

JALACHIKITSA

As the word itself indicates that Jalachikitsa means the treatment of any ailment with the help of water. Truly speaking the word Chikitsa is parallel to the word Therapy and when a certain procedure is referred to as Therapy it should be full proof in itself. So, even though the use of water for the treatment of any disease is normally referred as Hydrotherapy or Jalachikitsa, in real sense it is not so, as it has to be accompanied by many more procedures for a patient to get totally cured. Hence it is Jalopachar or Water Cure. As it is mainly a part of Nature Cure, it has to be accompanied by other Naturopathic Treatments to effect total cure.

HISTORY

Unlike any other scientific development, water treatment also has a long history. But, to mention with, the overall accepted story is somewhat as follows –

It was sometime in 1826, Vincent Priessnitz, a cowboy of about 8 to 10 years old, from a small village Grafenberge on a hill top in Germany, while grazing his cattle observed that a deer, having a wound in leg, is daily crippling towards the spring nearby and standing in the spring for hours together by dipping the affected part in the running waters of the spring. Being a cowboy he had his own observations about the habits of animals and also may be due to the child's curiosity he went on observing it daily. He found that day by day the crippling of the deer was improving and ultimately after complete 'cure' it stopped coming to the spring. This did put a deep impact on the mind of Vincent.

When he was 13, one of his hands got crushed under a stone. He decided to try the deer's theory. Daily he started putting his affected hand in the flowing waters of the spring and it got cured within a very short period. During the same period he met a person whose wrist got twisted and it started paining. Vincent suggested him to put his hand in running waters of spring. He did so and the pain stopped after some days. When he was 16, he fell while riding horse and three of his ribs got fractured with the loss of some teeth. It was not possible to dip only the affected portion in the spring waters, so he decided to apply cold water packs to the chest. He applied cloth drenched in cold water to the chest for 12 months and he was as fit as he had ever been.

During all this process and period, the effectiveness of water as a therapeutic agent went on getting confirmed in his mind and then he did not turned back. He went on treating various types of patients with the help of water with great effect. He became famous for this and people started rushing to his village. In due course his fame reached the Queen of Austria and she called him to treat her problem. She also got cured with water cure and then along with common people even noblemen from Europe started visiting him. He lived quite a ripe matured old age.

Through out his life he treated 40,000 patients all either medically incurable or frustrated. Out of these only 45 died and rest all got totally cured. So, the percentage of deaths was hardly 0.1 %. Surprising, his bank balance at the time of his age of 43 years was £ 50,000 /-.

Most of the naturopaths world over believe this case story as the starting of Modern Nature Cure.

UNDERLYING WORKING PRINCIPLES

- (1) Newton's Third Law – Law of Action And Reaction - For every action there is equal and opposite reaction.
- (2) Liquids attain their level - Liquid flow from higher level to lower level. (Especially for Enema).
- (3) Effect of temperature on the system –
Cold – Contraction (muscles, skin, nerves and blood vessels),
Hot – Expansion and Relaxation (same as above),
Hot and Cold (alternate) – Passive exercise.
- (4) Stimulating Effect –
Nerves,
Glands (to regulate secretions).
- (5) Lubrication Effect – Lubrication to the old dry coatings of the colon through enema.

METHODS OF USE

Packs [water and mud], compresses, bandages, foment, jets, showers, sprays, douches, enemas, imbibitions, irrigation, gargling, splashes, achamanas and various types of partial or full baths are some of the important Hydro- Thermo- Therapeutic procedures which prove effective when used properly.

Late Acharya K. Lakshman Sarma of Pudukkottai, Tamil Nadu, who is popularly known as “ **Father Of Indian Nature Cure** “, because he was the first person from India who showed & proved that even if the present concept of Natural Hygiene / Nature Cure / Naturopathy is evolved and developed in western countries these principles, concepts & treatments were present & were being followed in ancient India, may be in a different way. **He quotes the shlokas from the ancient scriptures like Veda, Upanishadas, Puranas & Geeta.**