**Ayurveda In Vedas**

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Life is beginning less and so is the knowledge about it. Quest for relief is since origin of man. But the earliest existence of Ayurveda is said to be manifested before creation. Ayurveda is nothing but the science to keep away the disease and maintenance of health i.e. science of life. History of medicine in India in ancient period is actually the history of the science of life (Ayurveda) which is shaped by ancient seers and later systematized as one of the upavedas.

Man does not stand in a vacuum; rather he is subjected to a number of forces operating in the universe guided by the time spirit. Man is a social product and as such his ideas shape others and shaped by others by process of interaction. Ayurveda has been a part and parcel of the culture of India as such is mixed up in the entire Indian documents. Atreyaa said in Aagniveshatantra (presently named as Chraka Samhita) Ayurveda (the science of life) is beginning less and eternal and further says that the creator has delivered Ayurveda even before creations. Brahma before creating man it self Ayurveda has been ready to deal with any eventuality in the future. The parampara mentioned in the text says; Brahma delivered it to Dakshaprjapti, Dakshaprjapti in turn to Ashwini devata to maintain the health of devatas and later, passed to Indra for maintenance of health of swargaloka, from where it has come to earth by the worldly sages Atri, Bharadvaja etc. moved by the affection of the people due to sufferings from various physical and mental diseases, approached Indra and brought Ayurveda down to earth for prevention and cure of ailments. Susruta’s mention is from Indra to Dhanwantri and follows on...

Hence the science of life is existed in prevedic era like Paleolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic ages also similarly in vedic and post vedic era. There may be some change in form and content from age to age but the central motive and instinct is the same.

Among all the oldest texts in the world Vedas are premier which dealt with Ayurveda along with all other branches of sciences.

1. **"Andeenaah shyaam saradah satam, Bhooyascha saradah sataath"** Y. 36/24  
   ‘O’ Paramatma, bless with hundred or more years of life with out any problems’.

2. **"Kurvanneeh karnaani jijeevishechatam sanna”** Y. 4th chap. 2nd mantra  
   Desire for hundred years of life while working in this world. For what this hundred or more years of life, to work properly in the world, so to fulfill this aim let us free of health problems - this is the ultimate of this prayer and this science. Out of four Vedas, Ayurveda discussed more in Atharva veda rather than Rig and Yajur Vedas, but it is regarded as upaveda of Rigveda (because of antiquity) or upaanga of Atharvaveda (because of similarity in approach and the subject matter).

Eight names of vaidika granthas noted in Atharva veda, in which ‘Bheshajaveda’ (which deals about the drug & treat) and Yatu veda (deals about the diseases) were described. This it self is obvious that, Ayurveda mostly elaborated in Atharvaveda than others.

Out of 9 sakhas, pouppalaad and shoumakeyaa sakhas are only available, in which shoumakeyya is more popular, from where the contents of this paper are taken.

Ayurveda has been elaborated in veda not in the pattern of Astanga ayurveda but described all astangas over the Vedas in scattered manner. 76 names of rishis are mentioned in vedamantram who are drastas of ayurvedic mantras. Vaidik rishis gave many upadeshas regarding integrity if life and also described in many places about prayers and measures for prolongation of life without any diseases. Though the matter is in vivid let usenumerate some of the important principles, theories and concepts originated in vedic periods, which are at present the nucleus/ foundations of the medical world.

Some of them are, knowledge of Anatomy (including 118 organs, 360 bones etc) blood circulation, arohdisas, achievement of conception, physician and his role, diseases and its causative factors (endotoxins, krini and imbalance of tresodhas), drugs and its usage, toxins, ierogenesis, methods of treatment godly and rational, art of surgery and its miracles, obstetrics and gynecology and many more prayers and measures.

**ANATOMY: (SAREERAA RACHANA).**

In Atharvaveda 10th khanda and 2nd sutra described almost all parts of the body (motor organs), sensory organs, psychological feelings, blood circulation and pranapaanda organs etc. And description of many organs were also found in yajurveda 25th chapter - Organs in the entire body of human is divided into 4 groups

1. **Urdhva sareeraravayaava (upper part of body)** 2. **Madhyaa sareeraravayaavah** 3. **Aadhav sareeraravayaava 4. Anthah kostavaayavah** - Urdhva sareeraravayas (above clavicles) are numbered 32 in which keshaa, shira, kapaala, masthika, laalaata, bru, karna, mukha, shmasru, chibuka, kantha, greevasti.

Madhyaa sareeraravayaavaha is nothing but trunk, comprising of 24 organs in which skandha, amsa, amshaphala, parshava, udara, prastavamsha, prastashi, spine etc Adhav sareeraravayaava are 36. Comprising of parts of lower limbs and circulating fluids like Rasa rakta mamsa, vasa, veerya, rajah, pittam, shlesha are included. Actually, even today as per Ayurveda, these are classified under ‘saakhasa’ only.

Anthah kostavaayavahas described are 26, which included all visceral organs like puppasa, amaashaya, pithasaya, unduka (appendix) guda (rectum) ‘gavantaak’ uterus and falloppian tubes, urinary bladder, testicles and all genital organs of both sexes.

In total 118 organs described and 360 bones were enumerated equating 360 days of the year which are bases of body and time (cosmos) respectively.

In nutshell look at these two manthras mentioned in Atharvaveda 10/2 to reveal the knowledge of body.

**Astachakra, Naradwara, devanaampurayodhyaḥ | Tasyaam kiranyanayay koshah swarga jyothishamith**  
A.V. 10/2/31

There is an unconquerable (Ayodhya) towns of Gods with eight wheels and nine entrances which is having an illumination of swarga with brightness.
Hiranyaye koshe tryare tripratistate |
Tasmin yad yakhshaatmanvath tadvou bramhavidoiduh |
Within that Hiranyakosha, three chambers are located with
tree centers of satwa, raja, tamo gunas in which jeevatma,
who is bramhajani is seated.
In this way Vedas described anatomy of body (organs) mind
(trgahunus) and spirit soul (atma) encapsulated - which is no-
thing but the definition of Ayu i.e. life according to
charakasamhit "sareendriya satvatma samyoge dhari
jeevitham".

BLOOD CIRCULATION:
Though the history of medicine at present reads blood cir-
culation is discovered by William Harvey in nineteenth centu-
year, look at the description of blood vessels, its contents and
its flow in vedas.
"Imaa yaasthe satam heeraah sahasram dhamaneeruta" A.V.
7/36/2
This is the widespread network of sirah (veins) and dhamani
(arteries) in the body comprising of hundreds and thou-
sands of vessels.
"Yasthe satam dhamanyozzgaanaanyu visithithah" A.V.
6/90/2
These vessels are spread in all organs.
"Bitvadmadnym" 7/36/2 hanging caliper in it for flow of blood.
On puncture of these vessels two colours would be found.
"Teera arunaah" 10/2/11 - Bright red (Aruna)- Dhamani
(artery)
"Taamra dhoomraah" 10/2/11 - smoke colour (tamra) - Heera
(vein)
In Vedas blood is also called as "Lohini" 10/2011 indicating it
contains Loha (iron), nowadays called as "Haem" since it is
having Haem = Iron.

APHRODISIACS: VAAJEEKARANA
Vaaji in the sense a man should have solidy, good physique and
potency (force) like vaaji (horse), the process which makes it
is known as vaajikarana. But this treatment is indicated for
only the debilitated weak persons.
"Yena krisham vaajanyathi yena hirvantiyathuram" A.V.
6/101/3

ACHIEVEMENT OF CONCEPTION: GARBHADHANA
Given much importance to get pregnancy with an aim to
achieve a progeny with longevity of life, with out any dis-
ease and for most potent performer. But not to increase the
crippling population.
"Aa veero jaayathama putrasthe dasamaasayah" A.V.3/23/
2
Couple must be potent to have a potent child -
The term Garbhadaanavidhi is self explanatory, for sex edu-
cation to get child, not for enjoyment. Described the process of
grahadaanavidhi, care of pregnant and care of child.
Let us move from health to disease section of Vedas.

DISEASE:
"Yaksma" is the synonym of 'oga', but commentators treated
it as Rajayaksha disease, but the fact is yaksha means
roga 'Yaksmaanam sarrerham' A.V. 9/8/10.
Out of which 12 diseases jwara kaala, baalaas, Apaahi,
Jayaanya, Harisma, Mootarodha kshetriya kilas arsava
vishuch and unmada described detail and many other dis-
orders described at various places. Rigveda 10 mandal 136
sookthi A.V.2/33, 9/8, 20/96 - and stated 'Ajnatayakshaat'
indicating many unknown disorders.

Kshetriya word is also used for disease, as this sayana com-
mentary says it is a genetically inherited disease, which is
transmitted by the patient to his son and grandson.
Jayanya is a disease which affects bones, musculature and
cervical vertebra. It is of infection nature and transmitted
from person to person. It is of two types wounded and unwounded.
Kasa - cough respiratory disorders, Jwara - Infection disor-
ders, Apachi - glandular enlargements, Jayanya - Disorders of
bones musculature, cervical vertebra, Kshetriya - Genetically
inherited disorders, Hasime - Jaundice, moora rodhe - dysuria,
Kilasa - Leucoderma vitiligo, Asrata - polyurea, accidental
hemorrhage, Visuchi - Gastro enteritis, Unnada - Insane.
Apar form the above, without naming the disease, diseases of
the organs are described in abundant viz. netra, nasika,
karma, sira, masthiksa, yoni, loma, nakha etc and also stated
"Ajnata yaksma" which indicates the diseases are innume-
erable.
Prime etiological factors of a disease mentioned in Vedas are
a) Endogenous toxins, its cumulations and causation of a
disease
"Yaksmapsanam sarvesham visham niravolchamaham" A.V.
9/8/10
b) Krimi or jeewanu - drishya - adrishya.
A.V.5/29/6, Y.V.16/6
c) Imbalance of tridoshas
A.V.6/109/3

KRIMI:
Under the caption of krimi covered and narrated all types of
jeewanu (microbes) udarakrini (body parasities), keeta,
pathinga (insects).
"Ye antah krimayo gaavi" krimi in environment (cosmos) A.V
2/32/1
Again two varieties of krimi described. 1. Visible
2. Invisible
"Dritamadreestambthram" A.V. 2/31/2
Mode of transmission -
Obviously described that "the krimi enters into the body through
water, milk, takra (A.V.5/29/7)"
"Ye annshesham vividhyanthi paatharesh pibathaam janam" through food and
vessels.
Described sites of manifestation of several organisms which
causes pathogenicity in a various organs A.V.10/1112/2
Several synonyms also quoted Rakshas, pishachhi (eats,
spreads through meat) and, yaatru, yaatradhan, krimidou
Gandarva (gayaka krimi), apsara (transmits through water),
Asura (which takes the prana).

DRUGS:
In vedic age man had intimate contact with the environment
particularly plants. In rites, ceremonies and sacrifice plants
played a great role in various forms. They defined a group of
trees useful in sacrifices as yajnya vriksha and plants used as
bhesaja for alleviate the disease. The osadhi suktar of RV
(10.97.1-23) is the authoritative document of the knowledge
about plants in the age. Various classifications based on struc-
ture, colour and usages were described.
Descriptions of not only of plants but minerals were also
present. Several thousands of names of drugs were mentioned
in Vedas but few drugs described in detail.

Yaaschaham veda veerudha yaascha paashyami
chakshushya |
Ajuantaajaa jaaeeeyasaachha ya yaasvu vidya cha
sambrutam | | 8/7/18
This 'Ajnata' word indicates that, you might be having vast
knowledge of plants and drugs, but still many are obscure.
Knowledge of medicines and its therapeutics were more in traditional practice. “paramparagaata” A. 19/39/9.
Knowledge of medicinal usage was well learned from cattle, birds, and other creatures.
During the vedic period, drug marketing was existed. Medicines were also treated as source of income. Place of sale and purchases also described.
By virtue of medicine you will get money, cow, horse, cloth etc.
Description of 67 plants in rigveda, 81 in yajurveda, 89 in atharvaveda is available apart from general mention.
In Vedas specific drugs were mentioned for specific diseases.
Prescription of single drug is available, but not mentioned multi drug therapy (compound drugs).
PHYSICIAN; is known as Bhishak.
‘Bhishati chikitsithe iti bhishak’ Who ever counters the disease, he is known as Bhishak.
‘Pavithraaya bhishak’ of yajurveda indicating that the medical profession is a holy and noble one.
Supreme physician is ‘paramaatma’ bheshajierbhisktam two bhishajo srutomi’ R. 2/33
Physicians are two types 1. Daivyam 2. Manusha.
Daivyam are agni, rudra, varuna, indra, ashwini deva, maruta and sarwati. Six male and one female physician.
Bhishak is defined as “the person who relieves the patient from suffering is the right and best physician” similarly, for sake of patient who further consults another physician and treats is still best. Bhishaja bheshajani krineath A.V. 2/9/5.

METHODS OF TREATMENT:
Diseases may be caused by unknown affect of natural agents or disturbances in innate factors. The former were treated by offerings and prayers to gods and other natural agents (daivyaparasraya chikitsa). The latter are treated with external and internal application of drug remedies (yuktiryparasraya chikitsa).
In vedic medicines, the division is included with two epithe ‘Rakshoha’ and ‘Ami vacatana’ given to bhishak. The physician was simultaneously treating Rakshas (supernatural unseen causative agents) and amita (innate disease) with recitation of hymns and application of drugs. The following methods were employed in vedic medicine.
1. Prayers and offerings to Gods-like Indra and Varuna.
2. Use of natural remedies like sunrays, fire, water and air. Fire is regarded as panacea (vishwabhesha), fire is mentioned as destroyer of rakshas as well as amrita. Fire and air are said as bhishak.
3. Internal administration of drugs
4. External application of drugs
5. Mechanical intervention such as catheterization in case of retention of urine.
6. Surgical operation.
Rigveda described many miracles of surgical skills (salya).
Ashwini kumaras are treated as best surgeons. Some of the surgical techniques are as follows.
1. Joining of amputated organs organoplasty
2. Iron/metal leg arranged for vishalpa who lost leg in the battle for better walking.
3. Major surgeries were done with metallic instruments.
4. Treatment of the conditions, injuries caused by Agni, Danda and metals.

5. Fractures, wounds, angabhangas were discussed.
6. Ashwini provided eye balls to Rijrasra and given light to blind.
   “Aakhir rijsra Aswinadhatham”
   “Jyothirandhaya chakradhuah vchaksha” R.V. 1/117/17
7. Removal of arrows and weapons pierced in various parts of body including heart. A.V. 6/60/1
   “Roobho ratghayaesaangagani sandadhatth parshara paru” A.V 4/12/7
The above stanza states that “surgeon is like a carpenter of a human body” which is indicating technical know – how of surgical skills of those days.

OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY:
Certain salient features found in veda regarding obstetrics and gynecology are as follows:
1. The Vedas contain various references of female genital organs.
2. ‘Gavini’ i.e. fallopian tubes were also described.
3. The woman is considered as kshetra.
4. The beautiful girl wearing ornaments was advised to select her husband, in other words, marriage was done in mature age.
5. Description of nourishment of fetus from mother specially through nabhi is available.
6. The drugs to protect the pregnant woman and protection from rakshas or krimi.
7. The process of labour, and good details of mechanism and management of labour are available in Vedas specially in the atharvaveda.
8. 10th month considered as best period for parsva.
10. Method of male and female contraception is available.
The man is made infertile by use of drugs (anti spermatogenesis) or by crushing his two naadis (vasectomy). A.V. 6/138/1.5 – by mantras and use of L.U.D. were noted for females.
11. pumasvana karma i.e. to achieve conception, to achieve deserved child.

CONCLUSION:
Though the Vedas are apaurushayas, the Vedas are considered to be the first written record of Indian literature containing innumerable references of science of life.
Apart from all the above, there are several descriptions on longevity of life, toxins, iatrogenic disorders and many more prayers and measures for maintenance of health, prevention of disease and to treat disease were mentioned in Vedas. The high edictive knowledge on this science of life in vedic period is still mystic in light of present day science. The surgical techniques described still appears to be miracles even by the high technique surgeons of the day. Vedas are nothing but all the aspects of the art and the science of living. The truth is that the Vedas represent all these and much more. The Vedas contain the seed of all modern sciences which needs for a comprehensive review of true facts.
In conclusions, it can be said that the entire vedic literature is full of the ideas and facts in relation to the science of life, which guided the development of the subjects as ayurveda in post vedic era.