

Prospective of Ayurvedic Pharamacy

Dr.K.S.Jayashree,M.D(Ayu),
Prof.& H.O.D.,Dept. of P.G.Studies in Dravyaguna,
Govt. Ayurveda Medical college, Bangalore-9,

Email: ayushree@rediffmail.com

Ayurveda the most ancient medical system of the world has laid down standards in every aspects of discernment of the science. These are even today relevant and valid. The very definition of the science Ayurveda is, 'The one which promotes the knowledge about the effect of everything existing in the universe with reference to their qualities and pharmacological activities and whether beneficial to the life or otherwise.

यतश्चायुष्याणि अनायुष्याणी च द्रव्यगुणकर्माणि

वेदयत्यस्तो आयुर्वेदः॥

The Incredible concepts related to physiology, pathology, pharmacology and pharmacy etc.. are extremely thoughtful, sustainable, and adaptable in the present milieu.

Ayurveda pharmacy has been evolved from a simple fresh preparation of Svaras-the expressed juice of the plant to fortification and coating of a medicine and also the use of metals through various processes to bring in them the organic qualities in order to make them acceptable by the human system.

Ayurveda has expounded the multifaceted activity of a single plant, and similar activity in many plants. Drug/ dravya being one of the fourfold requisites(chikitsa chatushpadas) of chikitsa (treatment) is considered to be genuine, not just by its identification but also by its availability in abundance, manifold activities and enabling the vaidyas to use it in multiple dosage forms.

बहुतातत्र योग्यत्वमनेकविधकल्पना संपद्यते चतुष्कोऽयं द्रव्याणां गुण उच्यते

The sages of Ayrveda had the vision about the plants as to in which form, after which type of a processing will produce the required effect. There is marked influence of conventional pharmaceutical practice on the Ayurvedic drug industry too. This has resulted in use of one type of extract in all types of preparations and the earlier dosage forms like churna, kashaya, grutha etc.. are slowly disappearing. It is not for the one single phyto-constituent, the plant was used instead the whole

plant being utilized in every process depending upon the medium used, the concentration, proportion of the liquid medium, nature of the medium, amount and duration of the heat given during the process every thing play a vital role in making the plant material to be efficacious in the expected way.

Let me try to give few examples to accentuate this novel approach our ancients had developed in the pharmaceutical field.

Hartaki –Terminalia chebula is known for its broad-spectrum pharmacological activities. Ayurveda vaidyas in Karnataka were named after this plant as Alalekayi pandita. This one drug with change in processing can exhibit different activity. One among them is ‘ haritaki swinna grahi—“ the drug when heated through exposing to steam acts as an astringent. Otherwise this is used as a laxative. Once this drug is cooked in water by the suspension method totally changes its pharmacological activity from laxative to astringent a contradicting activity. This is being practiced by vaidyas since centuries. With the help of modern analytical method the type of chemical transformation occurring during process could be understood. On svedana the tannins present in the Terminalia chebula fruit gets converted in to tannic acid.

Terminalia arjuna –arjuna is a well known cardiac tonic/Hrudya. Since centuries this drug is being used in hrudroga and this activity is attributed to prabhava of the drug, which means the activity can not be proved by rasapanchakas(the primary components of the drug, namely; rasa, guna virya, vipaka prabhava). At present it is understood that the arjunolic acid (a new triterpene) present in this plant is responsible for its hrudya activity, which is capable of reversing cardiac infarction as well as prevent the same. It is simply amazing to know our preceptor’s thoughtfulness and sustainable knowledge. Though we do not have the relative literature as what was the rationale, which were the parameters they utilized, one thing is evident that their observations are adaptable, acceptable for ever.

It is claimed that the practitioners of the alternative medical systems depend on subjective reckoning and user testimonials rather than scientific research to support. Hence they remain outside the scientific fold. If this were to be true the attributes listed for each plant appears to be guesswork. Instead every information details when tested with modern parameters are reproved. This itself shows how much potential the vision as well as the mission of the ancient preceptors of the science Ayurveda had.

In commensurate worldview –the conventional system is objective, materialistic, and mechanistic, the other (alternate/complimentary medical system) is subjective, animistic, and morally driven

There are instances wherein the available modern scientific methods are inadequate to re-establish the concepts/theories of Ayurveda. For example-sneha paka a special dosage form evolved in Ayurvedic pharmacy. A study carried out on Nirgundi (*Vitex nigundo.*) grutha prepared with this plant material when subjected to H.P.T.L.C. revealed presence of some phyto constituent. But this was not identified because lack of standard. Whether the phyto-constituent is identified or not this preparation is clinically proved effective in children as a memory enhancing medicine.

Ayurvedic potential is in its result, which is evaluated clinically, and also the established methodology.

Now days the whole drug extracts are being used majority of pharmaceuticals units, because this prevents the cumbersome efforts in collection, processing of the plant material etc. Ready aqueous extracts of whole plants are available and this can be bought and mixed with other extracts and filled in caps and packed. This is much more easier. But the clinical study carried out in the dept of Post Graduate Studies in Dravyaguna, G.A.M.C. Bangalore, shows variation in efficacy of the drug. Thriiphala available in the form of Sukshma triphala or thriiphala churna have better action as laxative or anulomaka. On the other hand the capsules with only aqueous extracts appear to be less effective in constipation. No doubt this extracts are really effective in producing one type of activity but are not the choice for the other activity. This fact was realized by the seers of Ayurveda as reason Bahukalpam –manifold utility of the drug in various dosage forms was advocated.

Ayurveda has established its own concepts in every subject like sharira kriya, sharira rachana, kayachikitsa,

draavyaguna shalya etc... these concepts help in identifying the underlying pathology and to plan a treatment for the specific disease. Karyaphala is the result of the treatment and this is evaluated through the various types of pariksha of the rogi for the presence of rupa-clinical features, state of the doshas, dhatus etc..

As the basic principles of the disease management differs from that of the conventional system at times it appears to be out of this standards. For example use of dipana pachana dravya in amajvara may not have any relevancy in modern medicine. But for an Ayurvedic physician it is very important. Thus the drug used initially may not act like paracetamol or like an antibiotic. The comparison between these two drugs may not be an encouraging one. Still the efficacy of the drug cannot be denied. Unless until the principles of Ayurveda is understood, the drug action appears to be empirical.

Researches if focused on only modern parameter the result may be useful to development of modern pharmacology. Further if the phyto constituents are isolated and used there is every possibility to produce ADR (Adverse drug reaction). If a molecule is developed synthetically will again end up with similar situation already being observed.

Ayurveda as whole if adapted its potentiality can be well appreciated.
