

AYUR VASTRA : THE NATURALLY HEALING CLOTH

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Abstract: Ayur Veda is practised in India for more than 5000 years and is regarded as an alternative form of medicine. It is a medical practice that can resolve many ailments. Ayur vastra is a Sanskrit word, which means healing cloth. The concept is to bring the traditional organic natural dyeing method to modern textile industry for making eco – friendly wellness textile. Ayur vastra is used to both prevent and cure diseases. Majority sleep wears, towels, bed spreads, meditational cloths, baby wears ect are made out of Ayur vastra fabrics. The medicinal properties are permanently infused in the fabric which turns out to be beneficial for health. The medical products with herbal finish are an eco-friendly and free from pollutants and chemical hazards.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Ayurveda, kashayas, natural fibers.

1. INTRODUCTION :

Ayur Veda is practiced in India for more than 5000 years and is regarded as an alternative form of medicine. Kerala is the spiritual and historical home to the healing system called Ayur Veda, which in many ways is one of the original, models for the worlds other medical systems such as western medicine. It is a medical practice that can resolve many ailments. The oral and other modes of treatments apart, a revolution is now set in Kerala in the field of ayurvedic cloths. Ayur vastra is a Sanskrit word, which means healing cloth. The concept is to bring the traditional organic natural dyeing method to modern textile industry for making eco – friendly wellness textile. Since the discovery of synthetic dye, by William Perkin in 1856, from the coal tar, the relevance of the natural dyes had diminished. They slowly become almost extinct. After realizing the negative impact of the synthetic dyes like pollution environmental and health problems the textiles world is now changing back to the alternative safe eco friendly dyeing methods. Ayur Vastra is used to both prevent and care diseases. In Ayurveda for healthy life three dosha (vatha, pitha, and kabha) should be balanced, if any dosha is imbalanced will lead to diseases to balance this and to have healthy lifting we need good food, shelter and clothing. Ayur Tex helps to give good clothing in natural way without synthetic chemicals, the environment.

2. HISTORY OF AYURVASTRA:

The incorporation of Ayur Veda in to the cloths was there in the thousands of years old Thaliyola (writing on palm leaf by pointed large metal pin). It is believed that Ayur Vedas was received by Dhanvantrin from Lord Brahma. Charaka Samhita and Susrutha Samhitha all the oldest known and the most famous Ayur Vedic texts. Until about 1000 year ago, people in many parts of India were using various forms of natural dyeing in which they rapidly dipped cloths in an herb based preparation after each wash. These natural dyes are free from tannins.

3. CONCEPTS OF AYURVASTRA:

Since long time, natural fibers like cotton, yarn, jute, wool, silk, hemp and linen are used by the textile industries. The use of natural fibers along with the artificial fibers is beneficial but the dyeing process of the fiber is harmful as it uses chemicals. To make the clothing favourable, chemicals must be avoided. It is based on the theory of ayurveda that the cloth is made up of natural fibers dyed using organic herbs and medicinal plants. Ayurveda provide relief from certain disorders. Majority sleep wears, towels, bead spreads, medication cloths, baby wears ect are made out of ayurveda fabrics. The medicinal properties are permanently infused in the fabrics which turn out to be beneficial for health. The cloths made from yarns instilled with the organic and medicinal herbs reduce the metabolic disorders. As the ayurveda make contact with the body, the toxins are lost and metabolism increases.

4. HERBS USED FOR DYEING :

4.1. Turmeric



Fig.4.1 Turmeric

Botanical name: *curcuma longa*

Shade: yellow

Turmeric is a natural wonder, providing beneficial in the treatment of many different health conditions from cancer to Alzheimer's disease. It has powerful anti inflammatory effects and is a very strong anti oxidant.

4.2. Thulasi



Fig.4.2 Thulasi

Botanical name: *Ocimum tenuiflorum*

Shade: green

Thulasi (Holi basil) is a sacred plant in Hinduism. In Sanskrit, thulasi means the "in comparable one". In the Ayurvedic tradition, thulasi is used to support normal respiratory function, promote health and longevity.

4.3 Neem



Fig.4.3 Neem

Botanical name - Azadiracata indica

Colour- Ivory

Neem tree has been described in Ayurveda's prime text, the charaka samhita, as sarva roga nirvarini (that which keep all disease way). It has anti bacterial properties which is why it works on infections , burns and any kind of skin problems to has anti- ageing property.

4.4 Vetiver



Fig.4.4 Vetiver

Botanical name- Chrysopogon zizanioides

Colour- Brown

Vetiver is used for the preparation of a decoction which used for the treatment of all kinds of poison in toxicology.

4.5 Indigo



Fig.4.5 Indigo

Botanical name- Indigofera tinctoria

Colour- Blue

Indigo is one of the oldest dye plant, which have many health benefits in cloths.

4.6 Sapan tree

Botanical name- caesalpinia sappan

Colour- Red + Pink

Decoction of wood and bark used for tuberculosis, diarrhea, dysentery, postpartum tonic, skin infections and anaemia. Seeds used for stomach aches and nervous disorder.

4.6 Triphala



Fig.4.6 Triphala

Botanical name- Terminalia bellirica

Colour- kaki

It has multi- purpose treatment for symptoms ranging from stomach ailments to dental cavities. It contains poly herbal formulations, which keeps to the prevention of several diseases.

4.7 Vembadam



Fig.4.7 Vembadam

Botanical name- Ventilago madraspantana

Colour- light grey

It contains several anti- inflammatory and anti- cancer compounds.

4.8 Tacomo/ pomegranate



Fig.4.8 Tacomo/ pomegranate peel

Botanical name -*Tacoma stans*/ *Punica granatum*

Colour- Yellow+ Ivory

This nutrient dense, antioxidant rich fruit has been revered as a symbol of health, fertility and external life. It is an effective detoxifying agent. The ellagic acid contained in the pomegranate peel effectively prevents the moisture in your skin cells. It is an effective sun block agent.

4.9 Onion



Fig.4.9 Onion Peel

Botanical name- *Allium cepa*

Colour- Yellow+ Green

Onion is used for treating digestion problems including for all appetite, upset stomach, and gall bladder disorder for trailing heart and blood vessel problem.

4.10. Bringaraj



Fig.4.10 Bringaraj

Botanical name- *Eclipta prostrata*

Colour- Green

Karisalankanni is the herb of choice in treating liver diseases. This herb grows in marshy areas throughout the year. It grows abundantly during the rainy season.

4.11 Karungali



Fig.4.11 Karungali

Botanical name- Acacia catechu

Colour- Black

5. MANUFACTURING PROCESS:

Cotton is mostly used for the making of Ayurveda. Other natural fibers like Jute, wool, hemp and linen can be also used for dyeing. The making of Ayur tex products includes 100% chemical free textile materials. The dyeing process of fabric and yarn contain several methods.

- Bleaching
- Preparation of ayurvedic kashayam
- Dyeing
- Drying
- Softening
- Finishing

5.1 Bleaching

The bleaching is a process to remove the natural colour and impurities in cotton or yarn. The natural bleaching should be done using sunlight, soap nut and medicinal grass etc.

5.2 Preparation of Ayurvedic kashayam

The dye prepared based on the customer requirement. Then organic fabric is medicated carefully in mixture of herbal medicine preparation called kashayas (meaning concoctions). The word medication is used instead of dyeing because have the medicinal plants/herbs themselves give natural colour to fabrics. The blend of herbs is boiled in a controlled temperature and then dye components are extracted and then filtered.

5.3 Washing/ finishing

In ayurvedic herbal dyeing, finishing is done by sprinkling pure water on the cloth and once again treated with natural surfactant solution to remove the unfixed in yarn or fabrics.

5.4 Softening

The dyed fabrics are too hard usually. So the natural herbal ingredients (for example coconut oil, Castrol oil) are used for softening the fabric or yarns.

5.5 Drying

The dyed fabric is dried in shades and kept in dark room for a week for colour fixation.

6. ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

Advantages:

- Balance ecosystem
- Enhanced health
- Increasing participation in global market
- Social sustainability
- Credibility of fabric

Dis advantages

- Less resistant to wrinkles and strength
- Limited range of colours
- Washing techniques are different

7. CONCLUSION:

Ayurveda is constantly gaining popularity in textile world as it imparts health to people. The herbal treated cloth has the ability to protect us from various skin diseases, provides relief from viral infected disease and mental depression since the herbal finished cloths or garments came in prolonged contact with the human body. The medical products with herbal finish are an eco-friendly and free from pollutants and chemicals.

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