

# AYURVEDA



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Institute of Ayurveda and Alternative Medicine



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## KNOW THE 'DEVIL'S COTTON' PLANT THAT AFFORDS WOMEN HEALTH SECURITY

*Dr. Jayasena Dahanayake - Traditional Physician (Translated by Mr. Lionel Wijerama)*

**According to the Ayurvedic system of medicine, the Devil's Cotton plant yields medicinal properties capable of preventing uterine afflictions, vaginal afflictions (*Yoni vyapat*), menstrual pains, excessive bleeding during periods and haemorrhoidal afflictions, in particular.**

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the use of Devil's Cotton powder for a few months, following it up with medicines beneficial to the uterus.

### HABITS OF THE DEVIL'S COTTON PLANT

The Devil's Cotton plant which is very common

in North India and forest areas in Sikkim, Assam, Nagland and in Bengal is very rarely found in Sri Lanka too. This plant which is morphologically a kin to the local Cotton plant, bears smaller leaves and \_\_\_\_\_ to page 8

### ERADICATION OF MENSTRUAL PAIN

The principal healing quality the Devil's cotton plant possesses is to eliminate menstrual pains. It also yields a medicinal compound of high value that strengthens the uterus. Women who are afflicted with menstrual pain can find relief and also improve prospect of conceiving by



'DEVIL'S COTTON'

# Monthly Zodiac Predictions - March

## Aries



A period with mixed results. Occupation, businesses and revenue are good in the first two weeks. You will get the employer support. But expenses will be high. You will face a monetary problem unless concern on frugality. Prone to build

an affair which damages your dignity. Conflict of opinion between spouses. Prone to get eye diseases, renal problems and pain in joints.

## Taurus



Will get busy with the occupation. Due to interference of some people, there is a tendency to have conflicts; but can be overcome and be a success at your work place if you act wisely. Earnings will increase. Marriage proposals will be confirmed.

Bad period for a maternal relative. Possibility of aggravating *Ushnaadhika roga* (sweltry diseases), *Vata roga* (Neurological diseases) and pain in joints. Tendency to get renal diseases and stomachaches.

## Gemini



You will be busy. Possibility of engaging in long distance travel. Less time to stay at home. Efforts to go abroad will be fruitful. Your efforts will be appreciated. You will get support from the state or from a dignitary. Time and money will be spent due

to an illness of a child. There is a tendency for re emergence of hypertension and heart diseases if you already had previously; while ladies might get gynecological disorders.

## Cancer



Troublesome period at your work place as well as uncertain condition in the position you hold. This will subsidize by the last two weeks in March. You will get chances to join trips and pilgrimages. Face obstacles at the place of residence. Last two weeks

will be propitious. Good for children. Studies will be successful. Patients with respiratory tract disorders and heart patients should be cautious. Tendency to get urinary problems.

## Leo



With extra effort, interest and bestir, job and businesses will be efficacious and get the fullest support from the employers. Will be able to face different obstacles successfully. Shows increased

revenue. Bad period for a sibling. It is advisable to be attentive on diseases related to ano-rectal region like piles, allergies, respiratory disorders and renal problems.

## Virgo



A great effort should be taken to enhance revenue. Unseen rivals and power forces might create troubles. This may cause a decline in revenues as well as in health. Last two weeks will give good results. Friendships might get stronger and revenue

will increase. Health conditions will deteriorate. Renal problems, disorders with blood and stomachaches likely to be experienced.

## By Astrologer Ms. Lolani Ranasinghe

(Translated by Dr. Chathuranga Ranasinghe - B.A.M.S)

## Libra



Great achievements in studies. Luck in exams. Dedication and hard work are inherited qualities. Make an effort on an activity related to a child, a conflict with a sibling. Most probably that might be related to inheritance. There is a tendency to damage

your dignity even though you will get popularity with social services. Likely to get headache, diabetes and gynecological disorders.

## Scorpio



Though there is no difference in the job, revenues will be meritorious. Progress of individuals who are in the field of education. Love affairs will be built. Marriage proposals will be confirmed. A period to get the use of your talents. A strengthen from a

migrated sibling will make you progress. Will suffer from diseases in stomach, gout and arthritis.

## Sagittarius



New job opportunities in the first two weeks. Revenues will be fruitful. Help from elder friends. Even though there are some obstacles and lethargy present, will get help from an elder. Renovations may occur in the place you reside

and will get opportunities to attend to functions. Might suffer from heart related problems, ailments related to blood pressure, boils and wounds.

## Capricorn



Progress in your job in the first two weeks. With effort will get new job opportunities. Effort will bear result. Revenue will be good. Financially stable. Will inherit properties. In last two weeks,

there is a tendency to go on trips. Problems may occur in eyes, head and throat.

## Aquarius



Beginning of this month and especially the last two weeks will be advantageous. Will get advantages from religious and social work. Chance to go abroad. Will get new job opportunities in the last

two weeks. Will suffer from ailments in dental, throat and neurological.

## Pisces



Circumstances are not good for the job and businesses. Low income and high expenses. Tendency to be outside from home. Disagreement between husband and wife. Not a good period for the spouse and you might need to spend some extra

money for his/her medicine. Might get problems related to fractures, accidents, surgery and diabetes.

# Editorial

The idea of an English newspaper on Ayurveda was conceived by my brother Manick Rodrigo and Dr. Jayasena Dahanayake during one of their monthly conversations at Barbery Reef Ayurveda Resort, Beruwela which Dr. Dahanayake visits regularly with his gift of the monthly Sinhala newspaper "Ayurveda". Barbery is a patron of the newspaper which will celebrate 25 years of unbroken publishing shortly. They discussed the possibility of preparing a similar newspaper in English and since I happened to be around I was assigned with the task of progressing this matter.

With it came for me the reward of getting to know Dr. Dahanayake and some of his colleagues who introduced me to the fascinating world of medicinal plants and concoctions. He shared with us his knowledge and love of plants and his commitment to preserve and share the indigenous medicine that has been handed down from one generation to another. He also shared his strong views on the need to recognize physicians who

**Geetha Rodrigo Karandawala**  
Director,  
Barbery Ayurveda Resorts

have a university of knowledge and understanding though they may have little formal qualification.

This newspaper seeks to share with the physicians and the public in Sri Lanka and overseas, the precious knowledge of Authentic Ayurveda. It also seeks to provide a platform for traditional Ayurveda physicians and physicians who are formally trained in Ayurveda to exchange views in a neutral setting.

So it has been my privilege to encourage the physicians who work at Barbery's Institute of Ayurveda & Alternative Medicine and the Barbery Ayurveda Resorts to research and write and translate and make this newspaper a reality. It is our intention to publish this newspaper each month and broaden its scope and deepen the analysis. Enjoy the first edition - Geetha.

### Editorial Team

Dr. P. M. Chandrasiri	Dr. Athma Karunathilaka
Dr. Jayasena Dahanayake	Dr. Chathuranga Ranasinghe
Dr. Sudharma Umayangani	Ms. Kuamrini Pathmanaban

## A poultice for strengthening joints

### Ingredients :-

Bark of the wild mango tree, bark of the Bo-tree, bark of the Ankenda tree, bark of the Jackfruit (Waraka) tree, bark of the Athdemata tree, bark of the Madatiya tree to be taken in equal quantities. Cut up into very thin pieces; pound them well; mix hot water and squeeze to extract the juice to obtain two or three measures of Patha (about a cup of tea). Take 3 kalans (15 G) each of the kernels of the seeds of the Beheth Erandu tree, raw saffron root, Vadakaha root, Sooty matter formed from the smoke on the kitchen attic (Viyan Dumbulu), Dry

**By Dr. Jayasena Dahanayake** -Traditional Physician  
(Translated by Mr. Lionel Wijerama)

ginger root, clay worked by the potter fly and the powdered antlers of the deer and add all these ingredients to the juice extracted previously and grind them together to mix well. Add coconut treacle, Kitul treacle and honey to it. Heat them on the hearth to boil to a thick mixture, set it all down from the hearth to apply in the form of a poultice.

Apply this preparation after washing the affected area thoroughly with the water in which equal quantities of Beli leaves, Paavatta leaves and Tamarind leaves are boiled.

# PANCHAKARMA TREATMENT FOR A HEALTHY LIFE

Ayurvedic Medical System is an inheritance of the Sri Lankan community which is widely practiced in the country nowadays. It is a combination of the Sri Lankan indigenous medical system and the Indian Ayurvedic medical system which arose more than 3000 years ago.

'Ayurveda' is more than a mere healing system; it is a science as well as an art of appropriate living which helps to achieve longevity through natural means. Panchakarma treatment procedure is one of the best therapeutic measures in Ayurveda.

'Panchakarma' means five types of therapeutic measures which are to purify and eliminate the impurities from the body. Those are, *Vamana* (Emesis therapy), *Virechana* (Purgation therapy), *Nasya* (Nasal administration), *Vasti* (Enema therapy) and *Rakta Mokshna* (Bloodletting).

There are several ways of getting diseases or disorders. The methods of formation are also different from each other. Inappropriate modernized food habits, sedentary life style, environmental and weather changes, psychological issues, injuries, accidents etc. are some of the factors which cause diseases. The treatment methods vary from disease to disease. Most of the people do not seek treatment for mild diseases. They get cured by the natural immunity system of the body. People are more concerned about life threatening diseases.

Although the diseases get cured, sometimes people get secondary manifestations and side effects in chronic diseases.

Ayurveda guides individuals in prevention of diseases and long term maintenance of health and mental stability. Due to different etiological factors, distorted *Tri doshas* (i.e. *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*) and *Sapta Dhatus* (i.e. *Rasa*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa*, *Medas*, *Asti*, *Majja* and *Shukra*) change the body activities causing chronic diseases. The only treatment for this is the internal purification of the body to eliminate the cause. This purification method is called '*Panchakarma*'.

## By Dr. P. M. Chandrasiri

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It is possibly for a rapid cure of the disease from the administration of Panchakarma purification method and then the administration of further appropriate medications cure the patient entirely. It is essential for healthy people to get the body purified properly. In these purification methods, the *srotas* (the channels or pores), *mala* (waste materials), *mutra* (urine), *rakta* (blood) etc. get cleansed. Moreover, patient feels the cleanliness in the channels and sense organs, increased appetite, increased luster of the skin, increased mental stability, etc.

We have to understand what '*Panchakarma therapy*' is. The excretory products of the body eliminate from the body via pores and orifices i.e. eyes, ears,

nose, mouth etc. In the purification procedures we use these channels to excrete waste products. For example, in *Vamana* (Emesis), waste products excrete through mouth and through the anus in *Virechana* (Purgation). This purification should be done only after a proper medical examination.

*Nasya* (Nasal administration) and *Vamana* (Emesis therapy) are used for chronic headache, insomnia, depression, epilepsy, alopecia, premature graying of hair, chronic catarrh, ENT disorders,

respiratory disorders, gastritis, gastro intestinal tract disorders, dermatological diseases etc.

*Virechana* (Purgation therapy) is used for disorders like *Hyperuricemia* /gout, hemorrhoids, anal fistula, gastro intestinal tract disorders, hepatobiliary disorders, dermatological diseases, arthritis, urinary obstructions and other Pitta related diseases.

*Vasti* (Enema) is mainly used for disorders related to *Vata*. It is mostly used in hemiplegia, arthritis, gynecological disorders, gout, rashes, gastro intestinal tract disorders, hemorrhoids.

Removing vitiated blood from the body is called '*Raktamo-kshana*'. It is done by either metal instruments or by non poisonous leeches nowadays. Dermatological

disorders, vata related diseases, filariasis, specific eye diseases, lymphadenopathy etc. are treated by this method.

The body needs to be purified with '*panchakarma treatments*' so that it can get permeated with new colours of youthfulness, health and vigor etc. The waste products and vitiated *dosha* and *dushya* in the subtle parts of the body is collected to the relative sites like stomach, colon. This process is called '*purva karma*' (pre-purification methods). The two methods are '*Snehana*' (oil application) and '*Swedana*' (sudation). '*Snehana*' is the oil administration internally and externally to make the body soft and supple. *Thaila abhyanga* (oil application), *Shirodhara* (pouring oil to head), *Sarvangadhara* (*Pizichil*), *Thaila pana* (internal oil administration) etc. come under this category. Using oils internally makes the accumulated materials soft. After '*snehana*', '*swedana*' treatment commences. '*Swedana*' is sudation or sweating by dry heat or wet heat. *Swedana* liquefies the toxins and increases the movement of toxins into the gastrointestinal tract. Once it is taken to the suitable place, the appropriate Panchakarma treatment is done to remove it from the body. After the treatment, several post treatment measures are taken to protect the patient.

The Panchakarma treatments should be done according to the procedures with a great discernment. After a successful treatment, the cause of disease is removed from the body which leaves the patient intensively cleansed. And it restores balance to the body, mind and emotions with a permanent recovery.

# 'HURRY', 'WORRY' AND 'CURRY' CAN LEAD TO AMLAPITTA (HYPERACIDITY/ ACID DYSPEPSIA)

'Amlapitta' means the 'pitta' comes with the taste of acid. According to the explanations in modern medicine, hyperacidity, also known as acid dyspepsia is the condition of excreting more than the normal amount of hydrochloric acid in the stomach.

To understand the true cause of the disease 'Amlapitta', one has to understand the concept 'Agni' in Ayurveda. Ayurveda has described this of 'Agni' as fire of life. It has been given a pivotal place in the balance between health and disease. This 'Agni' may be impaired due to several factors. This impaired 'Agni' shows effects on 'Pitta', the fiery energy of the body, responsible for transformation. 'Amlapitta' is the byproduct of this defective process. Due to indigestion (*Vidaaha*) *Amla* attribute of *Pitta* gets aggravated. Therefore, this disease is called 'Amlapitta'.

## COMMON SYMPTOMS:

Decreased digestive power, burning sensation of the heart and chest (retro-sternal burning) & nausea are the three initial symptoms of 'Amlapitta'. The other common symptoms are as follows;

1. Indigestion.
2. Sour or bitter belching.
3. Aversion to food.
4. Heaviness in abdomen.
5. Distention of abdomen.
6. Pain in abdomen.
7. Headache.
8. Vomiting
9. Bad breadth.
10. Foul smelling purgation.
11. Itching all over the body.
12. Dizziness.
13. Giddiness.
14. Excessive salivation.
15. Chronic *Amlapitta* may further lead to gastritis/ gastric ulceration.

## TYPES:

### 1. Oordvagata Amlapitta –

The disease has the symptoms of upper gastro-intestinal tract. It is associated with *Kapha*. Vomiting is the characteristic feature. Vomitus is of different colours mixed with *Kapha*.

### 2. Adhogatha Amlapitta –

The disease has the symptoms of the lower gastro-intestinal tract. It is associated with *Pitta*. Purgation is the characteristic feature. There is thirst, burning sensation, syncope, vertigo, urticaria, loss of appetite, bristling of hairs, hyperhidrosis.

- Excessive intake of acidic substance.
- Excessive intake of Spicy food.
- Excessive intake of Greasy food.
- Excessive intake of Salty and sour foods like chips.
- Excessive intake of alcoholic preparations.
- Irregular dietary habits.
- Over eating of stale, fermented foods.
- Insufficient sleep at night.
- Sleeping immediately after meals.
- Lack of rest, fast moving lifestyle.
- Suppression of natural urges.
- Depression.
- Stress and anxiety.

warm water. Ayurveda insists on this because, according to Ayurveda theory, "hot destroys hot" (*ushnam ushna hanti*).

- It is important not to overeat, but to take small meals, three times a day. Artificial stimulants should be avoided.
- Alcohol is like giving fuel to the fire of *pitta*.
- Avoid salt, oil, pickles, curd, fried foods, sour foods like tamarind, etc.
- To bring down aggravated *pitta*, a standard recommendation is to take two teaspoonfuls of ghee in a glass of warm milk instead of dinner or two hours after a very light dinner.
- Coconut water is exceptionally good in this condition.
- Aloe vera and *Kahipittan* (Ink Berry) is also good in this condition.
- If consumed excessively, tea and coffee also increase the acidity.
- Even an excess intake of sweets can cause acidity as the sugar causes fermentation and produces acid in the stomach, particularly if wrongly combined with other food types.
- For a time, it is better to use foods requiring only moderate mastication, since mastication naturally increases the flow of gastric juice with its acid. Insufficient mastication also aggravates this condition causing gastric irritation.
- As we all are genetically different with different constitutions and patterns, the response to treatment is also different. Hence Standard Ayurvedic Treatments are always individually formulated. This article is intended only for information. For specific treatment, always consult with a qualified Ayurvedic physician.

By Dr. Chaturanga Ranasinghe (B.A.M.S)  
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By Barberyn Ayurveda Resorts

Types according to *Doshas*:

1. *Vaatadhika Amlapitta* – (*Vaata* prominent hyperacidity)  
Tremors, dizziness, pricking, restlessness, unsteadiness, confusion, etc.
2. *Kaphadhika Amlapitta* – (*Kapha* prominent hyperacidit)  
Heaviness, lethargy, loss of appetite, cold, unsteadiness, feeling of phlegm in the mouth, decreased digestive power, itching, etc.
3. *Vaatakaphadhika Amlapitta* – (*Vaata* and *Kapha* prominent hyperacidity)  
A combination of the above types.

## ETIOLOGICAL FACTORS:

'Hurry', 'Worry' and 'Curry' are the three main reasons for the disease.

## COMPLICATIONS:

- Gastritis (Chronic).
- Gastric ulcers.
- Peptic ulcers.

## GUIDELINES AND AYURVEDIC REMEDIES:

As we can see acidity is mainly due to improper regime of diet and life style, it can be easily solved by following some simple guidelines:

- Factors that aggravate the *doshas* responsible for *Amlapitta* should be avoided.
- It is better not to overuse vinegar, garlic, tomato, pineapple, bakery items, and yoghurt if somebody is having *amlapitta*.
- Milk is excellent in this condition, especially when preceded by a fast, adjusted to your general condition. Along with this, drink

# Sudu Lunu - Garlic

<b>Scientific Name</b>	- <i>Allium sativum</i>
<b>Family Name</b>	- ALLIACEAE
<b>English Name</b>	- Garlic
<b>Sanskrit Name</b>	- Rasona, Lashuna
<b>Sinhala name</b>	- Sudu Lunu
<b>Tamil Name</b>	- Vellavengayam

Garlic bulbs are used medicinally and also along with vegetables as a flavoring agent. It is used for treating medical conditions in both human beings and animals. In Ayurveda treatment, it is used as a decoction, in the form of juice, syrup or poultice.

According to Ayurveda, Garlic has the following properties.

- Rasa - Madhura (sweet), Lavana (sour), Katu (pungent), Thikta (bitter), Kashaya (astringent)
- Guna - Snigdha (liquid), Theekshna (slimy), Pichchila (dull), Guru (heavy), Sara (clear)
- Veerya - Ushna (hot)
- Vipaka - Katu (pungent)
- Dosha - Pacifies Kapha, Vata dosha

**External Uses :** It is a Carminative and Antitoxic agent. We can use Garlic for the treatment of Skin Diseases, Oedema, Earache, and Gangrene.

**In the Nervous System:** It is a Nerve stimulating agent. It helps to improve vision. Garlic is administered for the treatment of Paralysis, Sciatica and Rheumatoid Arthritis.

**In the Gastro Intestinal Tract:** Garlic is administered as an anthelmintic. It is used for the treatment of Dyspepsia and Haemorrhoids.

**In the Cardio Vascular System :** It is used in the treatment of Heart Diseases, Hypertension and Angina pectoris.

**In the Respiratory system:** It has expectorant properties. Garlic is used in treating diseases which are related to the respiratory system such as Cough, Asthma, Tuberculosis, and Hoarseness.

**In the Urinary System:** Garlic is a Diuretic agent. It is used for the treatment of Disuria.

**In the Reproductive System:** It is an Emmenagogue and Aphrodisiac. It is effective in treating conditions like Dysmenorrhea.



#### CAUTION -

- Not recommended for patients with Gastritis.
- To be taken by pregnant women only after medical consultation.

#### Recipe from the Barberyn Kitchen

Name of the dish: **Garlic Hinduma**

- 350g Garlic
- 1/4 tspn Turmeric
- 1/2 tspn Curry powder
- 70g Onions sliced
- 1/4 tspn Pepper
- 1 tspn Salt
- 15g Curry leaves
- 200ml Thin coconut milk
- 1/4cup Thick coconut milk

#### Method:

1. Clean and wash the garlic and put it into a pan.
2. Add turmeric, curry powder, onions, pepper, salt, curry leaves and thin coconut milk.
3. Cook this on a high flame until done.
4. Then put thick coconut milk and cook for another few minutes.
5. Remove from fire.
6. Serve with rice accompanied with other vegetables.

#### Health properties (Ayurvedic benefits):

- Reduces vata, kapha dosha
- Expectorant
- Anthelmintic
- Diuretic
- Diaphoretic
- Helps to prevent the formation of blood clots
- Accelerates digestion

**By Dr. Athma Karunathilaka (B.A.M.S.)**

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# Alternative medical systems in Asia: introduction to Chinese traditional medicine:

**Chinese traditional medicine** is the result of knowledge gathered and experiments made by physicians in China for over 2000 years. Chinese medicine is very closely related to nature and some of knowledge has been gained by observing nature. One example has been studying the behaviour of animals when they are sick, to see which plants they consume. "Wu Qin Xi" is another example, for it is a form of exercise that imitates the movement of five animals which was discovered by the famous physician HuaTuo.

**Ayurveda** is the science of life discovered by the Sages (Rishis) in ancient India around 5000 years ago. **Deshiya Chikitsa** was the earliest system of medicine that existed in Sri Lanka before the formal advent of Ayurveda. It was handed down from one generation to another and in the course of time Deshiya Chikitsa became fused with Ayurveda. Historical records show that there has been an exchange of information on Ayurveda between India and Sri Lanka long before its formal introduction during the 3rd century BC with Buddhism during the period of King Devanampiyatissa (247-207 BC). Since then it has merged with the indigenous system of medicine that prevailed in Sri Lanka, and has been enhanced, practiced and preserved in an unbroken tradition up to today.

**Ayurveda** and **Chinese** medicine are more than systems of medicine. They are a way of life that teaches us to live well, from the day we are born till the last day of our life. Both medical systems attach a great importance to diet, exercise, yoga, tai chi, meditation and Qi gong. Both systems also teach that prevention is better than cure, and show the way towards this. In China there are hospitals for people to check for future diseases. For example if someone has sweating in just one side (one half) of the body (right side or left side/top or bottom) then it could be a sign of future stroke. So if one observes this it is possible to see a traditional Chinese medical doctor to do a full diagnosis and if there is any illness found, ask the physician what you must do and get medication if needed.

The main Ayurvedic texts are *Suśruta Samhitā*, *Charaka Samhitā* and *Ashtanga Hrada Samhitā*. In Chinese medicine, **The Yellow Emperor's Inner Classic (Huangdineijing)** is the most important ancient text. This is written in a conversation style and it consists of "Suwen" (Basic Questions) & "Lingshu" (Spiritual Pivot) which discusses about Acupuncture therapy in detail. *Treatise on Cold Pathogenic and Miscellaneous Diseases* – written by the great Chinese physician 'Zhang Zhong Jing' is more about drug prescriptions. This book was lost shortly after its publication. His writings were later collected and organized by physicians and made into two books; 'Shang han lun' & 'Jin kui yao lue'.

Some of the fundamental theories in Chinese medicine include Qi (pronounced as chee), Five Elements theory, Yin Yang theory, Essence and Blood. In this article I would like to briefly explain the Qi theory.

**What is "Qi" in Chinese medicine?** There are many forms of Qi in the human body. Qi is the fundamental matter that maintains the physiological functions of all the organs of the human body. Qi has the functions of warming the body, especially the limbs. Qi will help to defend against Exogenous Pathogenic Factors. When 'Zheng Qi'

————— *By Mr. Asanga Rodrigo*

(Healthy Qi) is more than the 'Xie Qi' (Evil Qi.), human body is in a healthy state. So we should try to protect the 'Zheng Qi' and should follow proper life routine depending on which season. For example in the winter we must go to bed early and wake up late. Then again during the winter we must wear enough clothes to protect the Yang Qi of our body, otherwise our body will have a deficiency of Yang Qi and it can lead to diseases.

When there is a 'Qi' imbalance or blockage it will cause illness that can be seen from our body's appearance and our behavior. The body is an organic whole and all the component parts are interconnected. The component parts are dependent and restrict each other physiologically and influence each other pathologically. So for example by looking at the tongue, mouth, eyes, nose, and ears a physician can say whether there is a problem of the heart, liver, kidney, spleen or Lungs. There are many other ways to diagnose or confirm if you have some disease, resulting from Qi blockage or Qi deficiency, by looking at the characteristics of our body such as the face, nails, hair, lips, complexion of the face, lethargy, and shortness of breath. Checking with the ear acupuncture points, Pressing the 'Alarm points' at the back of your body is also one such way of diagnosing diseases.

External forces such as wind, cold, or heat and internal forces, such as emotions of joy, anger, or fear can give rise to illness (Direction of 'Qi' flow will change, stagnation of the Qi or imbalance state of the 'Qi' will result in illness). Then lifestyle factors such as poor diet, too little sleep, or too much alcohol, etc. can also be reasons for the stagnation of the Qi and imbalance of Qi which can lead to illness.

In ancient times people who knew about ways of preserving health taught others to avoid the "evil winds" which according to Chinese medical terminology is one of the six external pathogenic factors. Today, when people are used to modern technology and the comforts it is advise not to get exposed to the wind from an electric fan or air-condition immediately after sweating, or try not to sleep with the air-condition, or keep it only a few Celsius colder than the outside temperature may not be heeded. Keeping a serene mentality, and refraining from covetous and wishful thinking can also help promote good health and prolong life.

In conclusion, both Ayurveda and Chinese traditional medicine seek to promote good health and well-being by teaching a sensible way of life that would in the first instance prevent disease and where disease arises treat such disease with minimum adverse side effects.

**Next month:** Five Element Theory of Chinese medicine

*Asanga Rodrigo studies Chinese medicine at the University of traditional Chinese Medicine in Beijing and his focus is Chinese herbal medicine and Acupuncture. He plans to join Barberyn on completion of his studies and contribute to the research and development activities of the Institute of Ayurveda and Alternative Medicine and help with the management of the Ayurveda Health Centres of the resorts. Asanga will have a regular column in this news paper to share his knowledge and understanding of this ancient medical system.*



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## KNOW THE 'DEVIL'S COTTON' ... From page 01

fruits, and grows up to a height of about 5-6 feet.

### A PLANT OF THE 'COMPILATION' (SANGRAHA) ERA

It is the belief of physicians that the Devil's Cotton plant was a source of a medicinal substance which does not find mention in the original source books belonging to the Vedic and *Samhita* (medicinal literature) era.

### POPULAR NAMES USED FOR THE DEVIL'S COTTON PLANT

- **Botanical Name -**  
*Abrus augusta*
- **Family Name -**  
Sterculiaceae
- **English Name -** Devil's Cotton
- **Sinhala Name -** *Yakkapu*
- **Sanskrit Sinhala Name -** *Pivaree*
- **Bengali Name -** *Ulatakampala*
- **Hindi Name -** *Peeber*

### CHEMICAL COMBINATIONS OF THE YAKKAPU PLANT

The bark of the root yields a gum and oil, and the gum contains Magnesium salt etc.

### QUALITY EFFECTS OF THE PLANT

Pungent and bitter in taste and flavor.

Light, firm and sharp in quality.

Hot in strength.

Acid in effect.

### FORTIFIES THE CONCEIVED WOMB

Devil's Cotton is used as a medicinal preparation active in the reproductive process, and ensures estrogenic development, fortifying the uterus. The bark of the root or root itself is an excellent medicinal material used for menstrual promotion.

It strengthens the uterine muscles.

### AN EXTRAORDINARY RELEIF A MEDICINAL PREPARATION SPECIFIC FOR MENSTRUAL PAIN

Add medicinally purified 10-15 seeds of *Olinda* (*Abrus precatorius*) to 21 seeds of pepper and have them ground into a powder. Use it with hot water two days prior to the expected date of menstruation, for 07 days, which will bring remarkable relief.

### LIQID EXTRACT OF DEVIL'S COTTON

This medicinal drug is meant for fortifying the uterus. This is a particularly excellent remedy for intensely painful mens-



truation which results from excessive accumulation of blood and due to neurological condition. It also eliminates afflictive pain caused during unusual or irregular menstruation, and facilitates normal, painless and convenient flux.

**Dosage:-** One dram to be taken with water, 6 hourly or 3 times daily.

The powdered bark of the root equivalent to the weight of 10-15 *Olinda* seeds to be taken.

The extract should be 1-2 *Tholas* in weight.

### POSSIBLE QUALITY DETERIORATION

Physicians believe that the healing properties of the medicine made by the bark of the tree will be lost if liquor is consumed.

### CAN WE GROW IT LOCALLY?

This plant with some valuable medicinal properties appears to be extinct in Sri Lanka, although historical legend suggests that the *Yaksha* tribesmen who lived in the country in our ancient past, whose dress was made from material obtained from this plant, and hence, it came to be known as '*Yakkapu*' (Devil's Cotton).

Today this plant has to be imported from overseas. So why is it that, we are making no attempt to grow this precious plant?

In view of these considerations, it is essential that enthusiasm is generated so that medicinal plants of that ilk are cultivated in Sri Lanka and utilized for medicinal purpose.