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ROLE OF AYURVEDA IN COMBATING COVID-19 CRISIS

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Abstract:

The holistic approach of Ayurveda system of medicine gives focus on prevention through lifestyle modification, dietary management, prophylactic interventions for improving the immunity and simple remedies based on presentations of the symptoms. Emphasis on avoidance of causative factors and enhancing the immunity against host of infections are characteristics of Ayurveda management.

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic is the defining global health crisis of our time and the greatest challenge we have faced since World War II. According to World Health Organisation "COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness, and dry cough. Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea. Some people become infected but don't develop any symptoms and don't feel unwell. Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing special treatment. Around 1 out of every 6 people who gets COVID-19 becomes

seriously ill and develops difficulty breathing. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, are more likely to develop serious illness.”

Since its emergence in china late last year, the virus has spread to almost every part of the globe and India is no more an exception to it. While announcing an extension to the nationwide lockdown till the 3rd May, 2020 Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi emphasised on a series of precautions that Indians can take to boost their general immunity to combat COVID-19 as recommended by AYUSH Ministry.

The advisory issued by AYUSH Ministry, Govt. of India clearly emphasised “Ayurveda’s immunity boosting measures for selfcare during COVID- 19 crisis”. Importantly, in the wake of the Covid 19 outbreak, entire mankind across the globe is suffering. Enhancing the body’s natural defence system (immunity) plays an important role in maintaining optimum health. While there is no medicine for COVID-19 as of now, it will be good to take preventive measures which boost our immunity in these times. Ayurveda, being the science of life, propagates the gifts of nature in maintaining healthy and happy living. Ayurveda’s extensive knowledge base on preventive care derives from the concepts of “Dinacharya” - daily regimes and “Ritucharya” - seasonal regimes to maintain healthy life. It is a plant-based science. The simplicity of awareness about oneself and the harmony each individual can achieve by uplifting and maintaining his or her immunity is emphasized across Ayurveda’s classical scriptures.

Ministry of AYUSH recommends the following self-care guidelines for preventive health measures and boosting immunity with special reference to respiratory health:-

1. General Measures

- (a). Drink warm water throughout the day.
- (b). Daily practice of Yogasana, Pranayama and meditation for at least 30 Minutes as advised by Ministry of AYUSH (#yogaathome#stayhome#staysafe)
- (c). Spices like Haldi (Turmeric), Jeera (Cumin), Dhaniya (Coriander) and Lahsun (Garlic) are recommended in cooking.

2. Ayurvedic Immunity Promoting Measures

(a). Take Chyavanprash 10gm (1tsf) in the morning. Diabetics should take Sugar free Chyavanprash.

(b). Drink herbal tea / decoction (Kadha) made from Tulsi (Basil), Dalchini (Cinnamon), Kalimirch (Black pepper), Shunthi (Dry Ginger) and Munakka (Raisin) - once or twice a day. Add jaggery (natural sugar) and /Or fresh lemon juice to your taste, if needed.

(c). Golden Milk- Half tea spoon Haldi (turmeric) powder in 150 ml hot milk -Once or twice a day.

3. Simple Ayurvedic Procedures

(a). Nasal application - Apply sesame oil / coconut oil or Ghee in both the Nostrils (pratimarshnasya) in morning and evening.

(b). Oil pulling therapy- Take 1 table spoon sesame or coconut oil in mouth.

Do not drink, Swish in the mouth for 2 to 3 minutes and spit it off followed by warm water rinse. This can be done once or twice a day.

4. During dry cough / sore throat

(a). Steam inhalation with fresh Pudina (Mint) leaves or Ajwain (Caraway Seeds) can be practiced once in a day.

(b). Lavang (Clove) powder mixed with natural sugar / honey can be taken 2-3 times a day in case of cough or throat irritation.

(c). These measures generally treat normal dry cough and sore throat. However, it is best to consult doctors if these symptoms persist.

CONCLUSION:

The holistic approach of Ayurveda system of medicine gives focus on prevention through lifestyle modification, dietary management, prophylactic interventions for improving the immunity and simple remedies based on presentations of the symptoms. Emphasis on avoidance of causative factors and enhancing the immunity against host of infections are characteristics of Ayurveda management.