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Healing powers of Tibetan Medicine

People's faith in medical systems may vary. While some people religiously follow modern medicine, some others embrace the traditional medicines like Ayurveda. Various forms of medicines bring effective cure for chronic diseases like cancer and diabetes. It is the faith in a medical system that works for patients, especially those who suffer serious diseases for a long time. Today, patients all over the world without reluctance use alternative medicine and their attempts prove to be successful in most cases.

Alternative medicine like Ayurveda, Homeopathy and others are fast gaining inroads in so far unknown territories but Tibetan medical system is yet to come out of the closet. There is hardly any knowledge in the world medical community about the traditional medical practice in Tibet and its universal healing powers. Relevance of Tibetan Medicine needs to be brought out of its oblivion. This issue of Future Medicine analyses important aspects of Tibetan medical system.

14th Dalai Lama brought the Tibetan traditional medical system as an alternative medicine which becomes more significant because of its treatment methods in harmony with nature. According to the Tibetan medical practice, cosmic energy plays a vital role in the well being of people and unless one's mind is not cleansed, perfect health and wellness cannot be attained.

Dr. Dorjee Raptan Neshar, Chief Medical Officer at Men-Tsee-Khang (Tibetan Medical and Astrological Institute of His Holiness the Dalai Lama) in Bengaluru, elaborates the healing effect of Tibetan medical system. He says Tibetan medical system strongly advocates the dynamic inter relationship between our body, environment, disease and the treatment.

Homeopathy as an alternative medicine is facing many challenges in India mainly due to the existence of different schools of thoughts and lack of unity among practicing Homeopaths. The article on the contributions of Dr. Sreevals G Menon, MD, who has stood forth, passionately seeking a worthy place for Homoeopathy in the field of ailment and palliative treatment, is worth deliberation.

In-depth analysis of Parkinson's disease is one of the areas we are addressing. Dr. Karen E Anderson, Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Neurology at Maryland Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorders Center, US, talks about the symptoms and causes of Parkinson's disease. Besides, there are articles on 'Delay ageing process to look younger' and 10 simple ways to create sexual pleasure in your daily life and help bring passion back to your life.



COVER STORY Tibetan Medicine

Tibetan Medical System

Cosmic effect

Tibetan medical practice is very much confined to the people of Tibet and the outside world has little knowledge of the prevalence of an effective medical system there though it has undermined for various reasons. It was His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama who re-established the traditional medical system as an alternative medicine. Today, like any other alternative medicine, the Tibetan holistic healing is also drawing attention of patients worldwide to its treatment methods in harmony with nature. According to the Tibetan medical practice, cosmic energy plays a vital role in the well-being of people and unless your mind is not cleansed, you cannot attain and enjoy perfect health





Tolerance is not an easy word nowadays. You need extraordinary qualities to overcome the trials and tribulations of life. This journey is spiritual and at the same time is material, but it gives you eternal bliss at the end. If you have a Guru or a teacher to guide you, things will be easier. The Guru must have gone through all these or deals with tolerance. In short, he must be as deep as an ocean. His Holiness the 14th **Dalai Lama** is one such Guru, a spiritual leader of a community that has gone through all sorts of difficulties. His life itself is a spiritual journey through this temporal world, but he survived all these mundane things

FM—By Sumithra Sathyan





In order to preserve and promote Tibetan Medical System or Sowa-Rig pa, the science of healing, the unique tradition, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama re-established Tibetan Medical and Astrological Institute better known as Men-Tsee-Khang in Dharamshala (India) in 1961. The Institute now has over 40 branches all over India and Nepal serving the local health needs. There are societies for Tibetan Medicine abroad where the doctors pay periodical visit for conducting classes and consultation.

Future Medicine introduces His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Tibetan Medical System as an Alternative Medicine for mental and physical wellness. Dr Dorjee Rapten Neshar is the Chief Medical Officer at Men-Tsee-Khang (Tibetan Medical and Astrological Institute of His Holiness the Dalai Lama) in Bengaluru. He was trained in medico-spiritual initiations for the more esoteric practice of Tibetan Medicine as well. In recognition of his outstanding contribution in the field of Alternative Medicine, Dr Dorjee was awarded the Gold Medal and Gem of Alternative Medicine in 1995 and 1996 by the Indian Board of Alternative Medicine, Calcutta. He has also received the International Award of Excellence from the American Organisation of Intellectuals Inc, New York, US. In an



exclusive interview, Dr Dorjee talks about the healing effect of Tibetan medical system

Tell us about the Tibetan Medical System and how it differentiates from other medical systems?

The fundamental concept of Tibetan Medical System revolves around the theory of five cosmo-physical elements and three humoral energies (Nes-pa), the balance and imbalance of which attributes to health and disease respectively. The food and lifestyle, seasonal factors and mental conditions are considered to be four causative factors responsible for the manifestation of Nes-painto disease. Based on the Buddhist concept of mind and body relationship, TMS recognises

Marigpa, the ignorance as the root cause of all the suffering. Ignorance literally means not knowing the non-existence of the Self because of which one suffers from three inborn mental poisons like lust or desire, hatred or anger, delusion or confusion all of which gives rise to various forms of imbalance in our body system which can be grouped under rLung, mKrsipa and Badkan. Therefore, unless we study and purify our mind from its black clouds of negative mental afflictions, we cannot enjoy the clear blue sky of perfect health.

TMS strongly advocates the dynamic interrelationship between our body, environment, disease and the treatment. All of them are made up



sea-buckthorn- bush



Precious pills

of same basic element of nature known as five cosmo-physical elements: earth, water, fire, air and space, which form our life sustaining energies. And particularly, our body (Micro-cosmic) enjoys very close and dynamic relationship with our external environment (Macro-cosmic), the balance of which directly affects our life and existence. Therefore, the environmental pollution and its related health hazards were clearly mentioned in the centuries old medical text. And, the message here is that if we want to enjoy good health and happiness, we should first respect and keep our environment healthy and unexploited.

The medicines used are chiefly natural herbs. Besides, some precious and semi-precious stones, salts, minerals and some animal extracts are also being used. The therapeutic effect of medicines is mainly determined by their inherent taste, potency and qualities. They are combined in keeping with their taste and potency so as to ensure total quality health of the patient without any unwelcome side-effects. Besides the medicines, many accessory therapies are used as part of patient care and pain management, relaxation, and palliative care.

How is a disease diagnosed in Tibetan Medicine?

The diagnosis of a disease is carried mainly through interrogation, visual examination and palpation. Visual examination involves study of the five sensory organs, stool and urine. Palpation involves examination of the body organs, energy meridians, and pulse of the patient. Most significantly, the pulse and urine analysis forms the most distinctive and important part of Tibetan diagnostic methods.

One of the unique features of the TMS is its close relationship with the Tibetan astronomical and astrological aspect. The changing season and its effect on our body can be best explained through the astrological calculations. Tibetan doctors also consider a wide range of astrological calculations during the collection and preparation of the medicines. Astrological calculations are also made before giving some minor surgeries and accessory therapies to ascertain the exact location of life force energy so that our vital life force energy in the quantum field is not disturbed which otherwise, could prove very costly for the patient. Seven extraordinary pulse information are established through the complex inter-relationship between Mother Son and Friend Foe calculations. The knowledge of interdependent relationship between each season, the six cosmic elements, body organs, pulse characteristics, and their relation to disease and treatment regimens are quite distinctive features of Tibetan Medicine.

Please explain the treatment system?

Tibetan Medicine considers the right approach to the patient and treatment as a very important factor rather than the treatment itself. The doctor-patient relationship is considered to be the gateway of the successful healing. Doctors are viewed as medicine



Medicine Buddha



Buddha with infinite compassion and dedication to patient care; his instructions as Buddha's own teaching with unmistakable truth and rewarding, and medicines as deathless nectar revitalising and life-giving. Doctors too view their patients as precious human being who should be treated with the devotion given to his or her beloved mother. The ethics of Tibetan Medicine and its physicians are interspersed with the teachings of Buddha Dharma to its highest practical level. The ultimate aim of TMS is to provide the evergreen tree of our body system with the two blossoming flowers of health and longevity bearing three fruits of spirituality, prosperity and happiness.

What is Tibetan Medicine most effective for?

In addition to many common ailments, Tibetan Medicine also offers very effective treatment in controlling and even curing major diseases like asthma, arthritis, diabetes, hypertension, sinusitis, eczema, anxiety, general cardio-vascular, liver and kidney related-problems, nervous disorders, gynecological problems, gastro-intestinal disorders, chronic cold and allergic problems, psychosomatic problems, heart-related issues, etc. The medicines also help in controlling primary cancer cases.

The best way to take 'precious pills'?

Soak the pills in a half cup of hot water and leave them for 30 minutes. You can remove the pills with a spoon, put the pills in your mouth and drink the remaining water.

Are there any side-effects for Tibetan Medicine?

Tibetan Medicine uses purely natural herbal recipe that goes down to treat the root of the problem. These medicines are very safe as they are prepared without adulteration and known to have no side-effects. Tibetan medicine formula is very balanced. For example, the formula sPos10, is one of the medicines we use to treat arthritis but it also has in its ingredients Saussurealappa which is for the stomach and Adhatodavasica which is to regulate blood pressure.

What about healing?

The natural herbal remedies are available in various forms to suit the disease condition. The understanding and administration of proper diet and lifestyle changes forms a crucial part of the disease management and optimum healing process. Besides, various forms of accessory or complementary therapies are given as part of pain and disease management, relaxation and rejuvenation. Although



Dr Dorgee with his colleagues



Tibetan medicine formulas



Aweto - herb used for tibetan medicine



Mullein - herb used for tibetan medicine

TMS treats almost all the common and major diseases, it is found particularly effective in treating many chronic diseases like allergic asthma, Rheumatoid arthritis, diabetes mellitus, heart and cardiovascular problems, gastrointestinal and colic problems, nervous diseases, various skin diseases, thyroid and psychosomatic problems etc.

It is said that Tibetan Medicine is very effective in cancer treatment.

Cancer is known as Dres in Tibetan Medical System. The name Dres was given following its resemblance to the shape of a fruit: like a coconut or like a solid mass of outgrowth from the internodes of big tree branches. The 63rd chapter "Oral transmission Tantra" of the 4 Great Tantra, the classical Tibetan medical text, explains in some details about this dreadful disease.

In order to restore the balance, to improve the immune mechanism, and for the healing to take place, herbal formulations in the form of pills and decoction should be given orally. Since the nature of tumour is solid hard, hot medicine bath, or an external application should be employed to dissolve the tumour. To flush out the dissolved cancerous cells or tissues from the body channels, vene-cleansing is strongly advised with the help of experienced practitioner. To reduce the pace of infection and inflammation, and to curb the speed of progression of cancerous cells, vene-section is frequently advised with the expert's help. To slow down or stop the pathways of proliferation or angio-genesis, moxabustion (A traditional Chinese medicine therapy using moxa made from dried mugwort) is used. It plays an important role in the traditional medical systems of China (Including Tibet), Japan, Korea, Vietnam, and Mongolia.

Enlightened Lamas and the respected Sangha community are also being consulted for the following reasons:

1. To counteract the harmful spirits that sometimes get total hold over the whole disease process and its treatment response
2. To minimize one's bad Karmic effects, and to remove any hidden obstacles to the treatment response
3. To uplift patient's aura and positive spirit

What is the legal status of the Tibetan Medical Centre?

Men-Tsee-Khang is a charitable, cultural and educational institution of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, registered under the Indian Societies Registration Act of 1860 (No: 1290/79). It has exemption under section 80G of the Income Tax Act 1961 (No.CIT/PTA/1 & 93-94/80-G/1813). The institution is registered under section 12A (a) of the Indian Income Tax Act 1961. ■



A foundation for well-being

Sethu Das, a fine arts graduate from The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, accidentally reached Dharamshala, the seat of the Tibetan Government-in-exile. There he was moved by the stories of Chinese atrocities in Tibet against the Tibetan political prisoners. He founded the Friends of Tibet (India) in 1999 with one member, an organisation he never registered officially till now. Now, Friends of Tibet (www.friendsoftibet.org) has several chapters in India and abroad. Sethu Das is also the Executive Director of World Tibet Day and one of the founding members of 'Friends of Tibet Foundation for the Wellbeing'.

Around 50 years back, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama founded a medical university at Dharamashala in Himachal Pradesh where Tibetan students undergo a rigorous five-year integrative medical course. 'Friends of Tibet Foundation for the Wellbeing' aims at the restoration, propagation and promotion of the endangered traditions and practices of the Tibetan medical system. It is totally a volunteer service among the members of the Friends of Tibet.

Universal vision

"Healthy relationships are a result of love and compassion. A compassionate doctor is much worthier than a dose of medicine he gives. The number of medical camps could be outdone by one caring medical practitioner. This limitless love and compassion comes to man from the Cosmos which is full of Universal Energy that attracts man to the centre of happiness. Therefore, any healing is a total inclusion of man and his natural environment and that helps man to experience the joy of good life. It is this 'togetherness' that becomes the truth of life. 'The Friends of Tibet and Wellbeing' does not believe in collecting and accumulating funds for its future activities—yet another self-imposed Buddhist discipline," says Sethu Das.

The 29th edition of the Wellbeing Tibetan Health Camp was jointly organised by the Friends



Sethu Das, Founder, Friends of Tibet

of Tibet and Men-Tsee-Khang, the Tibetan Medical and Astrological Institute of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, from May 8 to 11 at Ashirbhavan in Kochi. A number of patients attended the camp and found relief for their ailments.

Sincere efforts by the Wellbeing volunteers, excellent care from the doctors and the health-giving atmosphere helped them bring back smiles on their faces. Anyway, Tibetan medicine has got some magic that energises even the gloomiest patients.

There was Buddhist morning prayers before

consultations actually began by doctors whose unconditional love, humility and empathy boost the morale of the patients there.

Quiet happy with the relief from their severe ailments, the participants now eager to know more about Tibetan Medicine and healing practices. They even ask about pulse diagnosis, holistic medicine etc.

Healing power of Tibetan Medicine

The Tibetan race as a whole is deeply attached to prayer. The Wellbeing camp organised by Men-Tsee-Khang and Friends of Tibet has been running in Kochi for the past three years is also not so different. Each day at the camp begins with the chanting of the mantra of the Medicine Buddha. Bhaiajyaguruvaiduryaprabharaja ('Medicine Master and King of Lapis Lazuli Light') is the Buddha of healing and medicine in Mahayana Buddhism. Commonly referred to as the "Medicine Buddha", he is described as a doctor who cures suffering using the medicine of his teachings. The prayer if chanted daily will provide calmness to the mind and the heart free from all burdens. The prayer of the Medicine Buddha is significant as each day we face varied problems. When facing these problems we are to be like the sky incorporating all. This is the same in their treatment also. "The Tibetan medicine in its fullness is not only dependent on medication only. It is deeply dependent on the religion. Ideas like astrology and lucky charms which are considered as irrelevant by the modern medicine and modern sciences are considered important by the Tibetan medical practitioners.

Your sickness/unhappiness is not only a product of your workings in this world at the same time it is linked to one's activities in other births also. Your

Healthy relationships are a result of love and compassion. A compassionate doctor is much worthier than a dose of medicine he gives. The number of medical camps could be outdone by one caring medical practitioner

mistakes may be due to the evil eye following you always. What does the modern science's answer to such miseries? Nothing they consider it as just ridiculous. But such things do influence you. Even the most atheistic persons will certainly agree with the ups and downs of one's life which cannot be answered using our common logic. This is a true in the case with almost all persons. Such a riddle's answer is nothing but prayer in all theistic designs. Certain communities offer a number of religious rituals to cleanse one's self." Appu John another volunteer of Friend's of Tibet says .

The Tibetan community also offers the same but not basically through priests but through doctors. Hence in Tibet healing is a process deeply associated with prayers. You pray so that your heart is cleansed; you wear the amulets so your prayers are reassured in these physical forms. The prayers are answered as you progress in your prayer full life. ■



Wellbeing Camp



Tibetan

herbal healthcare products



Tobmean Chudue Gyatso-Health Tonic

Sorig health tonic is formulated from pure natural herbs in accordance with Tibetan medical text. It may help to optimise physical vigour, vitality and sensory organs, relieves chronic fatigue syndrome. It may act as an aphrodisiac, especially effective in maintaining kidney heat.

Gaay-Pa-Sowae Chulen- Elixir of Rejuvenation

It prolongs life span, is effective in retaining youthful appearance and lustre, increases vigour, triggers the sensitivity of sensory organs like eyes, improves memory and intelligence power. It is especially effective as an Aphrodisiac.

Chongchen Chulen- Energise the body

Energise the body Chongchen chulen (vital nourishment) is formulated according to Tibetan medical texts. This Chulen may be effective for the weak body caused due to longtime exposure to illness, breathing problems, dizziness, hiccough, anorexia, and pulmonary associated disorder. It is especially helpful to regain vital health. Prolonged intake may benefits to promote sexual power.

Lhophel Dhutse- Sharpens intelligence

Lhophel Dhutse (Wisdom nectar) is prepared with a combination of pure herbal ingredients based on the traditional Tibetan medical text. It may help to nourish, improves intelligence and memory power of children. It also promotes

lyrical and fluent speech production

Tsephel Dhutse- Boost the life span

Tsephel Dhutse (Elixir of life) is formulated according to Tibetan medical text. It assists to boost body energies and prolongs the life span. It is also effective in strengthening the immune system.

Kaem-Meen-Dashun- For Slimness

Natural herbs that can effectively help to enhance slimness and may reduce body weight. Helps to prevent breathing difficulties, excessive mucus, fatigue, balances blood sugar level, and liver dysfunction, regenerates blood cells, and promotes blood circulation and reduces swelling of glands.

Chilli powder

This Chilli powder is formulated from pure natural herbs according to Tibetan medical text. It is especially effective to restore digestive heat, acts as an anthelmintic, enhances the food taste and improves appetite. It contains chilli, horse mint, caraway, black pepper, dracocephylum tanguticum, chives etc.

Spices

People all over the world have a wide variety of diets, lifestyles and ways of thinking. In Tibet, the centuries old wisdom has helped to create a blend of spices that can be used in food to help digestion and cleanse the system. Herbal spices promote digestion, increase circulation. Helps promote a healthy mind and body. Cardamom maintains a healthy digestive system and helps stomach irritation whilst ensuring a healthy liver and spleen. This can be used to bring out flavour of salads, all meals and also helps promote a healthy appetite. ■





Dietary guidelines

In recommending an appropriate diet, Tibetan physicians consider which types of food are harmful and which might be beneficial, the amount of food to be eaten, the number of meals per day and the proper meal times. Food is analysed based on its qualities and nature as defined by a five-element theory. All of the materials which make up our universe are based on the qualities of five basic elements which are described in the ancient physics texts of Tibetan Medicine.

Ancient Tibetans lived in direct contact with the natural environment. They understood through experience and study that the forces manifest in nature directly correlate with and influence the functioning of the human organism. In the theory of the five elements, we see an effort to define the



qualities of the basic forces which exist in nature. They are named for their most identifiable manifestations: earth, water, fire, wind and space.

Specific arrangements of the five elements which occur during embryological development form the three basic principles of physical function (Wind, Bile, Phlegm). This is important because the taste of different foods, their resulting natures, and therefore their effects on the human organism are also dictated by the specific arrangements of elements which make up the food.

Wind is usually a contributing factor. Therefore, a proper therapeutic diet must routinely treat Wind imbalances. Depending on the presence of imbalances of Bile and/or Phlegm additional foods must be added to or removed from the diet.

Wind diet

Patients benefit from a diet of heavy nutritious foods, such as meat, cheese, butter, and soups made with bones (e.g. chicken soup). In the case of a Wind /Bile disorder, or some Mukpo disorders, or if the patient is a vegetarian, animal-based foods can be replaced with other foods. Substitutes include avocados, vegetable, legume or grain-based soups, onion, asparagus, and oats.

Bile diet

These patients observe the Wind dietary guidelines while incorporating additional principles that are tailored to the Bile condition. In this case, a simple vegetarian diet is suitable, including legumes, potatoes, cumin, coriander, fenugreek, artichoke, bitter vegetables (e.g. dandelion), and turnips. Foods that are

heating in nature should be avoided.

Phlegm diet

These patients adopt a heating diet with respect to both the nature and the temperature of the food. For example, they consume hot water, cooked foods, pomegranates, sheep cheese, yogurt, ginger radish, honey, ginger, and garlic. They avoid cold drinks and raw foods such as salads, potatoes, tomatoes, eggplant, bell peppers, and sugar.

Mukpo diet

Mukpo is the combined dysfunction of all three energies. This is a complex chronic condition in which each of the imbalances ultimately affects the digestive and metabolic functions. The diet includes fresh, cooked foods to facilitate the severely compromised digestion that is typical of this condition. ■