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ayurworld

PUBLISHED BY THE WORLD AYURVEDA FOUNDATION

INDIA'S MEDICINAL PLANTS SECTOR

Unlocking Global
Potential in the Ayush
Economy

NURTURING NEW LIFE

The Ayurvedic
Framework
for Pregnancy
Care

OBESITY MANAGEMENT

Bridging Ancient
Ayurvedic Wisdom
and Modern Metabolic
Science

Run-up to the
**11TH WAC &
AROGYA EXPO
2026**





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- Ashtang Hruday (6 CE)

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Om Shree Gurubhyo Namaha!

When a juggernaut is moving forward, there is little sound, fury or fanfare. It simply moves ahead, taking criticism and bouquets in its stride.

When the world celebrated International Yoga Day (IDY) on 21 June, we got a glimpse of how far and wide Yoga has penetrated. As people across the world experience the benefits of Yoga and more join the movement, we are unlikely to hear much sound, fury or fanfare. There will, in fact, be more silence – the silence of self-introspection and awareness. That ‘deafening’ silence could well lead to lasting peace, love and happiness in the world.

Ayur World has purposely not carried an IDY story in this issue, as we have little new to add to what has already been extensively reported across the media.

Ayurveda, too, is slowly but steadily moving the world in that direction. In that world, people will voluntarily choose a healthy Ayurvedic way of living, wellness and disease prevention over end-of-the-pipe solutions for disease. It is about gaining mastery over one’s personal health and lifestyle through greater self-awareness and discipline. The journey has only begun, and this juggernaut, too, will move quietly. That silence could ultimately help move the world towards living in greater harmony with oneself and with nature.

In this issue, we bring you stories that reflect the forward movement of this juggernaut. The news and views in these pages offer glimpses of where Ayurveda is heading. Believe me, it is a massive movement, and all of you are part of this journey. So, play your part well and make a small but meaningful difference in your own field of activity.

The cover story this time focuses on obesity. With the new generation of GLP-1 drugs entering the markets, it was timely to present an Ayurvedic perspective on obesity. Dr Mukund Sabnis does this comprehensively, while Dr Antonio Morandi and Dr Anupama Kizhekkeveetil offer perspectives on obesity from Europe and the United States.

The World Ayurveda Foundation has announced the **11th edition of the World Ayurveda Congress and Arogya Expo**, to be held in Bhubaneswar from 10–13 December 2026. By a fair distance, this is the largest global platform bringing together Ayurveda stakeholders. Don’t miss the opportunity to be part of it. There is something for every stakeholder to explore, learn from, and benefit from. Details inside.

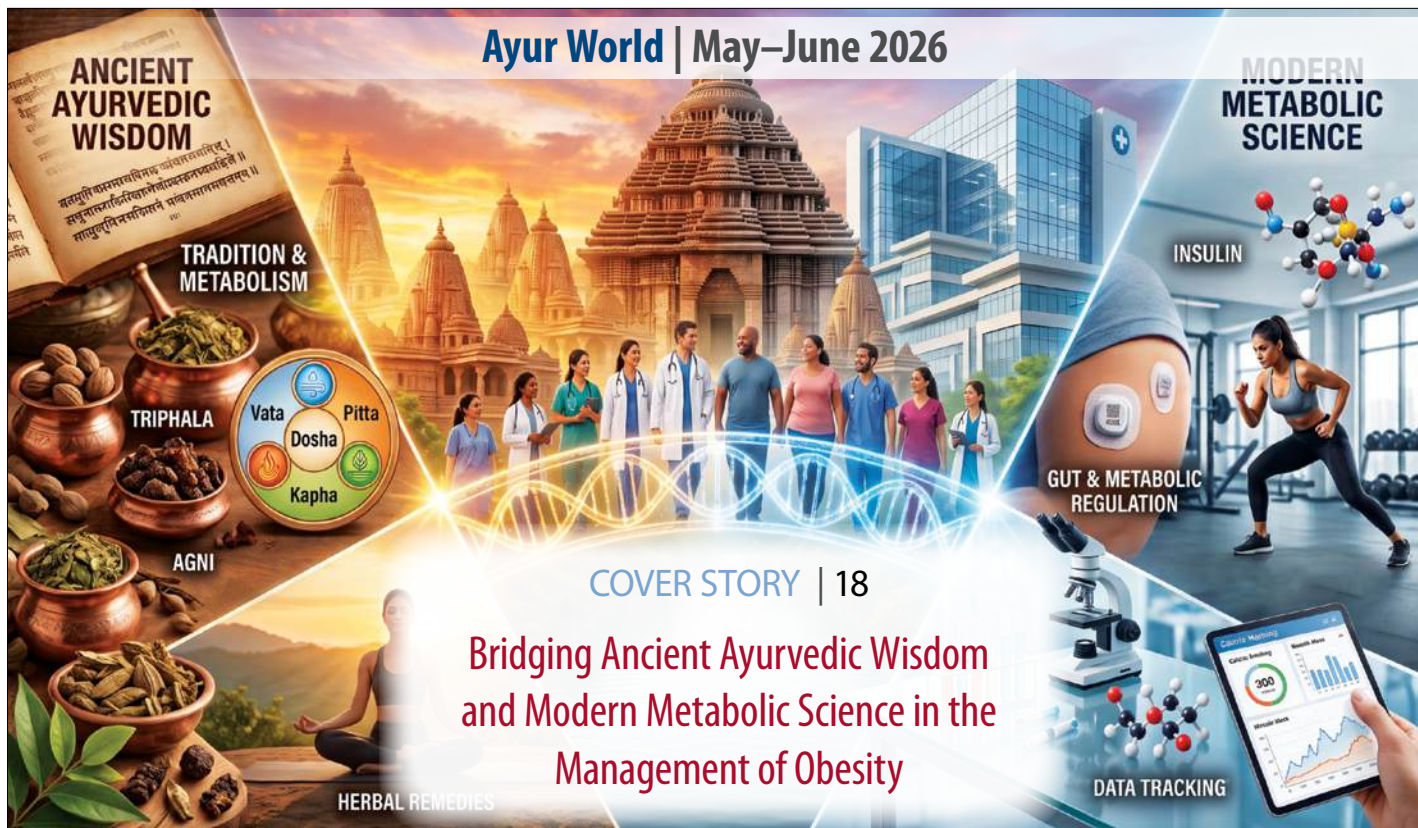
We have also carried a condensed version of the **NITI Aayog report, Strategic Roadmap for Globalising Ayurveda**. If you missed the longer report, this article may prompt you to look it up online. It is well worth reading. 📖

Best wishes.

Editorially yours,

Eashwar KP





Bridging Ancient Ayurvedic Wisdom and Modern Metabolic Science in the Management of Obesity

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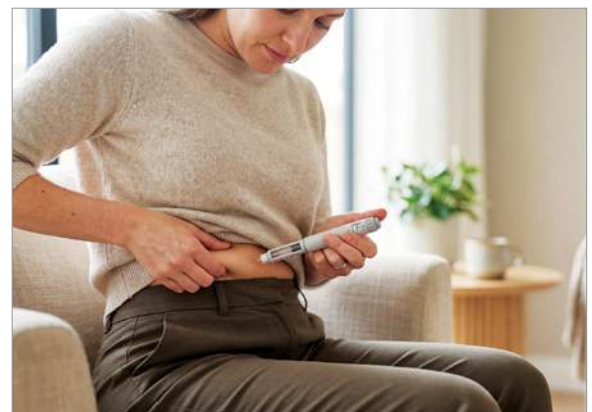
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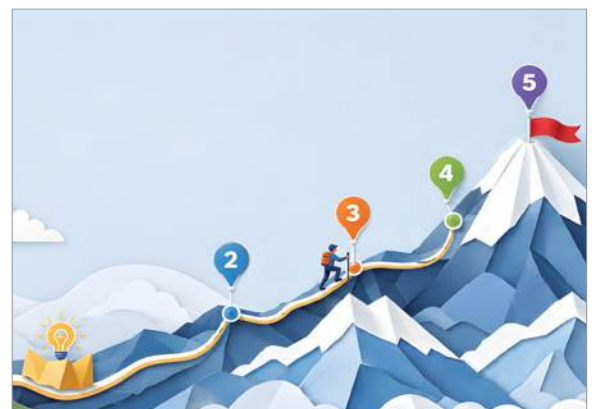
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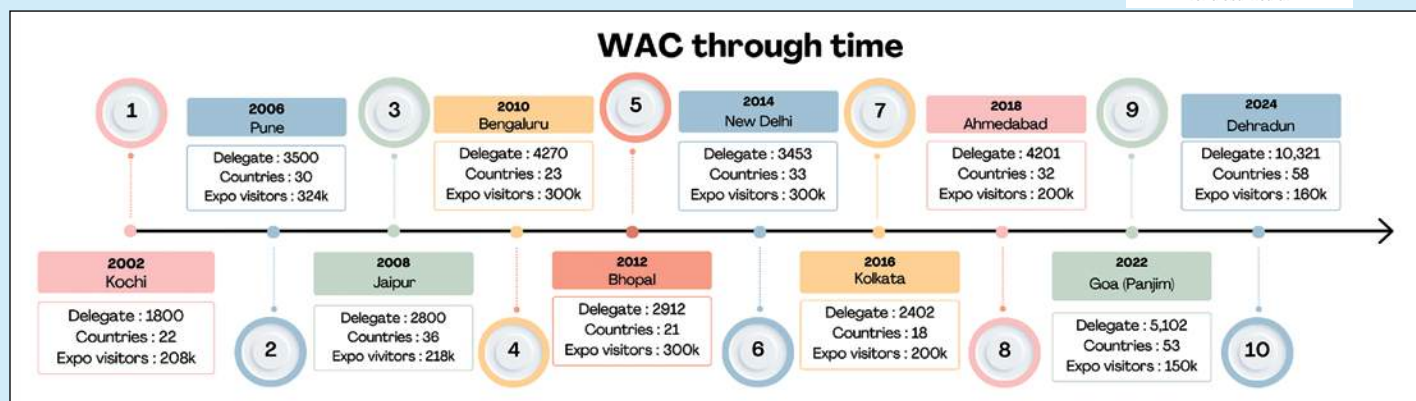
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The Global Renaissance of Ayurveda: Inside the 11th World Ayurveda Congress



Over the past two decades, a profound structural shift has been unfolding at the intersection of traditional wisdom and modern healthcare science. What the public often sees as a contemporary wellness trend is actually the result of a highly organized, deliberate movement designed to elevate traditional Indian medicine onto the global stage.

At the very heart of this transformation is the World Ayurveda Congress (WAC), a platform established by the World Ayurveda Foundation (WAF) and WAF's parent organization, Vijnana Bharati (Vibha). Driven by eminent scientists, academicians, industry, and policymakers in the Ayurveda sector, WAC has evolved into the world's pre-eminent platform for all stakeholders.

To understand the scale of the upcoming 11th edition, one must look at its journey. Moving across India since its inception in 2002 in Kochi, Kerala (which drew 1800 delegates), WAC has systematically expanded in strength, reach, and momentum. By its 10th edition in Dehradun in 2024, the event brought together a record-breaking 10,321 delegates, including 358 international representatives from 58 countries.

This unique movement has directly and indirectly fuelled the economic reality of the sector, helping catapult the Ayush market from a \$3 billion industry in 2014 to \$43 billion in 2022. Aligning with the policy frameworks set by the Ministry of Ayush, Government of India, the activities of WAC are directed towards achieving the next big target set by the Ministry of Ayush – taking the ancient healthcare science of Bharat to every nook and corner of the world and helping the sector achieve the \$200 billion target by 2030.

The next big stop for WAC is in the ancient temple city of Bhubaneswar, Odisha. Supported by the Ministry of Ayush and the industry, the Government of Odisha will host the 11th WAC and Arogya Expo from 10 to 13 December 2026. Celebrated for its rich cultural legacy, architectural marvels, and deep historical ties to traditional healing, Odisha provides the ultimate backdrop for this monumental gathering.

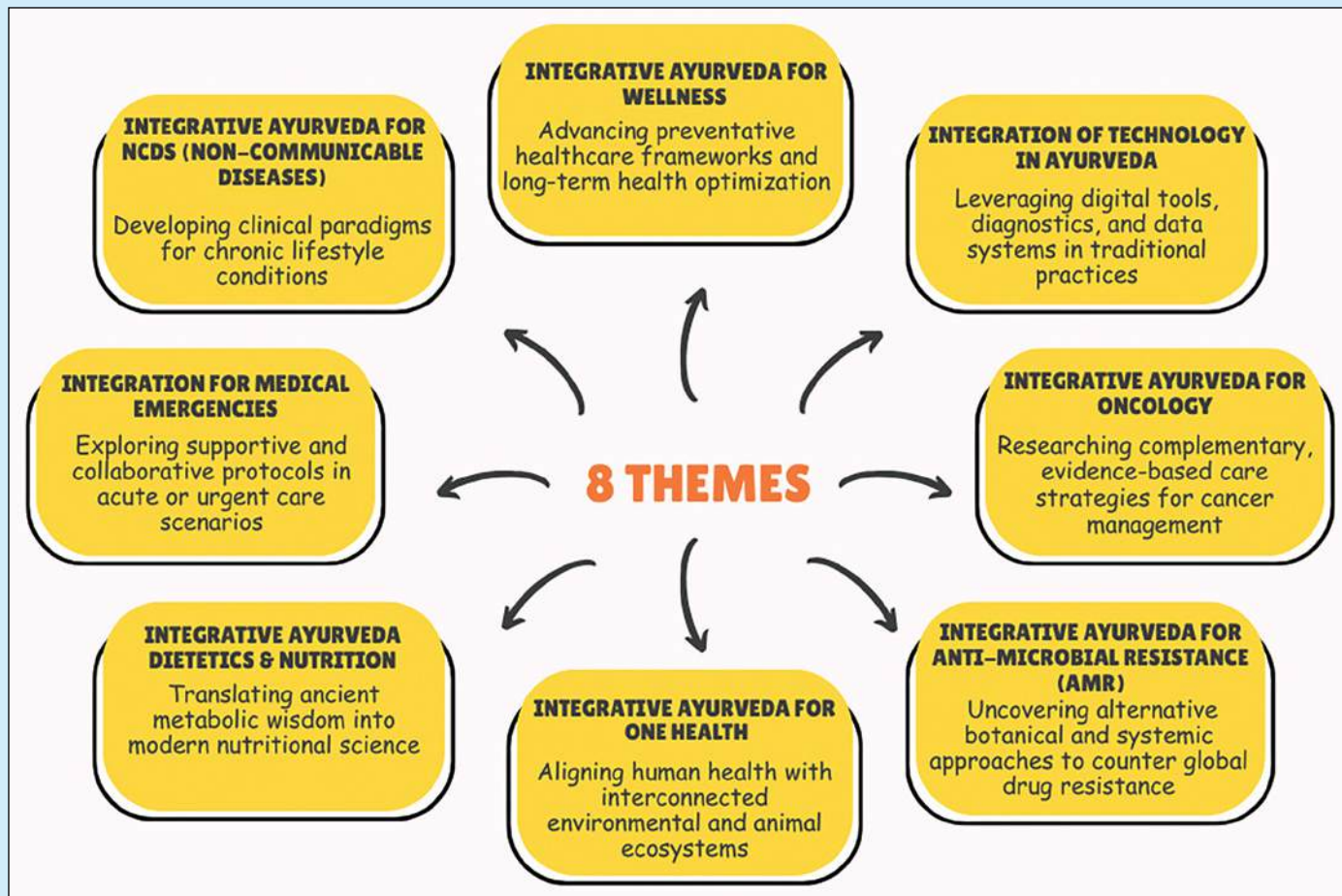
11th WAC: What's Unfolding in Bhubaneswar

The core philosophical anchor for this upcoming edition in Bhubaneswar is its definitive focal theme: **Integrative Ayurveda for Global Health**. This represents a critical evolution for this movement. The discourse is no longer just about preserving historical roots; it is about combining ancient Ayurvedic wisdom with modern medical science through evidence. By building an operational bridge between Ayurveda and modern clinical practices, the 11th WAC aims to develop scalable, global frameworks to tackle modern chronic conditions, non-communicable diseases (NCDs), and complex lifestyle crises affecting modern populations.

Call for Papers

For scholars, clinicians, and researchers worldwide, the scientific committee has issued an open call for papers. This track acts as a platform for rigorous academic scrutiny, where all accepted abstracts will be published





in the official WAC Abstract Book, and top-tier papers will be considered for peer-reviewed publication in the globally indexed *Journal of Ayurveda and Integrative Medicine (J-AIM)*.

To participate in the scientific oral or poster defenses, global academic stakeholders must submit original research aligned with the distinct scientific and digital innovation themes captured in the infographic above.

Beyond the Main Stage: Parallel Sessions and Core Pillars

The four-day itinerary is massive, spanning 21 associated events and 21 high-level Plenary Sessions running in parallel to maximize global policy and outreach. The Congress is operationally divided into three primary segments running concurrently:

1. Promoting Science

This track drives the academic backbone of the event, facilitating keynote lectures, panel discussions, and rigorous oral and poster defenses where researchers present raw data to global peers.

Upcoming Dates to Remeber

20
26

AUG 31

**Abstract Submission
Deadline**

SEP 10

**Acceptance
Notification**

OCT 10

**Final PPT & Poster
Submission**

**DEC 10-
13**

**Congress
Operational Date**

11th WAC brochure release

The brochure for the 11th World Ayurveda Congress & AROGYA Expo, scheduled to be held from 10–13 December 2026 in Bhubaneswar, was formally released by Shri Prataprao Ganpatrao Jadhav, Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Ayush. The occasion was attended by Dr Shiv Kumar Sharma, along with a delegation from the World Ayurveda Foundation and Vijnana Bharati.



2. Influencing Policy and Trade

Designed for structural, high-level change, this segment hosts the National Ayush Mission (NAM), Ministers' Conclave, Cross-Ministerial Roundtables (connecting the Ministries of Ayush, Agriculture, and Forests alongside insights from the NITI Aayog Task Force), the International Delegates Assembly (IDA), and the Traditional Healers Meet. Specialized B2B meets include the Veterinary Ayurveda Conclave, the Vriksha Ayurveda Conclave (plant health), and the Ayush Industry Meet.

3. Public Outreach and Experience Zones

A vital bridge to the public and consumer market, featuring the Ayush Lit Fest, the Ayurveda Short Film Festival, free public lectures, specialized clinics, and immersive Experience Zones showcasing Lab Tech, Pharma Tech, Simulation Labs, Cosmetology, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) deployment.

The International Arogya Expo: Exhibitor Logistics and Stall Sizes

For commercial enterprises, the concurrent International Arogya Expo serves as the primary trade engine, offering an

elite setup designed for Ayush manufacturers, state departments, traders, and hospitals (Table 1).

Delegate Registration

Attending the 11th WAC as a delegate provides full access to all plenary sessions, associated events, the expo floor, official conference kits, and all meals (breakfast, lunch, and dinner). *Note: Accommodation is strictly excluded* (Table 2).

Academic Presenter Fee Concessions

Approved abstract authors receive direct discounts on the baseline registration rates above:

Oral Presenters :	50% concession
Poster Presenters :	30% concession
E-Book Presenters :	20% concession

A Blueprint for the Future of Healthcare

The 11th WAC in Bhubaneswar is set to be an unmissable, high-energy milestone where the future of global medicine is actively being reshaped! Don't miss your chance to step on to

TABLE 1: EXHIBITOR LOGISTICAL MATRIX and BILLING SPECIFICATIONS

Stall Dimensions	Base shell units are fixed at 3m × 3m = 9 Square Meters.
Sizing Multiples	Larger brand footprints must be booked in exact structural multiples of the base unit (18 sqm, 27 sqm, 36 sqm, etc.).
Standard Space Cost	₹12,000/- per square meter.
Premium Space Cost (Corner Stalls)	₹14,000/- per square meter.
Shell Kit Inventory Included	Laminated wall panels, synthetic carpets, a customized fascia name board (up to 20 characters), 1 modular table, 2 chairs, 1 spotlight, and 1 five-amp plug point.
Commercial Booking Rule	100% full advance payment is required to confirm allocation. Spot bookings are strictly unavailable.
Retail Framework	Direct counter sales are permitted on the floor, provided exhibitors strictly comply with local state licensing and explicit GST regulations.

TABLE 2

Delegate Category	Standard Fee (On/Before Oct. 15)	Late Fee (16–31 Oct.)	Spot Registration Fee
Indian General Delegate	₹4000	₹4500	₹5000
Indian BAMS / Non-Stipend PG Student	₹3500	₹4500	₹5000
International Delegate (IDA)	\$100	\$150	\$200

this premier global platform — whether you are an academic looking to publish breakthrough research, an exhibitor tapping into a thriving global Ayurveda market, or a delegate eager to network with high-level international policymakers.

Secure your registration today, bring your expertise to Odisha, and be a part of the movement that is defining the next generation of integrative healthcare! [📄](#)

AIIA's iCAINE Shines at MSME Idea Hackathon 5.0

The All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA), through its incubation centre iCAINE, has notched a fresh win at the MSME Idea Hackathon 5.0, reaffirming its status as the Ministry of Ayush's leading Host Institute dedicated to the Ayurveda sector.

The selected idea, 'MITE OUT: A Dual-Action Non-Invasive Device for Safe Extraction of Myiasis Larvae in Livestock,' was developed by innovator Anneasa Manna and team, and will now receive mentorship and incubation support through AIIA.

The MSME Idea Hackathon, run by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, is a national platform for early-stage innovators, offering selected startups up to ₹15 lakh in funding along with structured mentorship via recognised Host Institutes.

'This achievement reflects AIIA's unwavering commitment to fostering innovation within the Ayurveda ecosystem,' said Prof. P K Prajapati, Director, AIIA, adding that the selection 'reinforces our vision of integrating traditional knowledge with modern innovation.'

Dr Shivakumar Harthi, In-charge of AIIA-iCAINE, called the win 'a testament to the strength of our incubation ecosystem,' noting the centre's focus on pairing innovators with the right mentorship and infrastructure to scale their ideas.

With this latest selection, AIIA continues to strengthen its incubation track record, supporting startups at the intersection of traditional Ayurvedic knowledge and modern healthcare innovation. [📄](#)

Ayurveda Steps In: A Transformative Stress Management Initiative for Police Personnel

A well-rounded healthcare initiative with strong potential for adoption across other high-stress work environments.

In an era where mental health is increasingly recognized as central to overall well-being, the All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA), New Delhi, has emerged with a pioneering initiative aimed at one of the most high-pressure professions – policing. Its Public Health Initiative (PHI) project, focused on stress management through Ayurvedic interventions, has made a meaningful impact, reaching over 35,000 police personnel.

At the heart of the initiative lies a simple yet powerful idea: mental health is as vital as physical health. Echoing the World Health Organization's perspective, the AIIA leadership emphasizes that true well-being enables individuals to cope with daily stress, work productively, and contribute to society. For police personnel – who often operate under relentless physical and psychological demands – this support is not just beneficial, but essential.

Led by a dedicated team of experts, the project combines traditional Ayurvedic wisdom with modern public health approaches. It has not only raised awareness on stress and mental health but also provided hands-on care. Through over 200 organized camps, thousands of personnel were screened for stress, hypertension, and related conditions. Many received personalized Ayurvedic treatments, including internal medications and therapeutic procedures such as Shirodhara, known for its calming and restorative effects.

A key highlight of the initiative is its holistic approach. Rather than merely addressing symptoms, the programme focuses on prevention, lifestyle balance, and emotional resilience. This philosophy has resonated strongly with participants, reflected in the encouraging response and measurable outcomes observed so far.

The initiative has also embraced technology, with the development of a dedicated mobile application designed to support stress management practices, making guidance accessible beyond physical camps.

Collaboration has played a crucial role in the project's success. The Welfare Division of the Delhi Police facilitated



implementation by providing venues and institutional support, while senior officials have acknowledged the value of Ayurveda's time-tested healing systems in modern occupational health challenges.

To share its findings and expand its reach, AIIA hosted a dissemination workshop that brought together policymakers, healthcare professionals, and subject experts. The event featured insightful sessions on meditation techniques and Ayurvedic strategies for managing occupational stress, further reinforcing the importance of integrative approaches to mental health.

As workplaces across sectors grapple with rising stress levels, this initiative stands out as a compelling example of how traditional knowledge systems can be effectively integrated into contemporary health frameworks. By addressing the mental and emotional well-being of police personnel, AIIA's PHI project not only supports those who serve society but also strengthens the foundation of a healthier, more resilient community. This is an intervention worth replication in other high-stress work environments. www.ayurworld.org

Union Minister Shri Prataprao Jadhav Launches Ayush Anudan Portal under Ayush Grid Initiative

Ayush Anudan Portal to Ensure Transparency, Efficiency and Accountability in Grant Management: Shri Prataprao Jadhav

In a significant step towards strengthening digital governance and enhancing transparency in the Ayush sector, Shri Prataprao Jadhav, Union Minister of State (IC) for Ayush and Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, today launched the Ayush Anudan Portal at Kartavya Bhawan, New Delhi. The portal is developed by the Ministry of Ayush under the Ayush Grid initiative marking a major milestone in streamlining the submission, processing, approval, and monitoring of funding proposals under various Central Sector Schemes of the Ministry.



Launching the portal, Shri Prataprao Jadhav said that Ayush Grid is a visionary digital initiative of the Government of India aimed at establishing an integrated, transparent, and citizen-centric digital ecosystem for the Ayush sector through the use of modern technology. Highlighting the vision behind the initiative, the Minister said, “Inspired by the vision of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on ‘Ease of Doing Business’ and ‘Ease of Living’, the Ayush Anudan Portal has been developed as a comprehensive digital platform.”

Shri Jadhav further stated that the portal would bring transformative changes in the grant management system

of the Ayush sector. Emphasising the significance of the platform, he said, “The primary objective of this portal is to ensure 100% transparency, efficiency, accountability and easy accessibility in the grant management process.” He also highlighted that the portal promotes the Government’s vision of paperless governance by enabling organisations and institutions to submit proposals entirely through an online process.

The Minister further added that integration with the NGO Darpan Portal would make authentication and verification of applicant organisations faster, automated, credible, and error-free. He also underlined that several digital platforms have already been developed under the ABDM-compliant Ayush Grid initiative across areas such as education, research, healthcare services, medicinal plant administration, drug regulation, capacity building, and global outreach, thereby ensuring transparent and citizen-friendly service delivery.

The event was also graced by Secretary, Ministry of Ayush, Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha; Joint Secretaries Dr Kavita Jain, Smt. Alarmelmangai D, and Ms Monalisa Dash; along with senior officials of the Ministry of Ayush.



The Ayush Anudan Portal enables organisations and institutions to submit funding proposals online through a structured and user-friendly interface, thereby eliminating dependency on manual and paper-based systems. Integrated

with the NGO Darpan Portal, the platform facilitates seamless authentication and verification of applicant organisations, ensuring enhanced institutional credibility and streamlined validation procedures.

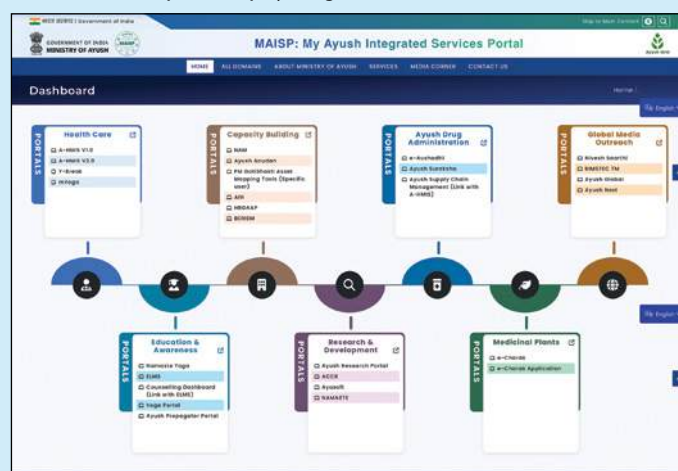
One of the key features of the portal is its scheme-wise application management system, enabling proposals to be categorised, processed, and monitored according to the specific requirements of different Central Sector Schemes of the Ministry. The platform also incorporates a real-time application tracking mechanism, allowing applicants and officials to monitor proposal status at every stage of processing.



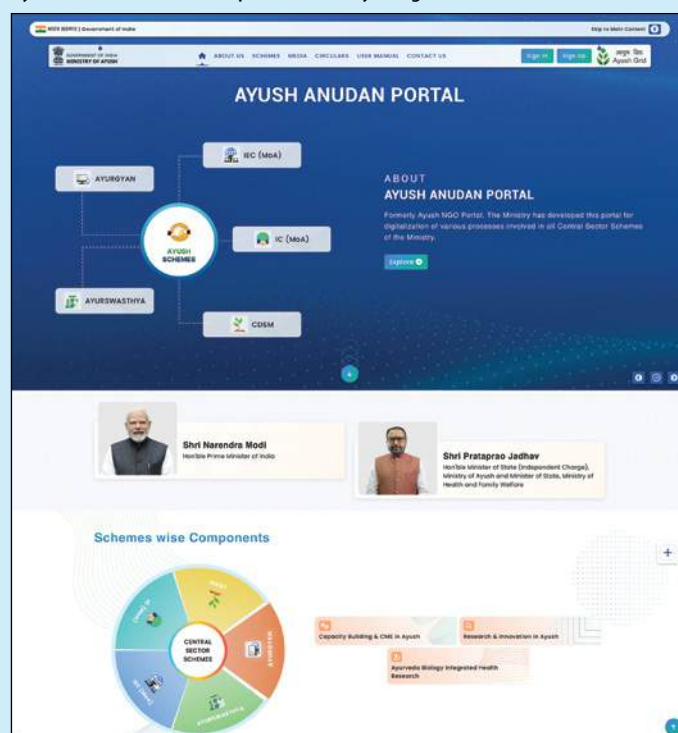
The launch of the Ayush Anudan Portal aims to ensure transparency, operational efficiency, accountability, and ease of access in grant management processes. This step reflects the Ministry's continued commitment towards digital transformation, transparent governance, and the creation of a robust, innovation-driven, and digitally empowered Ayush ecosystem in line with the vision of Digital India.

The portal can be accessed through the Ministry of Ayush's MAISP (My Ayush Integrated Services Portal), the Ministry's single-window digital initiative, or directly through the Ayush Anudan Portal link. <https://anudan.ayush.gov.in/index>

MAISP Portal: <https://maisip.ayush.gov.in/dashboard>



Ayush Anudan Portal: <https://anudan.ayush.gov.in/index>



Spice and Heal

AYUSHEXCIL and Spices Board of India Sign MoU to Strengthen Global Promotion of Ayush Products and Medicinal Spices.

In a significant step towards strengthening India's global leadership in traditional wellness and natural products, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between

AYUSHEXCIL and the Spices Board of India in the presence of Shri Prataprao Jadhav, Union Minister of State (IC), Ministry of Ayush, and Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare.

Shri Prataprao Jadhav congratulated AYUSHEXCIL and the Spices Board of India for what he described as a 'visionary and forward-looking partnership.' He said the collaboration represents an important step towards strengthening India's traditional wellness systems and promoting the global integration of Ayurveda, medicinal plants, and Indian spices.

Highlighting India's rich heritage, Shri Jadhav noted that Ayurveda and Indian spices have for centuries symbolised preventive healthcare, balanced living, and natural wellness knowledge. He said the coming together of the two sectors reflects a shared commitment to work for the benefit of farmers, industry, startups, exporters, and global consumers.

The Minister expressed satisfaction that the collaboration focuses on critical areas such as quality enhancement, traceability, scientific validation, innovation, export promotion, and development of international markets. He also highlighted the proposed 'Spice and Heal' initiative, stating that it has the potential to emerge as a powerful branding campaign positioning India as a global leader in holistic health and natural healing solutions.

Emphasising the Government's commitment to empowering MSMEs, startups, women entrepreneurs, farmers, and young innovators, the Minister said the initiative aligns closely with the vision of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for Atmanirbhar Bharat, Vocal for Local, Make in India, and Heal in India. He added that the Prime Minister has consistently recognised India's traditional knowledge systems and wellness heritage as important pillars of the country's global identity and economic progress.

Expressing confidence in the long-term impact of the partnership, the Minister stated that the MoU would open new avenues for export growth, employment generation, rural development, farmer empowerment, and international collaboration. He conveyed his best wishes for the success of the partnership, noting that it would further strengthen India's reputation in the field of global wellness and natural products.

The MoU was signed by Dr Anurag Sharma, Chairman, AYUSHEXCIL, and Shri M S Manivannan, IAS, Secretary, Spices Board of India. The collaboration aims to promote global cooperation in Ayush products and medicinal spices by strengthening export promotion, quality assurance, standardization, research, innovation, and international market development for functional foods, nutraceuticals, herbal extracts, and value-added Ayurvedic and spice-based products.

Under the partnership, both organizations will work together on branding initiatives, traceability frameworks, scientific validation, capacity building, Codex engagement,



and joint participation in international trade fairs and promotional activities. The initiative is expected to create new opportunities for exporters, farmers, MSMEs, startups, women entrepreneurs, and stakeholders across the Ayush and spices sectors, thereby enhancing India's export growth and global visibility in the wellness economy. www.ayurworld.org

Translation of Research Outputs: CCRAS Signs MoU with Anuvadini AI

AI-powered translation to make evidence-based Ayurveda research knowledge accessible in 13 languages.



In a significant step towards making information about evidence-based Ayurveda accessible across linguistic barriers, the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS), Ministry of Ayush, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Anuvadini AI, a platform designed by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) under the Ministry of Education, Government of India. The initiative aims to expand public access to evidence-based Ayurveda knowledge across India. Under this MoU, Anuvadini AI will facilitate the translation of CCRAS's research outputs and educational materials into 13 regional languages, including Hindi, ensuring that evidence-based Ayurveda knowledge reaches every corner of the country.

The MoU was signed by Prof. Vaidya Rabinarayan Acharya, Director General, CCRAS, and Dr Buddha Chandrasekhar, CEO, Anuvadini AI, marking a significant convergence of advancing language technology and traditional Indian medical knowledge.

Anuvadini AI focuses on translating technical, scientific, and governance-related knowledge into various Indian and foreign languages through artificial intelligence. Its objective is to ensure that credible, research-based information is accessible to citizens regardless of linguistic or regional background.

CCRAS, with its network of 30 institutes across 25 states in India, conducts and publishes scientific research

in Ayurveda sciences. One of its flagship publications, the CCRAS Bulletin, a quarterly research journal, along with other Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials, is currently published primarily in English. Under the MoU, Anuvadini AI will facilitate translation of these research outputs and educational resources into 13 regional languages, helping extend the reach of authentic Ayurveda knowledge to a wider range of the population and reduce the risk of misinformation.

On the occasion, Prof. Rabinarayan Acharya, Director General, CCRAS, stated that the collaboration reflects CCRAS's commitment to ensuring that the outcomes of Ayurveda research benefit not only the academic community but also citizens across the country in respective languages.

Dr Buddha Chandrasekhar, CEO of Anuvadini AI, emphasised that the platform was developed specifically to support such collaborations, where technology helps make knowledge more accessible, equitable, and empowering for society.

In the future, the initiative may also extend to foreign languages, beginning with languages of countries where the Ministry of Ayush and CCRAS have established Ayush Chairs, thereby expanding the global accessibility of authentic Ayurveda knowledge. www.ayurworld.org

India–New Zealand FTA Elevates Ayush to Global Platform, Unlocks New Pathways for Wellness Professionals



to engage with the New Zealand market. By promoting cooperation in Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa, and Homoeopathy, the FTA strengthens India's leadership in preventive, promotive, and integrative healthcare models.

The framework is expected to boost medical value travel, foster institutional partnerships, encourage research collaboration and support the international expansion of India's wellness ecosystem.

The conclusion of the India–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA) marks a significant milestone in India's global outreach in traditional medicine and holistic healthcare, placing Ayush systems at the centre of a new framework for international cooperation. The forward-looking agreement not only expands India's trade footprint but also opens unprecedented opportunities for global recognition, mobility, and institutional collaboration for India's traditional systems of medicine. The landmark agreement was formally signed by Piyush Goyal, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, and Todd McClay, New Zealand's Minister for Trade and Investment, underscoring the shared commitment of both nations to deepen economic and knowledge partnerships.

For the first time, New Zealand has agreed to a dedicated Health and Traditional Medicine Annex under an FTA with India, creating an enabling environment for trade in Ayurveda, yoga, and other traditional medicine services. This landmark provision formally acknowledges India's rich wellness heritage and positions Ayush as a contemporary, globally relevant healthcare solution, alongside indigenous Māori health practices.

Global Recognition and New Markets for Ayush Services

The agreement facilitates market access across a wide range of service sectors, creating new opportunities for Indian Ayush practitioners, wellness institutions, and service providers

Mobility Pathways for Ayush and Wellness Professionals

A key outcome of the agreement is the creation of structured mobility pathways for skilled Indian professionals. A dedicated visa quota will enable Ayush practitioners and Yoga instructors, along with other Indian cultural and knowledge professionals, to work in New Zealand for extended durations. This provision reinforces India's emergence as a global supplier of skilled wellness professionals while creating new employment avenues rooted in India's traditional knowledge systems.

Strengthening Cooperation in Traditional Knowledge and Wellness

The FTA also institutionalises technical cooperation in Ayush and traditional knowledge systems, laying the foundation for long-term collaboration in education, training, standards development, and wellness services. By integrating traditional medicine into a modern trade framework, the agreement reflects a shared commitment to sustainable health practices and people-centric development.

The India–New Zealand FTA represents a defining step in taking Ayush from national heritage to global healthcare mainstream. By opening international markets, enabling professional mobility and fostering cross-cultural collaboration, the Agreement reinforces India's vision of positioning Ayush as a pillar of global wellness and holistic health. www.ayurworld.org

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Taking Ayurveda to the World

In an era when traditional knowledge systems are finding renewed relevance in global healthcare, the World Ayurveda Foundation (WAF) has emerged as a key institution dedicated to taking Ayurveda to the world stage. Established in 2011 as an initiative of Vijnana Bharati, the Foundation seeks to create a global platform for the promotion, advancement, and wider acceptance of Ayurveda as a comprehensive health science.

The Foundation was conceived as part of the larger intellectual mission of the Swadeshi Science Movement led by Vijnana Bharati. Its purpose is both ambitious and timely: to bring the benefits of Ayurveda to humanity by fostering research, encouraging dialogue, and building institutional support for traditional healthcare systems. In doing so, WAF aims to strengthen Ayurveda's place not only in India but in the global health discourse.

Registered as a Trust with the Charity Commissioner in Karnataka, WAF is guided by an eminent Board of Trustees and supported by a participatory governance framework. Its Governing Council, functioning under the broad stewardship of the Board, enjoys considerable autonomy in designing and implementing annual programmes. This collaborative and stakeholder-driven model has enabled the Foundation to evolve into an effective platform for coordinated action in the Ayurveda sector.

WAF's mandate spans a wide spectrum of activities aimed at the propagation and popularization of Ayurveda worldwide. These include supporting scientific research, organizing healthcare initiatives such as camps and clinics, promoting documentation, and facilitating academic engagement through international conferences, seminars,

study groups, exhibitions, and other knowledge platforms. Through these efforts, the Foundation works to ensure that Ayurveda reaches communities across geographies while retaining its scientific integrity and philosophical essence.

Beyond programme implementation, WAF also seeks to provide leadership to a sector that increasingly needs a coherent and credible institutional voice. As Ayurveda gains visibility in national and international policy circles, the Foundation aims to articulate its ethos in policy planning and advocacy with governments and institutions in India and abroad. With broad stakeholder participation and a clear global vision, WAF positions itself as a catalyst for the sustained advancement of Ayurveda on the world stage.

One of the most significant platforms associated with this vision is the World Ayurveda Congress and Arogya Expo, the largest international gathering dedicated to exploring new frontiers in Ayurveda and integrative medicine. First held in Kochi in 2002, the Congress has since grown into a major global event, bringing together practitioners, researchers, policymakers, and industry stakeholders from across the world. With 10 editions held so far across India, the Congress has become a vibrant forum for exchange, collaboration, and the advancement of Ayurveda as a globally relevant system of medicine. In addition, the International Ayush Conference and Expo, with its three editions in Dubai, has further strengthened the Ayush ecosystem globally.

Together, the World Ayurveda Congress and the International Ayush Conference represent a concerted effort to build global recognition for Ayurveda as a living knowledge system with much to contribute to the future of healthcare.



Obesity Revisited: Bridging Ancient Ayurvedic Wisdom and Modern Metabolic Science in the Management of Obesity



Ayurveda has long viewed obesity not as a simple matter of calories, but as a complex disorder of metabolic imbalance – a perspective that modern science is only now beginning to validate through the lens of inflammation, insulin resistance, and mitochondrial dysfunction. In this cover story,

Dr Mukund Sabnis and Parth Sabnis revisit the classical Ayurvedic understanding of Medoroga, tracing striking parallels between ancient concepts like Ama and Abhishyandi and today's most pressing metabolic research. It is a compelling reminder that some of medicine's oldest observations may still have much to teach us.

Introduction

Obesity has emerged as one of the most pressing metabolic health challenges of our time, yet its conceptual roots stretch back thousands of years into classical Ayurvedic thought. Long before the language of insulin resistance, leptin signalling, or

chronic low-grade inflammation entered medical vocabulary, Ayurvedic scholars had already mapped out a sophisticated understanding of what they termed Medoroga or Sthaulya. This story revisits that ancient framework, exploring how concepts such as Abhishyandi (obstructive, channel-blocking

Obesity, known as Medoroga in Ayurveda, has been extensively explored in classical Ayurvedic literature. Ayurveda is fundamentally a science dealing with metabolic disorders.

qualities of food), Ama (the toxic byproduct of impaired digestion), and Agnimandya (weakened metabolic fire) offer a remarkably coherent lens through which to view the pathophysiology of obesity – one that resonates closely with contemporary findings on cellular inflammation, insulin resistance, and mitochondrial dysfunction. Drawing on classical texts including the *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and *Bhavaprakasha*, alongside commentaries by Dalhana and Chakrapani, this story traces how Ayurveda's holistic, cause-oriented approach to obesity – encompassing diet, lifestyle, genetic predisposition, and therapeutic intervention – continues to hold relevance for modern metabolic medicine.

Obesity through the Ayurvedic Lens: Understanding Medoroga

Obesity, known as Medoroga in Ayurveda, has been extensively explored in classical Ayurvedic literature. Ayurveda is fundamentally a science dealing with metabolic disorders. Most diseases described in Ayurveda are broadly classified as either anabolic (Santarpanajanya) or catabolic (Apatarpanajanya) disorders. Their management, dietary advice, and lifestyle modifications are explained in the context of metabolic balance and Chaya-Apachaya (anabolism and catabolism).

Regarding Sthaulya or Medoroga, which corresponds to obesity in modern medicine, Ayurveda has advocated several non-pharmacological interventions that are now gaining global scientific recognition. Ayurveda describes unique etiological factors for obesity and metabolic disorders, not only in Medoroga but also in Prameha, another major anabolic disorder prevalent in modern times. Sedentary lifestyle, excessive daytime sleep, and the overconsumption of curd, milk, and dairy products are specifically mentioned as causative factors. Interestingly, this perspective differs considerably from contemporary nutritional science, where curd and yogurt are widely promoted as probiotics and are rarely contraindicated in obesity or diabetes.

Ayurveda emphasizes specific dietary causes because understanding these factors helps in preventing disease

progression and reversing the Samprapti (pathophysiology). Food substances such as curd and yogurt are described as Abhishyandi, meaning they obstruct the microchannels (Srotas) of the body. These substances aggravate Kapha Dosha directly and also vitiate Vata Dosha through obstructive pathology. The concept of Abhishyandi can be correlated with chronic low-grade cellular inflammation, which is now recognized as a major contributing factor in obesity and metabolic syndrome.

Abhishyandi Foods and the Concept of Cellular Obstruction

Bhavaprakasha clearly explains that substances causing obstruction in the microchannels and producing heaviness (Gaurava) and edema are termed Abhishyandi. As Medoroga is predominantly a Kapha-dominant disorder, excessive Kledana (humidification or fluid accumulation) results in pathological Abhishyanda. Foods possessing Madhura (sweet) and Picchila (slimy) properties, when excessively consumed, produce excessive Kapha in the Amashaya (stomach). In pathological states, this excessive humidification may initiate inflammatory processes within the body.

In the 21st chapter of Charak Samhita Sutrasthana, Chakrapani comments that sedentary lifestyle, excessive intake of sweet, sour, salty, cold, heavy-to-digest (Guru), and unctuous foods produce excessive dampness and inflammation at the cellular level. This pathological process may further spread to adjacent tissues through paracrine inflammatory mechanisms. Therefore, understanding the concept of Abhishyandi is extremely important while dealing with obesity and other anabolic disorders.

Ama and Agnimandya: Ancient Insights into Metabolic Toxicity

The concept of Ama is equally important while understanding the pathogenesis of obesity and metabolic disorders. Due to impaired Agni (Agnimandya), improperly digested metabolites

are formed, which Ayurveda terms as Ama. This Ama possesses obstructive and inflammatory properties and circulates throughout the body, affecting various tissues and microchannels (Srotas). At a molecular level, Ama may be correlated with toxic metabolic intermediates, inflammatory mediators, endotoxins, and oxidative stress, which contribute significantly to insulin resistance, mitochondrial dysfunction, and chronic low-grade inflammation.

Excessive consumption of such foods may contribute to lipotoxicity and glucotoxicity, which often remain unnoticed until metabolic biomarkers become deranged. Similarly, freshly harvested grains, newly brewed alcohol, reheated food, and rancid food may contribute to the formation of advanced glycation end products (AGEs), thereby initiating the pathogenesis of obesity.

Samprapti of Medoroga: The Meda-Vata Dysfunction and Its Parallel to Leptin/Insulin Resistance

Charaka explains the Samprapti (pathophysiology) of Medoroga in a highly sophisticated manner. The pathology of obesity and other anabolic disorders involves a disturbed interaction between Meda Dhatu and Vata Dosha. Due to obstruction caused by excessive Meda, Vata becomes aggravated and stimulates excessive appetite, leading to frequent eating and progressive fat accumulation. This explanation remarkably resembles modern concepts of leptin resistance and insulin resistance. Excessive hunger described in Medoroga may be interpreted as hypothalamic dysregulation involving appetite-controlling hormones and gut-brain signalling pathways.

At the tissue level, Charaka describes obesity using the phrase ‘medomāṃsātivrddhatvāccalasphigudarastanaḥ’, indicating excessive accumulation of fat in the abdomen, hips, breasts, and other body parts. This description closely resembles central obesity and visceral fat accumulation, which are strongly associated with inflammation and insulin resistance.

An important observation in Ayurvedic literature is the concept of ectopic fat deposition. Charaka uses the term Medomamsa, which may indicate fat infiltration into skeletal muscles. Modern medicine recognizes intramuscular fat accumulation as a marker of severe insulin resistance and



mitochondrial dysfunction. Such toxic lipid accumulation, particularly ceramides belonging to the sphingolipid group, plays a major role in metabolic dysfunction and impaired cellular energy generation.

The disturbance of Agni also explains the metabolic inflexibility observed in obesity. Improper functioning of Agni hampers nutrient sensing and cellular metabolism, leading to defective utilization of glucose and lipids. This may ultimately contribute to mitochondrial dysfunction, reduced ATP generation, and accumulation of toxic lipid intermediates such as ceramides. Therefore, correction of Agni remains one of the central principles in the Ayurvedic management of obesity.

Genetic Predisposition: Ayurveda's Early Recognition of Hereditary Obesity

Ayurveda also recognized the hereditary nature of obesity thousands of years ago. Charaka uses the phrase ‘bījasvabhāvāc copajāyate’, and Chakrapani comments,



‘sthūlamātāpr̥tjanyatvār’, indicating the genetic predisposition of obesity. These references are highly relevant today, as several genetic defects related to leptin signalling, pituitary dysfunction, and growth factors are known contributors to obesity. Nevertheless, Charaka also elaborates therapeutic approaches capable of managing metabolic obesity effectively.

Charaka further warns that obesity reduces life expectancy. Modern research strongly supports the association between obesity and reduced lifespan. The term Shaithilya used in the context of Medoroga signifies more than mere laxity; it indicates unhealthy, weakened, and disease-prone tissues resulting from Dhatvagni Mandya (impaired tissue metabolism).

One of the most significant complications observed in obese individuals is erectile dysfunction. Charaka accurately identifies this as Kruchhavyavayata (difficulty in sexual activity). From a modern perspective, obesity-associated endothelial dysfunction and reduced nitric oxide synthesis impair penile blood flow. Ayurveda considers this another

manifestation of obstructed Vata Dosha due to excessive Meda accumulation.

Therapeutic Approaches: Langhana, Deepana, Pachana, and Rukshana

In the management of obesity, Ayurveda gives prime importance to fasting and forms of intermittent dietary restriction. Charaka repeatedly emphasizes Langhana and controlled dietary intake in metabolic disorders. Foods that are heavy yet less nutritive, such as millets, are promoted. Herbs including Triphala, Musta, Haridra, Haritaki, and Kutki are recommended in obesity management due to their metabolic and digestive actions.

Honey has also been widely recommended in obesity management, although its use often becomes controversial because of its fructose and glucose content. Chakrapani explains that honey possesses Yogavahi properties, meaning it enhances and carries the qualities of substances with which it is administered. Madhu Udaka (honey water), when used appropriately in small quantities, may help modulate gut microbiota and immune responses beneficial in obesity management.

Vagbhata strongly advocates the use of sesame oil in obesity prevention and treatment. Properly processed sesame oil has shown promising therapeutic effects when used scientifically.

Ayurveda emphasizes that without correcting Agni and eliminating Ama, sustainable management of obesity is difficult. Hence, therapies like Langhana, Deepana, Pachana, and Rukshana, and controlled fasting are advised to restore metabolic efficiency, improve digestion and tissue metabolism, and remove accumulated pathological metabolites.

Conclusion: Ancient Concepts, Modern Relevance

In conclusion, obesity or Medoroga is not merely a disease of modern civilization; it has existed since ancient times. However, its prevalence has increased dramatically in recent decades. Ayurveda provides a comprehensive and holistic understanding of obesity, addressing multiple pathological mechanisms through scientifically structured dietary, lifestyle, and therapeutic interventions. 

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Obesity in Europe: a Demographic, Biomedical, and Ayurvedic Perspective through CoMS



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Obesity in Europe is often reduced to statistics – nearly 60% of adults affected, according to WHO data. However, numbers alone do not explain why some individuals develop the disorder while others do not, or why modern pharmacology alone often falls short of lasting resolution. In this article,

Dr Antonio Morandi introduces CoMS (Collaborative Medicine and Science), a framework that brings Ayurvedic concepts like *agni*, *āma*, and *meda dhātu* into genuine dialogue with biomedical markers and cutting-edge treatments such as GLP-1 receptor agonists – not to replace one system with the other, but to build a shared map between them. It's a thoughtful case for treating obesity as a disorder of adaptation, not just excess weight.

Obesity is one of the clearest examples of how a modern disease cannot be reduced to a single cause. It is not simply the result of eating too much and moving too little, although these factors remain important. In Europe, obesity is the visible expression of a complex interaction between food systems,

ageing, sedentary lifestyles, stress, sleep disruption, socioeconomic inequality, metabolic vulnerability, and individual biology.

The scale of the problem is considerable. According to the WHO European Regional Obesity Report, overweight and obesity affect almost 60% of adults and nearly one in three

If agni is efficient, this information is transformed into nourishment, structure, vitality, and clarity. If agni is disturbed, the same input may produce āma, metabolic residue, stagnation, and pathological accumulation.

children in the WHO European Region. Obesity is also one of the major risk factors for non-communicable diseases, including type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, some cancers, musculoskeletal disorders, and reduced quality of life. In the European Union, Eurostat data show that in 2022, 50.6% of people aged 16 years or over were overweight, with important differences between countries, sexes, and age groups.

The demographic dimension is crucial. Obesity increases with age and often interacts with sarcopenia, frailty, insulin resistance, hypertension, sleep apnoea, and chronic inflammation. In older adults, excess adiposity is not only a question of body mass, but part of a broader loss of metabolic flexibility and adaptive resilience. In younger populations, childhood and adolescent obesity are particularly worrying because they create an early trajectory towards chronic disease. Social determinants are equally important: obesity is more frequent in disadvantaged groups, where access to healthy food, safe physical activity, stable daily rhythms, and preventive care is often limited.

Modern medicine has recently entered a new phase in the treatment of obesity. The arrival of incretin-based drugs, especially GLP-1 receptor agonists such as liraglutide and semaglutide, and dual GIP/GLP-1 receptor agonists such as tirzepatide, has changed the therapeutic landscape. These medicines act on appetite, satiety, glycaemic control, and metabolic regulation. The European Medicines Agency authorises semaglutide for weight management in adults with obesity or overweight associated with weight-related complications, together with diet and physical activity.

Tirzepatide is similarly authorised for weight management in adults with obesity or overweight with at least one weight-related comorbidity.

These drugs are important because they confirm that obesity is not merely a problem of willpower. It is a neuroendocrine-

metabolic disorder involving appetite regulation, reward circuits, insulin signalling, adipose tissue function, and systemic inflammation. Semaglutide has also been evaluated for cardiovascular risk reduction, with effects probably related not only to weight loss but also to improvements in blood pressure, lipids, glucose metabolism, and inflammation. This supports the idea that obesity-related treatment is becoming treatment of the whole metabolic system, not only of body weight.

Ayurveda offers a particularly useful interpretive framework for this complexity. Obesity may be related to classical categories such as sthauilya and medoroga, but it should not be simplistically identified with them. In contemporary Europe, obesity requires a new samprāpti, a pathophysiological reconstruction adapted to the modern environment. The visible accumulation of adipose tissue corresponds to disturbance of meda dhātu, but the process begins earlier, with altered agni, impaired transformation of food and experience, accumulation of āma, and obstruction of srotas, especially medovaha srotas.

From this perspective, obesity is not just 'excess fat'. It is a disorder of transformation, distribution, and adaptation. Food is not merely caloric matter; it is information entering the organism. If agni is efficient, this information is transformed into nourishment, structure, vitality, and clarity. If agni is disturbed, the same input may produce āma, metabolic residue, stagnation, and pathological accumulation.

The European obesogenic environment can be read through guṇa analysis. Ultra-processed foods are often guru, snigdha, picchila and excessively madhura in effect: heavy, unctuous, sticky, and building. Sedentary life adds manda and sthira qualities: slowness and immobility. Chronic stress, digital overstimulation, and sleep disruption aggravate vāta and rajas, producing irregular appetite, emotional eating, and loss of rhythm. Thus, obesity is not simply a Kapha disorder.



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Very often, a primary disturbance of Vāta and manas destabilizes rhythm and appetite; then Kapha and meda become the visible expression.

This is where Collaborative Medicine and Science, or CoMS, becomes useful. CoMS does not aim to force Ayurveda into biomedical categories, nor to replace modern medicine with traditional language. Its aim is to create a rigorous interface between different epistemologies. In the CoMS framework, this involves reformulation, modelling, and localization: Ayurvedic principles must be made intelligible to modern science without losing their epistemological integrity.

Applied to obesity, reformulation means that BMI, waist circumference, insulin resistance, dyslipidaemia, inflammatory markers, and liver steatosis are not mechanically translated into one Ayurvedic term. They are interpreted as different expressions of a systemic disturbance involving agni, meda, āma, srotorodha, prakṛti, and vikṛti. Modelling means building a shared map that includes biomedical markers, demographic data, lifestyle, social determinants, and Ayurvedic constitutional assessment. Localization means adapting Ayurvedic prevention and treatment to European food culture, climate, ageing populations, and healthcare systems.

The same CoMS logic can be applied to new anti-obesity drugs. CoMS pharmacological model proposes that drug

action can be interpreted through pañcamahābhūta, guṇa, doṣa, and karma, and that the final effect emerges from the interaction between the drug's qualities and the individual's prakṛti, vikṛti, agni, and āma status. In this sense, GLP-1 and GIP/GLP-1 drugs may be interpreted as acting on regulatory nodes of hunger, satiety, metabolic transformation, and meda accumulation. They are powerful tools, but their effect still unfolds within a specific constitutional and metabolic terrain. The Ayurvedic perspective, therefore, does not reject modern pharmacology. It helps to contextualize it. A patient losing weight with semaglutide or tirzepatide may still need restoration of rhythm, digestion, sleep, movement, emotional regulation, and food quality. Otherwise, the phenotype may improve while the deeper samprāpti remains partially unresolved.

Obesity in Europe should, therefore, be understood as a systemic disorder of adaptation. Modern epidemiology measures its scale; pharmacology offers powerful new interventions; Ayurveda reveals the hidden dynamics of transformation, accumulation, and loss of rhythm. Through CoMS, these perspectives can collaborate, generating a more complete, preventive, and personalized approach to one of Europe's most urgent health challenges. 

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Dr Anupama Kizhakkeveetil

The Weight of a Nation: Rethinking Obesity Care in America



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*Obesity is more than a number on the scale, and its treatment is becoming increasingly complex. **Dr Anupama** explores how evidence-based approaches in modern medicine – lifestyle changes, pharmacotherapy, and surgery – can be viewed alongside Ayurveda’s holistic understanding of weight gain as a manifestation of imbalance. Despite differences in language and approach, both traditions recognize the importance of diet, sleep, stress, and daily habits. Rather than declaring one approach superior, Dr Anupama examines what each can offer and where they may complement one another.*

As always, readers are encouraged to consult a qualified healthcare professional before making changes to their diet, medication, or treatment.

Walk into any American clinic today and you’ll find a quiet epidemic hiding in plain sight. According to the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), more than four in ten US adults now live with obesity – a rate that climbed for over a decade before finally showing its first slight dip in 2023, as reported in JAMA Health Forum. Women are affected slightly more than men, and the numbers vary sharply by region: the Midwest and South, where more than a third of adults are obese, lag well behind the West and Northeast. Severe obesity, meanwhile, touches roughly one in eleven Americans, according to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases.

These aren’t just numbers on a chart. Obesity drags a long tail of complications behind it – type 2 diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, sleep apnea, certain cancers, and a heavier emotional toll than most people realize, the WHO (World Health Organization) notes. It’s a problem that touches nearly every corner of public health, which is exactly why the conversation around treating it is shifting – from a single-track medical fix towards something broader, more personal, and, some argue, more sustainable.

The Endocrine Society's guidelines put diet, exercise, and behavioural change at the base of every treatment plan....

The Clinical Playbook

Modern medicine's answer to obesity in the US still starts where it always has: lifestyle. The Endocrine Society's guidelines put diet, exercise, and behavioural change at the base of every treatment plan, often paired with structured nutrition counselling for patients already managing related conditions.

When that's not enough, doctors reach for the next tool in the kit. A wave of anti-obesity medications – phentermine-topiramate, naltrexone-bupropion, liraglutide, semaglutide, and phentermine alone – has reshaped what's possible, particularly the GLP-1 drugs that have dominated headlines in recent years.

For the most severe cases, bariatric surgery remains the heavyweight champion of intervention. The American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery points to it as the most effective route to substantial, lasting weight loss – one that can also meaningfully improve diabetes, blood pressure, and sleep apnea along the way.

It's a system built on evidence, and it works for many. But it's also a system built almost entirely around the body as a mechanism – calories in, calories out, hormones adjusted, tissue removed. Increasingly, patients and practitioners alike are asking what gets left out of that equation.

An Older Lens on an Old Problem

Long before the language of BMI (Body Mass Index) and metabolic syndrome, Ayurvedic medicine was already grappling with excess weight; it calls the condition *Sthoulya* or *Medoroga*,



and an imbalance in *Kapha dosha*, a weakened digestive fire (*Agni*), and the buildup of metabolic toxins known as *Ama*, according to a study by Rioux and colleagues. Rather than prescribing a universal formula, this tradition starts by mapping the individual – their constitution, or *Prakriti*, their habits, their emotional patterns and *imbalance* or *vikriti* – before recommending anything at all.

The dietary guidance that follows reads almost like a nutritionist's fever dream of specificity. Lighter grains (barley, millet, quinoa, aged rice, amaranth) replace heavier, refined staples. Bitter, astringent and pungent vegetables like kale, chard, mustard greens, and bitter melon take centre stage, alongside light legumes such as moong and horse gram. Fruit choices lean towards apples, pears, pomegranate, and berries, over their sweeter, heavier cousins. And spice cabinets get a workout: ginger, cardamom, black pepper, long pepper, cumin, and coriander are all prized for their ability to stoke digestive fire. The overarching principle is taste itself – bitter, astringent, and pungent flavours are favoured, while sweet, sour, and salty ones, believed to feed *Kapha*, are minimized.

Yoga rounds out the picture, not primarily as a calorie-burning exercise but as a practice that supports stress



A systematic review found that regular yoga practice can favourably shift levels of adipokines like leptin and adiponectin in people with overweight and obesity.

reduction, emotional well-being, and overall metabolic health. That distinction matters, because chronic stress raises cortisol, and cortisol has a well-documented habit of encouraging abdominal fat storage and emotional eating. A systematic review found that regular yoga practice can favourably shift levels of adipokines like leptin and adiponectin (hormones that play a direct role in weight regulation) in people with overweight and obesity.

What the Evidence Actually Shows

Scepticism towards traditional medicine is fair, but this particular approach has been put to the test. A pilot study out of the University of Arizona, published in the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, followed 17 adults through a three-month program combining personalized Ayurvedic diet plans, yoga therapy, and self-monitoring. The results were modest but real: participants lost an average of 3.5 kg during the program itself, and continued losing afterward – averaging 5.6 kg lost at the three-month mark post-intervention and 5.9 kg at six months. Just as notably, participants reported improved stress levels, self-efficacy,

and quality of life, with satisfaction scores topping 90% throughout. The authors concluded that the intervention was feasible, acceptable, low-cost, and non-invasive, warranting further investigation in larger, controlled clinical trials as a complementary approach to conventional obesity management.

Two Systems, One Goal

Neither approach has all the answers on its own. Conventional obesity management offers evidence-based therapies that can produce substantial and relatively rapid weight loss, particularly with newer pharmacological agents and bariatric surgery. At the same time, Ayurveda and yoga bring something conventional medicine often struggles to prioritize: attention to the whole person, sustainable daily habits, and a framework for managing the stress and emotional patterns and long-term behavioural change. These approaches may help address some of the psychological, behavioural, and lifestyle factors that contribute to obesity and support long-term weight maintenance.

The future of obesity care may not lie in choice between conventional medicine and traditional health system, but in thoughtfully integrating the strengths of both. It's a patient-centred blend of both – treating excess weight not as a number to correct, but as a signal from a body, and a life, that's asking for balance. [\[30\]](#)

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India's Medicinal Plants Sector: Unlocking Global Potential in the Ayush Economy



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*In this article, **Dr Dadhich** examines how recent policy developments – including the Union Budget 2026/27 and the proposed Free Trade Agreement with Europe – are set to shape the trajectory of India's medicinal plants sector. He explores the opportunities these measures create for exports, value addition, and global market access, alongside the regulatory and quality-compliance challenges that lie ahead. The article also highlights the role of institutional initiatives, such as the e-Charak digital marketplace and conservation and farmer-support programmes of the National Medicinal Plants Board, in strengthening supply chains and building a more organised, demand-driven industry. Dr Dadhich concludes with a set of strategic recommendations aimed at positioning India as a credible global leader in herbal medicine, in line with the government's ambitious target of a USD 200 billion Ayush economy by 2030.*

Introduction

India has long been a global hub of traditional medicine systems, with Ayurveda at its core. Medicinal plants form the backbone of this ecosystem, supporting healthcare, livelihoods, and cultural heritage. As global demand for plant-based therapies, nutraceuticals, and wellness products surges, India stands at a

pivotal moment. Recent policy developments – including the Union Budget 2026/27 and the proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Europe – signal a strong intent to position India as a global leader in the Ayush sector. Achieving the ambitious target of a USD 200 billion Ayush economy by 2030 will depend significantly on strengthening the medicinal plant sector.

For the medicinal plant sector, the budget talks about the promotion of cultivation and value addition, strengthening of supply chains and farmer linkages, and investment in research, standardization, and quality control.

Union Budget 2026/27: Implications for the Ayush Sector

The Union Budget 2026/27 places renewed emphasis on preventive healthcare, traditional medicine, and natural products. Increased allocations for the Ministry of Ayush, research institutions, and digital health infrastructure indicate a shift towards integrating traditional knowledge with modern systems. For the medicinal plant sector, the budget talks about the promotion of cultivation and value addition, strengthening of supply chains and farmer linkages, and investment in research, standardization, and quality control. These initiatives are expected to improve productivity, ensure consistency in supply, and position India's herbal products more effectively in global markets.

FTA with Europe: Opportunities and Implications

The FTA with Europe, expected to be signed by the end of this year, presents a significant opportunity for India's medicinal plant sector to expand its global footprint. European markets are characterized by a strong and growing demand for herbal medicines, essential oils, and nutraceutical products, driven by increasing consumer preference for natural and plant-based healthcare solutions. This creates a favourable environment for India, given its rich biodiversity and long-standing tradition in Ayurveda.

The FTA is expected to open up new avenues for the export of both raw and value-added medicinal plant products, enabling Indian producers to access premium markets with higher price realization. It also offers substantial potential for the global expansion of Ayurvedic formulations and wellness products, strengthening India's position as a key player in the international herbal industry.

However, these opportunities come with significant challenges. The European Union maintains stringent regula-

tory standards regarding product safety, quality, and efficacy. Indian exporters will need to ensure strict compliance with these regulations, including proper certification, traceability, and adherence to internationally accepted quality benchmarks. Additionally, competition from well-established global suppliers poses a challenge in terms of consistency, branding, and market trust.

To fully leverage the benefits of the FTA, India must focus on aligning its production, processing, and certification systems with global standards. Strengthening quality assurance mechanisms, improving supply chain transparency, and investing in standardization will be essential to enhance competitiveness and build credibility in European markets.

India's Medicinal Plant Wealth and Traditional Knowledge Base

India's rich biodiversity supports thousands of medicinal plant species that form the foundation of traditional healing systems such as Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani, and various indigenous folk practices. These plants are increasingly being studied and validated through modern scientific and pharmacological research, strengthening their relevance in global healthcare systems.





Key examples include Ashwagandha, widely recognized for its role in stress management, immunity enhancement, and overall vitality; Neem, valued for its strong antibacterial, antifungal, and blood-purifying properties; Turmeric, known for its powerful anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects largely attributed to curcumin; and Tulsi (Holy Basil), traditionally used for respiratory health, immunity support, and stress reduction.

The growing convergence of traditional knowledge systems with contemporary biomedical research is enhancing the credibility, acceptance, and global demand for Ayush-based products, positioning India as a key contributor to the global herbal and natural medicine industry.

Role of NMPB in Strengthening the Sector

In the rapidly evolving medicinal plants landscape, the National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB), functioning under the Ministry of Ayush, plays a pivotal and catalytic role in aligning the sector with global market requirements. As India moves towards expanding its footprint in international herbal markets, NMPB's coordinated approach across ministries, states, and stakeholders is essential for building a robust, sustainable, and market-oriented ecosystem.

Through its Central Sector Scheme on Conservation, Development and Sustainable Management of Medicinal

Plants, NMPB is working to ensure a stable and sustainable raw material base, which is a critical prerequisite for meeting both domestic demand and export commitments. A major focus of the Board is on *in-situ* conservation through the establishment of Medicinal Plants Conservation and Development Areas (MPCDAs), which help preserve biodiversity while ensuring long-term resource availability.

At the same time, NMPB actively promotes Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and Good Field Collection Practices (GFCPs) to enhance the quality, safety, and traceability of medicinal plant produce. The development and dissemination of scientifically validated agro-techniques for over 100 species further support farmers in adopting standardized cultivation methods. Additionally, efforts to strengthen supply chains and build stronger farmer linkages are helping transition the sector from fragmented production systems to more organized and demand-driven value chains, thereby improving consistency, productivity, and income opportunities for cultivators.

Digital and Market Reforms

Digital integration is playing a transformative role in modernizing India's medicinal plant sector by improving transparency, efficiency, and market connectivity. One of the key

The rising international demand for natural and herbal products, fuelled by increasing awareness of their health benefits and fewer side effects, is creating strong export opportunities.

initiatives in this direction is the e-Charak platform, which functions as a dedicated digital marketplace for herbs and raw materials. It facilitates transparent trade while providing real-time information on prices, demand, and supply to farmers, traders, exporters, and manufacturers. This reduces information asymmetry and empowers stakeholders to make informed decisions.

In addition, the integration of medicinal plant raw materials with the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) is further strengthening the procurement ecosystem. It enhances efficiency, standardizes procurement processes, and improves price discovery by connecting buyers and sellers on a trusted digital platform.

Together, these digital reforms are helping shift the sector from fragmented, unorganized production systems towards more structured, demand-driven value chains. This transition not only ensures better market access and fair pricing but also supports scalability and global competitiveness in the medicinal plants industry.

Opportunities in the Medicinal Plants Sector

India's medicinal plant sector offers immense growth potential, driven by a combination of global and domestic factors. The rising international demand for natural and herbal products, fuelled by increasing awareness of their health benefits and fewer side effects, is creating strong export opportunities. At the same time, the rapid expansion of the nutraceutical and wellness industries is further boosting the demand for plant-based ingredients used in supplements, functional foods, and traditional formulations. In addition, there is a growing emphasis on preventive healthcare, where herbal medicines and Ayurvedic products are gaining wider acceptance as part of a holistic lifestyle approach. This shift in consumer behaviour is significantly contributing to the sector's growth. Importantly, the medicinal

plant industry also holds great potential for rural development, as it can generate employment and provide additional income sources for farmers through cultivation, collection, and value-added processing. Together, these factors position the sector as a key driver of both economic growth and sustainable healthcare.

Roadmap to USD 200 Billion AYUSH Economy by 2030

Achieving the ambitious target of a USD 200 billion Ayush economy by 2030 requires a comprehensive and strategic approach built on credibility, accessibility, effectiveness, and sustainability. Strengthening credibility is a foundational step, which involves standardization and certification of medicinal plant products, along with rigorous scientific validation of traditional knowledge. Ensuring compliance with international quality standards will be critical for gaining global trust and acceptance.

Expanding market access is another key priority. Leveraging FTAs can significantly boost exports, while strengthening digital platforms and trade networks will improve connectivity between producers and global buyers. In addition, enhancing





logistics and export infrastructure will ensure efficient movement of goods and reduce trade barriers.

Improving health outcomes is equally important for the long-term success of the Ayush sector. This can be achieved through the integration of Ayush systems with mainstream healthcare, promoting evidence-based practices, and increasing investment in clinical research and validation to establish efficacy and safety.

Finally, sustainable expansion must remain at the core of growth strategies. Conservation of biodiversity, promotion of cultivated medicinal plants over wild harvesting, and support for local communities and farmers are essential to ensure long-term resource availability and ecological balance. Together, these measures provide a clear roadmap for transforming India's Ayush sector into a globally competitive and sustainable industry.

Strategic Recommendations

To achieve long-term growth and establish global leadership in the medicinal plants and Ayush sector, a set of focused strategic interventions is essential. First, stronger policy integration is required to ensure effective coordination across ministries, state governments, research institutions, and industry stakeholders. This will help create a unified and efficient ecosystem for implementation and growth.

Second, greater investment in research and development is critical, particularly in pharmacological studies, clinical validation, and innovation in herbal formulations. Such efforts will strengthen scientific credibility and support evidence-based adoption of Ayush products globally.

Third, capacity building at the grassroots level must be prioritized by training farmers in scientific cultivation

techniques, sustainable harvesting, and post-harvest management practices. This will improve productivity, quality, and income stability for cultivators.

Fourth, emphasis on value addition is necessary to move beyond the export of raw materials towards processed, standardized, and branded medicinal plant products. This shift will significantly enhance profitability and global competitiveness.

Finally, the development of a robust digital ecosystem is essential for improving traceability, transparency, and operational efficiency across the supply chain. The use of technology-driven platforms will enable better market access, quality assurance, and data-driven decision-making, thereby strengthening the overall sectoral framework.

Conclusion

India's medicinal plants sector holds the key to unlocking the full potential of the Ayush ecosystem. With strong policy backing, institutional support from NMPB, and growing global demand, the sector is poised for significant expansion.

However, realizing the vision of a USD 200 billion Ayush economy by 2030 will require overcoming structural, regulatory, and market challenges while ensuring sustainability and quality.

By aligning traditional knowledge with modern science and global standards, India can emerge as a trusted global leader in herbal medicine and natural healthcare – transforming its medicinal plant wealth into economic and healthcare gains. 

Dr Mahesh Kumar Dadhich is Chief Executive Officer of the National Medicinal Plants Board under the Ministry of Ayush, Government of India.

Ayurveda in Mauritius: Building Bridges Between Traditional Wisdom, Public Health, and Global Sustainability



Under the aegis of the Ministry of Ayush, Government of India.

Mauritius, with its multicultural heritage and longstanding ties with India, offers a unique environment for the growth of Ayurveda as a holistic and preventive healthcare system. The

establishment of the Ayurveda Chair at the University of Mauritius marks an important step towards strengthening academic engagement, public awareness, research, and international collaboration in Ayurveda.

Ayurveda is witnessing growing interest in Mauritius through dedicated Ayurveda services, wellness initiatives, yoga-related activities, and increasing awareness regarding preventive and lifestyle-based healthcare. The multicultural setting of Mauritius provides significant opportunities for dialogue between traditional knowledge systems and modern scientific approaches.

The activities conducted under the Ayurveda Chair have focused on academic lectures, public awareness programmes, interdisciplinary discussions, and community engagement initiatives. Sessions have addressed themes such as personalized nutrition, preventive healthcare, mental wellbeing, gut-brain axis, sustainable lifestyles, and the relevance of Ayurveda in addressing non-communicable diseases and global health challenges.

Public outreach activities, media participation, and collaborative engagements with educational and healthcare institutions have further contributed to increasing awareness about integrative and preventive healthcare approaches rooted in Ayurveda.

The continued encouragement and support of the High Commission of India in Mauritius have played an important

role in strengthening India–Mauritius cooperation in the areas of Ayurveda, Yoga, wellness, and traditional knowledge systems. The Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences at the University of Mauritius has also provided a valuable interdisciplinary academic platform for meaningful collaboration and dialogue between Ayurveda and contemporary health sciences.

The vision is to further develop Mauritius as an emerging regional hub for Ayurveda education, research, wellness, and international collaboration. Planned initiatives include interdisciplinary research, academic exchange programmes, training activities, collaborative workshops, and evidence-based studies integrating Ayurveda with public health, nutrition, lifestyle medicine, epigenetics, and sustainable healthcare systems.

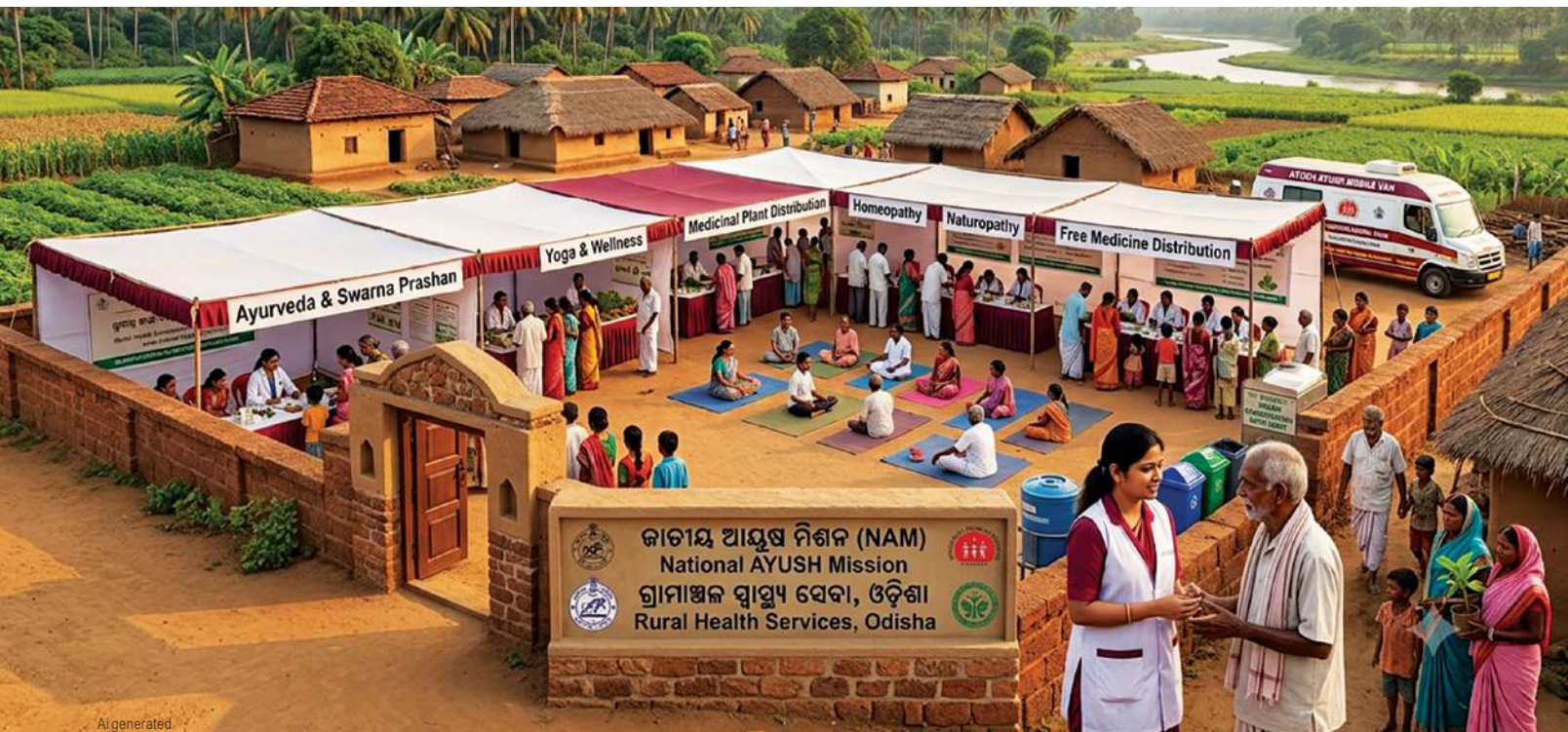
Ayurveda aligns strongly with the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in promoting good health, quality education, preventive healthcare, sustainable lifestyles, and harmony between humans and nature. With growing institutional collaboration and public interest, Ayurveda has the potential to contribute meaningfully to the future of integrative and sustainable healthcare in Mauritius and beyond.

Ayurveda is not only a traditional medical system but also a living knowledge tradition with enduring relevance for global wellbeing and sustainable living. <https://www.adobe.com/stock>



Ayush Moves Closer to Villages in Odisha

Traditional medicine systems are taking roots in Odisha in a systematic way. More doctors, community health camps and tele-consultation are widening access to Ayush care across rural and tribal areas. The 11th World Ayurveda Congress, to be held in Bhubaneswar during 10–13 December 2026, is expected to build further momentum for Ayush in the state.



Ayush healthcare in Odisha is taking a more visible place at the grassroots, with the state strengthening its network of practitioners, community outreach programmes, and digital consultation services. The expansion is particularly significant for rural and tribal communities, where access to specialised healthcare can often be challenging.

According to the Government of Odisha, 584 Ayurvedic Medical Officers, 525 Homoeopathic Medical Officers and two Unani Medical Officers have been appointed at government Ayush dispensaries across the state, including facilities serving rural and tribal populations.

The expansion is being supported by a combination of workforce development, community-based health programmes, and infrastructure under the National Ayush Mission (NAM). While public health remains primarily a state responsibility, NAM provides states with support for activities such as

Information, Education and Communication (IEC), behaviour change communication (BCC), training and capacity building, integrated Ayush hospitals, and new dispensaries in areas where Ayush facilities are not available.

Building capacity at the grassroots

Odisha is investing not only in expanding its Ayush workforce but also in strengthening its capabilities. Induction training programmes are being conducted for newly appointed Ayurvedic and Homoeopathic Medical Officers and Ayush assistants. Refresher training is also being provided to government Ayurvedic and Homoeopathic Medical Officers working as Community Health Officers at 422 Ayushman Arogya Mandirs (Ayush) across the state.

These centres represent an important shift towards a broader understanding of Ayush healthcare. Rather than focusing only on treatment, the Ayushman Arogya Mandirs follow a holistic wellness model encompassing preventive, promotive, curative, and rehabilitative care. Regular Yoga sessions, medicinal plant distribution, and health-day observances further extend their role as community wellness centres.

Taking Ayush to the community

Awareness and outreach form another important component of Odisha's strategy. The state is conducting outreach health camps, integrated Ayush camps, geriatric health camps, and International Day of Yoga programmes to bring Ayush services and knowledge closer to communities.

Specialised screening initiatives are also being organised under Ayush public health programmes, including the National Programme for Prevention and Management of Osteoarthritis and other Musculoskeletal Disorders and VAYO MITRA – AYUSH Geriatric Healthcare Services.

Such initiatives are particularly relevant in rural areas, where community-level screening and early intervention can help connect people with appropriate care before health problems become more serious.

Digital access extends the Ayush network

Perhaps the most significant development for remote communities is the introduction of Tele-Ayush services in Odisha.

Implemented through the e-Sanjeevani platform, the initiative connects 50 Ayushman Arogya Mandirs (Ayush) as spokes with two institutions functioning as hubs: Dr Abhin Chandra Homoeopathic Medical College & Hospital, Bhubaneswar, and Gopabandhu Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya, Puri.

This hub-and-spoke model allows people accessing Ayushman Arogya Mandirs to benefit from remote consultations, potentially reducing the need to travel long distances to reach specialised Ayush institutions.

A model of integrated grassroots care

Odisha's experience illustrates how the expansion of Ayush is increasingly moving beyond the traditional dispensary model. Doctors and dispensaries remain central, but they are being complemented by wellness centres, community camps, preventive health programmes, trained frontline personnel and digital consultation.

For rural and tribal communities, this combination can help make Ayush services more accessible while embedding prevention, wellness, and health awareness within primary healthcare delivery. The developments also point towards a broader evolution in Ayush delivery: from providing individual systems of medicine at standalone facilities to creating a connected community-based ecosystem of care.

Odisha Prepares for a Global Ayurveda Showcase

Odisha's growing Ayush ecosystem is set to receive an international spotlight later this year when Bhubaneswar hosts the World Ayurveda Congress and Arogya Expo from 10 to 13 December 2026.

The event is expected to bring together more than 10,000 Ayurveda professionals from across the world, providing a major platform for discussion and deliberation on issues concerning the development, promotion, and global propagation of Ayurveda. Delegates from over 60 countries are expected to take part in this event.

The accompanying Arogya Expo, with more than 400 stalls, is expected to showcase the breadth of the Ayurveda ecosystem, bringing together product manufacturers, healthcare providers, regulators, academic and research institutions, and other stakeholders under one roof.

The scale of the event is also expected to extend well beyond the professional community. Based on the experience of previous Arogya Expos, the organisers anticipate more than five lakh visitors in Bhubaneswar, giving the people of Odisha an opportunity to experience the diversity of Ayurveda's products, services, knowledge traditions and contemporary applications.

For the Government of Odisha, hosting the World Ayurveda Congress and Arogya Expo represents more than an opportunity to stage a major international event. It comes at a time when the state is expanding Ayush services at the grassroots through a growing workforce, Ayushman Arogya Mandirs, community health camps and Tele-Ayush services.

The convergence of these developments could give Odisha a distinctive position in the country's Ayurveda landscape – combining grassroots healthcare delivery with a global platform for Ayurveda's future. By hosting the World Ayurveda Congress and Arogya Expo, the state is also signalling its ambition to promote Ayurveda on a much larger scale and establish Bhubaneswar as an important destination for the Ayurveda community in India and beyond. 



Reimagining Ayurveda Through Digital Technology

From starting our journey in India to touching lives across the globe...
From being a healthcare brand to evolving into a holistic wellness company...
From developing herbal remedies for everyday needs to addressing the evolving requirements of our customers, we've come a long way.

What has enabled us to constantly evolve and continue being a reliable brand across the globe? Our focus on research and innovation to fulfill our purpose of spreading "Wellness in every Home, and Happiness in every Heart!"

And for us, blending the ancient science of Ayurveda with the technology of today isn't something new. As the world celebrates the harmony between the old and the new, we take pride in balancing tradition with innovative formulation technologies since our brand came into existence, 94 years ago. With a scientific approach and extensive R&D, we continue harnessing our capabilities to fulfill tomorrow's needs, today.

*We wish you and your family a lifetime of
good health and happiness!*



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Nurturing New Life: the Ayurvedic Framework for Pregnancy Care



Pregnancy is one of the most transformative journeys in a woman's life, and Ayurveda offers a remarkably complete roadmap for navigating it – from conception through childbirth and recovery. In this article, Dr Manjusha R Karkare, Professor and HoD of Prasuti Tantra Evum Stree Roga at Parul Institute of Ayurved and Research, walks us through the classical framework of Garbhini, Prasava, and Sutika Paricharya, showing how diet, lifestyle, mental wellbeing, and herbal support come together to nurture both mother and child. It is a timely reminder that caring for a pregnancy is as much about the mind and spirit as it is about the body.

Introduction

Suzanne Arms, the well-known American writer who published several books on pregnancy and childbirth, once said that, 'Childbirth is an experience in a woman's life that holds the power to transform her forever.' Ayurveda, the ancient science of wellbeing, recognized the arduousness of this journey and gave recommendations to make this experience as rewarding and fruitful as possible.

The Acharyas of Ayurveda gave this counselling under the umbrella of 'Garbhini Paricharya (ANC Regime), Prasava Paricharya (Labour Regime), and Sutika Paricharya (Post Delivery Regime)', all of which are of immense value in providing optimum antenatal care, ensuring the safety of the mother and the baby in labour and providing a means for adequate recovery of the mother that can restore her health to the prepregnant state.

Garbhini Paricharya

Garbhini Paricharya incorporates diet, lifestyle, psychological care, and herbal support to ensure the health of the mother and the fetus. The dietary guidelines are aimed at protecting the Agni (digestive capacity) and nourishing the Rasa Dhatu (loosely translated as Lymph) of the mother. The emphasis is, therefore, on Madhur (sweet), Drava (fluid consistency), and Sheeta (cooling property) Ahara (food items) that includes milk, butter, and ghee in appropriate amounts. Wholesome gruels medicated with Madhura Aushadhis (medicines of sweet taste) also figure in the regime. Fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains and liquids like coconut water contribute to Rasa Dhatu of optimal quality. The pregnant woman is advised to abstain from excessively oily, spicy, and processed foods, stale and dry food items, and stick to traditional home-made fresh meals.

Preparing the Body

Administering medicated bastis (medicated enemas) and vaginal tampons in the last month of gestation prepare the maternal pelvis and birth canal for the process of parturition. Gentle massage with local oils is also helpful in nourishing and calming both the mother and the fetus.

Lifestyle Restrictions and Garbhopaghatakara Bhavas

Over exertion, tough exercise routines, and mental and cognitive overload are discouraged. Garbhopaghatakara Bhavas or factors that are detrimental for fetal wellbeing such as abnormal and uncomfortable postures, overeating, intercourse, riding vehicles, and suppression of natural urges are discouraged. Mentally disrupting emotions like anger, jealousy, attachment, and fear also need to be dealt with and neutralized at the earliest in order to avoid an undesirable impact on the pregnancy.

Garbha Sanskara

The mental wellbeing of the mother is a vital element in ensuring desirable outcomes in pregnancy. The concept of Garbha Sanskara (positive influencing of the fetus) is gaining wide popularity in the current times and is much sought after by families that want to optimize pregnancy outcomes and achieve a maximum impact on the physical-mental-emotional

and spiritual aspects of the personality of the growing fetus. It involves the practice of Yogasanas that are appropriate for the ongoing stage of pregnancy. Meditation, chanting of Mantras, visualization, and dialogue with the unborn fetus are practised as a part of this Sanskara.

These help in developing a positive mindset that reduces apprehension, prepares the mother for the event of parturition, gives valuable inputs to the fetus that can positively influence its growth and development in childhood and can improve the bond between the parents and the child. Soothing music according to one's liking and certain Ragas from Indian classical music are recommended for psychological well-being. Positive affirmations, reading, and contemplating on spiritual texts as per the faith, create an energy conducive for positive outcomes.

Management of Common Pregnancy Concerns

Ayurveda has a lot to offer by way of medicines that are useful in promoting growth and stability in the fetus. Common concerns like nausea, vomiting, and constipation can be easily addressed using Ayurvedic therapies and herbs. Gut-friendly iron preparations, calcium tablets with herbal components, anabolic herbs, and therapies that help control and reverse growth retardation of fetus make Ayurveda a suitable modality for treating various concerns that may complicate a pregnancy.

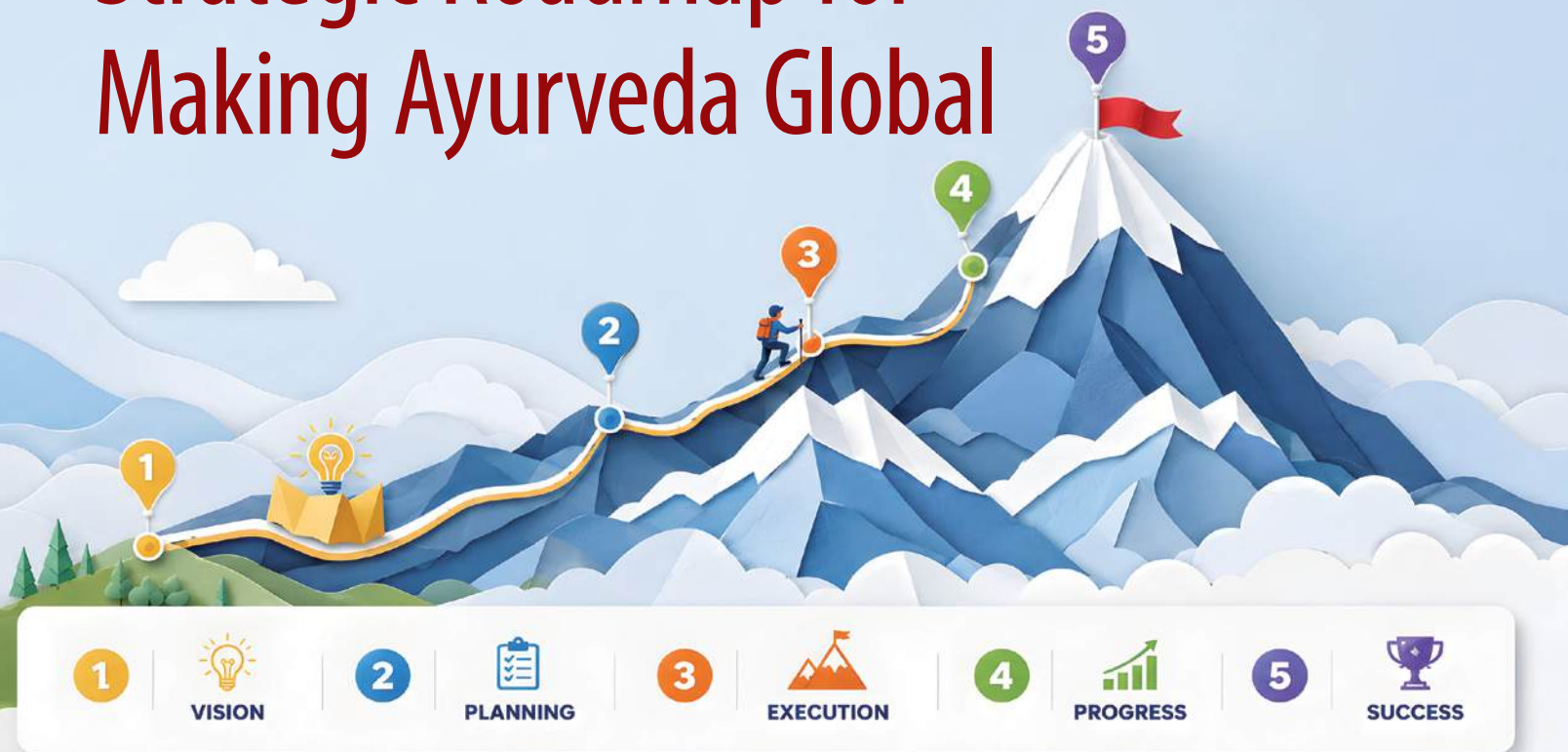
In the post-partum period too, the Sutika Paricharya regime advised by Ayurveda has restorative potential that can help the woman to not only regain her health but also deal effectively with challenges arising in the post-partum period.

Conclusion: an Invitation to Experience Ayurveda in Pregnancy

Reports of studies conducted across the world in these areas are available online for those who are curiously inclined. The limited availability of space prevents further elaboration. In a nutshell, Ayurveda can be a panacea for pregnant women who want to make pregnancy a memorable event in their lives. In a sincere appeal to readers, I would like to encourage women to experience for themselves, the rejuvenating experience of Ayurveda in pregnancy and for practitioners to promote the wellbeing of patients through the wisdom of this ancient science. 

Dr Manjusha R Karkare is Professor and HoD, Department of Prasuti Tantra Evum Stree Roga, Parul Institute of Ayurved and Research, Parul University, Vadodara, India. She can be reached at karkaremr@gmail.com.

Strategic Roadmap for Making Ayurveda Global



Strategic Roadmap for Making Ayurveda Global is a report published by NITI Aayog (Government of India) in 2026. The report, prepared in collaboration with PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), presents a comprehensive strategy for expanding Ayurveda's global presence, acceptability, and credibility. It builds on the Ministry of Ayush's ongoing international initiatives, including bilateral agreements, teaching and research collaborations, and the establishment of Ayush Information Cells in various countries. The report highlights the considerable economic potential of globalizing Ayurveda across health products, wellness services, and medical value travel.

For the benefit of our readers, Ayur World used AI tools to summarize the main report and subsequently edited and further condensed the summary to present its insights in a concise and accessible form.

Study Objectives and Methodology

The study set out to assess Ayurveda's current global footprint, identify the barriers and enablers to its international expansion, evaluate regulatory frameworks across major geographies, map global demand, and produce an actionable implementation roadmap. Researchers combined secondary research with in-depth consultations across ministries, regulators, industry associations, academic institutions, manufacturers, and international bodies.

The analysis rests on a three-pillar framework:

- Availability – workforce capacity, manufacturing and export readiness, international R&D, and education standardization
- Acceptability – regulatory compliance, international collaborations, insurance/reimbursement penetration, and cultural adaptability
- Propagation – strategic branding, global visibility, medical value travel, and India's presence in international platforms like the UN

Ayurveda now has some form of formal recognition in nearly 30 countries, through licensing models, academic partnerships, and inclusion in national health policies.

Where Ayurveda Stands Today

The report finds steady but uneven progress. Ayurveda now has some form of formal recognition in nearly 30 countries, through licensing models, academic partnerships, and inclusion in national health policies. Countries such as Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Mauritius, the UAE, South Africa, Tanzania, and several EU states recognize it to varying degrees, while diaspora-driven practitioner communities are growing in the US, UK, and Australia.

Yet India remains the overwhelming centre of gravity: it has over 355,000 trained Ayurveda practitioners, but 95% of qualified professionals are based domestically, leaving international practitioner representation thin. On trade, Ayush and herbal product exports have nearly doubled – from USD 1.09 billion in 2014 to USD 2.16 billion in 2023 – reaching around 150 countries, though most exports remain classified as dietary supplements rather than finished pharmaceutical products, due to regulatory constraints abroad. Research collaboration now spans roughly 70 countries, aided by the WHO Global Traditional Medicine Centre in Jamnagar, and educational outreach includes scholarships for 277 international students from 32 countries, alongside Ayush academic chairs at global universities – though standardized international curricula are still developing.

Gaps and Benchmarking Against Traditional Chinese Medicine

A central comparative thread in the report is Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), which it treats as the most instructive benchmark. TCM's global success has been driven by mission-scale state backing, heavy R&D investment, and proactive engagement with international standard-setting bodies – including over 30 overseas TCM centres, integration into multiple free trade agreements, and recognition through ISO/TC 249 standards.

By contrast, Ayurveda's international penetration lags, constrained by fragmented practitioner licensure, the absence of

harmonized pharmacopeial standards, limited multi-country research infrastructure, and insufficient integration with modern scientific validation pathways. The report frames closing this gap as essential to establishing Ayurveda as a credible, scalable global health system rather than a niche wellness offering.

Within each pillar, the report identifies specific weaknesses:

- Availability is held back by the lack of standardized practitioner licensure and recognized micro-credentials for healthcare workers abroad, and by a trade mix still dominated by raw materials rather than higher-value finished products, particularly limiting in the US and EU markets.
- Acceptability suffers from a gap between India's domestic quality standards and the stricter expectations of international regulators. The report calls for clearer regulatory guidance, upgraded GMP standards, and stronger support for small and medium manufacturers.
- Propagation is weakened by inconsistent, fragmented messaging across stakeholders, which the report says confuses Ayurveda's identity and value proposition internationally.

The Roadmap: Key Recommendations

The report proposes a phased roadmap running from 2025 to 2047, organized into short-term (to 2029), medium-term (to 2035), and long-term (to 2047) horizons.

Workforce and Mobility

The report calls for building a Global Ayurveda Register (GAR), offering WHO-aligned digital credentials and continuous professional development under the National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCISM), paired with a Global Information Portal consolidating licensing pathways, country-specific rules, visa norms, and compliance checklists into one reference point. India is also encouraged to pursue Mutual Recognition Arrangements through diplomatic channels such as G20, BRICS, and ASEAN, and

The report proposes a shift from a fragmented, product-led international presence to an evidence-anchored regulation-ready global health ecosystem.

to expand Ayurveda's academic footprint via electives in international medical schools tied to the Ayush Chair initiative.

Regulatory Credibility

The report emphasizes the need for upgrading India's Schedule T standards to WHO-GMP equivalence, publishing a public directory of certified manufacturing units, and developing an export-oriented edition of the Ayurvedic Pharmacopoeia – complete with sourcing standards, contaminant profiles, and batch-consistency fingerprinting. The report calls for differentiated regulatory strategies tailored to priority markets (the US, EU, UAE, Australia, Canada), alongside an expanded AyushExcil functioning as a specialized market-intelligence and compliance-support body.

Evidence and Intellectual Property

The report suggests scaling clinical evidence through WHO Collaborating Centre trials across multiple countries, annual global evidence and safety reporting, and real-world data registries built on India's Ayush insurance coverage mandates. On intellectual property, the report recommends modernizing the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library, aligning with WIPO disclosure frameworks, and establishing a national Patent Watch Mechanism.

Trade and Services

The report recommends a shift from raw-material exports towards high-value finished products, backed by stronger regulatory documentation and market-specific branding, diversification into culturally aligned Asian and African markets, and local manufacturing units abroad to speed approvals. The report also proposes a real-time Ayurveda Trade Dashboard tracking trade codes, pricing trends, and regulatory changes, alongside an 'Ayurveda-as-a-Service' model for establishing standardized clinics and wellness centres overseas.

Medical Value Travel

Medical value travel can be boosted by developing international hubs (starting with Mauritius), domestic wellness zones in heritage destinations, and bundled Ayush Visa packages

combining diagnostics, treatment, and tele-follow-up through NABH-accredited centres. In the longer term, the report envisions insurance pilots in OECD countries progressing towards out-of-area coverage for Ayurveda treatment delivered in India.

Branding and Diplomacy

The report puts forward the idea of developing culturally adapted 'Ayurveda Localisation Toolkits,' translating dosha-based concepts into language compatible with ICD-11's traditional medicine module, along with sustained myth-busting communication. The report suggests high-visibility 'Ayurveda Experience Centres' in landmark global locations – near WHO headquarters in Geneva, UN headquarters and Times Square in New York, Trafalgar Square in London, Marina Bay in Singapore, and Shibuya Crossing in Tokyo – plus partnerships with global hospitality, tourism, and retail chains. It also calls for embassies to serve as active Ayurveda information nodes, and for deeper engagement with WHO, UNESCO, WIPO, WTO, FAO, and UNDP to embed Ayurveda in global health diplomacy and sustainable development agendas.

Governance

To coordinate this multi-pronged effort, the report recommends a high-level Mission Steering Group, chaired by the Minister of Ayush, supported by a Global Ayurveda Forum responsible for execution, inter-ministerial coordination, milestone-linked agreements, and transparent progress dashboards.

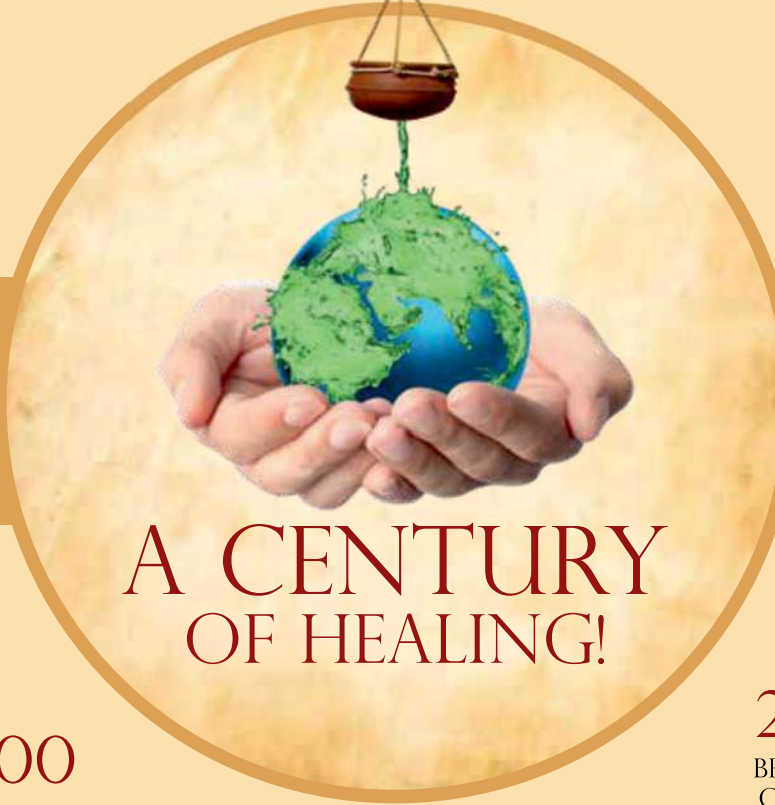
Conclusion

The report's overarching vision is a shift from a fragmented, product-led international presence to an evidence-anchored, regulation-ready global health ecosystem – one where Ayurveda achieves formal recognition in at least 20 national health systems by 2047, alongside credible research, harmonized standards, and integration into mainstream and complementary healthcare pathways worldwide. The authors frame this as central not only to Ayurveda's growth but to India's broader soft-power and global health diplomacy ambitions. 



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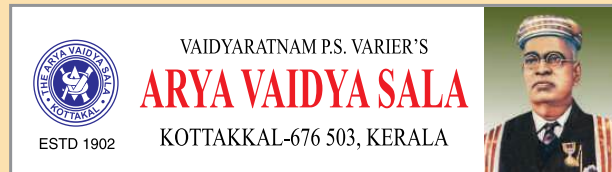
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