

Ayurvedic Doctors Sunrise Review 2019

Comments and Recommendations by Colorado Citizens for Science in Medicine (CCSM)

Introduction

Ayurveda is a religion belief system that has been mainly use to treat patient ailments, primarily in rural India, with herbs and diet. But numerous invalidated and dangerous practices are integral to Ayurveda, making it a threat to public safety, with untenable regulation. Much of Ayurvedic healing practices were reconstituted by the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi some four decades ago. Deepak Chopra is current the leading proponent in the United States

Reasons to Never Regulate the Practice of Ayurvedic Medicine in Colorado

1.) Ayurveda is pre-, non-, and anti-science.

* Ayurveda adheres to their notions of “universal principles,” *gunas*, *doshas*, and balancing the “four elements” (air, water, fire, earth).

“Our digestive systems represent fire, while our blood and lymph tissues represent water.”

* Ayurvedic practitioners hold that there are “Eternal and Absolute Truths” which makes the belief system and practices unamendable to verification by scientific methods or meaningful regulation.

2.) The practice of Ayurveda is highly unethical.

* The practice of Ayurveda violates all ten points of the [Nuremberg Code](#) on Permissible Medical Experimentation. Without evidence that their practices and nostrums are effective and safe, Ayurvedic practitioners are essentially treating their patients as experimental subjects, but without the benefit of appropriate consent and safeguards.

3.) Ayurveda misleads the public in trying to appear science-based while promoting traditional methods

* The terms “Ayurvedic Medicine” and “Ayurvedic Science” are oxymorons.

* Ayurveda is [presented](#) to the public as a [valid](#) “ancient wellness system” that restores “whole body balance” so people can achieve “limitless potential.”

* Meanwhile Ayurvedic practitioners claim to perform [miraculous cures](#).

4.) Ayurvedic [claims](#) to have eight “branches of medicine.” This is also misleading for the public.

- Kaayachikitsa - Internal Medicine
- Baalachikitsa - Pediatrics
- Bhuta Vidya - Psychiatry
- Shalaky Tantra - Ear, Nose and Throat Treatment
- Shalya Tantra - Surgery (not practiced in the United States today)
- Vishagara Vairodh Tantra - Toxicology
- Jarachikitsa/Rasayana - Geriatrics and Rejuvenation
- Vajikarana – Aphrodisiac Therapy, Fertility, and Conception

5.) Mainstay Ayurvedic treatments are *insanely* dangerous.

* A 2014 *JAMA* study found dangerously high levels of toxic heavy metals (mercury, arsenic, lead) in 20% of Ayurvedic preparations imported to the United States.

* There is a long tradition in Ayurveda of ingesting heavy metals, such as mercury and gold. The formulations for many Ayurvedic preparations, called *bhasams*, require heavy metals additives. It is believed that heating these metals “detoxifies” them and makes them harmless.

According to Dr. C. Viswanathan, an orthopaedic surgeon who is also well versed in Ayurveda, ‘the oxide of mercury is certainly toxic and is a health problem... . I think it is just wishful thinking to suggest that any amount of baking with herbs is going to make mercury non-poisonous.’”

* Tantric alchemy influenced Ayurveda in associating gold and mercury with immortality.

* Ayurveda considers all substances are medicinal when properly prepared.

*“Various classics of Ayurveda recommend a variety of medical treatments that make liberal use of animal products, including cow urine cooked in ghee for treatment of epilepsy, skull bones mixed with cow’s urine as a cure for ulcers, and beef, to quote Charaka Samhita, for “rhinitis, irregular fever, dry cough, fatigue, heightened digestion and wasting of muscles”. Contemporary Ayurvedic medicines routinely - and legally [in India] - use 75 ingredients derived from animals.
– From: “[Ayurveda under the scanner](#),” Meera Nanda, *FRONTLINE*, April 2006; 23(7).*

*[D]angerous amounts of lead have been found in Ayurvedic medicines, including ghasard, a brown powder given to relieve constipation in babies, and mahayogaraj gugullu, for high blood pressure.
– From “[Ayurvedic medicine](#),” *The Skeptic’s Dictionary*.*

*In 2003, a survey of Ayurvedic herbal products manufactured in South Asia and sold in Boston-area stores found that 14 of 70 products (20%) contained concentrations of lead, mercury, and/or arsenic that — if the products were taken according to directions—would exceed published regulatory standards. The authors also noted that Ayurvedic theory attributes important therapeutic roles to mercury and lead and that perhaps 35-40% of medicines in the Ayurvedic formulary contain at least one metal. The authors concluded that users of Ayurvedic medicine may be at risk for heavy metal toxicity, and testing of Ayurvedic HMPs for toxic heavy metals should be mandatory.” “[Heavy Metal Content of Ayurvedic Herbal Medicine Products](#),” Robert Saper, et al, *JAMA*, 5 Dec 2004.*

Several studies done in other countries have had similar findings. Another survey published in 2008 found potentially harmful heavy metals in many more Ayurvedic products. After identifying 673 products on 25 Web sites, the researchers randomly selected 230, received and analyzed 193, and found that one fifth of them contained heavy metals in amounts that exceeded standards for acceptable daily intake. – From [Lead, mercury, and arsenic in US- and Indian-manufactured ayurvedic medicines sold via the Internet](#),” by Sapier RD et al, *JAMA* 300:915-923, 2008.

In 2012, the CDC reported six cases of lead poisoning among foreign-born pregnant women in New York City who had taken Ayurvedic products. – From “[Lead poisoning in pregnant women who used ayurvedic medications from India—New York City, 2011-2012](#),” *MMWR* 61:641-646, 2012.

6.) Ayurveda’s claims for “therapeutic” gold water, silver water, and copper water, from an Ayurveda [website](#).

Health Benefits Of Gold Water

Gold is not only beautiful but has divine properties that can assist in maintaining balanced health. It is also heating and so should be used in caution in conditions with excess heat.

- Strengthens the nervous system
- Improves memory and intelligence
- Increases stamina
- Beneficial in Arthritis
- Asthma
- Breathlessness

Health Benefits Of Silver Water

Silver, in contrast to gold, has cooling effects on the body and is therefore recommended in cases of excess heat. However as with gold, it should be used with caution. Because of its cooling nature, in cases of colds and heavy damp qualities in the body Silver should be avoided.

- Antiseptic properties
- Increases strength and stamina
- Beneficial in emaciation
- Antibacterial properties
- Useful in heartburn and fevers
- Beneficial in Inflammation and Menorrhagia
- Works as a Disinfectant

Health Benefits Of Copper Water

Copper is perhaps the most widely used metal for health benefits. Copper vessels are used extensively in India and drinking from a copper cup daily is seen as assisting in maintaining optimum health. Copper is particularly beneficial for these conditions:

- Obesity
- Liver and spleen disorders
- Joint issues
- Polio
- Hypertension
- High cholesterol
- Stress and mental tension
- Paralysis
- Benefits the nervous and circulatory system
- Aids in bone health

7.) Ayurvedic practitioners claim to treat serious illnesses effectively.

As a final case, let us look at Swami Ramdev's prescription of purnayam as a "miraculous" cure for "all diseases, from A to Z". Ramdev lists some 260 conditions, including infectious diseases (cholera, leprosy, syphilis), hormonal disorders (diabetes, thyroid disorders) and complex, life-threatening,

systemic diseases of heart, liver, kidneys, brain, reproductive system. Yoga and purnayam (deep breathing exercises) alone, he promises, can "completely" cure all of these ailments. He claims that patients show significant improvements in their blood-sugar level, blood pressure, cholesterol and triglyceride levels, lung functioning and obesity by doing yoga and purnayam for just eight days in the "yoga-science" camps he organised periodically through 2004-05. There are undeniable benefits of yoga. But curing diabetes? Curing infectious diseases?"

– From: "[Ayurveda under the scanner](#)," Meera Nanda, *FRONTLINE*, April 2006; 23(7).

8.) Ayurvedic herbals are claimed to have specific vibrations that match the "quantum mechanical body." Just as herbs, they largely have no proven benefit, e.g.:

* *Nigella* (*Nigella sativa*), also called black cumin or black seed, grew in sales by over 200%. It's touted as a herbal remedy and used in Ayurvedic medicine. There are claims that can treat asthma, diabetes, digestive issues, hypertension, and more. Evidence is lacking to support use for any of these conditions.

* *Moringa* (*Moringa oleifera*) is another herbal remedy with roots in Ayurvedic medicine. It experienced sales growth of 30% and seems to be sold regularly as a powder. The report suggests that consumers may be attracted to *Moringa* for "general wellness and nutrition benefits." As a food product, *Moringa* has been used to support nutrition programs. As a medicine, evidence is lacking it has any specific benefits or even effects.

– From "[Billions on herbal remedies – and for what?](#)" Scott Gavura, pharmacist, *Science-Based Medicine*, 1 Nov 2018.

9.) Its main spokesman, Deepak Chopra, makes claims for Ayurvedic, including "yogic flying,":

"Needless to say, this is a remarkable moment for every meditator, and of the fifteen thousand TM meditators in America who practice the yogic flying technique, each one remembers his first liftoff with incredible vividness. My own experience is fairly typical. I was sitting on a foam rubber pad, using the technique as I had been taught, when suddenly my mind became blank for an instant, and when I opened my eyes, I was 4 feet ahead of where I had been before."

"If you have happy thoughts, then you make happy molecules. On the other hand, if you have sad thoughts, and angry thoughts, and hostile thoughts, then you make those molecules which may depress the immune system and make you more susceptible to disease."

"Ayurveda. Its a total plan for ... using the power of quantum healing to transcend disease and aging—for achieving Perfect Health."

10.) It appears there are too few Ayurvedic practitioners in Colorado to consider regulation.

The National Ayurvedic Medical Association [lists](#) only 39 practitioners in Colorado.

CONCLUSION

It is the opinion of CCSM that the practice of Ayurveda should not be officially recognized by the State of Colorado by awarding it a regulatory scheme. Ayurveda is mysticism that lacks a realistic scientific foundation. It lacks a meaningful code of ethics, and it does not acknowledge the dangers its practices pose to the public, especially children. Their lack of standards would make the effective regulation of this practice futile. Ayurveda is allowed within the scope of Colorado's Health Freedom Act. Should Ayurvedic practitioners harm the public, they can be charged with the unlicensed practice of medicine and/or subject to the state's criminal code, which offer the public, in this case, better protections than regulation.

References

[Lead, mercury, and arsenic in US- and Indian-manufactured ayurvedic medicines sold via the Internet,](#)” by Saper RD et al, *JAMA* 300:915-923, 2008.

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[“Cowabunga – Can Cow Therapy Cure Cancer?”](#) Harriet Hall, MD, *Science-Based Medicine*, 3 July 2018. *A hospital in India offers to cure cancer in eleven days with Ayurveda.*

[“Ayurveda under the scanner,”](#) Meera Nanda, *FRONTLINE*, April 2006; 23(7).

[“Gold Water, Silver Water, Copper Water,”](#) Harriet Hall, MD, *Science-Based Medicine*, 6 October 2018.

[“Ayurvedic medicine,”](#) The Skeptic's Dictionary.

*This report was prepared by **Colorado Citizens for Science in Medicine**, a private association concerned with state legislation that would advance science-based health care practices. 5/3/2019*

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