

EDITORIAL

Pharmacovigilance: Ancient Wisdom to Recent Initiatives

तदेव युक्तं भेषज्यं यदारोग्याय कल्पते ।

स चैव भिषजां श्रेष्ठे रोगेभ्यो यः प्रमोचयेत् ॥ (Ch.Su.-1/134)

Holistic health approach of Ayurveda is devotedly serving for the mankind with potential impact to patient safety and benefits since prehistoric era by physician monitored quality assurance. Iatrogenic complications are propounded if non compliance to the therapeutic use of any drug/ therapy is explicitly illustrated and classified as *Atiyoga* (complications of over administration/ overuse of therapy/drug), *Mithyayoga* (complications due to improper administration of drug/therapy), *Ayoga* (complications due to inadequate administration of therapy/drug); such practice is coined as *Aprashasta bhashaja* (Not an Ideal drug/treatment) in the classical texts.

अकालेऽल्पाति मात्रं च पुराणं न च भावितम् ।

असम्यक्संस्कृतं चैव व्यापद्येतौषधं दुतम् ॥ (Ch.Si.-6/28)

Also adverse drug event (ADE) in Ayurveda therapies can be found due to non-compliance of classical guidelines i.e. if drug is not collected, prepared, processed or used/applied as per classical guidelines. Acharya Charaka has clearly opined even a strong poison can be transformed into an excellent medicine when prepared and administered using the appropriate methods. On the contrary, even a good medicine may act as a strong poison if administered improperly.

योगादपि विषं तीक्ष्णमुत्तमं भेषजं भवेत् ।

भेषजं चापि दुर्युक्तं तीक्ष्णं सम्पद्यते विषम् ॥ (Ch.Su.-1/126)

Earlier Vaidya used to prepare medicines for his patients ensuring its quality , safety and efficacy . The increasing popularity and increased demand of Ayurveda medicines led to exponential growth of Ayurveda drug industry. Ensuring quality, safety and efficacy of Ayurveda medicine has become a big challenge as there are many influencing factors such as contamination of soil due to pollutants, use of pesticides/other chemicals etc. Though, the regulations to address this challenge are in place, it is utmost essential to enforce and implement these regulations in an effective manner. Accomplishment of this task requires cumulative efforts and mutual understanding and moral responsibility among all the stakeholders.

The consumers are using Ayurveda medicines alongwith other medicines such as allopathy and other systems of medicines . Owing to the belief that the Ayurveda medicines are absolutely safe and can be safely consumed by the patient on his/her own self, without advice of a physician, led to large-scale self-medication , irrational use by people and sometimes resulting to side effects, or unwanted adverse effects. This gave an impetus in prospecting Ayurveda physicians to be vigilant about the safety monitoring of Ayurveda medicines or therapy in the interest of Public Health.

Pharmacovigilance is a step forward to optimize drug safety and improve treatment outcomes. World Health Organization (WHO) defined Pharmacovigilance as a science, with activities that relate to the Detection, Assessment, Understanding, and Prevention of Adverse effects or any other drug-related problems. The Ministry of AYUSH has implemented Central Sector Scheme of Pharmacovigilance of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homoeopathy (ASU&H) Drugs establishing the three-tier network of National Pharmacovigilance Centre (NPvCC), Intermediary Pharmacovigilance Centres (IPvCCs) and Peripheral Pharmacovigilance Centres (PPvCC). This initiative will facilitate detection and prevention of adverse events and will promote safe, effective and rational use of Ayurveda medicines paving way to attain global leadership.

To realize this vision, it is the responsibility of every stakeholder / practitioners of Ayurveda not only to embrace the intricacy of Ayurveda medicine and to nurture the system in its holistic way but also to participate in this noble endeavor of Pharmacovigilance with great zeal and vigor.



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