



Alternative Medicine: An Ancient Perception with Novel Concern to Supplement Modern Medicine

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Traditional approach of management such as Ayurveda, Siddha, and Unani is a well known in India. Such systems are detailed in the ancient Vedas and other scriptures. In India the Ayurvedic concept evolved between 2500 and 500 BC in India [1]. We have been into the herbal research many years. We see, feel, smell and eat the herbs daily. Ever individual is taught the importance of consuming fruits, vegetables and grains right from their childhood. The fact and importance hidden was unfamiliar. Nowadays the products and evidence based practice has given us the real picture of their action in our body and its nutritional data. Based on WHO estimate, around 80% of the population depend themselves on traditional approach for primary health care, in which herbs are the form the leading resources [2].

Alternative medicine is an olden concept of managing various diseases. Before the pharmaceutical companies had emerged the management of diseases could have been done by a holistic approach. Such questions do arise with everyone.

1. How does the painful ulcer heal?
2. How was pain managed without analgesics?

Such herbal and other alternative medicine would have played a vital role in treating ailments.

We have been using such herbs in day to day life. Few journals, textbooks and charts are available in natural management of certain disorders. Such medicines are not been used as tablets, capsules or syrups but in the form of chopped leaves, sliced wheat bread, and pieced fruits and vegetables. Various herbal formulations are available nowadays even in the form of pharmaceutical preparations for body requirements. We consume variety of food according to our needs which could be called as personalized medicine.

Other forms of alternative medicine such as yoga, meditation etc

has proved to be an adjuvant to successful modality of treating certain disorders. Such therapies relax mind, and body by relieving stress. Most of the physicians' advice relaxation techniques along with medications to treat depressive disorders. Even such techniques could be useful in patients with lichen planus as stress plays a predisposing role in causation of lichen planus.

It is a known fact that many allopathic medicines originated from the plants. Herbal medicines which were a traditional medicine would surely supplement to modern medicine if used appropriately. But there are few pros and cons relating to the use of alternate medicine.

Advantages of using alternate medicine;

- a. Daily consuming fruits and vegetables is cost effective than spending towards aliments
- b. Acceptance by the patients: Explaining about a well known herb is much easier than an unknown drug.
- c. Generally there are very less side effects known with the use of herbs
- d. Diverse pharmacological effects: Several herbs have more than one property that aid in the treatment of the disease

Constraints with herbal medicines;

- a. Unavailability: Every herb may not be available in all parts of the world.
- b. Various properties of herbs are still unexplored
- c. Acute/emergency management: It is unclear about the effectiveness of such therapies in case of life threatening situation

It is well known that preventing a disease is better than managing it. Hence it is appropriate and judicious supplementation of herbal therapies with modern medicine would enhance the quality life of patient thereby reducing the mortality and morbidity in the long run.

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