Ayurveda and traditional Chinese medicine: A Comparative Overview

Bhushan Patwardhan,¹ Dnyaneshwar Warude,¹ P. Pushpangadan,² and Narendra Bhatt³

¹Interdisciplinary School of Health Sciences, University of Pune, Pune 411 007, India
²National Botanical Research Institute, Lucknow 226 001, India
³Zandu Pharmaceutical Ltd, Mumbai 400 025, India

Received 13 June 2005; Accepted 7 October 2005

Copyright © 2005 Bhushan Patwardhan et al. This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Abstract

Ayurveda, the traditional Indian medicine (TIM) and traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) remain the most ancient yet living traditions. There has been increased global interest in traditional medicine. Efforts to monitor and regulate herbal drugs and traditional medicine are underway. China has been successful in promoting its therapies with more research and science-based approach, while Ayurveda still needs more extensive scientific research and evidence base. This review gives an overview of basic principles and commonalities of TIM and TCM and discusses key determinants of success, which these great traditions need to address to compete in global markets.
Like in Chinese medicine, Ayurveda relies on a balance, in this case a balance between the doshas. Just as an imbalance of Yin and Yang can lead to ailment, an imbalance in one of the doshas leads to sickness as well. Traditional Chinese Medicine and Ayurveda also share the teaching that lines of energy or meridians connect the vital organs. It is these energy lines that play an important part in diagnosis as well as the flow of balanced energies throughout the body. So while it is clear that Ayurveda and Traditional Chinese Medicine are two distinct systems, it is clear that they have influenced each over the centuries and both have a lot to bring to the modern paradigm of health.