



Review Article

IMPORTANCE AND UTILITY OF THE PRINCIPLE OF AYURVEDA FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH

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ABSTRACT
A nation is built by its citizens and these citizens with their good health, hard work determines the future of a nation. To ensure a bright and prosperous future we need to focus on the health of a community. Community health is defined as simple services that are delivered by common men outside hospitals and clinics. Community health services can be classified into Preventive Health Services, Promotive Health Services, Curative Health Services, and Rehabilitative Health Services. Preventive health services include measures by which we can avoid the disease before its occurrence *Dincharya, Ritucharya, Sadvrit, Tryoupstham*, and *Vegdharan* can be included in this category. Similarly, promotive health care services include *Rasayan, Vaajikaran, Ashtaaharvidhi vishesh ayatan, Sadvrit, Tryoupstham*. Curative health services include single-drug therapy for the different diseases called *Ekal dravya* and treatment of *Kaas, Swash, Atisaar, Amlapita* which are very common. Rehabilitative health services such as physical therapy, counseling, and other mental health services can be provided by *Ashwathan chikitsa, Medhya rasaayan, Yoga, Pathya palan, Padansikkarm palan*.

INTRODUCTION

Community health with its different dimensions can be included in *Svasthvarit*. *Swasthvrit* is a branch of Ayurveda that deals with the study of health and its preservation. *Swasthvrit* is the practice of keeping the body clean to prevent disease and infections, avoidance of contact with infections, and promoting and preserving good health and healthy living to have a longer life expectancy and decrease the rate of disease and disability^[1]. *Svasthavrit* can also referred as hygiene, is a branch of medical science concerned with the practice that ensures good health and cleanliness of an individual and community at the same time^[2]. The World Health Organization promotes guidelines on hygiene practices on an international level.

Community health is defined as simple services that are delivered by common men outside hospitals and clinics. Two groups, community health volunteers

and community health workers are mainly responsible for the facilities with help of primary care providers. Community health volunteers are a member of the local community with considerable knowledge of medicine and health facilities. They are local they can easily identify the weak link or those in need, to provide them with better facilities. Community health workers can further divided as Community health assistance and community health officers these may or may be not local but have professional and academic qualifications so that they can train, supervise, teach and research in community health departments³.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1. To incorporate the vast knowledge of Ayurveda in community health.
2. To make the knowledge of Ayurveda more accessible to common people.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The classical Ayurvedic texts as Charak Samhita, Shushrut Samhita, Astang Hridaya are screened out for community health, modern and Ayurvedic literature, different sites on community health were evaluated for complete understanding.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Community health can be divided into four major groups^[4]:

Preventive Health Services

The measures taken before the beginning of a disease or disability is considered in preventive health service. Disease and disability are affected by environmental factors, genetic predisposition, disease agents, and lifestyle choices.

Each year millions of people die of preventable diseases. A 2004 study in the United States showed that about half of all deaths can be preventable. Leading causes include cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease, unintentional injuries, and diabetes. A poor diet and a sedentary lifestyle further support diseases. Ayurveda has solutions for these problems; it can give directions for better living and dietary habits^[5].

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|---|------------------------|--|
| 1 | <i>Dincharya</i> | The necessities of a day are included in it: early waking, evacuation of bowels, oral hygiene, nasal therapy, collyrium, medicated smoking, physical cleanliness, exercise, massage, bathing, toiletries, and use of turban. The proper conduct of these everyday routine according to a person's capability, is an excellent way of avoiding disease ^[6] . |
| 2 | <i>Ritucharya</i> | <i>Vata</i> , <i>Pitta</i> , and <i>Kapha</i> with concerning seasons get accumulated, vitiated, and alleviated. Diet and regimen play a major role in these three states of <i>Doshas</i> . By applying diet and regimen respective to each <i>Ritu</i> that is <i>Varsha ritucharya</i> , <i>Sarad ritucharya</i> , <i>Hemanta ritucharya</i> , <i>Vasant riticharya</i> , <i>Grisma ritucharya</i> , <i>Pravrit</i> , and <i>Sananya ritucharya</i> . A person who follows these, is not victimized by the risk of disease caused by the vitiation of <i>Dosha</i> ^[7] . |
| 3 | <i>Sadvrit</i> | It is a collection of moral conducts and behaviors including emotions, feeling, sentiments, and desires exhibited by a human. Honor to god, avoidable deeds, avoidable place, maintainable conduct, and speech-related conduct come under this ^[8] . |
| 4 | <i>Trayo upastambh</i> | Three pillars support our body <i>Aahar</i> , <i>Nidra</i> , and <i>Brahmacharya</i> . A person gains strength, luster, growth, and a full span of life with the support of these three pillars ^[9] . |
| 5 | <i>Adharaniye vega</i> | We can divide <i>Veg</i> into <i>Dharniye</i> and <i>Adharniye</i> . Natural urges of flatus, feces, urine, yawning, tears, sneezing, eructation, vomiting, semen, hunger, thirst and sleep are <i>Adharniye veg</i> , if these urges suppressed cause severe disorders. Other urges like anger, misery, fear, grief etc should be avoid or suppress for well being ^[10] . |

Promotive Health Care

Ayurveda aims at *Swasthasya swatha rakshanam*^[11] for promoting and protecting the health of a healthy person, we should follow *the Dosha shamanya siddhant* that is principle of balancing *Dosha*. The principle says that diminished *Dosha* should be raised, vitiated states of *Dosha* should be alleviated, the enhanced state of *Dosha* should be eliminated, and equilibrium state *Dosha* is to be maintained^[12]. *Brihana* (nourishing therapy), *Samsamana* (alleviation therapy), *Samsodhana* (elimination therapy) and *Nidanaparivarjana* (avoidance of causative factors) are the methods applied respectively.

Samsamana are the drugs that do not eliminate the *Dosha* nor aggravates normal state of *Dosha* but maintain the equilibrium state^[13]. *Samsamana* can be easily achieve by seven methods that are *Pachana* (drugs that can digest the *Dosha*), *Dipana* (drugs that enhance the digestive fire), *Kshuta* (hunger), *Trut* (thirst), *Vyayam* (exercise), *Atap* (sun therapy), *Marut* (wind therapy)^[14].

Samsodhan and *Samsamana* are the two basic concepts; follow in Ayurveda to managing *Dosha*

imbalance. A healthy person's *Dosha* gets easily vitiated by some negligence and by nature with time. We can maintain the natural state of *Dosha* by *Sharirshodhan* and *Aaharvidhi*. We detox the body with *Panchkarma* these are *Vaman* (elimination of *Dosha* through vomiting), *Virechan* (*Dosha* elimination by purging), *Niruhbasti* (i.e., decoction of herb use as enema), *Anuvasanbasti* (herbal oil preparations use as enema), *Nasya* (medicine applying through nasal cavity) explained by *Acharya Charak*. *Acharya Sushrut* described five different procedures of *Panchakarm* as *Vaman*, *Virechan*, *Basti*, *Nasya* and *Raktmokshan*. *Raktmokshan* (bloodletting by different means leech etc.) include as fifth procedure because *Shushrut* regards *Rakta* as one of the body *Dosha*, it is equally responsible for diseases.

Nidanaparivarsan can achieve by avoiding *Aaharaj* and *Viharaj nidan*. The practices recommended for avoiding *Aaharaj nidan* are *Aaharvidhi* is the rules of food consumption that include *Astavaaahar vidhi visheshaayatani*^[15] eight factors which determine the utility of food like nature,

preparation, combination, the quantity of food, etc. *Aaharvidhividhan* are the practices recommended for healthy and some unhealthy individuals. One should take hot and unctuous food in proper quantity, food should be taken after digestion of previous meal, potency of food should not contradict, dinning space is pleasant with proper accessories, food should be taken not so fast not so delayed manner, without talking and laughing, with full concentration, with due consideration of own power of digestion^[16].

Pathyaapathya aahar, the food and regimen which does not hinder the normal function of *Shrotas* and delight the mind are called as *Pathya aahar*^[17]. Anything which contribute to one's wholesomeness (*Pathya*) depends on the administration in proper quantity, season, mode of action, habitat, physical constituency and predominance of *Dosha* play important role in wholesomeness and unwholesomeness (*Apathy*)^[18]. Illness can be alleviated by the use of *Pathya aahar* without any medicine. But an illness cannot be cured with help of hundreds of medicine in devoid of *Pathya aahar vihar*. *Pathya vihar* are collection of moral conducts and behaviors, including emotions, feeling, sentiments or desires exhibited by human beings. Reverence should be rendered to gods, cows, Brahman, preceptors, elders, prophets and teachers^[19].

By following these *Aahaj* and *Viharaj pathya* one can achieve positive health; he is not susceptible to the attack of diseases, lives for hundred years without approaching any untimely death. He became worthy of admiration, reputation, prosperity and friendship with all living beings^[20].

Curative Health Care

Treatment of minor illnesses has come under curative health care. There is various kinds of

formulations given in the Ayurvedic textbook which can be made with just one drug or a combination of different kind of drugs, Ayurveda facilitates with easy homemade remedy as well as complex drug preparation in it, there is a reference to *Ekal aushadhi* or *Agrya aushadhi* came. *Agrya aushadhi* means *Shresth aushadha*, best among all^[21]. These are collection of leading or principle substances. *Charak* includes 152 entities where as *Astang Sangraha* includes 155. These are best in *Pathaya* or *Apathya* for sustaining life. Excellency of *Agrya dravya* they are fast action, broad spectrum action, use at various stages, less adverse effect, specific site of action and have high potency. *Agrya dravyas* can be understand by putting them in different groups as *Aahara*, *Manas*, *Vihar*, *Doshaj* related *Agrya*. *Harsha prinanam*, *Puasti swapnakarnam* these *Agrya* are *Manas* related. Here *Acharya Charak* very beautifully explains how full stomach leads to sound sleep.

The other concept like *Mahakasaya* is also mentioned in *Samhita*. *Acharaya Charak* had described fifty *Mahakashay* or five hundred *Kasay*^[22]. *Mahakashay* is decoctions made by the ten best drugs for a specific action, for example *Hridhya mahakashay* has the best 10 drugs to support the heart, and these drugs can also be used individually. These are ready to use formulations.

Rehabilitative Health Services

It help to minimize the impact of diseases, the broad range of health conditions, illnesses and injuries such as physical therapy, counseling and other mental health services that come under this group^[23].

It helps in chronic disorders where damage already happened to slow down the process.

Sadvrit, *Achar rasayan*, *Medhya rasayan*, *Pragyaapradh*, *Vajikaran*, *Ashwathan*, *Padansik karm*

1	<i>Sadvrit</i>	It is a collection of moral conducts and behaviors with emotion and sentiments that a person exhibits
2	<i>Rasayan</i>	<i>Rasayan</i> is a therapy that enhances the youth, prevents premature aging, makes the person free from diseases, and hence increases life span, intellect, and strength ^[24] . We can get benefits from <i>Rasayan</i> by <i>Achar rasayan</i> and <i>Medhya rasayan</i> . <i>Achar rasayan</i> – By only behavioral changes we can achieve <i>Rasayan</i> benefits these behavioral changes are called <i>Achar rasayan</i> . A person who is devoid of anger, truthful, away from violence, alcohol, sexual indulgence, who is peaceful, sweet-spoken, involve in charity, etc. these are behavioral rejuvenescence. <i>Meghya rasayan</i> - These are the group of drugs described in <i>Charak Chikitsa</i> 1 st chapter with multifold benefits, especially for intellect, and retention power. These drugs with regular practice will boost health, immunity, mental peace, and hence longevity of life. <i>Mandukaparni</i> , <i>Yastimadhu</i> , <i>Guduchi</i> , and <i>Shankhapushpi</i> these four are specially mentioned with a wide range of applications.
3	<i>Pragyaapradh</i>	When a person is inclined towards sinful acts due to deranged <i>Dhee</i> , <i>Dhriti</i> and <i>Smriti</i> lead to all sorts of unwholesome actions, <i>Rajas</i> and <i>Tamas dosha</i> cover the mind and causes <i>Pragyaapradh</i> . <i>Pyagyaapradh</i> leads to vitiation of all the <i>Dosha</i> that further causes a different kind of disease because of <i>Ayog</i> , <i>Aatiyog</i> , and <i>Mithya yog</i> of our <i>Indriye</i> .

4	<i>Vajikaran</i>	Ayurvedic medicine can be divided into promoting, by increasing the strength, and second which cure the disease. <i>Vajikaran</i> and <i>Rasayan</i> come under the first category. It is employed for the promotion of sexual health and curing sexual diseases. <i>Vajikaran</i> drugs are instructed for a healthy person as well; they amplify and preserve sexual potency, reduce seminal related problems, the conception of healthy progeny, and also improve the physical, psychological, and social health of an individual ^[25] .
5	<i>Aashwasthan chikitsa</i>	The reference of <i>Ashwan chikitsa</i> comes under <i>Unmad</i> and <i>Apsamar chikitsa</i> in <i>Charak Samhita</i> . <i>Ashwasan chikitsa</i> simply means giving assurance. The increased incidence of mental disorders, depression, anxiety, and suicidal tendencies need this <i>Ashwasthan chikitsa</i> .
6	<i>Padanshik kram</i>	This concept says how to switch from an unhealthy to a healthy regime without vitiation of <i>Dosha</i> and by sudden change not harming our own body. By following this sequence we can adapt the new changes easily ^[26] .

CONCLUSION

The knowledge of Ayurveda is collection of knowledge by ancestors from many thousands of previous years. These knowledge are already present in every house but we do not recognize it. We need to make Ayurveda again available to each and every person it can only happen by knowing its true potency and incorporating it in community health. These ideas are easy, less complicated, have less side effects and require fewer resources. By following *Dincharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Sadvrit*, *Ashta vidhivishesh aytan* etc. We cover almost every aspect of life and its related problems so by including these principles we built a better community.

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