

Ayurveda is on the Way to Open the Golden Door of Indian Tourism Through Panchakarma: A Review

Dr. Avijit Das

B.A.M.S (WBUHS), M.D (Ayu) Panchakarma, Consultant / Assistant Professor, Ph.D Scholar , Subject - Panchakarma (Ayurveda)

ABSTRACT

Over the years, Ayurveda, the science of healing and regeneration, has become increasingly popular throughout the world. Numerous Ayurvedic centres are expanding nowadays, as they are one of the primary tourist attractions in the southern region. India is becoming a popular destination for medical tourism due to a number of draw factors, including easy accessibility, affordable and high-quality medical care, beautiful vacation spots, etc. The best place is in South India, which is also the nation's centre of health. The boundaries and opportunities of Ayurvedic tourism have undoubtedly expanded with the recognition of Ayurvedic healing on a national and worldwide level. With any fortunate, India will be the world's top choice for high-quality medical facilities within the next several years. Ayurveda was supposedly bestowed upon humanity by the gods to enable us to live long, healthy lives free from illness. Nearly every tribe in India swiftly embraced ayurveda, and it soon started to spread to nations like Afghanistan, China, and Iran. Panchakarma can provide a long-lasting or permanent treatment for multi-system disruptions. Panchakarma is becoming a vital component of medical travel. Therefore, the government ought to actively support the growth of Panchakarma travel. This review discusses the many facets of ayurvedic travel to India, including Panchakarma, its development, and current trends.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Tourism, Panchakarma, health

INTRODUCTION

Panchakarma primarily consists of a purification procedure that uses many methods to get rid of our body's vitiated doshas, or humours. It is a part of traditional *Panchakarma* and involves *Vaman* (therapeutic emesis), *Virechana* (therapeutic purgation), *Basti* (medicated enema), *Nasya* (errhine), and *Raktamokshana* (blood-letting).¹ Prior to delivering these primary processes, some preparatory procedures such as *Pachana* (digestive), *Snehana* (Oleation), and *Swedana* (sudation) should be carried out. This preparatory step is meant to transfer vitiated dosha from the body's *shakha* (periphery) to the *koshtha* (gastrointestinal tract). With the aid of these purifying procedures, doshas are eliminated from the body through the closest path once they enter the *koshtha*. There is another type of Panchakarma called *Kerliya panchakarma* in addition to this classical panchakarma.² It is a special kind of treatment where external treatments are prioritised. Examples of *Keraliya Panchakarma* are *Navarakizhi* (*pinda sweda*), *Elakizhi* (*snigdha patra sweda*), *Narangakizhi* (*jambeera pinda sweda*), *Podikizhi* (*churna pinda sweda*), *Pizhichil* (*sarvanga dhara*), *Talapothichil* (*taladhara*), *Chavuti thirumal* (*padaghat*), etc. In

addition to being effective in curing illness, Panchakarma is a helpful therapy method for maintaining and enhancing ideal health.³ India's natural legacy is Ayurveda, with Panchakarma emerging as one of its main treatment modalities on a daily basis.⁴ Nowadays, more people are experiencing the negative effects of stress and anxiety as a result of their busy schedules, competitive environments, and suppression of their natural urges. These conditions include poor digestion, sleep deprivation, allergies, heart disease, diabetes, chronic fatigue, cancer, and osteoporosis.⁵ By removing these metabolic pollutants from the body, Panchakarma enables tissues and channels to mend permanently. People are looking for a radical, natural, and efficient treatment for this kind of lifestyle condition. Allopathic medical systems only provide palliative care because they have several adverse effects and might become habit forming with prolonged use. The aforementioned factor is the rationale behind the growing adoption of Panchakarma therapy worldwide. India's ayurvedic tourism industry has grown significantly as a hub for health tourism and marketing. Travelling to India has taken on new significance with the inclusion of Ayurveda. India is a major centre for ayurveda tourism because of its inexpensive cost of healthcare when compared to other nations, utilisation of safe, non-toxic herbal resources, and significantly shorter waiting times for treatment when compared to other nations.

OBJECTIVES

- To be aware of *Panchakarma's* significance in the travel industry
- Identify the factors that are behind India's *Panchakarma* tourism
- Provide pertinent recommendations for enhancing Panchakarma in the travel and tourism sector.

MATERIAL & METHODS

Information about Panchakarma and Medical tourism was taken from Ayurvedic and Modern literature, commentaries, and modern medicine, in that order. Information on pertinent subjects has also been gathered from medical journals, both index and non-index.

REVIEW OF LITRETURE

• History of Indian tourism

The history of tourism stretches back thousands of years, to the time when Greek pilgrims went from all across the Mediterranean to the little region known as *Epidauria* in the Saronic Gulf. The first location for medical tourism was *Epidauria*. Early medical tourism took the shape of spa towns and *sanitariums*. People go to these locations in order to receive medical care. India is a historical location for medical tourism. Five millennia ago, Ayurveda and Yoga were popular.⁶ National strategy for tourism The Indian government initiated the "Incredible India" international marketing campaign in 2002 with the aim of promoting tourism in India to a worldwide audience. The Ministry of Tourism initiated the "Athiti Devo Bhava" campaign in 2009 with the aim of educating the local populace on appropriate conduct and manners when interacting with foreign visitors. The goal of this campaign was to raise awareness of the impact of tourism and to educate Indians about the need to preserve their heritage, culture, hospitality, and cleanliness.⁷ Instead of unwinding after a business or leisure trip, those who go overseas may experience after travel effects like jet lag, missed sleep, interrupted fitness routines, etc. Panchakarma tourism is a rising concept that aims to incorporate healthy vacation options and activities. This is a one-stop shop that offers travel services, wellness, and medical amenities. Individuals receive top-notch facilities with affordable healthcare, no waiting lists, excellent service, and significant savings. The

global medical tourism and health care tourism industries are rapidly expanding and worth billions of dollars. It is an economic activity that involves the exchange of services and combines tourism and medicine, two of the biggest sectors in the world.⁸

- **Panchakarma**

In order to assist rid the body of accumulated toxins and restore health, Panchakarma is an Ayurvedic therapy that consists of five karmas. In Panchakarma, a variety of procedures are arranged based on the patient's health and the nature of the disease. Other than *Niruha*, *Anuvasan*, and *Vamana*, *Virechana*.⁹

Different Procedures of Panchakarma

Three steps make up panchakarma, which carefully guides the body through a range of treatments. During the *Purvakarma* stage, the body's stored toxins and excess doshas are released by oleation therapy and extreme sweating. A specific treatment called *Pradhanakarma* is used as the actual treatment to cleanse the body and restore its vitality. In order to prevent the disease from reoccurring, a rehabilitation plan including dietary changes, rest, and lifestyle adjustments is suggested at the final stage, known as *paschatkarma*. What distinguishes Ayurveda from other medical specialties is this post-treatment care.¹⁰

Some Procedure uses in different disorders

- *Shirodhara* -For chronic headache, insomnia, mental tension, hysteria, hallucination and insanity.
- *Shirobasti*- Treatment for dryness of nostril, mouth and throat, severe headache, facial paralysis and burning sensation in head.
- *Pizhichil*- For spondylosis, rheumatic disease, paralysis, hemiplegia, nervous disorder.
- *Navarakizhi*- In wasting of muscle, rheumatism, sports injuries, certain kind of skin disease.
- *Udvaartana* - In hemiplegia, paralysis, obesity etc.
- *Snehapana* - Both as a *shamana* (pacification) *chikitsa* in conditions like OA, BPH, etc., and as a pre-emptive measure before to *shodhana* (purification) *chikitsa* like *vamana* and *virechana*.
- *Swedan*- For body sudation as a *poorva karma* before *shodhana*
- *Nasyam* - Treatment for nasal ailment
- *Karnapoorana* - Treatment for ear ailment

Popular Panchakarma centre for medical tourism in India¹²

- Somatheeram Ayurveda Resort, Kovalam Kerala
- Ananda Spa in the Himalayas, Narendra Nagar, Uttarakhand
- Devaaya Ayurveda and Nature Cure Centre, Tiswadi, Goa
- Sreekrishna Ayurveda Panchakarma Centre, Alappuzha, Kerala
- Hemadri Ayurveda Centre, Rishikesh, Uttarakhand
- AVN Arogya Ayurvedic Retreat, Madurai, Tamil Nadu
- Kairali Ayurvedic Health Village, Palakkad, Kerala
- The Leela, Udaipur, Rajasthan
- Chingoli Ayurveda Hospital and Research Centre, Alappuzha, Kerala
- Jiva Ayurveda Clinic & Panchakarma, Faridabad, Haryana
- Elephant Pass Ayurveda & Yoga Retreat, Kodanad, Kerala
- Vana Malsi Estate, Dehradun, Uttarakhand
- Shinshiva Ayurvedic Resort, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala

- Ayurveda Kalmatia, Almora, Uttarakhand

The fascination of foreigners with Ayurveda

The boundaries and opportunities of Ayurvedic tourism have undoubtedly expanded with the recognition of Ayurvedic healing on a national and worldwide level. The 'Panchakarma' process offers a methodical approach to detoxification; therefore, it is advisable for those who are afflicted to participate in one of its curative facilities in order to benefit from its beneficial approaches. India is home to a vast array of treatment facilities that are equipped to handle a wide range of illnesses, from minor ones like hair loss to more serious ones like diabetes, hypertension, and even heart issues.¹³ The population of today's stressed-out world is turning to Ayurvedic naturopathic medicine for comfort and calming relief. In these wellness clinics, therapeutic massages using essential oils—one of Ayurveda's most effective methods for relieving stress and anxiety—are also used as part of the therapeutic process. Although one can also massage themselves, the professional method used in health centres not only provides relief but also educates on the standard approach to be used. Consequently, this is giving Ayurvedic tourism the push it needs.¹⁴ The popularity of relaxation therapy and effective beauty regimens around the world has expanded the potential applications of Ayurvedic tourism. There has been a progressive movement in focus towards Ayurvedic therapies for beauty and style statement, as plastic surgery and allopathic remedies have proven to be expensive and unsatisfactory. In addition, Ayurveda has long drawn interest from people worldwide, particularly in wealthy nations. India has long been a destination for foreign visitors seeking knowledge. They were studying Ayurveda at prestigious universities like Nalanda, Taxila, and Kashi alongside philosophy and religion. This is demonstrated by the way that different Ayurvedic practices and concepts have been incorporated into other conventional medical systems across the globe. A significant part of Ayurveda's international dissemination was also contributed by religious individuals. Ayurveda was brought to Asia, especially East Asian nations like Malaysia, Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar, Japan, Singapore, Korea, and Tibet, by Buddhist religious people in particular. Following the resurgence of Ayurveda in India following the nation's freedom, Ayurveda began to garner interest from the general public and international medical community. This was mostly due to Ayurveda's holistic approach, humanitarian perspective, straightforward treatment methods, ability to treat chronic and incurable diseases, and use of safer, non-toxic herbal resources. WHO also emphasised in Alma Ata in 1977 that Ayurveda and other TSMs should be revived in order to address the health care issues of the affected nations. Up until the 1980s, the only ways that Ayurveda was spread abroad were through lectures and in-person visits by *Vaidyas* who would impart knowledge and offer treatments. This led to a rise in interest in Ayurveda.¹⁵

The factors listed below are some of the reasons why Ayurveda is becoming more popular in various nations:

- Holistic approach as opposed to over specialization.
- The significance of each person's constitution (Prakruti) in designing a personalised food plan.
- According to Ayurveda, equilibrium is the foundation of health.
- Value of a sensible lifestyle that is in line with the environment, climate, and customs. utilising
- Natural resources as medication because our bodies are naturally adapted to them.
- The risk associated with contemporary chemical treatment drugs.

- Ayurveda's profoundly spiritual outlook leads to a respectful attitude towards the natural world and its ecological equilibrium.

DISCUSSION

Travellers who come for authentic Ayurvedic therapy will be duped and will return with a false impression of Ayurveda. Therefore, quick action is needed to stop these phoney setups. The improvement of the social and physical environments should be our top priority. The physical environment includes the enhancement of fundamental infrastructure, hygienic standards, and other aspects. Basic facilities should be kept up and environmentally friendly. The social environment encompasses the advancement of human culture and behaviour, meaning that individuals ought to treat guests with kindness. It is important for people to realise that Panchakarma is more than just a wellness centre; it also has healing and restorative properties. Panchakarma is the most effective method of treating musculoskeletal, neurological, skin, and immunological problems in Ayurveda medicine. The Indian government ought to develop a number of directives and regulations to support Panchakarma in the travel and tourist industry. For example, organising many Panchakarma-related health campaigns, promoting it on social media, and awarding the best tourist destination for receiving Panchakarma therapy are all examples of how to do these things. connection between Panchakarma Centre and a number of hotels and resorts. The government ought to develop PPP models for a cooperative strategy. In order to promote Panchakarma tourism internationally, the Indian government should also choose brand ambassadors on a worldwide scale. mentioning every Panchakarma resort and its healing properties in travel guides to increase public awareness of the location.

CONCLUSION

India is well-positioned to take advantage of the worldwide medical tourism market potential. Particularly in the area of Panchakarma, the government's involvement is essential to the growth of medical tourism. India may play a vital role in providing healthcare and medical support close to transcontinental hubs. Currently, the majority of foreign visitors are limited to India. Kerala is the only Indian state that contributes significantly to Panchakarma in relation to health tourism. Due to its holistic approach and lack of adverse effects, it is highly favoured by medical tourists. Panchakarma appeals to tourists not just for health reasons but also for other specific reasons. The range of people using Ayurvedic tourism, particularly for Panchakarma, is broad, and the number of foreign visitors visiting India is growing daily. Therefore, the government ought to take the lead in promoting Panchakarma in every Indian state. The development of a streamlined medical visa application process is necessary to facilitate travel to India. Standardisation of practices and the encouragement of cross-sectoral cooperation are necessary to establish Panchakarma as the premier organisation in the field of medical tourism.

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