

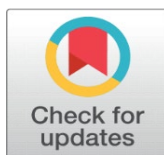
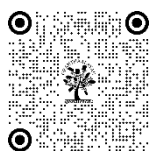
AYURVEDA FOR PROMOTION OF HEALTH

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ABSTRACT

Health is self produced by equilibrium and balance in the behavior of individuals at every level. This is the real meaning of wellbeing advancement on public health according to Ayurveda. Ayurveda is based on universal principles -- not constrained to a specific ethnic gathering or culture-being both individual focused and intercultural and it very well may be utilized as a joining of the existent human services frameworks just as a layout to safeguard nearby conventional qualities so as to address the issues of various populaces. Ayurveda concerns mostly with longevity, whose notion is not only limited merely to long-lasting life, but it encompasses all the conditions to live in health and vitality in order to achieve an healthy death, meaning the natural final experience of the cycle of life. Thus, in Ayurveda the concept of public health, even encompassing all ages, focuses primarily on the individual capability of healthy aging intended as complete fulfilling one's life.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Health promotion, Longevity, Healthy aging

1. INTRODUCTION

The world is experiencing a fast change in all circles; the eco framework, nature and living creatures are under solid endurance worry because of extreme contamination, environmental change, populace rise and other financial reasons. At this intricate point, individuals are attempting to beat these chances for endurance. Keeping up the respectability of nature and human wellbeing is a major test before the world and it can't be disregarded either; the overseeing organizations everywhere throughout the world are burning through billions of dollars and turning out with more grounded approaches to improve general wellbeing step by step. In this situation, there is a lucky opening rising up out of the sides of world towards Traditional/Holistic therapeutic frameworks like Ayurveda. General wellbeing today is picking up force all finished, and is a decent sign for conventional medicinal frameworks to get their place to satisfy the need of the day.

Since, health is subjected to constant change under various influences it is equally important to maintain and promote health, as rightly told in Ayurveda "Arogyam Mulamuttamam," Ayurveda given utmost importance to Arogya (Health). The primary aim of Ayurveda is "Swasthasya Swasthyarakshanam" and "Aturasya Vikaraprashamanam," the context explains the importance of maintenance and promotion of health in healthy, along with treating a sickness¹. Health, according to ayurvedic theory, is defined as: uninterrupted physical, mental, spiritual happiness and fulfillment; a true balance of organs/systems, psyche and spirit, and balanced and creative relationships with fellow creatures and nature

as a whole, family, friends, work, climate, ideals and customs, truth and ourselves², the universe and ourselves; balance and harmony of the three doshas. According to the Caraka samhita, well-being is a "disease free state" to be pursued for the attainment of "virtue, wealth and gratification"³. A person whose self, mind, and senses are harmonious and cheerful is healthy. In Sanskrit, swastha means healthy; sva means self and stha means established: established in self. Self has three parts-body, mind and spirit⁴. To be healthy is thus to have mental, spiritual and physical peace, along with social well-being.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A comprehensive study was undertaken on the descriptions of Ayurveda and Health Promotion in different Ayurvedic Samhita. Descriptions were collected from various Ayurvedic Samhita and research papers published in scholarly journals were searched online from scientific electronic databases viz. PubMed, Google scholar, Science Direct by using the following key phrases: Ayurveda and Health, Positive Health through Ayurveda and Yoga, Vitality of Ayurveda in present Health care system etc. Results were analyzed in view of contemporary science to understand the importance of Ayurveda for the promotion of positive Health

HEALTH AND AYURVEDA.

In Ayurveda the determinants of health are biological, ecological, medical, psychological, sociocultural, spiritual and metaphysical factors, all interdependent and wired together by the common concept of relationship. The harmonization and integration of these determinants in a complex system allows the emergence of what is identified as health. Ayurveda describes health as swastha, a sanskrit term meaning "stability in the true self", a state of complete, balanced, physical, mental and spiritual well-being^{5,6}. This remind us to United Nations' World Health Organization's definition of health (1948) as "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity"⁷.

Ayurvedic definitions of health include true balance with society, fellow creatures and nature as a whole. Family, friends, work, ideals and customs, spiritual life, climate and ecology are encompassed in this definition. The health of the individual is dependent on at least eight factors⁸: the ecosystem-natural zone and category of the land, such as jungle, desert, lake-shore and so on; seasons in the ecosystem; available food material; fresh local produce available, like fruits and vegetables; the way of living and habits of the people, such as siestas (napping during the afternoon); availability of medicinal substances; useful animals, particularly for agricultural and transportation purposes. The holistic basis of Ayurveda implicitly incorporates mental health in most aspects of health promotion, disease prevention and treatment. In Indian science, the mind is believed to control all bodily functions. A disciplined, finely tuned and spiritually connected mind is thus able to have a great deal of positive impact on overall health of an individual.

Ayurveda has two basic aims: First, to preserve the health of healthy people and to help them attain the four principle aims of life (virtue, purpose or wealth, pleasure, and release or liberation from cycle of rebirth); second, to treat illness and disease⁹. Thus, the ayurvedic definition of health by Sushruta: One whose doshas are in balance, whose appetite is good, whose dhatus are functioning normally, whose malas are in balance, and whose physiology, mind and senses are always full of bliss, is called a healthy person¹⁰.

MEASURES TO PROMOTE HEALTH AND LONGEVITY THROUGH AYURVEDA

Ayurveda for preserving one's health (throughout the life span) are not only scientific, but practical and entirely workable at the levels of individuals, community, society and in clinical practice. They are also highly relevant today, when Mankind (in all parts of the world) is exposed to and suffering from the ravages of highly "artificial life styles" adopted by individuals and societies/communities, consequent to modern civilization, urbanisation and technology explosion, apart from severe competition and stress in daily life.

Ayurveda gives elaborate guidelines for achieving perfect health and remaining healthy in its "Swastha Vritta" through Dinacharya (daily routine) and Ritucharya (seasonal regimens). Comprehensive instructions are given on specific food/dietary schedules (for different times of the day, different seasons, according to one's age and most importantly, to suit one's individual constitution or "Prakriti").

Apart from nutrition, measures for personal hygiene, use of medicated gargles, oil massages and regulated physical exercises (based on the Yoga system) are prescribed.

Further, Ayurveda advocates¹¹ that individuals should not suppress natural physical (physiological) urges like micturition, defecation, sneezing, yawning, as also hunger, thirst, sleep, tears etc. On the other hand, Ayurveda advocates suppression of harmful psychological urges (ie. negative emotions) like anger, fear, greed, vanity, jealousy, malice, as also excessive attachment (to anything).

Importance is given to maintaining mental health by cultivating a positive attitude and Sadvritta (adherence to a strict code of moral principles and conduct, throughout life), apart from measures of relaxation such as meditation, prayer, group activities etc. It is interesting to note that, today, renowned cardiologists, neurologists and psychiatrists from the developed countries are advocating the same principles for modifying lifestyles so as to prevent/manage dreaded diseases such as heart attacks, stroke, stress disorders, cancers, diseases of ageing, etc. through non-drug measures, as supplements to medications and surgery that are routinely being practised in the modern era.

Apart from “Swastha Vritta”, Ayurveda offers another unique principle/therapy or technique - “Rasāyana tantra” for preventing or countering the adverse effects of ageing. The Rasāyana drugs/ measures of Ayurveda encompass the whole gamut of anti-ageing, anti-oxidant, adaptogenic/anti-stress, immunity- conferring food items, drugs and other measures (like meditation, achāra rasāyana or behavioural code for positive health). ‘New Age Ayurveda’ (from Western countries) had added many new plant drugs to the list of Ayurvedic Rasāyanas (such as ginkgo biloba, ginseng, evening primrose oil, etc.)¹².

The ultimate goal of Ayurveda- (the Science of living) is to help Mankind to live a healthy, long life, mainly to achieve the well recognised four-fold purpose of human life viz. the chaturvidha purushārtha. To our ancients, human birth and life did not represent an accidental phenomenon (or a passive event to be completed mechanically), but a meaningful journey (from birth to death) for each individual with definite, time-tested goals to be achieved in consecutive stages of life (from childhood and adulthood to old age- terminating in death). This four-fold purpose of human life comprises: dharma (learning righteousness and moral values to be practised throughout life, especially in carrying out one’s duties with moral responsibility); artha (acquisition, by just means, of material wealth); kāma (fulfilling one’s desires and well deserved enjoyment of the pleasures of life, within the frame work of dharma – with respect to social and family life, particularly in adulthood and middle age), and finally moksha (salvation or liberation of the ‘soul’ through spiritual pursuits, in old age). To attain this four-fold purpose of life, Ayurveda considers it essential, for a human being to maintain oneself not only in a disease-free condition, but also in a state of perfect, positive health, balancing the body, mind and spirit¹³.

Ayurveda considers each human being as a distinct individual born with unique physiological/metabolic characteristics (most of which remain constant throughout life). These distinct characteristics, which contribute to the physical, physiological (metabolic) and psychological make-up of each individual, are described under the term Prakriti in Ayurveda. As Ayurveda believes in maintaining harmony with the internal as well as the external milieu, it is important to determine the “Prakriti” of each human being for maintaining health and preventing diseases, by following certain specific schedules relating to life-style, (including dietary guidelines) for each prakriti.

3. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Health is self generated by equilibrium and balance in the behavior of individuals at every level. This is the real meaning of health promotion on public health according to Ayurveda. Ayurveda, the traditional medicine of India, is a personalized medicine whose principle is based on patient individual constitution (prakriti) and relationships. Its focuses are a predictive, preventive medicine, a well-respected concepts in modern molecular medicine. Ayurveda

is based on universal principles - not limited to a particular ethnic group or culture- being both person-centered and intercultural and it can be used as an integration of the existent healthcare systems as well as a template to rescue local traditional values in order to meet the needs of different populations. Ayurveda concerns mostly with longevity, whose notion is not only limited merely to long-lasting life, but it encompasses all the conditions to live in health and vitality in order to achieve an healthy death, meaning the natural final experience of the cycle of life. Thus, in Ayurveda the concept of public health, even encompassing all ages, focuses primarily on the individual capability of healthy aging intended as complete fulfilling one’s life. Ayurveda places importance upon the constitution/resting state of the individual. Choice and dosage of medication are dependent upon dosha and environmental conditions, and treatment paths are individualized to people’s unique needs. Ayurvedic methods of diagnosis are simple and non-invasive. The understanding of disease reflects the interactions between mind and body. Emphasis is placed on positive health and prevention of disease. A wholesome diet and recommended daily regimen assist in health promotion.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None

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