**Ayurveda**

**What is Ayurveda?**

Literally Ayurveda is ‘**the knowledge of life**’. Ayurveda is one of the most ancient systems of medicine in the world. It is the extension of **Atharvaveda** (one of the Four Vedas)

Ayurveda is inbuilt to Indian culture and is a part of daily lifestyle of many Indians who adopted it to maintain good health.

**How Ayurveda came to origin**

In popular Indian mythology, the story is that Lord Indra taught Ayurveda to Rishi Bhardwaj.

Rishi Bhardwaj was chosen by the sages to represent the mankind and he then approached the gods to alleviate the human miseries caused by the diseases.

Knowing man’s limited knowledge lord Indra taught Rishi Bhardwaj the principles of Ayurveda after dividing it into 8 braches.

**Branches in Ayurveda**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **S.No.** | **Type** | **Explanation** |
| 1 | **Kayachikitsa** | Internal medicine |
| 2 | **Balarogachikitsa** | Paediatrics and gynaecology |
| 3 | **Shalyachitiksa** | Surgery |
| 4 | **Shalakyachikitsa** | ENT (ear, nose and throat surgery) |
| 5 | **Agadatantra** | Toxicology |
| 6 | **Rasayanchikitsa** | Rejuvenation |
| 7 | **Vajikaranachikitsa** | Study of sexual function and reproduction |
| 8 | **Manasrogachikitsa** | Psychiatry |

As per the guru-shishya relationship this knowledge was propagated, modified and crystallised into the most primary form and in the standard reference Ayurveda texts of Charaka and Shushutra samhitas.

These were further expanded with advances made in complementary sciences and gave birth to other texts like Vagabhatta’s Ashtanga Hridya, Sharangdhara Samhita, etc.

**Why you need Ayurveda in life?**

Everyone wants to live a healthy life.

Stress free, disease free, and efficient body is a dream of many.

But there is a difference in saying Healthy body and Disease free body. A disease free body is not necessarily a healthy body but a healthy body is certainly a disease free body.

Allopathy has solution to almost every disease known to mankind and if not then it is spending millions and billions in research and development (popularly known as R&D). This is the reason people have faith in allopathy.

Take one tablet when you are down in fever or take a cough syrup when you caught cough for no reason or even take an injection when your stomach pain. And woosh its gone. You are again healthy and ready to take down the world.

But just wait for minute…. Is it so easy???

Did you just cure it forever??? Or is it just a temporary solution! What was the reason you cought fever? why is it every season change gives you cough? And why on earth these rare occurring stomach pains are now frequent phenomena?

Allopathy certainly can cure the disease and it is not a easy thing to do. Decades of time and millions of rupees have been spent to invent a cure for a disease.

But why do people fall sick?

Why is it that you are healthy and fine one day and the next day you are out with fever?

This is where Ayurveda falls in. It discusses at length the ways to prevent any forms of disease.

Ayurveda is a lifestyle to adopt. It gives you a framework for good health.

According to Ayurveda, Health rests on the tripod of – body, mind and spirit.

To be healthy a balanced state of all three is necessary.

So, to be healthy you need an Ayurvedic lifestyle.

It gives you a dincharya or ritucharya to follow. It gives you all the answers like – what is right to eat? When is to eat? And How much to eat?

The simple adjustments of daily routine can bring wonders in one’s life. How substituting Curd with buttermilk can help one with stomach bloating and how ghee can act as a lubricant to body functioning is answered in Ayurveda only.

If the question of how to stay healthy and thoughts of diseases haunts you daily then Ayurveda is the single answer to all your questions and worries.

**Misconceptions about Ayurveda**

**Ayurveda is only about herbs** – this is just a misbelief. Ayurveda even include things like Yoga and panchkarma. Diet and digestion are the fundamentals of theories in Ayurveda. So, it is more than just a study of herbs.

**Ayurvedic medicines have no side effect** – this is again a popular misbelief that it does not have any side effect. Any thing that can have effect can also have side effects. Proper prescriptions must always be followed to have proper results.

**Less effective as compared to allopathic meds** – well this question is tricky. If you have followed the ayurvedic lifestyle you might not even have to opt for allopathic meds. And for curing permanently a disease you have to be patient.

**Why do the misconception occurs?**

The answer is time and language. Ayurveda is written in Sanskrit. Although it is a very powerful language it is understood by a very few today. Stanzas of charak Samhita is in Sanskrit and its interpretation differs from person to person and from time to time. For example the word ‘***Rasa***’ can have 13 different meanings depending on the context in which it is used.

Further translations into more widely understood vernacular languages only added to the confusion.

The sum and substance of Ayurveda is today widely out of synch with tune of life.

**The right choice?**

The fabric of society has changed and with it, dietary habits and day-to-day routine of the people. Thus, the remedies of Ayurveda are anachronisms and often unacceptable. In the jet age of syrups and quick-acting injections, the gentle kadhas and slow acting ghuttis of Ayurveda seems cumbersome and entirely out of place.

So, what is it then, Allopathy or Ayurveda?

These two independent sciences with different theories and practices. One should not blindly follow one and ignoring one.

Both are developed for the betterment of human health. Both are still developing. One is much older than the other and has proved the test of time. Since ancient time Ayurveda is being adopted in the households of many.

Proper balance between the two must be kept and followed to live a long and healthy life.

Dadi ke nuskhein or Nani ke Nuskhien our first choice has always been kitchen remedies.

Even in modern times people searches on google about home remedies for every ailment just shows how strongly people believe in this ancient science of Ayurveda.