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## A general concept of Āyurveda and the Āyurvedic and Siddha texts preserved at the French institute of Pondicherry

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### Abstract

The present paper describes the general concept of Āyurveda and Siddha medicine. It also gives detailed description of the Āyurveda and Siddha manuscripts collection of French Institute of Pondicherry.

**Keyword:** Āyurvedic, Siddha, French institute of Pondicherry

### Introduction

Āyurveda is an intricate system of healing that originated in India thousands of years ago. We can find historical evidence of Āyurveda in the ancient books of wisdom known as the Vedas. In the R̥gveda, over 60 preparations were mentioned that could be used to assist an individual in overcoming various ailments. What we see is that, Āyurveda is more than just a medical system. It is a Science of Life. The word, Āyurveda, is from the ancient Indian language, called Sanskrit, and literally means "Knowledge of Life" (Āyus = Life, Veda = Knowledge/wisdom). We are all part and parcel of nature. Just as the animals and plants live in harmony with nature and utilize the Laws of Nature to create health and balance within their beings, we, too, adhere to these very same principles. Therefore, it is fair to say that Āyurveda is a system that helps maintain health in a person by using the inherent principles of nature to bring the individual back into equilibrium with their true self. In essence Āyurveda has been in existence since the beginning of time because nature's laws have always governed us. The Ayurvedic approach to life involves listening to and addressing the unique needs of your body, recognizing and balancing your mental and emotional states and deepening your connection with your spirit your essential self. Āyurveda sees that the two main areas that affect our health and wellness are the foods we eat and the lifestyle we live. By changing our nutritional protocol and lifestyle, we can greatly influence our physical, mental, and emotional health. You are the only one who can do this, because you are the only one who will truly benefit from your actions or suffer from your abuses. Āyurveda can be a mirror that reflects our true nature and maps out the path for a return to the lives of vitality that we are meant to have.

Āyurveda recognises three main energies that combine to form all things in the universe. These are recognized as being fundamental to all life and are seen in the processes of growth, maintenance, and decay. Their actions are named anabolism, metabolism, and catabolism in the western sciences. Life, light, and love exemplify all these energies and are found in our environments at every moment on every level. These energies combine in limitless ways to create the unique qualities of each individual. When you become aware of these qualities within yourself, you take the first steps toward creating a healthy life. Āyurveda assists you in identifying these energies in your body and shows you how to more fully experience their gifts and to gain freedom from their limitations. By working with the body's unique nature, you are able to create true health. With Āyurveda, we acknowledge that beneficial daily habits are different for each person, because each person is a unique combination of these three energies. Everybody has all three energies though people experience each of them to a greater or lesser degree.

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Everyday Āyurveda would like to assist you on this healing journey by providing more information for discovering your underlying nature using Ayurvedic principles. Once you are familiar with this, you can bring balance to the body through the foods you eat and how you eat them, daily practices including exercise, rest and massage, and five-sense therapies utilizing color, aroma, taste, touch, and sounds. Everyday Āyurveda provides introductory classes on Ayurvedic principles and how you can apply these principles to live a fully balanced life. Āyurveda is an affordable, accessible daily practice for creating health and harmony in your body and in your environment. Once you begin to incorporate these principles in your daily activities, you will see positive benefits in every aspect of your life. There is not one food, herb, or activity that is Ayurvedic. You already have many practices that create balance in your life. When this brings clarity and healing at the deepest level, you are practicing Āyurveda.

Āyurveda is the Vedic system of health care that developed in India over 5000 years ago. A gift of the Gods, it was codified by the sage-physician Caraka and the sage-surgeon Suśruta. This ancient science is health, not disease, specific and takes into account the patient's entire personality - body, mind and spirit. According to Āyurveda, every human being has a typical constitution that decides the state of his or her health and his or her predisposition to a particular disease. According to Caraka, "ayu" is comprised of four essential parts. The combination of mind, body, senses and the soul.

Āyurveda, we view a person as a unique individual made up of five primary elements. The elements are ether, air, fire, water, and earth. Just as in nature, we too have these five elements in us. When any of these elements are present in the environment, they will in turn have an influence on us. The foods we eat and the weather are just two examples of the presence of these elements. While we are a composite of these five primary elements, certain elements are seen to have an ability to combine to create various physiological functions. Ether and air combine to form what is known in Āyurveda as the Vāta-doṣa. Vāta governs the principle of movement and therefore can be seen as the force, which directs nerve impulses, circulation, respiration and elimination. Fire and water are the elements that combine to form the Pitta-doṣa. The Pitta-doṣa is the process of transformation or metabolism. The transformation of foods into nutrients that our bodies can assimilate is an example of a pitta function. Pitta is also responsible for metabolism in the organ and tissue systems as well as cellular metabolism. Finally, it is predominantly the water and earth elements, which combine to form the Kapha-doṣa. Kapha is what is responsible for growth, adding structure unit by unit. Another function of the Kapha-doṣa is to offer protection. Cerebral-spinal fluid protects the brain and spinal column and is a type of kapha found in the body. Also, the mucous aliening of the stomach is another example of the Kapha-doṣa protecting the tissues. We are all made up of unique proportions of vāta, pitta and kapha. These ratios of the doṣas vary in each individual; and because of this, Āyurveda sees each person as a special mixture that accounts for our diversity. When any of the doṣas (Vāta, Pitta or Kapha) become accumulated, Āyurveda will suggest specific lifestyle and nutritional guidelines to assist the individual in reducing the doṣa that has become excessive. We may also suggest certain herbal supplements to hasten the healing process. If toxins in the body are abundant, then a cleansing process known as Pañcakarma is recommended to eliminate these unwanted toxins.

This understanding that we are all unique individuals enables Āyurveda to address not only specific health concerns but also offers explanation as to why one person responds differently than another.

The Caraka and Suśruta Saṃhitās are compendiums of two traditions rather than texts authored by single authors. A third tradition is that of the Kāśyapas. Some plant remedies of Āyurveda are also mentioned in the earlier edic literature 2nd millennium BC. Both the Suśruta and Caraka Saṃhitās are the product of several editorial hands, having been revised and supplemented over a period of several hundred years. The scholar Vāgbhaṭa, who lived inside Sindh at the beginning of the 7th century AD, produced a grand synthesis of earlier Ayurvedic materials in a terse work called Aṣṭāṅgahṛdayam. Another work associated with the same author, the Aṣṭāṅgahṛdayam, contains much the same material in a more diffuse form, written in a mixture of prose and verse. The relationship between these two works, and a third intermediate compilation, is still a topic of active research. The works of Caraka, Suśruta, and Vāgbhaṭa are considered canonical and reententially called the Vṛddha Trayī, "the triad of ancients"; or Bṛhat Trayī, "the greater triad." In the early eighth century, Mādhava wrote his Nidāna, a work on etiology, which soon assumed a position of authority. In the 79 chapters of this book, he lists diseases along with their causes, symptoms, and complications.

Traditional Āyurveda speaks of eight branches: kāyācikitsā (internal medicine), śalyacikitsā (surgery including anatomy), śālākyaicikitsā (eye, ear, nose, and throat diseases), kaumārabhṛtya (pediatrics), bhūtaidyā (psycuatrt, or demonology), and agada tantra (toxicology), rasāyana (science of rejuvenation), and vājīkaraṇa (the science of fertility). Apart from learning these, the student of Āyurveda was expected to know ten arts that were indispensable in the preparation and application of his medicines: distillation, operative skills, cooking, horticulture, metallurgy, sugar manufacture, pharmacy, analysis and separation of minerals, compounding of metals, and preparation of alkalis. The teaching of various subjects was done during the instruction of relevant clinical subjects. For example, teaching of anatomy was a part of the teaching of surgery, embryology was a part of training in pediatrics and obstetrics, and the knowledge of physiology and pathology was interwoven in the teaching of all the clinical disciplines. The vast majority of Ayurvedic therapies are herbal compounds. Some alchemical preparations start to enter the ayurvedic pharmacopeia towards the end of the 1st millennium AD in works such as those of Ugraditya (8th century AD) and Saṅgadhara (14th century AD). It also provides therapies for the treatment of various vegetable and animal toxins like scorpion, spider and snake venom. It has a whole science of toxicology called agada-tantra as one of the eight branches of traditional Āyurveda. The Ayurvedic idea is that the organism adapts to the environment and its food, climate etc. This principle of adaptation is called satyama. Through introducing small amounts of a food or medicine, the organism can adapt to it and learn to resist it.

It could be said that the simple essence of Āyurveda is knowledge and awareness of the qualities of nature – called Gurvādi guṇaḥ. By understanding the qualities inherent in the environment, in foodstuffs, in activities, etc., one gains an appreciation of their effects on the individual constitution through the principle of similarities; i.e., that similarities cause increase while dissimilarities cause decrease. Thus hot qualities in the environment or diet will increase hot qualities in the body.

The Gurvādi guṇaḥ are listed in Vāgbhaṭa's Aṣṭāṅgahṛdayam as:

Guru (heavy) – laghu (light)  
Manda (slow) – tīkṣṇa (quick, sharp)  
Hima (cold) – uṣṇa (hot)  
Snigdha (unctuous) – rukṣa (dry)  
Slakṣṇa (smooth) – khara (rough)  
Sandra (solid) – drava (liquid)  
Mṛdu (soft) – kaṭhina (hard)  
Sthira (stable) – cala (mobile)  
Sūkṣma (subtle) – sthūla (gross)  
iśāda (non-slimy) – picchila (slimy)

Since everything in the material world possesses combinations of the 20 qualities, Āyurveda postulates that every material process or object can either harm or heal a person by influencing that person's unique original constitution (called prakṛti). An ayurvedic practitioner will assess the qualities of a disorder, the patient's unique prakṛti, and his/her influencing factors to arrive at a treatment plan. The treatment plan will consist of using herbs, therapies, diet, etc., with opposite qualities so as to assist the patient in re-establishing their prakṛti.

According to the ancient Sāṅkhya theory of cosmology, on which Āyurveda is based, the elements – pañcamahābhūta – combine in different proportions to form the material world. Each element possesses different amounts of the above-mentioned guṇas; thus each element has its unique qualities of nature.

Ayurvedic treatments in the west are primarily massage, and dietary and herbal advice, due to the strong regulations surrounding medical practice in Europe and America. Patients are classified by body types, or prakṛti, which are determined by proportions of the three doṣas. Illness and disease are considered to be a matter of imbalance in the doṣas. Treatment is aimed at restoring harmony or balance to the mind-body system.

In India, Āyurveda is gaining a lot of prominence as an alternative to western medicine. However, the traditional methods of teaching Āyurveda - such as undergoing a rigorous study of Sanskrit - are being discarded and only diseases and cures are being taught in most Ayurvedic colleges across India. For the next generation of Ayurvedic doctors, this reduces the basic understanding of Āyurveda as a comprehensive system. Also, not being able to comprehend the original Vṛddha Trayī in Sanskrit may lead to different interpretations of the ancient texts and possibly to deviations from traditional Āyurveda.

The below text are collected and preserved at the French Institute of Pondicherry. The Bold texts are in Sanskrit language and Grantha script and the other text are in Tamil Language.

Acuvavākaṭam  
Akattīcurar Karmakāṇṭam  
Akattīcurarvāittiyam Aimpatu  
Akattīcvarār Kulikai (8) Vāittiyam  
Akattiyamunivar Aruliyatu 205  
Akattiyamunivar Vaityaratiinaccurukkam  
Akattiyar Ārukāṇṭam (Cittavāittiyam)  
Akattiyar Cūttiram  
Akattiyar Īrattinaccurukkam  
Akattiyar Jñānam  
Akattiyar Kāvīyayokacūttiram (16)  
Akattiyar Pasmam 200  
Akattiyar Paṭṇaṇṭakam

Akattiyar Vāittiyam 1001  
Akattiyarcūttiram  
Akattiyarkurupūcaviti Cūttiram  
Akattiyarpāṭal (Pūcāviti 5, 10, 13)  
Akattiyarpūraṇacūttiram  
Akattiyarpūrṇacūttiram  
Akattiyarvāittiyakāvīyam  
Akattiyarvatittiyakāvīyam Nālānkāṇṭam  
Anupavavāittiyamurai  
Arkaprakāśaḥ or Arkacikitsrā  
Aṣṭāṅgahṛdayadīpikā  
Aṣṭāṅgahṛdayavyākhyā by Raghunāthahatakaṅka  
Auśadhakalpaḥ  
Āyirattirunūrumutarkāṇṭam  
Bhāiśajyam with Tamil Meaning  
Bheśajasaṅgrahaḥ  
Calliyānārpāṭal  
Caṅkamuniyārpāṭal (100)  
Caranūlcūttiram  
Caṭṭaimuni  
Caṭṭaimuni Jñānam  
Caṭṭaimunināyanārpāṭal  
Caṭṭaimuniyār Koccaicūttiram (50)  
Caṭṭaimuniyār Pūcāviti (50)  
Caṭṭaimuniyārpāṭal  
Cattiyārūṭam (Vāittiyam)  
Cayarokavaralāru  
Centūram  
Cikitsāsārasaṅgrahaḥ  
Cikitsrāsāraḥ  
Cilliyānūl  
Cinentiramālai  
Cinlāraracāyanam  
Cirrampala Nāṭī Cūttiram  
Cittarāittiyam (Urāinaṭai)  
Cittavāittiyānūl  
Civacittar Venpā (Vāittiyam)  
Cuntarānantamūrtipāṭal  
Cuntarānantamūrtipāṭal  
Cuntirānantar Atitacūttiram  
Cuppiramanīyacuvāmi Akattiyarukku Arulicceyapāṭal  
Cuppiramanīyacuvāmiyaruliyapāṭal (500)  
Cuppiramaṇiyar Jñānam  
Cuppiramaṇiyarjñānam 200, 100, 50  
Dhanvantaricintāmaṇiḥ  
Dhanvantariyanirghaṇṭuḥ  
Dravyaśuddhiḥ  
Īrāmatevar Sūttiram  
Īṭaikkāṭṭucitar Pāṭal  
Kampalliccaṭṭai Kailācamūrti Pāṭal Āyirattiraṭṭu (Vāittiyam)  
Kantamurcūttiramjñānam (100)  
Karpakkolukku Maruntu  
Karuvōor Nāyanār Jñānam  
Karuvūr Cittar Cūttiram  
Karuvūrārmaraippu Añcanam  
Karuvūrārpūcāviti  
Kaucikar Kuzambu  
Kautamaṛṣi Vākkīyam  
Kirāṇivaralāru  
Koṅkaṇānāyanār Kāṭaikkāṇṭacūttiram (500)  
Koṅkaṇarpāṭala  
Koṅkaṇarpiṇṭorpati  
Koṅkaṇarvāittiyam  
Kumpamuni Kecaṛjñānam  
Kumpamunivāittiyānūl

Kuruṇāṭicāttiram  
 Māntiriikanūl  
 Maruntu  
 Maruntukal  
 Maruntuvakai  
 Māṭṭu Vākaṭam  
 Mūlikaikkarpam  
 Muppūram (Vaittiyam)  
 Muruntu Vakaikal  
 Muruntuvakaikal  
 Nākārūṭam (Vaittiyam)  
 Nantīcurarpāṭina Muppūcurukkam  
 Nantivilakkam  
 Nāṭipariṅṅai  
 Padārthagunapāṭhaḥ  
 Pālavākaṭam  
 Pālavākaṭam  
 Pāmpukkaṭicciṅṅai  
 Patañcalināyanārpāṭal (22, Vātavittai)  
 Patārtakunacintāmaṅṅai  
 Patikeyarvākkiam  
 Piramamuni Vaittīyam  
 Piramamunivaittīyam 386  
 Pokanārpāṭal (Vālaipūcaiviti, Tiripurai Pūcaiviti)  
 Pokanātar 557 (Vaittiyam)  
 Pokar Vaittīyanūl  
 Pokarpāṭal  
 Pulippānilittiyam  
 Putrasantānaśadhyādi  
 Rāmatevarcāttiram (1000) Vaittīyam  
 Rāmatevārpāṭal (10) (500) Vaittīyam  
 Rāmatevarpāṭal (108) (50) Māntirīkam  
 Rasavaidyaviśaya  
 Rattinaccurukkam  
 Rattinaccurukkam  
 Roganirṅṅai  
 Romarṅṅipāṭala  
 Sinduramaṅṅari  
 Suppiramaṅṅiyar Upatecam  
 Suṅṅagrathāḥ  
 Tamilerayar Vaittīyanūl  
 Taṅṅakam  
 Taṅṅcināmurtijālam 1200 (Vaittiyam)  
 Taṅṅcināmūrti Cakalalalaijñānam (200)  
 Taṅṅcināmūrti Cakalalalaijñānam Curukkam (120)  
 Taṅṅcināmūrti Nayanavithi  
 Taṅṅcināmūrti Paripāṅṅai (Kāṅṅam I, II, V)  
 Taṅṅcināmūrti Paripūraṅṅavaittīyam (400)  
 Taṅṅcināmūrticalliyānūl  
 Taṅṅcināmūrtijñānam (20)  
 Taṅṅcināmūrtipāṭal (Kāṅṅaikaḷ 7) 6 - 7 Kāṅṅaṅṅal Missing  
 Taṅṅcināmūrtipāṭal Kāṅṅaikaṅṅam (500) (Yogam, Vaittiyam)  
 Taṅṅcināmūrtipāṭal Muppu  
 Taṅṅcināmūrtipāṭala (16, Vetāntam 5, Tītcai)  
 Tirumūlakaṅṅar Cūttiram  
 Tirumūlar Karumānaccurukkam  
 Tutinūl  
 Utarkūru  
 Vaidya  
 Vaidyacintamaṅṅai  
 Vaidyakalpaḥ  
 Vaidyāmṅṅtasārasaṅṅrahaḥ  
 Vaidyaviśatamulu  
 Vaittīya Akarāṅṅi  
 Vaittīya Aṅṅavaṅṅai

Vaittīyacintāmaṅṅai  
 Vaittīyacūttiram 230 by Takṅṅināmūrtisvāmi  
 Vākaṭam  
 Vākaṭam  
 Vākaṭattirāṅṅu  
 Vallāṅṅi  
 Vālmīkar Nāṅṅacūttiram  
 Viṅṅattakkumaruntu  
 Yogaratnasamuccayasaarasaṅṅraha  
 Yūkimuni Vaidya

To conclude this article, I must mention that, the French Institute of Pondicherry has a good collection of Siddha and Āyurveda manuscripts, which can be useful for the future generations. Now a day's Āyurveda is flourishing throughout the world. The pandemic situation has made such way only Āyurveda can help people to overcome this tragedy. Through preclinical trial one need to go through the manuscripts and try to bring them into book form, so that it will be readable by others. And the traditional knowledge of Siddha and Āyurveda medicine will reach to the common people.

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