

'Ayurveda' (The ancient Indian science of life) as an alternative approach to allergy management in Indian subcontinent

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'Allergy' is a world-wide health problem. Although clinical allergy is under-reported in developing world, there is an evidence of increasing prevalence of food allergies in many parts of world¹.

English language medical literature search suggests that there is a greater diversity in prevalence of airway allergies in populations of the countries beyond western-Europe and North America². Important aero-genic and food allergens have also been identified as region specific. Due to rapid urbanization and loss of protective lifestyle factors, an expected Tsunami of allergic diseases is waiting to unravel in Asian countries³.

Feasibility of management of increasing burden of allergic diseases in countries where 'Allergy' is a poorly developed specialty of modern medicine brings attention to pre-existing health practices relevant to the local cultures.

'Ayurveda' is a comprehensive system of philosophy, medicine and spiritual health scripted around 5000 years ago in India⁴. Ayurveda is well-recognized and widely practised as an alternative medicine in Indian subcontinent. Ayurveda recognizes allergies as an imbalance of health which leads to hypersensitivity of Immune system. In Ayurveda, term for allergy is "Srotasam Atipravrutti" translated as "body channels hyperactivity"⁵.

Ayurvedic management of disease is based on understanding of 'individual' nature of health and disease. Ayurvedic management underlines correction of the imbalances of health by rectifying disordered digestion and mitigation of external adverse factors or their effects identified as causes of imbalance in health.

It is interesting that modern medicine recognizes altered gut microbiome and changes in lifestyle as contributing factors in allergic disease⁶ which Ayurveda acknowledges as factors interfering with gut and innate constitution of an individual.

Authors suggest that a scientific exploration of Ayurvedic methods to prevent and manage allergic disease may become a useful strategy to manage allergy in the masses of Indian Subcontinent.

Doshas are the three humors or forces of the body, which bring health when in balance, and produce diseases when out of balance.

The three doshas are called **Vata, Pitta and Kapha**

Dosha are affected by genes, environment, life-style, food and mental activity

Ayurveda believes that the diseases are the physical expression of the degree of harmony and dis-harmony across our entire system.

Identifying details of one's doshas in health and dis-ease is the key to managing dis-ease in Ayurveda.

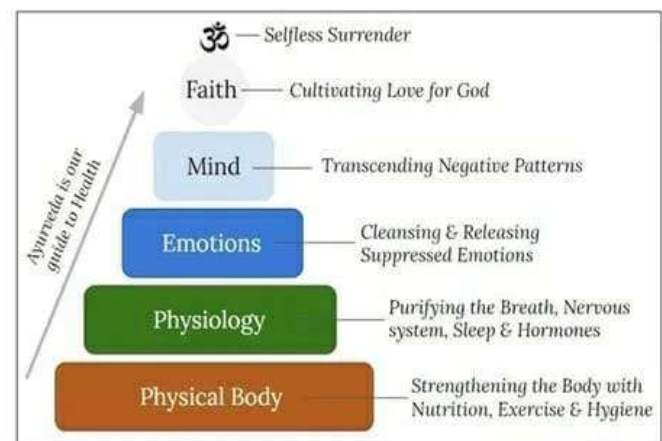
Ayurveda is a holistic science of well being along with its better-known sister science 'yoga'.

A living organism is either in health (ease) or in dis-ease according to Ayurveda.

Constitution of a living being is described as a unique balance of their 'doshas'

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Symptoms of Allergy according to Ayurveda are explained on the basis of type of dosha vitiation.		
Vata Related Signs in Allergy: bloating stomach, flatulence, nerve pain, tingling sensation, loss of sleep, twitching muscles, joint's pain.	Pitta Related Signs in Allergy: Urticaria, allergic dermatitis, eczema, diarrhea, and pustule formation	Kapha Related Signs in Allergy: Asthma, sinusitis, bronchitis, rhinitis, cold, cough, sleeping disorders



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