CHAPTER - 7

NATURE CURE: THE WHOLISTIC APPROACH TO HEALTH CARE

7.1 Introduction

Health is the constant and normal condition of the body and does not require to be maintained by any special programmes. A healthy person’s food is digested normally, blood easily circulated throughout the body, the lungs aerated without any external assistance. There are striking disparities among the various sections of our people as far as health is concerned. No improvement in the health care system can be efficacious unless the individual assumes responsibility for his own well-being.

We have not succeeded so far in maintaining the health care infrastructure owing to poor sanitation and easy exposure to infection. Efforts are now being made to vitalize our secondary healthcare systems to cater to the needs of both the rural and the urban situations and to provide renovation and expansion of District Hospitals and Community Health Centres aimed at improving health services at all levels. The private sector is encouraged to supplement the efforts of the public sector as a collaborator rather than competitor working in partners in a common cause.

Ill-health is due to unwise choice of food and unhealthy methods of cooking food and so a balanced nutrition is the surest safeguard against most of the preventable diseases. Fresh air and sunshine are
necessary for a healthy living. Proper aeration inside the house is most essential to health. In Nature Cure the vital force is the chief physician and the real healing power. If this power is disturbed, diseases will occur. The inter-related systems of health care, Yoga and Nature Cure can serve the poor better than the modern Medicare systems. In Nature Cure there are certain easily available and harmless health care methods that are scientific and effective, suited to all age groups and types of people. Our rural folks are already following more or less a natural way of life.

7.2 Health Care Systems: A popular analysis

In this part we are going to discuss the popular systems of health care. Greater attention is paid to assess the modus operandi of today's most popular system of health care, called Allopathy. Homoeopathy is also probed into in some detail. Due consideration is given to Ayurveda, the most ancient and traditional system of healthcare. It is to be admitted that these systems have their own merits and demerits. Lastly the system of Nature Cure is discussed at length. It also has its limitations as well as merits. But considering Nature Cure as a system of drugless therapy, its merits far outweighs its disadvantages.

Allopathy

Allopathy is the most popular system of medicine with the label of modernity. During the 15th century, it developed into a proper
science as a result of new discoveries and inventions. During the later part of the 19th century and early 20th century, several disease-causing agents were identified one after another in rapid succession. The technique of vaccination against small pox by Edward Jenner and the outstanding contributions of Louis Pasteur among others gave the system both credibility and popularity and it came to be looked upon as a promise and a hope for the future. And it resulted in the establishment of the Germ Theory of disease.

According to the system of Allopathy, the disease causing agents have been classified into different groups:

a. Biological agents: - Viruses, bacteria, Fungi, Protozoa, Metazoa etc.

b. Nutritive agents: - proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals and water.

c. Chemical agents: - some of them may be produced within the body as a result of functional or organic disorder. Eg., Diabetes, acidity, etc., and some exogenous agents like metals, fumes, dusts, grease etc. may get into the body through inhalation, rupture of the skin etc.

d. Physical agents: - Heat, Cold, Humidity, Pressure and Radiation and

e. Mechanical agents: - chronic friction or other mechanical forces resulting in crushing, tearing, sprain, dislocations or fractures.1
Allopathy is the name applied to that school of medicine which administers drugs internally and externally for treating illness of all kinds. Allopathy places greater emphasis to the cure of disease rather than on the building up of health.

Most of the medical students who come out of the Allopathic medical colleges and start practicing medicine know little about the laws of life. They simply analyse the diseases using the knowledge gained from their medical textbooks. They begin their practice on the basis of the drug manufactured, where everything is analysed and arranged alphabetically. This is how they meet disease and restore health. The allopathic doctor seeks to kill the pathogenic germs.2

Allopathy administers drugs for treating illness of every kind. It seeks to kill the pathogenic germs and suppress the symptoms of disease. Medical science ignores the part played by the individual himself in falling a prey to the disease and concentrate solely on external factors, namely germs. It is the main factor which is continuously terrifying modern man. But germs and bacteria are normal agents of decomposition and decay. When any living matter dies, it immediately begins to disintegrate into simple chemical elements of which it is composed of and Nature employs germs and bacteria for this purpose. We may note that the germs and bacteria which help in the degeneration of dead organic matter are not different from those supposed by medical science to be the main cause of disease in the human body. Germs and microbes take part in all
disease phenomena because there are processes requiring the breaking down or disintegration of accumulated toxic matter with the body, which the system is endeavoring to throw off. They are scavengers, employed by Mother Nature to break up and remove the accumulated internal filth of years of unhygienic living and to promote the proper functioning of the body.

The therapeutic revolution, which followed the introduction of sulphonamides in the late 1930s, provided the medical profession with a large number of drugs, which revolutionized the field of treatments for diseases. All these drugs with many salient therapeutic qualities are found to produce adverse reactions in most patients treated with them. The occurrence of this adverse reaction is now a major problem in clinical practice. Reaction may be serious enough for hospitalization and often prove fatal. The enormity of these adverse reactions has provoked one investigator to an extent that he called them "Disease of medical progress". In medical language they are known as iatrogenic (doctor induced) diseases.¹

A striking illustration of the clinical importance of adverse reactions in practice is provided by increasing role in hospitalization and the morbidity during hospitalization. Adverse drug reactions will probably assume even greater intensity in clinical practice, since the influx of new and even more toxic medicines shows no signs of abating. It is estimated that each year new drugs on an average inducted into the medical catalogue.
It is a fact that the diseases of the chronic and lethal type are on the rise in the world as a whole. They claim that certain fatal diseases (like small pox) have been eradicated by now. And modern medical systems loudly proclaim that they have by their 'preventive' methods (like vaccination, inoculation etc.) succeeded in eradicating such diseases from the face of the earth. But it seems that they have not given sufficient thoughts to the side effects produced by the repeated suppression of such diseases. They fail to notice that the advantage gained by the eradication of fatal diseases like the small pox, has been more than nullified by the sudden spurt in the incidence of diseases like Cancer, Heart problems, Rheumatism, Diabetes and even AIDS. The fact is that the general health level of the people is deteriorating.

It is a well-known fact that a drug can cause many reactions. Occasionally a particular set of circumstances has allowed a reasonably accurate assessment of incidence of a particular reaction to a particular drug. This applies to several haematological reactions. Thus an adverse reaction to a drug must be considered in the differential diagnosis of many disorders. From the clinical point of view, adverse reactions to drugs fall into two groups. (1) Those which are predictable and doze related, i.e., related to therapeutic dosage, and (2) those, which are non-predictable in the individual subject and in general are not related to therapeutic dosage and which occur only in a small proportion to the subject at risk.\(^4\)
Allopathy rests on the treatment of diseases by multiple means and multiple methods in order to cover the different symptoms of the disease in the allopathic system, the doctors advise auxiliary heteropathic measures to give relief to the patient. This system is not based on any definite law of cure. The sole aim of this system is to achieve the prolongation of the patient's life by completely wiping out the illness but it is totally indifferent to overall health of the patient. It gives no recognition to the vital nature of the sick individual. In this system the diseases are diagnosed on the basis of causations and pathological findings. It does not take into consideration the susceptibilities, sensitivities and reactive nature of the patient.

According to Dr. Hahnemann, the allopathic system plays an irresponsible murderous game with the life of the patient by means of dangerous violent medicines, whose action is unknown and which are chosen on mere conjectures and given in large and frequent doses. In the allopathic system, only a few symptoms of the patient are taken into consideration. A particular name is given to the disease and specific medicines are administered for that disease.

The allopathic system generally fails to cure diseases because it blocks the natural process of cure. When the external manifestations of the disease disappear, it becomes all the more difficult to treat it. The result is that the disease causes organic changes in the tissues and affects the vital organs. It then becomes impossible to cure the disease. But people are attracted to this system of medicine because it
gives quick relief from the uneasiness caused by the disease, which is mistaken for cure.

Medicines become remedies and capable of annihilating diseases, because the medicinal substance produces a certain artificial morbid state that removes and abrogates the symptoms already present.

In short, we can see that every medical system possesses its own techniques and approaches. As is well known ‘no two substances are alike’. Similarly no two things can have identical properties. The symptoms that each medicine produces in healthy persons can be the only sure guide for selecting it for the treatment of a particular disease.

Homoeopathy

Dr. Samuel C.F. Hahnemann, a German physician (1955-1843) discovered Homoeopathy in 1790. The homoeopathic system of medicine is based on the principle of ‘similar cure similars’. The therapeutic law of nature was known to people much before Hahnemann established it as a system of treatment. During the long period of his practice as a doctor Hahnemann proved one drug after the other on himself, his disciples, well-wishers and friends. He found out that in the healthy persons, the medicines produced symptoms very similar to what they cured in diseased persons.

The homoeopathic system of treatment is governed by the following fundamental principles:
Homoeopathy is an art of healing with a scientific basis as it satisfies all the rules of inductive logic. The first and the foremost maxim of homoeopathy is 'treat likes'. The art of homoeopathy demands a very careful application of this fundamental principle.

Diseases are characterized by deviations from the normal routine of healthy life. The essential principle of homoeopathy is that the drugs used to cure or relieve any case of disease is the drug that would in healthy people produce the symptoms of the disease being treated. In other words 'simile similibus curantur' meaning 'let likes be treated with likes'.

Any symptomatic measure to suppress all outward signs of sickness lurking inside the body reappears in full force with homoeopathic high potency medication. When patients are put on a therapeutic fist, the manifestation known as "healing crisis" which is nature's method of getting rid of the poison as well as the suppressed symptom is mistaken for 'disease crisis'. This is where the difficulty arises because patients switch over to other methods to tide over the
so-called 'crisis' in order to get immediate relief by suppressing it, but this only helps to make matters worse.

Dr. Hahnemann after many experiments, arrived at the conclusion that "it is the power to make sick that drugs can cure sickness and that a medicine can only cure such morbid condition as it can produce, when tested on healthy persons". The rule is to treat the patient, not the disease.

Homoeopathy believes that when the vital force is attacked by any disease, the vitality produces symptoms. It seeks to remove pathogenic conditions by different medicines. But first the symptoms may appear to grow worse and only then they subside until they disappear they improve and finally cure.

Homoeopathy altogether, leading to a complete recovery, proceeds on the principle that the natural disease is never to be considered as a noxious material situated somewhere within the interior or exterior of a man. If the selected homoeopathic remedy is administered properly then the acute natural disease will disappear in a few hours. If a patient complains of one or more trivial symptoms, that have been observed a short time ago, the physician should not regard this as a fully developed disease that requires serious medical aid. A slight alternation in the diet and routine will usually suffice to dispel such an indisposition.
In homoeopathic treatment the physician must pay utmost attention. When the medicine is selected, the potency must be carefully checked. The action of the homoeopathic medicine is slow, when it is diluted with water and given in small doses. Compared to allopathic methods, this system of medicine is rather more dependable because chances for drug induced diseases and doctor inflicted diseases are less in the homoeopathic system. But homoeopathy is also fast getting commercialized and its reputation suffers in consequence.

**Ayurveda**

Ayurveda – the indigenerous system of medicine is the traditional science of life. The etymological meaning of the word *Ayurveda* is i.e., ‘ayur’ means life and ‘veda’ means science, and hence *Ayurveda* means ‘science of life’. It deals with the rules of daily routine, normal health, hygiene and seasonal regulations in which diet is also included. *Ayurveda* covers the animal and the plant kingdom. The fundamental principles of the *Ayurvedic* system of medicine can be traced to the *Atharva Veda*. Special diet, herbal decoction, fomentation, massage and various forms of enema are the special features of *Ayurveda*, which could be stated as a judicious combination of the principles of Nature Cure as well.

According to ‘Charaka’ “nothing exists in the world of thought or experience that cannot be used as medicine”. Knowledge of medicinal herbs and drugs was based on popular experience and was
mostly empirically accumulated and spread. When we take any disease curable or incurable in any field of medicine, we must realize the fact that the healing is dependent on the vital force of the patient.

Man has been continuously endeavouring to keep himself free from three types of miseries, viz, physical, mental and spiritual. Therefore, the history of medicines is as old as the history of mankind. According to Charaka, "Ayurveda or the science of life had always been in existence and it has been practiced by the people who understood it in their own way". Charaka has defined Ayurveda as the science through which one can obtain knowledge about the useful as well as harmful (hita and ahita ayus) happy and miserable types of life and the span of life as well as the very nature of life. It will be seen from the definition that Ayurveda lays emphasis on (notionally) leading a life which is full of happiness, which implies an individualistic attitude, but also leading a life which will be useful to society as a whole. Man is a social being. He cannot keep aloof from society. If the society is not happy, it will not be possible for the individual to attain or maintain his own happiness. The social medicine which as a new concept in the modern system of medicine is something that has been preached and propounded in Ayurveda more than 2500 years ago.

Susruta, one of the most eminent pioneers of the Ayurvedic system of medicine, knew the technique of burning the source of disease in the body of an individual. It was not necessary to perform
surgical operation since the source of disease could be burnt down by the method of radiation (Agni-Karma Vidhi). 12

Ayurveda does not deal exclusively with the treatment of human beings. It also deals with the treatment of diseases of animals and even plants. Ayurveda provides rational means for the treatment of many internal diseases, which are considered to be obstinate and incurable in other systems of medicine in vogue now-a-days. Simultaneously it lays a great deal of emphasis on the maintenance of positive health of a normal or healthy person. It thus aims at both the prevention and the cure of disease. For the purpose of prevention of diseases the regimens one should adopt at the proper time and seasons have been described in details. Ayurveda also provides measures for the prevention and control of old age ailments. The unique features of Ayurveda are:

a) Treatment of individual as a whole

In modern medicine, greater attention is paid to correct the affected part of the body. But in Ayurveda, while treating a disease, the individual as a whole is taken into consideration. While treating the patient, not only the condition of the body, but also the condition of the mind and soul are also taken into account.

b) Low cost of medicine

Mostly Ayurvedic medicines are prepared from medicinal plants, which are available in our forests. The preparation of medicines like arishtas, asavas, kashayas, lehyas etc. is comparatively cheap.
c) **No foreign exchange is involved.**

Almost all *Ayurvedic* drugs, which include vegetables, metals, minerals and animal products, are available in India. Foreign exchange is not utilized for importing them. Even for their preparation, there is no need for foreign expertise and imported sophisticated equipment.

d) **Conducive to socialistic patterns of society.**

In the past, physicians used to prepare their own medicines for treating their patients. At present, physicians have very little time to prepare their own medicines. Therefore, many pharmaceuticals have been set up in private and public sectors. But for the establishment of such pharmaceuticals goes to the labourers, who collect raw materials for the manufacture of medicines. It is, therefore, more conducive to a socialistic pattern of society.

e) **Free from toxicity**

*Ayurvedic* medicines have centuries of traditional experience behind them. They produce little toxicity in the human body. Certain toxic materials used for the preparation of medicines are always detoxicated and made more acceptable to the body before they are actually administered in the form of medicine.

f) **Each medicine is a tonic**

Drugs of modern medicine except vitamins and minerals are meant for patients only. Most of the *ayurvedic* medicines can be used by both the patients and healthy persons. When taken by patients they cure diseases and in healthy individuals they produce immunity against disease.
g) **Conducive to the customs of the people**

Along with medicines, very often certain diet controls are prescribed to the patients. These dietary controls are on the lines of the customs and traditions of the people.

h) **Psychosomatic concept of disease**

Diseases are not considered as exclusively psychic or somatic. Psychic factors are always described as causes of somatic diseases and vice versa. This has given rise to a psychosomatic concept of all diseases in *Ayurveda*.

i) **Emphasis on preventive medicine**

*Ayurveda* lays a lot of emphasis on the prevention of diseases. Several do's and don't's are prescribed for a healthy living. Regimens for different parts of day and night and different seasons for persons of different age groups and social status, are described in detail.

Diseases caused by improper diet, lack of exercise, etc. can be eradicated by medicines means for internal cleansing. The cleansing therapy becomes more effective when coupled with other curative methods such as massage, fomentation, kneading, etc. While prescribing a therapy, the physician always examines both the patient and the disease carefully. The selection of medicines and therapies however depends upon the consideration of the following variations:

a) **Variation relating to 'doshas':** The intensity of 'dosha' may be either controlled or aggravated or may remain in a state of equilibrium. The *dosha* may vary according to their upward, downward and sidewise movements and also according to their location in the peripheral, central or middle path.
b) Variations relating to drugs:- The effects of the drugs may vary between young and old. The ayurvedic drugs prepared from green herbs when mixed with other dried herbs and medicinal plants vary in effectiveness for the doshas of the body by virtue of their qualities like rasa (taste) virya (potency) vipaka or prabhava (specific action).

c) Variations relating to the place:- The effectiveness of the medicine may differ according to the condition of the place or topography.

d) Variations relating to time:- The effectiveness of the medicines may depend on the time and season selected for its use.

e) Variations relating to strength:- The strength of the patient may vary as it is inherent, acquired or affected by time.

f) Variations in regulation of body:- The body is to be fully lean, compact or porous.

g) Variations relating to selection:- It may vary according to its nature, method of preparation, combination, quantities etc.13

The effect of Ayurvedic treatment is rather slow, but this method is comparatively harmless than Allopathy regarding side effects. But now-a-days Ayurvedic system is also adopting commercial trends and tricks to withstand competition and for survival.

Nature Cure

Nature Cure is defined as the art and science of health and healing based on the principles of the vital force and the natural laws of the universe.
The fundamental principles of Nature Cure are derived from the philosophical systems of ancient India. They are found in the Vedas, Ayurvedic classics, and Yoga. There are many similarities among Nature Cure, Ayurveda and Yoga. Nature Cure do not prescribe any drugs or medicines. Some of the naturopaths use non-toxic vegetable juices as medicine, while some others employ fasting, different Yoga postures and *pranayama* for treatment.

According to the Indian philosophy, the physical body is composed of *panchamahabhutas*. The basic principle of Nature Cure is that, all healing comes from within the body itself. There are self-cure measures inherent in the human body, working towards health and healing. For eliminating the waste materials from the body, Naturopath advocates different types of physical exercises, diet control and fasting, if necessary. Sunbath, use of water and mudpacks are prescribed as therapeutic methods for curing diseases. Nature Cure is essentially a drugless therapy.

In order to understand the system of Naturopathy, its importance and relevance, the present position in the field of treatment and its influence on people, the researcher conducted a thorough field study and interview in different places of Kerala. The questionnaire prepared for the purpose is given in the appendix. The data are analysed in the following pages.
7.3 Data Analysis

The available data, derived from the field study and interviews all over Kerala, show that Kerala has failed in promoting the Nature Cure education.

Table 7-1

Formal Educational Institutions in the Important Realms of the Health Care system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allopathy</th>
<th>Homoeo</th>
<th>Ayurveda</th>
<th>Nature Cure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 Medical Colleges</td>
<td>5 Homoeo Colleges</td>
<td>5 Ayurvedic Colleges</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source-Personal study

There are 6 Medical Colleges for moulding Allopathic doctors and to propagate modern medicine. In addition to this, there are a lot of Paramedical Institutions. Ayurveda and Homoeopathy are also given sufficient importance and there are 5 Ayurvedic and five Homoeo colleges in the Government and Co-operative sectors. Moreover the Government is now planning to have an Ayurvedic University. It is pathetic that the Government is not giving adequate importance and encouragement for the propagation of Naturopathic education. There is not even a single institution under the Government sector or the co-operative sector for practicing and propagating Nature Cure in Kerala.
Table 7-2

Number of Health Care Clinics of Different Systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method of treatment</th>
<th>No. of centers (Range)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allopathy</td>
<td>500-700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeopathy</td>
<td>300-400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayurveda</td>
<td>500-600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature Cure</td>
<td>10-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>100-200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source – Personal Study

The above table shows the disparity between the Nature Cure centers and other health care centers in the State of Kerala. Allopathy as a branch of medical science for health care has a greater number of centers compared to other systems of health care. It ranges between 500-700 health care centers including clinics. The Ayurvedic Health Care centers including 'vaidya salas' number between 400-600. Homoeopathy has 300-400 centres. But Nature Cure is treated as the least important with 10-15 centres including individual practitioners. Other miscellaneous systems like Siddha, Unani, etc. have between 100-200 centres. These data prove that allopathy keeps its superiority in the realm of health care, and neither the Government, nor the private sector is willing to invest a substantial amount of money for the promotion of Nature Cure.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allopahty</th>
<th>Homoeopahy</th>
<th>Ayurveda</th>
<th>Nature Cure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X-ray</td>
<td>Symptoms, Modern clinical tests, Iridiagnosis</td>
<td>depending on modern clinical tests, etc</td>
<td>No specific diagnostic methods except observation and case history. Modern clinical results are also used at present for basic information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical tests, (blood, urine etc.) Scanning, ECG EEG etc</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source - Personal Study

Allopahty as an advanced system of treatment has highly sophisticated methods for diagnosis, which includes, clinical tests, X-ray, scanning, ECG and so on. The system of Homoeopathy and Ayurveda also depends on these information technologies for identifying diseases. Ayurveda also follows some traditional diagnostic methods such as iridiagnosis, nadi vidya, etc. Considering Nature Cure as a system of treatment, there are no specific diagnostic methods for differentiating diseases. It believes in the philosophy of the unity of disease and the unity of cure.

But at present some of the established Nature Cure centers seek assistance from the above-mentioned diagnostic methods. It gives Nature Cure a clinical approach as against its claim as a way of life. If
we stop using the modern clinical diagnostic methods in Nature Cure this will be a cheaper method for maintaining good health and hygiene.

**Pie Chart 7-1**

**Educational qualifications of the Nature Cure Practitioners**

Source – Personal study

It is true that Nature Cure as a system of treatment has made rapid progress in the recent times. But as a way of life, it has not achieved the desired progress. This is probably because of the scarcity of duly qualified practitioners in this field of treatment. While other branches of medical sciences have facilities for higher education and specialization, Nature Cure does not have even a basic educational institution in Kerala. This fact has been unrevealed in the interviews conducted by the researcher all over Kerala. The majority of the Naturopaths are devoid of any special qualifications. Actually many of them are not competent enough to be Nature Cure practitioners.
Among the Nature Cure practitioners only 66% possess B.N.Y.S. (Bachelor of Nature Cure and Yogic Sciences) qualification. 24% of the respondents have only N.D. (Diploma in Nature Cure). Short-term certificate holders form 20%. The remaining 50% include traditional Nature Cure practitioners (NCP) and practitioners with experience only (30%, 20% respectively)

Table 7-4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diseases</th>
<th>Allopathy</th>
<th>Homoeopathy</th>
<th>Ayurveda</th>
<th>Nature Cure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heart problems</td>
<td>10-15%</td>
<td>3-5%</td>
<td>2-4%</td>
<td>80-90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>10-20%</td>
<td>5-10%</td>
<td>50-60%</td>
<td>90-95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidney trouble</td>
<td>10-15%</td>
<td>5-8%</td>
<td>25-30%</td>
<td>50-60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood Pressure</td>
<td>6-10%</td>
<td>20-30%</td>
<td>40-50%</td>
<td>65-75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Cancer</td>
<td>5-8%</td>
<td>5-8%</td>
<td>4-6%</td>
<td>60-70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Primary stage 100% cure

Source - Personal study

There are a number of diseases, which subject man to terrible uneasiness and misery. Among these, the researcher has selected five diseases viz, heart problems, diabetics, kidney trouble, blood pressure and cancer, for conducting a comparative analytical study between Nature Cure and other major systems of health care. In treating these diseases, Allopathy gives only a maximum of 15% positive result. Even after treatment the patient has to take medicines throughout his life. Ayurveda and Homoeo systems yield only 2-5% positive results. But Nature Cure is found to yield 80-90% positive results.
The case of diabetics, Allopathy cure range is between 10-20%, Homoeopathy 5-10%, Ayurveda 50-60% and Nature Cure 90-95%. In the case of kidney trouble Allopathy cure ranges between 10-15%, Homoeo treatment has little impact. Ayurveda helps 25-30% and Nature Cure is effective in 50-60%. In the case of blood pressure Allopathy cure ranges between 6-10%, Homoeo 20-30%, Ayurveda 40-50% and Nature Cure 65-75%. In the case of cancer, if we follow Nature Cure system of treatment from the primary stage itself 100% cure is possible. Even in its early secondary state a 60-70% cure is reported.

Table 7-5
The Curative Measures Used in Different Systems of Treatment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allopathy</th>
<th>Homoeopathy</th>
<th>Ayurveda</th>
<th>Nature Cure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drugs, Surgery, Radiation,</td>
<td>Medicines, Herbal extracts,</td>
<td>Kizhi, Massage,</td>
<td>Diet control, Fasting, Enema, Massage,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physiotherapy, Chemotherapy,</td>
<td>Herbal, Synthetic and Purified</td>
<td>Herbal medicine,</td>
<td>Exercise, Yoga, Meditation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transplantation of organs</td>
<td>medicines</td>
<td>Kashaya, Kuzhambu,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rasayanas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source - Personal study

Table 5 shows that in Nature Cure, not a single medicine is administered orally. Allopathy, the most popular system of health care, uses drugs, surgery, radiation, physiotherapy, chemotherapy etc. as curative measures. Homoeopathy uses medicines prepared from
herbal extracts and synthetic or purified medicines *Kizhi*, massage, herbal medicines, *kashaya*, *rasayana*, *kuzhambu*, etc are used as therapeutic agents in *Ayurveda*. Nature Cure follows only certain curative methods such as diet control, fasting, enema, massage, exercise, yoga, meditation, etc. From this analysis it is seen that Nature Cure is a *drugless, harmless and effortless* health care system.

**Table 7-6**

The Average Range of Expense in Different Systems of Treatment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Allopathy</th>
<th>Homoeopathy</th>
<th><em>Ayurveda</em></th>
<th>Nature Cure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4000-6000</td>
<td>3000-4000</td>
<td>4000-5000</td>
<td>2000-3000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source – Personal study

Compared to the other conventional systems of health care, Nature Cure is less expensive with high curative value. The expenditure in Allopathic and *Ayurvedic* systems are almost equal. But this expense does not include the food expense. It ranges between 4000-6000 per month. Homoeo medicines are comparatively cheap and the average monthly expense for an in-patient ranges between 3000-4000 excluding food. But in Nature Cure, the monthly expenses range between 2000-3000, which includes the cost of the food also, because food is the medicine according to Nature Cure. This proves that *Nature Cure is the most economic system* of health care. In the case of out patients, there is only negligible expense for treatment.
Table 7-7

The Range of Side Effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System</th>
<th>Range of side effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allopathy</td>
<td>Very high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homoeopathy</td>
<td>Very low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayurveda</td>
<td>Considerably low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature Cure</td>
<td>Nil*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Some BNYS and ND Holders consider skin allergies and food allergies as side effects.

Source – Personal study

Allopathy uses very high dosages of medicines and injections for curing diseases and it produces many serious side effects. It may even lead to new drug induced diseases. In Homoeopathy the side effects are very low compared to Allopathy. In Ayurveda the curative agents are prepared in a particular atmosphere and the patients must obey some dietary restrictions called ‘Pathyam’ and if the restrictions are violated, it may cause serious harm. And hence in Ayurveda, the side effects are comparatively high compared to Homoeo but considerably low compared to Allopathy. In Nature Cure there is no question of any side effects, because it never advises any curative agents in the form of drugs and the like. All these go to prove that Nature Cure is the full natural health care method and it strictly conforms to the Hippocratic principle “Let thy food be thy medicine and they medicine be thy food”:
Table 7-8

Periods Taken by Different Systems for Curing Diseases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Systems of Treatment</th>
<th>Nature of Curing</th>
<th>Duration/Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allopathy</td>
<td>Permanent addiction to drugs and suppressive in nature</td>
<td>Sudden relief (No permanent Cure)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homoeopathy</td>
<td>Curative method, partial cure</td>
<td>Comparatively slow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayurveda</td>
<td>Curative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature Cure</td>
<td>Absolute cure: Removal and elimination of the cause</td>
<td>Very slow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fast relief</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source – Personal study

The table shows that Allopathy produces permanent addiction to drugs and it does not give a permanent cure. It gives a feeling of sudden relief because of the suppressive nature of the treatment. Homoeopathy uses curative methods and effects a partial cure and it takes comparatively longer period for better results. Ayurvedic cure is subjected to the observance of taboos and restrictions. It is a very slow process but gives a permanent cure. Nature Cure gives rather absolute cure as it eliminates the cause of the disease. It gives fast relief from the misery caused by the diseases in accordance with the vital capacity of a person.
### Table 7-9

**Percentage of Patients Coming Under Different Stages of Disease**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of treatment</th>
<th>Acute</th>
<th>Chronic</th>
<th>Degenerative</th>
<th>Terminative State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allopathy</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homoeopathy</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayurveda</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature Cure</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Personal Study

### Bar Diagram - 7-1

**Percentage of Patients Coming Under Different Stages of Disease**

![Bar Diagram](image)

Source: Personal Study
The diagram given above shows the percentage of patients coming under different stages for different systems of health care. It shows that 30% of the patients select Allopathy as primary method in the acute stage. 50% seek in the chronic stage, 8% in the degenerative stage and 12% in the terminative stage. In the case of Homoeo, it shows that 60% with acute disease, 30% with chronic problems. In the degenerative stage only 8% prefer this method and in the terminative stage it is only 2% or less. In Ayurveda the percentage is 30%, 25%, 40% and 5% in the case of acute, chronic, degenerative and terminative stages respectively. Only 12% with acute problems select Nature Cure as primary method. But 55% of them are chronic. In the degenerative stage the percentage is 30 and in the terminative stage, it is 3% or less.

### Table 7-10

**Various Health Care Systems and the extent of Harmony with Nature**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System of Treatment</th>
<th>Medicine</th>
<th>Relationship with nature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allopathy</td>
<td>Chemical drugs, Electromagnetic devices</td>
<td>Unnatural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homoeopathy</td>
<td>Medicines</td>
<td>Herbal extracts, Not natural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayurveda</td>
<td>Rasayana/Kizhi</td>
<td>Processed and preserved semi-natural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature Cure</td>
<td>Food only, Natural diets</td>
<td>Fresh Ecofriendly and Natural</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source – Personal Study
In Allopathy, unnatural substances are mainly used for treatment. In Homoeo, herbal extracts and synthetic medicines are used. In Ayurveda processed and preserved semi-natural medicines are generally used. But in Nature Cure natural food products are only used as medicine. It proves that it is the most salutary natural way of life.

Graph 7-1
Degree of Progress in Nature Cure

Source: Personal study

From the graph, it is evident that there is a remarkable increase in the number of patients with acute diseases selecting Nature Cure as primary treatment. In the case of chronic diseases there is a slight decrease i.e., from 61 to 50%. As far as degenerating cases are concerned there is not much difference.
From the graph it is proved that during the last five years, Nature Cure system has got a certain type of propaganda which has given an awareness among the public regarding Nature Cure.

**Table 7-12**

**Awareness About Nature Cure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awareness</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unaware</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial awareness</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum awareness</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrong awareness</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full awareness</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source – Personal study

The table shows that 5% of the total respondents are unaware of this system. 35% of the total respondents have wrong awareness. 30% possess partial awareness and 25% possess a minimum awareness. But only 5% of the total respondents have full awareness. It shows the need of starting educational institutions and awareness programmes for propagating Nature Cure for creating a healthy society.

The Bar-Diagram prepared on the basis of the field study shows that in acute cases fasting is 86 per cent effective. In chronic cases the percentage is 80. In degenerative cases about 70 per cent were benefited by fasting. In the terminative stage the effectiveness is only 30 percent. The fasting may be pure fasting, juice fasting, fruit fasting, one time food fasting, etc. which is recommended according to the vital capacity of the patient.
Source: Personal study

Ninety per cent of patients with acute problems are advised air cure. Seventy five per cent of the chronic patients and forty per cent of degenerative patients are also advised air cure.

Sunlight is considered to be the universal natural curative agent. Ninety five per cent of the patients with acute problems, ninety per cent of the patients with chronic problems and eighty per cent with degenerative problems can practice sun cure. In the terminative stage sun cure is advised for forty five per cent of the patients.
Unlike sun cure, water cure is given only in selected cases. In acute cases water cure is advisable in eighty per cent cases. In chronic problems it is seventy five per cent. But in degenerative cases it is only forty per cent.

The effectiveness of earth cure is more or less the same as that of water cure. It is advisable in seventy per cent acute cases. In chronic cases it is eighty per cent but in degenerative cases it is advisable only thirty percent. In the terminative cases both water cure and earth cure methods are rarely recommended i.e., below five per cent.

Generally all these curative methods are recommended separately or in a combined manner along with other natural measures. The overall effectiveness depends on the vital capacity of the patient.

7.4 Findings

1. Nature Cure is an entirely different system of health care and its approach to the health problems of individuals and society is also quite different. It normally avoids drugs, chemicals or any type of intoxicants for restoring or retaining good health. At present it seems that some Naturopaths knowingly or inadvertently resort to the techniques followed in other systems of health care. The researcher has found that it tends to lower the prestige built up by Nature Cure. It may even affect the very identity of the system expended by the great Acharyas of our land.
2. Naturopathy uses the inherent recuperative power in our body to root out all the diseases. Now-a-days the diseases are becoming more chronic and complex in nature and the treatment has become highly expensive. It has care to a stage that only specialists can handle the problem. Naturopathy on the other hand, is less expensive and much expertise is not needed for its practice and treatment. The common people with proper direction can make the best use of it. So it is the right answer to the need of the time.

3. It is observed that Nature Cure methods do not have any side effects or after effects; they demand us to follow a healthy life following the dictates of Nature. The trouble is that people go after spurious techniques, which promise an instant cure. But Nature Cure inserts on following a life-style consistently and offers a radical cure and sound health in return.

4. Nature Cure is opposed to the prevalent form of health education existing in Kerala because it never provides a wholesome approach to health and human life. Though there are more than 600 institutions for scientific studies and researches in the area of health care in Kerala, it seems that they do not impart true health education. The basic health science we teach them is every narrow in its scope and application.

5. Nature Cure - the science of proper living through the life style will keep the person in full health in all aspects - physical, mental and spiritual. This is neither a technical subject nor the monopoly of an exclusive body of professionals for the exploitation of the people for profit; it is a liberating device, which will free the people from he
dependence on drugs, doctors and even from professional Nature Cure doctors. The Conference of the World Health Organization (WHO) held at Alma Ata on primary health care, to plan the scheme of “Health For All by 2000 AD” examined available statistics on health care in the Asian countries. It stresses the need to evolve methods of prevention, the involvement of the rural communities in health care and a re-orientation of the educational systems. Statistics show that in many countries in Asia 85% of the National health budget is devoted to support services, which serve less than 10% of the population, leaving only 15% of the budget to provide basic health care for 90% of the people. Voluntary institutions also imitate this pattern. Nature Cure can provide a lasting solution to this problem.

6. It would be worthwhile to study the results of the experiments and efforts made by organizations like Asian Community Health Action Network (ACHAN) with its headquarters in Hong Kong and branches in many countries. National Institute of Naturopathy (NIN), Health Action International (HAI) and the Bare-foot Doctor Scheme (BDS) in China etc. make small communities or individuals capable of maintaining their health by participatory training methods. The training programme includes training of grass-root and middle level health workers. Such attempts were initiated by Late Sri. C.R.R. Varma under the umbrella of Prakrithi Jeevana Samithies in many parts of Kerala. This has helped and still helps many people to lead a healthy life. The hospital services are using the lion’s share of the financial aid given by the Government to maintain health for all. Majority of the people is not getting even primary treatments. The same
pattern is being followed by other organizations also. The Government is not able to maintain health for all in spite of expending enormous sums on it. Here we can appreciate the easy accessibility of Naturopathy, its economic viability and its liberating potential.

7. ‘Health for All’ depends also on our educational system, agricultural and industrial methods, eco-friendly schemes, housing patterns and the wholistic vision of life presented by Mahatma Gandhi. This slogan can best be put into practice with the help of the Nature Cure System. The existing system of health care is not flexible enough to share the knowledge with the ordinary people. There are few individuals or communities capable of maintaining health on participatory methods. In these circumstances Nature Cure can provide useful training to middle level health workers associating with Prakrithi Jeevana Samithies in many parts of Kerala.

8. It is really unfortunate that there are no training institutions for Nature Cure in Kerala, whereas other States have gone a long way in the field. Considering the advancement in education especially in health awareness, it is high time we had trained Nature Cure Practitioners to impart proper health education so as to attain self-sufficiency in and an easy access to health care process. Nature Cure treatment believes that a proper education in right modes of agricultural and industrial production. Eco-friendly schemes, housing patterns and wholistic vision of life can guarantee health for all.

9. At present there are Nature Cure practitioners and followers with divergent views and concepts. There are hundreds of Practitioners of Nature Cure spread all over
India who run institutions of their own. Some of these individuals have organized themselves into associations to further their own interests. Though there is apparent unity and uniformity among the different organizations and groups, it is only superficial. Most of those who are associated with the Nature Cure movement and works under the banner of All India Nature Cure Federation (AINCF) are not completely free from prejudices and self-complacency. For the followers of a scientific system of health care it is not at all a healthy or desirable propensity.

10. The differences may either be theoretical or practical. Theoretically the differences are based on basic principles, philosophy, terminology, subject matter and the definition of theories like vital energy, panchabhutas, therapeutic techniques, methods of diagnosis etc. In practice, differences seem to rest on the disparity in the professional qualifications of the practitioners, the organizational set up of the institutions, staff pattern, infrastructure, research facilities etc. There are divergent views and concepts entertained by the practitioners and followers of Naturopathy in Kerala. Some of them conduct themselves in such a way that institutions and associations only to propagate and further their own interests.

11. The practitioners are mainly of three types viz. (1) those who are working in Government institutions, (2) those in private organizations and (3) those working at their own residence. Hence there is no uniform code governing their practice.
12. There are institutions run by private individuals, practitioners, industrialists, businessmen, philosophers, missionaries, social workers, practitioners of other systems of health and medicine, and public trusts. Many organizations, institutions and individuals hold periodical meetings, conduct study classes, camps, seminars, symposia, workshops, and run consultation cum service centers counselling centers, research center, publishing houses etc. There is a lack of co-ordination and therefore they do not produce the desired results. If we give sufficient importance to Nature Cure System it will definitely bring about positive results with a minimum expenditure, unlike other systems of health care.

13. The AINCF, being the pioneer organization in Nature Cure in India, it should try to ensure unity and uniformity in practice among the different individuals and groups engaged in Nature Cure in India. Detailed discussions may be held on the differences of views among practitioners at the AINCF conferences. Prejudices, if any, against any individual or group may be removed and solutions found for maintaining a healthy relationship as co-travellers to the same destinations.

14. Proper and adequate efforts are not made to popularize Naturopathy among the people, so much so majority of the people come to Naturopathy as a last resort. If a disease relapses, the same treatment can be followed by anybody without the help of a doctor. In some rare cases unqualified practitioners have donned the robe on the strength of effecting accidentally cure. They manage together some elementary knowledge either from some books or from other doctors or Naturopaths or from some people who claim to be the traditional experts in
Naturopathy. In the field of Naturopathic practice in Kerala, there is not even a single institution functioning here to impart higher education or training.

7.5 Suggestions and policy recommendations

1. Though Nature Cure is a way of life based on the vital force (Pranaskthi), today it has also become a reputed therapeutic science. A future Nature Cure Practitioner should be a good judge of healthy life, who understands very clearly that diagnosis is very important in the treatment of diseases. In diagnosing the disease he may have to make use of certain methods, which are generally adopted by the modern medical practitioners. But at the same time he can make use of his own special method of diagnosis such as ‘iri diagnosis’, ‘nadividya’ and character reading. Though Nature Cure follows the principle of the ‘unity of disease’ and the ‘unity of cure’ the practitioners should give due importance to the diagnosis or a better understanding of the abnormal conditions for efficient treatment. Therefore, modern diagnostic methods could be made use of to supplement the traditional methods.

2. There is an inherent power (Pranaskthi) in our body to protect us from ill health. We must make use of this to the maximum advantage. To make the best use of pranaskthi, Nature Cure is the most appropriate system. So we should encourage people to practice this system and make them aware of this phenomenon inherent in the body.

3. If we strictly follow the Natural laws in food habits, lifestyle, sleep, rest, exercise, entertainment and sex, there will be no room for ill-health. We must avoid all
unnatural and artificial things, in spite of their attraction to our sense organs or the momentary sensory pleasures they give.

4. The world is changing fast. These changes pose many complex problems, which are medico-biological in character. All these factors should be studied thoroughly viewing them from the angle of better health for the coming generation. The quality of our environment is deteriorating at an unprecedented rate and worsens our living conditions. A large number of hospitals and nursing homes will not solve the problems. We have to turn to nature, rather, return to nature. We have to study from nature and we have to obey nature for ensuring good health and security to our descendants. Accordingly the Governmental and non-governmental agencies will have to undertake more and more studies, researches and discussions in this field for promoting the Nature Cure System.

5. By birth our biological system is in tune with nature. So the Nature Cure System is the best-suited method for us. Those who want to be healthy are advised to follow this system.

6. 'Health for all' slogan can be realized in India only through the propagation of Nature Cure at all levels.

7. For independent growth and development of Nature Cure a department of Nature Cure may be constituted under the supervision of the Government, which should conduct courses at various levels including the doctorate.

8. In view of the increasing demand from the public the Government may start Nature Cure hospitals in every
District, those functions on a self-generating basis. Necessary initial funds may be made available with the assistance of the Panchayat Committees and other local bodies. Hospital Development Committees that control the Government hospitals can provide the necessary infrastructure for this purpose.

9. There are over 100 Nature Cure Centres in Kerala. Except a meager, all of them are finding it difficult to make both ends meet. Government may consider this matter seriously and provide grants-in-aid to overcome the present crisis. Sufficient grants may be earmarked for conducting researches.

10. Considering the advancement in education, especially in health awareness, it is high time we had a good number of competent teachers to impart proper health education and to attain health self-sufficiency in the trained personal. Each Panchayat is advised to make necessary arrangements to popularize the effectiveness of the Nature Cure system among the village people.

11. Majority of the students, who are going for Nature Cure studies in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka are known to be Keralites. Considering the growing enthusiasm among the students and their parents in this field the Government had better start a Bachelor of Nature Cure and Yogic Science (BNYS) degree course in the Government or co-operative sector as early as possible.

12. The Government may take steps to give Nature Cure a status on a par with the other systems of health care. It is highly recognizing as reliable scientific system desirable
to provide facilities for students for doing research in Nature Cure. This can be implemented by establishing a Nature Cure Medical College and Hospital with facilities for research.

13. The principles of 'prakrithi jeevanam' must be included in the school and college curriculum.

14. Instructions may be given to all heads of educational institutions to provide assistance to conduct Nature Cure seminars and workshops in their respective institutions.

15. Financial assistance may be provided for conducting seminars, workshops and Nature Cure camps for rural and urban communities. It can be done through various community health programmes sponsored by the State and the Central Governments, the World Health Organization and various other agencies.

16. The Government may support publications on Nature Cure by providing newsprint at subsidized rates and other possible help and giving publicity through the Public Relations Department.

17. Existing important health care systems other than the Nature Cure System are now included in the medical re-imbursement scheme. Justice demands that the Government officials and other employees who undergo Nature Cure treatment should also be made eligible for medical re-imbursement benefits. Immediate orders may be issued to include Nature Cure under this scheme.

18. The registration facilities may be provided to the Nature Cure Physicians also. The Diploma awarded by the Gandhi Nature Cure College, Hyderabad and the Akhil
Bharathiya Prakrithic Chikilsa Parishad, New Delhi, should be recognized by the Government as the minimum qualification for appointment in Government Nature Cure hospitals.

19. As Nature Cure Practitioners being denied medical registration, they are not entitled to get telephone connections as in the case of doctors in other medical disciplines. Hence this inconvenience may be removed and the special category facility may be granted to them also.

20. Nature Cure Training classes may be arranged for health inspectors and field workers in the Department of Health so that they can give proper guidance to the village people on matters of health.

21. Nature Cure may be given due priority in the Tourism Development Projects. The Kerala beaches and backwaters are world famous and they attract a large number of tourists both foreign and native. They show great interest in the Nature Cure methods and the Yoga. Government Nature Cure Centres can be started in all the tourist centers on a profitable or at least self-generating basis.

22. Nature Cure Diet Centres may be started all over Kerala under the auspices of the Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC). Each University may be advised to start a Natural Diet Canteen in order to generate a love for the natural food among the students.

23. Government of Kerala may include Nature Cure in its health propagation schemes included in the 15-point
development project recently proposed by the Chief Minister of Kerala.

24. All the practitioners and followers should be made conscious of the need for rallying behind the main organization i.e. the AINCF and working unitedly. Efforts should be made to reduce the differences based on regional and cultural factors, placing emphasis on the essential common values.

25. The Government may conduct a National Eligibility Test for the Naturopaths and those who intend to enroll as practitioners. Those who fulfill certain minimum requirements of general educational qualifications, professional qualifications or have membership of professional bodies or have sufficient practical experience, etc. can be admitted to the NET. The successful candidates may be declared as eligible for registration and appointment in Government Institutions.

26. The practitioners are persons having different social, economic, cultural and educational backgrounds. So regular refresher courses and contact classes may be conducted to ensure a requisite standard and uniformity.

27. There is a growing tendency among some Naturopaths to condemn and undermine other systems of health care especially Allopathy. It would be a futile exercise on the part of Naturopaths to try to root out Allopathy from our land. Instead of following a negative approach Naturopaths may involve in constructive works, positive studies, research and campaign to propagate Nature Cure. The Merits of the other systems should be
recognized and respected and a policy of peaceful co-existence or even fruitful co-operation may be adopted.

28. The practitioners of Nature Cure are advised to follow the foot-steps of Mahatma Gandhi, who himself was an ideal Naturopath. It is a pity that there is hardly any institution functioning on the guidelines given by Gandhi. It is well that Gandhis views are given due importance as those of one who has been true to nature to the very end of his life.

29. The Public Relations Department (P.R.D) of the Government may give adequate importance for the propagation of Nature Cure methods through documentary films, T.V. advertisements, interviews with Naturopaths and so on.

30. In order to popularize the natural way of life the Government may take steps to popularize eco-friendly farming, using bio-fertilizers for cereal and vegetable cultivation.

7.6. Conclusion

According to Mahatma Gandhi, “Nature Cure is not merely a cure of disease but an attempt of the body to prevent the disease and also a way of life.” He considered Nature Cure treatment as Godly treatment.

As we know, the human body is made up of panchabhutas viz. Ether, Air, Fire, Water and Earth. They have got immense prophylactic and curative powers. If there is any imbalance in these
basic elements, it will cause uneasiness in the body, which is generally known as disease.

Diseases are caused by wrong habits. The worst of them is our lack of control over our palate. It is high time that we realized that we have become slaves to our palate and lust, and as a result of this we are ever restless. It is a proven fact that food plays an important role in improving or impairing our health. We generally suffer from diseases resulting from the consumption of over-cooked, fried, processed and adulterated food, which are robbed off their valuable vitamins and mineral salts. Consumption of large quantities of strong tea, alcohol or other intoxicants and, above all, the habit of eating without hunger, fast-eating and over-eating cause various disorders.

We take the assistance of different medical streams for treating various diseases. Allopathy, Ayurveda, Homoeopathy, Nature Cure, etc. are the main streams of the medical system. Of these, no doubt, Allopathy is the one which is being widely practised all over the world, despite its harmful side-effects. But in modern times health awareness amongst the common people has greatly increased and the trend is favourable for fast strides in Nature Cure.

Real health lovers have recognized the efficacy of the alternative drugless therapies for promoting and maintaining their health. Amongst all such alternative systems of healing, Nature Cure occupies a prominent place. It accepts all other alternative drugless therapies
as complementary remedies. Nature Cure does not advise the use of any drug and therefore it is known as a drugless therapy having no side-effects.

The basic principle behind healing is that all the curative powers come from within the body itself, i.e., there are self-curate forces which are inherent in the human body, working towards health and healing. In reality, the nature heals and cures; the physician only lends intelligent assistance and interprets nature’s laws to the patients, i.e., the doctor treats and the nature heals. The capacity of one organ to grow strong to fill a gap left by the failure of another organ has long been recognized. When a man loses a leg, the other leg grows so strong that over a period of time it is able to support the weight of the whole body. Similarly a blind man’s other limbs become more alert and sensitive in order to substitute the defect of the eyes. This ‘deputizing’ is an inherent mechanism of the body.

Health is the normal and natural state of the human being and it cannot be maintained without a conscious regimentation and protection of the inherent powers of the human body. It is sometimes called the natural force or the vital force. The inherent recuperative powers of the patient must be permitted to function freely and unhampered. This vital power heals wounds, repairs broken bones, builds up blood tissues and muscles and eliminate waste matter.
Now-a-days what we find is that the art of healing is being overwhelmed by the ‘science of medicine’. There is division between basic science and clinical medicine. This has led to the deterioration of the physician-patient relationship.

Immunity is mostly a biochemical process where nature has endowed each species with a certain protective mechanism through which it can destroy, eliminate or ward off those elements, which would interfere with life and the normal functioning of the body. Prevention is a superior weapon in combating diseases.

When harmful drugs or injections are administered indiscriminately for immediate relief without realizing their consequences the resultant drug-induced (iatrogenic) diseases prove worse than the diseases for which the drugs have been used. Unless there is a change from the so-called artificial civilized life-style to a normal and natural healthy life-style, new diseases will, not only increase, but also will ever remain a challenge to humanity and ‘health for all’ will be a mirage.

The greatest secret of health lies in remaining a little hungry all the time, so as to make the internal mechanism of the body remain on top form thereby equipped to face the demands of any eventuality that may arise at any time. This eternal vigilance is the price we pay to safeguard our health. Fasting gears up the normal functioning of the
internal mechanism thereby getting equipped to fight against different types of diseases.

Generally speaking modern medicines are prepared from herbal extracts. In modern medical technology, we analyze and investigate the active ingredients of these herbs and synthesize the related compounds called drugs, which allow the effective control of specific body functions by chemical intervention. In addition to this, modern medicine relies to a large extent on electromagnetic technology and surgery.

Nature Cure, on the other hand, believes that it is preferable to use the healing properties of natural products in the way they exist in nature. Natural products used for healing as such have a very high level of saving grace in comparison with the isolated or synthetic drugs. The same principle applies to the use of high technology. Therefore synthetic drugs, high technology and major surgery are excluded from the practice of Nature Cure.

The principal aim of Nature Cure is the restoration of the vital power, maintenance of the health of the body and the mind through the use of biologically corrective and naturally occurring forces called panchabhutas.

While modern medicine sees most diseases as being caused by a single factor or closely defined factors and tries to find a specific agent to counteract this disease causing factor, Nature Cure, in general
perceives our health problem as being caused by a wide range of contributory factors including bad habits and alienation from nature.

There are many factors, which may contribute to the weakening of our immunity system. It may have already started with a hereditary weakness, got transmitted to one's body from the weak immunity systems of one's parents. This may be in the form of a deficiency state, i.e. deficiency of vitamins from A to E, of minerals like zinc, manganese, etc. Mucus forming diet will greatly weaken the immunity system. Allergies, fungus infestation resulting from the use of antibiotics, mental and emotional stress, fear, depression, etc. are some of the important factors that impair the immunity mechanism.

Usually it is not necessary to correct all these factors simultaneously, because a partial rectification may sufficiently strengthen our immunity system to make us resistant to invading germs. The same applies to arthritis, cancer and all other diseases - minor or major. One therapist may succeed through appropriate change in the diet of the patient while another may achieve the same result by using mind-strengthening methods of a mere physical manipulation. Cardio-vascular diseases, diabetes the so-called mucus diseases, etc., also can be cured through the Nature's way.

The most salient feature of the Nature Cure methods is that it wipes out the very root of the disease. It strives until it finds out the root cause of the disease and removes that cause. One of the main
causes of the disease is the formation and accumulation of toxins in the body. Nature Cure tries to eliminate all such toxins and poisons deposited in the body. Thus Nature Cure aims at purifying the entire body and keeping it internally hygienic to regain health.

Nature Cure helps a person to return to nature so that he may lead a normal and natural life with congenial habits and surroundings. Thus Nature Cure is the most ideal way of leading a hygienic life. It is possible only when we know the principles of health and obey its basic laws, which alone can keep our body fit and healthy. This health awareness can be achieved through the knowledge of Nature Cure. When we violate the natural laws, eat against the principles of health, form wrong habits and lead an unnatural life, Nature punishes us with restlessness, which is generally termed as disease.

Out of ignorance we are unable to bear this uneasiness and we lose patience and hurriedly take heavy doses of drugs for quick recovery. These drugs suppress the peripheral symptoms of the disease and give us only temporary relief. Moreover, some drugs cause side effects in the body and in certain cases damage the vital organs of the body.

Comparatively, Nature Cure is a safe therapy and gives a permanent cure. Nature Cure as a way of treatment treats the patient using the same natural elements of which human body is composed. It also takes the help of certain natural methods which can be easily
practised and which is within our reach, such as yoga, pranayama, exercise, etc. Nature Cure also stresses the need for having a control over such inclinations as lust, anger, jealousy, greed and, above all, the demands of the palate.

The Nature Cure practitioner sees our health problems and diseases as being caused by our own wrong life-style. The main factors are unsuitable diet, unfavourable activities and a negative emotional attitude. Therefore, in the wholistic approach, a therapist helps the patients to set right their life-style by regulating the factors as much as possible in addition to using specific remedies and techniques.

A common wholistic approach for the treatment of diseases or for general health improvement may include the following steps:

1) The diet is regulated by minimizing the use of disagreeable stuffs such as sweets, meat products and saturated fats. Besides, through patient observations food allergies are detected and suitable antidotes suggested. Vitamin, mineral and enzyme supplements may be used to rectify specific deficiencies or to provide an optimum intake of all essential nutrients.

2) A plentiful intake of good quality water and herbal or fresh fruit juice is required for internal cleansing.

3) Minimize the body exposure to harmful environmental factors such as strong electromagnetic fields or radiation from electric appliances, TV, fluorescent lighting, polluted air, petrochemical fumes, tobacco smoke, waste water,
synthetic clothing, noise and visual pollution. Life in salubrious rural surroundings including health resorts is highly conducive to good health and hygiene.

4) Mental balance can be practised through the releasing of blocked emotions and feelings and through meditation and relaxation exercises.

5) Physical well-being is also important and can be achieved and maintained by practising regular exercises, *pranayama* and through the right choice of agreeable food items, etc.

Most of these can be realized only with the active co-operation and participation of the patient. The therapist acts only as a teacher, using his or her skill and experience in making the appropriate changes in life-style and by pointing out the best methods and remedies to the patient in a suitable manner, thus instilling confidence in the patient. Accordingly, in Nature Cure the patient is educated and not medicated.

Nature Cure believes in the theory: “Prevention is better than Cure”. In Nature Cure the patient is being taught yoga and some self-corrective techniques to cure the disease. Nature Cure appears to be superior to other health care systems in many respects because it has taken upon itself the duty of curing the disease in the Nature's way as Nature alone is the healer. Nature will cure us and will take the best care of our body and will keep us healthy and happy only when we obey the laws of nature as her obedient children.
It is a hopeful sign that now even in the Western countries people are increasingly becoming conscious of the harm being done by drugs and are gradually turning to Nature Cure. No wonder, Nature Cure clinics are mushrooming all over the world. In our state also Nature Cure has succeeded in attracting the attention of a considerable segment of the population because of its property of wholistic healing. It may appear to be a time-consuming method, requiring much greater efforts than the conventional drug treatment. All the same, the result in terms of improved health and happiness is worth the trouble. One need not be flabbergasted if this laudable system of health care ushers in an era of 'total health' for mankind, dreamed of by Sir. Thomas Moore in his celebrated classic, UTOPIA, although much water will flow under the London Bridge before it comes true. The researcher is absolutely confident that many resourceful people will take up the challenge as a mission in life and Nature Cure will be enthroned in the fullness of time, in its rightful position of excellence and eminence.
REFERENCE


4. Ibid. p. 19.


10. *Charaka Sutra* –XI, 47.


13. Vaidya Bhagwan Dash, op. cit. p.64.