

Basic principles of Ayurveda
4 lessons

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Lesson One:Introduction to Ayurveda
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Ayurveda is a science of life so to know more about it, we must know what is life? Life according to Ayurveda is a Combination of senses, mind, body and soul. So it is clear from this definition of life that Ayurveda is not only limited to body or physical symptoms but also gives a comprehensive knowledge about spiritual, mental and social health.

The modern society, education, culture and the television everything speaks about materialism. If this was everything why is it so that most us are unhappy. There is unrest, anxiety, mental tension, fighting and terror every where despite best efforts being made to stop them. This is because some part of our body is not being nourished properly.

Be open-minded and try to understand.

Ayurveda (Sanskrit for "knowledge of life" or "knowledge of longevity") is a comprehensive system of traditional health care that emphasizes the relationship among body, mind, and spirit. And is considered to be the traditional system of medicine of India.

Ayurveda is a science in the sense that it is a complete system. It is a qualitative, holistic science of health and longevity, a philosophy and system of healing the whole person, body and mind. Historians have not pinpointed the exact time Ayurveda came into being. Most agree that Ayurvedic classical texts were written in India between 3,500 and 5,000 years ago. At this time, philosophy and medicine were not separated. Therefore, philosophical views have

strongly influenced the Ayurvedic way of thinking.

There are several aspects to Ayurveda that are quite unique:

Ayurveda offers reference points for managing treatment decisions specific to each case. Ayurvedic theory is profoundly useful in analyzing individual patient constitution and understanding variations in disease manifestation.

The Ayurvedic framework can be used to structure working models of the unique state of each patient, and to project a vision or goal for a whole state of health, again unique to each case.

Ayurveda offers specific recommendations to each individual on lifestyle, diet, exercise and yoga, herbal therapy, and even spiritual practices to restore and maintain balance in body and mind.

Ayurveda sees a strong connection between the mind and the body, a huge amount of information is available regarding this relationship.

This understanding that we are all unique individuals enables Ayurveda to address not only specific health concerns but also offers explanation as to why one person responds differently than another.

We will review some of the basic Ayurvedic concepts in our next part

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Part 2 will cover :

" Physiology of Ayurveda- Tridosha -Vata Pitta Kapha."

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I hope our first introductory part have made you curious and you are eager to know more about Ayurveda.

Today we will discuss about Physiology of Ayurveda.

All matter is thought to be composed of five basic elements

(panchamahabhutas) which exhibit the properties of

earth (prithvi), water (jala), fire (tejas), wind (vayu) and space (akasha).

These elements do not exist in isolated forms, but always in a combination,

in which one or more elements dominate. According to Ayurveda,

the human body is composed of derivatives of these five basic elements,

in the form of doshas, tissues (dhatus) and waste products (malas).

Tridosha

The most fundamental and characteristic principle of Ayurveda is called "tridosha" or the Three Humours. Doshas are the physiological factors of the body.

They are to be seen as all pervasive, subtle entities, and are categorized into

vata, pitta and kapha.

Vata regulates movement and is represented by the nervous system.

Pitta is the principle of biotransformation and is the cause of all metabolic processes in the body.

Kapha is the principle of cohesion and functions through the body fluids.

Together, these three doshas determine the physiologic constitution of an individual. Health is described as a balance of all three doshas (bodily Humours).

Dhatu

The tissues are classified into seven categories:

Rasa (plasma), Rakta (blood cells), Mansa (muscular tissue), Meda (adipose tissue), Asthi (bony tissue), Majja (bone marrow) and the Shukra (reproductive tissue).

Mala

Three main waste products are Mutra (urine), Purish (faeces) and Sweda (sweat).

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Part 3 will cover :

"Prakriti - Body constitution in Ayurveda"

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Today we will talk about a very important aspect of Ayurveda "Prakriti - Body constitution in Ayurveda"

So, let's get started!

Prakriti [Body Constitution]

There are two types of Constitutions of our body

1. Deha Prakriti (Body Constitution)

Every individual has a unique combination of the three doshas- Vata, Pitta and Kapha. To understand individuality is the foundation of Diagnosis and Treatment in Ayurveda.

Humans are endowed at birth with one of seven different body types, depending on which dosha or combination of the three basic doshas dominate. Body types can be dominated by a single humor (vata, pitta, or kapha), or they can be dominated by combinations: vata-kapha (when vata and kapha are present in almost equal amounts); vata-pitta; pitta-kapha; and vata-pitta-kapha

(when all three doshas are present in almost equal amounts).

Suppose you have a kapha (water) dominant constitution then you may have a tendency to overweight, over-emotional nature or suffer congestion in the chest. So you should modify your diet, life style, daily routine and other activities accordingly, for example, avoid sleeping too much in the day or eating too many sweets, to maintain your health and also to cure the diseases .

2. Mana Prakriti (Mental Constitution)

A person's dosha type is expressed emotionally as well .

Vedic philosophy classifies human temperaments into three basic qualities: satva, rajas and tamas.

Relative predominance of satva, rajas, or tamas is responsible for individual psychological constitution.

Ayurvedic physicians mainly take body type and imbalances among the doshas into consideration when treating a patient.

This is a very short description and if you want to learn more you can visit my website -<http://www.ayurveda-foryou.com> and get more information.

Ok, now that you have understood about the basic principles and about Dosha predominance in prakriti, you're ready to learn about the very important part - Diagnosis and treatment of various ailments....

but that's for next lesson!

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Part 4 will cover :

"Samprapti - the Disease Process(Pathology)&Chikitsa -Treatment of Disease."

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Today you'll find out more about "Samprapti - the Disease Process(Pathology)&Chikitsa -Treatment of Disease."

Samprapti - the Disease Process(Pathology)

Under normal conditions, the doshas, dhatus and malas

correspond to certain standards regarding their quantity, quality and function. However, this situation is not static, and due to several endogenous and exogenous factors, the doshas may become unbalanced, resulting in disease.

Every disease is related to an imbalance of the doshas. Other coherent factors can be: the disturbance of the biological factors (agnis). The formation and accumulation of undigested nutrients (ama). Obstruction of the body channels (shrotorodha), and a disturbed assimilation in the tissues.

Chikitsa, Disease Management (Pharmacology and Treatment)

There are four main classifications of management of disease in Ayurveda: shodhan or cleansing; shaman or palliation; rasayana or rejuvenation; and satvajaya or mental hygiene.

Ayurveda gives us a model to look at each individual as a unique makeup of the three doshas (Prakruti) and thereby design treatment protocols that specifically address a persons health challenges. When any of the doshas (Vata, Pitta or Kapha) become imbalance, Ayurveda will suggest specific lifestyle and nutritional guidelines to assist the individual in reducing or increasing the doshas that has become imbalance.

The materia medica of the Ayurveda, composed of the five basic elements, has been categorized according to the derivatives of these elements. They include: taste (rasa), potency (virya), taste of the digestion product (vipaka), properties (guna), specific properties (prabhava) and action (karman).

The drugs used in Ayurveda are made by several processes from vegetable and mineral raw materials. Mostly plant alkaloids are the active ingredients. Obviously barring some chemical changes it is mostly natural deviates.

If toxins in the body are abundant, then a cleansing process known as "Panch Karma" is recommended to eliminate these unwanted toxins. This "panchkarma" or Five internal cleansing methods, is a most profound therapy in Ayurveda.

I hope that you will continue to explore Ayurveda to enhance your health and to gain further insights into

this miracle we call life.

It was a real pleasure for me to teach you the basics about this holistic science of life 'AYURVEDA'.

This is a very short description and if you want to learn more you can visit my website -<http://www.ayurveda-foryou.com> and get more information.

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