

AYURVEDIC SERVICES

Ministry of Health and Wellness

What is Ayurveda?

Ayurveda is the time tested traditional system of medicine of India that explains the cause of different miseries, imparts the knowledge of life and advocates promotion of physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing. Ayurveda is a science of life with a holistic approach to health and personalized medicine. It is one of the oldest medical systems, which comprises thousands of medical concepts and hypothesis.

It is known to be a complete medical system that comprised physical, psychological, philosophical, ethical, and spiritual health. In Ayurveda, each cell is considered to be inherently an essential expression of pure intelligence hence, called a self-healing science. In addition, to the self-healing concept, the use of herbal treatment is equally important in this Indian traditional system of medicine. The term Ayurveda translates to "life knowledge" and it emphasises the importance of living in harmony with nature.

Ayurvedic Services in health system

1. The Ayurvedic Unit is under the Curative Section of the Ministry of Health and Wellness. Ayurvedic Service was re-launched in 2004 on a pilot basis at Belvedere and L'Escalier Mediclinic. With good responses and increasing demand of the Ayurvedic Medicine, new outlets were opened at SSRN Hospital (2008), Victoria Hospital (2009) and at Flacq La Source (2010). At present, seven Ayurvedic Clinics are providing Ayurvedic services to the whole island. The sixth Ayurvedic Clinic at Heyderkhan Mediclinic had been launched in September 2017. In July 2024, Ayurvedic Services have been extended to Grand Bois Mediclinic.

2. Services offered at the clinics:
 1. Free Consultation and diagnosis of diseases
 2. Ayurvedic Panchkarma Therapy on prescription
 3. Advising therapeutic yoga in all required and appropriate cases
 4. Advising and counseling of patient as per Ayurvedic principles
 5. Free distribution of Ayurvedic Medicine
 6. Regular follow-up of all cases depending on its acute or chronic condition

3. Brief Statistical overview:
 - a) Attendance: an average of 70 patients attend the clinic daily, with an average of more than 4,000 monthly attendances and an average of 50,000 patients attend the clinics annually;
 - b) Annual sick treated cases are 78,000- 80,000;
 - c) Ayurvedic health services are provided at the OPD level -open 6/7 days;
 - d) Catering all chronic diseases: muscular-skeletal disorders along, skin diseases NCD and many other acute conditions; and
 - e) All complicated cases and emergency cases (if any attend the clinic) are referred to casualty or to respective specialised department.

4. Additional services provided by the Ayurvedic Unit:
 - a) Training of Ayurvedic dispensing – included as Ayurvedic module in the Dispenser course conducted by the Mauritius Institute of Health (MIH);
 - b) Training of Ayurvedic Panchkarma Therapy- to Nursing Staff (selected);
 - c) Radio and Television programs along with frequent talks on Ayurvedic Medicine at community level; and
 - d) Awareness program by Ayurvedic officers.

5. Progress Made:
 - a) Extension of services in different region of the island; initiated from two Ayurvedic clinics (2004) to seven functional Ayurvedic clinics presently.
 - b) Three international Ayurveda conference had been held in 1990, 2011 and 2016, respectively in collaboration with the Indian Government.
 - c) A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed with the Indian Government in 2015 which has been renewed further for another three years, with the aim to developing the Indian traditional medicine in Mauritius through research and development.
 - d) An Ayurvedic Committee has been set-up since 2014 which look into the control of importation of Ayurvedic medicines/herbal product in the country.
 - e) Celebrating Ayurveda Day and Yoga Day - promote and develop both Ayurveda and yoga; to inculcate a healthy way of living and create awareness about the value of these ancient sciences.

6. After running Ayurveda OPD since 2004, and now treating around 78,000-80,000 diseases annually at the 6 clinics, the country is mature to welcome an Ayurvedic Hospital.

| POSITION TITLES | PURPOSE |
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| Officer In-charge (Senior Ayurvedic Medical Officer) | 1. Advising the Ministry with expert opinions and views on matters related to Ayurvedic Services |
| | 2. Chairing regular meetings with Ayurvedic Medical Officers |
| | 3. Coordinating the activities of Ayurvedic Services |
| | 4. Monitoring of Ayurvedic Drug at CSD and Ayurvedic pharmacy |
| | 5. Performing administrative duties for efficient planning |
| | 6. Chairing of the Ayurvedic Committee |
| Ayurvedic Medical Officer (AMO/ Senior AMO) | To provide quality services at the OPD and, be responsible and manage the clinic under the supervision of the Panchkarma Treatment Unit. |
| Nursing Officer (trained in Ayurvedic Panchkarma Therapy) | To be responsible for the clinic and para-medical staffs and perform Panchkarma Therapy. |
| Health Record Clerk | Registration of patient (new and follow up cases), giving of appointments and maintaining files as well as statistics. |
| Health Care Assistant (trained in Ayurvedic Panchkarma Therapy) | To provide quality services: assist at the nursing station and provide Panchkarma Therapy. |
| | To avoid lengthy waiting period of appointment for Panchkarma session as the cases need urgent treatment. |
| Dispenser (Trained in Ayurveda for dispensing) | To dispense Ayurvedic drugs as prescribed by the AMO/SAMO. |
| Hospital Care Attendant | To maintain cleanliness and assist in Panchkarma Therapy and other duties. |

I) Legislation: The Ayurvedic and Other Traditional Medicine Act

1. The existing Legislation was formulated for the Traditional Medicine in 1989 known as the Ayurvedic and Other Traditional Medicines Act, which cater for issues related to Ayurvedic, Homeopathic and Chinese medicine practitioners.
2. Presently, the complete constituents of AYUSH are recognised and accepted in Mauritius. All Ayurvedic and Homeopathic practitioners from Indian traditional medicine, in addition to Chinese medicine practitioners are duly registered by the Traditional Medicine Board (TMB), of the Ministry. The main function of TMB is to exercise and maintain discipline in the practice of Traditional Medicine. Moreover, only Ayurvedic medicine has been integrated in the public health system since 1998 while Homeopathic and Chinese medicines are being practiced privately.
3. The Ayurvedic and Other Traditional Medicine Act is now called the Traditional Medicines Act.

Ayurveda is considered by many scholars to be the oldest healing science. In Sanskrit, Ayurveda means “The Science of Life.” Ayurvedic knowledge originated in India more than 5,000 years ago and is often called the “Mother of All Healing.” It stems from the ancient Vedic culture and was taught for many thousands of years in an oral tradition from accomplished masters to their disciples.

It is a complex holistic system of medicine, which offers indigenous and effective therapy concepts, which are already helping many patients worldwide, especially those suffering from chronic diseases. Today, even in medical circles, Ayurveda is widely recognised in this sense and has reached the threshold of entering into the realm of evidence-based science.

Ayurveda is a traditional system of medicine and health care which originated in the Indian subcontinent. The term Ayurveda denotes “knowledge of life”. It is a compound of two words, “ayu” (life) and “veda” (knowledge). The discipline encompasses the physical, psychological, spiritual and social dimensions of life, deals with dynamic concepts of well-being, harmony, health promotion, longevity, and concerns the

healthy, beneficial and advantageous aspects of human life as well as its unhealthy, deleterious and disadvantageous aspects.

It was first recorded by Charaka, an Ayurvedic physician who lived around 300 BCE, as he wrote the book Charak Samhita. In Ayurveda, there is a large focus on lifestyle and the treatments are very holistic. Ayurveda practitioners believe that your health consists of three different types of substances called doshas which determine how well you feel: Vata Dosha (space & air), Pitta Dosha (fire), and Kapha Dosha (water & earth). There are also seven different elements that Ayurveda practitioners believe help determine your health: Earth, Air, Fire, Water, Space, Ether, and Mind. When you get treatment, it will depend on which doshas or elements are out of balance in your body.

In Ayurveda, wellness is resilience and dynamic adaptation of body -sarira (siryateiti - continuously degenerating substratum) to the external environment (desa – space and kala - time). Wellness is also linked to longevity of life (Aayu) in its three dimensions viz. sukhayu, hitayu, deerghayu. For globalised health systems to advance from the narrow largely medicalised disease-centric approach, Ayurveda's contribution of health-Svasthya as total wellness is significant. There is the important question of balance within (achieved through self-awareness) and balance with the external natural and social worlds.

AYUSH is an acronym for Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Homoeopathy and Sowa Rigpa. Ayurveda is the oldest system with a documented history of its practice for more than 5,000 years whereas Homoeopathy is in practice in India for around 100 years. These systems are being practised in the country with diverse preferences of people and infrastructural facilities. AYUSH systems of medicine include Indian systems of medicine and Homoeopathy.

The Indian System of Medicine is of great lineage. It is the culmination of Indian thought of medicine which represents a way of healthy living valued with a long and unique cultural history and epitomizes the Vedic guidance of “Let noble thoughts come to us from every side”. Thus, one can see an amalgamation of the best of influences that came in from the contact of different sources of knowledge. Ayurveda, Siddha and Yoga has been a part of ancient vedic tradition our scriptures and associated with

sages like Charaka, Shushruta, Agasthya and Patanjali. Unani Medicine has roots in Greece, homoeopathy in Germany, and Naturopathy in the 19th Century Natural Cure Movement of Europe. In parallel to the multifaceted cultural evolution of our country, AYUSH medicinal systems have evolved over centuries blessed with a plethora of traditional medicinal practices. Traditional medicine is also increasingly prominent in the world of modern science.

Ayurveda in Mauritius do meet the primary health care needs, it is accessible and affordable. It is a belief system of medicine and thus, considered integral to everyday lifestyle and well-being. Initially, it was believed and considered to treat mostly the chronic diseases as joint pains, skin disease, hair disorders, etc. Moreover, now its potentials are being explored, extended and established for seasonal diseases, non-communicable disorders and as panacea for adverse effects of chemical medicines with much tailored made treatment based upon the fundamentals of Ayurvedic medicines.

Among several system of Indian Traditional Medicine known over the world as AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha & Homeopathy), Ayurveda stands out distinctly as not only a system of great antiquity, but also a well-organised 'scientific' system of medicine with well-defined aims and objectives.

Ayurveda represents a 'total way of life' and not only a system of medicine that offers to cure diseases through drugs and rituals. It encompasses the body, mind and spirit aspects of a living entity. The term 'Ayurveda' denotes the science of longevity, believing it offers a complete system to live a healthy life. It is an ancient and traditional form of medicine that is prevalent today and also very much reputed and successful. Presently, this medical practice has been enjoying resurgence both in its native and throughout the world. Ayurveda is an interactive system that is user friendly and educational. It teaches the patient to become responsible and self-empowered.