

AyurvedaNews

Chakrapani Ayurveda Clinic & Research Center
Chakrapani Global Center for Training & Research in Ayurveda

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Testimonial from Dr. Jürg Zuber, Switzerland

Dear Dr. Rajesh Kotecha, During my stay at your clinic for five weeks you gave me the opportunity to experience the deep wisdom of Ayurveda. In the setting of high class lectures by brilliant teachers along with practices of the broad spectrum of Panchakarma you created a very effective learning program. I enjoyed also the warm and encouraging atmosphere that allowed discussions in totally individualized way, while maintaining a high scientific level.

I would like to thank you, your highly qualified teaching body and your clinic staff that made this possible. I am looking forward to come again. Sincerely,

- Dr.med. Jürg Zuber

(Thanks Dr. Zuber for wonderful compliments on our training programs)

Kindly visit us at <http://chakrapaniayurveda.com> to use our free Ayurveda online consultation facility.

Dr. Kotecha's 10th Trip to USA

The CEO of Chakrapani Ayurveda Clinic & Research Center, Dr. Rajesh Kotecha 'Vaidya' will be visiting USA from **March 24 till April 20, 2005**. Dr. Rajesh is again invited to the community in the West and mid West to give lectures, consultation and conduct workshops. He will be with Mr. Gary Grewal, President of Garry and Sun, USA. Please see the detailed schedule hereunder and take advantage of the golden opportunity by attending his events. His tentative program for the lectures, workshops, personal consultations and Panchakarma at different places of West coast and Mid-West, USA is as below:

March 25 - March 26: Workshop on Ayurveda at Omaha Yoga & Bodywork Center. **Contact Ms. Susi Amendola at 402 553 8250. Website:** <http://dovoganow.com> The workshop will include an introduction to Ayurvedic Health principals including, The doshas, The Gunas, Pulse Diagnosis and Herbs.

March 27 (Sunday): Ayurveda cooking class **Contact Ms. Sandy Aquilla at 402-435-5078**

March 28 - April 05: Personal consultations & Panchakarma treatments at **Omaha Healing Arts Center, 1216 Howard St Old Market, Omaha, Nebraska. Contact Ms. Sandy Aquilla at 402-435-5078. Website** <http://omahahealingarts.com>

April 11 - April 20: Personal consultations and panchakarma treatments at Reno, **Contact Mr. Gary Grewal at 1-888-98-HERBS or 775-530-9942. Website:** <http://garrysun.com/ustourmar05.html>

Editor's Note:

The today's feature article entitled "**Food Principles: An Ayurveda Approach**" is a contribution of Dr. Mita Kotecha, Vaidya. According to Ayurveda the diet plays an important and delicate role for the maintenance of our health. We hope that our valued readers will enjoy reading different aspect of Ayurveda in every issue of AyurvedaNews.

We are thankful to Gilgi Hauser for helping us edit this issue of AyurvedaNews. Do enjoy reading AyurvedaNews. Each issue contains new information and new articles.

We invite your views and ideas on the subject matter and content of our feature articles. Our wish is to help you and for this we need your input to help us to serve you. So please keep us posted with your views, ideas and preferences.

Food Principles: An Ayurveda Approach: 'Vaidya' Mita Kotecha

Ayurveda, the oldest existing health science has survived through the ages fulfilling the mission of helping the healthy people to retain optimal health and ailing population with its three dimensional holistic approach towards the health in the physical, mental and spiritual plane. According to

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Ayurveda the diet plays an important and delicate role for the maintenance of health. Out of three Upasthambhas, the Ahara, Nindra and Bramhacharya, the Ahara (diet) has been recognized as an essential factor for the smooth running of life. Being supported by these three well regulated factors of life, the body is endowed with strength, complexion and growth. These qualities remain in optimally healthy status until the full span of life provided a person doesn't indulge in such regime as are detrimental. Among all Upasthambhas, Ahara is the best sustainer of life.

In modern science food can be defined as any substance which when consumed, is utilized to yield energy or heat, helps in building up of new tissues or repair the worn-out tissues, regulated the body processes and aids in production of body compounds. If viewed closed there is an intimate relationship between entire personality of the man and his diet. Thus it can be said "a person is what he eats." Food as a whole serves three important functions (1) it provides material needed for growth and repair of the body tissues. (2) It provides energy for the life process to continue. (3) It provides the necessary materials, which regulate the body functions. Though the supremacy of diet is universally accepted some misconceptions have crept in to the minds of the people for example now a days it is believed that in take of ghee will increase the body lipids and cholesterol. This misconception is the result of the trend followed by the dairies while preparing the ghee and vegetable oils. If we consider the preparation of ghee by modern dairy industries we can see that they separate cream from milk using a machine specially designed for this purpose and it will also regulate the fat percentage of milk during the separation. This cream is heated, filtered and marketed as ghee. This ghee obtained directly from milk will not be exported to Manthana Samskara and Agni Samskara, it is just the "Amasneha" that can increase "Amansh" in the body and cause Agnimandya. Studies done over this aspect had shown that it is this ghee which will increase the lipid levels in the body. The same can be interpreted for the vegetable oils also. On the other hand if we consider the traditional preparations of ghee in Indian homes the concept of "SAMSKARO HI GUNANTARADHANM UCCHYATE" stands good in this context. At first milk is converted in to curd and the churning to curd will present the butter which is exposed to heat and Ghrita is prepared. In the above process in every stage new properties will develop and the final product is considered as best. This Ghrita without any Amansha will increase Agni and Medha and studies has shown that it will not affect the lipid levels in the body. Thus we should strive to include the ghee prepared by the traditional way in the diets of the people.

Another example necessary to be quoted in the present context is the trend of consuming salads (raw vegetables). In Ayurveda it is mentioned that Shaka (Patra, Phala and Kanda etc.) are Vishtambakaraka, Guru and Ruksha Pradhana Dravyas. It is also said that they will destroy the Asthi Dhatu and vitiate Rakta and Shukra Dhatus. Since some of the Shaka are having nutritive values and to make use of them Acharya Charaka has given the remedy for the above problems. For the Shaka to be easily digestible and nutritive they should be boiled at first and devoid of any water content. Later on, they should be fried / seasoned by adding ghee and other spices. It is also seen that cutting vegetables in to small pieces and exposing them to air may result in loss of nutrients. On the other hand steaming of vegetables prevents vitamin loss due to leaching and cooking in acid media with tamarind and other acids. This has a protective effect against nutrients and vitamins. Some of the vitamins like vitamin 'A' and carotene are not lost during cooking and instead, cooking destroys harmful food borne microorganisms. Digestibility of several foods particularly of starch on cooking and heating or autoclaving of the legume improves protein quality since their access to enzyme and their digestibility improves. In Ayurvedic parlance, by Agnisanskara the food will attain Laghuta and Ruksha Guna of Shaka will be subsided by adding ghee and making it Sneha Siddha.

Since the main aim of taking raw vegetables in the form of salads is to maintain the consumption of dietary fiber. We should not forget that on cooking DF (dietary fiber) will neither be lost nor its beneficial effect will be reduced. Since the diet of people of more meat eating countries will not include much DF, it becomes imperative for them to take DF in the form of raw vegetables but if we direct our viewpoint towards the diet of Indian homes it will be cleared that our diet contains adequate dietary fiber. For e.g. the daily recommended intake of total Dietary fiber (TDF) is 25-40g/day and Roti made of wheat contain 12.5g/100g of TDF. This means our Roti consumption only is able to provide most of our requirement of DF. Thus it can be said that diet should contain cooked vegetables as far as possible instead of raw ones.

Another example needed to elicit in the same context spreading misconceptions is our approach towards sprouted legumes. Today's conventional science projects sprouted beans or lentils as the major source of nutrition. But Ayurveda strongly discourages to take them stating that this Viruddha Anna are very heavy in digestion and aggravate Vata and Pitta. But if we give Agni Sanskara and add Sneha then Laghuta and Snigdha Guna may develop in the sprouts and can be easily digestible. Apart from it, non nutrient components like tyrosine inhibitors are distributed widely in legumes and they generally inhibit the activity of trypsin in the gut and interfere with digestibility of dietary proteins and reduce their utilization. But as they are heat in cooking, they can be inactivated and help in protein absorption. Another non-nutrient components present in high amount in seed coat of most legumes is tannins. They bind with iron irreversibly and interfere with iron absorption. Removal of seed coat of legumes and later on cooking will reduce tannin content of the diet and improve iron absorption. Tannins are also known to bind proteins and reduce their availability. Thus it can be concluded that instead of taking sprouted beans directly we should at first cook them and consume them. Hence it is an ardent advises that present generations should ponder over this and misconceptions formed should be rooted out from the minds of the people.

We need a wide range of nutrients to perform various functions in the body and to lead a healthy life. Since we derive all the nutrients we need through the diet we eat, our diet must be well balanced to

provide all the nutrients in proper proportions. Thus Ayurvedic medical fraternity should strive to spread the message of promotive and preventive aspect of Ayurveda globally regarding the diet of the people of modern era.

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Dr. Mita Kotecha is M.D. in Ayurveda from Gujarat Ayurveda University of India and is presently working as Assistant Professor in the Department of Dravyaguna (medicinal plant sciences) at the National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur (India). Earlier, she was Head, Department of Dravyaguna and Director of Herbal Garden at Chitrakoot University. She has authored and published several research papers and articles on Ayurveda and a book entitled "Concept of Lekhana (obesity management) in Ayurveda". You can contact her personally at drmita@chakrapaniayurveda.com.

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