



## Evidence based Ayurveda in Hungary since 1991

Mr. Istvan Riesz Dr.(Ayu)Hon.  
Chairman of the  
Hungarian Ayurveda Medical Foundation PUO  
(1996, Budapest)  
[www.ayurveda.hu](http://www.ayurveda.hu), [www.garuda.hu](http://www.garuda.hu)

In frame of the  
First International Ayurveda Congress in Austria  
Klagenfurt, Austria, 1st-2nd of October 2010



„In spite of the fact that the ancient Hindu Medicine practised in  
India in the earliest times **was an equally developed  
scientific discipline** as any other contemporary system in the  
world, its **influence** on the Western society **was small**.

Hence, **most of the current writings in history of  
medicine do not have an appropriate mention of the  
contributions of ancient Indian medicine.**“

Welch, C.S. 1968



## Definition of health in Ayurveda

„Health is the state of equilibrium of Doshas, Agnis, Malas and body functions, along with spiritual, sensorial and mental well-being.“

## Definition of health by WHO

(based on Ayurvedic principles)

„Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.“



3



## Exploring evidences for contemporary Ayurveda

Ayurveda is one of the most **ancient** systems of medicine.

It has enjoyed an **unbroken tradition of practice** in India for thousands of years till today.

Because of its growing global popularity, the **need** has arised to **explore the evidence-basis of ayurvedic practices**.

**Evidence for safety and efficacy** of ayurvedic medicines is in the focus of the WHO and Western-world.

### Contemporary concept of evidence:

Dimensions of evidence:

- ✓ scriptural
- ✓ experience-based
- ✓ mass acceptability
- ✓ and **new scientific evidence** (required by Western medicine).

4



## Scriptural evidences of Ayurveda

Ayurveda is the most ancient medical system, remounting back to the times of the Vedas, and surviving till today through two sets of **classical texts**:

### The three major texts:

- 1) Caraka Samhita (1000-700 B.C., philosophy and medicine)
- 2) Susruta Samhita (1000-600 B.C., practice and surgery)
- 3) Vagbhatta Samhitas (300-600 A.D., medicine and therapeutics)

### The three minor texts:

- 1) Madhav Nidana (900 A.D., diagnostics)
- 2) Sarangadher Samhita (1300 A.D., medicine)
- 3) Bhava Prakasha (1600 A.D., drugs and herbs)


5

## Widely used ayurvedic plants with written and mass evidence for a specific effect



Azadirachta indica (Nimba)	antiseptic, antifungal, antimicrobial, antiviral, anthelmintic
Withania somnifera (Ashwagandha)	antistress, adaptogen, immunomodulator
Phyllanthus emblica (Amla)	immunomodulator, antioxidant, appetite-tonic
Plantago ovata (Isabgol)	gastrointestinal cleanser
Picrorhiza kurroa (Katuka)	hepatoprotective, stomathic, cholagogue
Terminalia arjuna (Arjuna)	cardiac tonic
Curcuma longa (Turmeric)	anti-inflammatory, anti-cancerous, anti-diabetic, antiseptic, anti-bacterial
Tinospora cordifolia (Guduchi)	hepatoprotective

6




## New scientific evidence: Priorities in ayurvedic drug research

- ✓ **standardization** and **quality control** of in-use ayurvedic medicines with necessary GMP
- ✓ new drug formulation/development through the **reverse pharmacology approach**

### Leading areas in drug research today

- ✓ antistress, adaptogens, memory-enhancers
- ✓ immuno-enhancers, anti-ageing remedies
- ✓ hypolipidemics
- ✓ cardioprotectives
- ✓ hepatoprotectives
- ✓ antidiabetics
- ✓ anti-arthritis
- ✓ cytostatics, anticancer-drugs, antioxidants
- ✓ nutraceuticals
- ✓ costmetical products

7



## WHO perspective of global evidence

- 1) Key issues in the assessment of therapeutic effect:
  - ✓ standardization of diagnostic criteria
  - ✓ clinical trials to assess safety and efficacy
  - ✓ systematic review of literature and clinical research
- 2) Cross-national evaluations using common protocols.
- 3) Weighting the evidence using systematic reviews.
- 4) Conduct of research in practice-setting.
- 5) Evaluating information from completed studies.

8



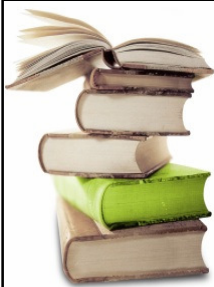
## Local perspective: HMPC Regulation for registration of herbal products in Europe

„... to **enable products which have been in long standing traditional use to be registered, because their safety and efficacy can be deducted from their long-standing use.**

The long tradition of the medicinal products enables **to waive requirement for clinical trials**, insofar as **the efficacy of the medicinal product is plausible on the basis of long-term use and experience.**

The **preclinical tests do not seem necessary** either, where the medicinal product on the basis of ... its traditional use **proves not to be harmful** in specified conditions of use.”

9



## Evidence-based Ayurveda in Hungary

The introduction of ayurvedic knowledge (theory)  
to Hungary

- ✓ **disseminating ayurvedic knowledge** in Hungary and neighbouring countries through media, conferences, informational materials (since 1991 and 1996, **HAMF**)
- ✓ building up the **Ayurveda Coordination Centre of Europe (ACCE)** web database (since 2007)
- ✓ setting up of an **Ayurveda Medical Library** in 2003 (more than 800 volumes collected so far)
- ✓ supporting the **translation and publication** of 2 authentic ayurveda books from Indian authors (in total more than 20.000 copies so far)
- ✓ supporting the starting of **teaching of Ayurveda at Hungarian medical universities** as a half year obligatory course (already started), and later on as a PhD course (under process)
- ✓ support of **diploma works** in the topic of Ayurveda and related sciences, as pharmacy, cosmetics, wellness-tourism, etc. (so far 9 works since 2003)

10

## Ayurveda in practice in Hungary

human and veterinary medicine

- ✓ **licencing and marketing** of a wide range of safe and effective **human-** and **veterinary-care** ayurvedic **products** (since 1991 and 1998 respectively)
- ✓ **elevation** of the average **health-level** of hundreds of thousands of people since 1991
- ✓ helping meet food-safety standards, cut costs in **animal breeding**
- ✓ working in partnership with Calendula Ayurveda Private Clinic (Siofok, Hungary, offering ayurveda health-services), as well as other companies offering ayurveda beauty/wellness-services
- ✓ support **clinical trials** with ayurvedic products (for osteoporosis, liver-problems, gastro-intestinal problems, reumatism, addictions, etc.)
- ✓ working in partnership with Del-Borsod Health and Social Cluster, who is aiming to start a **scientific and research centre for Ayurveda** in Hungary, in cooperation with Indian partner institutes

11

## Official background for Ayurveda in Hungary: acceptance at Government-level



- ✓ officially registering the word 'Ayurveda' as a trade mark (2003)
- ✓ laying down the standards of ayurvedic services, education
- ✓ Ayurveda became an official health-care system in Hungary (1997)
- ✓ Indo-Hungarian Health Agreement (2001, 2008)

12



## Obstacles in our way: hurdles of the period between 1990-2004

from changes of political system till joining the EU

- ✓ difficulties with product-licencing (long process, huge financial investment, lack of knowledge of authorities)
- ✓ great marketing efforts needed (lack of knowledge on Ayurveda, fastly rising number of competitors)

## Obstacles in our way: hurdles of the period after 2004

- ✓ **former licences will loose their validity with 31st of March 2011 (THMD)**
- ✓ excessively strict, difficult and costly licencing procedure
- ✓ lack of support for alternative medicinal systems on the EU-level
- ✓ **lack of substantive dialogue between EU- and Indian authorities on ayurvedic herbs (negative lists)**
- ✓ lack of treating Ayurveda as an individual and holistic medical system

13

## Goals for the next 10 years



- ✓ continue the dissemination of ayurvedic knowledge
- ✓ **lobbying for the amendment of THMD**
- ✓ eased licencing system for ayurvedic products
- ✓ **close work of EU and Indian authorities on the synchronisation of pharmacopoeias**
- ✓ building in the basics of ayurvedic medical concept in Western medical training

14

## Conditions of introduction of Ayurveda into Western healthcare systems

- ✓ definite (legal and financial) support of the governments
- ✓ professional, as well as financial support of AYUSH
- ✓ adequate and supportive licencing system
- ✓ civil and business intitiations and funds
- ✓ close cooperation with Indian ayurvedic product manufacturers, scientific centres, universities, hospitals
- ✓ effective, safe, attractive products
- ✓ good marketing strategy, effective marketing support
- ✓ strategic planning



15

**Thank you for your attention!**

See you in Budapest in May 2011  
at the 2nd International  
Ayurveda Conference in Hungary

co-organized by HAMF

Contacts:

Phone/Fax: +361-3312316, 3531591

E-mail: [garuda@garuda.hu](mailto:garuda@garuda.hu),  
[ayurveda@garuda.hu](mailto:ayurveda@garuda.hu)

Web: [www.garuda.hu](http://www.garuda.hu), [www.ayurveda.hu](http://www.ayurveda.hu)  
[www.ayurvedacoordination.eu](http://www.ayurvedacoordination.eu)

