

Ayurvedic Medicine Event, June 29th, 2018

Members of the TEGSA faithful convened on Friday, June 29, 2018 to hear the Ayurvedic word delivered by Dr, Vaidya N. Vaikuntharaja, Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery.

The TEGSA committee arranged a snack plate to ensure that the members were receptive to the principles and tenets of Ayurveda which were expected to be demystified in the course of the evening.

The evening commenced with the introduction of the keynote speaker by Loretta D'Sylva, who waxed eloquent about his accomplishments. Dr. N. Vaikuntharaja was faced with the daunting task of introducing a complex subject to the gathering within the 1 hour allotted. Thanks to a Power Point presentation, members got a thumb nail understanding of Ayurvedic Medicine.

As the evening proceeded at a brisk pace, I got a sense from a few members I spoke to, that a printed handout of the evening's discourse would have certainly complemented their understanding of the subject. As well, there were numerous references throughout the evening to "homemade remedies" and it would certainly have been helpful if we had illustrations of a few down to earth examples of what these might be.

The second part of the evening consisted of a lively question and answer session which featured an enthusiastic audience posing a variety of Ayurvedic questions which were fielded by Dr. Vaikuntharaja.

The evening concluded with a vote of thanks by Loretta D'Sylva.

For the benefit of the attendees as well as those members who did not attend, here is a synopsis*** of the presentation.

Developed more than 3,000 years ago in India, Ayurvedic medicine ("Ayurveda" for short) is one of the world's oldest holistic ("whole-body") healing systems. It is based on the belief that health and wellness depend on a delicate balance between the mind, body, and spirit. Its main goal is to promote good health, not fight disease.

An Ayurvedic adherent knows that every person is made of five basic elements found in the universe: space, air, fire, water, and earth.

These combine in the human body to form three life forces or energies, called **doshas**. They control how your body works. They are **Vata dosha** (space and air); **Pitta dosha** (fire and water); and **Kapha dosha** (water and earth).

Everyone inherits a unique mix of the three doshas. But one is usually stronger than the others. Each one controls a different body function. It's believed that your chances of getting sick -- and the health issues you develop -- are linked to the balance of your doshas.

Vata Dosha

This is the most powerful of all three doshas and controls very basic body functions, like how cells divide. It also controls your mind, breathing, blood flow, heart function, and ability to get rid of waste through your intestines. Things that can disrupt it include eating again too soon after a meal, fear, grief, and staying up too late.

If Vata dosha is your main life force, you're more likely to develop conditions like anxiety, asthma, heart disease, skin problems, and rheumatoid arthritis.

Pitta Dosha

This energy controls your digestion, metabolism (how well you break down foods), and certain hormones that are linked to your appetite.

Things that can disrupt it are eating sour or spicy foods and spending too much time in the sun.

If it's your main life force, you're more likely to develop conditions like Crohn's disease, heart disease, high blood pressure, and infections.

Kapha Dosha

This life force controls muscle growth, body strength and stability, weight, and your immune system.

You can disrupt it by sleeping during the day, eating too many sweet foods, and eating or drinking things that contain too much salt or water.

If it's your main life energy, you may develop asthma and other breathing disorders, cancer, diabetes, nausea after eating, and obesity.

Ayurvedic Treatment

An Ayurvedic practitioner will create a treatment plan specifically designed for you. He'll take into account your unique physical and emotional makeup, your primary life force, and the balance between all three of these elements.

The goal of treatment is to cleanse your body of undigested food, which can stay in your body and lead to illness. The cleansing process—called “panchakarma”—is designed to reduce your symptoms and restore harmony and balance.

To achieve this, an Ayurvedic practitioner might rely on blood purification, massage, medical oils, herbs, and enemas or laxatives.

At present, Ayurvedic medicine is regarded as alternative therapy in Canada and there is no OHIP coverage. It is hoped that private health benefits will cover Ayurvedic medicine as they have extended coverage for acupuncture.

Always talk to your doctor before you try Ayurveda or any other alternative medical treatment.

*** <https://www.webmd.com/balance/guide/ayurvedic-treatments#1>

By: Bernard Alvares