

Let your body heal itself

NATUROPATHY Therapy involves taking people back to basics

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NEW DELHI: Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday left for Bengaluru, Karnataka, to treat his uncontrolled diabetes and persistent cough at a naturopathy centre.

He is scheduled to spend 10 days on the outskirts of the city where the centre is situated.

For the uninitiated, body's self-healing characteristic is what practitioners of naturopathy believe in and use to treat people suffering from various health conditions.

Naturopathy is one of the AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy) systems of healing that revolves around five basic elements or 'panch mahabhutas' - earth, water, sun, air and ether.

"Naturopathy can treat lifestyle induced ailments that are even chronic in nature such as diabetes, obesity, hypertension, upper respiratory tract infection and skin diseases, etc. We do not treat accident cases or infectious diseases," said Dr Rukamani Nair, medical superintendent, Babu Nature Cure Hospital and Yogashram, in Mayur Vihar, Phase-I.

Naturopaths believe that 99% of the diseases are caused by the violation of natural laws like lack of self-control, ignorance and indulgence. Naturopathy helps undo the results. Hence, the power to cure diseases also lies within one's body.

The therapy is about detoxifying the body and taking people back to basics. There is no set formula as therapies are chosen keeping in mind specific needs of the person.

In some cases people are asked to continue with their regular medicines while undergoing naturopathy for people with diabetes, hypertension, hypothyroidism etc.

Diet plays a vital role in healing along with the therapies. As one goes into detoxification mode, naturopaths advise bland, boiled food at least till the time therapy is on.



■ Therapy varies from person to person.

RAJ K RAJ/HT PHOTO

THE FIVE ELEMENTS OF NATUROPATHY

EARTH: People are given mud therapy that includes mud bath, mud packs, mud massage. Mud therapy conditions include chronic gastric ailments, skin diseases etc.

WATER: This is called hydrotherapy. Water is one of the major components of naturopathy. It acts as a stimulant, and anti-pyretic which reduces fever and improves kidney function among other things.

AIR: It is important to expose a person to fresh air post massage. In some cases, mud bath is given in open air to maximise benefit.

ETHER: Ether denotes a vacuum and the treatment modality involves fasting therapy in accordance with the patient's condition.

THE SUN: Fifth modality is the sun therapy, where those undergoing treatment are made to soak up sunlight in different surroundings.

There are cabins that have different coloured windows for a thermalium sun bath. Sun rays are known to have an invigorating effect and are also good for blood circulation that relax the body and bring peace to the mind.

What to expect during treatment?

- Complete/partial fasting, with water or fruit diet
- Bland food
- Yoga
- Meditation
- Underwater massages
- mud packs
- Sun bathing

To aid healing, yoga, prayer and meditation also go hand in hand in this form of alternate treatment.

"We don't use medicines or chemicals. Normally 10 days is enough for people to be relieved of their symptoms but results start showing within 36 hours," said naturopathy expert Dr SK Mundra. Most naturopathy centres have an in-patient department facility and the cost of therapy that includes food, etc. starts from ₹100 to ₹5000 per day, depending on the centre. "From cough to cancer, a

good naturopath will be able to handle all. In many cases the person is relieved of the symptoms fully," said Mundra.

Naturopaths get patients as young as 19 years and as old as 90. "Younger people mostly come on an OPD basis and older people prefer staying over during the course of treatment," said Dr Nair.

"Detoxification fascinates youngsters. For us that is the basis of treatment; once a person's system is detoxified, he or she will be relieved of the condition," added Dr Nair.