

The Growing Popularity of Ayurveda in Global Healthcare Practices

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Abstract

Ayurveda has gained increasing visibility beyond India as interest in traditional, complementary, and integrative healthcare continues to expand. The World Health Organization recognizes traditional and complementary medicine as an important health resource and reports growing recognition of such systems within national health frameworks. Recent research also shows substantial growth in Ayurveda-related publications and increasing attention to its possible role in contemporary healthcare. This paper examines the growing popularity of Ayurveda in global healthcare practices, focusing on international interest, wellness and preventive health, personalized care, medicinal plants, research development, digital access, cultural exchange, regulation, and challenges to integration. Ayurveda's holistic orientation and emphasis on lifestyle may contribute to its appeal among people seeking complementary approaches to health. At the same time, the evidence base for specific Ayurvedic interventions remains heterogeneous, and concerns include standardization, safety, quality control, practitioner training, and differences in national regulation. The paper argues that Ayurveda's global growth should be understood as both a cultural and healthcare phenomenon. Sustainable integration requires rigorous research, pharmacovigilance, appropriate standards, culturally respectful practice, and clear communication about the evidence and limitations of individual interventions.

Keywords

Ayurveda; Global Healthcare; Traditional Medicine; Complementary Medicine; Integrative Healthcare; Wellness; Medicinal Plants; Healthcare Practices; Globalization

Introduction

Traditional and complementary medicine has become an increasingly visible component of global healthcare. The World Health Organization's global reporting indicates that many countries recognize traditional and complementary medicine within their health systems, while its current strategy emphasizes evidence-based, culturally respectful, and sustainable integration. □cite□turn0search0□turn0search11□

Ayurveda is one of the most prominent traditional medical systems associated with India. Its approaches include lifestyle practices, dietary guidance, medicinal plants, preventive health, and individualized care. Its international visibility has grown through education,

wellness industries, research, migration, tourism, digital media, and interest in holistic health.

The global expansion of Ayurveda should not be understood simply as the export of a fixed traditional system. Ayurvedic knowledge has been adapted to different cultural, regulatory, and healthcare environments. Contemporary research has also expanded considerably: one bibliometric study analyzed 11,773 Ayurveda-related publications from 1993 to 2022, demonstrating substantial growth in the research field.

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At the same time, global adoption presents challenges. Recent literature highlights heterogeneous evidence, variability in formulations and clinical practice, limited standardization, and the need for stronger clinical guidelines and safety evaluation.

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This paper examines nine dimensions of Ayurveda's growing global popularity: international acceptance, wellness, preventive health, personalization, medicinal plants, research, digital access, cultural adaptation, and regulation.

1. Ayurveda and the Global Growth of Traditional Medicine

The growing visibility of Ayurveda reflects a broader international interest in traditional, complementary, and integrative medicine. WHO reports that countries are increasingly recognizing the role of traditional and complementary medicine in national health systems and health policy. □cite□turn0search0□ Ayurveda's international presence is influenced by its historical identity, holistic orientation, lifestyle emphasis, and growing interest in complementary approaches. Its global development therefore forms part of a wider transformation in how healthcare systems address patient preferences and culturally diverse health practices.

2. Ayurveda, Wellness, and Preventive Health

Ayurveda's emphasis on diet, daily routines, lifestyle, and maintaining well-being has contributed to its popularity within global wellness culture. These practices can appeal to individuals interested in prevention and healthy living rather than healthcare focused only on disease treatment. The preventive orientation can complement broader health-promotion activities when practices are safe and appropriately evaluated. However, wellness practices should not replace established preventive measures such as vaccination, screening, diagnosis, and evidence-based treatment.

3. Personalized and Holistic Healthcare

Ayurveda traditionally emphasizes individualized approaches to diet, lifestyle, and health. This feature aligns with contemporary interest in patient-centred and personalized healthcare. Individuals may be attracted to systems that appear to consider lifestyle, environment, daily routines, and personal experiences together. Such an approach can encourage patient engagement and discussion of health goals. Personalization should

nevertheless be based on reliable assessment and should not be confused with scientifically validated diagnosis simply because an approach is individualized.

4. Medicinal Plants and Global Interest in Natural Products

Medicinal plants are a major component of Ayurvedic traditions and have attracted international interest as part of the wider market for herbal and natural products. WHO defines herbal medicines broadly as products containing plant materials or combinations of plant materials as active ingredients. [cite]turn0search11 Scientific research has investigated numerous plant-derived substances, but evidence varies considerably among individual plants, preparations, doses, and health conditions. Global commercialization therefore creates both research opportunities and safety challenges. Quality control, accurate identification, contamination testing, appropriate labelling, and monitoring of herb-drug interactions are important for responsible use.

5. Expansion of Ayurveda Research and Scientific Evidence

The growth of Ayurveda research is an important factor in its contemporary global visibility. A 2023 bibliometric study identified 11,773 publications related to Ayurveda between 1993 and 2022 and mapped emerging research themes to the Sustainable Development Goals. [cite]turn0search4 Recent reviews suggest preliminary clinical potential for selected interventions, but also emphasize heterogeneous evidence, variable formulation quality, and the need for stronger clinical trials. [cite]turn0search6 Research can help distinguish promising interventions from unsupported claims and can strengthen communication among traditional practitioners, researchers, and biomedical healthcare professionals.

6. Digital Media and the Internationalization of Ayurveda

Websites, social media, mobile applications, online courses, teleconsultations, and e-commerce have made Ayurvedic information and products accessible across geographical boundaries. Digital communication can introduce Ayurveda to audiences who may have little direct contact with traditional practitioners. This accessibility creates educational opportunities but also makes misinformation and exaggerated commercial claims easier to spread. Consumers may find it difficult to distinguish qualified guidance from promotional content. Digital growth therefore needs to be accompanied by transparent information, professional standards, and clear communication about evidence and limitations.

7. Cultural Exchange and Adaptation of Ayurvedic Practices

As Ayurveda moves across national and cultural boundaries, practices may be adapted to local expectations, regulations, languages, and healthcare traditions. This process can encourage cultural exchange and create new forms of wellness practice. At the same time, excessive simplification can remove practices from their historical context or transform complex traditions into commercial lifestyle products. Respect for cultural heritage and traditional knowledge is therefore important. Globalization can be most

constructive when adaptation occurs without misrepresentation and when traditional knowledge holders are appropriately recognized.

8. Regulation, Safety, and Professional Standards

Global expansion creates major regulatory challenges because countries differ in how they classify, regulate, and monitor traditional medicines and practitioners. WHO's global work emphasizes national frameworks, product regulation, practices, practitioners, and related challenges. [cite\turn0search1] Recent Ayurveda literature also identifies clinical practice variability and the need for clinical practice guidelines that connect research evidence with clinical decision-making. [cite\turn0search2] International growth therefore requires stronger quality standards, pharmacovigilance, practitioner education, standardized terminology, and clear professional responsibilities.

9. Future Prospects for Ayurveda in Global Healthcare

The future role of Ayurveda is likely to depend on responsible integration rather than simple replacement of conventional medicine. WHO's current traditional medicine strategy emphasizes evidence-based, culturally respectful, and sustainable integration of traditional, complementary, and integrative medicine into health systems. [cite\turn0search11] Future opportunities include rigorous clinical research, standardized formulations, digital education, sustainable medicinal-plant cultivation, interdisciplinary training, and patient-centred models of care. The global popularity of Ayurveda can therefore become a constructive healthcare development when cultural knowledge, scientific evaluation, safety, and patient choice are considered together.

Illustration

The following illustration presents the main pathways through which Ayurveda is becoming more visible in global healthcare, including traditional knowledge, international interest, research, and integrative practice.

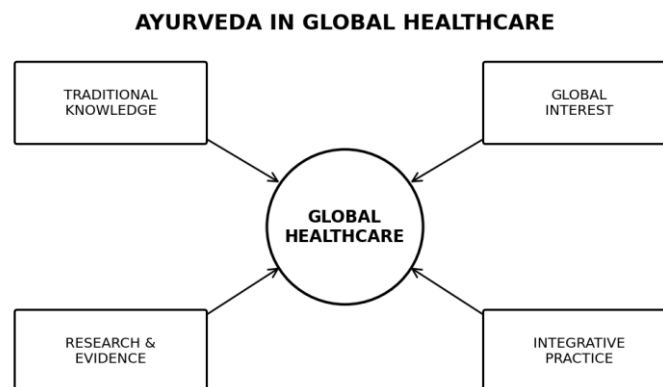


Figure 1. Ayurveda and its growing role in global healthcare practices.

Conclusion

The growing popularity of Ayurveda reflects broader global interest in traditional, complementary, and integrative healthcare. Its emphasis on lifestyle, prevention, individualized care, and medicinal plants has contributed to its visibility in wellness and healthcare discussions.

Research activity is expanding, and international health policy increasingly recognizes the need to evaluate traditional medicine through appropriate evidence, regulation, and safety frameworks. However, evidence for individual Ayurvedic interventions remains uneven, and challenges include clinical variability, product quality, practitioner standards, and differences in national regulation.

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Ayurveda's future in global healthcare should therefore be based on responsible integration rather than uncritical acceptance. Strong research, quality control, pharmacovigilance, professional education, sustainable practices, and culturally respectful communication can help ensure that growing international interest develops in ways that protect patients while preserving valuable traditional knowledge.

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