

International Research Journal of Ayurveda & Yoga

An International Peer Reviewed Journal for Ayurveda & Yoga



Ayurvedic Concept of Wellness

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ICV-70.6 ISRA-1.218
VOLUME 4 ISSUE 1 JANUARY 2021

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Article received on 25th dec 2020

Article Accepted 17th Jan 2021

Article published 31st Jan 2021

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Wellness is the most cherished asset in the living world. A healthy body, healthy mind, healthy soul in a healthy environment is the prime need of every human individual. The Global Wellness Institute defines Wellness as the active pursuit of activities, choices and lifestyles that lead to a state of holistic health. In this era of urbanization and industrialization, man is running behind this busy world which makes him unable to look after his healthy matters. Ayurveda is the science which explains the way of living in harmony with the laws of nature. The aim of this article is to define the concept of wellness according to Ayurvedic and modern approach and the practices that should be followed for wellness.

Materials and Methods: The concept of Wellness and practices adopted for the maintenance of wellness according to Ayurveda and modern approach is elucidated through Literature review of classical Ayurvedic books and journalistic reviews.

Results and Discussion: Ayurveda can be considered as a science of wellness through its holistic approach and methods adopted for prevention of diseases. Wellness of a person is multidimensional-physical, mental, social, spiritual and emotional. The following practices helps in maintaining wellness such as *Dinacharya*, (daily regimen) *Rithucharya* (seasonal routine), *Rathricharya*, (night regimen) *Sadvritta* (code of good conduct) *Achara Rasayana*, (code of conduct), *Brahmacharya* (Celibacy), *Garbhini paricharya* (antenatal care) *Sutika paricharya*, (Post natal Care) *Navajatasisu paricharya*, (neonatal care) *Ritu Sodhana*, (seasonal Purification) *Aharavidhi* (Ayurveda Dietetics), *Nidraavidhi*, (Sleeping order) Control over mental urges and normal evacuation of physical urges, Intake of *Rasayana* (rejuvenation therapy) and *Vajeekarana* (Aphrodisiac treatment) avoidance of *Prajnaparadha* (crime against wisdom) adoption of Yoga and Pranayama, cultivation and propagation of medicinal plants etc.

Keywords: Ayurveda, *Dinacharya*, *Swastha*, Wellness



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How to cite this article: Aswathy. P Aravind S, Ayurvedic Concept of Wellness-, IRJAY, January: 2021 Vol- 4, Issue-1; 131-136; Doi: <https://doi.org/10.47223/IRJAY.2021.4102>

INTRODUCTION

Wellness is the most cherished asset in the living world. A healthy body, healthy mind, healthy soul in a healthy environment is the prime need of every human individual. In this era of urbanization and industrialization, man is running behind this busy world which makes him unable to look after his healthy matters. Moreover, there is a rapid change in the occurrence of diseases and new diseases are being emerged such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), and finally Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19) ⁽¹⁾ Ayurveda is the science which explains the way of living in harmony with the laws of nature. Ayurveda defines wellness as *Swastha*, the condition in which body is free from diseases. The unique objective of Ayurveda includes preservation and promotion of wellness in healthy individuals and treatment of the illness in the diseased person ⁽²⁾. This has developed into two

main aspects of Ayurveda namely *Swastha Vritta* (Prophylactic) and *Athura Vritta* (The Therapeutic) respectively. *Swasthavritta* deals with the concepts of preventive medicine which emphasizes on the regimens and the practices to be followed for being healthy ⁽³⁾. While we are going through the classical literatures of Ayurveda like Charaka Samhita, Susruta Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya and Ashtanga Sangraha, we can find that Acharyas have given prime importance to *Swastha Vritta* ie, preservation and promotion of wellness. *Swasthavritta* (wellness) is further divided into two elaborated branches such as *Vaiyaktika Swasthavritta* (Personal wellness) and *Samuhika Swasthavritta* (Social wellness). The aim of this article is to define the concept of wellness according to Ayurvedic and modern approach and the practices that should be followed for wellness.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The concept of Wellness and practices adopted for the maintenance of wellness according to Ayurveda and modern approach is elucidated through

Literature review of classical Ayurvedic books such as Brihatrayi and Laghutrayi and journalistic reviews.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Ayurveda can be considered as a science of wellness through its holistic approach and methods adopted for prevention of diseases. Acharya Susruta defines *Swastha*(Health) as a state of equilibrium having physiological homeostatic functioning of doshas, normalcy of Agni (Digestive power), proper functioning of tissues, proper evacuation of waste products from the body, perfectly sensitized sense

organs with pleasantness of mind and soul. This can be considered as the earliest scientific reference regarding the concept of wellness which can be achieved through the blending of physical, mental, social and spiritual and environmental well-being ⁽⁴⁾. Vagbhata states that avoidance of unhealthy habits, control over sense organs, good memory, proper orientation of place, time and person,

adoption of good code of conduct results in the promotion of wellness and cure of the diseased⁽⁵⁾. *Kshemakutuhala* enlist the characteristics of a healthy person having hundred-year life expectancy as, intake of food two times per day, six times bladder movement, proper timely sleep and optimum sexual intercourse⁽⁶⁾. Bhavamisra explains that every individual should follow the procedures like *Dinacharya* (daily regimen), *Nishacharya* (night regimen), *Ritucharya* (seasonal regimen) to maintain wellness⁽⁷⁾.

The wellness concept can be adopted through the propagation and practice of healthy-living, self-help, self-care, fitness, healthy nutrition, diet, and spiritual practices. Wellness is considering health as a continuum that extends from illness to a state of optimal wellbeing. Patients with health problems engage the medical paradigm to treat illnesses and they interact reactively and episodically with doctors and clinicians who provide care. The wellness paradigm encourages people to focus proactively on prevention and maximizing their vitality by adopting attitudes and lifestyles that prevent disease, improve health, and enhance their quality of life and sense of wellbeing. Wellness of a person is multidimensional-physical, mental, social, spiritual and emotional. Ayurveda clearly states physical wellness should be maintained with prime importance. In Charaka Samhita, it is mentioned that one should preserve his body like a Mayor who governs the city and a rider who rides the chariot who take over all the issues⁽⁸⁾. Charaka clarifies the concept of Physical wellness that a healthy person should have a compact and firm musculature, good anthropological measurements, properly functioning sense organs, good strength and endurance⁽⁹⁾. The practices like *Dinacharya* (daily regimen), *Ratricharya* (night regimen) are directly contributing to the maintenance of Physical wellness. Pleasantness of mind is considered as one of the key factors for health. The vitiation of mind will affect the equilibrium of the body and will result in psychosomatic disorders. Control of mental urges, Avoidance of mental conflicts, *Satwavajaya*

Chikitsa (Ayurvedic psychotherapy)⁽¹⁰⁾, meditation techniques etc. are used for the preservation of mental wellness. The practice of *Sadvritta* (code of good conduct)⁽¹¹⁾ and *Achara Rasayana*(code of conduct) explained in Samhitas helps in the maintenance of social wellness. The features of *Atma* (soul)⁽¹¹⁾ are explained in our classics which reveals the importance of spiritual wellness in Ayurveda. The proper orientation of time, place and person and taking food knowing yourself are best examples in Ayurveda supporting spiritual wellness⁽¹²⁾. Emotional wellness is the ability to recognize and accept the reality and cope with the demands of daily life. The practices like Yoga, Dhyana (meditation) and Pranayama (breathing)⁽¹⁴⁾ etc. helps to maintain the emotional wellness of a person. Ayurveda considers the environmental wellness that every living being should be cared and it has various divisions such as *Mrigayurveda*, *Vrikshayurveda*, *Aswayurveda*, *Hastyayurveda* etc. Ayurveda in the true sense can be considered as a science of wellness. Primary prevention is action taken prior to the onset of disease, which removes the possibility that a disease will ever occur. The following practices helps in maintaining wellness of a person by way of healthy living such as

1. Practice of *Dinacharya* (daily regimen), *Nishacharya* (night regimen), *Ritucharya* (seasonal regimen) to maintain wellness.
2. *Dinacharya* (daily regimen), is a wholesome systematic daily routine in order to maintain ideal life style. *Dinacharya* (daily regimen) is need of current era as various diseases are result of disturbed and deranged lifestyle. It includes awakening during Brahma muhurta, drinking water in the morning, evacuation of bowels, cleansing the teeth, tongue scraping, gargling, mouthwash, nasal instillation of medicine, oil application overhead, ears, nose and legs, application of Herbal powder to remove oils etc. It also includes practice of different types of aerobic exercises and anaerobic exercises, administration of medicated smoke, proper cutting of hair, moustache and nail in routine

intervals, bathing, application of Collyrium, wearing clean dress, umbrella, footwear and headcap etc.

3. *Ratricharya* (night regimen) includes the regimen that should be followed during the night time for the maintenance of health which includes regimen for taking dinner, regimen to be followed for Sound sleep, rules and regulations for sexual intercourse explaining the place, suitable time, preparations, seasonal practice for sexual intercourse. *Ritucharya* (night regimen) is the regimen to be followed to maintain wellness in different seasons in relation to the hot, cold and rainy atmosphere.
4. Adoption of *Sadvritta* (code of good conduct) and *Achara Rasayana* (code of conduct)

Sadvritta consists of the code of conduct that should be followed for the maintenance of wellness. Code of conduct has been described related with the rules regarding hygiene, speech, diet, urges, relation with females, study, social relations and mental activities. *Achara Rasayana* (code of conduct) is also described by Charaka in *Charaka Samhita Rasayana Adhyaya* which is also the code of conduct that should be followed for the maintenance of wellness.

5. Proper intake of healthy food following the principles of *Aharavidhi* (Ayurveda Dietetics),

Aharavidhi (Ayurveda Dietetics) consists of the rules for taking food. It covers a wide array consisting of eating habits, eating patterns, order of taking food, time to take food, factors to be considered while taking food, regimen to be followed after taking food, healthy food preparations etc. The food pattern for controlling non-communicable diseases should be adopted by

- avoidance of junk foods, canned foods, and coloured flavored foods, misapprehension towards high calorie food and acceptance of staple foods etc.
6. Proper timely sleep following the principles of *Nidraavidhi* (Sleeping order)
7. Practice of *Brahmacharya* (Celibacy).
8. Control over mental urges and normal evacuation of physical urges
9. Practice of *Ritu Sodhana* (seasonal routine), and preventive panchakarma techniques for avoidance of seasonal diseases
10. Intake of *Rasayana* (rejuvenation therapy) and *Vajeekarana* (Aphrodisiac treatment) medicines
11. Avoidance of *Prajnaparadha* (crime against wisdom)
12. Proper orientation of place, time and oneself
13. Daily intake of *Triphala churna* before bed time, intake of *Khandakhadya* after sexual intercourse, intake of *Ritu Hareetaki* etc
14. Adoption of Yoga, Pranayama and meditation techniques
15. Cultivation and propagation of medicinal plants
16. Practice of *Garbhini paricharya* (antenatal care) for pregnant women, *Sutika paricharya* (postnatal care) for purpureal women and *Navajatasisu paricharya* (neonatal care) and *Rakshoghna karma* (Protective measures) for new born child.
17. Practice of *Thailadhara* (medicated Oil dripping), *Ksheeradhara* (medicated milk dripping) *Thalapochichil* (anointment to head/head pack), *Pichu* (Spine Therapy) *Pratimarshana* (nasal therapy) *Karnapurana* (medicated oils in the ears) *Abhyanga* (Ayurvedic massage) etc. for stress release which helps in maintenance of wellness

CONCLUSION

The occurrence and recurrence of diseases should be prevented and this should be achieved through wellness preservation and wellness promotion. Prevention of disease¹⁵ has four main levels and they are: **1. Primordial prevention** :The

propagation and education related with *Dinacharya*, (daily regimen) *Rithucharya* (seasonal routine), *Ratricharya*, (night regimen) *Sadvritta* (code of good conduct) *Achara Rasayana*, (code of conduct), *Brahmacharya* (Celibacy), *Garbhini*

paricharya (antenatal care) *Sutika paricharya*, (Post-natal Care) *Navajatasisu paricharya*, (neonatal care) *Ritu Sodhana* (seasonal Purification) *Aharavidhi* (Ayurveda Dietetics), *Nidraavidhi*, (Sleeping order) etc considered as method of primordial prevention.

2.Primary prevention: Practice of *Dinacharya*, (daily regimen) *Rithucharya* (seasonal routine), *Rathricharya*, (night regimen) *Sadvritta* (code of good conduct) *Achara Rasayana*, (code of conduct), *Brahmacharya* (Celibacy), intake of wholesome food, practice of *Rithu sodhana*, (seasonal Purification) avoidance of *Prajnaparadha* (crime against wisdom) and intake of *Khandakhadya* (sugar) after sexual intercourse etc. comes under the perspective of primary prevention.

3.Secondary prevention: The administration of

proper medication such as *Sudarshana gulika in Jwara* (fever), *Agastya Rasayana in Kasa* (cough).

4.Tertiary prevention: are all measures available to reduce or to the limit impairments and disabilities, minimize suffering. It includes administration of specific medicaments such as *Rasayana* (rejuvenation therapy) and *Vajeekarana* (Aphrodisiac treatment) etc. The concept of wellness enlightens the importance of a healthy lifestyle and Ayurveda is the science which explains a healthy lifestyle for the maintenance of physical, mental, social, spiritual, emotional and environmental wellness through a healthy body, healthy mind, healthy soul in a healthy environment.

Acknowledgement: - Nil

Financial Support: - Nil

Conflict of interest: - Nil

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