# Revisiting Ayurveda in Covid-19

*Dr. Keshav Chauhan, Senior Ayurvedic Physician, Jiva Ayurveda, talks about how Ayurveda is redefining healing during COVID-19.*

## What role does Ayurveda play in the modern world?

Ayurveda is the world's oldest system of healthcare and it is still being practiced today. India, the birthplace of Ayurveda, is experiencing a revival of this ancient system of healthcare, partly as people outside of India show interest in the resurgence of indigenous knowledge that has transformative potential to heal mental and physical ailments.

Our modern-day pace of life has an increasingly negative impact on our physical, mental and social health, which is manifesting itself in the form of various mental health issues and lifestyle disorders. Ayurveda not only helps us a guide to address such issues but also helps us deal with various acute and chronic illnesses. Ayurveda means "the science of life", the word Ayurmeans "longevity or life" and Veda means "science". In simple terms, we can say Ayurveda is the instruction manual for human beings. It provides us the knowledge of how to live naturally by following certain principles mentioned in Ayurveda.

**In the wake of Covid-19, people are discovering immunity boosters that have its origin in Ayurveda. Tell us more about it?**

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged healthcare systems across the globe. It has turned the world's attention to "the immune system", and immunity-boosting foods and methods, which were long back mentioned in the classical texts of Ayurveda. Charak Samhita, the classic of Ayurveda, describes epidemic management and defines immunity as the ability to prevent disease and arrest its progress to homeostasis. The concept of building the strength of mind and body to cope with various stressors, including infection, is a cornerstone of Ayurveda practice. Similar to innate and acquired immunity, the Ayurveda concept of immunity (Bala or strength) is classified as natural (Sahaja), chronobiologic (Kalaja), and acquired (Yuktikrut).

There is a separate branch in Ayurveda called as "Rasayana", which is completely dedicated to rejuvenation and immunity building. In this branch, there are more than 100 formulas mentioned which helps rejuvenate the body for different purposes. Ayurveda has spoken of very potent immuno-modulators. Ashwagandha, Peepli, Giloy and Amla are some of the common ones that are often recommended by Ayurveda doctors. In addition to that, the AYUSH ministry has also issued several immunity-enhancing guidelines by using Ayurvedic principles.

## What common ailments are best treated using Ayurvedic medicines?

Common ailments like obesity, anxiety and depression, headache, constipation, hyperacidity, gastritis, IBS, skin and hair problems, arthritis, menstrual pain, fatigue and asthma can be treated effectively using Ayurvedic medicines, or even with home remedies.In fact, Ayurveda can be used to treat all acute as well as chronic ailments.

## What Ayurvedic practices should a senior citizen follow to lead a healthy life?

According to Ayurveda, Jara (ageing) is not a disease but a natural phenomenon like hunger or sleep. It is influenced by factors affecting doshas (vata aggravates and kapha depletes), dhatu (tissue) depletion, ojas (immunity) depletion, and indriya (senses) depletion. However, one can live a healthy and happy life even in old age by following basic Ayurvedic dietary rules and dincharya. This routine involves waking up two hours before sunrise, eating at the right time, sleeping on time, performing light exercises and practising yoga daily. Anti-ageing ayurvedic herbs can be used to prevent old-age disorders. Vata aggravating foods and lifestyles should be avoided. To prevent muscle stiffness and rickety joints, gently massage your body with coconut or sesame oil. You can also rotate your joints clockwise and anticlockwise to ease joints stiffness. A daily practice of yoga, meditation and pranayama helps enhance muscular strength and body flexibility, improve respiratory and cardiovascular function, reduce stress, anxiety, depression, and chronic pain, and improve sleep patterns.

## What all areas does Jiva Ayurveda work in?

Jiva Ayurveda was founded with the mission of 'taking Ayurveda to every home'. It's objective has been to make people happy and healthy through lifestyle and regenerative treatment delivered at the doorstep. Today, Jiva Ayurveda has reached millions of patients through its largest and first-of-its-kind Ayurvedic Telemedicine Center (TMC) in the world. Established in 1995, today this center has a team of 500 Ayurvedic doctors and support professionals, who provide free consultations to more than 8,000 patients daily across 1,800 cities and towns in India and abroad. Jiva Clinics and Panchakarma Centers offer personalized care and treatment for all kinds of acute and chronic health conditions. Apart from medications, our ayurvedic doctors provide dietary and lifestyle advice to the patients for their overall wellbeing. Jiva has more than 80 clinics in India. We also have our manufacturing unit, Jiva Ayurvedic Pharmacy that offers more than 600 classical formulation and products to the consumers in the beauty, healthcare, and wellness segment.