Ayurveda diet class for the patients by a trained dietician in addition to detailed individual, diet and lifestyle consultation done by the Ayurveda doctors. Yoga is part of the standard repertory.

## RESEARCH PROJECTS

Apart from analysing the effect of complementary medicine in motor symptoms of Parkinson's patients using different scales like UPDRS III etc. There are some specific ongoing researches like,

- Effect of nasya on hyposmia and psycho-neural disturbances and its influence on the Nose-Brain-Axis
- Effect of vasthi on microbiomes and its influence on the Gut-Brain-Axis
- Colon microbiome research in Parkinson's disease and multiple sclerosis patients
- Effect of Ayurveda diet on microbiomes
- Effect of spices on smelling receptors in the nose and gastrointestinal tract, especially their influence on the microbiomes

- Effect of Propionic acid and Butyric acid on multiple sclerosis.

## EVIDENCE BASED AYURVEDA

It was not so easy to say which treatment helped more, but now as we observe the results in our different specific research projects, we are able to identify the individual benefits. However, it is evident that those affected by primary Parkinson's disease gets more stability when Ayurveda principles and treatment methods are introduced for treating the patient along with the conventional methods.

Patients get stable without aggravation in symptoms and maintains an improved lifestyle along

with Ayurvedoktha Pathyahaaravihara, Dinacharya and Ritucharya. Despite the multitude of instructions, patients do not feel pressured by their physician. Instead, they value the opportunity to cope actively with their disease by contributing to its cure or the alleviation of symptoms. The integrative approach opens large options for the patient. As a person working in such a department where the Neurologists and Ayurveda doctors go hand-in-hand to provide the optimum care for the patients, I can feel the positivity among the patients towards complementary system that satisfy their health care needs.

Ayurveda medicine is accepted by our hospital management, by our Parkinson's patients and their different self-help groups and we were able to create a social acceptance among the community. Delegation from the Ministry of Ayush and Indian Consulate, Frankfurt, also recognised and appreciated our work. This acceptance came after 10 years of dedicated and hard work from our team.

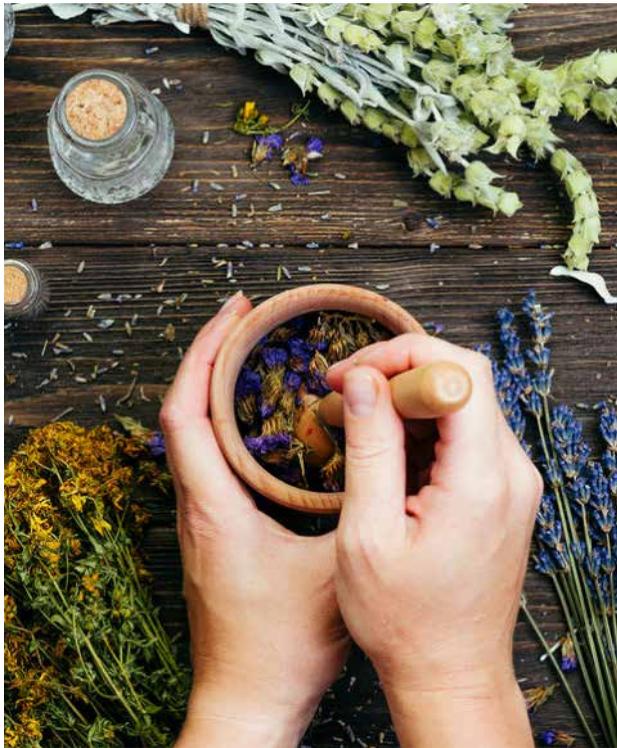
Unfortunately, ours is the only hospital in Germany, where Ayurveda medicine is equally accepted and considered at par with the conventional medicine. Here, an Allopathy doctor and Ayurveda doctor visit the patients together. My mission is to achieve this acceptance in a global scenario through evidence-based Ayurveda.

The factor that helped us to create such a social acceptance for Ayurveda, is evidence. In these 10 years, we could provide clinical evidences in both motor and non-motor signs and symptoms of Parkinson's patients along with other objective evidences. Now, we conduct different tailored research projects from systematic reviews and meta-analysis to interventional RCTS. Evidence based research approach is one of the keys towards global acceptance of Ayurveda.

Once during his daily rounds, Professor Przuntek asked me if I could provide some recent research evidences in Ayurveda treatment done in the freezing of gait in Parkinson's disease. I told him I am unaware of any such study conducted in Ayurveda, but in classical texts written by our Acharyas, we can find references of gait disorders like skhalitham cha gathaou in Kaphaavarana Vyana etc.

Having said that I asked him, "Sir why are you so adamant about recent evidences when our great acharyas have already mentioned these conditions and their treatment?" To this he said, "Yes, I know that great acharyas have written about a vast range of ailments and their treatments in the different Ayurveda classics, which in itself is a great treasure, and I also believe that at that time they were intellectually and socially very much capable of treating such conditions, but I





want to know whether today's Ayurveda or Ayurveda doctors can bring the same results."

It is high time that we regain our culture of observation, research and analysis that existed during the period of our great acharyas. Ayurveda withstood all these 5000 years through consistent development and constant changes in the mode of propagation from verbal mode of teaching scriptures, from Sanskrit verses to commentaries in Sanskrit to Hindi, English and other regional languages.

Can you imagine what would have happened if Punarvasu Atreya didn't ask his Agniveshadi disciples to write down the scriptures? What would have happened if Hemadri, Arunadatta, Chakrapani, Indu and other acharyas had not written their commentaries?

Similarly, credit goes to all those personalities who have contributed in one way or the other for propagation of Ayurveda. We all know that necessity is the mother of invention. All these changes mentioned earlier, like from verbal mode to scriptures, Sanskrit verses to commentaries, etc., happened due to necessity, which we call today as social demand.

So, identifying the social demand and initiating appropriate actions accordingly will lead to acceptance. And one of them is evidence-based research. I would like to point out the different approaches towards evidence-based research in Ayurveda.

Evidence based research or evidence-based medicine is "the integration of best research evidence with clinical

experience and patient values". In other words, EBM is not just about the literature. Following is the framework for EBM in practice, the 5 As of EBM.

1. **Asses the problem:** Which is to identify the clinical problem.
2. **Ask the question:** Formulate a clinical question using PICO
3. **Acquire the Evidence:** Collect the evidence using different outcome measures
4. **Appraise the Evidence:** Evaluate the evidences
5. **Apply to the Patient.**

This diagram represents the hierarchy of evidence. There are many different variations to it, but this is the most common one. According to conventional wisdom, the most qualitative form of evidence has been ranked low in terms of importance while the most quantitative evidence has more importance. Thus, expert opinion without supporting data rests at the bottom and all the meta analysis and multiple RCTs rests on the top.

In the case of Ayurveda studies, keeping expert opinion at the bottom feels kind of unfair, since expert opinion in Ayurveda (Apthopadesha) is forged from a series of clinical guidelines over the years. There is a revised version of this hierarchy to correct the under valuing of expert opinion by superseding the meta analysis with clinical guidelines and this suites the research studies in Ayurveda too.





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*Mr. Baby Mathew, Chairman & Managing Director, and Mrs. Sarah Baby Mathew, Director of Somatheeram Ayurveda Group, received the prestigious National Award for the year 2022 instituted by the Government of India for the "Best Ayurvedic Wellness Center" from the Honourable Union Minister of Tourism Shri G. Kishan Reddy and Minister of State for Tourism Shri Ajay Bhatt.*

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- Soma Palmshore in Kovalam Beach, Trivandrum.
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PIN 695 501.

# YOGA path to total health

Are you lost in this materialistic world and is looking for answers and meanings to life? Look no further, as Yoga has answers for everything. **Vd. Divya Chauhan** tells us how Yoga helps to attain both inner and outer beauty in life.



**Dr. Divya Chauhan**

MD MSc FNR,

Ayurveda lifestyle Counselor

Ram Yoga Heritage

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“Open your eyes, look within. Are you satisfied with the life you are living?”

This is a very famous quote that makes us think deeply. Touching reality through the experience of beauty from within is the need of the hour in this materialistic world that is almost fake.

It is here that the path of Yoga helps to calm the mind and refresh the body. With globalization, the time and money spent on looking good is at an all-time high.

As encrypted in literature, one must be healthy inside to be able to look good on the outside.

But, how can this be achieved is the question that often bothers us. And the answer to this is deeply seated in our classical literature of Yoga. One may be still doubtful and curious if or whether Yoga can help us achieve all these things.

And the answer is a definite 'YES'. Regular practice of Yoga with a proper daily, seasonal regime, discipline and a healthy diet can all help in looking youthful and radiant and thus proving the old axiom that 'Age is just a number'.

### **HOW DOES YOGA WORK?**

The holistic approach to health and radiance both from the inside and the outside requires detoxification of the body, toning of the muscles and a total relief from stress and anxiety. All these can be achieved by the daily practice of Yoga. Although this is considered as a holistic approach

t o



achieve a healthy mind, body and soul, it actually does more than that.

It is to be understood that Yoga does not directly treat just the skin issues. Some of the Yoga asanas or postures increases the flow of blood to the face and the upper extremities of the body. Some of these poses are the shoulder stand, fish pose,

child's pose, plough pose and triangle pose. These enhance the blood circulation beneath the skin, making it hale and healthy.

Get to know more about these asanas or poses so that you get a skin that is healthy and clear of all toxins!

## **PRANAYAMA FOR DAMAGED SKIN**

To get a radiant and healthy skin, focusing on deep breathing is important. This is a simple and effective meditation technique that takes just a couple of minutes.

Its calming qualities are felt instantly. In general, a daily 15-minute pranayama session includes the following:-

- Alternate Nostril Breathing Technique (Anulom Vilom)
- Cleaning Breath Technique (Kapalabhati Pranayama)
- Cooling Breath Technique (Shitali Pranayama)
- Bellows Technique (Bhastrika Pranayama)
- Bee Breath Technique (Bhramari Pranayama)

## **YOGA FOR BLISSFUL BEAUTY**

Yoga is as important for the outer beauty as for the inner self. Follow the yoga poses mentioned below to achieve both inner and outer beauty.



- Surya Namaskar: The 12 poses of the Surya Namaskar helps to remove all stress and toxins from the body and eventually gives a natural glow to the skin.
- Bow Pose (Dhanurasana): This pose improves the body posture with the proper supply of oxygen to all the organs.

- **Shoulder Stand (Sarvangasana):** This asana improves the skin texture and quality by improving blood circulation to the face. Practicing this asana for 3 to 5 times a day helps the skin to get rid of pimples, acnes, wrinkles and dullness.

- **Plough pose (Halasana):** This asana helps to improve the digestive process that is essential for a glowing and healthy skin.

- **Seated spinal twist (Ardha matsyendrasana):** This seated twist pose helps in removing toxins and other harmful substances from the different organs of the body.

- **Legs up the wall (Viparita Karani):** This posture improves blood circulation in the head and thus helps in having healthy hair and radiant glow in the face.

## **FOR A SMOOTH AND SOFT SKIN**

Practice the following poses for a soft, wrinkle-free, glowing and radiant skin.

- Stand straight with feet apart about one foot from each other.

- Cover the face with palms and breathe deeply for at least ten times.

- Massage the face, eyes, forehead with palms and then continue the deep breathing again for 10 times.

- Massage the whole face starting from the chin to the forehead with the hands and continue to keep breathing deeply.

## **GET RID OF STRESS**

- For this, lie in the supine position on the floor without moving any of your body parts.

- Leave the body loose and close your eyes.

- Free the mind of all thoughts, worries and tensions.

- Practice this daily for 15 minutes.

## **FOR GOOD PHYSIQUE**

- Stand straight and spread your hands forward parallel to the ground.

- Now, bend the knees like in the sitting posture.

- Make sure your thighs are parallel to the ground and your spine is straight.

- Remain in this position for three minutes.

- After that, come back to the normal standing position.

- Place the feet about 1 foot apart and spread the hands sideways in the level of the shoulders and parallel to the level of the ground.

- Turn the upper portion of the body to the left from the waist upwards, so that you can easily look behind.

- The feet should remain firm on the ground.

- Now come back to the starting position and turn to your right. Repeat this at least ten times.

- In the next step, place the hands on the waist and bend forwards approaching your thighs. Repeat this 20 times.

## **FOR A SLENDER NECK**

Correct your clumpy neck by performing the following poses.

- Place your feet firmly on the ground.

- Keep your body straight with an erect spine and without moving your shoulders try to turn your neck to the extreme left as much as you can.

- Then move the neck to the extreme right.

- Repeat this exercise ten times.

Yoga is a holistic discipline that has a profound effect on the mind and body. Along with Yoga, proper diet too is important for a healthy skin. Below are a few regimens:

- Have a balanced diet with organic and seasonal varieties.

- Include a lot of seeds and nuts in your diet.

- Avoid processed foods.

- Include Ayurvedic herbs such as ginger, turmeric, etc., during cooking to promote digestion and boost blood circulation.

- Stick to sattvic food choices.

- Always eat with a happy heart and a beautiful smile.

With yoga and a balanced diet, the saying 'you are what you digest' holds true. According to Ayurveda, a healthy diet and lifestyle is a reflection of our personality and this manifests in our physical appearance. So, seek happiness in nature and yourself and make Yoga a habit!

# PRANAYAMA

## Pathway to true bliss

Pranayama is the practice of controlling the breath in order to gain a stable and balanced inner self. Read on to find out how this breathing technique can help attain a healthy mind and body.



**P**ranayama is a breathing exercise that helps the practitioner get rid of stress and finally achieve true bliss in our lives. Regular practice of Pranayama works on the mind, intellect and deeper state of awareness. This technique helps to tap into the parasympathetic nervous system, which helps to monitor the activities of the body when in a state of rest.

It is a myth that during Pranayama we tend to take in more oxygen and thus increase the capacity of our lungs. What actually happens is that the quality of carbon dioxide increases during Pranayama. This is done through a double exhalation process.

During this process, the internal organs of the body are seen to crave for more oxygen and that does not happen during Pranayama. Thus, this yoga technique is the doorway into the internal universe of the mind and body withdrawing the senses inwards.

Not clear initially, Pranayama may seem like a physical practice as it can result in aches and pains on the upper back and on the chest. This is especially so while doing Bhastrika, an excellent breathing exercise in Pranayama that can be practised slowly or quickly according to convenience.

This leads to the rapid expansion of the diaphragm, which starts to tap on the muscles of the body that remained idle for a long time. This may also lead to an initial dizziness because of the expansion and contraction in the diaphragm and the brain as well.

This further leads to emptying of all the emotions playing in our mind and body like fear, anxiety, tension. Conversely, these tend to affect breathing and the diaphragm movement at a conscious and unconscious level.

Different emotions cause contraction of the diaphragm and close our awareness. So working with the diaphragm during a Pranayama session helps to release all built-in tensions in the body. This is the beginning of the practice of Pranayama, which prepares one for internal practices like meditation and samadhi. Eventually, the senses start withdrawing from outside objects.

In Nadi Shodhana, the energy channels or Nadis are purified. Thereby, opposing energies in our

body are united. A first timer may experience anxiety and drowsiness while practising Nadi Shodhana. This usually happens when it is practised without full awareness, or without a Satvik mind.

If the mind is filled with impurities, there will be an obstruction in the flow of prana. When practised with full awareness, it helps to withdraw the senses and the practice becomes very pleasant. It thus helps to tap into one's internal universe.

Pranayama is also a case of extreme Tapas. Many times, deep emotions or sanskaras are brought to the surface during this practice. When practicing Pranayama our fake selves are broken and we tend to dig deeper within ourselves. In this process, many things surface. Fears, anxieties and tension are specifically targeted in Pranayama due to the working with the diaphragm.

With time, love and patience, these sensations become less intense and they are let free and loose. Once a friendly bond is developed with the sanskaras, they release and drift away. So emotions are let loose and our thoughts are silenced. Both the positive as well as negative thoughts are silenced. What will be left are feelings of bliss like love, compassion, freedom.

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# Let not eyebags weigh you down



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You may see puffy eyes when you get up in the morning. Normally, it disappears after a couple of minutes. Sometimes it persists due to several reasons. Better prevent it naturally...

**P**uffy eyes or eye bags is a condition in which the skin beneath the eyes becomes puffed or bulged, making it difficult to blink. It could cause itching sensation followed by inflammation in the eyes. The puffed area slowly becomes darker.

**Symptoms:** Swollen eyelids, itching in the eyes, puffing of the eyelids, redness of the eye region and difficulty in opening or closing the eyes are the common symptoms.

**Causes:** Since the skin around the eyes is very delicate, compared to skin in other parts of the body, it is a highly sensitive area.

Swelling of the eyes occurs due to many factors such as trapping of fluid in eye tissue, accumulation of fat in the skin beneath the eyes, stress, hormonal changes, allergy (irritation from contact lenses), dermatitis or sinus, aging, high blood pressure, less consumption of water, long term use of antibiotics or intake of excess salt.

## WHAT CAN WE DO?

Chronic under-eye bags are difficult to remove. But puffiness can be cured by herbal home remedies.

## HOME REMEDIES

Take cotton wool and make two thick square pads. Soak them in cucumber juice or rose water. Lie down and place the soaked pads over the eyes. Keep them for 15 minutes.

Potatoes soothe and shrink puffy eyes. Place slices of raw potatoes over the eyes for 15 minutes, and rinse juice off with cool water.

Place two slices of cool cucumber over the eyes for 15 minutes. (High water content in cucumber helps reduce swelling.)

Press the region of the eyebrow and the eye socket with the middle finger. This method is effective in curing puffy eyes as it stimulates the lymphatic system and drains the excess fluid.

## AYURVEDA MEDICATION

1. Apply Rasnadi choornam or Kachoradi choornam as lepa: Mix 3-5 gm of Rasnadi choornam or Kachoradi choornam with butter-milk to make a paste and apply over the puffy eyes. Wet the surface with the same paste when it gets dried. Wash with cold water after 30 mts.
2. Use Karutha gulika: Karutha gulika has to be crushed and made into a paste by adding buttermilk.

Apply it over the eye bags and retain for 30mts.

3. Wash the eyes with Triphala decoction: Amalaki (*Emblca officinalis*), Bibhitaki (*Terminalia blerica*) and Harithaki (*Terminalia chebula*) are the three fruits contained in Triphala.

4. Apply juice of Aloe vera or leaf of *Moringa oleifera* over the eye bags.

If the problem persists, consult a physician at the earliest.

## PREVENTIVE CARE:

Sleep at least 7-8 hours a day.

Drink 8-10 glasses of water. (When a person is dehydrated the body starts storing water as a defence system. This will add to puffiness around the eyes.)

Increase the quantity of fatty acids, especially from flax seed oil and fish oils, in diet. (Essential fatty acids would help reduce inflammation throughout the body.)

Rinse face with chilled water a couple of times.

Don't drink a lot of fluids before going to sleep.

Wear sunglasses.

Reduce intake of sodium contained salt.

Soak tea bags in cold water, and place them on the eyes for several minutes.

Avoid applying wrinkle removal cream near the eyes. (The cream may close the pores in the skin, leading to hydration in that area and result in puffiness of the eyes.)

Avoid anything that triggers allergic reaction. For example, sleeping on a feather pillow can cause puffiness under the eyes.

Avoid rubbing eyes.

## DO EYE EXERCISES

Press the base of your palms gently on the eyes. Release the pressure and repeat. Do this three to four times a day.

Hold a pencil in front of the face. Look at it. Slowly move the pencil further and further away from the face, while still looking at it. Bring the pencil back slowly and repeat.

Look out of the window as far as you can see. This is a very good exercise for the eyes.

Drinking alcohol or eating salty foods before going to sleep can lower the anti-diuretic hormones (ADH) in the body, causing temporary puffiness of the eyes.

# VITIATED *VATA* AND LOWER BACK PAIN



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For the human body to remain healthy, the tridoshas—*Vata*, *Pitha* and *Kapha*—must remain in balance. When *Vata* gets vitiated, it causes back pain. *Vata* must be pacified to bring the body back to normal, writes **Dr P Mohanan Warriar.**

“Not able to sit for more than 10 minutes. Back pain.”

“Severe back pain that goes down to leg while walking.”

These are very common complaints a general physician encounters almost every day.

Pain on the spine and the muscles surrounding it is generally called back pain. Usually, the term ‘back pain’ is used to indicate pain on lower back. So, it is called low back ache or LBA.

To understand back pain from an Ayurvedic perspective, one has to understand some basic principles of Ayurveda.

### **AYURVEDIC STRUCTURE**

Ayurveda considers human body as a combination of dosha (the subtle part of matter), dhatu (the physical body) and mala (waste not transferred as body) kept in equilibrium.

Tridosha theory says that the balance of the three doshas—*Vata*, *Pitha* and *Kapha*—helps the body remain healthy and any imbalance in tridoshas leads to disease. This is the fundamental principle of Ayurveda.

Among the three doshas, *Vata* is important in back pain. *Vayu*, or the manifestation of *Vata*, is divided into five types. Of this, *apana* is responsible for expelling mala and the movement of the trunk.

When *Vata* gets vitiated and concentrated on colon (pakwasaya), it manifests itself as diseases of the abdomen, rectum, kidney, hip and lower part of



spine. Therefore, low back pain is generally called vatavyadhi or disease due to Vata. Urusthambha, katigraha, gridhrasi are few vatavyadhis with back pain as a symptom.

Ayurveda sees body in a state of dynamic equilibrium which gets degenerated and regenerated continuously. The food assimilated into the environment of body, is processed and its useful parts get converted as dhatu while the waste parts make mala.

An obstruction to this process produces toxins. Panchakarma (five-route cleansing) eliminates these toxins and reinstates the proper programming of tissue-building. Drugs are also helpful in the process.

## GROUNDS FOR BACK PAIN

Spine is a chain of 33 vertebrae. In between each pair of vertebrae is a disc which is elastic in nature. These discs help the spine move to all sides. Discs also act as a shock-absorber protecting the spine from heavy impact.

Of the 33 vertebrae, the seven in the neck (cervical) and five in the back (lumbar) are the most mobile. The lumbar vertebrae move while carrying more weight (Eg. when we stoop to pick up weight).

This explains why back pain is experienced most in the area called the lumbar. Around 70 lakh such back pain patients are admitted to hospitals every year.

Back pain mostly occurs in connection with the nature of one's job. So, it can also be called an occupational disease. Among various types of workers some are more prone to it. Examples are:

- Those who do physically strenuous jobs (Eg. Loaders).

- Those who do sedentary jobs without much exercise to the back (Eg. Clerks).

- Workers continuously bending forward and side-ward

- Those who work with the same repeated movements continuously.

- Those who need to do work suffering vibration (Eg. drilling).

Those with smoking habit and who are malnourished tend to experience back pain more.

The majority of back pain patients visit hospital for problems of the disc. Of the remaining, almost 15 per cent may be suffering from problems of the muscles, ligaments, etc. Arthritis, infections, growths, cancer and disease of the bones and of the nerves make up the rest.

Overweight of body exerts more pressure on low back. So, obesity is another reason for back pain. Ladies experience back pain related to menstrual period, pregnancy, delivery and menopause. Contraction of muscles causes back pain during menstrual periods.

Pressure on back bone due to the enlargement of uterus creates back pain during pregnancy. Weakness of abdominal muscles is a reason for back pain after delivery.

Pre-natal and post-natal treatments in Ayurveda are very helpful to prevent back pain during pregnancy and after delivery. Malnutrition during lactation period, especially calcium deficiency, can also cause back pain.

Hormonal changes after menopause leads to degeneration of bones causing back pain. Back pain is a

symptom in diseases like prolapsed or herniated disc, lumbar spondylosis, lumbar canal stenosis, etc.

In these cases, damage of muscles, ligaments, nerves, and vertebral joints create pain. Pain that radiates below knees, aggravation of pain while coughing or sneezing indicate disc prolapse.

Severe pinching pain, numbness, loss of sensation, weakness of legs and wastage of muscles are also symptoms of inter-vertebral disc prolapse. Back pain can occur as secondary to constipation, piles, dysentery etc.

Back pain is a symptom in several diseases related to abdomen, uterus and kidney.

**Diagnosis:** The success of any treatment is definitely based on correct diagnosis. An experienced physician can make out from his initial check-up itself such conditions as muscle pull and protrusion of the disc.

But in many cases, this may not be easy and hence the help of X-ray, CT scan, MRI or myelogram is sought. In suspected TB and cancer, blood test and biopsy will also help.

Together with this, the physician would also consider the cause of vitiation of Vata. The vitiation can have two origins – obstruction and degeneration. Obstruction can be either due to non-passing of faeces, urine or due to a stone or prolapsed disc, oedema from thecal sac, fascia muscle or skin.

Degeneration can appear primarily in bones as osteoarthritic changes, in nerves as demyelination and in muscles as dystrophy. Each of this has to be interpreted and addressed from an ayurvedic perspective.

Usually what we adopt a modern approach dovetailed with the basic principles of Ayurveda. The nature of pain, its intensity and radiation will give a picture of dosha vitiation. Then a decision has to be taken whether the cause of pain is obstruction or degeneration.

Local symptoms with obstructed SLR (straight leg raise or sakthi ulkshepa nigraham) usually point to an obstruction.

Vague symptoms and generalised pain which is non-specific with positive signs of degeneration on examination can lead to a diagnosis of degeneration. Investigations such as X-ray, MRI scan and blood test are of great help in differential diagnosis.

**Treatment:** Deviation of apana and apanavaiga is the main cause of back pain. Getting it back on rail (vathanulomanam) should be the mainstay of management.

The abode of Vata is in pakwasaya which is enclosed within the lumbar spine. So, it is very important that the purity and sanity of colon (pakwasaya) is maintained.

Back pain has many treatments available now, complete rest being the most important one. With complete rest for 2-3 weeks, most back pains disappear. So, it is not advisable to venture into an expensive treatment, surgery or panchakarma therapy in the initial stages.

For bed rest, keep a pillow under the knee and lie on a wooden cot. Apply Dhanwantaram kuzhambu,

Sahacharadi kuzhambu and Karpooradi kuzhambu in the area of pain and with the help of someone slowly massage from top to bottom. This



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will help increase the blood supply to that area and relax the tense muscles and help pacify Vata.

Massage and fomenting will also help. In addition, medicines to cure arthritis and muscle pull and relieve inflammation may also be used.

Ayurveda physicians use medicines administered through oral and anal routes (vasti), different kinds of massages, yoga and medicated sachets (kizhi) apart from prescribing a belt for back support.

Whatever the treatment plan, the main aim is to reduce pain, prevent disability and avoid recurrence of pain.

Pichu, Prishtavsthi, Mathravasthi are the other treatments helpful in most of the problems related to spine. Avagahasweda (hip bath) is also a commonly used process.

This is easy to do at home. Patient should sit in a special tub filled with water boiled with herbal leaves such as castor plant, tamarind and jack fruit tree that have Vata-normalising (vatahara) property.

Along with these external treatments, internal medicines are also to be administered. Surgery should be considered only as a last resort.

Most patients get relief in three to four weeks of such treatment and yoga. Only if the condition does not improve with both these that a patient needs to start panchakarma therapy.

For this, a solvent in the form of ghee is given in buffer dose for 2-7 days (snehapanam). The ghee is selected weighing the structure (prakriti), weather and nature of disease.

Some patients also undergo massage with heat. The selection of the vehicle of heat and the pressure and

intensity of massage are decided using ayurvedic principles.

Vasti (medicated pressure enema) and virechana (medicine-induced purgation) are the panchakarma processes that are found to be most useful in the treatment of back pain.

The selection of drug for performing vasti and virechana depends on several factors. A course of treatment lasts 14-40 days, depending on the intensity of the pain. The pain subsides for most patients in 14 days. Simultaneous practice of yoga and traction are advisable.

## PREVENTIVE MEASURES

Back pain can be kept at arm's length by not lifting excess weight, not standing or sitting in one position for a long time, controlling body weight and continuous practice of yoga.

The vertebral column of a standing person will have two convex curves and two concave curves into the neck and hip regions. These curvatures help the body distribute its weight equally into the ground.

This precision is possible only when you stand and sit erect. That is why it is advised to always adopt a straight posture while standing or sitting.

When not kept in a straight posture, the body continuously struggles and uses extra energy to keep itself against earth's gravitational pull. This causes extra burden on the muscles and ligaments, leading to oedema and pain.

Exercises through yoga help the body and the muscles with hassle-free movement. An obese person has to move with weight and needs extra energy to keep posture. So regular exercise, keeping the right posture and a regulated diet are vital to keep back pain away.

## FOOD

Dietary regimen for back pain is decided on the basis of the body constitution (prakriti) of each person.

Traditional food habit is different in different societies. These habits have evolved through centuries according to the climatic and geographical condition of each area. Changing these habits completely can lead to several diseases.

People prone to back pain may avoid dependence on junk food and include sufficient quantity of vegetables and fruits in their diet. Milk, ghee, pulses and butter-milk should be part of diet.

There is no harm in including non-vegetarian food in the diet. Sufficient intake of fluids must be ensured so as to keep easy and satisfactory bowel movements.



# Ask Your Doctor

## Dr. K. Muralidharan Pillai

Chief Consultant, Ayuryogasramam, Vadakkancherry.

Former Senior Consultant,  
Oushadhi Panchakarma Hospital & Research Institute, Thrissur.

(Former Principal, Vaidyaratnam &  
Vishnu Ayurveda Medical College & Former Medical Director, Vaidyaratnam Ayurveda  
Foundation & Research Center.)



*My mother is 68 years old. She suffered a stroke a year ago. After prolonged treatment, she regained her health. She is continuing her physiotherapy even now. We are interested in giving her Ayurveda treatment. How beneficial is it?*

**Minu Philips, Mumbai**

Stroke occurs when there is a block in the vein in any part of the brain. It can also be caused by a haemorrhage due to high blood pressure. The chance of a stroke increases as one grows older. This is more common among those who suffer from high blood pressure. Majority of ischemic stroke happens to people who are 60 years and above. This can also occur to people who have a family history of the disease.

Atherosclerosis, which is a process in which abnormal deposits of lipids, cholesterol, and plaque build-up, leading to coronary artery disease and other cardiovascular problems leading to strokes, can occur at a young age and so it is important to follow a healthy diet, lifestyle and exercise to keep such diseases at bay. While treating patients affected with stroke, it is important to examine their children and diagnose if they have any possibility of high blood pressure, blood cholesterol levels, and also the level of sugar in their blood.

After examination, precautions should be taken accordingly. Also, people who are likely to be affected by stroke, should maintain a healthy body weight. Those above 40 years should take great care of their health and should exercise and take proper diet. These people should also completely avoid drinking alcohol and smoking cigarettes.

In Ayurveda, stroke is listed under 'maha rogam'. Ayurveda addresses this disease through careful lifestyle management and diet. Proper use of 'Shaddharana Choorna' can control the increased blood pressure. Sneha Vasti and Kashaya Vasti are good for treating stroke patients. The special treatments like Elakkizhy, Njavarakkizhy, Pizhichil, Shiro Vasthi, done under expert supervision can give good results. While taking rest, the stroke patient should be made to sleep in different directions to avoid bed sores. Using Sahacharadi Kashayam, Maharasnadi Kashayam, Yogarajagulgulo tablets, Kottam Chukkathi Kuzhambu and Mahanarayana Thailam can give good results.

*I am a 42-year old working professional who travels extensively. Of late, I am finding it difficult to bend my knees. Is there any treatment in Ayurveda for this? Will taking tablets for rheumatism help me deal with this issue or will it be harmful?*

**Juno Narayanan, Ottapalam**

This kind of joint pain is usually not arthritic in nature. What you need to understand is that the main symptoms of arthritis are pain, swelling and redness of the affected joints and morning stiffness along with increased temperature, anorexia (loss of appetite) and fatigue (tiredness). ESR count in the blood of suffering from these conditions will be high due to inflammation in the joints.

The pain that you experience is observed in most people who always sit in a wrong position, especially for a prolonged period, either at work or while travelling. This can produce swelling of the tendons and ligaments that connects the two bony ends in the joint and thus produce pain. Continuous sitting, keeping the knee joint over the other one, increases the pressure of the joint and increases the pain. You have enquired if tablets for pain can be used for instant relief. What you need to understand is that the pain you experience is the body signifying that you are affected with a disease. If you mask it by using a pain killer, the main disease that causes the pain will develop to the next stage. Moreover, these of tablets will affect the kidney and other vital organs badly. Hence, it is not advisable.

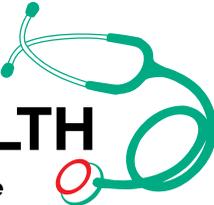
As mentioned in your question, you have been experiencing these symptoms only for the last two months. In such a situation, simple medications along with some changes in lifestyle can help you to overcome the disease. Massaging the affected part with lukewarm medicated oils like Kottamchukkadi, Karpooradi, Likucha Thailam (oil), etc, along with upanaha sweda (using paste of Jadamayadi choorna mixed with hot water for external application over the affected joint at night) can provide great relief. To reduce pain and swelling, decoctions like Rasna Saptaka, Rasnairandadi kashaya with Yogaraja gulgulu gulika can be taken every day based on expert advice after applying hot thailas over the joints. It is also advised to have bath only in hot water. If obese, try to reduce weight by bringing down food consumption.

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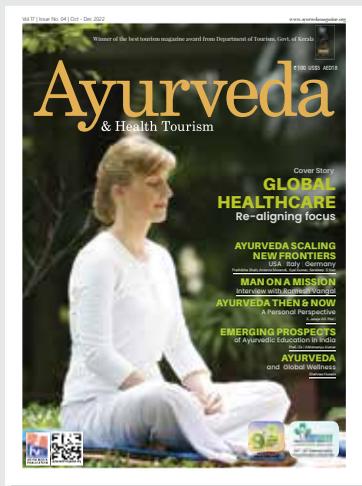
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