

# Medicine Systems used by Indian People – An Evaluation

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**Abstract:** Medicines are substances that are used to treat, identify, and prevent disease and illness. The ancient civilization of India fostered the growth of numerous medical systems. India offers both the allopathic medical system and the traditional Indian medical system. In addition to one type of allopathy, India has five distinct traditional medicinal systems in use: Siddha, Ayurveda, Unani, Homeopathy, and Naturopathy. In developing countries, traditional medicine is becoming increasingly popular, especially in rural areas. Ayurveda, which translates as "the science of life," is a holistic medical strategy that emphasizes keeping one's body, mind, and spirit in good shape. The three doshas (constitutional types) are the basis of ayurvedic doctrine, and the patient's constitution is more heavily considered during diagnosis and treatment. Astrology and incantation are also used in Siddha medicine. Tamil Nadu, India's most southern state, uses it the most commonly. In addition to mineral or metallic medications, adjuvants (like honey, ghee, milk, betel leaf juice, and hot water) are frequently administered. Clean air, food, water, physical movement and rest, psychological movement and rest, sleep and alertness, and the retention of beneficial materials and outflow of waste materials from the body are the six elements of illness prevention and health promotion. With origins in the Reformation, homeopathy in Germany enjoyed a golden age in the 17th and 18th centuries. In 1995, the Department of Homeopathy and Indian Systems of Medicine was established. One of the objectives of the organization is to develop standards for Ayurvedic, Unani, Siddha, and homeopathic medicines. Folk knowledge about the traditional application of herbal remedies is very prevalent in ethnic cultures. People become physically and psychologically weaker when they don't take their medication, which makes them more susceptible to contracting new ailments. In addition to allopathy, India has five additional traditional medical systems. Among these are Siddha, Ayurveda, Unani, Homeopathy, and Naturopathy.

**Keywords:** allopathy, ayurveda, homeopathy, naturopathy and ancient civilization, siddha, traditional Indian medical system, Unani.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Medicines are chemical substances used in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of disease and illness. The use of medicines is governed by the underlying science of illness and disease. Numerous medical systems were able to evolve thanks to India's ancient civilization. As specialists worry about environmental contamination and the ensuing disaster, people get weaker physically and mentally and are exposed to a wide range of new diseases. Because of this, this industry is growing more quickly everywhere, especially in India. There are two different types of medicines available in India: the allopathic system and the traditional Indian system [1][2].

In India, traditional medicine has a long history, is well-established, and is included in the broader medical system of the nation. Additionally, traditional treatments are becoming very popular in poorer nations. India has five different traditional medical systems in use, including Siddha, Ayurveda, Unani, Homeopathy, and Naturopathy, in addition to one style of allopathy [3].

### 1.1 Statement of the problem

The development of several medicinal systems was supported by India's ancient culture. The Siddha, Ayurveda, Unani, Homeopathy, and Naturopathy traditional medical systems are among the five that are now practiced in India. Traditional medicine is gaining popularity in emerging nations, especially in rural. In Germany during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, homeopathy gained popularity. It has its roots in the Reformation. India has five additional traditional medical systems in addition to allopathy. Folk wisdom regarding the conventional use of herbal treatments is quite common throughout ethnic communities. Creating standards for Ayurvedic, Unani, Siddha, and homeopathic medications is one of the goals of the Department of Homeopathy and Indian Systems of Medicine [4][5].

### 1.2 Methodology of the study

The subject is essentially technological in nature, whether it is pure ISM informatics or pure health informatics. In practical terms, this is outside the subject of this article; as a result, it has not been addressed. Based on a thorough examination of the literature, this article presents a snapshot or an overview of the advances in the Indian healthcare information system. For the sake of this study, a variety of literatures, including published articles, books, and monographs in the relevant field, underwent a systematic review that also applied to web-based resources [6][7].

## 2 MEDICINE SYSTEMS USED BY INDIANS

The medicine systems used by Indians may be categorized into several classes as shown in Fig. 1.

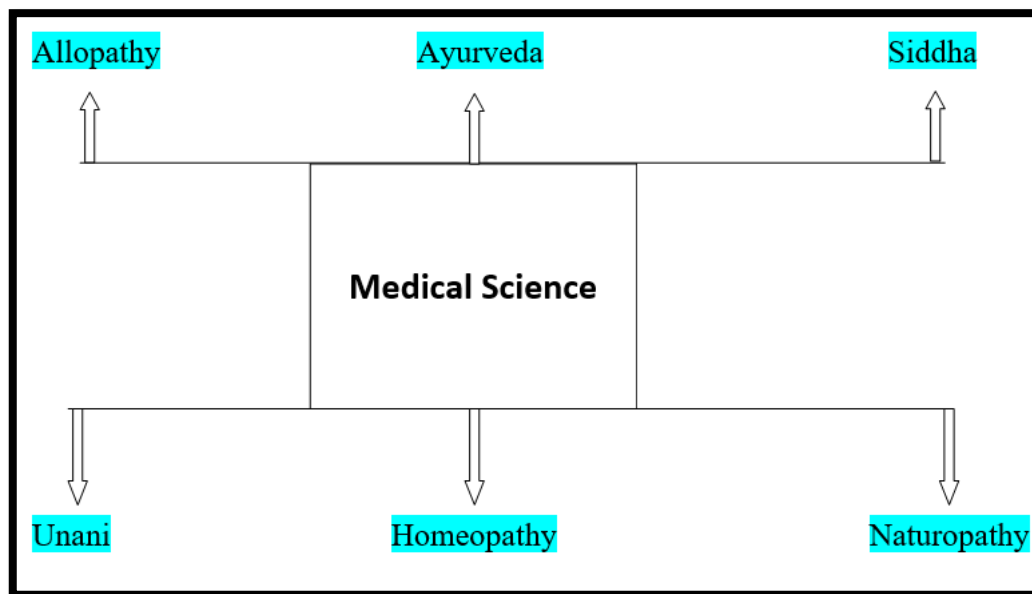


Fig. 1. Medicine Systems used in India

## 2.1 Allopathy

Modern, science-based medicine is referred to as allopathy, also known as "allopathic medicine." Depending on where you are in the nation, you could use the phrase differently. The phrase is frequently used to criticize osteopathic medicine, particularly in the context of medical education [8].

## 2.2 Ayurveda

Ayurveda, which refers to "the science of life," is a holistic medical approach that places a strong emphasis on maintaining a healthy body, mind, and spirit as well as encouraging harmony in one's relationships with others and the cosmos. Before the invention of written writing around 5,000 BC, many practices were transmitted orally. The Caraka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita, which are the foundational works on Ayurvedic medicine, provide descriptions of internal medicine, surgery, treatment of head and neck diseases, toxicology, psychiatry, sexual vitality, rejuvenation, care of the elderly, gynecology, obstetrics, and pediatrics [9].

Ayurvedic doctrine is founded on the three doshas (constitutional types), and rather than focusing more on the ailment itself, diagnosis and therapy focus more on the prakriti (patient's constitution). Symptoms of illnesses and other disorders are relieved, impurities are removed, disease resistance is increased, and general well-being is improved using a combination of herbs, oils, food, yoga, and lifestyle changes according to each person's constitution. Ayurveda is the most commonly used medical system in India [10].

## 2.3 Siddha

One of India's oldest medical systems is the Siddha one. The implication of Siddha is "accomplishment." Siddhas are holy individuals who have recovered from illness through yoga. In addition to the condition, the Siddha technique takes into account a patient's age, sex, race, habits, environment, diet, physiological constitution, and other aspects. Siddha medicines have been effective in treating some conditions, but further study is required to completely understand why this approach is effective. In order to alter the potency, toxicity, and efficacy of the therapies, adjuvants (such as honey, ghee, milk, betel leaf juice, and hot water) are often given in conjunction with very modest doses of mineral or metallic medications. In Siddha medicine, astrology and incantation are also employed. Siddha medicine is most frequently used in Tamil Nadu, the southernmost state of India [11].

## 2.4 Unani

Traditional Unani medicine originated in Greece, was improved upon by Arab experts, and eventually travelled to India during the Middle Ages. The foundation of unani theory is the idea that a harmony of humours is necessary for maintaining health (blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile) [12].

The six components of illness prevention and health promotion include clean air, food, and water; physical movement and rest; psychological movement and rest, sleep and alertness; and the retention of beneficial materials and outflow of waste materials from the body. In addition to pharmacology, food treatment, and surgery, unani medicine makes use of herbal, animal, marine, and mineral therapies [13].

## 2.5 Homeopathy

The fundamental principle of homeopathy is "SIMILIA SIMILIBUS CURENTUR," which translates to "Let likes cure likes." In order to treat or prevent sickness, homeopathy tries to strengthen the body's defence mechanisms and processes. Small doses of substances known as remedies are given to patients in order to treat them; according to homeopathy, these substances would cause the same or comparable signs and symptoms of sickness in healthy people if given in larger doses. Each patient in homeopathy receives a treatment plan that is personalized (tailored for each person). Homeopaths base their treatment choices on a patient's overall health profile, which considers the patient's lifestyle, emotional and mental states, and other aspects in addition to their symptoms [14].

Homeopathy saw a heyday in Germany in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It is one of the most often used methods of treating sickness in India. Hippocrates was the first to recognize that particular substances cause the signs of illnesses that they would later be used to treat (400 BC). This study found that a homeopathic medicinal ingredient that can cause fake symptoms in healthy people can also treat a similar set of symptoms in real disorders. Typically, only a small amount of one drug, at just the right doses, is used to treat the condition.

## 2.6 Yoga and Naturopathy

Naturopathy and yoga are modes of living. Simple natural principles are used in naturopathy. It nudges people to be mindful of their dietary and lifestyle choices. The list of treatments also includes hydrotherapy, mud packs, baths, massages, and others. The eight pillars of yoga include restraint, austerity, physical postures, breathing exercises, restraint of the sense organs, reflection, meditation, and samadhi. The idea of reviving these antiquated medical systems is gaining popularity.

The Department of Indian Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy was created in 1995 as a separate department under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Creating standards for Ayurvedic, Unani, Siddha, and homeopathic medications is one of the organization's goals. The creation of effective manufacturing procedures for Ayurvedic drugs is almost complete. The division is exerting great effort. To improve the accessibility of top-notch raw resources, compile information from antiquity, and develop a database of medicinal plants, it was suggested that a medical-plant board be established.

In India, there are many historically established and codified medical systems in use. Many of these medical systems, though, lack comprehensive documentation. Ethnic cultures have a great deal of folk knowledge about the conventional usage of herbal remedies. However, such medical systems were plagued by bias during India's colonial era. During the rule, several indigenous medical systems vanished without a trace, and many more are currently only practiced in rural regions. The market size of traditional medicine is difficult to estimate because most practitioners create and administer their own formulas and make a substantial contribution to meeting health needs.

## 3 SIDDHA MEDICINE IN TAMILNADU

The concept "Siddha," which denotes a perfected thing or celestial delight, is derived from the word "Siddha." Siddha focused on the eight supernatural aptitudes, or "Astamasiddhi." Those who possess the aforementioned skills are known as siddhars. 18 illustrious Siddhars developed this medical procedure in antiquity. As a result, it is referred to as "Siddha medicine." Scrolls made of palm leaves were used by the Siddhars to record their knowledge; these scrolls have been found throughout South India. It's believed that certain families have more fragments, which they only keep for their own use. Siddha manuscripts are widely collected by traditional Siddha families.

Experts claim that there were 18 outstanding Siddhars. Agasthya is thought to be the originator of Siddha treatment among these 18. The Siddhars believed that a healthy body was the only way for a healthy soul to manifest. They created processes and medications to support their physical bodies and, by extension, their spirits as a response. The people referred to as Siddhars devoted their lives to improving the system.

They were said to have practised strict yogic rituals, such as years of sporadic fasting and meditation, in order to develop superhuman strength, a vast intellect, and universal immortality. They wrote scriptures on all facets of life, including the arts, sciences, and miraculous cures for illnesses, using their spiritually obtained supreme knowledge. Due to the manuscripts, Indian medical science now includes the Siddha University of Medicine. Today, recognized Siddha medical institutes that are overseen by government universities teach Siddha medicine.

### 3.1 Origin of Siddha Medicine in Tamil Nadu

Research on Siddha medicine in Tamil Nadu has brought to light various problems that need to be resolved in order to completely understand this medical system and its past. The reliability of secondary research, which is mostly written by Tamil Siddha doctors, is the main concern. Very little research has been done on India and Indian medicine by Western academics and students. In Tamil Nadu, a powerful nationalist movement has emerged as a result of growing recognition of the distinctiveness of the Tamil language over the past several decades. Some Tamils (Tamil people) even hold the opinion that their ancestors were the first civilized humans on the earth. Tamils (Tamil people) think their cultural and linguistic history is older and more significant than that of the Indo-Aryans to the north.

This dispute has lately been rekindled by a disagreement over the script of the so-called Indus Valley Civilization, which has not yet been understood. In terms of size, development, and antiquity, this ancient city way of life, which was located along the Indus River and its tributaries in what is now Pakistan, was comparable to the superior civilizations of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia.

While one side of the argument maintains that the writing represents a language, presumably with Dravidian roots, the opposing side maintains that it does not represent any language at all. Tamil speakers, who speak a Dravidian language, are closely monitoring the dispute since, should the previous position triumph, it may attest to their ancestry on the Indian subcontinent.

### 3.2 Inventor of Siddha medicine

The architects of Siddha medicine in Tamil Nadu are the 18 Siddhars listed below. The eight superhuman talents known as the ashta siddhis were held by the siddhars, spiritual gurus. As their spiritual leader, Sage Agathiyar is revered by the Siddhars.

Table 1. List of the Siddhars

S. No.	Name of the Siddhars
1.	Akathiyar
2.	Thirumoolar
3.	Bogar
4.	Konganar
5.	Therayar
6.	Korakkar
7.	Karuvurar
8.	Edaikkadar
9.	Chattamuni
10.	Sundaranandar
11.	Ramadevar
12.	Pambatti Siddhar
13.	Macha Muni
14.	Kudhambai Siddhar
15.	Azhuganni Siddhar
16.	Agappai Siddhar
17.	Nandeeswarar
18.	Kakapusandar

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

The ancient civilization of India played a role in the development of many different therapeutic modalities. In India, there are two different systems of medicine available: the allopathic system and the traditional Indian system. Lack of medication causes people to weaken physically and psychologically, leaving them open to developing a number of new diseases. India uses five different traditional medical systems in addition to allopathy. Siddha, Ayurveda, Unani, Homeopathy, and Naturopathy are a few of them. The use of traditional medicines is rising in poor nations.

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## ETHICS STATEMENT

This study did not involve human or animal subjects and, therefore, did not require ethical approval.

## STATEMENT OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare no conflicts of interest related to this study.

## LICENSING

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