

IMMUNISATION AND AYURVEDA

“*Svastasyasvastarakshanam*”(Maintaining the health of healthy people) is one of the primary aims of Ayurvedic science, in addition to curing diseases. Immunisation programmes of conventional medicine can control only infectious diseases, that too not perfectly. Infections do produce diseases but that is not the only cause of diseases. There should be a suitable environment in the body conducive for the microbial attack. But if we don't provide such an environment inside our body by keeping our mind and body healthy, it will not be diseased. This is one of the basic principles of Ayurveda. According to it, the equilibrium of three bodily humours, *vata*, *pitta* and *kapha* is essential for the maintenance of health and their vitiation causes diseases.

Preventive measures of diseases are very much explained, especially in the *swasttavritha* branch like things to be practised like daily, night and seasonal regimens (*dinacharya*, *sayamcharya*, *ratricharya*), code of conduct (*sadvritha*). Other techniques like *Rasayana*, *Vajeekarana*, *panchakarma* also help in the maintenance of health and cure of diseases. *Trayopasthambha* (Diet, sleep and celibacy) are the three pillars for health. Performing these according to Ayurvedic principles, restraining from diseases causing factors, intellectual blasphemy, controlling emotional urges, non suppression or forceful expulsion of natural urges are also essential for staying healthy, increasing the life span and graceful ageing.

Ayurvedic physician should be like a health educator, psychologist, advisor, philosopher, philanthropist, dietitian and pharmacist. Unlike the contemporary concept of immunisation, embracing these Ayurvedic principles will not only prevent infections, even non communicable diseases also.

Above all, *Swarna prashana* and *prakarayogas* are special recipes described for immunomodulation. Multiple experimental studies show that *SwarnaPrashana* (administration of gold) is immuno-modulatory, arrests the activity of free radicals, controls stress levels and is analgesic/anti-inflammatory in nature. *Prakara Yoga* is a chapter in one of the prime traditional Ayurvedic pediatric text book – *Arogyakalpadruma*. The whole content of *Prakara Yoga* chapter deals with different immunomodulatory recipes and procedures to be adopted right from the day after delivery. Adopting all the above principles will ultimately build up a healthy and wealthy world.

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