



FUTURE SCOPE AND STRATEGIES FOR PRESERVATION OF HEALTH THROUGH AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT

A long healthy life is a desire of every living-being since antiquity. Ayurveda is the Science of life with the aim of attaining health. The social impact of ill health is on the rise, with some diseases affecting not only the health of individuals but also increasing burden on the national economy by increasing healthcare costs. The enormous complexity of human body offers scope to conceptualize its dynamic organization in a number of ways such as structural, biochemical, functional, etc. The contemporary system of medicine view the body from a structural perspective, whereas Ayurveda sight the human body from the perspective of dosha, dhatu and mala. The chikitsa concepts of Ayurveda aims not only at removal of disease, but also at the restoration of the equilibrium of bodily functions. These different viewpoints of Ayurveda and contemporary medicines have resulted not only in the use of different terminologies and descriptions to explain the human system but also in their different approaches to health and illness. In the recent days, there has been a growing interest in our Ayurvedic system of Medicine in concern to promotion of health and preventive-curative aspects of diseases. In this context, there is a significant necessitate to mainstream Ayurveda into health care to achieve the objective of improved access to healthcare facilities.

KEYWORDS : Health, Ayurveda, Swastya, Dosha, Dhatu, Mala

INTRODUCTION

Health in Ayurveda is termed as Swastya which is a component of Swasta. It is defined by Chakrapani in the commentary of Charaka Samhita as 'Susthu Nirvikaratvena....' i.e; A person without any abnormality anatomically in his physique in the other sense Prakruti, Pramana, Bala etc is considered to be Swastha and its Physiological derivation is considered as Swasthya i.e; Health which is explained as one who is devoid of the udwejaka dhatu vaishamy and in the state of equilibrium of doshas.¹

In the contemporary Science; Health is defined as a condition in which all functions of the body and mind are normally active.

WHO defines health as a state of well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Health means; there is no obvious evidence of disease, and that person is functioning normally i.e; conforming within normal limits of variation to the standards of health criteria generally accepted for one's age, sex, community and geographical region.²

Acharya Susrutha states that the Samatwa of dhatu should be considered in terms of Physically (Shareerika), Mentally (Manasika) and Spiritually.³

In other Sciences the above concept is put in plain words as; the several organs of the body are functioning adequately in themselves and in relation to one another, which implies a kind of equilibrium or homeostasis – a condition relatively stable but which may vary as human beings adapt to internal and external stimuli.

Arunadatta in the commentary of Astanga Hrudaya explains that there are two types of Swasta as Sanchita dosha and Asanchita dosha. Also says that Nirogaha is said to be as Swastha i.e; the state of health.⁴

In Kalyanakaraka it described about two types of Swasthya as; the Paramartha swasthya i.e; the ultimate health and Vyavahara swasthya i.e; general health.

On the contrary the dimensions of health are elaborated in terms of Physical, Mental, Spiritual, Emotional, Vocational etc. as follows;⁵

Physical - implies to perfect functioning of the body. It conceptualizes health biologically as a state in which every cell and every organ is functioning at optimum capacity and in perfect harmony with the rest of the body.

Mental – a state of balance between the individual and the surrounding world, a coexistence between the realities of the self and that of other people and that of environment.

Social – quantity and quality of an individual's interpersonal ties and the extent of involvement with the community.

Spiritual – part of an individual which reaches out and strives for the meaning and purpose in life. It is the intangible that transcends physiology and psychology.

Emotional – it has been seen as one element or as two closely related elements. It relates to the feeling.

Vocational – it is a part of human existence. It is related to work adapted for human goals.

Components Of Health And Their Importance:

According to Ayurveda, the prime components of health are Trayopasthambha s. Upasthambha means sub-pillars. A house is mainly supported by pillars, but there are certain sub-pillars which add to the supporting strength of such pillars. Similarly body/health is mainly supported by the acts, performed in the previous life which determines the present life span.

But such acts are further supported by regimen like Ahara, Nidra and Brahmacharya (According to Astanga Samgrahakara Abrahmacharya) which are nothing but the components of health. In other words these components of health are considered to be the secondary supports of life.

Ahara – Ahara has been given prime importance since Vedic

period. It is considered as Brahma in Upanishad. Kashyapa gives it the name as Mahabhaishajya.

Living organisms get their life from food. All living beings on the earth live on food. Food is prime requirement of every biotic entity, is taken as the greatest matter in the world.⁶

Ahara is vital for life of living beings. Just as oxygen is essential for life, Ahara is essential too. Ahara offers individual on colour, luster, speech, life, innovation, happiness, content, nourishment, strength, intelligence etc. Ahara fulfills needs of body and brings about the homeostatic condition in body physiology.

Acharya Kashyapa states that, no medicine is equivalent to food. It is possible to make person diseases free with just proper food diet.

Charaka Samhita emphasizes the importance of Ahara as, the body as well as diseases are formed by ahara, wholesome and unwholesome foods are responsible for happiness and misery respectively.⁷

Nidra⁸ –Nidra is nothing but the location of mind in a place unconnected with sensory and motor organs. When the mind and indriyas get exhausted, they withdraw themselves from their objects and the individual sleeps.

In relation to health, Nidra in proper will helps in the attainment of happiness, nourishment, strength, sterility, knowledge and life.

Nidra is like maya of Vishnu, it naturally comes to all beings. It is also known as Paapma as it destroys all means, through which good actions can be done at that time.⁹

Brahmacharya – It is composed of two words namely Brahma and Charya. The word Brahma is having various meaning like Veda, Tapas, Dharmacharana etc. it is derived from root word 'Brihm' which causes Brihmana i.e; development. Charya means trying. Trying to attain of life, action etc. so the Brahmacharya gives meanings like trying to get knowledge, trying for truth, wealth, trying for anna, trying to get strength or nourishment.

Brahmacharya is a state where all the indriyas of the body are functioning with co-ordination, including pleasant mind.¹⁰

Brahmacharya will promote the individuals physical, mental and social health.

Practical Guidelines For Implementing Concept Of Health In Today's Society

Learned should take maximum efforts while resorting to Ideal Life Modalities aided by proper adoption of regimen pertaining to ahaara, achara and cheshta.¹¹

The prime target of health system is to turn every individual into a noble citizen of the world, so that mankind evolves into a better race and to see that everyone leads a long, happy and useful life. Ayurveda attaches great importance to the conduct, methods and devices by means of which sound health is maintained and promoted.

Thus, the concept of health should be implemented since from the time of conception. As their will be influence of matruja ahara vihara, matruja bhavas and pitruja bhavas, it is very important to adopt the regimens explained in classical literature regarding the time of conception, ahara vihara, rules and regulations like patya-apatya during garbhavastha will help in attainment of good health of progeny from the time of birth.

Also an individual should implement the conducts of

Dinacharya, Rutucharya, Ratricharya, Dharaneeya-adharaneeya vegas, Sadvritta, Achara rasayana, following Nitya sevaneeya dravyas, Astavidha ahara vishesha ayatanas, dwadhasha ashana pravicharas practically as explained in our classical texts to get a better healthy, happy life and healthy mind.

One can also attain the goal of healthy life by following certain guidelines practically by means of rich heritage i.e; planning of the progeny, pure mind and body, nourishing and balanced diet, regular and adequate sleep, taking appropriate rasayanas, avoiding harmful activities, avoiding vices like smoking, drinking, gambling etc., enjoying worldly pleasures without coming into conflict with rules of good conduct, earning money in a righteous manner, keeping good company and having good manners, respecting parents, teachers and elders, letting the lives of great men, learned men and saints set as an example, acquiring skill, proficiency and mastery in the respective field, restraining our sense organs by mind, mind by intellect and intellect by conscience, identifying self with the entire universe.

In total, Ayurveda classics described Dinacharya, Rutucharya and others as not only prophylactic in health system but also for conducive to four purusharthas i.e; dharma, artha, kama and moksha.

Thus, one can achieve positive health by following the above concepts properly also helps in the maintenance of the equilibrium of tissue elements.

The contemporary sciences explained about certain determinants to implement the concept of health practically in today's society as follows; Biological determinants, behavioural and socio – cultural conditions, environment, socio – economic conditions, health services, ageing of the population, gender, other factors like; science and technology, information and communication.

Prevention Of Diseases Occurrence And Recurrence

Sharangadhara quotes that; no creature in the universe is immortal, it is impossible to prevent death, but it is possible to prevent disease. So one should try to prevent the disease.

Health according to ecological concepts is visualized as a state of dynamic equilibrium between man and his environment. Some have equated ecology with epidemiology. Ecology embraces the interrelationship of all living things.

In this regard, epidemiology constitutes a special application of human ecology or the part of ecology relating to the state of human health. Prevention of disease through ecological or environmental manipulations or interventions is much safer, cheaper and a more effective rational approach than all the other means of control. The greatest improvement in human health thus may be expected from an understanding and modification of the factors that favor disease occurrence in the human ecosystem.

In the commentary Chakrapani states that "Dhatu-sam-yartham arogyakaranama" i.e; Dhatu samyata is considered to be the arogya and Dhatuvaishamyia is Vikara.

In the further contexts of Charaka Samhita; certain principles are explained to prevent the occurrence and recurrence of diseases. Such as, Vikara anutpattikara chikitsa, Vikara prashamana chikitsa, Dwividhopakarama, Shadvidhopakarama principles. In the classical literature Acharyas have given importance to Shodhana chikitsa in the prevention and curative aspects of disease with the principle of; Doshah kadachit kupyante jitha langana pachanaihi |Jitaham samshodhanair tu nateshasm punarudhbhavah ||¹³

If an individual adopt Shodhana procedures one can prevent the occurrence and recurrence of diseases.

The Shodhana chikitsa and Panchakarma procedures will be helpful not only in terms of curative aspects but also having the benefits in preventive and promotive aspects as;¹⁴ Vardhana of kayagni, upashamana of vyadhi, anuvartana of prakriti, prasadana of mano-buddhi and indriya, enhances bala, pusti and vrishata, delaying jara, chira jeevana.

Also while explaining the phala of panchakarma procedures the further benefits in preventing and curing diseases like generation of pratyagra dhatu i.e; nutanadhatus etc. are explained.

Thus, if an individual undergoes Rutu shodhana, Kramataha shodhana one can prevent the occurrence of diseases.

Applied Researches On Preservation And Protection Of Health

Many Survey studies have been conducted in the recent days in concern to the preservation and protection of health by WHO and other organizations in concern to the indicators of life, quality of life, standard of living.

Studies have shown that the efforts in the health field were simultaneously reinforced by developments in other sectors like literacy especially female literacy has played a key role in improving the health situation. An effective programme of land reform had given poor people access to land resources for food production at the household level.

Few Recent Research Works Conducted In This Regard Are As Follows;

- Modern Health Services and Health Care Behavior: A Survey in Kathmandu, Nepal
- New WHO antenatal care model—quality
- The influence of economic evaluation studies on decision making.: A European survey
- Use of Complementary Health approaches among children Aged 4–17 Years in the United States: National Health Interview Survey.
- A Study on Survey of Internet Activities And Its Impact Over Mental Health of Young Students
- A survey on Dietary status of women in Wadad village.
- In Ayurveda, Research projects and survey studies are;
- A survey study to evaluate the effect of ratri jagarana on health wsr to nidra vega dharana
- Genome-wide analysis correlates Ayurveda Prakriti
- Prakriti as a risk factor in pre-diabetes- a survey study
- An Epidemiological study on morbidity pattern among Geriatric (JARAVASTA) Population Residing In the Field Practicing Area of Primary Health Centre
- Effect of dietary, social, and lifestyle determinants of accelerated aging and its common clinical presentation: A survey study

Model Health Care System And Its Propagation:

Health development contributes to and results from social and economic development. Therefore, health development has been given increasing emphasis in the policies and programmes.

Health and Family Welfare departments of Central Government, State Government, Ministry of Ayush, Organization like CCRAS are conducting many health related workshops, programmes, schemes and projects to serve the purpose of Model health care system like;

- Ayushman Bharat
- Arogya Karnataka Scheme
- Jyothi Sanjeevini Scheme
- Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana
- Janani Suraksha Yojana.

- Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakaram.
- Mission Indradhanush.
- Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY)
- National Ayush Mission (NAM)
- National Viral Hepatitis Surveillance Programme.
- National Programme for the Health Care for the Elderly.

In Ayurveda the model health care system can be designed by adopting certain tools to know about the quality of life and to educate them about the standard of living like;

- Knowledge about the concepts of Prakriti and its assessment and respective regimen to be followed.
- Educating the society to follow the system of Dinacharya, Rutucharya, Sadvritta, Achara Rasayana.
- Conducting workshops to serve the knowledge about hita-ahita ahara, Ahara vishesha ayatanas.
- Knowledge regarding the abramhacharya, time of celibacy, do and don't s to be followed during the time of conception.
- Knowledge regarding the Masanumasika garbhini paricharya.
- Programmes on Immunization Schedule. Knowledge regarding Swarna prashana, Shodasha samskaras.
- Awareness programmes on menstrual disorders, Biological changes during Menopausal time period and their management.
- Knowledge on Hygiene and Sanitization.
- Awareness programmes on communicable, non-communicable diseases and occupational disorders.
- To undergo Rutu Shodhana.
- Knowledge regarding geriatrics and to follow Rasayana chikitsa.

To propagate these periodical monitoring and updating the society regarding the variations in season and about regimens are necessary.

Indicators helps to measure the health status of a community, to compare the health status of one country with that of another; for assessment of health care needs; for allocation of scarce resources; and for monitoring and evaluation of health services, activities and programmes. Indicators help to measure the extent to which the objectives and targets of a programme are being attained.¹⁵

Qualities of indicators are – should be valid, reliable, sensitive, specific, feasible, relevant.

Mortality indicators – Crude death rate, Expectation of life, Age-specific death rates, Infant mortality rate, Child mortality rate, Under-5 proportionate mortality rate, Adult mortality rate, Maternal mortality rate, Disease specific mortality rate, Proportional mortality rate, Case fatality rate, Year of potential life lost.

Morbidity indicators – Incidence and prevalence, notification rates, attendance rates at out-patient departments, health centers etc., admission readmission and discharge rates, duration of stay in hospital and spells of sickness or absence from work or school.

Disability rates – Health-adjusted life expectancy, Quality-adjusted life years, Disability-free life expectancy, Disability-adjusted life years.

Nutritional status indicators – It is a positive health indicator – Anthropometric measurements of preschool children, Heights, Prevalence of low birth weight.

Health care delivery indicators – Doctor- Population ratio, Doctor – nurse ratio, Population-bed ratio, population per health/subcentre, Population per traditional birth attendant.

Utilization rates – Utilization of services, Indicators of social

and mental health - , Environmental indicators, Socio-economic indicators, Health policy indicators, Indicators of quality of life etc.

Future Strategies For Preservation Of Health

Maintaining the positive health and cure of a disease are the aims of Ayurveda. Former, best achieved by following Dinacharya, Rutucharya and Sadvrutta helps to maintain homeostasis of body elements like Dosha, Dhātu and Mala.¹⁶

Improvement in population health can be achieved only when the principles of public health care are intervened and implemented at individual level. This can be achieved through:

- Assessment of current health care services and evaluation of their objectives, whether or not their objectives are being achieved.
- Assessment of the requirements of health care professionals and the public.

Thus the future strategies for preservation of health should take up Millenium Development Goals:

Goal 1. Eradicate Extreme Poverty And Hunger

- Prevalence of underweight children under five years of age, Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption.

Goal 2. Reduce Child Mortality

- Under-five mortality rate, infant mortality rate, proportion of 1-year-old children immunized against measles.

Goal 3. Improve Maternal Health

- Maternal mortality ratio, Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel.

Goal 4. Combat Hiv/aids, Malaria And Other Diseases

Goal 5. Ensure Environmental Sustainability

Goal 6. Develop A Global Partnership For Development

Other strategies for progress towards "Health for All" are as follows;

- Implementing the above said schemes programmes at all the Levels of health care – primary, secondary, tertiary.
- Forming different health teams for doing survey on health and for propogating the basic knowledge of health to the society as "Health for all"
- Health Promotion - Ottawa Charter for health promotion – incorporates five key actions i.e; build healthy public policy, create supportive environment for health, strengthen community action for health, develop personal skills, re-orient health services, Health promotion logo.
- Comprehension on Jakarta Declaration of Health promotion, Declartion of Alma-Ata
- Health services research –in related to Biomedical research, intersectoral research.

CONCLUSION

The aim of a health system is health development – a process of continuous and progressive improvement of the health status of a population.

This health system should operate on a need based strategy. It should evaluate the utility of advancements in health care but simultaneously taking care for not devaluing the essentials of Ayurveda healthcare fundamentals. A serious effort is required to improve healthcare by utilisation of Ayurvedic traditional skills added with the technological breakthrough made in modern science.

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