

# Opening new vistas

Health Nation 26.10.03

**MUHAMMAD RAMZAN** says our government should project the role of our traditional therapies

**H**ealth is wealth is a popular quotation but wealth is not a substitute of health. This is a paradoxical fact. A healthy student can exert more in his study, a robust farmer can work harder in his field, a healthy office worker can give better performance in his office work, a health wise sound wife can attend to her domestic and house-hold duties more zealously and like-wise a brainy and brawny industrialist and businessman can take care of his industry and business more prodigiously. Such a manpower (endowed with the requisite skill and technique) would always prove productive. Thus, they can be the saviours of our economy, progress and prosperity.

Pakistan spends billions of rupees on the import of medicines and life saving drugs, besides the money, which is being spent on the medication of our patients indigenously. Pakistan with a population of over 140 million (being the seventh most populous country in the world and the fourth in Asia), has a growth rate of 2.4 per cent. It is estimated that it population will rise to 260 millions by the year, 2035. Side by side with the problem of over crowding and congestion in our cities and towns, medical care of our ailing population, which is expected to be double till 2035, will be causing a great strain on our economy and will equally badly affect human resource productivity.

Pakistan can learn a lot from its all-weather friend, China, which succeeded in reducing its infant mortality rate from 250 to 40 per 1000 live births between 1952 to 1982 and could decrease the prevailing rate of affection by malaria from 5.5 per cent to 0.3 per cent. Chinese "bare-foot" doctors owe a great deal to this miraculous success.

They are different medical systems but China's success in herbal, natural and rational treatment is mainly due to the afore-said "bare-foot" doctors. China has made a great headway in its different types of treatments like acupuncture, homeopathy, naturo-pathy, chiropractic

the major alternative therapies and they are also cost effective besides having no side effects, these should be patronised and boosted keeping in view the purse and pocket of an overwhelming majority of the country, which does not afford to avail the expensive treatment.

Amongst alternative treatments, therapies and medicines are acupuncture, applied nutrition (therapeutic nutrition), homeopathy, aromatherapy, breathing therapy, colour therapy, herbage, hydrotherapy, psycho-therapy, auto suggestion and Schuessler Tissue Salts system. Chiropractic, acupuncture, massage therapy and yoga are manipulative methods while hypnosis meditation, biofeedback, prayer therapy and music therapy are used to facilitate the mind's capacity to affect the body's functions and to cure and control different diseases.

Acupressure, which is known as Shiatsu in Japan and Reflexology in the West, is primarily a self-care treatment, requiring massaging of the suspected points of the patient's

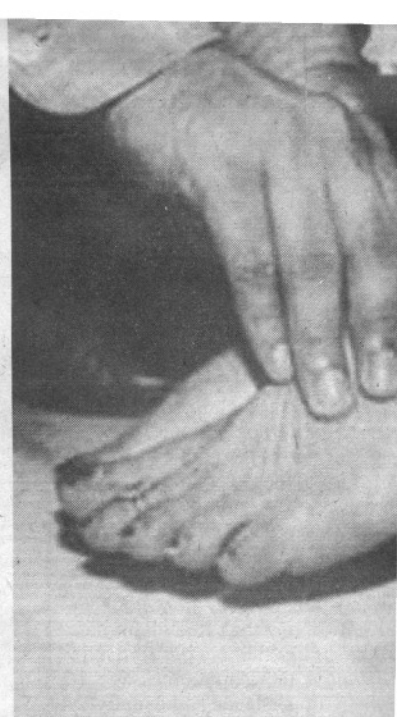
retard healing of the disease. This therapy is known as Bach therapy.

Breathing therapy is considered useful in healing many ailments. Breathing is commonly thought an automatic process of respiration but good breathing techniques should be acquired by proper counselling and practice. Exercises in breathing that raise the heartbeat moderately are called aerobics. Deep breathing has many therapeutic effects.

Colour therapy is also being used for healthiness. Certain colours like white, blue and green (especially light colours) have calming effect on the mind while others like red and black have agitating and exciting effects.

Dieting and fasting for health care are known as dietary therapy. The denial of certain types of food in certain ailments or occasional fasting or abstaining to take solid food for two to four days is an important therapeutic way against certain allergies and ailments.

More than 70 per cent of the world's population use herbs



Mist. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) mentioned its curing effects and efficiency in every disease except in death. The Muslims have, therefore, been using kalonji in different ways for the last fourteen centuries.

The West is now making research on this herbal seed and they have discovered that it contains more than hundred components and is very effective against all kinds of virus, bacteria, fungi and parasite. In treating different diseases some times it is used all alone and some times in combination with other herbs and botanical/biological products. Most

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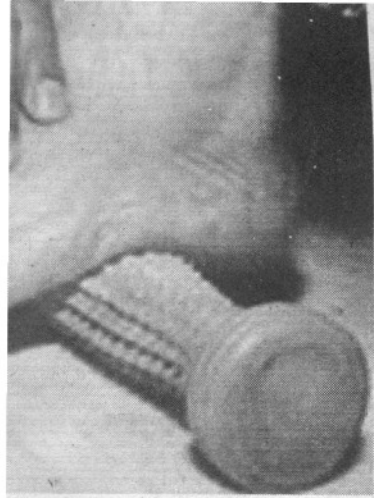
body several times a day. It is meant to unblock various paths, arterial, venous, nervous etc., the clearance of which is a source of relief to the patients.

Nutrition or simply dieting is preventive in nature and is a primary self-care therapy. Prevention is better than cure must always be kept in mind to keep fit and sound.

Aroma therapy is the use of scents of different parts of various plants and flowers to alter the mood of a patient. It is often helpful in treatment. The smell of the substance used in this therapy can have positive

and herbal products as medicines. This is known as herbage. The use of extracts from certain plants and at times of animals has proven an effective medication. It has provided the basis for modern pharmacology. Herbs are taken in different form as dried and powered, tinctures, teas, pills, tablets, pressed juices and syrups for internal use and ointments and shampoos for external use. Some of these are most effective in healing. For example sipping tea made from manzanilla (which is also called chamomile) has a useful health

recently it has been proven that it is beneficial in different kinds of cancer and hepatitis. Neem leaves were used in Bangladesh villages to relieve the discomfort of smallpox. These are also used for healing old wounds. Its ointment proves very effective. Peelu (Salvadora Persia) which in the Punjab is called 'Wan' is abundantly found in Cholistana, Balochistan, Thar and Kharan has different uses. Its leaves are used as vegetable, its wood as 'miswak' (tooth-brush) and its fruit, which is found in different colours, in the form of small berries is eaten, cures bronchitis, diseases of spleen, leucoderm



against illness, homeopathy is based on the concept of like against like illness. Essential features of diseases and symptoms and minimal doses are its importance aspects. It originated from Germany and has made success for over two centuries. Its medicines are administered in the form of drops, tinctures, granules, powder or tables, most of which are energetic medicines. Antidotes like coffee, camphor, tooth-paste, cough drops etc., should be avoided during homeopathic treatment.

Modern Chinese acupuncture (treatment by using needles is extra-ordinarily useful in arthritis, acute and chronic back-pain, sciatica, pain of the joints of shoulders, tenosynovitis, strained neck, hip pain, knee pain and cervical spondylosis.

Hydro-therapy is also simple and useful system, which involves no expenditure. Recently Professor Dr Khawaja Amjad Saeed got printed and distributed leaflets on this system with reference to Japanese Sickness Association, which claims 100 per cent success for curing old and new diseases with water.

It is an established fact that simple physical activity has profound healing effects. Movement is the ideal medicine. It is extremely effective, free and inexpensive. In order to avoid falling ill and then going for expensive, arduous and lengthy treatment, we must cultivate and practise good health habits to keep physically, mentally and socially fit. Preventive natural health methods make much more sense. Use of herbal medicines, traditional ways of wealth care walking, swimming, running, pedalling, aerobic action, flexibility, relaxation, meditation and prayer therapy should be reinvented and reintroduced because of their immense advantage for the upkeep of our health and to safeguard us from disease and health disorder. ●