

# Editorial

## Pharmacoepidemiology: A Requisite for evidence-based Ayurveda

Ayurveda is gaining popularity across the globe owing to its holistic approach and stands unique amongst various medical disciplines of the world. Tradition, ethics and culture is woven intricately into the very concept of Ayurveda and it approaches health as a state of equilibrium. Aushadha (medicines) constitutes one among the quartet described for success of any medical modality. All aspects/issues related to the drug like propagation, collection (GACP), quality addition, processing, preservation are required to be followed by the Vaidya according to the intended use of the particular formulation. With the globalization of Ayurveda, large scale commercialization of Ayurvedic medicines has come to the fore. As with every system of medicine, use of drugs may be beneficial or harmful, voluntary or involuntary. Initially Ayurveda Vaidya prescribed quality assured medicines which were procured and prepared usually by themselves, mostly in fresh form and dispensed at the same time. But, large scale commercialization has started raising issues related to drug manufacturing, quality, safety and efficacy, etc. The increased concern over safety of drugs has led to the emergence of a field of science known as pharmacoepidemiology, which is a synergy of clinical pharmacology and epidemiology.

The potential use of pharmacoepidemiology in Ayurveda is to quantify information pertaining to efficacy, safety, drug adverse reactions/adverse effects, rare and delayed side effects, drug–drug interactions, drug–diet interactions, duration of use, pattern of usage, Anupana usage, cost effectiveness, patient compliance and documentation of unexpected benefits.

Pharmacoepidemiology has bloomed into a robust discipline and its application in Ayurveda will ensure evidence-based efficacy and safety profiling of Ayurvedic formulations. It is to ensure ethical and legal requirements necessary for protection of Ayurvedic medicines from untoward accusations related with adverse reactions. It will further enable integration and global propagation of Ayurveda.

Proper documentation and analysis of Ayurvedic medicine for its safety have always been considered to be of utmost importance; for the same under the directions of Ministry of AYUSH, the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) has made pharmacovigilance as its integral part. Further CCRAS has initiated pharmacoepidemiological studies through its 24 institutes, located across various geographical regions; focusing on the drug efficacy, safety and documentation of unexpected beneficial and untoward adverse effects of commonly used Ayurvedic formulations particularly Rasaushadhis (herbo-mineral/metal-mineral based formulations). It is aimed to provide supportive evidence for Ayurveda to fulfill national and international requirements.



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