

# Traditional System of Medicine-

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- It is a well-known fact that Traditional Systems of medicines always played important role in meeting the global health care needs.
- They are Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homoeopathy. Though Homoeopathy came to India in 18th Century, it completely assimilated in to the Indian culture and got enriched like any other traditional system hence it is considered as part of Indian Systems of Medicine (Prasad, 2002).

## 1. Ayurveda -indian system of medicine

- Ayurveda, a natural system of medicine, originated in India more **than 3,000 years ago**.
- The term Ayurveda is derived from the Sanskrit words ayur (life) and veda (science or knowledge). Thus, Ayurveda translates to knowledge of life. Based on the idea that disease is due to an imbalance or stress in a person's consciousness, Ayurveda encourages certain lifestyle interventions and natural therapies to regain a balance between the body, mind, spirit, and the environment.
- Ayurveda is based on the hypothesis that everything in the universe is composed of five basic elements viz. Space, air, energy, liquid and solid .
- They exist in human body in combined forms like VATA (space and air), PITTA (energy and liquid )
- and KAPHA (liquid and solid ) .
- Vitta,pitta and kapha together are called Tridosha ( three pillars of life ) .
- It believed that they are harmony with each other , but in every human being one of them is dominating which ,in turn is called saptadhatu viz. Rasa (lymph) ,Rakhta (blood) ,meda ( adipose tissue ) , mamsa (flesh) , majja ( nervine tissue) , shukra ( reproductive tissue ) and asti ( bones ) .
- Authentic information on ayurveda has been compiled by ancient indian medicine practitioners in forms called samhita and other similar books .
- Mostly ,all of them are polyherbal formulation.

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- Some important herbs in Ayurveda are RAUWALFIA SEPENTINA , CASSIA ANGUSTIFOLIA, PIPER LONGUM, etc.

## 2. Unani system of medicine -

- The roots of this system go deep to the times of the well known *greek philosopher Hippocrates* who is credited with it .
- **Aristotle Golen - philosopher " father of natural history "** made valuable contributions to it .this system of Greek origin was further carried to **Persia (Iran)**, where it has been improved by **Arabian physicians** .
- The history of Unani medicine can be characterized by the work of its practitioners, or hakims, who relied on natural healing based on principles of harmony and balance, uniting the physical, mental, and spiritual realms.
- They believed that these principles are responsible for the body constitution and its health , as well as , the diseased conditions.
- The Unani system of medicine aims at treating the cause of disease and not its symptoms. For this purpose , thorough history of the patient is recorded in addition to his pulse , urine and stool examination .
- **Unani medicine : Madar, fuful, kabab chibi , sana Zeera.**

## 3. Siddha system of medicine -

- The term "siddha" means achievement and 'siddhars' were saintly personalities, who attend proficiency in medicine through practice of bhakti and yoga . according to traditional belief Lord Shiva unfolded the knowledge of medicine to his wife parvati which was then passed to Siddhars.
- Siddha practitioners believe that five basic elements– earth, water, fire, air, sky – are in food, "humours" of the human body, and herbal, animal or inorganic chemical compounds, such as sulfur and mercury, used as therapies for treating diseases.

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- The identification of causative factors of disease is done through pulse reading , colour of body, study of voice ,urine examination, status of digestive system and examination of toungue.
- Few natural drugs used in siddha system of medicine are :
  - **Abini (papaver somniferum)**
  - **Ethi( Strychnos Nux-vomica )**

### 4. Homoeopathic system of indian medicine -

- It was developed in the late 1700s in Germany. It's common in many European countries, but it's not quite as popular in the United States.
- In comparison to other traditional system of medicine , homoepathy is a newer one and has been developed in the eighteenth century by Samuel Hahnemann - he proposed that the cause of disease itself can be used for its treatment .
- Homoeopathy is a medical system based on the belief that the body can cure itself. Those who practice it use tiny amounts of natural substances, like plants and minerals. They believe these stimulate the healing process.
- In the homoepathy system ,the drug treatment is not specified , but the choice of drug depends on symptoms and the clinical condition of the patients .this is based on the concept of proving and prover.
- The drug are extracted in the form of mother tincture , which is further diluted in terms of decimal or centesimal potencies .

**Various medicinal plants used in homeopathy are :**

**Vegetable drugs** - Arnica, Belladonna, Opium , Nux-vomica

**Animals drug** - Honey -bees, Calcium carbonate, Cantharis

**Minerals and metals** - Kalashisa, sulfur, Copper, platinum.

### Role of medicinal and Aromatic plants in national economy-

- The wealth of India is stored in the enormous natural flora which has been gifted to her, Endowed with a wide diversity of agro-climatic conditions, India is virtually herbarium of the world,
- Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs) contribute to the local and national economy and become the source of the cash for the rural livelihood at the hard time. The financial contribution made by Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs), especially medicinal plants, is significantly higher as compared to the timber products
- because of vast areas and variety of agro-climates in India, a large number of medicinal and aromatic plants are found growing wildly. India, with her varied climatic conditions and topography has been considered as "Botanical Garden of the World" and this botanical wealth constitutes more than 2200 species of medicinal and essential oil containing plants, regularly.
- The importance of medicinal and aromatic crops in the national economy and their potential for the rapid growth of phytopharmaceuticals, perfumery and allied industries in India has been emphasised from time to time. It is felt by experts that the drugs of natural origin with their wide range of action shall play an important role in health care particularly, in the rural areas of India
- Indian senna (*Cassia angustifolia*) is commercially cultivated in Tirunelveli, Madurai and Ramanathapuram districts of Tamil Nadu. The cultivation is also reported on small scale in Cudappa district of Andhra Pradesh. When grown for leaves alone under irrigated conditions, the yield obtained is 300 kg of dry leaves and 50 kg of dry pods per hectare.
- The annual indigeneous production of Neem and Mahua oils is 3 lakh tonnes and 50 thousand tonnes respectively.
- India is one of the few countries in the world where the essential oil industry was developed at a very early stage. The essential oils, perfumes and flavours have been associated with the Indian civilization for several thousand years. Because of availability of vast area and a variety of soil and

climate, essential oil bearing plants of all types can be grown in one or the other areas of the country.

- As a result of agrotechnology developed by the Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, Lucknow and Regional the Research Laboratory, Jorhat, *Cymbopogon winterianus* (Java citronella) is now being commercially cultivated in the states of Assam, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra.

### Their export potential-

- The export of medicinal plants and herbs from India has been quite substantial in the last few years. India has been the major supplier of medicinal plants in the world market till 1976 when it was relegated to the second position by South Korea. With exports worth only Rs. 15 crores during 1978-79, the quantum of export has dropped to almost half of what it was in 1976-77, when India exported medicinal plants worth of Rs. 29 crores.
- With development of phytochemical industry in India, domestic requirements for various medicinal plants grew considerably. Consequently, the Government of India has adopted restrictive export policy in respect of those crude drugs which were indiscriminately exploited in the forests.) In accordance with the policy, the exports of rauwolfia, podophyllum, Indian rhubarb, dioscorea, saussurea, etc. from India were restricted. The exports of these drugs are, however, permitted by firms obtaining certificates from the Chief Conservator of Forests or officer authorized by him that the material is of plantation or nursery origin,