Top 16 Healing Ayurvedic Treatments for Total Body

Deblina Biswas  Treatments

Ayurveda is India’s traditional alternative therapy, which uses holistic healing methods to promote good health. The three main classical texts that are the foundation of Ayurveda are the Charaka Samhita (Charaka), Ashtanga Hridaya (Vagbhata) and Susruta Samhita (Susruta) and according to these texts the human body is made of 5 elements – earth, fire, air, water and space. These five elements combine in the body to for three Doshas – Vata Dosha (Space and Air), Pitta Dosha (Fire and Water) and Kapha Dosha (Water and Earth). Ayurvedic treatment tries to bring about a balance between the mind, body and spirit and harmonise it with the universe. Any disruption of this harmony causes sickness and poor health.

Benefits of Ayurveda

Ayurveda has been a part of life of the people of India since the dawn of civilization and in recent years, Western culture has also embraced the procedure of holistic healing of the patient’s mind, body and spirit. Often called the “Science of Life”, Ayurveda has various physical and mental benefits that help in improving the overall quality of life. Usually a lot of people get severely effected by Loneliness that leads to mental disorders.

- **Boosting Immunity** – The immune system is the natural defence mechanism of the body that helps in fighting disease-causing bacteria and viruses. Ayurvedic medicine and Ayurvedic home remedies use a multitude of herbs and oils that are mixed together to create tonics that improves appetite and strengthen the body’s defence system.

- **Complete Healing** – The herb preparations administered by the Ayurvedic practitioner help in healing diseases from the root along with its symptoms. The treatments also involve lifestyle changes and increase in physical activities.
- **Relieving Stress** – Stress is one of the major reasons of poor health and the tonics, therapies and massages involved in Ayurvedic treatment helps in relieving stress and enhancing physical well-being by balancing the mood and bringing about a harmony between the soul and the body.

- **Purifying the Body** – Purging the body of toxins and maintaining it at the proper balance is the basic aim of Ayurveda. The Ayurvedic medicines and tonics *promote thorough cleansing* from within in order to improve overall health. Panchakarma is the most effective cleansing Ayurvedic treatment.

- **Maintaining Overall Balance** – One of the greatest benefits of Ayurvedic treatment is that it helps achieving overall balance of energies in the body. The body is affected by the accumulation of toxins and Ayurveda helps in cleansing and removing these impurities.

### 16 Most Important Healing Ayurvedic Treatments

Ayurvedic healing process depends mainly on holistic self-healing through purgation of toxins of the body and administering of herbal oils and medicines. The treatments involve massages, therapies, herbal medicines, *proper diet* and exercise. The benefits of Ayurveda are so powerful that even in the 21st Century; these treatments are extremely popular among health conscious people.

**Purvakarma**

Panchakarma is one of the vital ayurvedic treatments for *complete purification and rejuvenation of the body*. But in order to prepare the body for this treatment, Purvakarma is required. It is a pre-purification measure that precedes the Panchakarma process. It involves a combination of Snehanam (oleation) and Swedhanam (fomentation) both of which helps in loosening up the body and prepared it to flush out the toxins by moving them through the gastrointestinal tract.
Snehana – Snehana involves both internal and external oleation. For external Snehana, Abhyanga oil massage is done in which the body is massaged with various Ayurvedic oils that promote the toxins to move towards the gastro-intestinal tract. There are several other benefits of the Abhyanga massage. It relieves stress and improves the functions of the nervous system. It enhances the softness and suppleness of the superficial and deep tissues. Snehana is recommended for 3 to 7 days at a stretch. Internal Snegana is done through the oral intake of ayurvedic medicated Ghee.

Swedana – Swedana or sweating is done on a daily basis for 3 to 7 days and the process follows Snehana – Abhyanga. In this process, herbal decoction infused steam is applied to the body to make it sweat and liquefy the toxins which lead to its release through the gastro-intestinal tract.

Panchakarma

Panchakarma is a Sanskrit term used in ayurvedic treatment. Ayurveda Panchakarma involves five therapeutic treatment methods that are used to purify the body and remove toxins from the system. It is equally effective in case of both healthy and unhealthy individuals. While the unhealthy person gets rid of the chronic diseases, the healthy person becomes fit enough to prevent diseases and stay physically and mentally fit.
The history of Panchakarma dates back to 5000 B.C and it has been designed as a treatment method based on medicine and diet. This procedure follows five steps for removing the deep-seated impurities from the body and balances the Doshas – the forces that rule all biological functions. The five parts of Panchakarma are Vamana, Virechana, Vasti, Raktamokshana and Nasya. Ayurvedic treatment centers such as Kerala ayurvedic health care specialize in providing this treatment.

Vamana

Vamana is the first step of Panchakarma that involves Emesis therapy. It is an ayurvedic procedure of therapeutic vomiting that helps in eliminating excess Kapha or mucus that is the root cause of diseases such as bronchitis, asthma, sinusitis, cough and cold, etc. It also helps in treating the skin problems of psoriasis, eczema and urticaria.
Vamana is also an effective ayurvedic treatment for diabetes, nausea, food poisoning and tonsillitis. Most ayurvedic practitioners administer Vamana therapy to cure various diseases.

Virechana

Next is Virechana, or purgation therapy which removes excess Pitta from the body and purifies the blood to treat the problems of skin rashes, acne, pimples, inflammation, biliary vomiting, Jaundice, digestive disorders, headache and certain gynaecological disorders. The procedure involves oleation, fomentation and emesis followed by a medicated steam bath every day for 3 days along with a light and warm diet.

This procedure cleanses the major organs of the body – small intestines, colon, kidney, stomach, liver and spleen. The herbs used in this treatment along with milk, mango juice, castor oil and raisins work as a laxative that is beneficial for the patient.

Vasti

Vasti or Basti is a medicated Enema treatment that is extremely beneficial for rejuvenating convalescence and treating neuromuscular and musculoskeletal disorders, infertility, sexual
debility and other conditions. The term “Basti” stands for a pouch or bag. The procedure involves introducing ayurvedic liquid and herbal concoctions made of oils and milk through the perineum or anus or the vaginal opening in women in order to cleanse and heal the lower part of the body and remove the toxins accumulated in this part through the colon and urinary tract.

This ayurvedic treatment helps in relieving kidney stones, backache, chronic fever, cold, constipation, sciatica and joint pains. There are primarily two types of Basti – Anuvasana Basti that uses medicated oil enemas and Niruha Basti that uses enema made from a combination of medicated oils and herbs.

Raktamokshana

Raktamokshana, which means ‘to let out the blood’ is a bloodletting procedure and effective blood purification therapy that helps in neutralizing the accumulated Pitta in the blood. This ayurvedic treatment is especially effective in treating haemo pathological conditions, skin disorders and skin allergies. It is a localized treatment and usually not more than 10 to 40 ml of blood is removed at a time. There are two main types of Raktamokshana – Shastra Visravana and Anushastra Visravana.
In Shastra Visravana the blood is let out using surgical instruments through multiple incisions (Pracchana) or Venepuncture (Siravyadha). In Anushastra Visravana, the blood is let out through organic instruments such as application of leeches (Jalaukavacharana), sucking the blood through cow’s horn (Shrungavacharana) and extracting of blood using a vegetable called Alabu/ bottle gourd (Alabu).

Nasya

Nasya or nasal administration is a procedure of cleaning the accumulated Kapha from the head and neck region. At first, the face, head and chest is massaged thoroughly using certain herbal oil which promotes perspiration. This procedure is followed by administering of certain ayurvedic oils and powders through the nostrils.
The excess mucus accumulated in the throat, sinus, throat and head is drained out through the nearest opening – the nose. This treatment helps in treating sinusitis, headaches, migraine, Rhinitis, facial palsy, paralysis, insomnia, frozen shoulder and neurological dysfunctions. It is also effective in improving eyesight and memory.

Dhara

Dhara is an exceptionally relaxing ayurvedic therapy in which a stream of soothing warm herbal oils, milk and buttermilk is poured on the head and various other body parts that help in soothing the nervous system and calming the mind. This therapy induces feeling of peace and happiness in the mind.

This treatment is effective in treating insomnia, chronic headache, insanity, hysteria, hallucinations and cervical spondylosis. Nethradhara is a special part of the Dhara treatment in which the eyes are washed with “Triphala kwatha” that helps in relieving eye disorders and relieving eye stress.

Pizhichil

Pizhichil or Thailadhara is the best ayurvedic treatment in Kerala, in which warm medicated oil is poured on the body along with gentle massage while the person is lying on a wooden plank. This treatment helps in strengthening the immune system of the body and is useful for rheumatic diseases, arthritis, neurological disorders, sexual weakness and blood pressure.
This relaxing and rejuvenating ayurvedic therapy also helps in relieving anxiety, stress and depression. It also maintains the youthfulness of skin and prevents skin aging.

Kizhi

Kizhi is yet another purifying and rejuvenating ayurvedic treatment that heals the mind and body. Kizhi involves tying up of heated oils, herbs and powders into small muslin bags or “Potli” that are placed on different body parts using varying degree of pressure with a special focus on the nerve points. This is followed by a healing massage done using fingers and palms of the hands. The fingers and palms apply controlled pressure on specific areas that help in treating various ailments.
This therapy follows the process of perspiration induced body scrub followed by a rejuvenating bath. Navarakizhi is a special Kizhi therapy that helps in treating muscular pain arthritis, paralysis, sore muscles and general weakness. It is also helpful for regulating high blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

**Udhwarthanam**

Udhwarthanam is an effective ayurvedic treatment for obesity and weight loss that involves deep dry massage using herbal powders. The massage is done in opposite direction of the hair follicles that stimulates the subcutaneous fat tissue and breaks down subcutaneous fat storage. This powerful massaging technique reduces obesity and skin problems, improves mobility of the joints and strengthens the muscles of the body.

The procedure of Udhwarthanam involves application of a herbal paste on the entire body. It is made of dry grains, variety of oils and milk. After the application of this paste, the body is massaged thoroughly followed by a warm bath. There are various types of Udhwarthanam that are categorized according to their purpose – medical or relaxation. This treatment also helps in giving a healthy shine to the skin by exfoliating it and removing dead cells and cellulite.

**Sirolepanam**

Sirolepanam or Thalapothichil is a traditional ayurvedic treatment for hair care that provides a complete solution to all hair problems. It reduces hair fall, stimulates the hair follicles to promote hair growth and improves shine of the hair strands. In this process, the relaxing and rejuvenating process, the scalp is first massaged using prescribed oils. The massage is followed by application of medicated pastes, medicines and juices of herbs mixed with oils to head and the whole scalp.
The mixture comprises of Amalaki, Musta, Panchagandha, etc. that are ground well to bring about a thick consistency. After the application of the paste, the scalp is covered with lotus or plantain leaf and a hole is made at the center of the leaf for frequent application of oil. This treatment also helps in relieving psychiatric disorders, neurological disorders and vision impairment.

Bahya Vasti

Bahya Vasti is an ancient ayurvedic treatment that involves the process of retaining a specific amount of lukewarm medicated oil on a specific area of the body for a fixed time. The oil is contained in a receptacle made of paste made of urad dal.
This process helps the medicated oil in penetrating the outer layer of the body and reaching the targeted muscles and organs. This healing procedure promotes complete rejuvenation of the body from within.

**Sirovasthi**

The Sirovasthi ayurvedic treatment involves retaining of medicated oils over the head for a certain period of time. In this procedure, a long leather cap is fixed on the head and secured at the temple suing a cotton cloth. The top end of the cap is open through with the warm medicated oil is poured into the cap and the scalp is allowed to soak this oil.

This treatment is exceptionally effective for treating facial paralysis, deafness, degenerative brain diseases like Parkinson’s, insomnia, stress and rheumatic diseases. The session continues for 7 days and the oil is retained for 30 to 45 minutes every day for these 7 days.

**Kati Vasti**

Kati Vasti is an effective ayurvedic treatment for relieving lower back pain, one of the biggest health disorders of modern times. The waist area of the body is known as “Kati” in Sanskrit and this treatment involves the holding of warm ayurvedic oils over the lower back and spine region for a specific period of time. The patient is asked to lie face down on a wooden plank and 200-300ml of medicated oil is poured into a reservoir made on the lumbosacral area using black gram dough.
The warm temperature of the oil is maintained by adding a small amount of oil throughout the treatment. The oil is kept in the region for 30 to 40 minutes, followed by gentle massage of the area and steaming for 15 minutes for better absorption of the medicinal oil into the body. The course lasts for 5 to 7 days. This treatment relieves numbness due to Sciatic nerve compression, strengthens the back muscles, reduces inflammation and alleviates pain associated with fracture and dislocation.

Greeva Vasti

Greeva Vasti treats the disorders related to the neck region. Greeva stands for neck and basti refers to the container. In this process, warm medicated oil is retained on the back of the neck using a reservoir made of black gram dough. The reservoir covers all the vertebrae of the neck along with 2 to 3 vertebrae of the thoracic region. The worm oil which is poured into the reservoir helps in alleviating neck pain and strengthens the bones and joint tissues.
The cold oil is soaked using a cotton gauge and warm is poured again. The entire procedure runs for 30 minutes. After removing the oil, the area is gently massaged using the same oil and the patient is asked to rest for some time. This treatment helps in relieving neck pain and stiffness, cervical spondylitis, shoulder pain and headache.

These are the 16 most important treatments of traditional Ayurveda that has been administered for ages to treat various diseases and ailments. Let us know if we have missed any other important treatments from ancient Ayurveda.

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