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Review Article

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Role of Ayurveda in Global Health w.s.r. to Physical, Mental and Moral well-being

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Abstract

Ayurveda, the ancient medical science of India, not only deals with bodily diseases but also with psychological disorders. In Ayurveda, the mind performs functions such as reasoning, conceptualization and thinking. The principles of Ayurveda and Yoga are thought to be a good method of relieving mental suffering by balancing the mind with the soul. Ayurveda also addresses psychosomatic diseases such as Bhayaj, Shokaj Jwara, Atisara, Manas Arochaka Chhardi. These physical and mental ailments can be addressed with various Ayurvedic practices such as meditation, Svasthavritta, Yoga, Dinacharya, Ritucharya, Shamana, Shodhana, Svedana and Snehana. Ayurvedic preventive and therapeutic interventions help in the restoration of physical, mental, moral and spiritual health. This article explore role of Ayurveda in global health with special emphasis to physical, mental and moral well-being.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Yoga, Dinacharya, Ritucharya, Shamana, Shodhana

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1. Introduction

Ayurveda uses preventive and therapeutic interventions in the process of restoration. The therapeutic aspect of Ayurveda helps to cure health ailments and promote general development of body. Internal treatments like *Shamana* and *Shodhana* helps to destroy accumulated impurities. External therapies include the use of herbal pastes, *Snehana*, *Svedana* and surgical procedures. *Daivya Chikitsa* includes spiritual healing to restore emotional and psychological balance. Ayurveda model of prevention is aimed at maintaining health and increasing longevity through a consideration of an individual's *Prakriti*. It centers on the utilization of personalized regimens for the sake of obtaining balance, such as diet, exercise, massage, meditation and mindfulness practices, etc. (1-3)

The Indian medical system recognizes various traditional systems of medicine which includes Ayurveda, *Yoga* and naturopathy, etc. Ayurveda is known as a condition of *Samya* that results from harmonious relations between an organism and its context. Although freedom from disease does matter, health is defined differently in Ayurveda. More precisely, a state of deep connection to oneself is conveyed through the term *Swasthya*. This means that despite the existence of disease, a healthy mind, body, and

spirit enable a person to cope with stress and stay healthy overall. (3-5)

Ayurveda's applicability in the contemporary world is in its basic principles and its unique method of understanding health. It involves principles like the *Panchamahabhuta*, *Prakriti* and *Ahara-Vihara*. Research on *Prakriti* assessment indicates that Ayurveda has the potential to categorize humans into different phenotypes, irrespective of race, geography, or ethnicity, making the understanding of health and wellness more individualized.

2. Ayurveda Practices of Health Restoration:

Ayurveda goes beyond physical and mental well-being to account for spiritual, social, and environmental considerations. Ayurveda's healing philosophy also goes beyond drugs to incorporate lifestyle changes, hygiene, dietetics, exercise, and social contact. Ayurveda places great emphasis on *Dinacharya* & *Ritucharya*, and concept of psychosocial health. Ayurveda addresses health from a holistic perspective by treating mental, social, and environmental factors through principles like *Svasthavritta*, *Achar Rasayana* and *Yoga*. Such Ayurvedic principles as depicted in **Figure 1**, provides well-being of society thus supporting global health in all aspects. (4-6)



Figure 1. Various principles of Ayurveda for Healthy Society

Righteous social conduct highlights ethical and moral accountability in society, self-control restraint over one's behavior and desires. *Yama, Niyama* and *Asana* are basic elements of *Yoga* consisting of *Yama, Niyama* and *Asana*. Ayurveda fosters a values-based lifestyle and inspires virtues like honesty, modesty, courage, forgiving nature, and love for all living things. Ayurveda develops various activities that harmonize human body with nature. Ayurveda is more than a mere system of medicine or therapy. It is a complete philosophy of life. Ayurveda inspires man to manage his own health by himself, becoming self-sufficient and provides a way of living in accord with nature. (5-8)

3. Role of *Yoga*

Yoga and its benefits to health were greatly publicized globally; *Yogic* exercises like *Pranayama, Kapalbhata* and *Anulom Vilom*, etc. have gained popularity due to their immense therapeutic benefits. The positive impact of *Yoga* on general health is as follows:

- ✚ *Yoga* practices lower the stress level
- ✚ Imparts soothing effects on nervous system
- ✚ Elevated blood pressure gets lowered by *Yoga Asanas*
- ✚ Lung capacity gets enhanced by virtue of breathing practices
- ✚ Effective secretion of body fluids is promoted
- ✚ *Yoga asanas* improves circulatory process of body and maintain balances of *Dosha*

Certain *Yoga asanas* allow for fat metabolism and hence lower obesity and susceptibility to Type II Diabetes Mellitus and ischemic heart disease. Meditation has been medically proven to soothe the body, soothe the nervous system, lower elevated blood pressure, and cultivate mental tranquility. It also stimulates the release of endorphins, which create a sense of well-being and euphoria. (6-8)

As per Ayurveda, *Yoga* is an effective means of overcoming mental ailments. Through *Yoga*, the mind achieves union with the soul, freeing itself from worldly sensory pleasures and pains. The various physical and mental issues are cured efficiently by meditation and *Yoga* practices. Mood-elevating therapies and *Sadvritta* also imparts great resilience against diseases when practices along with regular *Yoga* exercise.

Acharya Charaka says that all types of misery are removed in the state of *Yoga* and *Moksha*. *Yoga* is a great method to overcome psychological suffering due to feelings of fear, jealousy, anger and greed, etc. which are commonly associated with psychological disorders. Ayurveda speaks of eight higher abilities, referred to as *Ashta Siddhis*, which can be achieved through rigorous *Yogic* practice when a *Sattvic* mind merges with the soul. (1, 4-6) Thus *Yogic* practice helps to achieve following *Ashta Siddhis*:

- ✓ *Aawesha* (Power of entering another person's body)
- ✓ *Arthanam Gyanam* (Power of seeing other people's thoughts)
- ✓ *Chhanda Kriya* (Freedom to perform actions without control)
- ✓ *Drushti* (Surpassing sight beyond the norm)
- ✓ *Shruti* (Heightened sense of hearing)
- ✓ *Smruti* (Powers of supermemory and recall of past)
- ✓ *Kanti* (Divine light and aura)
- ✓ *Eshtata Darshan* (Power to come and go at will).

Yoga and *Swasthavritta* are instrumental in the achievement of *Ashta Siddhi*, which emerge as a result of severe *Yogic* practice, profound meditation, and a *Sattvic* lifestyle that synchronizes the mind and body towards higher levels of awareness. *Yoga* offers an organized route to these *Siddhis* through several practices. *Dhyana* increases mental focus and spiritual awareness, resulting in increased perception like *Drushti* and *Shruti*. *Pranayama* controls *Prana*, enabling control over the body and mind, required for *Siddhis* like *Aawesha* and *Eshtata Darshan*. The eightfold path of *Yoga*, especially *Yama* and *Niyama*, cleanses the mind. *Yoga* & *Swasthavritta* are integral practice that provides a balanced way of life as a requirement for the unfolding of higher faculties. Through a well-disciplined *Vihara*, rising early at *Brahma Muhurta* practicing *Dincharya* and *Ritucharya*, and upholding *Sadvritta* helps in the attainment of *Siddhi*. The practice of *Yoga* and *Swasthavritta* collectively not only fosters general well-being but also establishes the groundwork for the attainment of *Ashta Siddhi* and the disclosure of the supreme potential of human consciousness. (7-9)

4. Conclusion

Ayurveda, with its holistic approach, provides a comprehensive understanding of both physical and mental well-being. It not only addresses psychological disorders but also emphasizes preventive and therapeutic interventions through *Yoga*, meditation, and lifestyle modifications. The integration of *Yoga* within Ayurveda further strengthens its ability to manage psychological distress. The principles of *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Sadvritta* and dietary guidelines help individuals to maintain a balanced life. Ayurveda, in its holistic nature, gives an integrated idea of physical and mental health. It does not only treat illness but also focuses on preventive intervention and promote overall development of body.

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Conflict of Interest

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