



## The Purpose of Ayurveda

Ranvir Pahwa\*

1130, 8th Street East, Saskatoon, SK S7H 0S4, Canada

### Editorial

As a member of the editorial board, it is my privilege to bring important aspects of Ayurvedic medicine for the second issue of the Journal of Homeopathy and Ayurvedic Medicine. In recent years Ayurveda has gained worldwide acquaintance. Ayurveda is a timeless holistic medicine science. It is a classical medicine which can adapt and absorb any healing science and be adopted by any medical system.

Ayurveda is said to be a medical science which was delivered by the Gods to the sages and seers (Rishis) who were yogis and renowned in their insight, intuitions and keen observations of human behaviours.

The sages and seers transferred their knowledge to their disciples. Ayurveda was an indigenous medical system which was popular and practiced in Indian sub continent since pre-biblical era. Ayurveda became an integral part of the Indian Society.

The word Ayurveda is a composition of two Sanskrit words: Ayur-meaning Age; Veda- meaning Knowledge or Science. It is explained as a "Science of the Age" or the "Science of the Life" or the "Knowledge of Health." Moreover it is also called as a Science of "Whole Health and Healing," as well as the "Science of Longevity."

Ayurvedic literature explains the purpose of Ayurveda beautifully and effectively in a very simple, pious and in various ways. The teachings and principles which were put forth in ancient times to keep one's health disease free, the exact same philosophy is implicated in modern times.

The purposes are-

**Prayojanam chasya swasthasya swasthya rakshanam aturasya vikar prshmana cha**

-Charka Samhita; SU.30.26

**Explanation:** The purpose of Ayurveda is to protect health of the healthy and alleviate disorders in the diseased. It has also been indicated as the science of the protection of your age (Ayu). Actually there is no exact meaning of Ayu in English language. I will use age and Ayu alternatively in this article.

How Ayurveda observes the Age (Ayu)? Meaning what Ayu entails in the Ayurveda? What comprises Ayu in the Ayurveda?

**शरिर्द्रिये सत्व आत्म संयोगो धारी जीवितं I**

**नित्यगश्चानुबंधश्च पर्यायैर आयु रूच्यते II**

**Sharirendriya satva atma samyogo dhari jeevitam I**

**nityagashchanu-bandhshch parayaer ayu ruchchayte II**

-Charka Samhita, SU.1. 42

**Explanation:** Age is the conjunction of the body, senses (indriya), organs, mind (satva) and soul (the self, the atman) and several synonyms of Ayu exist as indicated in the shloka above; which are dhari (what we sustain and achieve), jivita (who is alive, the organism), nityaga (which is with us always) and anubandha (continuous flow).

**हिताहितम सुखं दुःखमायुस्तस्य हिताहितम I**

**मानं च यत्रोक्तमायुर्वेदः स उच्चयते II**

**Hitahitam sukham dukham-ayustsya hitahitam I**

**Maanam cha tachcha yatroktam-ayurvedah sauchchayte II**

-Charka Samhita, SU.1.41

**Explanation:** Ayurveda deals with good and bad life (Ayu) and happy and unhappy life (Ayu). It explains what is appropriate (the promoters of the health) and what is inappropriate (the non promoters of the health) in relation to the life, as well as it measures the life expectancy and the nature (quality) of the life.

However, this deserves a detailed explanation as below:

A happy human life (the Sukha Ayu) is one:

- who is devoid of mind and body imbalances
- whose senses are perfectly functioning
- who possesses a body full of ojas (strong immunity), tejas (shine) and prana (energy)
- where a person is well respected, industrious, valorous and scholar of various virtues
- who is prosperous and has obtained all the richness of the world
- and who can perform all the duties without obstacles

However, contrary to all of the above it is an unhappy life (Dukha Ayu), a life full of grief and which one regrets. Another kind of life belongs to a person who cares for others (Hita Ayu) and is related to his/her social conduct, as we know in **Yoga** which is coined as **Yama**.

A caring and dedicated life (Hita Ayu) is one who

- is disposed to peace, truth, and greedlessness
- possesses all the virtues of a good smarten
- is spiritual and portrays an ideal image
- behaves respectfully with all the ages of the society
- is able to control mental deflections

And opposite of it is all unfavourable and harmful (Ahita Ayu)

\*Corresponding author: Ranvir Pahwa, 1130, 8th Street East, Saskatoon, SK S7H 0S4, Canada, Tel: 306-664-3873; E-mail: [ranvirp@gmail.com](mailto:ranvirp@gmail.com)

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Further to above all that who offers the knowledge about longevity and what goes against of it and also provides the account of the time and quality of life (ayu) as well, is termed as Ayurveda.

-Charka Samhita; SU.30.24

**Ayurveda has also been admired by the scholars as most virtuous science of life, which is beneficial for human being in both worlds.**

-Charka Samhita; SU.1.43

Ayurveda provides us age (Ayu), health and longevity, but why do we need that? We noticed above that there are different forms of lives (Ayu) which Ayurveda is able to offer. However, there is another intention and expectation of Ayurveda that is mentioned in the following hymn as:

**आयुः कामयमानेन धर्मार्थसुखसाधनम् ।**

**आयुर्वेदोपदेशेषु विधेयः परमादरः ॥**

**Ayu kaamayamaanen dharmarthsukhsadhnam I**

**ayurvedopadesheshu vidheyh paramadrh II**

-Ashtang Hridayam, SU.1.2

**Explanation:** It is all through the respected Ayurveda we desire life, longevity (ayu) why? To comprehend the four goals or four instincts of human life which are **Dharma, Artha, Kama** and **Moksha**.

A brief elaboration of above purpose is given below.

**Dharma (righteousness)**- It is a concept of the rights and duties of the human being, where one creates an understanding of the good, the bad and the wrong and adopts good morals and thinking of well being of an individual and the society.

**Artha (financial)** - literature says one must earn, be financially strong and wealthy to live the best life. Vedas have also talked about to pray God to obtain all the wealth and luxury to live like a lord.

**Kama (desires and procreations)** - It directs one to fulfill life's desires and procreate our own kind and expend to create a better and prosperous world.

**Moksha (nirvana, mukti; instinct towards freedom)** - This aspect takes human life towards the attainment of salvation through liberation.

Life is related to health. **Ayurveda has defined health as below:**

“Human body where all three humors (**Doshas: Vata, Pitta and Kapha**) are in balance, whose appetite and digestion are in balance; whose seven body tissues (**Seven dhatus: rasa, rakta, mamsa, meda, majja, asthi and shukra**) are functioning normally; whose malas (urine, feces and sweat) are eliminated properly and whose spirit, senses and mind remain full of bliss is called health”

-Sushruta Samhita, SU. 1. 41.

In conclusion to this editorial author wants to depict another purposeful message that how Vedic literature correlated to Ayurveda had bestowed a global message of health:

**Serve bhavantoo sukhinah, serve santoo niramayah I**

**Serve bhadrani pashyantoo ma, kashchid dukkha bhag-bhavet II**

**Translation**

May all be happy, May all be free from the diseases

May all see good in everything, May none suffer from any grief