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Concept paper

Description of health as per ayurveda

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Abstract

Health has been a central concern of humanity since antiquity. Among the traditional systems of medicine, Āyurveda presents one of the most comprehensive and holistic concepts of health by integrating physical, physiological, psychological, ethical, and spiritual dimensions of human life. Unlike disease-centred medical systems, Ayurveda emphasizes the preservation of health as its primary objective and the treatment of disease as its secondary objective.

The present paper examines the classical Ayurvedic concept of health through an analysis of its foundational definition, physiological principles, disease causation, therapeutic approaches, and preventive strategies. It also explores the relevance of these principles to contemporary healthcare. The study is based on an analytical review of the principal Ayurvedic classics, namely the Carakasaṃhitā, Suśrutasaṃhitā, and Aṣṭāṅgasaṅgraha, together with standard commentaries and selected contemporary literature on Ayurvedic medicine. Classical Ayurvedic literature defines health as the harmonious equilibrium of the doṣas, agni, dhātus, and malas, accompanied by mental, sensory, and spiritual well-being. The concepts of tridoṣa, Ṣaṭkriyākāla, Śodhana, Śamana, and Pañcakarma collectively constitute a systematic framework for disease prevention, diagnosis, and treatment.

The Ayurvedic concept of health extends beyond the absence of disease and presents a comprehensive model of holistic well-being. Its preventive orientation and individualized therapeutic approach continue to provide valuable insights for contemporary integrative and lifestyle medicine.

Keywords: Āyurveda; Health; Tridoṣa; Agni; Pañcakarma; Ṣaṭkriyākāla; Preventive Medicine; Indian Knowledge Systems

Introduction

Health is universally recognized as one of the most valuable assets of human life. The quality of life enjoyed by an individual depends largely upon physical vitality, mental stability, emotional balance, ethical conduct, and harmonious interaction with the surrounding environment. Modern medicine has achieved remarkable success in diagnosing and treating numerous diseases; however, the increasing global prevalence of lifestyle disorders, metabolic diseases, psychological stress, and environmental health challenges has renewed interest in holistic systems of healthcare.

Among the world's traditional systems of medicine, Āyurveda occupies a unique position because it views health as a dynamic state of equilibrium rather than merely the absence of disease. The term Āyurveda is derived from the Sanskrit words *āyus* (life) and *veda* (knowledge), literally meaning "the science of life." Its scope extends beyond disease management to include the preservation and promotion of physical, mental, social, ethical, and spiritual well-being.

The philosophical foundations of Āyurveda are deeply rooted in the broader framework of Indian Knowledge Systems. While Yoga primarily addresses the discipline of the body and mind, Vedānta explores the nature of consciousness and ultimate reality. Āyurveda complements these traditions by providing practical principles for maintaining bodily health and preventing disease. Together, these three disciplines offer a comprehensive vision of human well-being in which physical health supports mental clarity, and both contribute to spiritual development.

One of the distinguishing features of Āyurveda is its preventive orientation. The classical texts consistently emphasize that preserving the health of healthy individuals (*svasthasya svāsthyarakṣaṇam*) is the foremost objective of medical science, whereas the treatment of disease (*āturasya vikārapraśamanam*) is considered its subsequent responsibility. This preventive philosophy has gained renewed importance in the context of modern public health, where lifestyle-related diseases account for a substantial proportion of global morbidity and mortality.

Unlike reductionist approaches that examine individual organs or isolated pathological processes, Āyurveda understands the human organism as an integrated whole. Health depends upon the harmonious interaction of physiological functions, digestive and metabolic processes, bodily tissues, excretory mechanisms, sensory faculties, mental balance, and spiritual awareness. Disease arises when this equilibrium is disturbed through improper diet, unhealthy lifestyle, environmental influences, psychological factors, or the natural processes of ageing.

The classical Ayurvedic literature presents a remarkably systematic explanation of the origin, progression, prevention, and management of disease. Concepts such as tridoṣa, agni, dhātu, mala, and Ṣaṭkriyākāla provide an integrated physiological and pathological framework that has guided Ayurvedic practice for centuries. Therapeutic approaches including Śodhana Cikitsā, Śamana Cikitsā, and Pañcakarma are designed not only to alleviate disease but also to restore physiological balance and enhance the body's inherent capacity for self-regulation.

In recent decades, there has been growing international interest in integrative medicine, preventive healthcare, and personalized medical approaches. Many of these emerging perspectives resonate with the classical principles of Āyurveda, particularly its emphasis on individualized constitution (*prakṛti*), preventive care, dietary regulation, and healthy lifestyle practices. Consequently, the Ayurvedic concept of health has acquired renewed relevance in contemporary discussions on sustainable healthcare and holistic medicine.

प्रयोजनं चास्य स्वस्थस्य स्वास्थ्यरक्षणम् आतुरस्य विकारप्रशमनं च।

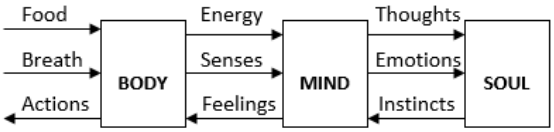
prayojanaṃ cāsya svasthasya svāsthyarakṣaṇam āturasya vikārapraśamanaṃ ca.

***Carakasaṃhitā*, Sūtrasthāna 30.26**

The purpose of this (Āyurveda) is the preservation of the health of the healthy and the alleviation of the disorders of the diseased. The objective of this paper is to examine the classical Ayurvedic concept of health by analysing its foundational definition, physiological principles, disease causation, therapeutic framework, and contemporary relevance.

Concept of Health in Āyurveda

The human body requires good food, the human mind requires good company and the human soul requires good vibrations. The inputs and outputs of the human system are indicated in the diagram shown below



Thus, the concept of health will have 3 domains namely – physical, mental and spiritual. Further, Āyurveda presents a multidimensional understanding that encompasses:

- physical,
- physiological,
- psychological,
- sensory,
- ethical, and
- spiritual well-being.

In the Indian Knowledge Systems, the specialized philosophical branches named as AyurvEda, yoga and vEdAntha, correspond to these 3 domains. As physical health is the one that requires immediate

attention, let us explore AyurvEda for the suitable definitions of health, along with the advices provided for the maintenance of one's health.

Definition of health as per Ayurveda

There are 6 main text books of Āyurveda classified into two groups:

Bṛhattrayī (The Great Trilogy)

- Carakasaṃhitā
- Suśrutasaṃhitā
- Aṣṭāṅgasaṅgraha (or *Aṣṭaṅgahṛdaya*, depending on the textual tradition adopted)

Laghutrayī (The Lesser Trilogy)

- Mādhavanidāna
- Bhāvaprakāśa
- Śārṅgadharasaṃhitā

Among these classical works, the Suśrutasaṃhitā provides the most widely accepted definition of health is as follows:

समदोषः समाग्निश्च समधातुमलक्रियः ।
प्रसन्नात्मेन्द्रियमनः स्वस्थ इत्यभिधीयते ॥
samadoṣaḥ samāgniś ca samadhātu-malakriyaḥ |
prasannātmendriya-manaḥ svastha ity abhidhīyate ||

सुश्रुत संहिता (सूत्रस्थान १५/१०)

This means that when the three doṣas (vāta, pitta, and kapha), the digestive fire (agni), the seven bodily tissues (rasa, rakta, māṃsa, medas, asthi, majjā, and śukra), and the excretory functions (mala-kriyā) are in equilibrium, and when the ātman (self), indriyas (sense organs), and manas (mind) are in a state of tranquillity, the individual is said to be in a healthy state (svastha). Another definition of health is found in the Aṣṭāṅgasaṅgraha.as follows:

नित्यं हिताहार-विहार-सेवी समीक्ष्यकारी विषयेष्वसक्तः।
दाता समः सत्यपरः क्षमावान् आप्तोपसेवी च भवत्यरोगी॥
nityaṃ hitāhāra-vihāra-sevī samīkṣyakārī viṣayeṣv asaktaḥ |
dātā samaḥ satyaparaḥ kṣamāvān āptopasevī ca bhavaty arogī ||

अष्टाङ्गसंग्रहः सूत्रस्थानम् अध्याय ५-६३

The one who daily consumes healthy food, enjoys outside regimen, is thoughtful in his actions, not involved in the sensory affairs, generous, just, truthful, forgiving, who takes care of close ones – such person remains unaffected by disease. In charakasamhithA, the following verse mentions about the importance of food:

आहारसम्भवं वस्तु रोगश्चाहारसम्भवः ।
हिताहितविशेषात्तु विशेषः सुखदुःखयोः ॥
āhārasambhavaṃ vastu rogaś cāhārasambhavaḥ |
hitāhitaviśeṣāt tu viśeṣaḥ sukhaduḥkhayoḥ ||

Carakasaṃhitā, 28.45

Food gets formed by matter, and disease gets formed by food. Hence, comfort-discomfort caused by food is more important than the pleasant-unpleasant nature of food. As per the principles of Āyurveda, the bodies - the bodily portions - the age groups - the timings of the day - the natural seasons: all these can be classified into 3 basic humors named as vāta**,** pitta and kapha**.** Vāta means air driven (vāyu), pitta means heat driven (agni), and kapha means water driven (jala).

Humor (dosha)	vāta (airy)	piththa (warm)	kapha (cold)
Portions of the body	Abdomen	Stomach	Chest
Stage of life	Old age	Adult-hood	Child-hood
Seasonal predominance	Rainy season (aggrava-tion), autumn (manifestation) *[varies by classical text]*	Autumn	Late winter and spring
Main physiological fuction	Movement, circulation, respiration	Metabolism, digestion, regulation of body heat	Structural stability, lubrication, immunity
Food that causes increase in humor	Pungent, astringent, bitter	Sour, salty, pungent	Sweet, Sour, salty
Typical aggravating factors	Irregular meals, fasting, anxiety, excessive travel, sleep deprivation	Hot, spicy foods, alcohol, anger, excessive heat	Overeating, excessive sleep, inactivity, heavy foods
Lifestyle issues that cause increase in humor	Dry foods, stale foods, excessive travel, excessive workout, eating often, fasting, indiscipline, worry, fear, quarrel	Fried foods, excessive stress, unsystematic food consumption, indigestion, toxic drugs, alcoholism, fatigue, anger, envy	Cold conditions, Fatty foods, excessive sweets, excessive salt, roasted foods, laziness, doubt, avarice, cruelty
Sickness due to excessive increase in humor	Body pain, weakness, stiffness, cataract, light stroke	Burning sensations, skin issues, acidity, jaundice, foul smell	Phlegm, heaviness, insomnia, lack of hunger, obesity

Prakṛti: Constitutional Types

The relative predominance of the three doṣas gives rise to seven constitutional types (*prakṛti*):

1. Vāta-prakṛti
2. Pitta-prakṛti
3. Kapha-prakṛti

4. Vāta–Pitta-prakṛti
5. Pitta–Kapha-prakṛti
6. Vāta–Kapha-prakṛti
7. Sama-prakṛti (balanced constitution)

Individuals with sama-prakṛti, in whom the three doṣas remain in equilibrium, are considered to possess the most stable physiological constitution. However, this constitutional type is relatively uncommon, and most individuals exhibit one or two dominant doṣas.

The understanding of prakṛti forms the basis of personalized medicine in Āyurveda, influencing dietary recommendations, lifestyle practices, preventive measures, and therapeutic interventions

The humors of the body can be verified by an experienced vaidya, by checking the beats of the 3 pulses at the wrist of the person (right wrist for male, and left wrist for female).

A perfectly healthy human body is the seventh one, in which all 3 humors are in equal proportion, with uniform beats; but it is seldom the case.

In general, a person will have a particular type of body by birth itself. In addition, as the last three rows in the table indicate, the body will undergo changes in the humors, based on the quality of food that is consumed, and on the other lifestyle related issues. In this way, a particular humor can increase, by suppressing the other two; such condition is called as "vrddhi". Later, it may increase beyond a limit, and will become aggressive, causing disease; that condition is called as "prakopa". Hence, suitable therapy is required to handle both of these cases.

Reasons for diseases as per Ayurveda

Āyurveda explains that disease arises when the equilibrium of the doṣas is disturbed by inappropriate interactions between the individual and the internal or external environment. The classical texts identify four principal categories of disease causation.

Ābhyantara (Internal Causes)

These include disturbances arising within the body, such as impaired digestion (*agnimāndya*), accumulation of āma, hereditary predisposition, and physiological imbalances.

Āgantuka (External Causes)

These include trauma, infections, environmental toxins, accidents, poisonous substances, and other external factors that disturb physiological equilibrium.

Mānasa (Psychological Causes)

Mental disturbances such as excessive anger, grief, fear, anxiety, jealousy, attachment, and emotional stress adversely affect both the mind and body, contributing to disease.

Svābhāvika (Natural Causes)

Certain conditions arise naturally through ageing, hunger, thirst, sleep, and the inevitable processes of biological ageing. These are regarded as natural phenomena rather than pathological abnormalities.

Improper Utilization of the Faculties

Āyurveda further classifies disease causation according to the manner in which the body and senses are used.

- Atiyoga — excessive utilization
- Hīnayoga — inadequate utilization
- Mithyāyoga — improper utilization

The appropriate and balanced utilization of all bodily faculties is known as Samyagyoga, which promotes health and prevents disease

In order not to have diseases, one should involve in the right usage of organs, which is called as samyagyoga.

The sequence in which excessive humors turn into diseases is mentioned in the following beautiful verse in Suśrutasaṃhitā:

सञ्चयं च प्रकोपं च प्रसारं स्थानसंश्रयम् ।
व्यक्तिं भेदं च यो वेत्ति दोषाणां स भवेद्भिषक्॥
sañcayaṃ ca prakopaṃ ca prasāraṃ sthānasaṃśrayam |
vyaktiṃ bhedaṃ ca yo vetti doṣāṇāṃ sa bhaved bhiṣak ||

सुश्रुत संहिता (सूत्रस्थान २१)

The humors in excess get accumulated in specific parts of the body (vāta in large intestine, pitta in small intestine, kapha in stomach), then they become aggressive if ignored, and they travel to other parts of the body, get settled in selected parts (vāta in joints, pitta in blood, kapha in lymphatic system), then get manifested as diseases, and finally they affect the functioning of the organs. This is called as Ṣaṭkriyākāla (6 durations of the humors), and the one who fully comprehends this, is called as a physician. If all the 3 humors become aggressive, then all the 3 pulses will be beating heavily, and such condition is called as Sannipāta; this is a serious condition, which requires immediate treatment.

Disease progression

One of the most distinctive contributions of Āyurveda to medical science is its concept of Ṣaṭkriyākāla, which explains that disease develops gradually through six recognizable stages. This framework enables early diagnosis and timely intervention before a disease becomes clinically established.

Table 2. Ṣaṭkriyākāla: Six Stages of Disease Progression

Stage	Sanskrit	Clinical Significance
I	Sañcaya	Accumulation of a doṣa in its natural site
II	Prakopa	Aggravation due to continued causative factors
III	Prasāra	Spread of the aggravated doṣa throughout the body
IV	Sthāna-saṃśraya	Localization in susceptible tissues (*khavaiguṇya*)
V	Vyakti	Manifestation of recognizable clinical symptoms
VI	Bheda	Differentiation into specific disease entities with possible complications

The doctrine of Ṣaṭkriyākāla illustrates the preventive orientation of Āyurveda. Rather than waiting for overt disease to develop, the physician is encouraged to identify early physiological disturbances and institute appropriate dietary, behavioural, or therapeutic measures. This proactive approach aligns closely with modern concepts of preventive medicine and risk reduction.

Therapeutic Principles in Āyurveda

The primary objective of Ayurvedic therapeutics is the restoration and maintenance of physiological equilibrium. Since disease arises from the imbalance of the doṣas, impairment of agni, derangement of the dhātus, and improper elimination of the malas, treatment aims to re-establish harmony among these fundamental components of health.

Classical Āyurveda adopts an individualized approach to therapy. The selection of treatment depends upon several factors, including the patient's constitutional type (*prakṛti*), pathological condition (*vikṛti*), age, physical strength (*bala*), digestive capacity (*agni*), season (*ṛtu*), and the stage of disease (*Ṣaṭkriyākāla*). Consequently, treatment is tailored to the individual rather than directed solely at the disease.

Therapeutic interventions are broadly classified into two principal approaches:

- Śodhana Cikitsā (eliminative or bio-purificatory therapy)
- Śamana Cikitsā (pacification or palliative therapy)

These two therapeutic modalities complement each other and are selected according to the patient's condition.

Śodhana Cikitsā (Bio-purificatory Therapy)

Śodhana Cikitsā is intended to eliminate aggravated doṣas from the body through specific purification procedures. Unlike symptomatic treatment, Śodhana addresses the underlying pathological imbalance and is therefore regarded as a radical or definitive therapeutic approach in classical Āyurveda.

The principal purification procedures are collectively known as Pañcakarma.

Pañcakarma

The term Pañcakarma literally means "five therapeutic procedures." Each procedure is intended for specific pathological conditions and is selected according to the predominant doṣa involved.

Procedure	Primary Indication	Therapeutic Objective
Vamana	Kapha disorders	Therapeutic emesis
Virecana	Pitta disorders	Therapeutic purgation
Vasti	Vāta disorders	Medicated enema
Nasya	Disorders above the clavicle	Nasal administration of medicines
Raktamokṣaṇa	Disorders involving vitiated blood (*rakta*)	Therapeutic bloodletting

Among these procedures, Vasti is traditionally regarded as the most effective therapy for disorders of vāta, owing to the central role of vāta in regulating bodily functions.

Preparatory Procedures (*Pūrvakarma*)

Before administering the principal purification therapies, the patient undergoes preparatory procedures collectively known as Pūrvakarma. Their purpose is to mobilize aggravated doṣas from peripheral tissues toward the gastrointestinal tract, where they can be effectively eliminated.

Snehana (Oleation Therapy)

Snehana involves lubrication of the body through medicated oils or ghee.
It is of two types:

- Ābhyantara Snehana (internal oleation through oral administration of medicated ghee or oil)
- Bāhya Snehana (external oleation through therapeutic massage)

Snehana softens tissues, facilitates the movement of aggravated doṣas, improves flexibility, and prepares the body for purification.

When oleation is contraindicated, Udvartana, a dry massage using herbal powders, may be employed. Udvartana is particularly beneficial in disorders associated with excessive kapha, obesity, and impaired circulation.

Svedana (Sudation Therapy)

Following Snehana, Svedana (sudation therapy) is administered to induce perspiration. Steam, heat, or other suitable methods are employed to dilate the body channels (*srotas*), liquefy aggravated doṣas, and facilitate their movement toward the gastrointestinal tract.

The combined application of Snehana and Svedana enhances the effectiveness of the subsequent purification procedures.

Śamana Cikitsā (Pacification Therapy)

Not all patients are suitable candidates for eliminative therapies. In elderly individuals, children, debilitated patients, or those with mild disease, Śamana Cikitsā is preferred.

Rather than eliminating aggravated doṣas, Śamana gradually restores physiological balance through diet, lifestyle regulation, herbal formulations, and supportive therapies.

Two important therapeutic procedures are:

Dīpana

Dīpana stimulates the digestive fire (*agni*), thereby improving appetite and enhancing digestive efficiency.

Pācana

Pācana promotes the digestion and elimination of āma (metabolic toxins) without necessarily increasing appetite. It restores normal metabolism and prepares the body for further therapeutic interventions when required.

These therapies are often administered before Śodhana to improve digestive capacity and optimize therapeutic outcomes.

Post-Therapeutic Care (*Paścātkarma*)

Successful therapy extends beyond the elimination of aggravated doṣas. Following the principal purification procedures, the patient undergoes Paścātkarma, the post-treatment phase.

The most important component of Paścātkarma is Saṃsarjana Krama, a graduated dietary regimen in which light, easily digestible foods are introduced progressively until normal digestion is restored.

This gradual transition prevents digestive overload, protects the weakened agni, and supports tissue recovery following detoxification.

Rejuvenation and Health Promotion

After the restoration of physiological equilibrium, Āyurveda recommends rejuvenative therapies to maintain health and prevent recurrence of disease.

Rasāyana

Rasāyana comprises rejuvenative measures intended to promote longevity, improve immunity, enhance tissue nutrition, preserve cognitive function, and delay the ageing process.

Vājīkaraṇa

Vājīkaraṇa focuses on reproductive health, vitality, physical strength, fertility, and overall quality of life. Classical texts regard it as an important branch of Ayurvedic therapeutics for promoting healthy progeny and sustaining vitality.

Table 3. Major therapeutic procedures in Āyurveda

Category	Procedure	Purpose
Preparatory	Snehana	Oleation and mobilization of doṣas
	Svedana	Sudation and channel dilation
	Udvartana	Dry powder massage
Purificatory	Vamana	Elimination of kapha
	Virecana	Elimination of pitta
	Vasti	Elimination and regulation of vāta
	Nasya	Therapy for diseases of the head and neck
	Rakta-mokṣaṇa	Elimination of vitiated blood
Pacification	Dīpana	Enhancement of digestive fire
	Pācana	Digestion of āma
Post-treatment	Saṃsarjana Krama	Restoration of digestive capacity
Rejuvenation	Rasāyana	Promotion of longevity and immunity
	Vājīkaraṇa	Promotion of vitality and reproductive health

Therapy as per Ayurveda

To remove the aggravated humors from the body, Āyurveda prescribes a set of detoxifying therapies called Śodhana, which comprises five methods called Vamana, Virecana, Basti, Nasya, and Raktamokṣaṇa – hence collectively called Pañcakarma Cikitsā. All the five need not be conducted together, as their purpose is different, and hence are independent of each other. Vamana is the induced vomiting to cleanse the stomach and Virecana is the induced diarrhea to cleanse the small intestine. Basti is process of cleansing the large intestine by means of either herbal decoction or medicated oil / ghee / milk. Nasya is the instilling of medicated oil / ghee into the nostrils, for cleansing them as well as to increase the blood circulation at the head region. Raktamokṣaṇa is the removal of bad quality blood that is accumulated at some parts of the body.

To enhance Pañcakarma, there are some preparatory procedures (Pūrvakarma), such as Snehana and Svedana. Snehana can be internal, when medicated ghee / oil is consumed, and can be external, when the body is massaged using medicated oil. Due to any medical reason, if the person's body is unsuitable for oil massage, then medicinal powder's massage called Udvartana, is administered. Svedana is the process of induced sweating, either by means of physical exercise or by exposure to steam, through which toxins get expelled out of the skin surface. These preparatory procedures help the person in having a safe detoxification.

Śodhana is performed when the person is having enough stamina to undergo the procedures, and the therapy will be quite effective in the removal of aggravated humors. But if the person is physically weak to face these therapies, then detoxification is performed by alternative procedures, by inducing digestion (Dīpana) and by increasing digestion (Pācana); these two are together called Śamana. Most of the times, these are performed to the strong person as well, as a preliminary action to Pūrvakarma, to enhance the digestion of medicated ghee / oil.

After the main procedure (Pradhānakarma) of Śodhana is completed, the concluding procedure (Paścātkarma) is called Saṃsarjana; which is the strengthening of the weakened body, by slowly introducing the normal food style, after administering easily digestible food varieties for a few days. Thus, in total, the detoxification therapy contains multiple procedures, and can be conducted for a minimum of 5 days or for a maximum of 18 days. During the therapy, as the food regimen gets prescribed by the vaidya, the body will have less work on the digestion and metabolism, and hence, the blood cells release the toxins that are inside, into the interstitial fluid, which later gets released into the blood stream, which later on gets its way into the gastrointestinal tract, which finally gets expelled out of the body.

Thus, Ayurveda advises and offers a wise and unique maintenance methodology for the human body, for regaining physical health, which is summarized in the following table:

Table. 4 Therapeutic Terminologies in Āyurveda

Therapeutic Terminology	Description
Snehana (*Snehana*)	Oleation therapy through external oil massage or internal administration of medicated ghee or oil
Svedana (*Svedana*)	Sudation therapy by inducing perspiration through steam or other heating methods
Udvartana (*Udvartana*)	Therapeutic massage using medicated herbal powders
Laṅghana (*Laṅghana*) *(Reducing or lightening therapy)*	Śodhana (*Śodhana*) *(Elimination of vitiated doṣas from the body)* Pañcakarma procedures: Vamana, Virecana, Vasti, Nasya, and Raktamokṣaṇa
	Śamana (*Śamana*) *(Pacification of vitiated doṣas within the body)* Dīpana (stimulation of digestive fire) and Pācana (digestion of *āma* and enhancement of metabolism)
Saṃsarjana Krama (*Saṃsarjana Krama*)	Graduated dietary regimen followed after Śodhana therapy to restore digestive capacity
	Rasāyana (*Rasāyana*)
Bṛṃhaṇa (*Bṛṃhaṇa*) *(Nourishing and strengthening therapy)*	Rejuvenation therapy that promotes nourishment, immunity, longevity, and tissue regeneration
	Vājīkaraṇa (*Vājikaraṇa*) Therapy for promoting vitality, reproductive health, fertility, and physical strength

Contemporary Relevance of the Ayurvedic Concept of Health

The holistic concept of health described in Āyurveda remains highly relevant in the twenty-first century. The increasing prevalence of lifestyle disorders, obesity, diabetes mellitus, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, mental stress, and sleep disorders has highlighted the limitations of approaches that focus primarily on disease management rather than disease prevention.

The Ayurvedic emphasis on balanced nutrition, regular daily and seasonal regimens (*dinacaryā* and *ṛtucaryā*), physical activity, mental discipline, and individualized healthcare aligns closely with several principles of preventive medicine and lifestyle medicine. Furthermore, the concept of *prakṛti* anticipates aspects of personalized healthcare by recognizing constitutional diversity among individuals.

Although Ayurvedic concepts employ a distinct philosophical and physiological framework, many of their practical recommendations—such as moderation in diet, maintenance of digestive health, regular exercise, adequate sleep, stress management, and seasonal adaptation—are increasingly supported by contemporary research in public health and behavioural medicine. These shared principles provide opportunities for constructive dialogue between traditional knowledge systems and modern biomedical sciences.

Consequently, the Ayurvedic concept of health may be viewed not merely as a historical medical doctrine but as a comprehensive framework for promoting long-term health, resilience, and quality of life.

Conclusion

Since millenniums, through the seers, the knowledge of Āyurveda is transferred to the human generation.

Āyurveda presents a comprehensive and integrated concept of health that extends beyond the absence of disease. According to the classical definition of the Suśrutasaṃhitā, health is achieved through the equilibrium of the doṣas, agni, dhātus, and malas, together with the harmonious functioning of the mind (manas), sense faculties (indriyas), and self (ātman). This multidimensional understanding recognizes health as a dynamic state of physical,

physiological, psychological, ethical, and spiritual well-being.

The present study has examined the classical Ayurvedic concept of health by exploring its physiological foundations, the doctrine of Tridoṣa, the causes and stages of disease development, and the therapeutic principles of Śodhana, Śamana, and Pañcakarma. The concept of Ṣaṭkriyākāla demonstrates the preventive orientation of Āyurveda by emphasizing the recognition and management of disease during its earliest stages.

A defining feature of Āyurveda is its commitment to preserving health before treating disease. This objective is reflected in the classical maxim:

स्वस्थस्य स्वास्थ्यरक्षणम् आतुरस्य विकारप्रशमनम् च

svasthasya svāsthyarakṣaṇam āturasya vikārapraśamanam ca

चरक संहिता (सूत्रस्थान 30.26)

"To preserve the health of the healthy and to alleviate the disorders of the diseased." This guiding principle is supported through daily and seasonal regimens, ethical conduct, dietary discipline, and individualized therapeutic interventions aimed at sustaining physiological balance throughout life.

In an era characterized by increasing lifestyle-related disorders and growing interest in integrative healthcare, the Ayurvedic concept of health offers a valuable perspective that complements contemporary approaches to disease prevention and health promotion. While its theoretical framework differs from that of modern biomedicine, its emphasis on individualized care, preventive strategies, and holistic well-being continues to inspire research and clinical practice. Thus, the classical principles of Āyurveda remain relevant not only as a part of India's intellectual heritage but also as a meaningful contribution to the global discourse on sustainable and person-centred healthcare. The health enthusiast is expected to study them and follow them, in order to remain disease-free.

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