AN OVERVIEW OF AYURVEDA

WHAT IS AYURVEDA?

- **Ayurveda is the world's oldest Indian holistic healthcare system**

- **Ayurvedic medicine is a complete medical science hence, entirely holistic. It aims to integrate and balance the body, mind and spirit.**

- **Thus, it is the art of living in harmony with nature.**

DEFINITION OF AYURVEDA

- **Having both holistic approach and preventive aspects Ayurveda is not restricted to a definition as 'science of disease'**

- **Derived from the Sanskrit word composed of two basionyms: 'ayur'-life and 'veda'-science/knowledge, it is defined as the science of life and also as knowledge of life.**

OBJECTIVES OF AYURVEDA

- Ayurveda advocates a complete promotive, preventive and curative system of medicine.
- Ayurveda lays great emphasis on preservation and promotion of health thereby preventing the diseases.
- Based upon principles of personal hygiene including diet and regimen during daily routine, seasonal routine, ethics and behaviours.

Ayurveda aims to

1. Prevent disease- by maintaining and promoting health
2. Cure diseases

▪ Preventive Medicine- seeks to create and maintain health along with longevity within the individual which is done through daily and periodic regimens to support the body constitution and keep it in balance

▪ Curative Medicine- the treatments seek to heal an illness, which are achieved by various medical and non medical approaches.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF AYURVEDA

- **Ayurveda is based on the following theories :**
    1. **Pancha Mahabhuta Theory - Five Basic Elements which form the basis for all existing material creation**
    2. **Tri-dosha theory - Three Body Humors – regulate every physiological and psychological process in the living organism**
        i) **Vata: force of motion (transporting)**
        ii) **Pitta: power of energy (transforming)**
        iii) **Kapha: power of inertia (stabilizing)**
    3. **Sapta-dhatu theory-(Seven Body Tissues)**

Definition of Health

- an individual having a balanced condition of
    doshas (somatic & psychic humors)
    agni (digestive capacity)
    dahtu (body tissues)
    mala (excretions)
    kriya (physiological activity)
- and soundness of
    Atma (soul)
    Indriya (sensory organ)
    Mana (mind)
    Is known as health

Thus Ayurveda conceives a four dimensional definition of health.

PERSPECTIVE OF AYURVEDIC MEDICINE

- According to this perspective, Ayurveda is concerned with measures to protect "ayus", which includes healthy living along with therapeutic measures that relate to physical, mental, social and spiritual harmony.
- Ayurveda is not a 'one-size-fit-all' system
- Its regimens are tailored to each individual's unique body constitution(prakruti)
- The focus is on both the patient and disease
- Thus, Ayurveda fundamentally aims to promote health and enhance s the quality of life with therapeutic strategies for treatment of specific diseases or symptoms in a holistic way.

AYURVEDIC TREATMENT

Types of Treatment :

- **Nidan Parivarjan (Avoidance of disease causing and aggravating factors)**
- **Shodhana therapy (Purification Treatment)**
- **Shamana therapy (Palliative Treatment)**
- **Pathya Vyavastha (Prescription of diet and activity)**
- **Satvavajaya(Psychotherapy)**
- **Rasayan therapy (Rejuvenating)**

- Diagnosis in Ayurvedic medicine is based on two-fold approach to diagnostics:
  a) examination of the patient –ascertaining the constitution of the individual and status of health and vitality
  b) examination of disease-defining the stage of disease based on its acute and chronic state

- Ayurveda use whole crude plant, metal and minerals drug having a mixture of many ingredients.

- Ayurveda uses plant drugs either in single form or in a complex compound formulations of many herbs and plants mixed together

Plant drug combinations are based upon a comprehensive principle for combining different herbs in a formulation Combination of constituent herbs are done based upon :

- Synergistic action
- Antidote effect
- Enhance bio availability and assimilation of main ingredients
- Additional therapeutic effects

SCOPE OF AYURVEDA

- **The eight branches of Ayurveda are:**
- **1. Internal medicine - Kayachikitsa Tantra**
- **2. Surgery - Shalya Tantra**
- **3. Ears, eyes, nose and throat - Shalakya Tantra**
- **4. Pediatrics - Kaumarabhritya Tantra**
- **5. Toxicology - Agada Tantra**
- **6. Purification of the genetic organs - Bajikarana**
- **(or Vajikarana) Tantra**
- **7. Health and Longevity - Rasayana Tantra**
- **8. Spiritual Healing / Psychiatry - Bhuta Vidy**

EVIDENCE BASED RESEARCH

- **In Ayurveda the process of learning, research and clinical practice are scientific and evidence based**

- **The knowledge is scientifically validated through evidence based approaches ; the Pramanas (Evidence):**

  - **Pratyaksa (Direct perception),**

  - **Anumana (Logical inference),**

  - **Aptopadesa (authentic documentary testimony),**

  - **Yukti (Experimental evidence)**

AYURVEDA IN MAURITUS

- **Ayurvedic system of medicine has been introduced in Mauritius since 1960s in the private sector**

- **In 1989 Ayurveda was legalized along with other Traditional medicine as Chinese and Homeopathy system of medicine.**

- **It was known as 'Ayurveda and other Traditional Medicne Act'**

- **It was integrated in the public health system since 1997**

- Presently Ayurvedic health services are being provided at five Ayurvedic clinics with the following resource persons:
  1. Ayurvedic medical officer
  2. Nursing Officer
  3. Health Care Assistant (trained in Panchkarma therapy)
  4. Health record Clerk
  5. Dispenser (trained in Ayurvedic dispensing)
  6. Health Care Assistant

- In the general practice of Ayurveda both acute conditions and all the chronic diseases are well controlled and managed with both medicinal and non-medicinal treatments.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda has made developments through the centuries and today it is gaining global relevance. This new upsurge of interest in Ayurveda and its rapidly increasing public interest and use has given rise to many newer issues and challenges. The public in general, as well as the scientific and professional community, seems to be largely convinced with the rationality and possible potency of the system.

THANK YOU

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