

Towards a Comprehensive Practice of Ayurveda

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Abstract

Panchakarma is presented as the main body cleansing program prior to any treatment of Ayurveda medicine and as a main line of treatment, whose purpose may be: to promote health through the practice of dinacharya (daily) or Ritucharya (seasonal) regimes; preparing the body for rejuvenation therapy (Rasayana) and fertility (Vajikarana) treatment of disease by eliminating ama (waste) or balancing the vitiated Doshas (humors) in order to prevent disease. Panchakarma therapies are divided into three groups: Purva Karma, Pradhana Karma and Paschata Karma. Purvakarma is described as Snehana and Swedana. Pradhanakarma include the therapies: Vamana, Virechana, Nasya, Asthapana and Sneha Basti. Other procedures include: Abhyanga, Vashpaswedanam, Shirodhara, Mukhlepa, Marma Massage, Patrapotali Pinda Sweda, Kati Vasti, Nasyam, Shirobasti, Pizhishil, Navarakhizhi, Udhavartana, Netra Tarpana etc. A comprehensive practice of Ayurveda requires the domain of Ashtanga Ayurveda (The 8 parts of this spiritual science), to indicate the necessary therapies for each case (individual), by qualified professionals from accredited institutions, in order to practice Ayurveda inducing to Learn about the "spirit of renouncement" to realize one never truly owns anything, having a human experience. Actions of the Ayurveda-Today Program (ATDP) approaching to Chilean universities, aimed at exploring the formation of academic staff able to generate research to strengthen Ayurveda and teaching undergraduate, starting from its postgraduates from areas of Medicine, Nutrition, Kinesiology and Agronomy, among others. Ayurveda-Today Study Groups (ATDSG) model allows this strategy, whose performance is guided by Ayurveda teachers or Ayurveda-Tutors from India, which may guide the development of particular ATDSG at each university that associates with ATDP. Some policy criteria of Chilean universities with accredited schools of medicine in Chile are mentioned and two possible areas for University-ATDP cooperation are presented, which are: Postgraduate program design and Extension activities program.

Introduction

According to Ayurveda, every human being is a unique phenomenon of cosmic consciousness. The three Dosha (humors) determines every individual's psychosomatic temperament or constitution. Vata (ether plus air), Pitta (fire plus water) and Kapha (water plus earth) are called the Tridosha, meaning the three Dosha. The internal environment is governed by Vata -Pitta -Kapha (V-P-K), which is constantly reacting to the external environment. The wrong diet, habits, lifestyle, incompatible food combinations (e.g. milk and fish, melons and grain, yogurt and meat or cooked honey etc.), seasonal changes, repressed emotions and stress factors can all act either together or separately to change the balance of V-P-K. According to the nature of the cause, Vata, Pitta or Kapha undergo aggravation or derangement that produces Ama (toxins). To stop the further production of Ama Ayurvedic literature suggests putting the person on a proper diet with appropriate lifestyle, habits and exercise, and administering a proper cleansing program such as Panchakarma.

Pancha Karma as the name suggests, Pancha in Sanskrit stands for Five and Karma are therapeutic measures thereby meaning five types of therapeutic measures. These are undertaken for the purification of the body and Ayurveda considers it necessary before the start of any other therapy. The logic being - as a cloth needs to be purified or cleaned of impurities and dust before it can be imparted a new color. Similarly the Body needs to be purified before it can be imparted new colors of youthfulness, health and vigor etc. In fact, most of the times, Panchakarma is an end in itself rather than a prelude to other therapeutic measures.

The most deeply seated toxins that cause disease are heavy and sticky, lodging in the deepest tissue layers. *Pañcha Karma* permanently eliminates these toxins from the body, allowing healing and restoration of the tissues, channels, digestion, and mental functions.

It is recommended for healthy persons also as a preventive treatment to keep physically and mentally fit and energetic. It is also done to best advantage, although not always, at the junction period between two seasons, thus helping a person to prepare their internal environment for the oncoming season.

The purpose of Pancha Karma is to:

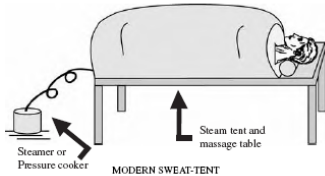
1. Promote health by Dinacharya (daily regimen) and Ritucharya (seasonal regimen) which collectively is called Svastha Vrta.
2. Prepare the body for rejuvenation (Rasayana) and fertility (Vajikarana) therapies.
3. Treat disease by elimination of malas (natural waste of metabolism) from the body.
4. Treat disease by eliminating doshas from the body (with or without toxins - *ama*).
5. Prevention of disease by stopping the reoccurrence of dosha aggravation.

Panchakarma therapies can be broadly classified into three: Purva Karma, Pradhana Karma and Paschata Karma. Here we will discuss the first two.

Purvakarma: Pre-purification Measures for Panchakarma

Before the actual operation of purification begins, there is a need to prepare the body in prescribed methods to encourage the body to let go of the toxins. The two procedures are Snehana and Swedana.

Snehana (Abhyangam) is the oil massage. Oil is applied to the entire body with a particular type of massage which helps the toxins to move towards the gastro-intestinal tract. Oil massage also makes the superficial and deep tissues soft and supple, thus helping to remove stress and to nourish the nervous system. Snehana is given daily for three to seven days, as indicated.



Swedana (sudation or sweating) is given every day immediately following the Snehana. An herbal concoction may be added to the steam to further loosen the toxins from the individual. Swedana liquefies the toxins and increases the movement of toxins into the gastro-intestinal tract.

Pradhanakarma: Main Purification measures of Panchakarma

Vamana: Emesis Therapy

When there is congestion in the lungs causing repeated attacks of bronchitis, colds, cough or asthma, the Ayurvedic treatment is therapeutic vomiting, Vamana, to eliminate the Kapha causing the excess mucus.



Virechana: Purgation Therapy



When excess bile, Pitta, is secreted and accumulated in the gall bladder, liver and small intestine, it tends to result in rashes, skin inflammation, acne, chronic attacks of fever, biliary vomiting, nausea and jaundice. Ayurvedic literature suggests in these conditions the administration of therapeutic purgation or a therapeutic laxative.

Nasya: Nasal Administration

The nose is the doorway to the brain and it is also the doorway to consciousness. The nasal administration of medication is called Nasya. An excess of bodily humors accumulated in the sinus, throat, nose or head areas is eliminated by means of the nearest possible opening, the nose.



Basti: Enema Therapy



Vata disorders such as arthritis, rheumatism, gout, muscle spasms and headaches

Vata's predominant site is the colon. Ayurvedic Basti involves the introduction into the rectum of herbal concoctions of sesame oil, and certain herbal preparations in a liquid medium. Basti, is the most effective treatment of Vata disorders, although many enemas over a prescribed period of time are usually required. It relieves constipation, distention, chronic fever, cold, sexual disorders, kidney stones, heart pain, backache, sciatica and other pains in the joints. Many other

may also be treated with Basti. Basti therapy is divided in two main types, i.e. **Anuvasana Basti** or medicated oil enemas and **Niruha Basti** or medicated enema of decoctions and medicated oils.

Various Other Panchkarma Procedures

ABHYANGA (Massage)

In this treatment, Specific Body massage for 45-60 minutes with herbal oil or herbal cream to tone up the body and to improve the blood circulation etc. is performed. It is useful for elimination of several ailments as well as it is indicated as PURVAKARMA - pretreatment procedure - for all the therapeutic Panchakarma procedure.

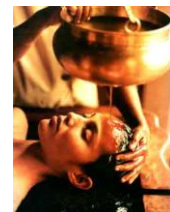


VASHPASWEDANAM: (Medicated Steam Bath)

This is a unique treatment and under this treatment leaves of medicinal plants are boiled and resulting steam is passed to the whole body. This treatment is helpful in to eliminate impurities from the body, reducing fat and also helpful in fighting with some skin diseases. This is also indicated as PURVAKARMA for Panchakarma procedures.

SHIRODHARA

In this process medicated water, herbal oils, medicated milk etc. are poured on the forehead through a special method for 30 to 45 minutes. This treatment is very useful for mental tension, stress, hypertension, insomnia, Vata predominated diseases and certain other diseases.



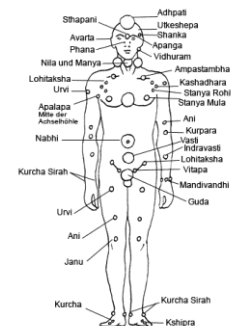
MUKHLEPA



This is an herbal face pack with specially made herbal powder and fresh cream. This prevents and avoids wrinkles and improves the skin tone. This is also good for the eyes.

MARMA MASSAGE

This massage includes whole body massage with herbal oil or powder by hand and foot, for 90 minutes. This is good for rejuvenating the body, to reduce mental tension, sexual weakness, to improve vitality etc. relieves back pain, stiffness and sports injuries but also stimulates various bodily organs and systems.



PATRAPOTALI PINDA SWEDA



Herbal leaves and herbs or herbal powders are applied to the whole body in boluses with hot medicated oils for 45 minutes per day for a period of 7 to 14 days. This treatment is for osteoarthritis, arthritis, swelling. Spondylitis, sports injuries etc.

KATI VASTI

In this process specially prepared warm medicated oil is kept over the lower back with herbal paste boundary. This treatment lasts for 45 minutes to 1 hour and it is good for any type of back pain and spinal disorders.



NASYAM



Herbal juices, medicated oils through the nose for 7 to 14 highly effective for certain kinds bells palsy, writers cramps, disorders, insomnia depression, certain types of skin diseases etc.

SHIROBASTI

Certain lukewarm herbal oils are poured into a cap fitted on the head for 15 to 60 minutes per day according to the patient's conditions for a period of 7 days. This treatment is highly effective for mental stress, rejuvenation of sensory organs, facial paralysis, dryness of nostrils, mouth and throat, severe headaches, burning sensation of head and other vata predominant diseases.



PIZHICHIL



In this treatment, lukewarm herbal oils are applied all over the body by two to four trained masseurs in a special rhythmic way for about 60 to 90 minutes per day fora period of 7 to 21 days. This treatment is very useful for rheumatic diseases like arthritis, paralysis, hemiplegia, and nervous disorders etc.

NAVARAKHIZHI

It is a process by which the whole body or any specific part thereof is made to perspire by the application of certain medicated puddings externally in the form of boluses tied up in a muslin bag. This is applied by two to four masseurs for about 60 to 90 minutes per day for a period of 14 days. This treatment is for rheumatism, pain in the joints, emaciation of limbs, blood pressure, cholesterol and certain kinds of skin diseases.



UDHAVARTANA



This is a typical massage with herbal powders for about 30 minutes daily for a period of 3 to 28 days. This treatment is for oily skin, to enhance the luster and glow of the skin and for the diseases like obesity (excess fat) and certain rheumatic ailments.

NETRA TARPANA

This is the cleaning process of the eyes which gives cooling effect. Prevents eye diseases and strengthens the optic nerve. It is very effective at treating eye diseases and poor or blurred vision.



A Comprehensive Practice of Ayurveda



Panchakarma Applying by a clinic or hospital in Chile, implies not only provide the number and quality of appropriate therapists, but the facilities, equipment, materials, medicinal herbs, oils and utensils for Ayurvedic Practice. Practices that result from a deep anamnesis of patients by an Ayurveda Physician, who knows the Ashtanga Ayurveda to provide the therapeutic indications that apply.

The Ashtnaga Ayurveda corresponds to the eight parts of this spiritual science, which are:

1. Kaya chikitsa - Internal Medicine
2. Shalaky Tantra - Diseases of the head and neck
3. Shalya - Surgery
4. Agada Tantra - Toxicology
5. Kaumarbhritya - Pediatrics
6. Rasayana - Rejuvenation
7. Vajikarana - Aphrodisiacs
8. Bhutavidya - Psychology

As it is difficult to cover all the disciplines that form Ayurveda, it is essential to have a close relationship with the practitioners of various Ayurvedic expertise and in this way creating an environment of **Interdisciplinary Ayurvedic Teams**.

Moreover, not all therapies are Ayurvedic and not all therapies that are said Ayurvedic are creditable in India.



The list of creditable therapies are::

- ❖ All types of Ayurvedic Therapies like Marma Massage, including Indian Head massage, reflexology, etc..
- ❖ Ayurvedic Nutrition
- ❖ Ayurvedic Herbal Treatments
- ❖ Yoga
- ❖ Meditation
- ❖ Pranayama
- ❖ Sound therapy
- ❖ Recitation of prayers and mantras
- ❖ Painting Mandala and Sacred Geometry
- ❖ Chrome-therapy
- ❖ Crystal therapy
- ❖ Homa-therapy
- ❖ Therapy based on the energy Shaktis (empowerment energy)
- ❖ Rituals of healing based on the Vedic scriptures
- ❖ Conscious Work
- ❖ Vedic Astrology
- ❖ Vastu Sastra



A Possible route of accreditation to be used by therapist may be through an institution recognized by the [Central Council of Indian Medicine](#) (Official)

The importance of therapists trained in accredited institutions is to ensure the selection of the Therapy, because:

- ❖ Ayurvedic Therapies are specific for Person, Disease, Season and particular time in a day.
- ❖ As each person is unique in his Body Constitution, Disease Condition & Oja (Immunity).
- ❖ The Ayurvedic Person should Judiciously deduce therapy, appropriate for the user.
- ❖ Specific Therapy for Specific Person for appropriate Duration can only give Total benefit.

So, every therapist should have following Qualities/Role

- ❖ Well trained in Ayurvedic Therapies
- ❖ Skilled do differentiate specific therapy requirement of healthy and disease person, and in Processing of medicine required for therapies.
- ❖ Therapist should maintain self Hygiene and cleanliness while processing of Medicine as well as in the therapeutic area.
- ❖ A therapist should strictly follow the direction given by the Ayurvedic Physician.



According to WHO: Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

All the system of Medicine covers these very aspects of Health. But in Ayurveda, Spiritual aspect has also been taken into account.

Why Spiritual?

Why do we need Spiritual aspect in our daily life?

What is the real purpose beyond these practices (Meditation, Yoga, Pranayam)?

- ❖ **To Learn about the “spirit of renouncement” to realize one never truly owns anything, having a human experience.**

The implementation of Ayurveda in our body allows us to

- ❖ Help us traverse this evolutionary path of Greater Happiness;
- ❖ Help us to remember who we really are :- spiritual beings incarnated in a physical body, to have a human experience;
- ❖ Help us find the answer of: incarnation, where we come from and where are we going?, what is the dharma of each other and thus ...
- ❖ Help in the evolution of humanity and our world.
- ❖ To "dissolve" the illusion of separation and to achieve “higher integration with One”.

Ayurveda-Today and Universities



The traditional Ayurvedic Institution (Teacher-Student tradition) is the best mode of teaching of Age Old Ayurveda System. To achieve this we will use a developmental sequence: beginning with Ayurveda Tutors, a system associated with this Study Group, to be organized in universities that are associated with Ayurveda-Today Programme.

In this regard, it is important to emphasize that the Chilean Universities usually are governed by strict policies emanating from each Vicerrectory, which specify what can or can not perform and the stages of Academic and financial assessment to be met by each project, including:

- ❖ The subjects in each career, they need planning, teacher and budget annually.
- ❖ There are universities that do not provide facilities for external paid services, especially those that provide paid health care, for which special permits are required.
- ❖ It is possible to perform demonstrations or free care to low income patients, as long as they are part of the curriculum.
- ❖ Outreach Universities are defined as free activities open to the community.
- ❖ It is possible to produce conferences with Ayurveda-Today Program specialist, to raise awareness of the issue at the university, which can provide the physical place, the promotion of the event and the graph of the posters.

In the case of Ayurveda-Today Program (ATDP), its approach to universities is to explore the development of cooperation projects at an early stage, whose purpose is to develop knowledge and skills designed to build the critical mass of professionals from

which to draw the faculty, who can perform research and undergraduate teaching in the basic specialties of Ayurveda:

1. Practitioner Ayurveda
2. Dietitian Ayurveda
3. Herbalist Ayurveda
4. Panchakarma Therapist



The academic team (Faculty), corresponding to these specialties may be graduated in areas such as Medicine, Nutrition, Kinesiology, Agronomy and others.

The graduate programs of Chilean Universities, necessary to form the four specialties, may include: workshops, courses, diploma, master's and doctoral, paid by students.

Having evaluated the project, funding and academic line, Programs that could be performed through a Convention signed between the University and the Ayurveda-Today Programme's governing body, with links with universities in India.

As shown, the path toward a comprehensive practice of Ayurveda, it isn't fast execution, but admits the start of two work lines:

- ❖ University extension
- ❖ The development of graduate programs.

Study Groups associated to each university will be the unit that ultimately will mark the developmental characteristics of Ayurveda in each University associated to ATDP.

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