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Role of Ayurveda in Fighting against Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Dr. Abhay Singh

Associate Professor Of Chemistry, K.L.P. College, Rewari, Haryana (India)

Abstract: *As we are aware about the coronavirus (COVID-19). It is a worldwide epidemic. Educational institutions are closed, roads are closed, cities are closed and every body has to sit in their home with the family. Therefore, people are in a panic all over the world. So this is a very critical time.*

At present, the whole world is facing an unprecedented pandemic of novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19). COVID-19 disease has spread all over the world with more than 8.99 Million confirmed cases and 469,000 deaths as of 22 June, 2020. In India alone there are 4, 53, 110 Confirmed cases and more than 13, 867 Deaths occurs as on 22 June, 2020. In spite of the worldwide efforts to contain it, the pandemic is continuing to spread.

Till now no vaccine is being developed to fight against it. Though many countries are claiming to achieve some positive results to develop a vaccine.

However, utilization of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Wuhan to treat COVID-19 cases sets the example demonstrating that traditional healthcare can contribute to treatment of COVID-19 affected patients successfully. Therefore, in Indian context where the COVID-19 infected cases are increasing very fast nowadays and no system of medicine has any evidence based treatment for COVID-19 as yet, therefore it is proposed that Ayurveda system of medicine requires immediate implementation to fight against COVID-19.

I. INTRODUCTION

An outbreak of pneumonia in December 2019, in Wuhan, China has now been determined to be caused by a novel coronavirus. Since then the disease has spread all over the world with more than **8.99 Million** confirmed cases and **469,000** deaths as of 22 June, 2020. In India alone there are **4,53,110** Confirmed cases and more than **13,867** Deaths occurs as on **22 June, 2020**. As per reports the disease is almost controlled in China [1], it is still widespread in Europe and US which have emerged as the new epicenters of COVID-19 [2,3].

In the Indian context it is logical and essential to explore how Ayurveda can help in COVID-19 challenge. In fact, this is the time to mainstreaming the AYUSH systems to transform Indian Healthcare and demonstrate the potential of AYUSH systems the present day challenge and restoring health [4]. It is observed that about 80% of COVID-19 cases are with mild symptoms requiring only primary medical care. Out of remaining 20% cases, 15% require urgent medical attention at secondary healthcare services. Remaining 5% are critical cases requiring an intensive care and hence require a transfer to tertiary health care units equipped with ICU [5].

There are 3598 AYUSH hospitals available in India including 2818 Ayurveda hospitals. Similarly, there are 25723 AYUSH dispensaries including 15291 Ayurveda dispensaries. There are total 7.73 lakh registered practitioners including 4.28 lakh Ayurveda practitioners [6]. There are 8954 AYUSH drug manufacturing units in the country. Among these, 7718 are Ayurveda pharmacies [7]. With this infrastructure and associated human resources, implementation of the proposed action plans seems highly feasible.

Ayurveda has enough potential and possibilities to be employed both for prevention and treatment of COVID-19. This will be provide an important opportunity for learning and generating credible evidence [8]. The participation of Ayurveda in addressing the COVID-19 challenge in India should not remain limited and seen as the extension of services and support to bio-medical system.

AYUSH system across the country has been put on alert for being called anytime to serve the nation. From this perspective, implementing the suggested intervention plan within AYUSH healthcare facilities by Ayurveda workforce may benefit the nation greatly.

India is the country where the world's oldest living healthcare system originated and therefore it is being being carefully watched by the world community for how it handles the crisis using its own resources.

II. AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE ON CORONAVIRUS COVID-19

In ‘Charaka Samhita’ there is a chapter called ‘Janapada Dvamsa Vyadhi’ which means or refers to world-wide epidemics. There Charaka says this is a great opportunity to be here at home.

Nowadays, as we are a home so we can follow our *dincharya* i.e. daily routine. Wake up early in the morning, brush your teeth, scrap your tounge, rinse your mouth and drink hot or warm water. Have ginger, cinnamon and cardamom tea. Regular ‘chai’ made with tulsi, mint, cinnamon and cardamon. These herbal Teas boost energy.

It is observed in the Ayurveda that as long as we keep our ‘agni’ i.e. (digestive fire) strong, then illness will not happen to us. So, Ayurveda has a great way of prevention. This is how we can prevent ourself being affected by coronavirus. Keep your ‘agni’ strong and, to do that, follow your ‘dincharya’. It is first important thing that Ayurveda recommends.

For ‘dincharya’ wake up early in the morning and after finishing your daily routine, drink a glass of warm water and then do ‘pranayama’. There is a package of eight beneficial pranayama exercises. These are, Bhastrika, Kapala Bhati, Anuloma Viloma, Brahmari, Utjayi, Utgeet, Sheetali and Sheetkari. Just by doing this package of eight pranayama, we can strengthen our immune system including our pranavaha srotas, our respiratory system, and our lymphatic system will be cleared and in this the balance of Ojas (i.e. immunity strength) tejas (i.e. digestion) and prana (i.e. vital life forces) so we can keep away from the virus.

Another interesting health supporting practice is to do some yogasana such as camel pose, cobra pose, cow pose, boat, bow an bridge pose, locust, lotus, and lion pose. If you think that is too complicated, just do Surya Namaskar. For Surya Namaskar, do a minimum of 7 rounds and a maximum of 12 rounds.

The most important part of our ‘dincharya’ is our diet. This is a great opportunity to be at home and then eat home made foods. At this time enjoy *Basmati Rice and Moong Dal kitchari* with vegetables. Hot food is good. It is better not to take cold drinks. No ice water and ice cold Beverages. No yoghurt, cheese or ice cream. The cold foods will suppress your ‘agni’ (digestive fire) and exposure to cold will diminish your natural resistance. For that reason, try to avoid the cold, but you can have hot water. Sip it throughout the day.

Ministry of AYUSH, INDIA also recommends the following self care guidelines for preventive health measures and boosting immunity with special reference to respiratory health. These are also supported by the Ayurvedic literature and scientific publications. The recommended measures are :

A. General Measures

- 1) Drink warm water throughout the day.
- 2) Daily practice of Yogasana, Pranayama and Meditation for atleast 30 minutes.
- 3) Spices like Haldi (Turmeric), Jeera (Cumin), Dhaniya (Coriander), and Lahsun (Garlic) are recommended in cooking.

B. Ayurvedic Immunity Promoting Measures

- 1) Take Chyavanprash 10 gm in the morning.
- 2) Drink Herbal Tea / decoction (Kadha) made from Tulsi (Basil), Dalchini (Cinnamon), Kalimirch (Black Pepper), Shunthi (Dry Ginger) and Munakka (Raisin) once or twice a day. Add jaggery (natural sugar and / or fresh lemon juice to your taste, if needed.
- 3) Golden Milk- Half Tea spoon Haldi (Turmeric) powder in 150 ml hot milk –once or twice a day.

The above measures are preventive and does not claim to be treatment for COVID-19.

The above measures are summarized in the following Table

SCHEDULE FOR PREVENTIVE MEASURES AGAINST COVID-19			
Sr.No.	TIMING	DOSE	DETAILS
1.	06:00 A.M.	_____	Wake Up
2.	06:30A.M TO 7:00 A.M.	½ HOUR	Yoga Pranayam
3.	07:00 A.M.	50 TO 100 mL	Hot Lemon Water
4.	07:30A.M. TO 08:00 A.M.	Vitamin-C	Breakfast
5.	08:30 A.M.	50 TO 100 mL	HotMilk+Turmeric
6	09:00 A.M.	5 to 10 minutes	Steam
7	09:30 A.M.	50 to 100 mL	Kadha
8	11:00 A.M.	50 mL	Hot Tea

9	12:00 P.M.	50 to 100 mL	Hot Lemon Water
10	1:00 P.M. TO 2:00 P.M.	Vitamin C+B	Lunch
11	3:00 P.M.	5 to 10 minutes	Steam
12	04:00 P.M. TO 05:00 P.M.	1 HOUR	Rest
13	05:30 P.M.	50 to 100 mL	Kadha
14	06:00 P.M. TO 07:00 P.M.	1 HOUR	Yoga & Aerobics
15	07:00 P.M.	50 to 100 mL	Hot Lemon Water
16	07:30 P.M. TO 08:30 P.M.	Vitamin C+E	Dinner
17	09:00 P.M.	5 to 10 minute	Steam
18	09:30 P.M.	50 to 100 mL	Kadha
19	Before Sleep	50 to 100 mL	HotMilk&Turmeric

III. CONCLUSION

Let us walk together, share together, stand together but not too close with a little distance and always wearing mask and whenever outside home. Never shake hands, but do *Namaste*. *Namaste* is a very beautiful gesture. If you see your friend, do *Namaste* and this is a wonderful greeting and there is no direct hand to hand contact. Let us speak the same truth together. Let us share the wisdom with our friends and be happy and this period will soon go away within couple of weeks. We will see positive vibration and do not need to be nervous. Do not be unhappy. Don't be sad. Come out. Stand together and you will see the energy will flower into bliss.

In the wake of the COVID – 19 outbreak , entire mankind across the globe is suffering. Enhancing the body's natural defence system (immunity) plays an important role in maintaining optimum health. We all know that prevention is better than cure. Ayurveda, being the science of the life, propagates the gifts of nature in maintaining healthy and happy living. Ayurveda's extensive knowledge base on preventive care, derives from the concept of '*Dincharya*' to maintain healthy life. It is a plant based science. The simplicity of awareness about oneself and the harmony each individual can achieve by uplifting and maintain his or her immunity is emphasized across Ayurveda's classical scriptures.

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