AHS-1

# MEDICAL TIPS FROM ATHARVAVEDA AND AYURVEDA IN RELATION TO THE SIDDHAS

Dr. Prof. Mrs. V. Balambal, M.A.B.T. Ph.D. FRAS (London)

Senior Fellow, Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi
Professor (Retd) of History, University of Madras, Chennai

The natural outcome of the optimistic and robust outlook, which the ancient Indians had on life, was a keen desire to live a long and healthy life of a hundred years. They advocated the theory 'Prevention is better than cure'. *Atharvaveda* and *Ayurveda* deal with different kinds of diseases and remedial measures to cure the same. *Atharva vedic* hymns could be divided into two parts: the first part known as white magic deals with the curing of diseases and creating peace and prosperity; the second part known as black magic or sorcery is meant for causing evil effects. The exact authorship of Atharvaveda could not be made. As *Ayurveda* has been given a good form at a later time, the experts responsible for the progress of this science could be named. But a deeper study would reveal that the *Ayurveda* has taken much from *Atharvaveda* .It is also known as *Upaveda*, or accessory Veda, to *Atharvaveda*. It is interesting to note that the Rig Veda praises God Rudra as the ablest Physician who prepared all medicines with his beautiful hands. The *"Rudra Adhyaya"* of the *Yajur Veda* praises the god as the first physician. Both the Vedas refer to herbal plants used for medicines. Similarly the Siddhas of the Tamil country are great Physicians. They are able to find remedy for all the diseases using the herbs grown in the Tamil soil. A deeper study proves that *Atharva Veda, Ayurveda* and Siddhas' medicinal devises are supplementary and complimentary to one another. Though India was affected by the Muslim and British occupations and culture, the indigenous form of medicine has been able to survive during the dark periods and in modern times it poses a great challenge to Allopathic. There are innumerable medicinal herbs available in India and the scholars and physicians have been making use of the same. It is impossible to cover the entire medical. This paper deals with some important herbs, which have been used to cure the diseases from the very early times to the modern times. The *Atharva Veda, Ayurvedic* texts and the contributions of the Siddhas to herbal medicine and the medical tips gathered from elders form important source materials.

*Ayurvedic* paradigm shows how body, mind and spirit interactions can be predicted, balanced and improved to enable us to live gracefully and harmoniously. *Ayurveda's* greatest treasures are its theories of health and disease, which are remarkably compatible with the models espoused by modern medical thinkers. *Charaka Samhita* is the earliest still most important of all *Ayurvedic* texts and *Sushruta Samhita* ,the most famous surgical text. Jivaka, the court physician of Bimbisara was an expert in *Ayurvedic* medicine and was appointed to supervise the health of Buddha and his followers.(Robert E.Svoboda,Ayurveda,p.10) Buddha himself was impressed with the treatment given by Jivaka. *Ashtanga Sangraha*(7th century) and *Ashtanga Hrdaya*(8th century) are the condensations of the works of Charaka and Sushruta, with some more diseases and therapies. In the 14th century new syndromes and treatments were introduced in *Sharngadhara Samhita*. It is interesting to note that Amber ordered for the compilation of all medical knowledge under the direction of his Hindu minister Raja Todarmal. During the British rule, the Eastern Western medicine was favoured and the indigenous form lost its glory. The translation of Sushruta's work into German in the 19th century opened the eyes of the physicians and researchers toward *Ayurveda*. The plastic surgery of modern times has its roots in that skin grafting and operations for cataract and bladder stone were performed by the *Ayurvedic* surgeons in India in the 18th century itself. Indian literature.

Charaka advises that if anyone asks a physician which Veda he follows, he should proudly answer *"Atharva Veda*, because it advocates the treatment of disease." He also refers to the respect shown to the Asvin twins in the Rig Vedic period. The Atharva Veda refers to fever, leprosy, epilepsy (*Kumara or Apasmara*), consumption (Yakshama), dropsy, heart disease, wounds, headache, parasites, eye and ear diseases, rheumaticm, poison and madness. To cure these diseases, charms, plant and animal juices, natural elements like Sun and water and human contrivances were used in the Vedic times. The medicinal substances were used as amulets. Children were very much affected by epilepsy; a dreaded disease and people believed that it was supposed to be a seizure or attack by a dog-demon. (*The Vedic Age, p.528).* The symptoms were the stiffness of the body and much crying aloud. Boys were affected by a peculiar disease called Samkha in which the patients uttered tones resembling the sound of a *samkha* (conch) when blown. Takman, a kind of fever (perhaps like malarial fever) is detailed in five hymns of the Atharva Veda. Apart from the medicinal cure of these diseases, people had magical and superstitious beliefs that enabled cure by propitiating the demons by means of rites and ceremonies. Headache and poisonous bites also received ritual treatment.

The physician was held in high esteem. Asvin twin gods were considered to be the great healers of diseases and experts in surgical art. They were respected as divine physicians who restored eye sight and cured the blind, sick and maimed.*(The Vedic Age,p.398)*.They are mentioned over four hundred times in the Rig Veda. They rejuvenated the sage Chyavana and revived the sage Rebha when drowned and given up as dead. When Atri Saptavadhri suffered from suffocation, the Aswins gave a cooling and refreshing draught. It is interesting to note that they cured Paravrij of blindness and lameness. When Vispala's leg was cut off in a battle, the divine surgeons replaced it with an iron leg. . Fractures were well treated by them. It is not known why the divine physicians were not treated well in the *Yajur Vedic* times. They were allotted a share only after the other gods grudgingly purified them. Though the physicians were highly respected in the Rig Vedic period, Yajur Veda emphasises that a Brahman must not practise medicine, because a physician is impure and even unfit to attend a sacrifice. But all the students of the Vedas were expected to learn medicine as they learnt astrology, grammar etc.

The fourth Veda contains lot of information about the use of herbal plant, which are referred to as antidotes for poison, or medicinal plants. Good water has the capacity to heal all ailments and gives good digestive power. (v.26) Jaundice is cured through *Shuka* seeds.(v.98) The leaves and seeds of *Shirish, Sthouneyak, Talish, Gandhak, Jambu, Arka, Dadima,*

*Shigru and Kshiri* are beneficial to cure jaundice and heart diseases.

*Oshadhis*, the herbal plants were well used for their curative powers. On the spiritual side, people believed in sincere prayers for long life. *Soma* is the king of plants (v.2198) The sweet tasting herb called *Munja* is cold in nature and cures itch, leprosy, and diseases related to urine and eyes. It stops fever, diarrhoea and dysentery. It cures piles, burns and removes thirst. (v.8) *Ashringhi* is an antidote for poison; Asking, *Rainy* (Atharva veda, vv.99-102) and *Asuri* (v.104) cure leprosy and the whiteness of the head and body. Perhaps the latter may denote leukoderma, a skin disease that has been considered as a dreaded contagious disease and also known as *venkushtam*(white leprosy). Though scientifically it has been proved as just a change in the skin, even in modern times people are scared of the disease. *Asuri* beautifully changes the colour of the skin. *(Ibid)* It also cures wounds. *Sarupa* cures boils. The herbs cure even diabetes and bronchitis. *Silachi* also known *as Arundhati* is a medicinal creeper is used for severe contusion or fracture. The *Vishanaka* plant cures illness caused by wind and uproots diseases inherited from parents. (v.1427)

Much importance has been given to *Kusha* grass *(darbha)* in *Atharva Veda* as it helps one to have a healthy life. It increases the life span and protects the lungs and heart.(vv.4771&4772)It conserves the soil, makes the atmosphere and heavens firm by its radiations, and the bearer knows no evil, and it wards off all trouble and brings peace and happiness.(v.4779) *Ghritachi*'s root is used as a poison killer.(v.2704)*The Atharva veda* specifies different ways of nullifying the effect of snake poison.

- Fastening bandage on the affected part to prevent the poison from spreading.
- Injection of poison to neutralise the poison.
- Putting hot bandage on the affected part.
- Applying the plaster of Soma, a medicinal herb. (v.2706)

The fig tree *(Focus Infectoria)* ,Pipal tree(*Aswatha or Ficus Religiosa), Khadira(Acacia Catechu),Arundhati(Laksha* or lac)contribute to heal the wounds.(v.959)The lac is applied on the wound or fracture so that healing is expedited. The shelter under the fig tree and the use of drinking of boiled water of its leaves cure consumption. *Varana* , a medicinal tree, cures consumption through its intense fragrance.(v.1552)A plant called *Vrisha* is used to strengthen and exalt the nerves and nourish the semen and make one stronger and heroic. (vv.613&617)

The *Atharvaveda* includes many medicinal charms and enumerates a number of diseases, which the demons were supposed to cause. For the *Takman* disease, the plant *Kushtha* was considered to be the best cure. But it is not clearly stated whether it was used as a medicine or amulet. The energy and power derived from *Kusha* grass for fighting against the fighting force is tremendous. It appears to be a mine of radiating energy. The *Jangida* herb is useful to cure asthma; the cancer of the backbone and consumption (v.4795) The plant is even used as an amulet. The learned physician grows this plant by transplanting it thrice in the well-prepared soil. (v.4791) The *Shatavar* plant's root could destroy the germs of consumption and cure ulcer and eczema.(v.4801)The *Kushtha* plant is capable of curing all kinds of fever and pain giving diseases.(v.4814) *Ajashringi or Kakrasingi (Odina Pinnata)* cures cough, thirst, dysentery, vomiting and consumption. *Atharvaveda* speaks high of *Guggulu, Pila,Naladi, Aukshagandhi, and Pramandni* as medicinal plants which could cure many diseases.(v.880) These also find their place in *Ayurveda. Vacha* (v.639) and *Prakri* (v.641), the medical herbs are antidotes for poison. The leaves of the plant *Prishniparni* cure cholera and other diseases. (v.291)

Charaka has emphasised that there is no substance in the world, which has no medicinal value. Jivaka proved it by demonstration. The *Ayurvedic* texts have mentioned innumerable medical plants. Most of them are in use in modern times too. *Psyllium* seed are used for bowel problems. To reduce blood pressure, the alkaloid extracted from *Rauwolfia serpentina* is used. To stop diarrhoea *Cissampelos pareira* is very useful. It also proves to be a smooth muscle relaxant and antidote for snakebite. *Tylophora asthmaticais is* effective for bronchitis and asthma. Recent researches have proved to be fruitful in using bamboo shoots, neem fruit, betel leaf, *bibhitaki* and three varieties of tomato as possible contraceptives for males. The papaya seeds immobilise sperms. Its effect is reversible too. On females it induces abortion. To treat heart disease, *the Ayurvedic physicians use Coleus forskohlii plant*. It also reduces blood pressure and relieves abdominal colic, painful urination, respiratory disease, insomnia and convulsions. It is interesting to note that the seed of *Canavalia virosa*, which is very poisonous and narcotic, is used for extracting the poison of a scorpion or centipede. The seed is rubbed raw on one side and applied over the sting of a scorpion where it remains for five to seven hours and when falls off its own, all the poison has been extracted from the tissues. *Aragvadha(Cassia fistula)*is used in treating fever and skin diseases. Mint is used to relieve gas, colic, nausea, cough and congestion, and stimulate the circulation and control head ache. Galls, the tumours created on trees by insects are used as astringents for diarrhoea and dysentery and expectorants in respiratory problems.

*Amalaki*(Emblica officinalis) is used to cure respiratory problems and it makes a good hair oil against greying and baldness.Charaka calls it the best medicinefor preventing ageing. Its fruit contains vitamin C. The whole plant is of therapeutic value. *Haritaki (Terminalia chebula)* has much effect on *vata* and scrapes *ama* away from tissues, especially from the digestive tract and rejuvenate the body, especially the colon and lungs. *Bibhitaki (Terminalia belerica)* has much medicinal value. It helps to remove flam (*kapha)*. The dried ripe fruit stops diarrhoea and is useful in curing piles and skin diseases. *Amlaki, Haritaki and Bibhitaki* are known as *Triphala* and are used to shampoo the hair, wash the body, and as emetic or a laxative, as nose, eye and ear drops, as a gargle or a snuff, and as a decoction for enema. The gum of the *Babbula(Acacia arabica)* tree is highly effective on diarrhoea, dysentery, diabetes and excessive menstrual bleeding. Women consume a sweet made from this gum for four to six weeks after childbirth to regain physical strength. *Vacha (Acorus calamus)* or calamus reduces *vata* and *kapha* and increases *pitta* and acts as an aphrodisiac. It controls epilepsy and improves the voice and speech. A coma or shocked patient returns to consciousness if its powder is blown into the patient's nose. It is used to control bedwetting, sleepwalking, sleep talking and tobacco addiction. To enhance the intellect and stimulate the immune system, babies were given its paste with gold and honey or ghee. It is also useful to cure headache, bronchitis, pneumonia, cough, diarrhoea etc.

*Bilva (Aegle marmelos)* is a sacred tree for the Hindus. It is full of medicinal value. Its leaves are used as poultices in inflammation and gangrene; the leaf juice controls diabetes its roots controls *vata*; cold and fever; its fruit helps digestion; its fruit jam cures diarrhoea and constipation; bilva oil is used as ear drops to treat deafness. *Ghrta-kumari (barbadensis)* helps the woman to tone the female organs. Fresh gel found inside the leaves is applied externally to burns, rashes and inflammation; if taken internally it cools the liver and eyes, purifies blood, balances the menstrual cycle and reduces excessive bleeding, regulates digestion and soothes the whole body. Its leaf powder could be a purgative or some times aggravate *vata*.

*Tambula (Areca catechu)* tree bears betel nuts. The arecoline in the nuts stimulates peristalsis, constricts the bronchial muscles and reduces blood pressure. But it is harmful to heart. The root of the *Shatavari(Asparagus racemosus)*rejuvenates female organs and blood and improves digestion and strength and cures urinary tract disorders. All parts of the neem tree are bitter in taste but very medicinal in character. It reduces *pitta* and *kapha*, purifies blood. It is used for fever, liver problems, ulcers and skin diseases and even syphilis.

Bamboo (*Venu or Bambusa bambos)*is used to cure fever, asthma, cough and paralysis. The roots of Barberry *(Berberis aristata or darvi)* contain antibiotic alkaloid. It reduces *pitta and kapha* and controls jaundice,s kin eruptions, inflammations, boils, abscesses and ulcers. *Darvi* helps to cure piles, reduces body fat and enlargement of the liver and spleen. *Punarnava* (pigweed or *Boerhaavia diffusa*) is laxative, digestive and appetising .It is effective in heart diseases, cough, asthma, intestinal colic, haemorrhage, anaemia, nerve diseases, urinary stone, alcoholism, rheumatism, consumption, hepatitis, biliousness, fever and poisoning. Its paste is used to heal skin diseases. In the western part of India, the village physician treats jaundice by tying one inch pieces of *punarnava* root into a garland to which incense is offered. A coconut is offered to the physician who makes seven marks on his own hand and ties the garland and ties the garland on the patient who should be cured within seven days. Though it may look superstitious, people believe in the practice, like the people of the Vedic times who believed in tying amulet to cure diseases.

*Guggulu (Commiphora mukul)* scrapes fat from the body, purifies blood, strengthen the nerves and rejuvenate the tissue. It is used to treat chronic bronchitis and indigestion, hay fever, consumption, emaciation, diarrhoea, colitis, hepatitis and leucorrhoea. Sushruta has made his remarks on *guggulu* and in modern times, it is used to reduce cholesterol in allopathic medicine. *Rasagandha (Commiphora myrrha)* is used to treat obesity, rheumatoid arthritis and purifies and rejuvenates female reproductive tract. *Durva (Cynodon dactylon)*, the Bermuda grass, dries excessive fluids, blood, lymph, fat and urine and stops bleeding. Its juice is used as nose drops and as enemas for bleeding piles, or colitis. It is used to treat diabetes, diarrhoea, hysteria, epilepsy and insanity.

*Dhattura (Datura metel) or unmatta* is a poisonous plant. In the Vedic period its seeds were smoked to relieve respiratory spasm and expel tenacious mucus of asthma. In modern times its leaves and flowers are used in medicine. *Eclipta alba or kesharaja* is used to cure hepatitis, prevent ageing and greying and rejuvenate bone and tissues, teeth and hair and improve sight and memory. People suffer from intestinal problems use *Vidanga (Embelia ribes)*. It clears tapeworm and roundworm and kills certain pathogenic bacteria. Though asafoetida is used in cooking, it has medicinal value. It is a resin collected from the living rhizome and root of a small tree called *Bingu or Ferula foetida*. It relieves pain in the swollen joints and frees the downward movement of apana. By applying a thin paste of asafoetida to the distended abdomen relieves painful or obstructed menstrual flow. Sushruta calls *madhuvinashini (Gymnema sylvestre )* as the 'killer of diabetes'. It is interesting to note that when chewed, it prevents the tongue from tasting anything sweet for some time. *Japa* or Hibiscus flowers are sacred and remove heat from the body, control bleeding, cool the genito - urinary tract, purify the blood, cool the mind. Boiled and powdered hibiscus flowers consumed by a woman thrice daily for a fortnight after her menses ends are reported to provide contraception for the whole month.

The seeds of the *Kutaja* plant( *Holarrbena antidysenterica*) purify the urinary and biliary tracts, strengthen the lungs, cure diarrhoea and dysentery, fever, bleeding piles, gas and colic. Its bark is also used for curing skin diseases and haemorrhages.Another popular herb very useful for curing diseases associated with lungs is *Pushkaramula (Inmula racemosa)* .It also tones the female organs and controls diabetes. External application of its paste relieves muscle pain. *Katphala (Myrica nagi)* or bayberry bark purifies the respiratory and digestive tracts and the nervous system. Its powder is used into the nose for swoons, headaches and head cold It could be used as a mouth wash for mouth ulcers and toothache. Its decoction with ginger juice cures asthma, cough, and chronic diarrhoea, dysentery and bronchitis.

*Tulasi (Ocimum sanctum)* or the holy basil controls *vata* and *kapha* It purifies, oxygenates and invigorates the body, removes the effects of poison from the body, and is very effective in the early stages of cancer. The leaves are very useful for bronchial problems like cough, asthma, hiccups, and pleurisy and for the heart. Its juice could be applied as eardrops. Betel leaves (*Nagavalli or Piper betle)* are chewed with interest by many Indians. Its juice cures all respiratory ailments. It is also applied over the breasts to promote milk secretion. *Pippali (Piper longum)* or Long Pepper fruit paste is used to treat anaemia, rheumatic diseases, asthma, cough, loss of appetite, ascites, piles, consumption, and respiratory problems. Charka considers *Chitraka (Lumbago zeylanica)* or leadwort as a great remedy for piles and colic. *Eranda (Ricinis communis)* or the castor plant yields seeds, which are used to make castor oil. It is a great medicine for pain in the joints, stomach, pelvic organs, sprains, menstrual pain, inflammation etc. Its roots reduces *kapha and vata. Bala( Sida)* plant roots strengthen the tissues and nervous system. The decoction of *bala* root with milk is useful in treating some arthritis problems.

Gokshura (Tribulus terrestris) rejuvenates the genito-urinary tract, particularly the prostate. Added with milk, it helps to correct impotence. *Tagara (Valeriana wallichii)* Is used as a sedative, nervine and anti-spasmodic for muscle spasms, menstrual cramps, colic, digestive and nervous problems. *Ushira or Vetiver (Vetiveria zizanodes)* relieves thirst and burning sensation and purifies blood, skin and genito-uri-

nary tract.Ayurveda also suggests ways and means of diagnosing diseases, preparation of medicine from various parts of the plants, different types of surgery to cure diseases.

The people of Tamilnadu from very early times had their own code in diagnosing and curing the diseases. Even before they came across allopathic medicines and treatment, they had their indigenous medicines. They never used any chemical properties, which would have some bad side effects too. They believed that "prevention is better than cure." They utilized the roots, stems, leaves, barks, buds, flowers, seeds, vegetables, fruits etc. of trees and plants as basic and prime materials for preparing medicines for various diseases. Various herbs were grown in house itself and the people at home knew how to make use of them for smaller ailments Going to the physician was the last resort for them. The medicinal herbs grow in such a manner that people do not know their values. It is believed that Siva himself spoke to Parvathi about Siddha medicine, who in turn gave the message to Nandideva who taught to the Siddhas the ancient method of treating the diseases. Many rulers of the south patronised Siddha medicine. People believe the presence of divine grace in Siddha method.

The Siddha system of medicine owes its origin to the Dravidian culture, which is of the Pre-vedic period. An examination of the ancient literature would reveal that the vedic Aryans owed allegiance to the cult of Shiva and the worship of the phallus (*linga)* which was later on absorbed by, and incorporated into the Vedic culture. The Shiv Cult is associated with its medical counterpart, the Siddha system of medicine, which is mainly therapeutic. Mercury, sulphur, iron, copper, gold, bituman, white, yellow and red arsenic and other materials as well as vegetable poisons are extensively used in the pharmacopocia of the Siddha tradition. The Siddha system of medicine is prevalent in the Sourthen States of India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, and Singapore, where the Dravidian civilization was document.In the North of India, the *Siddha-Kalpa* system (Siddha means one who has attained immortality. *Kalpa* means panacea) is known as Tantric Science. Siddha Science considers nature and man as essentially one. One who knows the anatomy of nature and its five elements knows well the anatomy of men. Nature is the foremost physician. The Tamils who inhabit the Southern peninsula of the sub-continent of India have an impressive and venerable past, as ancient as that of perhaps the Egyptians. They undertook a systematic study of nature and its elements and from what they were able to grasp, they had developed a highly systematized medicine, which is now known as Siddha system. It is well founded on the basic principles of nature and its elements offer a careful and thorough study of the human system.

The ancient Tamils in their quest for knowledge for longevity developed two ways by which man can achieve mastery over nature. One is the Yogic way and the other is through medicines The persons who dedicated themselves to this task were themselves great yogis known as Siddhas. Hence the system of medicine propounded by them came be known as Siddha system of Medicine. This system can be traced to the prevedic period. Siddha, a Tamil word that is derived from its root 'chit' means perfection in life or heavenly bliss. It generally refers to eight kinds of supernatural powers attainable to man. The persons who had attained such miraculous powers in life are known as Siddhars. They are men born with great talents who lived thousands of years ago in Tamil country, who by their devotion and search for truth, achieved perfection in their lifetime.

The earliest mention of the use of medicinal plants is to be found in Tirumular's *Tirumantiram-Ennayiram, Tolkappiam* and the ancient Tamil works of *Sangam* Literature that are believed to have been written thousands of years before the Christian era. There are now more than 500 works in Tamil dealing with various subjects such as science of life, nature of universe, astronomical data, cosmic dance, atomic theory, space travel, alchemy, '*Kaya Kalpa*' medicine, etc.

According to Siddha medical science the universe consists of 5 elements. Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether, which correspond to the five senses of the human body. Man consumes water and food, breathes the air and then maintains the heat in the body. He is alive because of the life force given by ether. The earth is the first element, which gives fine shape to the body, including bones, tissues, muscles, skin, hair etc. Water is the second element representing blood, secretions of the glands, vital fluid etc. Fire the third element that gives emotion, vigour and vitality to the body. It also helps digestion, circulation and stimulation besides respiration and the nervous system. Above all other is the characteristic of man's mental and spiritual faculties. A suitable proportion of these five elements in combination with each other produce a healthy person. These elements are divided into two halves, namely physical and subtle. And this subtle part is further sub-divided into two equal parts of which one is retained as such and the other part is again subdivided into four equal parts. This is what is known in Siddha system of Medicine as the theory of *Panchikarnam* (Fivefold combination). It is fact the functioning of the five elements in the human body. The ideal of the unification of energy and matter and the synthesis of the various phenomena of sound, light, heat, etc. which modern science has been endeavoring to establish were achieved by the ancient Siddhas, when modern equipments was not available for research. Siddhas also held that he who knows the secret doctrine of the five elements, could change a baser metal into gold. Siddhas alchemy is based on this theory. Kalpa Treatment: Ancient Siddha devoted time in finding out suitable remedies rather than describing the causes of a disease in detail. The scope of '*Kaya Kalpa*' treatment is two-fold; one is to cure degenerative diseases and the other is to prolong the life span. Kalpa serves as an anti-degenerative elixir that can cure cancer and heart diseases is itself rejuvenation.

Siddha Science considers nature as the foremost physician. Apart from utilising the medicinal plants, the Siddhas have shown excellent method of surgery and it is surprising to know that they had the knife which could part a hair in to two. Siddhas have diagnosed nearly 4448 types of diseases and found out remedies for the same. The Siddhas were great exponents of indigenous herbal medicines. They have given to the whole world a new type medicinal cure for almost all diseases-small or big. The Siddhas utilised different types of herbs for the preparation of various medicines The influence of Allopathic medicines and availability of Allopathic doctors and belief in their treatment have made the Tamils to give scanty attention to their own Siddha medicines which do not harm them any way. Slowly it was waning. Even the rural people have forgotten the simple, less costly and safe Siddha practices and have fallen a prey to Allopathic treatment. It is absolutely essential to revive the

Siddha practice in curing diseases. There is remedy for every disease in Siddha method.. It has different ways of curing a disease.

Siddhas like Agasthiya, Tirumular, Bhogar, Pulippani, Kalanki, Sattamuni, Ramadevar, Kamalamuni, Machchamuni, Uromarishi, Karuvurar, Idaikkattar, Sundaranandar, Akappaisiddhar, Pampattisiddhar, Theraiyar, Yuki munivar and Yakoppu have contributed a lot to herbal medicine. Even the idol of Lord Muruga in Palani temple is made of herbs by the Siddhas and the sacred water after *abisheka* is very medicinal in character. *Pranayama* and *Surya Namaskara* are parts of Siddha practices to keep the body, mind and spirit fit. They prevent various ailments. The herbal medicine is harmless. It is interesting to note that treatments are available for mental illness, evil eye, and the defects caused by ghosts and spirits. The Siddha method showed in *Manimantra Aushadam* relieves the illness. We could find similar practices available in *Atharva veda.*

There is remedy for diseases associated with eye, ear, throat, tongue, heart, lungs, teeth, mouth, lips, face, brain, skin, stomach, women, men, children etc. Eye is a vital organ of our body. It needs to be protected well. Due to mal nutrition, and other causes eye is affected in very many forms. The eclipse plant *(karisalankanni)* is the best medicine to keep the eye in good condition. If it is consumed daily with food and used to have a head wash, eye sight would remain good. All sorts of greens (*keerai*), curry leaves vegetables, pomegranate and cumin (*siraksm*), improve eyesight. The juice of East Indian Rosebay (*nandiyavettai)* and basil (*tulasi)* are used to cure any eye disease. To increase eyesight lady's finger *(vendaikkai)* could be taken to cure eye pain and stop the beating of eyelids the juice of betel leaf is used. For eye itching, the paste of gallnut could be used. For curing night blindness *(malaikkan)*, the juice of bael (*Crataeva religiosa)* leaves (*vilvam)* could be applied. Banana is prescribed to improve the vision. A*adatodai* flowers are used to remove the reddishness in the eye. Fenugreek greens are good for people who have eye problems.

Ear problems cause much uneasiness. The juice of betel leaves, and neem oil help to cure ear pain. Though allopathic doctors condemn the practice of putting few drops of oil heated with a garlic pearl, the Siddha School advocates this treatment to cure the ear pain. To stop puss in the ear, few drops of jasmine leaf juice is preferred. Another treatment is putting *Strychnos nuxvomica* (*ettikkai*) in neem oil for few days and burning it piercing through a needle. They gather the oil while it burns and put one or two drops in to the affected ear. The patient would be completely cured. This treatment should not be effected on children below the age of three.

Nose is a tender part of the body. It could be very easily affected. To stop bleeding of the nose, gallnut *(kadukkai)* powder could be admitted into the nose. If there are blood clots falling from the nose, roots of basil and *sirukeerai* could be ground with cow's milk and drunk both in the morning and evening. Similarly there is herbal cure for extra growth in the nose and water flowing from the nose.

Teeth are important to give a shape to the face as well as to speak well. If teeth are not protected well, many diseases will affect one. Though many pastes are in the market, the Siddhas prescribe herbal products. Stem of neem tree, and the powders made of leaf of mango tree, gall nut, lime skin, banyan root falling from the tree *(vizhudu)* make the teeth stronger and shining. To remove the yellow tint in the teeth the juice of eclipse plant is used for gargling. It could be cooked and consumed too. To stop bleeding in the teeth, the powder made of gallnut, cumin and salt is prescribed. A paste made of salt, tamarind, clove *Sison ammi ( omam)* is suggested to cure the gum with blood leakage. Camphor and clove powder is used for the same. Clove oil is also used. Chewing of betel is preferred to strengthen the teeth. If the tooth is shaky, boiled gallnut water could be used for goggling. Gallnut powder could be used in the tooth to stop shaking. . Dried ginger is of great help to the patients to get relief from toothache. Goggling of boiled pepper, ginger and *Acalypha Indica(kuppaimeni keerai)* would relieve the pain .

Mouth, tongue and lips are to be taken good care. *Solanam Nigrum(manathakkali)* is a good cure for sore in the mouth. Basil boiled in sheep's milk, groundnut, mint leaves, coriander leaves, fruits of *Ficus racemoso (aththi)* are to be eaten for curing sores in mouth and tongue. It is assumed that if there is sore in mouth, there will be sore in the stomach too. It would cause greater damage to life. Hence proper treatment should be given. For throat infection, limejuice with honey is suggested. For dryness of the throat, it is better to drink lime mixed in hot water. To clear the throat, dried ginger could be munched. If there is growth of flesh in the throat, toasted gallnut could be munched and the saliva could be taken in. For tonsils a mixture of *Karisalankanni*, gingely oil and cow's milk is well boiled as a paste and applied in the throat. For throat pain, bael fruit could be eaten. Honey is the best cure for any problem related to mouth, throat and lips.

Heart is another vital organ, which is to be given good care.. Fenugreek greens are good for heart. Most of the heart diseases take place because of deficiency of Vitamin C. So it is necessary to add oranges, gooseberries, and lime in our daily meal. The powder made of dried ginger, pepper, cumin and the bark of *Terminalia alata (marudappattai)* mixed with honey is good for heart diseases. The boiled palmyra flower water cures heart problems. White lotus juice is also good for the same. For high palpitation *aththi* fruits could be boiled in milk and drunk. Climbing brinjal (*thuthuvalai keerai*) and Bryonia *Scabara (musumusukkai)* could be cooked and taken. For blood pressure garlic in any form could be consumed. To strengthen the heart and brain basil juice could be taken daily.

Lungs should be kept clean and strong. T*huthuvalai*, drumstick leaves, *Vilampazham, musumusukkai, sirukeerai*, cumin greens should be taken to strengthen the lungs. It is advisable to take five *vilva* leaves ground with ten peppers. For curing Eosenophilia, a mixture of handful of *arukampul* (a kind of grass), 10 basil leaves, 9 peppers and little quantity of cumin with cow's milk could be taken. To stop blood in mucus the juice of *adathodai* leaves with honey is to be taken. Fenugreek *(venthayam)* greens are good for tuberculosis patients. Pomegranate seeds also have good effects on tuberculosis and other bronchial diseases. *Pistia stratiotes (akasa thamarai)* is a great cure for tuberculosis and leprosy. To cure the tuberculosis tumours around neck should eat black basil leaves both in the morning and evening. To deal with asthma, the central nerve of the flower of white *erukku (Calotropis gigantea)* should be taken with betel leaf for one week continuously.

The stomach portion of a human body is very important as most of the vital organs are there. For digestion, betel leaf, *Sison ammi(omam)*, gooseberry, neen leaf, ginger, coriander leaves and pomegranate could be used. To cure sore in stomach, betel stem, pepper, *sirukeerai* could be used. To stop vomiting, indigestion, loose motion, etc., the powder of dried ginger, pepper and long pepper *(thippili)* is mixed with water and drunk twice a day. For constipation gallnut could be consumed every day. Lady's finger and guava also help the patient. For dysentery cumin with curd, *omam*, curry leaves etc are eaten. For jaundice *Kizhanalli* is the best medicine. *Karisalankanni*, the skin of pumpkin are also used. For diabetes, pomegranate, tender mango leaves, black berries, stem of banana tree, radish, dates, bitter guard, neem leaves greens are good. The flower, leaf, and stem of *Cassia auriculata (aavarai)* are to be dried and powdered and used instead of coffee or tea powders. The powder could also be consumed with milk

Similarly there are many herbs to cure the skin diseases, piles, various children's diseases, diseases affecting men and women specifically, intestine, kidney, blood pressure, cancer, different types of fevers, sprain, rheumatism, bile, bites of poisonous insects and living beings, poisonous plants etc. The greatness of honey, betel leaves, many medicinal flowers, vegetables, fruits, seeds, barks, greens, root crops, leaves and even waters in Siddha medicine could not be under estimated. The knowledge of these herbs is essential to utilize them properly. Though the modern world gives importance to Allopathy, an in depth study on herbs would prove that there is cure for every thing in the Siddha school of medicine and it is the duty of every Indian to do some thing to revive its old glory as the Siddhas have contributed to this science in a grand and useful manner.

The *Atharva Veda, Ayurveda* and Siddha Texts give a detailed account of different kinds of ailments, and cure. What is special about the first text is though it it is very scientific and practical n suggesting treatment for various diseases with the help of the herbs available, the black magic pronounced in the text makes the study somewhat unpalatable to some sections of the readers. The *Ayurveda* is well received not only by the natives but by the foreigners too and has universal recognition. The healing of the diseases by using different kinds of herbal products and intricate surgical methods has secured a special place for *Ayurveda* in the field of medical science. The advent of the Muslims and British caused a spell on it but *Ayurveda* has withstood the onslaught and come with new vigour to prove to the whole world its worth. Similarly, the Siddhas have found out easy remedies for simple and severe diseases. Their way of treating a disease is very simple. As the Siddhas have told the healthiness of a person lies in his diet. Siddhas have specified the dos and don'ts of every person in day-to-day life. What is very interesting is that the diseases, cure etc revealed in *Atharvaveda, Ayurveda* and Siddhas' works are more or less same. They have stood the tests of times and in the modern world when Allopathy has been dominating, the indigenous medical form of the Indians has proved that it is in no way inferior to the western science.

Infact, the former proves to be more successful in treating the diseases where Allopathy had failed. Indigenous medicine has proved that the five natural elements and all the plants have medicinal values. The medical tips from the Fourth *Veda, Ayurveda* and Siddhas' works are essential to be used in one's life, as they are simple, less expensive, harmless and very fruitful. It is necessary not only to safeguard this treasure but also to propagate to the whole world the importance of the same, so that the world community as such would benefit a lot.

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Vijnana Bharati