



REBORN ANCIENT SCIENCE: THE ANCIENT INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM AND THE MEDICAL SCIENCE

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DOI - 10.5281/zenodo.14566859

ABSTRACT:

The Ancient Indian Knowledge System has been a profound source of wisdom in various fields, especially in ayurvedic medicine. Rooted in texts like the Vedas and Upanishads, this knowledge system emphasizes a holistic approach to health, combining physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. One of the key aspects of the ancient Indian medical system is Ayurveda, a comprehensive science that uses natural remedies such as herbs, dietary changes, and lifestyle modifications to prevent and cure diseases. Vedic literature is the foundation of India's knowledge tradition. It includes important texts like the Upanishads, Vedas, and Upvedas. One key idea from these teachings is "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam," a phrase from the Maha Upanishad, which means "The World is One Family." The word "Ayurveda" comes from two Sanskrit words: "Ayu," meaning life, and "Veda," meaning knowledge. So, Ayurveda is the knowledge of life, focusing on health and well-being.

This research paper aims to explore the rich history and contributions of IKS in the field of medical sciences, highlighting its relevance in modern times. It will cover the essential principles of Ayurveda, the role of medicinal plants, diagnostic methods like pulse reading (nadi vigyan), and how these ancient practices can be integrated into contemporary healthcare. The paper will provide insights into the sustainability of these practices, particularly in the context of global health challenges. By looking at IKS through various lenses, this study seeks to present a comprehensive understanding of how ancient Indian medical knowledge continues to influence modern science.

Keywords: Indian knowledge system, Nadi Vigyan, Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.

INTRODUCTION:

The Ancient Indian Knowledge System (IKS) is a vast and intricate body of knowledge, encompassing various fields like philosophy, astronomy, mathematics, and medicine. Among

these, the medical sciences in ancient India, particularly Ayurveda, have played a pivotal role in shaping health practices and well-being. The foundations of Ayurveda are found in the Vedas, which are considered the

oldest sacred texts in human history. These texts laid the groundwork for understanding human anatomy, physiology, and the balance of the body's energies, offering methods to maintain health and cure diseases. In this research paper, we will delve into the core concepts of IKS, with a primary focus on its medical aspects. We will discuss its key principles, the significance of plants and herbs in treatment, diagnostic practices such as pulse diagnosis, and the relevance of IKS in modern medicine. The paper aims to present a clear understanding of how these ancient practices can be integrated into contemporary healthcare systems to address the rising challenges in global health.

ORIGIN OF INDIAN MEDICINE:

Ancient India made great progress in the field of medicine, with important contributions from famous scholars like Susruta and Charaka. These individuals wrote influential texts that helped shape the practice of medicine in India.

1. **Susruta:** Known as the "father of surgery," Susruta is famous for his work on surgical techniques, especially in the areas of surgery and anatomy. His text, the *Susruta Samhita*, is one of the oldest medical treatises, providing details about surgical procedures, tools, and patient care.

2. **Charaka:** Charaka was a key figure in the development of Ayurvedic medicine. His text, the *Charaka Samhita*, focuses on internal medicine, including the diagnosis and treatment of diseases, as well as promoting health through lifestyle and diet.

In addition to these texts, ancient Indian medicine was passed down through an interesting method of storytelling. Stories, often filled with morals and wisdom, were used as a way to teach medical knowledge to students and the general public. This method helped make the knowledge accessible and memorable, ensuring that it was passed on through generations.

DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF INDIAN MEDICINE:

- **Ayurveda:** Indian medicine is largely based on Ayurveda, a holistic approach that emphasizes the balance of the body, mind, and spirit. Ayurveda teaches that health is achieved by maintaining harmony within oneself and with nature.
- **Herbal Medicine:** Ancient Indian medicine used a variety of natural remedies, many of which are still in use today. Herbs, minerals, and other natural substances were carefully prepared and used to treat various ailments.

- **Yoga and Meditation:** As part of Indian medicine, the practice of yoga and meditation was also used to promote health. These practices are known to help reduce stress, improve mental clarity, and maintain physical well-being.
- **Pedagogical Approach:** Indian medicine was traditionally taught through oral transmission, where gurus (teachers) passed on knowledge to their disciples through stories, discussions, and practical teachings. This method helped preserve medical knowledge and made it easier for students to understand and apply in real-life situations.

The origin of Indian medicine is deeply rooted in ancient texts and teachings, with a focus on natural remedies, holistic health, and the mind-body connection. The wisdom of scholars like Susruta and Charaka continues to influence modern medicine, particularly in practices like Ayurveda.

AYURVEDA: THE FOUNDATION OF ANCIENT INDIAN MEDICINE:

- **The Origins of Ayurveda:** Ayurveda, which translates to the "Science of Life," originated thousands of years ago in India. It is an ancient healing system that focuses on maintaining

balance in the body, mind, and spirit. The system emphasizes the use of natural substances, including plants, minerals, and dietary adjustments, to prevent and treat illness.

- **Key Concepts in Ayurveda:** Ayurveda is based on the concept of three doshas (Vata, Pitta, and Kapha), which are energies believed to govern bodily functions. These doshas determine an individual's physical and mental constitution, and an imbalance in these energies can lead to illness.
- **Ayurvedic Treatment Principles:** Ayurveda uses a combination of herbal medicines, detoxifying treatments, yoga, and meditation to restore harmony within the body. It focuses on preventive care rather than just curing diseases, aiming to balance the individual's physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

NADI VIGYAN (PULSE DIAGNOSIS): A KEY DIAGNOSTIC TOOL:

- **Understanding Nadi Vigyan:** Nadi Vigyan is an ancient technique used to diagnose health conditions by examining the pulse. Unlike modern medicine, which typically

measures the rhythm of the pulse, Nadi Vigyan looks for over 28 characteristics of the pulse, including its rhythm, strength, and quality. This method provides insights into the functioning of the body's internal systems, such as the heart, liver, and digestive organs.

- **The Role of the Pulse in Health Diagnosis:** The pulse reflects the balance of the doshas, and changes in pulse quality can indicate underlying health issues. Ayurvedic practitioners use pulse diagnosis to assess imbalances and recommend appropriate treatments based on the individual's condition.
- **Practical Application of Pulse Diagnosis:** Nadi Vigyan requires expertise, as it involves using three fingers (index, middle, and ring) to assess the pulse at specific points on the wrist. This method helps detect subtle signs of disease long before they manifest in physical symptoms.

MEDICINAL PLANTS AND HERBS IN AYURVEDIC MEDICINE:

- **Herbal Remedies in Ayurveda:** Ayurveda uses a wide range of medicinal herbs and plants to treat various health conditions. Plants like Ashwagandha, Tulsi, and Neem are commonly used

for their therapeutic properties, such as reducing stress, improving immunity, and detoxifying the body.

- **The Importance of Natural Medicine:** Ayurvedic medicine is deeply connected to nature and emphasizes the healing power of plants. Unlike synthetic drugs, herbal remedies aim to address the root cause of illness and work in harmony with the body's natural processes.
- **Recent Research on Ayurvedic Herbs:** Modern scientific research has begun to validate the medicinal properties of many Ayurvedic herbs. For example, studies on turmeric (*Curcuma longa*) have shown its anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects, supporting its use in treating various health conditions.

INTEGRATION OF ANCIENT PRACTICES WITH MODERN MEDICINE:

- **Global Recognition of Ayurveda:** In recent decades, Ayurveda has gained global recognition as an alternative and complementary medical system. It has been integrated into conventional healthcare systems in many parts of the world, especially in the treatment of

chronic diseases and stress-related disorders.

• **Sustainability and Relevance in Modern Healthcare:**

Ayurveda offers sustainable, natural solutions to many health problems that are prevalent in modern society, such as stress, lifestyle diseases, and environmental toxins. Integrating Ayurvedic principles into contemporary medicine could improve patient care and reduce reliance on pharmaceuticals.

• **Challenges and Opportunities:**

While Ayurveda has much to offer, challenges remain in standardizing treatments and ensuring their safety and effectiveness. Research, education, and collaboration between Ayurvedic practitioners and modern healthcare providers will be essential for the future of integrative medicine.

AYURVEDA IS STILL IMPORTANT FOR MANY REASONS – TODAY'S SCOPE:

1. **Holistic approach:** Ayurveda focuses on physical, mental, and spiritual health, which aligns with the growing interest in healthcare that treats the whole person, not just individual symptoms.

2. **Personalized medicine:**

Ayurveda emphasizes customized treatment plans based on an individual's unique needs, which matches the modern trend of personalized medicine.

3. **Natural and sustainable:**

Ayurveda uses natural remedies and promotes sustainability, which appeals to people looking for eco-friendly and natural health options.

4. **Chronic disease management:**

Ayurveda offers helpful treatments for managing chronic conditions like diabetes, arthritis, and digestive issues, which are common today.

5. **Stress management:**

Ayurveda includes stress-reducing practices like yoga and meditation, which are particularly useful in today's fast-paced world.

6. **Preventive healthcare:**

Ayurveda focuses on preventing illness and promoting overall health, which fits well with modern healthcare's focus on prevention.

7. **Complementary therapy:**

Ayurveda can work alongside conventional Western medicine, providing a more complete approach to health and healing.

This shows that Ayurveda continues to be relevant and beneficial in modern times.

According to Ayurveda - The Relation between "The Mind and Body"

1. **Mind's importance:** Ayurveda believes that the mind, with its creative power, was the first to exist, and everything else in the body was created afterward.
2. **Mind-body connection:** The physical body is seen as a material representation of the mind. This idea forms the basis of the Indian belief that the mind can influence the body ("mind-over-matter").
3. **Mutual influence:** The mind and body are connected on an immaterial-material continuum, meaning they both affect each other.

This concept is similar to modern psychosomatic medicine, which says that -

1. **Multiple causes of disease:** Every disease has many different causes, not just one.
2. **Psychological causes of physical disease:** Physical illnesses can also be caused by psychological factors, such as stress or emotions.
3. **Negative emotions as causes:** Emotions like fear, anger, grief, greed, pride, and jealousy can contribute to illness. Interestingly, Ayurveda also sees

greed and pride as factors that can lead to sickness. This shows that no one is immune to becoming ill.

4. **Positive qualities for health:** Ayurveda also emphasizes that certain values, attitudes, and behaviors, such as courage, righteous living, and self-control, promote good health. Righteous living means acting in ways that benefit everyone in the long term. These qualities are the opposite of negative emotions like fear, greed, jealousy, anger, grief, and pride, which are harmful to health.

CONCLUSION:

The Ancient Indian Knowledge System, particularly in the field of medical sciences, offers a holistic and sustainable approach to healthcare that has stood the test of time. Ayurveda, along with practices like Yoga and meditation, provides valuable insights into maintaining health and preventing disease. The integration of ancient diagnostic methods, such as pulse diagnosis, with modern medical technologies can lead to more comprehensive and individualized treatment plans. By embracing the wisdom of the past, we can address many of the health challenges faced by modern societies, promoting wellness on a global scale. Ayurveda remains relevant today for several reasons, such

as its holistic approach to health, personalized treatments, use of natural remedies, and focus on prevention and chronic disease management. It also helps with stress and works well alongside modern medicine.

According to Ayurveda, the mind and body are deeply connected, with the mind influencing the body and vice versa. Negative emotions like fear, anger, and greed can cause illness, while positive qualities like courage and self-control promote good health. This concept is similar to modern medicine, which also acknowledges the role of psychological factors in physical health.

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