

Editorial

Extending Ayurveda further....thinking beyond the possibilities...

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We take great pleasure in informing our authors, readers, reviewers, and subscribers that AYU has been indexed in PubMed. To get linked with the largest medical database is a very precious achievement of all the ayurvedists, especially AYU. Definitely, this indexing not only enhances the propagation of Ayurveda throughout the world, but will also help to attract the scientific community to improve the scientific quality of the content, and in turn the research levels in Ayurveda. This fulfills the main objective of the journal to make the globe aware of the science of Ayurveda for a better quality of life. At this juncture we acknowledge all our authors, reviewers, readers, and subscribers for their support. We also appreciate the full support by the Department of Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy (AYUSH), Government of India, for the full-fledged, extended support given for the publication of AYU. We are thankful to the Medknow team for their efforts to make AYU recognized globally by its printing quality.

Ayurveda seems to be the fastest developing ancient medical system. The credit goes to the Department of AYUSH for its successful development strategies by organizing various programs to popularize Ayurveda abroad. The Department of AYUSH sponsors expert Ayurvedic faculties to visit foreign lands and conduct introductory training programs for the betterment of Ayurveda. In recent times, Dr. B. N. Sridhar from Bengaluru has been deputed as the Ayurvedic Physician at Port Dixon Hospital, KL, in Malaysia. A team of experts led by Honorable Secretary — AYUSH, Shri Anil Kumar, consisting of Joint Secretary Shri D.D. Sharma, Chief Executive Officer — National Medicinal Plants Board — Shri Bala Prasad, Director General Central Council for Research in Ayurveda and Siddha (CCRAS), Dr. Ramesh Babu Devalla, and other technical and teaching faculty visited Trinidad and Tobago. The Director — IPGT and RA — Prof. M. S. Baghel with other experts participated in the meeting of the World Health Organization (WHO) collaborating centers at China. These are appreciable efforts by the Department of AYUSH for the betterment of Ayurveda. These efforts propagate Ayurveda at a primary level, to make people aware about the therapeutic potential of Ayurveda for prevention of diseases, health promotion, and cure of diseases.

At a secondary level, when we overview the scenario of academic institutions in India, as many as 1200 Ayurvedic postgraduates pass their examination each year and enter into the streamline of academics and practice; least of them choose their profession as research in Ayurveda. The reason behind this is needed to be investigated. Very few organizations have well-established research infrastructure for exclusive research in Ayurveda. Owing to this, most of the ayurvedic researches are yet at the

primary post graduate level and the least that can be expected is to upgrade the researches.

When we see the development of modern medical science, it has crossed all barriers and developed extraordinarily, and has also been accepted in the society as well as scientific community. Then why does Ayurveda not get that much importance in its own birth place — India? Why is this ancient wisdom lagging behind, despite having tremendous potential to treat diseases successfully? Has this science remained at a superficial level? Unfortunately the answer may be 'yes'. Many times it is stated that Ayurveda is 50 years behind the modern science. However, only we are responsible for this lack in progress. In the era of nanotechnology, very few Ayurvedic institutions with Ayurvedic teachers are interested in the use of technology, modern innovations, and their integration in support of Ayurveda. The strategy planning of Ayurveda should be more practically oriented, so that the ancient knowledge can be made applicable in the present day context. The undergraduate scholar should be capable of practicing General Ayurveda as a primary healthcare provider. The postgraduate degree holders should have set up a secondary health care referral. Moreover, the super-specialty Ayurvedic hospitals should have all the infrastructure for tertiary and quaternary healthcare. Institutes with good infrastructure and hospitals can serve this job. This will satisfy the needs of good academic and clinical practice of Ayurveda.

Still the research aspect of Ayurveda lags behind. Although the national institutes of Ayurveda, with financial support from the central government, like National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur, Institute for Postgraduate Teaching and Research in Ayurveda, Jamnagar, and so on, train the scholars about research, they do not have a specialized research wing for conducting continuous research. The research conducted at the postgraduate level is time bound for three years, where the scholars are actually actively involved only for two years. Despite the fact that some of the researches give very good clues about the Ayurvedic potency, very few are continued further and practiced as experience-based medicines, with good scientific data. Furthermore, very few get published in a standard journal after a peer review, subject to the sufficient number of patients under the study. Moreover, at the global level, Ayurveda is viewed by the aspect of 'lack of supportive scientific data'. If this has to be stopped, the whole system needs rejuvenation in all aspects.

At the very beginning, the scholar should be clear about his views for an Ayurvedic future. The clinics and hospitals need accreditations and gradations to maintain their standard. The existing higher level postgraduate institutions should think with a broader vision, to generate scientific data, based on the basic

principles of Ayurveda. The subspecialties and superspecialties in Ayurveda need to be imbibed in the Ayurvedic academia. Fortunately, some efforts have been made by some interdisciplinary people interested in Ayurveda, to develop standard Ayurvedic research organizations. Unfortunately, the Ayurvedic personnel are not in a leading position in these organizations and remain in the sidelines. This is good for the development of herbal medicine, but not for holistic medicine. The Ayurvedic personnel should lead, and be motivated and supported to conduct the project. Otherwise, Ayurveda will soon become a toy of the interdisciplinary people. The parent body, the Department of AYUSH; the controlling Ayurvedic research council CCRAS, the Academic council, *Central Council of Indian Medicine* (CCIM), the national institutes IPGT and RA, *National Institute of Ayurveda* (NIA), faculty of Ayurveda, IMS, *Banaras Hindu University* (BHU), and those in Kerala and southern states should join their hand together and play their role specific to the upgradation of Ayurveda in the academic, clinical, and research fields. Research journals have a great role in coordinating the same in the appropriate direction. AYU may be a platform for all these activities. This will work for Indian medicine in India at first as well as globalize it in its original form. It is hoped that the new, upcoming All India Institute of Ayurveda, in the national capital, will be a unique institute, fulfilling the aspirations of the people with the synthesis of quality Ayurvedic education, enriched by allied sciences, full-fledged infrastructure for interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research, extending good clinical service to the ailing society, and by providing standard quality Ayurvedic drugs, by integration of tradition and technology and laboratory research and field research.

As always AYU concentrates on the inclusion of a variety of research articles in each issue on various topics pertaining to almost each speciality of *Ashtanga Ayurveda*. This issue is also not an exception to the uniqueness of the contents of AYU. This issue includes a total of 26 articles with three review articles, 15 clinical research articles, two articles based on pharmacognostical research, one on pharmaceutical standardization, and four on pharmacological researches. The last article is a letter to the editor with a brief on dentistry in Ayurveda. The first article on *Prakriti* shows the distinctiveness of Ayurveda above all other medical systems, and deals with the concept of personalized medicine. The other reviews are comprehensive knowledge about the ancient science and basic principles of Ayurveda. The clinical researches deal with some of the burning problems in the society like senile dementia, helminths causing anemia, *Arsha* (hemorrhoids), the protective effect of *Yastimadhu* on the side effects caused by Chemotherapy and Radiotherapy in head and neck malignancies, depression, and so on. The next section relates to the drug standardization aspect of Ayurvedic herbs and their experimental efficacy. We hope this issue, which includes a variety of articles from renowned institutions of India will serve as brain food for the scientists and ready data for the clinicians.

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