



Can Ayurveda help dengue patients?

“In Ayurveda, we call the ailment ‘Pittaja Jvara’. There are about 35 Ayurvedic drugs that are highly effective in its management”

Can patients suffering from dengue and expensive treatment in private hospitals, especially when they have to undergo platelet transfusion, find remedies in Ayurveda? Is Papaya leaf extracts, about which everybody is talking about in the social media and elsewhere, good for dengue positive patients?

Questions surrounding Indian medicine and its efficacy to treat dengue are many.

However, experts in the field maintain that before even the term dengue was coined, the protocols for management and its definition were clearly given in Ayurvedic literature.

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There are a set of 35 Ayurvedic drugs that are highly effective in its management. The quality, composition and dosage of these drugs to be administered to patients are clearly defined in literature. The challenge, however, is finding a reliable Ayurvedic doctor and not quacks,” says Vice-Chair (Education), Central Council of Indian Medicine (CCIM), S. Sarangapani.

In fact, recently, the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS), Ministry of AYUSH, had released the list of 35 drugs and guidelines that the Ayurvedic practitioners need to follow for clinical management of dengue. The AYUSH had suggested prescribing any of the anti-pyretic formulations for fever and dehydration.

“In Ayurveda, the ailment and its impact on any part of the body are not seen in isolation. On the contrary, the whole body is seen as one unit and a holistic approach towards treating the ailment is seen. Therefore, people, before visiting an Ayurvedic doctor, should do due diligence and avoid persons who make false claims,” cautions Dr. Sargapani.

Professors in Ayurveda also endorse the role of extracts from Papaya leaves.

“Papaya is relatively a new plant and nothing much is written about it in the old Ayurvedic literature.

However, recent research in this field has amply shown its use in managing dengue patients and not treating them. Public should keep this difference in mind,” says Professor and HOD (Pharmacology), Government Ayurvedic School, Ch. Ravi Kumar.

There are studies that have indicated that extracts from Papaya leaf help increase blood platelet count among dengue patients.



The real danger for dengue positive patients is when their platelet count starts to plummet.

The dengue virus is known to directly impact the production of blood platelets.

It is quite normal for dengue patients to lose their platelet count from 1.5 lakh platelets per micro litre of blood to less than one lakh.

“In our own studies conducted in Bengaluru, we have observed a rise of platelets from 65,000 to 1,05,000 among patients in just five days,” said Kasture Prabhu of Bengaluru-based Micro Labs, which had launched Caripill, the Papaya leaf extracts-based drug for dengue patients.

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