

CONCEPT OF HEALTH IN AYURVEDA**Dr. Guruprasad K.***

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is a science of life and comprehensive natural health care system originated in India a long ago. It is widely used as primary health care system in India, and growing universal as well. *Ayurveda* has a unique concept and methodologies to maintain and promote health, the word *Ayurveda* comprise of from two words that is *Ayu* means life *Veda* indicate knowledge, thus *Ayurveda* deals with various characteristic of health and wellbeing in there diverse aspects, such as happy life, sustainable happiness and longevity. It is one among traditional system of medicine offers extensive insights about health, its preservation and promotion based on exceptional intangible and theoretical positions. This article briefly reviews *Ayurvedic* texts to draw awareness to necessitate for deeper engagement with

conventional knowledge of system and health. Furthermore article point out recreation of methodologies that facilitate the holistic observation regarding health in *Ayurveda*.

KEYWORDS: *Ayurveda, Swastha, Swasthya, Dosha, Arogya.*

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is one of the oldest systems of medicine and knowledge gifted by sages of ancient India to the mankind which focuses its attention on maintenance of health of an individual and promotion of health to humankind. *Ayurveda* is science of life or knowledge of life which explains regarding right eating and right living in the name of daily regimen and seasonal regimen to protect health.

Ayurveda in conventional sense it is not only a system of medicine in curing disease, it is also a means of life that teach us regarding uphold and protect mental and physical health and

attain longevity. Health is generally treated as absence of illness and an individual free from sickness is considered as healthy. The primary aim of *Ayurveda* comprises preventing of getting diseases by healthy person and treating diseased person.^[1] The basic concept of *Ayurveda* is 'prevention is better than cure', definition of health given by world health organization was 'Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely an absence of disease or infirmity'.^[2] Though *Ayurveda* generally aims at preventing the person getting diseases by maintaining balanced condition of *Doshas* in the body, as well healthy state of body and protection of health explained for the first time in *Ayurveda* and is the basic concept for healthy society.

कालार्थं कर्मणां योगो हीनमिथ्यातिमात्रकः।
सम्यग्योगश्च विज्ञेयो रोगारोग्यैक कारणम्॥^[3]

All the creature in this earth is subjected to the course of constant transformation *kala* refers to time this etiological factor for disease is natural and inevitable. Time of the day, various seasons, different stages of life all these correspond to different aspects of time producing versatile effect on human body, the changes in *Doshas* like *Chaya*, *Prakopa* and *Prashamana*, also changes in human life childhood, adulthood and old age are certain factors for disease occurrence.

धर्मार्थं काम मोक्षाणां आरोग्यं मूलमुत्तमम्।
रोगास्तस्यापहर्तारः श्रेयसो जीवितस्य च॥

To achieve *Chaturvidha Purusharthas* the four comprehensive objectives of human life those are *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha*, one should require healthy life, without the healthy life individual cannot achieve these four objectives of life.^[4]

आयुः कामयमानेन धर्मार्थसुखसाधनम्।
आयुर्वेदोपदेशेषु विधेयः परमादरष॥^[5]

The same version in *Ashtanga sangraha* says the ultimate aim of human life is attainment of principle objects those are *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha*, to attain these *Purusharthas* individual should require healthy life, one can achieve this by resorting oneself to the principles of *Ayurveda*, individual can achieve this from reading literatures of *Ayurveda* and also from instructions eminent *gurus* efficient scholars in the field.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Aim of this study is to collect all available references from *Ayurvedic* classical texts and other ancient texts regarding health and healthiness or wellbeing to make easy understanding of topic.

Analyze the importance of health in *Ayurveda* classics, and also discuss the significant role of *Ayurveda* in promotion and maintenance of health.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This article is conceptual, all the available references from Ancient literature have been searched, collected and compiled also available websites for health have been searched for this article and analyzed for better understanding of health and wellbeing.

To conclude the study, all available *Ayurvedic* literature referred, and a humble effort has been made to draw conclusion.

CONCEPT OF HEALTH

Health in *Ayurvedic* context deals with separate branch called as *Swasthavritta*, which comprises of two words *Swastha* and *vritta*, The dictionary meaning of prefix *SWA* is one's own, belonging to one self,^[6] suffix *STHA* is standing, staying, abiding, being, and existing.^[7] *Swasthya* is self reliance self dependence.^[8] Another word *Vritti* denotes living by one's own exertions.^[9] Overall the meaning is self maintenance and its implementation is called as *Swasthavritta*

सुष्ठु निर्विकारेणावतिष्ठते इति स्वस्थः। तस्य भावः स्वास्थ्यम्, उद्वेजकधातु – वैषम्यविरहितधातुसाम्य मित्यर्थ^[10]

The condition where the body is devoid of any abnormality is known as healthy i.e. *Swastha*. The feeling of *Swastha* is called as *Swasthya*.

Health is generally treated as absence of illness and person free from disease is measured as healthy. *Ayurveda* make clear that balance in the functions of *Dosha*, *Dhathu*, and *Mala*, as well as *Agni* as a condition of health, *Ayurveda* has given major emphasis on preventive aspects, in many *Ayurvedic* classical texts explained regarding health which includes physical, mental and social health some of the extract are mentioned beneath.

DEFINITIONS OF HEALTH

Various authors of classical text in *Ayurveda* defined health in different method, however which gives similar meaning like state of well being and devoid of diseases, *Ayurveda* classics elucidate Physical, Mental, Social and Spiritual health in detail but references are in scattered manner. By collecting all references of health and analyzed underneath.

सम दोषः समाग्निश्च समधातु मलक्रियाः।
प्रसन्नात्मेन्द्रियमनाः स्वस्थ इति अभिधीयते॥^[11]

According to *Acharya Susruta*, person is said to be healthy whose *Tridosas* are in balanced condition, *Agnis* are in proper functioning, equilibrium state of all *SapthaDhatus* and proper excretion of *Trimalas*, along with mental, sensory and spiritual pleasantness and happiness.

अन्नाभिलाषो भुक्तस्य परिपाकः सुखेन च।
सृष्टविण्मूत्रवातत्वं शरीरस्य तु लाघवम्॥
सुप्रसन्नेन्द्रियत्वद्य सुख स्वप्न बोधकम्।
बलवर्णायुषीलाभः सौमनस्यं समाग्निता॥
विद्यादारोग्य लिंगानि विपरीते विपर्ययम्।^[12]

Kashyapa enlighten the characters of health as elaborated in *Khilasthana* of *Kashyapa Samhitha*,

- Desire to take food, good appetite, followed by Proper digestion of consumed food.
- Smooth, normal evacuation of urine, stool , abdominal gases
- Lightness of body, perspicuity of *Indriyas*.
- Proper sound sleep, Easy and natural awakening early in the morning with a sensation of freshness.
- Normal growth and development of body
- Nice complexion, texture and lusture of the body
- Good immunity or resistance power to any disease
- Absence of lethargy, heaviness and laziness of the body
- Steady, active but balanced, calm and quiet mind.

सम मांस प्रमाणस्तु सम संहननो नरः।
दृढेन्द्रियो विकाराणान् न बलेनाभिभूयते॥
क्षुत्पिपासातपसहः शीत व्यायाम संसहः।
समपक्ता समजरः सममांसचयो मतः॥^[13]

Acharya Charaka elucidate health as a individual must contain proportionate musculature and Compactness of the body, possess extremely Strong sensory and motor organs, they are overcome by the attack of diseases, individual can withstand Hunger, thirst, heat, cold and Person can digest and assimilate properly.

वपुः कृशत्वं वदने प्रसन्नता नादस्फुटत्वं नयने सुनिर्मले
अरोगता बिंदुजयोऽग्निदीपनं नाजीविशुद्धिरहठसिद्धि लक्षणम्॥^[14]

Acharya mentions assessment of Perfection in *Yogi* after *Hathayoga* is achieved this can be correlated with the *Swastha lakshana* those are leanness or compactness of the body, Tranquil countenance or the face glows with delight, Manifestation of the inner sound (*Anahathanada* manifests), Eyes are clear, devoid of Diseases, Control of the *Bindhu* (semen or ova), Appetite increases and one should know that *Nadis* are Purified and success in *Hathayoga* is approaching.

कार्यं धातुसाम्यं तस्य लक्षणं विकारोपशमः।

परीक्षा त्वस्य रुग्णोपशमनं स्वरवर्णं योगः, शरीरोपचयः, बलवृद्धिः अभ्यवहार्याभिलापः, रुचिराहारकाले, अभ्यवहतस्य चाहारस्य काले सम्यग्जरणं, निद्रालोभो यथा कालं, वैकारिकाणां च स्वप्नामदर्शनं, सुखेन च प्रतिबोधनं वातमूत्रपुरीषरेतसां मुक्तिः सर्वाकारैर्मनोबुद्धीन्द्रियाणां चाव्यापत्तिरिति॥^[15]

In *Charaka vimana sthana Acharya* make clear concerning assessment to determine disease is cured those are the balance condition of *Dhathus* itself correspond to disease is alleviated, further more indications given to access cure of ailment are mitigation of pain, manifestation of natural voice and complexion, sustenance of the body, enhance in strength, desire for taking food, appetite to take food in proper time, absence of dreams representing morbidity, cheerful awakening, appropriate elimination of *Vata*, *Mutra*, *Purisha* and *Shukra*, unimpairment of mind, intellect and sense and involvement of all healthy symptoms.

In *Mahabharatha* it is explained that *Sheetha*, *Ushna* and *Vayu* these three are bodily elements, when these are in equilibrium condition in the body, such person is called as physically healthy. In same version *Satva*, *Raja* and *Tama* are *Manasika Gunas*, a mind which constitutes these three characteristics in due proportion is called as healthy mind.^[16]

PHYSICAL HEALTH

In all the versions above mentioned and in other context also our *Acharyas* mentioned regarding physical health, those are balanced condition of *Doshas* (*Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*), *Dhathu* (*Rasa*, *Raktha*, *Mamsa*, *Medha*, *Asthi*, *Majja* and *Shukra*) and *Agni* (*Saptha Datvagni*,

Pancha Bhutagni and *Pachakagni*), proper excretion of *TriMalas* (*Mala, Mutra* and *Purisha*), Compactness of the body, timely hunger, easy digestion of taken food, proper assimilation of food, lightness of the body, Good complexion and texture of the skin, sound sleep and also timely awakening, one can withstand naturally for cold, hot, hunger, thirst, good voice, natural complexion, strong exercise capacity in normal range, bright eyes, well built.

MENTAL HEALTH

Acharyas also mentioned regarding mental health under the name of *Swastha lakshana*, *Arogya lakshana* and *Dharaniya vegas* which includes person having a pleasant sensory organs (*Indriyas* includes *Panchagnanendriya* and *karmendriya*), strong mind, study and balanced calm and quite mind, *pravara satva*, control over the *Dharaniya Vegas* (*Kama, Krodha, Bhaya, Iershya, Shoka, Lobha* and *Moha*).

दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः।
वीतराग भय क्रोध स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥^[17]

Individual having strong mind which is not agitated with in adversity, one who is free from desire and who is devoid of attachment, fear and anger such human being is called sagacious of study wisdom.

यः सर्वत्रानभिस्नेहः नत्तत् प्राप्य शुभाशुभम्।
नाभिनन्दति न द्वेष्टि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥^[18]

The person who is without self-centered affection for anything, who expresses joy not in positive situations and disgust not in adverse condition, such person's perception is confidently situate.

SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH

Ayurveda also explains social and spiritual health in the name of *Sadvrittis* and *Achara Rasayana*, which includes person, should worship god, cow, *Brahmin*, sages and respect elders and *Gurus*, one should do *Vedic* rituals morning and evening twice in a day.^[19] Person should speak less and in sweet language, one should not be supposed to speak lies, point out fault of others, reveal of others secretes, should not speak badly about good persons and teachers.^[20] One should respect women, should not insult women, one should not indulge in sexual intercourse with a others wife and avoid sex with women who is not interested.^[21] Person is supposed to forever speak truth, avoid from anger, alcohol, sexual intercourse and

violence, person should practice *japa* and hygiene, be away from cruelty and always kind to all, intellectual, not self-centered, have superior behavior, devoid of incorrect judgment, inclined towards philosophy.^[22]

आत्मौपम्येन सर्वत्र समं पश्यति योऽर्जुन।
सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं स योगी पशमो मतः॥^[23]

Bhagavan srikrishna preach *Arjuna* that yogi is one who can perceive same *Atma* in all out of sense of identity and feels there joy and a suffering has his own.

PROMOTION OF PHYSICAL HEALTH

In each and every Ayurvedic classical texts given importance for preventive aspects and promotion of health rather than curing, *Ayurveda* accepts prevention is better than cure, some of the references for promotion health are mentioned beneath.

मानवो येन विधिना स्वस्थस्तिष्ठति सर्वदा।
तमेव कारयेव्वैद्यो यतः स्वास्थ्यं सदेप्सितम्॥
दिनचर्या निशाचर्यामृतुचर्या यथोदिताम्।
आचरन् पुरुषः स्वस्थः सदा तिष्ठति नान्यथा॥^[24]

The technique through which men can able to be remain healthy constantly be supposed to instructed by the physician, one should follow these regulations strictly because health is forever desirable. Individual who is following Daily regimen, Night regimen and seasonal regimen as per classical text and incorporated these factors in his life person will always stay healthy but not otherwise.

नित्यं हिताहारविहारसेवी समीक्ष्यकारी विषयेष्वसक्तः।
दाता समः सत्यपरः क्षमावानापतोपसेवी च भवत्यरोगः॥^[25]

Acharya Vagbhata says Individual who is always consumes wholesome food, follows wholesome habits, is not interested in worldly matters, generous, straight forward, honest, speaks truth, having patience, who values traditional wisdom and who follows words of *Aptha* does not develop any diseases.

सर्वमन्यत् परित्यज्य शरीरमनुपालयेत्।
तदभावे हि भावानां सर्वाभावः शरीरिणाम्॥^[26]

Acharya Charaka explains importance of health in this quote that person should take care of his body by neglecting all other works, if individual is unhealthy nothing is exist, there is nothing that can be made available to the individual.

नगरी नगरस्येव रथस्येव रथी यथा।
स्वशरीरस्य मेधावी कृत्येष्ववहितो भवेत्॥^[27]

Acharya Charaka highlight in this citation that a intelligent person be supposed to execute a action which are good for his body and promote health by his own, like soldier take care of city and charioteer take care of his chariot. Here *Acharya* used word wise person, each individual having *Buddhi* but application of intelligence in preventing health further essential.

हैमन्तिकं दोषचयं वसन्ते प्रवाहयन् ग्रैष्मिकमभ्रकाले।
घनान्तये वार्षिकमाशु सम्यक् प्राप्नोति रोगानृतुजान् न जातु॥^[28]

Methods to prevent seasonal diseases *Acharya charaka* clarify that, *Doshas* accumulated in *Hemantha ritu* will be eliminated in *Chaitra masa*, those accumulated in summer will eliminated in *Sravana masa*, and those accumulated during rainy season should be eliminated in the month of *Margashira*. This shows individual should have proper knowledge about accumulation of *Doshas* according to *Ritus* to prevent the diseases concern to the season.

स्वस्थवृत्तं यथोद्दिष्टं यः सम्यगनुतिष्ठति।
सः समाशतमव्याधिरायुषा न वियुज्यते॥
नृलोकमापुरयते यशसा साधु सम्मतः।
धर्मार्थवेति भूतानां बन्धु तामुपगच्छति॥
परान् सुकृतिनो लोकान् पुण्यकर्मा प्रपद्यते।
तस्मात् वृत्तमनुष्ठेयमिदं सर्वेण सर्वदा॥^[29]

Individual who follow prescription of *Samhitas* will maintain positive health, devoid of all ailments, lives for hundred years and does not meet with untimely demise, he admired by high-quality, earns reputation all over the world, accomplish desirable quality and prosperity, he becomes companion of all creatures, individual who follows good conducts and virtues act will reach exceptional abode of good souls after death.

न जन्तुः कश्चिदमरः पृथिव्यां जायते क्वचित्।
अतो मृत्युखार्यः स्यात् किन्तु रोगान्निवारयेत्॥^[30]

Acharya Sharangadhara mentions importance of prevention of diseases in this version, No animal in this world is immortal, death is unavoidable where as disease can be avoided.

PROMOTION OS MENTAL HEALTH

अर्थेष्वलभ्येष्वकृतप्रयत्नं कृतादरं नित्यमुपायवत्सु।
जितेन्द्रियं नानुत्पन्ति रोगस्तत्कालयुक्तं यदि नास्ति दैवम्॥^[31]

The person making effort to obtain possessions or pleasure which are beyond the ability similarly not being pleased with the already having with him, both are to be avoided to preserve good health. Subsequent to following all these regulations of wellbeing individual may become victim of sickness caused by divine intervention which is beyond human knowledge.

कालोऽनुकूलो विषया मनोज्ञा धर्म्याः क्रियाः कर्म सुखानुबन्धि।
सत्त्वं विधेयं विशदा च बुद्धिर्भवन्ति धीरस्य सदा सुखाय॥^[32]

The person having a positive time, sense objects which are pleasant to the mind, virtuous behavior which are recommend by the scriptures which impart contentment, mind under control, one who is not influenced away by emotion and comprehensible intelligence in courageous person all these are principle for endorsement of health and forever afford happiness.

सुखार्था सर्व भूतानां मताः सर्वाः प्रवृत्तयः।
ज्ञानाज्ञानविशेषात्तु मार्गामार्गप्रवृत्तयः॥^[33]

In this verse *Acharya* says the regimen that should followed to get happiness in life everyone should follow, nobody deliberately does anything so as to invite misery, a wise man follows proper path to achieve happiness, an ignorant choose themselves a wrong way to provoke unhappiness.

वृत्त्युपायाग्निषेवेत ये स्युर्धर्माविरोधितः।
शममध्ययनं चैव सुखमेव समश्रुतं॥^[34]

Individual be supposed to acknowledge merely such a means of livelihood as do not divergence with righteous path, person should follow the path of peace and assign himself in studies, this is how one can accomplish happiness.

RESULTS

In subsequent to referring all available classical texts in *Ayurveda* and relevant ancient texts the concepts of health in *Ayurveda* is more evidently and elaborate explanation regarding physical, mental, social and spiritual health we can find in all classical texts. *Ayurveda* advocates *Dhoshha* and *Dhathu Samyata* as prime aim of attaining good health, this equilibrium condition of *Dhatus* is termed as *Arogatha* or free from disease. The state of health is also depends upon other factors like *Agni*, excretory products, *Ahara*, *Vihara*, Daily regimens and seasonal regimens.

The foremost importance of *Ayurveda* is to maintain and promote health of healthy individual and alleviate the diseases in diseased person. *Ayurveda* provides number of tools to maintain and promote the health and achieve state of well being. Tools like Daily regimen, Seasonal regimen, Code of good conduct, suppressible and non suppressible urges, all these mentioned for promotion of health furthermore our *Acharyas* given importance for *Pathya Apathya* of *Ahara* and *Vihara*. Importance of *Nityasevaniya Ahara Dravyas* and *Rsayana Dravyas* by consuming regularly individual can enhance immunity and by that promote health.

DISCUSSION

The world is passing through an unprecedented and unexpected situation of health issues, since diseases are progressively becoming a major problem to all the developed and developing countries. The rise in life style disorders like Diabetes, Hypertension, and obesity additional many more diseases are burden to the country in the means of morbidity and mortality, these diseases will hinder growth and development of the country.

In spite of the quick growth made by contemporary medical science, there are permanent rise in health associated illness, due to life style disease component is increase in the world community started giving importance to health and its promotion. Supporting to above explanation people conscious about importance of positive health but truly speaking we are not conscious regarding actual meaning of health.

Ayurvedic texts like *Charaka* and *Susrutha* considered important aim of *Ayurveda* is to maintenance of superior health, in support of this our sagacious have explain the concept of *Swastha* in different circumstance. Considering all these quotes under one roof *Swasthya* can be taken as balanced condition of anatomical and physiological functions of the body. Further consumption of *Ahara* and following of *Vihara* which is unsuitable to body constitution may

imbalance *Doshas*, health is depends upon the *Prakrithi* of the person, additionally composition of *Dhoshas* and *Dhathu* is depends upon individuals *Prakrithi*.

Health is a dynamic process which changes according *Kala*, *Acharya Susrutha* mentions *Kala* is *Svayambu*, because everything in this world depends on time factor. As time changes health as well changes within its dimensions, individual will undergo *Ayu* from *Bala* to *Jara* according to *Kala* only, so everyone will attain Physical and Physiological changes in this time factor. Also some may pass through *Hithayu* and *Sukhayu*, some may acquire *Ahithayu* and *Dukhayu*. Intellectual person should listen to *Apthopadesha* and follow *Ayurveda* literature to achieve positive health, maintain and promote health of an individual.

आरोग्यं विद्वता सज्जनमैत्री महाकुले जन्म।

स्वाधीनतां च पुंसां महदैश्वर्यं विनाप्यर्थः ॥^[35]

Health, wisdom, friendship of virtuous people, birth in a distinguished family, personal freedom these are the assets that individual can obtain even without any money. This citation from *Vaidyakiya Subhasitha Sahithya* explains that health cannot be achieved only by money, it requires something besides which are clearly mentioned in *Ayurvedic* context.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda always highlight preventive aspect rather than treating the diseases, moreover pays attention on avoiding factors which causes diseases. *Ayurveda* is not only a medical system which cures the disease it is also a conventional system of medicine which teaches individual to live with positive health. *Ayurveda* advocates multidimensional concept of health, which clearly defines meaning of *Swastha* and *Swasthya*. An absence of disease is mentioned as constricted view to understand health, as *swasthatha* is process of constant modification and adjustment. Further person who follows *Dinacharya*, *Ratricharya*, *Ritucharya* and *Sadvritta* as explained in *Ayurvedic* literatures individual will stay physically, mentally and socially healthy.

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