



Government of India
MINISTRY OF
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भारत सरकार

GUIDELINES

for
NATUROPATHY
PRACTITIONERS
for
COVID 19

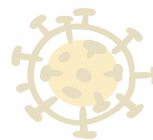
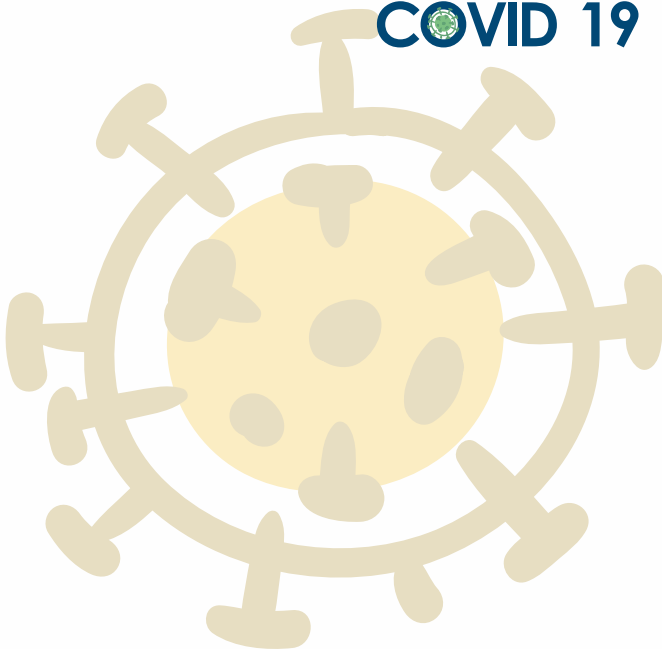


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Role of Naturopathy in prophylaxis during Covid-19 pandemic

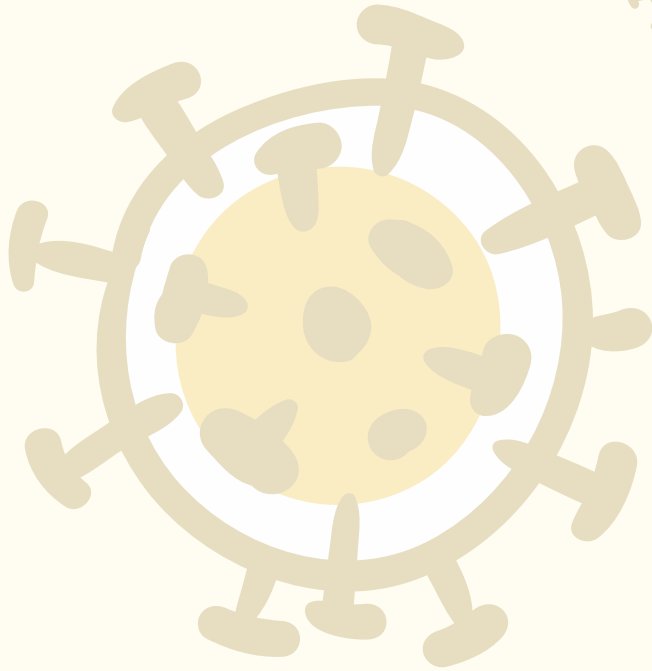
This guideline document is for Naturopathy practitioners to impart yoga therapy, naturopathy treatment modalities, nutrition, diet and lifestyle approaches to improve immunity in our population. Research has shown that there is a heterogeneity in susceptibility to infections during a flu epidemic. Psychologic stress, Fitness and physical activity, Nutrition, Sleep, comorbid conditions and lifestyle play a vital role in shaping this immune response. Naturopathy is a system of lifestyle medicine that works in modulating these factors that improve body's innate healing properties i.e. immunity. This may be useful in this current scenario where we are facing a Covid 19 pandemic. Since elderly population, children and those with co morbid conditions are vulnerable to this infection, naturopathy interventions can be used as an adjunct preventive management. The impending anxiety and stress of isolation due to COVID-19 disease and lockdown can down regulate immune responses and defenses that can lead them to contract this infection and increase its severity(1)(2). Though isolation, hygiene precautions and social distancing are important for preventing one getting infected, anxiety and stress resulting from these also need to be taken care of Treatment protocols for people with COVID-19 should address both the physiological and psychological needs of the patients and health service providers(3).

Prophylaxis and Preventive care

Naturopathy system works by improving one's vitality or modulating immunity and can therefore be used as a preventive approach. Listed below in Table 1 are several measures that can be used to improve immunity against infections. These measures may be particularly useful in patients with comorbid illness such a diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and elderly who may have increased susceptibility to Covid-19.

Measures for preventive care and immune enhancement

S.No	Objectives	Measures
1.	Improving Mucosal Immunity and reducing airway reactivity	<p>1. Gargling with hot water with salt daily or Gargling with Neem oil.</p> <p>2. Nasal Irrigation with warm saline water followed by ghee application to nostrils to reduce nasal congestion, dryness and airway reactivity(4).</p> <p>3. Neti kriya – Vata Neti and Jalaneti followed by Kapalabhati kriya twice a week to reduce airway reactivity(5).</p> <p>4. Aromatherapy to improve Mucosal Immunity. Aromatic oils for inhalation such as peppermint oil and eucalyptus oil and Tulsi(6).</p> <p>5. Yoga and Mindfulness exercises to improve secretory IgA levels and Salivary Beta Defensin 2 that confer mucosal immunity(7).</p>
2.	Improving Innate Immunity or immune homeostasis	<p>Naturopathic Nutrition with balanced diet consisting of plenty of fruits and vegetables (as given under Nutrition).</p> <p>Intermittent fasting or lemon juice fasting one day a week to reduce oxidative stress, improve autophagy and improve immune homeostasis(8,9).</p> <p>Regular exercise improves circulation and immune homeostasis, and is useful in allergies.</p>
3.	Reducing Stress	<p>Psychologic Stress can increase susceptibility to Infections(1). Regular practice of Yoga (Minimum 20 minutes) Loosening /Breathing exercises-5 min, Suryanamaskar 6 rounds -6 minutes, Yogic relaxation techniques – 5 min, Kapalabhati- 3 rounds followed by Nadishodana Pranayama-9 rounds, Ujjayi Pranayama -9 rounds and Bramari -3 rounds)</p>
4.	Improving sleep	<p>Poor sleep can increase susceptibility to respiratory Infections. Regular healthy sleep hygiene with 8hrs of sleep essential to modulate immunity(10,11).</p> <p>Hot foot immersion with cold compress to head for insomnia.</p>
5.	Improving fitness and respiratory health	<p>Regular moderate intensity exercise such as walking 30 minutes daily prevents incidence of respiratory infections(12).</p> <p>Endurance exercises to improve stamina and cardiorespiratory fitness.</p>



Symptom Management:

A successful antiviral response would see the infection limited to the upper airway, as is the case clinically with the majority of viral infections in healthy individuals. Should such a response be deficient, then predominantly upper-airway viral infections, may spread to the lower airways, causing lower respiratory symptoms and an exacerbation of symptoms of wheeze, and dyspnea in predisposed individuals. The mainstay in management of corona viral infections has been supportive care, nutrition and preventing secondary infections in the absence of any antiviral agent or vaccine. In the initial phases of infection where there is upper respiratory tract involvement, several home remedies can be tried as prescribed in naturopathy. Majority of spices are used in respiratory diseases (26.3%), ranging from colds, flu, to cough and catarrh(13). Some of these measures are listed in next Table.

Measures for Symptom management

S.No	Symptoms	Measures
1.	Cold, Coryza - Running nose, Nasal Congestion	Steam Inhalation with Tulsi, peppermint and Eucalyptus oil(4) Nasal Irrigation with warm saline water(14,15) or Neti Kriya – Jalaneti followed by Kapalabhati Hot foot immersion(16),
2.	Sore throat, Hoarseness of voice	Hot saline water gargle. Gargling with neem water decoction with honey(17). Coriander and turmeric Kashayam with black pepper (18)
3.	Expectorant Cough	Chewing ginger (Zingiber officinale). It is rich in 1,8 cineole which is an anti- inflammatory, antispasmodic, antitussive, expectorant, (19)
4.	Dry Cough	Ginger Kashayam with honey, cloves, cinnamon, turmeric and pepper for dry cough in milk(18)
5.	Headaches	Hot foot Immersion for headaches with cold compress on head (16), Aromatherapy with Tulsi or lavender oils.
6.	Fever	Cold chest pack, cold sponging for pyrexia
7.	Wheeze, Chest Congestion	Cold Chest Pack, Hot fomentation to chest and upper back, Hot foot immersion Chair breathing to reduce respiratory effort. Steam inhalation with Tulsi or eucalyptus oil.
8.	Malaise and Fatigue	Nutrition rich in Plant proteins, Natural Vitamin C, glucose and Vitamin D Lemon water with honey to boost immunity(20)
9.	Stress, Anxiety Depression	Aroma therapy with lavender, Basil or lemon grass oils (Inhalation/steam inhalation)(21). Yoga therapy module: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hands in and out breathing, Hands stretch breathing, Bhujangasana breathing, Shalabhasana breathing, Tiger Breathing 2. Asanas(7,22,23) – Suryanamaskar – 2-6 rounds depending on fatigue status 3. Padahastasana, Ardha chakrasana, Trikonasana 4. Sulabha Matsyasana, Makarasana, Bhujangasana, shalabhasana 5. Ardha Matsyendrasana, Shashankasana with “M kara” chanting. 6. Chair Breathing (for respiratory distress)(24) 7. Pranayama- Bhastrika-9 rounds, Ujjayi-9 rounds, Nadishodhana-9 rounds and Bramari- 9 rounds (25–27) 8. Yogic Relaxation Techniques – Muscle relaxation, Breath awareness relaxation, Deep relaxation (28)

General Measures

Naturopathy Nutrition:

Good nutrition boosts immunity. “Feed a cold and starve a fever” an old adage has been proven in clinical experiments on animal models and human studies. Food rich in proteins, glucose, vitamin C and D are recommended for faster recovery from viral infections. The dos and don'ts of Nutrition are outlined as under:

What to Have	What to Avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Drink plenty of warm water, Lemon or fresh citrus juices with honey or Jaggery● Add spices in your daily food (Jeera, turmeric, Ajwain, Cinnamom, cloves, cardamom etc.).● Prepare foods that are low on oils and fats (Dhalia, Idly, Kichdi).● Have a balanced diet.● Have protein rich (Dal Kichdi, boiled legumes) and fiber rich foods, millets, (vegetable soups).● Have plenty of colored fruits and vegetables. Wash them thoroughly, have boiled vegetables as curry or sambhar. Consume alkaline rich foods.● Have Zinc and Selenium rich foods- Oats, spinach, beans, milk, cheese, pumpkin seeds, cashews etc.● Drink at least one glass of Yogurt/day (probiotics) to improve gut flora	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Avoid Cold beverages, Canned juices and aerated drinks, Coffee● Avoid refined sugars● Avoid confectionary and bakery products.● Avoid sweets, chocolates, ice creams.● Avoid snacking on oily and junk foods● Reduce salt intake● Reduce the amount of trans- and omega_6 fatty acids in the diet (Vegetable oils)● Food in eateries● Smoking and alcohol

Acupressure:

Applying manual pressure with the thumb to certain points in the body is known to confer immunity and improve respiratory effort.

Individuals should be taught to apply intermittent pressure over acupressure points LI-4, LI11, SP6, TW 5, CV17, ST36(29) .

Heliotherapy:

Exposure to the sun and air in the morning and evening hours is known to reduce stress and confer immunity by improving Vitamin D metabolism. This will give a change from confines of indoors and has been shown to be useful in managing flu symptoms .

Following a healthy regimen is very important to boost one's immune response. The following lifestyle practices have evidence to prevent one from getting infected with flu.

Exercise: Regular exercise of moderate-intensity is associated with a reduced incidence of upper respiratory tract infection. The recommended means of aerobic exercise is walking, with an optimal frequency of three to five days a week and an optimal duration of 20 to 30 minutes of continuous activity(30) .

Sleep:

Sleep and the circadian system exert a regulatory influence on immune functions. Sleep deprivation can affect immune function in several ways that lead to enhanced susceptibility to the common cold and pneumonia with poor sleep efficiency

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Disclaimer

These guidelines are in addition to the standard treatment guidelines of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt of India and also vetted by the Interdisciplinary AYUSH Research and Development Task Force setup by Ministry of AYUSH, Govt of India



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