Ayurved

What is Ayurved?

Ayurved is the science of healthy and harmonious living. It is a system of holistic and preventive medicine developed in Bharat several thousand years ago by Rishis. Without good health, spiritual progress towards Moksh can be more difficult.

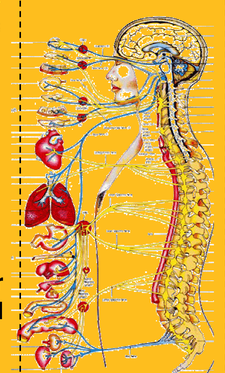
In Sanskrit, the word *ayurved* consists of the words ayu, meaning "longevity", and ved, meaning "knowledge and science". Today, ayurved is spreading all over the world. Over the millenia, ayurvedic practitioners developed a number of medicinal preparations and procedures for the treatment of various ailments and diseases. The *chakr samhit* is the primary and oldest ayurvedic text. The *sushrit samhit* is another ancient ayurvedic text with special emphasis on surgery.

Tridosh

In ayurved, living matter is considered to include 3 doshs or *tridosh*: vata, pita and kapha. These are 3 forces that govern all biological processes. When the 3 doshs are out of balance, they cause diseases. The doshs arise out of the 5 mahabhuts.

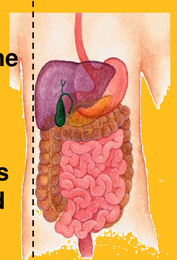
Vata

Vata is the moving force behind the other 2 doshs, which are considered to be incapable of movement without it. It is responsible for all the body's activities and sensations. It is what channels perceptions through the appropriate sensory organs, converts them into psychological events and directs the appropriate response through the organs of action. It is responsible for the movement of air in and out of the lungs, blood through the circulatory system, and thoughts in the mind. Vata arises out of the vayu mahabhut.



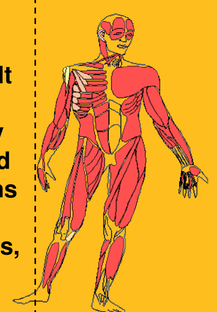
Pita

Pita means that which digests things. It is responsible for all chemical and metabolic transformations in the body, as well as for heat production. It also governs our ability to digest ideas and impressions and to perceive the true nature of reality. It stimulates the intellect and engages our capacity for enthusiasm. Pita arises out of the jal and agni mahabhuts.



Kapha

Kapha provides support and substance to the body. It structures everything from an individual cell to the musculoskeletal frame. It gives strength and stability, both physically and psychologically, and governs human emotions such as love, compassion, forgiveness, loyalty, and patience. Kapha provides resistance against disease and can support the healing process. It arises out of the prithvi and akash mahabhuts.



Trigunn

In Sanatan Dharm, a gunn is one of three fundamental qualities. These qualities are: satv, rajas and tamas. Gunns are a way to categorize our thoughts, speech and behavior. Gunns are also used in ayurved to assess people's diet and behavior. Each of the three gunns is considered to be manifested in our mind, body and spirit. All of creation can be viewed as made up of a balance of these three fundamental forces.

Satv

Satv is the highest of the three gunns and it has only positive characteristics. It is manifested by characteristics such as: contentment, humbleness, enlightenment, happiness, fearlessness, faith, forgiveness, non-violence, self-control, truthfulness, generosity, kindness, purity and knowledge. Freedom from ego, freedom from expectations, looking upon all with an equal eye, and freedom from desire are satvic qualities that help us attain Moksh.

Rajas

The rajas gunn ranks in between satv and tamas, and consist of both negative and positive characteristics. Rajas is the quality of action. It is manifested by characteristics such as: anger, hatred, competitiveness, arrogance, envy, jealousy, greed, attachment, energy, power, prestige, fear, nervousness, selfishness and expectation. Rajas is viewed as being more positive than tamas, and less positive than satv. This is because it is more lively, ambitious and active than tamas, which is characterized by inactivity and spiritual darkness. However it is less positive than satv, which is characterized by purity, clarity, calmness and creativity.

Tamas

Among the three gunns, tamas is associated with only negative characteristics. Tamas is the attribute of ignorance. It is manifested by characteristics such as: lack of knowledge or spiritual insight, focusing only on enjoying materialistic life, idleness and confusion. The result of a tamas-dominated life is karmic demerit, such as descent to a lower and miserable environment in the next life. Other characteristics of tamas are: irresponsibility, cheating, insensitivity, being negative about everything, frustration, lack of self-confidence, lack of logical thinking and planning, and procrastination. Tamasic activities include overeating, oversleeping and the consumption of alcohol and drugs.

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