

**CROSSROADS IN AYURVEDA****Pal Guru Sharan**

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**ABSTRACT**

Ayurveda is now facing problems of dilemmas regarding education, practice and research. Deferent doctors have deferent views on these issues. There is lacking of clear decision on these issues. In these conditions, development of Ayurveda is not possible. So, there is need of today to make clear decisions on various issues of Ayurveda. For this, conferences of Ayurvedic experts are required on these issues.

**Keywords:** dilemmas, education, practice, research, integrated medicine

**INTRODUCTION**

There are so many confusions and so many dilemmas regarding education, practice and research in Ayurveda. In the newly designed syllabus of UG and PG courses of Ayurveda, more than 50% part is modern medicine. Some Ayurvedic doctors support it and some Ayurvedic doctors oppose it. Some states have allowed Ayurvedic doctors to prescribe modern medicines and some states have banned it. There is vacancy of Ayurvedic doctors in health ministry, Ayush ministry and labor ministry but there is no place for Ayurvedic doctors in defense ministry. There are so many problems in the area of research in Ayurveda. Some wants to prove efficacy and safety of Ayurvedic drugs on modern parameters and some wants to prove their efficacy on the basis of ancient research methodology. Some wants to practice integrated medicine but some doctors oppose it. Thus, there are so many crossroads in various areas of Ayurveda. This is need of today to find out the right

pathway to go ahead.

**REVIEW**

Ayurveda was only one and a well-developed medical science in ancient India. Later on, Muslim invaders attacked India and destroyed many Ayurvedic texts and institutions. Then, British government ruled over India and promoted modern medical science only, not Ayurveda. After independence, govt. of India tried to support and revitalize Ayurveda but growth rate was very slow. Department of Indian Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy (ISM & H) was created in March 1995 and re-named as Department of Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy (AYUSH) in November 2003 and now, Department of AYUSH has been upgraded as Ministry of AYUSH in November 2014. Now, govt. of India is providing a huge financial support to propagate and upgrade Ayush. This is history of Ayurveda in brief, from ancient times to present time.

Now, many Ayurvedic universities and colleges are running in India. Many books and journals are being published for enriching Ayurveda. National and international seminars and conferences are being conducted to propagate and exchange various ideas in Ayurveda. But, I have just felt one thing in these books, journals and seminars that there are three types of Ayurvedic doctors in India. Firstly, those Ayurvedic doctors who diagnose the disease on the basis of principles of Ayurveda and treat the disease on the basis of Ayurvedic principles too. In my opinion, number of such Ayurvedic doctors is 5% approximately. Secondly, those Ayurvedic doctors who diagnose the disease on the basis of principles of modern medicine and treat the disease on the basis of modern principles too. Such Ayurvedic doctors are 20% as per my assessment. Thirdly, those Ayurvedic doctors who diagnose the disease on the basis of principles of modern medicine and prescribe Ayurvedic medicines to fit them on modern concepts and number of such Ayurvedic doctors is maximum i.e. 75%. The Himalaya Drug Company prepares literatures to keep view of these third types of Ayurvedic doctors e.g. *Gokshura* is diuretic and *Bhummyamalaki* is hepatoprotective, etc. Maximum articles in journals are written by third type of Ayurvedic doctors. An article entitled "Ayurpathy: A modern perspective of Ayurveda" was published in AYU, 2011 July-Sept issue in which it was mentioned that *rasa, guna, virya, vipak* and *prabhav* of medicinal plants is debatable in present time and pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics, efficacy, safety profile and chemical compositions of medicinal plants should be established<sup>1</sup>. In the same issue of the same journal, Prof. R.H. Singh com-

mented on this article that research in Ayurveda and its scientific validation in tune with its principles are essential to suit the contemporary needs leading to its mainstreaming<sup>2</sup>. The author personally agrees with Prof. R.H. Singh's opinion that scientific validation of Ayurveda should be done in tune with its principles and it is essential for global acceptance of Ayurveda in present time. If scientific validation of Ayurveda is done entirely in tune with modern concepts then, Ayurveda will be ruined.

Many facts have been mentioned in Ayurvedic texts. Acharya Charak has indicated local application of *bakuchi* (*psoralea corylifolia*) in the management of vitiligo<sup>3</sup>. Modern medicine also indicates local application of psoralen (active ingredient of *bakuchi*) in the management of vitiligo. Acharya Sushrut has explained very minute structures of our body without any microscopes in those times. He has depicted about 7 layers of skin, their thickness and diseases<sup>4</sup>, which are supported by modern medicine today. Acharya Vagbhat has mentioned the symptoms of anhidrosis and hyperhidrosis in *kusth*<sup>5</sup>, and modern medicine also accepts the condition of anhidrosis and compensatory hyperhidrosis in leprosy. Thus, we find that many facts which have been mentioned long ago in our classical texts are also supported by modern medicine today. But scientific reason of so many facts of classical texts is not known till now. Acharya Charak has indicated that curd should not be taken at night<sup>6</sup>. Its scientific reason on the basis of modern view is not known. Acharya Sushrut has described that if the patient of *kusth* (skin problems) dies then, he gets *kusth* again in the next birth also<sup>7</sup>. The scientific reason and mechanism of transmission of

*kusth* from one birth to another birth is not known till now. Similarly, Acharya Vagbhat has described that one who condemns or kills a gentleman, gets *kusth*<sup>8</sup>. Mechanism of origin of *kusth* after condemning or killing a gentleman is not known. Researches should be done to explore unknown facts mentioned in classical texts. When modern scientists prove any fact then we say that it has been mentioned in our texts long ago. We should prove these unknown facts to globalize and mainstream Ayurveda.

CCIM has stopped practical/oral examinations in *Ashtang Hridaya* and *CharakSamhita* minimizing the importance of these classical texts. In the new syllabus of BAMS, CCIM included modern medicine more than Ayurveda which has been opposed by some ayurvedic doctors. There is lacking of articles which emphasize on elaboration and scientific validation of fundamental principles of Ayurveda i.e. *panchmahabhut*, *tridosh*, *saptadhatu*, *mala*, *agni*, *samprapti* (Ayurvedic pathogenesis of diseases), *srotas*, *ojas*, etc. No initiatives have been taken to explore these fundamental principles of Ayurveda and current researches in Ayurveda are not beneficial for Ayurvedic practitioners. What is the relevance of these fundamental principles of Ayurveda in the diagnosis and management of diseases, where should Ayurveda move and where is Ayurveda moving towards- these are debatable questions in present time. The author has heard about some Ayurvedic diagnostic tools such as electrotridoshgram (ETG) and *nadi* examination machine. If these instruments are really functioning properly then, these should be upgraded and propagated.

An article titled "Spat over Ayurveda Primer for Doctors" was published in "The Tele-

graph" Calcutta edition on 16 August 2016<sup>9</sup>. In this article, it was mentioned that CCIM has decided to offer a two year postgraduate diploma course in Ayurveda to doctors of modern medicine. Many Ayurvedic doctors support cross practice- Ayurvedic doctors prescribing modern medicine or allopathic doctors prescribing ayurvedic medicine. But many Ayurvedic doctors oppose this cross practice keeping Ayurveda pure. Like that, many allopathic doctors support cross practice and many oppose this. In my opinion, patients are free to choose whatever stream they want to be treated through- Allopathy, Ayurveda or homeopathy, but doctors should prescribe medicines from their field of training only.

In a written reply to Rajya Sabha, Defense Minister Shri Manohar Parrikar said that Ayurveda treatment was not approved as a mode of treatment for defense services personnel and integration of entire complement of Indian systems of medicine with Armed Forces Medical Services was not feasible. However, a 10 bed Ayurvedic hospital was inaugurated by the defense secretary at the Army Base Hospital in Delhi Cantonment. Health ministry of India has recognized qualifications of all streams as equivalent and stressed the need for integrated medicines. In June 2016, Union health minister inaugurated a Center for Integrative Medicine & Research at AIIMS, New Delhi which will explore the use Ayurveda and yoga in treating various diseases.

### CONCLUSION

In the syllabus of UG and PG courses, basic principles of Ayurveda should be explored. Only some basic knowledge of modern science should be included in the syllabus. There is no importance of any ayurvedic

course for allopathic doctors. There is no need of integration of different streams in education and practice. Training and practice should be done separately. Treatment should be done on the basis of requirement of diseases. The stream (Allopathy, Ayurveda, and Homeopathy) which is more beneficial in a particular disease should be adopted. If integrated management is more beneficial in a particular patient then, it should be adopted but treated by doctors of their own streams.

Ayurveda is an occult science. Basic principles of Ayurveda should be explored. There is need of research in the basic principles like *panchmahabhut*, *tridosh*, *saptadhatu*, *mala*, *agni*, *samprapti*, *srotas*, *ojas*, etc. to understand Ayurveda deeply. Only drug research on modern parameters is not sufficient. It is true upto some extent that Ayurveda is not feasible for Armed Forces Medical Services. Ayurveda is suitable for healthy and ill defense personnel but it is not very much suitable in acute conditions, infections and injury like conditions of war. So, it is challenge to explore Ayurveda for defense. Ayurveda should be explored for soldiers working on high altitudes, in the sky and in the sea. Ayurveda should be explored for soldiers in various critical conditions of wars. Then, Ayurveda will be feasible for Armed Forces Medical Services and will be included for defense personnel. Thus, there are so many challenges in Ayurveda which should be taken seriously by Ayurveda experts to protect and propagate Ayurveda.

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