

# Ayurveda: Maximizing the Potential For Healing

Ayurveda<sup>[1]</sup> is the ancient and traditional medicine of India. A holistic form of medicine, Ayurveda focuses on creating an optimal environment within the body for healing to take place. The goal of Ayurveda is to support the body's internal healing capability.

The science of Ayurveda views the human being as a dynamic, life affirming organism that in its natural state is healthy, free from disease and at peace with life. Optimum health occurs when the natural process of the body are not interfered with. This happens without effort when the human being is living a harmonious life.

Disharmony of any kind, physical, mental, emotional or spiritual is the cause of disease from an Ayurvedic perspective. Disharmony occurs when a person is out of tune with the environment or other people. In order to maximize the healing capability of the body, the Clinical Ayurvedic Specialist (C.A.S.) helps their clients reestablish harmony through learning to follow a healthy lifestyle.

The five senses are portals or gateways into the body, mind and consciousness. Through them, impressions from the environment are absorbed. When healthy impressions (healthy foods, visual impressions, sounds, smells and touch) are taken in, the body responds by reaching its full potential. When low quality impressions are taken in, the body responds with less than optimum function and becomes susceptible to disease.

Western Medicine acknowledges two principles in the onset of disease. One is the role of virulence or the strength of a pathogen such as a bacteria or virus. The second is resistance or the ability of the host (the person) to ward off the disease. This second component is called immunity. It is the function of Ayurveda to maximize immunity and defend against disease. These principles are also true on the mental level. Mentally and emotionally, stress is the pathogen. A person's ability to resist stress is the "immune system" of the mind. Ayurveda not only attempts to maximize physical immunity but also mental immunity.

While Ayurveda is excellent preventative medicine, it also supports the capacity of the body to heal. Hence, Clinical Ayurvedic Specialists routinely work with sick clients. However, the focus of their healthcare is not on the eradication of the disease but rather on the underlying causes of the disease. By eliminating the underlying causes, the body heals itself. This self - healing model is paramount to understanding the benefits to Ayurveda. While mechanistic models of well being view the patient as a machine with parts to be replaced and chemicals to be added or subtracted to get the right balance, Ayurveda is a vitalistic system of well being respecting the life affirming energy of the body. Ayurveda views the body as intelligent down to the cellular level and even the subatomic level. The role of Ayurveda is simply to support the work of the innate intelligence.

The Clinical Ayurvedic Specialist counsels clients to create a lifestyle of harmony through the five senses. Using dietary, herbal, color, aroma and massage therapies along with yoga and deep relaxation, Ayurvedic practitioners help their clients understand how their current lifestyle may be creating disease and offers suggestions and support to create a newer, healthier lifestyle. Each change made reduces stress and increases the healing capacity of the body.

Is what is right for one person, right for everyone? Not according to Ayurveda. Ayurveda views each person as unique with individual needs. We may all be human but we have slightly different physiologies and emotional tendencies. Ayurveda teaches that for this reason, each person's path toward optimal health is also unique. Nothing is right for everyone and everything is right for someone. Ayurveda resists the temptation to sell one program to every person. Rather, Ayurveda emphasizes an individualized approach to lifestyle. Some people thrive as vegetarians and others as meat eaters. Some thrive on spicy food and others on bland food. Some do well with raw foods and

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other better with cooked foods. Ayurveda is a path of understand what is right for the individual, not the masses. Ayurveda is neither a statistical form of medicine or a health fad, it is a science, based upon understanding individualized needs and meeting those needs to bring about the best a person can be.

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[1] <http://www.ayurvedacollege.com/glossary/term/10>