

# Ashtanga Ayurveda

Ayurveda is categorized into eight branches which are collectively called as *Ashtanga Ayurveda*. Ashtanga means eight limbs or eight parts.

## **1. Kayachikitsa - Internal Medicine**

Kaya means body, chikitsa means the treatment. For treating physical diseases Ayurveda uses various herbs, minerals, metallic oxides, animal and sea products after their proper purification and detoxification. Charaka Samhita is the main textbook of Kayachikitsa and has described more than thousand diseases their diagnosis and treatment. Panchakarma or purification is the branch of Kayachikitsa.

## **2. Kaumara Bhritya - Obstetrics, pediatrics**

This branch deals with nourishment, support and care of the children from conception to the age of sixteen years.

## **3. Graha chikitsa - Psychiatry**

This branch deals with psychological diseases, their causes, symptoms and different treatment procedures.

## **4. Shalakya Chikitsa - ENT**

In this branch the physician uses a special instrument *Shalaka* for diagnosis of nose, ear, throat, eye and diseases of head. Shalakya is branch dealing with causes, pathology, symptoms, complications and treatment of diseases of organs above clavicle or color bone.

## **5. Shalya chikitsa - Surgery**

Shalya means Surgery. This branch deals with treatment of diseases caused by foreign bodies and diseases which need surgical treatment. It is carried out only for diseases, which cannot be cured by medicines.

## **6. Agada chikitsa - Toxicology**

This branch deals with management of toxicological problems. It deals with signs, symptoms and treatment of toxins, poisons as well as snake bite and various insect bites.

## **7. Rasayana Chikitsa- Rejuvenation**

Rasayana Chikitsa aims at improving the health and the longevity of people by

- Enhancing their metabolism,
- Repairing the wear and tear of the body due to aging or diseases,
- Removing waste products and toxins,
- Improving the immunity and increasing tissue turnover.

**8. Vajikarana Chikitsa - Aphrodisiacs**

This is a branch which deals with diseases regarding infertility, sexual impotence or problems with sexual fluids of the individual.