



Ayurveda Day 2024

[Source: PIB](#)

Why in News ?

The [Ministry of Ayush](#) celebrated 9th [Ayurveda Day](#) on 29th October, 2024 centered around the theme “**Ayurveda Innovations for Global Health.**”

- The PM launched several health projects, highlighting **India's commitment to accessible Ayurveda.**

What is Ayurveda?

- **About:** Ayurveda focuses on achieving balance in the body, mind and spirit to promote holistic wellbeing.
 - The term Ayurveda is derived from two **Sanskrit words: “ayu”, meaning life, and “veda”, meaning knowledge.**
- **Historical Context:** Ayurveda, with origins dating back to the Vedas (5000-1000 BCE), is **among the oldest healthcare systems.**
 - Ancient texts like the Ramayana and Mahabharata reference plant-based treatments and surgery.
 - Around 1000 BCE, the [Caraka and Susruta Samhitas](#) established Ayurveda's principles, later expanded by Vagbhata's Astanga Sangraha and Astanga Hridaya (Ayurvedic texts).
 - By the 19th-20th centuries, **India formalised Ayurveda education**, creating structured programs and a thriving industry that supports public and private healthcare.
- **Ayurveda Day:** Since 2016, the Government of India has been observing Ayurveda Day every year on **Dhanawantari Jayanti (Dhanteras)** to raise awareness about Ayurvedic principles, medicinal herbs, and lifestyle practices.
 - The **knowledge of Ayurveda is attributed to Dhanawantari**, the divine physician who received this knowledge from the Lord Brahma.
- **International Reach:** Ayurveda spread globally through trade and cultural exchanges, influencing traditional medicine practices in Tibet, China, and beyond.
 - Ayurveda is now **recognised as a traditional medicine system in 24 countries**, with over 100 countries importing Ayurvedic products.
 - This international acknowledgment is furthered by collaborative platforms like the [Shanghai Cooperation Organisation \(SCO\)](#) Expert Working Group, [BIMSTEC](#) Taskforce, and [BRICS](#) High-Level Forum on Traditional Medicine, which foster policy alignment and global healthcare integration.
 - The [World Health Organisation \(WHO\)](#) included **Ayurveda in the ICD-11 TM Module 2**, allowing accurate documentation of Ayurvedic health interventions.
 - WHO **also set benchmarks for Ayurveda practice and training**, raising global quality standards.

What is the Significance of the Theme?

- The theme focuses on fostering Ayurvedic innovation to address global health issues.

- **Key Objectives Include:**
 - Combating [non-communicable diseases \(NCDs\)](#) and antimicrobial resistance.
 - Addressing challenges related to climate change, geriatric and mental health, and nutritional disorders.
 - Emphasizing preventive health and holistic wellness.
 - Supporting the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) and [Universal Health Coverage \(UHC\) vision](#).
- **Key Focus Areas:**
 - **Women's Health:** Utilising Ayurveda's holistic methods to address women-specific health issues.
 - **Workplace Wellness:** Applying Ayurvedic principles to support physical and mental health in work settings.
 - **School Wellness Programs:** Promoting Ayurvedic wellness among children through practices that enhance immunity.
 - **Food Innovation:** Advancing Ayurvedic dietary concepts and innovations by merging traditional approaches with modern culinary methods.
- By promoting preventive health and wellness, Ayurveda supports [Sustainable Development Goal \(SDG\) 3](#) and [Universal Health Coverage \(UHC\)](#).

Initiatives Taken for the Development of Ayurveda

- [National Ayush Mission](#)
- [New Portals on Ayush Sector](#)
- [ACCR Portal and Ayush Sanjivani App](#)

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AYUSH Systems of Medicine

AYUSH encompasses Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa, and Homeopathy, with Ayurveda having a documented history of 5000+ years.

Ayurveda

- **Samhita Period (1000 BC):**
Emerged as mature medical system
 - **Charaka Samhita:** Oldest and most authoritative text
 - **Sushruta Samhita:** Gives fundamental principles and therapeutic methods in eight specialties
- **Main Schools:**
 - **Punarvasu Atreya** - School of physicians
 - **Divodasa Dhanvantari** - School of surgeons

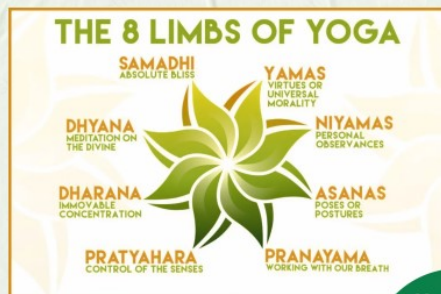
Lord Brahma is believed to be the 1st proponent of Ayurveda

Branches of Ayurveda:

- Kayachikitsa (internal medicine)
- Shalya Tantra (surgery)
- Shalakyata Tantra (disease of supra-clavicular origin)
- Kaumarabhritya (paediatrics)
- Agada Tantra (toxicology)
- Bhootavidya (psychiatry)
- Rasayana Tantra (rejuvenation and geriatrics)
- Vajikarana (eugenics & science of aphrodisiac)



Yoga & Naturopathy



- **Naturopathy:** Healing with help of 5 natural elements - Earth, Water, Air, Fire and Ether
 - Based on theories of self-healing capacity of body and principles of healthy living
 - Encourages a **person-centred approach** rather than disease-centred

Yoga first propounded by Maharishi Patanjali in systematic form Yogsutra

Unani

Pioneered in Greece, developed by Arabs as 7 principles (Umoor-e-Tabbiya)

- Based on the framework of teachings of **Buqrat** (Hippocrates) and **Jalinoos** (Galen)
 - Hippocratic theory of **four humors** viz. blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile
- **Recognised by WHO** and granted official status by India as an alternative health system

Siddha

Dates back to 10000 – 4000 BC; Siddhar Agasthiyar - Father of Siddha Medicine

- Preventive, promotive, curative, rejuvenative, and rehabilitative health care
- **4 Components:** Latro-chemistry, Medical practice, Yogic practice & Wisdom
- Diagnosis based on 3 humors (**Mukkuttram**) and 8 vital tests (**Ennvagai Thervu**)

Sowa Rigpa

Origin: Lord Buddha in India before 2500 years

- Traditional medicine in Himalayan regions of Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, etc.
- Recognised in India by Indian Medicine Central Council Act, 1970 (As amended in 2010)

Homeopathy

German physician Dr. Christian F. S. Hahnemann codified its fundamental principles

- Medicines prepared mainly from natural substances (plant products, minerals, animal sources)
- Brought in India by European missionaries - 1810; official recognition - 1948
- **3 Key Principles:**
 - **Similia Similibus Curentur** (let likes be cured by likes)
 - Single Medicine
 - Minimum Dose



Drishti IAS