



A comparative study of Ayurveda, Homeopathy and Allopathy

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GSC Biological and Pharmaceutical Sciences, 2025, 32(01), 382-384

Publication history: Received on 11 June 2025; revised on 26 July 2025; accepted on 29 July 2025

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30574/gscbps.2025.32.1.0293>

Abstract

Ayurveda, Homeopathy and Allopathy represent three major systems of medicine practiced globally, each with unique philosophical foundations, treatment modalities and cultural acceptance. This research paper explores the fundamental differences, origins, mechanisms, advantages, limitations and real-world applications of each system. Each system is based on distinct philosophies, treatment approaches and historical origins. This paper also examines their principles, efficacy, public perception, scientific validation and integration into modern healthcare.

Keywords: Traditional Medicine; Disease; Ayurveda; Homeopathy; Allopathy

1. Introduction

In the modern world, living beings are suffering from various kinds of diseases due to their lifestyle habits. Today, medicine is the first aid preferred for every disease. The usage of medicine is being practiced from prehistoric times to the present [1]. Human beings believed that medicines have the capacity to regulate diseases and it devotes to health and well-being of patients. In India, Ayurveda and Homeopathy remain widely practiced alongside Allopathy, the dominant modern medical system [2]. Understanding the differences and similarities among these systems is crucial for integrated healthcare approaches.

2. Origin and Philosophy

2.1. Ayurveda

- Ayurveda is a Sanskrit word which is formed from two words, “Ayus” meaning life and “Veda” meaning knowledge or science. So, the term Ayurveda resembles, “The Knowledge of Life” [3].
- Origin: India, over 5,000 years ago.
- Philosophy: Based on the balance of three doshas (Vata, Pitta, Kapha) [4].
- Key Principle: Treat the root cause and maintain harmony between body, mind and spirit.
- Focus: Preventive care and natural therapies (herbs, yoga, diet, panchakarma).
- Founders/Texts: Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita.

2.2. Homeopathy

- Homeopathy, the name is derived from two Greek words (homoios + pathos) meaning “like disease” [3].
- Origin: Germany, 18th century (by Dr. Samuel Hahnemann).
- Philosophy: “Like cures like” - a substance that causes symptoms in a healthy person can cure similar symptoms in a sick person [5-6].

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- Key Principle: Use of highly diluted remedies to stimulate the body's self-healing.
- Focus: Individualized treatment based on symptoms and constitution.
- Founders/Texts: Dr. Samuel Hahnemann, Organon of Medicine.

2.3. Allopathy (Modern Medicine)

- Allopathy is derived from the Greek word allos (other or different) + pathos (disease or suffering), which means "other than the disease" [3, 7].
- Origin: Western countries; rooted in scientific research and clinical trials.
- Philosophy: Disease is treated using drugs or surgery targeting specific symptoms or pathogens.
- Key Principle: Evidence-based, focused on immediate relief and control of disease progression.
- Focus: Diagnosis, drugs, and surgery.
- Founders/Texts: Hippocrates, Scientific advancements.

Table 1 Treatment Approaches

S.No.	Aspect	Ayurveda	Homeopathy	Allopathy
1	Diagnosis	Pulse reading, tongue, eyes, Prakriti analysis	Constitutional, mental, emotional symptoms	Blood tests, imaging, histopathology, evidence-based guidelines
2	Medication	Panchakarma, Rasayana, Herbal extracts (Ashwagandha, Triphala etc)	Ultra-diluted solutions (Belladonna, Nux Vomica etc)	Pharmaceuticals (antibiotics, vaccines), surgery, radiology etc
3	Side Effects	Usually, minimal	Minimal if dosage correct	Often significant
4	Duration	Long-term, holistic	Gradual healing	Often rapid relief
5	Focus	Prevention & balance	Natural self-healing	Symptom suppression

2.4. Advantages

- Ayurveda: Natural, preventive, lifestyle-based, long-term healing.
- Homeopathy: No side effects, cost-effective, safe for all age groups.
- Allopathy: Quick relief, life-saving emergency treatment.

2.5. Limitations

- Ayurveda: Time-consuming, standardization lacking, slow effect.
- Homeopathy: Not effective in surgical/emergency cases, controversial.
- Allopathy: Side effects, over-dependence on drugs, antibiotic resistance.

2.6. Efficacy and Scientific Evidence

- Ayurveda: has ancient texts and growing modern research but needs more clinical standardization.
- Homeopathy: faces skepticism due to ultra-dilution, though some anecdotal and observational support exists.
- Allopathy: highly supported by scientific studies, clinical trials and research.

2.7. Global acceptance

- Ayurveda: Popular in India, Sri Lanka and gaining recognition globally.
- Homeopathy: Widely practiced in India, Europe and Latin America.
- Allopathy: Globally dominant in hospitals and medical education.

2.8. Integration in Healthcare

- Indian Ministry of AYUSH promotes integration of Ayurveda and Homeopathy [2].
- Global trend toward Integrative Medicine: combining modern and traditional approaches.
- Hospitals now offering Yoga, Ayurveda and counseling alongside Allopathy.

2.9. Case studies / examples

- COVID-19: Allopathy used for emergency care; Ayurveda/Homeopathy promoted for immunity [8-9].
- Chronic diseases (arthritis, diabetes): Ayurveda gaining attention for lifestyle management.

3. Conclusion

All the medicine systems, Ayurveda, homeopathy and Allopathy have their own merits and demerits and choice should depend on the disease, cause of illness, possible ways of treatment etc. Ayurveda emphasizes long-term balance and wellness, Homeopathy focuses on natural self-healing, and Allopathy offers rapid and scientifically tested treatments. An integrated, patient-centric approach can provide better healthcare outcomes. Rather than choosing one system over the others, blending the best practices may offer holistic and effective solutions.

Compliance with ethical standards

Acknowledgments

The authors are thankful to Principal, Govt. Girls Degree College, Chhibramau, Kannauj, Uttar Pradesh for moral support and encouragement.

Disclosure of conflict of interest

Authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

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