

ROLE OF AYURVEDA IN ACHIEVING “UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE FOR ALL BY 2030”

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ABSTRACT

World health day theme for 2019 was ‘universal health coverage’ for all by 2030. All UN Member States have agreed to achieve universal health coverage (UHC) by 2030, as part of the Sustainable Development Goals. UHC means that all individuals and communities receive the health services they need without suffering financial hardship. Prevention of diseases can play a great role in achieving this goal. In Ayurveda the preventive aspect of diseases has been described very elaborately incorporating every aspect of health such as physical, mental, social and spiritual. Even, there is description about how to prevent the accidents and natural calamities. Ayurveda emphasizes on two concepts i.e. maintenance of health of a healthy person and curing the disease of an ill. And To maintain the health some “*Dincharya*” i.e. daily regimen has been elaborated. By following daily *Dinacharya* one will be able to follow a healthy lifestyle thereby maintaining health.

Keywords: Universal health coverage, Ayurveda, Prevention, *Dincharya*

INTRODUCTION

As per the history, Ayurveda has been created by “Lord *Brahma*” the creator of this Universe. It is the science related to life. This science was brought to earth through various Dev(deity) and Rishi’s (sages)¹. The main aim of *Ayurveda* is to prevent the diseases and if disease occurs, then to cure it². The knowledge of Ayurveda is *Aptopadesh* i.e. it is given by a person who had knowledge of *trikaala* means past, present and future³. So it is a misperception that Ayurveda is an old science. Although it has been written in past still its knowledge provides us with cure for all types of problems in the society. Ayurveda has capacity to prevent and cure each and every problems of human

being. World health day theme for 2019 was ‘universal health coverage’ for all by 2030 and all UN Member States have agreed to try to achieve this goal by 2030, as part of the Sustainable Development Goals. UHC means that all individuals and communities will receive all health services which they need without suffering financial hardship. It includes the full spectrum of essential and quality health services, from health promotion to prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and palliative care. The success rate surely can be increased up to a great extent by adding preventive measures described under *dincharya* in *Ayurveda* as by following daily regimen (*Dincharya*) one will be

able to follow a healthy lifestyle thereby maintaining health. This knowledge can be applied directly due to its strong historical background. It is very difficult to incorporate all the preventive measures in this article so especially the preventive measures for physical health have been elaborated here.

Aim: To bring forth the precious god gifted knowledge of *Ayurveda* before the mankind.

Objectives

- To encourage people to incorporate this knowledge in their lifestyle to lead a healthy life.
- To achieve the goal "universal health coverage 2030" through this knowledge

Materials:

Broadly all diseases have been classified into three categories as per *Ayurveda*⁴.

- *Sharirik* - physical problems
- *Maansik* - mental problems
- *Agantuj* - accidental problems

1.Prevention of physical problems:

They can be prevented by obeying the following advises of *Ayurveda*⁵:

- Following the specific daily routine (*Dincharya* or *Swasthavritta*) as mentioned in the treatises.
- By following the seasonal regimen advised in the treatises.
- Obeying of rules for natural suppressible and no suppressible natural urges.
- Seasonal purification of body through *Panchkarma*.
- Intake of rejuvenating (*Rasayan*) drugs regularly and aphrodisiac (*Vajikaran*) drugs as per need.

2. Prevention of mental and accidental problems⁶:

- Refrain from *Pragyaanparaadha* (excessive, very less and faulty indulgence of three types of work i.e. physical, verbal and mental). It is also called as *Adharma*.
- *Indriya upshama* (control on sense organs)
- *Smriti* (remembering of the previous happening)
- Knowledge about *Desha* (where the person is residing), *kaala* (knowledge of time) and *atma* (knowledge about spirit)

- Obeying of *Sadvritta* (good conduct) as described in the literature.

Prevention of physical problems:

For this our *Acharya's* have described specific *Dincharya*, *ritucharya*, *rasayan* etc. to protect the body from various diseases.

A) *Dincharya*:

1-Awakening: One should rise up after complete digestion of food. Awakening before sunrise (starting of *kaphaj kaal*) is good for health and also it is easier to awake in this period as it comes under *vataj kaal* where people usually don't remain in deep sleep whereas after sunrise *kaphaj kaal* starts and one feels more lethargic. So, one should go to bed early for proper digestion of food and should rise up early.

2-Brushing⁷:

Preferably one should use twigs of specific plant like *Neem*, *Karanj*, *khadir* etc. for brushing daily. But now a days due to our modified lifestyle this can't be done on regular basis so instead of regular use we can adopt this at least once a week for proper cleaning of teeth. Also, we can use powder or paste of various drugs in form of *manjan* described in our *samhita's* to protect teeth from caries and other dental problem.

3-Oil gargling (*Gandusha dhaaran*)⁸:

Oil *dhaaran* (preferably sesame oil) in the mouth for certain period (10-20 minutes) also known as *gandusha* is advised in our routine regimen by our *acharya's*. This not only prevents but also cure the sensitivity and attrition of teeth and strengthen the gum tissue along with oral mucosa.

4-Eye and face washing⁹:

Washing face after rising by medicated decoction like *panchvalkal kashaya* or that of *amla* and *lodhra* along with milk is beneficial in preventing pimples, dark circles and other skin problems. Also washing eyes daily with *Triphala kashaya* is mentioned and it is helpful in clearing vision.

5-Anjan karma (applying collyrium in eye)¹⁰:

It has been advised in *Ayurveda* to apply *anjana* regularly. Specific *surma* (*sauviranjan* and *rasanjan*) have been advised for this. *Sauviranjan* can be applied on daily basis and *Rasanjan* once in 5 or 8 days. Applying *anjana* prevents and cures burning, itching, water-

ing, pain and early morning stickiness of eye. Also, it clears the vision and tolerance power of eye for wind and sunshine.

Precaution- It should not be applied just after taking meal and bath, after vomiting and after being tired from journey through any vehicle.

6-Nasyakarma¹¹:

Putting medicated oil or *ghrita* in each nostril is known as *nasya karma*. As per Ayurveda nose is the gateway for *shirah pradesh* (head), so *nasya* is the main therapy for preventive as well as curative aspect of diseases of head as well as *urdhwajatrugata roga*.

It has been advised to do *nasyakarma* in three specific seasons i.e. *Varsha*, *Sharad* and *Vasant* by a specific medicated oil i.e. *Anutail* in a specific method, dose and process to prevent diseases of head. It can preserve the function of eyes, nose and ears for prolong period as well as it strengthens the sense organs. Also, it is mentioned that hair fall, discoloration of hairs and beard never occur if one does *nasya karma* regularly. Ageing signs are delayed. A milder form of *nasya* known as *pratimarsha nasya*, can be done daily by everyone.

7-Dhumpaana (medicated smoking)¹²:

It is a procedure for prevention of various diseases of head especially of due to *kapha dosha*. There are three varieties of *dhumpaana* as per *Ayurveda* i.e. *prayogik*; *snaihik* and *vairechanik*. If it is used judiciously it cleans the heart, throat, sense organs and one feel lightness in head. Hairs, teeth, moustache and beard becomes strong. Brings freshness in mouth and prevents *kaas* (coughing), *swaas* (asthma), *aruchi* (anorexia), feeling of coating in mouth, hoarseness of voice, dribbling of saliva, sneezing, vomiting, spontaneous difficulty in breathing, *tandra* (unnatural sleepiness), *ati nidra* (excessive sleep), lock jaw, rhinitis, problem of head, earache, eye ache and *vatakaphaj* diseases of mouth.

8-Chewing of betel¹³

Chewing of betel is a good traditional practice but should be done as per advises of Ayurveda. It has been advised to use *karpura*, *jaiphal*, *sheetalchini*, *lavang*, *latakasturi*, *chuna* (lime) and *choti elaichi* in betel. It cleanses the mala (microorganisms) of gum,

teeth, tongue and clears the voice and sense organs. It also cures the excessive salivations as well as strengthens the heart and cures the diseases of throat and neck. Chewing betel leaf at specific time has been mentioned i.e. early in morning after sleep, after taking diet, after bath and after vomiting. In some cases, like bleeding disorders, faintness, excessive thirst etc. this should be avoided.

9-Oil massage in head¹⁴

In *Ayurveda* it has been advised to apply oil in scalp daily. It relieves headache and other head related problems. Neither hair fall occurs, nor their discoloration takes place, rather they become soft, thick and grows quickly. It also nourishes the sense organs like ears, nose, eyes etc. and helps in sound sleep. For doing massage oil applied should be in normal temperature i.e. neither warm nor hot.

10-Putting of ear drop¹⁵

It has been advised to put oil in ear daily as per *Ayurveda* for a normal (*swastha*) person. If one obeys this, he/she would never suffer from any *vattik* disorders of ear like *karnashool* (earache), *karna naada* and *karna kshweda* (tinnitus). Also, *karn poorna* prevents stiffness in neck and jaw and impairment of hearing including complete deafness, never occur by following this.

11-Abhyanga (body massage)¹⁶

Massage of the body with oil give softness to the body, prevents aggravations of *vata* and *kapha*. So, body ache and lethargic feeling never occurs. Also, it provides nourishment to the tissues. Body gains extra strength or tolerance power. External trauma never occurs so easily. It gives luster to the body so one looks beautiful. Ageing process slows down. It helps in growth of tissues in the same way as that of growth of a plant occur when water is sprinkled on its.

12-Feet massage¹⁷:

Massaging the feet is also a very good practice. It cures vaat related problem like the feelings of roughness, stiffness, dryness and numbness in feet and also it relieves tiredness. Feet becomes soft, gains strength and stability. It enhances visual acuity. Also, regular practice of it prevents *griddhrashi* (sciatica).

12-Exercise¹⁸:

It is very important for everyone in today's era. It plays a key role in prevention of disease and maintenance of health. *Vyayama* not only have positive effect on physical health but also on mental health. So, one should exercise daily and also after that whole body should be massaged well.

Limitation of exercise:

One should do physical exercises keeping in consideration one's age, strength, physique, country, season and diet; otherwise he/she may fall ill. Persons who are suffering from hemorrhagic diseases (abnormal bleeding from any parts of body), *krusha* (cachexia), *shosha* (phthisis or AIDS like debilitating disease), *swaas* (asthma), cough, and TB, excessive thirst and vertigo, those who have just taken their meals and those who have become weak due to excessive sexual intercourse should not do physical exercise.¹⁹

13-Daily bath²¹:

Bath brings the feeling of purity in body and mind, burning sensation, fatigue, sweating, itching and excessive thirst. It is beneficial to the heart; it stimulates all the senses and is the best cleansing medium. It relieves drowsiness and evil thoughts, affords contentment, increases the sexual virility of the man, stimulates the digestive power and causes purification of blood.

In healthy condition warm water for head bath has been contraindicated except during peak cold season otherwise it leads to eye ailments.

Contraindication of bath: in case of diarrhea, newly developed fever, earache, in case of any *vattik* pain, *aruchi* (loss of appetite), *ajirna* (indigestion) and after having food

14-Diet:

A great emphasis has been given to diet in *Ayurveda*. It is one among the three pillars to hold our body in its normal condition. Other two are *nidra* and *brahmacharya*. *Ahaar* is called as *mahabhaisajya* (*bhaisajya* means *ausadhi* as a suitable diet is said to be more than an appropriate medicine). Diet should be in appropriate quantity neither more nor less, which depends on two main factors i.e. appetite of a person and quality of diet. Also, Diet should not be taken before

proper appetite otherwise it may cause indigestion, diarrhea even severe food poisoning hence causing death²².

15-Rules of taking curd²³:

In *Ayurveda* certain regulations have been postulated regarding intake of curd such as:

1-Curd should not be taken during night and should not be taken without mixing any of these such as ghee, *shakkar*, *mungdaal*, *madhu*, *aamla*.

2- It should not be taken warm. Otherwise diseases like *kustha* (skin diseases), *visarpa* (erysipelas), *pandu* (all forms of anemia), *jwara* (fever), *bhrama* (vertigo), *raktapitta* (abnormal bleeding) etc. may occur.

16-Proper sleep²⁴:

Ayurveda considers sleep to be one of the "Three Pillars of Life". Good sleep is essential and advantageous to the quality of life. Sound sleep at night is a natural and nourishing phenomenon, so it is also called *bhutadhatri*. Day sleeping is abnormal, unrighteous and aggravates all the *doshas*; and due to the cumulative aggravation of the *doshas*, diseases like cough, dyspnea, corrhiza, heaviness in the head, body ache, anorexia, pyrexia and weak digestion result. But there are some exceptions such as the children, the elderly, the exhausted one, the wounded, the weak, one who are tired and one who is suffering from indigestion, *urokshata*, suffering from *trushna*, *dhaatukshyay* etc. Similarly, in those who keeps up during night, complications occur due to *vata-pitta* aggravation. Therefore, keeping up in night and sleeping in the day should be avoided as Lack of proper sleep can cause various diseases such as emaciation; loss of strength, impotency, improper response of sense organs and even can cause death due to severe diseases.

B) *Ritucharya* (seasonal regime):

Ritucharya consist of the lifestyle & diet regimen to cope up with the influences caused by seasonal changes. This helps us to increase our physical as well as mental strength and to fight back any disease that may occur due to seasonal changes. It also balances all the three *doshas* in our body and keeps us fit and healthy all year long. So *Ritucharya* holds great significance in *Ayurveda*.

Specific diet and activities have been advised very elaborately for all six seasons by both *Acharya Charak* and *Acharya Sushruta*.

C) Seasonal purification of body²⁶:

As per *Ayurveda* specific *doshas* are aggravated in our body due to influence of specific *kaala* such as *vaata* aggravates in *Pravratt ritu* (mid of June to mid of August), *pitta* aggravates in *saratritu* (mid of October to mid of December) and *kapha* aggravate in *Vasantritu* (mid of Feb to mid of April). So, to avoid the ill effect of these *doshas* a healthy person should do regular *shodhan* of these *doshas* in particular period such as *vasti* in between July and August, *virechan* in between November and December and *Vaman* in between March and April.

D) Rasayana and Vajikaran:

Rasayan-Rejuvenating the body has been advised as *Rasayan* therapy and is a unique process of *Ayurveda*. It protects the body through revitalizing the individual cell or strengthening the natural immunity of body. It is a special procedure practiced in the form of rejuvenator recipes, dietary regimen and special health promoting conduct and behavior i.e. *Acharya rasayana*.

It is a special way to attain longevity, memory, intelligence, youthful age, excellence of luster, complexion and voice, optimum strength of physique and sense organs along with freedom from ailments.

Vajikarana- Through *vajikaran* it has been advised how to produce a healthy progeny. Special rules for intercourse along with special medications have been described to produce a best progeny along with maintenance of optimum sexual health.

Both in *Charak* and *Sushrut samhita* very detail description about them is available.

DISCUSSION

There is very elaborative description available in *Ayurveda* about our daily routine so as to maintain and live a healthy life. A thorough discussion is needed to understand the importance of this knowledge. Like in our ancient texts it is being told that one should wake up early as sleeping in morning hour increases the *kapha doshas* thereby blocking the channels of our body, so it takes time to feel fresh. As a

result of which our mental output decreases. Secondly *dantamanjan* powder advised in *Ayurveda* is having very tremendous effect in prevention from diseases of gum and teeth. So, it should be propagated in the society to maintain oral hygiene in a simple method. Oil pulling method mentioned in *Ayurveda* is also having tremendous effect on maintaining the wear and tear of oral cavity so that it can remain healthy till old age. Washing Eye and face with certain prescribed formulation are the simplest method to protect the vision as well as maintain the beauty of face. *Anjan karma* is having great role to maintain the vision of eye. But nowadays traditional *anjana karma* have been reduced up to great extent, So, it also should be restarted compulsorily to prevent the eye power from deterioration. Also, it is more essential in this era as human life cannot run without the screen, which is the main victim for visual problems. *Nasya karma* have also been advised for the vitiated *dosha's* as it helps in clearing them thereby keeping all our *indriyas* safe and healthy. Medicated *dhumpana* is also having great role in protection of head from aggravated *kapha dosha*. This aggravated *kapha dosha* gradually block the channels of head causing gradual deterioration of their natural function so *dhumpana* can be done for prevention *kapha* related disorders in head. Betel chewing was a very good traditional method which is still running in some families in village. With proper knowledge and indication if this is used, it can prevent *kapha* related problems with many local benefits related to oral hygiene. Oil massage is also a very good method to maintain the health of skin as it provides nourishment to skin. Unfortunately, this method is also diminishing gradually as an impact of modernization and lack of time. Regular putting of eardrops of medicated oil is equally essential like *abhyang* to repair the wear and tear of ear canal. Today as people are doing very much use of earphone so this should be practiced regularly. Next is the practice of foot massage daily but now a days it is vanishing. There was a traditional practice of foot massage of elders by youngsters. The benefit of this was that elders will never be needed medicines to induce a sound sleep, also simultaneously youngsters use to receive blessings

thereby maintaining peace in a family. Now a days most people are leading a sedentary lifestyle so Regular exercise is the best method for present time to be healthy because it can balance all the three aggravated doshas, when shodhan is not possible. Most important is one can digest even unwholesome diet taking knowingly or unknowingly. Taking bath regularly is very important to maintain freshness of body but the contraindication of bath should be followed to prevent aggravation of disease. Hence regular practice of all these following rules and taking into consideration the contraindication of each practice is very essential to maintain a sound health as well as sound mind. A healthy body and healthy mind only can impact one's role for a healthy society.

CONCLUSION

As per Ayurveda happiness is nothing but the disease-free State. Lord Brahma has given detailed knowledge about how to keep us healthy through *Ayurveda* the *upveda* of *AtharvaVeda*. Unfortunately, in the name of modernization we have forgotten these valuable advises. But Due to increase in burden of diseases in spite of advancement in medical sciences in its peak level, people are inclining towards *Ayurveda*. So, it is the correct time to bring into light the hidden knowledge of *Ayurveda* in front of the society. *Dincharya* And *Ritucharya* are part of the vast knowledge of *ayurveda* regarding health. So Once people start to follow them definitely the health burden will fall drastically, and it will be easier to achieve the goal "Universal Health Coverage till 2030". Not only this but through this a healthy society, healthy India and healthy World can be formed.

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