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## THE SYSTEMS OF MEDICINE PRACTICED IN INDIA - AN OVERVIEW

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### **Abstract:**

*In the eastern world countries, specifically in Indian subcontinent, there is a vivid history of diversification in each aspect of human life. Here in India the language, food, dressing, living habitat and health keeping habits changes every mile as we explore it. Same is the case with the health management system deployed and practiced in India. A brief review of all such systems of medicine is been bunched off and presented in preceding review work.*

**Keywords:** systems of medicine, diversification, Indian subcontinent

### **Introduction:**

The Indiandiversified culture also reflects in its health system. InIndia more than one medical system or use of both conventional and complementaryor alternative medicine are practiced for health and illness. Indian subcontinent had been ruled by many rulers across the globe with wide time variation. This intruders had infused their respective health care system principles and thus Indian medical system got exposed to systems of medicine practiced in foreign countries. India health care system is having very rich traditional system of medicine which has its origin thousands of years ago in Vedic period. Various ancient Indian classicshave mentioned the detailing of thousands of medicinal plants and methods of treatment of hundreds of diseases with medicinal formulations. Considering all these facts this study is conducted to describe about the various systems of medicine which are being practiced for the speedy treatment of the various ailments. This

study will focus on origin, development, principles, and advantages of the various system of medicine practiced in India and brief introduction about the other system of medicine practiced in other countries also.

### **The Systems of Medicine:**

The medical system is the way in which the disease will be managed or treated. The medical system is also called as the – Pathy. Across the world there are various systems of medicine which are utilized to treat the disease. Primarily the ancient civilization like Indus civilization and surrounding continents had developed their unique system of medicine which is known as traditional system of medicine. Apart from this, the system of medicine which are in vogue and are recognized widely are been discussed here. Those well recognized and popular systems of medicine are:

- 1) AYUSH (Ayurved-Yoga-Unani-Homiopathy) system of medicine
- 2) Modern system of medicine
- 3) Chiropractic
- 4) Acupuncture
- 1) **AYUSH** (Ayurved-Yoga-Unani-Homeopathy)

Indian government had established the ministry of AYUSH as this is regarded as most primitive and still relevant system of medicine practiced in India. The primary health care which is available at the grass root level i.e. at most rural parts of developing country like India is this system of medicine. Due to adoption of modern system of medicine for emergency conditions, it is also known by some popular names like, Allied sciences, Traditional health care, Indigenous system of medicine and Alternative medicine. AYUSH as a form of medical treatment includes, Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy. To ensure the optimal development and propagation of the AYUSH system of healthcare, The Government of India has a dedicated Ministry, established in 2014, which is known as AYUSH ministry. It is one of the safest methods of system of medicine. Ayurveda basically mentions the use of a various herbal preparations, like Kwath- decoctions, Swarasa – juices, Hema – Phanta - infusions and Churna - powders, for treatment. These contains organic as well as inorganic drugs which are used as medicines. The natural and raw form of medicines helps to enhance the safety – efficacy of the medications and are also relatively cost effective. The cost efficacy along with natural herbal base of treatment and also delivering promising results have increased the demand of AYUSH system of medicine round the globe. Apart from Indian subcontinent, now this system of medicine is accepted and practiced across the globe.

The various sub systems which encompasses the AYUSH are been discussed as follows;

#### **a) Ayurveda:**

Ayurveda is an Upaveda of Atharva Veda, which is one among the four Veda – the most primitive literature known to mankind. Maharshi Charak, Sushrut, and Vagbhata had compiled their

respective work and are termed as Brihatrai.CharakaSamhita, SushrutSamhita and AshtangaSamgraha - Brihatrai, these are considered as the basic and principle texts of the Ayurveda. The principles of Ayurveda includes Tridosha Siddhanta, Samanya – VisheshSiddhanta, Dosha-Dhatu – Mala Siddhanta, etc.It is believed that Ayurveda is the most primitive health care system (5000 years ago) which is still in practice. The various treatment methods available in Ayurveda includes, Shodhana therapy (purification treatment), Shaman therapy (palliative treatment), Pathya–Apathy (prescription of diet and activity), Nidanparivarjan (checking the Causative factors), Satvavajay (psychotherapy), Rasayan therapy (use of immunomodulators and rejuvenators). Panchakarma is one of the treatment methods in Ayurveda which is considered as a body de-tox program. It includes following five procedures:

Vamana – Emesis

Virechana – medicinal purgation

Basti – Enema

Nasya – Nasal medication

Raktamokshana – Blood letting

By virtue of it, we can eliminate the vitiated Dosha and Mala out of the body and regain the balance in Tridosha. Thus we can correlate it with Body Detox.

#### **b) Yoga and Naturopathy:**

This is most widely accepted and practiced system of medicine in present times.Yoga finds its roots the Rig-Veda, and in the Upanishads. MaharshiPatanjali had led its foundation and elaborated it in a very unique style. Apart from its complete health care system capabilities, the western world countries had misinterpreted it as mere posture based physical fitness, stress relief and relaxation technique.Traditionalyoga includes eight limbs of Yoga which address physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing.MaharshiPatanjali is called as the father of yoga- and had describedAshtang Yogain his Book – PatanjaliYog Sutra. The practice of Yoga prevents psychosomaticdisorders by strengthening one’s mind. It also builds the physic by rigorous stretching of muscles and body parts. Yoga improves an individual’s resistance and ability to handle stressful situations. There are four branches of Yoga, viz;

Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Raja Yoga and Dnyana Yoga.

These are considered as four paths by which one can attain the highest self which is the main objective of these system.

Ashtanga Yoga includes;

Yama (moral code)

Niyama (personal discipline)

Asana (Yogic Postures)

Pranayama (Yogic breathing)

Pratyahara (withdrawal of senses)

Dharana (concentration on one object)

Dhyana (meditation)

Samadhi (salvation)

These are the eight limbs of Yoga, and by practicing it one can achieve the highest self.

Naturopathy is a holistic approach to the wellness. Father of Naturopathy is Dr. Benedict Lust. Naturopathy follows certain sets of principles which are guideline for treating the diseases, these principles can be briefed as,

1. Do no harm (use of non-invasive and nontoxic treatment)
2. Healing power of nature (natural healing power of body)
3. Identify and treat the cause
4. Doctor as a teacher (educate and support the patient)
5. Treat the whole person (holistic approach by considering one body)
6. Prevention

In Naturopathy, the subject is treated and not the disease. Naturopathy believes that the basic cause of disease is not Bacteria or any pathogen but accumulation of morbid matter in the body. It believes that the disturbance in the natural rhythm of the body causes the unease and it can be rectified by use of naturopathy principles. Naturopathy Treatment includes - watertherapy, Airtherapy, firetherapy, Spacetherapy, Mudtherapy, Suntherapy and Food therapy.

### **c) Unani:**

The Unani system of medicine has its roots in Greece. It is believed to be developed and propagated by Hippocrates. The Arabian scholars and physicians had contributed greatly for development of this system.

The base of its theory of illness is the imbalances between certain fluids (e.g. bile and blood) within the human body. The imbalance in this four Humors – Earth, air, water and fire causes illness and restoring its balance gives health. In India it was introduced by Arabs. Unani system of medicine principles includes,

Arkan (element)

Mizaj (temperament)

Akhiat (humors)

Azas (organs)

Arwah (vital spirit)

Quwa (powers)

Afal (functions)

Arthritis, Leucoderma, Jaundice, Liver disorders, Nervous system disorders, Bronchial Asthma, etc. are treated effectively with the help of Unanimedicines. The modes of treatment like, regimental therapy, diet therapy, pharmacotherapy and surgery makes Unani system of medicine a different, remarkable and popular system.

#### **d) Siddha:**

Siddha system is derived from word Siddhi, which means perfection in one's life or actions. This is widely practiced in southern regions of India and focuses on maintaining balance and stability between the environment, climatic conditions, physical activities and stress, to ensure good health. Siddha considered nature and man essentially one. Siddha literature is in Tamil and it is practiced largely in Tamil speaking part of India and Abroad. Tirumandiram is the first Siddha classic written by Tirumala dated approximately in 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> century. There are 96 basic principles which are mentioned in Siddha classics which are used for treatment purpose. There are much similarities in the basics and theory of Siddha and Ayurveda. The Siddha system widely make use of various metals and mineral origin drugs.

#### **e) Homeopathy:**

Homeopathy was founded in 1796 by the German physician Samuel Hahnemann. Its practitioners are called homeopaths. Homeopaths believe that a substance that causes symptoms of a disease in healthy people can cure similar symptoms in sick people. This doctrine is named similia similibus curentur, or like cures like. The principles of Homeopathy includes;

Individualization

Principle of similia

Principle of simplex

Principle of minimum dose and dilution

Law of dynamism

Vital force

The unique method of medicine preparation and drug delivery made it a cost effective, potent and widely popular system of medicine.

#### **2) Modern medicine:**

Modern medicine now refers to "the broad category of medical practice that is sometimes called Allopathic medicine, Western medicine, biomedicine, evidence-based medicine. The term Allopathy was coined in 1810 by the inventor of homeopathy, Samuel Hahnemann. In this system the drugs used are having effects opposite to the symptoms. Most modern science-based medical treatments include the conventional use of antibiotics, vaccines, and chemotherapeutics surgery etc.

#### **3) Chiropractic:**

This term is derived from the Greek words – Cheir and Praxis which means done by hands. In

Chiropractic, relationship between bodily structure (primarily that of the Spine) and function are taken into consideration. The mechanical defects in the nerve conduction and misalignment of bony structure are been corrected in this system of medicine. Chiropractitioners use manipulative therapy as an integral treatment tool. It naturally aligns the normal posture of body and thereby gives relief in respective disorders.

#### 4) Acupuncture:

Acupuncture is a method of healing developed in China at least 2000 years ago. According to this system it is considered that energy or life force flows through a certain channel called meridians and here this flow is corrected by working on this meridians. It includes stimulation of anatomical points on the body by a variety of techniques. The scientifically studied techniques involve penetrating the skin with thin, solid, metallic needles that are manipulated by the hands or by electrical stimulation.

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