INTRODUCTION:
Drug is the most important component of therapeutics as it is responsible for the equilibrium of the body system. It has been considered as the tool in therapeutics because physician becomes handicapped without a drug/medicine. To treat the emerging life threatening diseases like Dengue, Chicken Guinea, Swine flu, SARS etc. potent herbal drugs are highly required. Multidrug therapy for a single disease or use of single drug in many ailments is based not only on theory but also on observation, experiment and experience.

Ayurveda, the ancient wisdom of life science has unique principle in terms of diagnosis and treatment of ailments as well as preventive measures, healthy dietary habits etc. Charaka Samhita mentioned that drugs are obtained from three sources- Audbhida (drug of plant origin), Jangama (drug of animal origin), Bhauma (drug of mineral origin)1. But all these drugs are advised to use rationally after proper diagnosis of the disease. In the context of proper planning of drug use, Acharya Charaka mentioned as

A potent poison may becomes the best medicine if used judiciously. On the contrary even the best medicine becomes a potent poison if used incorrectly. Hence, to become a successful physician, knowledge of drug is highly essential.

Pandit Narahari (author of Raja Nighantu) quoted in his work that the physician who is entering in to the practice without the knowledge of Nighantu is equally criticized by the society like a scholar without knowledge of grammar and a warrior without the practice of weapon.3

KEYWORDS
Ayurveda, Namarupa vijnana, Gunakarma vijnana, Prayog vijnana, Manaki karan

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:
The qualities of ideal drugs mentioned by our Acharyas should be adopted as the sole objectives of the drug research4.

The use and demand of Ayurvedic medicine is increasing day by day. Hence, it is very much essential to maintain the purity, quality and efficacy of Ayurvedic medicine up to the mark otherwise it will not produce the desirable therapeutic effect and finally defame the Ayurveda. Our Acharyas advised to invent or add new drugs or rediscover new properties of old drugs mentioned in the Samhitas as per the principle of the Ayurveda. This article presents a review of ancient methodology to discover new drugs and new properties of old drugs. The methodology consists of the knowledge of Nama rupa vijnana, Guna karma vijnana, Prayog vijnana, and Manaki karan of the drug.
Charaka has clearly mentioned that a wise scholar is one who knows about the nama (names), rupa (morphological characters) and guna (properties) of the drugs. He has also stressed to contact the persons who are very close to nature, forest tribes, saints shepherds etc. to obtain the knowledge about drugs. Pandit Narahari, the author of Raj Nighantu mentioned seven methods for nomenclature of the drugs. They are as under:

1. Rudhithah-Tradition/uses
2. Prabhavat-Specific power/properties.
3. Deshokta-place of origin.
4. Lanchhana-special morphological properties.
5. Upama-Simile
6. Veerya-Potency
7. Itarahwaya-Miscellaneous.

Many modern Ayurvedic scholars advocated the nomenclature of the plants on the basis of parts used, historical importance, weight, dose, properties, pharmacological actions etc.

GUNA –KARMA VJUNANA (Pharmacology):
After the identification of drug, assessment of rasa panchaka is highly essential. Rasa, Gun, Veerya, Vipaka and Prabhava (collectively known as Rasapanchaka) are the important properties of a drug as per Ayurveda. Following are the parameters for the assessment of Rasapanchaka.

Rasa (taste of drug)- Rasa of the drug is the gustatory appeal. It can be assessed by Vipaka-It is the final biotransformation of rasa through action of the drugs. They are as under:

- Kala (time of drug administration)
- Adhikaran (site of drug action)
- Karma-(Action or effect of drug)
- Nipata method (direct contact of drug with the tongue)

Rasa of the drug is the gustatory appeal. It can be determined from its taste, potency and smell. The physical and chemical characters of the drugs are to be recorded carefully which helps in identification and in explaining the pharmacological action and therapeutics.

PRAYOG VJUNANA (Pharmacotherapy):
Experimental and clinical trial should be done to find out the action, indication, dosage and toxic effect of a particular drug. In ancient days, use of toxic drug for homicidal purpose was a common practice. In view of this fact, Acharyas have advised to use a portion drug to lower the animals and birds like deer, crow, cuckoo etc. to judge the toxicity of the same. This type of experimental model was designed for toxicity study.

MANAKI KARANA (Standardization):
The problem of standardization of Ayurveda drugs is an acute one. For researchers it requires sincere and constant team work for years together. Acharya Charaka has beautifully described it in Viman Sthana 8/87 of Charaka Samhita.

Evam prakriti (Nature of the drug)-The first step of drug research is to know the nature or habit of the drug which is differ according to the proto element constituent of drugs and it depends on the habitat of drug.

Evam gunam (Qualities of the drug)-The pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics of a drug depends on its properties. The physical and chemical characters of the drugs are to be recorded carefully which helps in identification and in explaining the pharmacological action and therapeutics.

Evam Prabhavam (specific action of the drug)-The specific action is nothing but the inherent active principle of the drug.

Asmin deshejatam (place of growth)- The properties of the drug depends on their place of growth. The growth and development of plants are much influenced by various ecological factors like soil, air, temperature, rainfall, sunlight and altitude. Hence the study of ecological factors have an important role to play in selection of drug. Acharya Sushruta advised to examine the land (place of collection) for collection of medicinal plants. The land should be free from gravel, stone, unevenness, ant-hills, away from cremation ground, temples, sandy soil, non-fertile and non-fragile. It should be nearer to water source, smooth, firm/compact, plain/flat surface, black, golden or red in colour.

Asmin rutajatam(season of collection)-Particular parts of the plant should be collected in the appropriate season when they have attained their maturity in terms of taste, potency and smell. The colour, odour, taste, texture, and specific action should not be affected by time, sunlight, fire, water and parasites.

Evam giriham (mode of collection)- The person who wish to collect the plants should wear white cloth, must be neat and clean and follow the ritual procedures and perform prayer prior to collection and collect the plants facing towards East or North.

Evam nihitam (method of preservation)-The collected raw materials should be preserve in suitable container and kept in well equipped store house facing eastward or northward. The store house should be suitable for all seasons, devoid of wind but well ventilated, daily ritualized with offering flowers and it should be unapproachable for fire, water, smoke, dust, rats and quadrupeds.

Evam upaskrutam (method of processing)-Many
pharmaceutical preparations of drugs can be made with a view to make the drug more potent, preserved, palatable and clinically effective. The selection of preparation will be made by proper planning (Yuktī) according to the need. Svaras (juice), Kalkal(paste), Kwath (decoction), Hima (cold infusion) and Phanta (hot infusion) are the basic dosage form of Ayurveda medicine.2

9. Anaya cha matrayayuktam (Dosage in which it is employed)-Sharanagdhar has clearly stated that there is no specific dose for every individual. To fix/finalize the dose, kala (time), agni (digestive fire), vaya (age), bala (strength), prakruti (constitution), dosha and desha (region) should be considered. Then only the dose will be finalized.15 The dosage should be regulated so that the drug may produce desirable effect without any harm to the body.

10. Tavantam dosham apakarshuyapashamayati (Quantum of Dosa eliminated or alleviated)-This is the most important method of assessment of a drug or its medicinal utility. To observe the elimination or alleviation of doṣhas, clinical research should be designed in different ways. And by these ways action of drug on a particular doṣha or doṣhas along with dhatu, mala, srotas should be revealed.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION:
Research on drug have opened new sources of remedies. Ayurveda has got vast scope in the field of drug research because of its unique way of drug evaluation. If Ayurvedic drugs (single drug/compound medicine/known or unknown drugs) will be reassessed in the principle of Ayurveda as well as in the light of modern drug evaluation method, then it will create a new faith in the potency of Ayurvedic medicines at the global level.

REFERENCES: