

# Ayurveda and yoga for COVID-19 prevention

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Experts in Indian traditional medicine, including the chair of the Government of India's committee charged to lead that nation's efforts on the potential uses of traditional medicine relative to COVID-19, describe how the approach of Ayurveda and yoga may help strengthen host immunity and provide an effective, accessible, and affordable means of

prophylaxis of COVID-19 infection. A well-referenced description of how Ayurveda can support local and systemic prophylaxis of COVID-19 is published in JACM, the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*.website.

The paper, titled "Public Health Approach of Ayurveda and Yoga for COVID-19 Prophylaxi," is co-authored by Girish Tillu, Ph.D. and Bhushan Patwardhan, Ph.D., AYUSH Center of Excellence, Savitribai Phule Pune University, Sarika Chaturvedi, Ph.D., DrDY, Patil University, and Arvind Chopra, MD, Center for Rheumatic Diseases, Pune, India. During the article's production, Patwardhan, the article's anchor author, was named by the Indian Ministry of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, Homeopathy and Naturopathy) as chair of the 18-member Interdisciplinary Ayush Research and Development Taskforce for initiating, coordinating and monitoring efforts against COVID-19.

Ayurveda focuses on the host response and includes herbal preparations as well as measures for a healthy lifestyle to better cope with various stressors, including infection. This concept of stimulating immune function is a cornerstone of Ayurvedic practice. The authors discuss local prophylaxis, including use of Ayurvedic practices to help block virus entry to the body and passage to the lungs. This may include consumption of hot water, hot food and herbal drinks, gargling with medicated water, and steam inhalation. Systemic prophylaxis focuses on overall health and includes factors such as diet, sleep, mental relaxation, lifestyle behaviors, and yoga. The authors describe the science supporting Rasayana therapies, a specialty of Ayurveda that deals with rejuvenation and can stimulate immunity. They note botanicals that have been found to be effective in immunomodulation and restoration of immune homeostasis.

JACM Editor-in-Chief John Weeks, Seattle, WA, states: "In COVID-19,

we are seeing a collision of the acute (the virus)—and the chronic (the host conditions that increase susceptibility). The authors assemble a well-referenced argument from [biomedical research](#) and some traditional texts to make a compelling case for more increased clinician and research attention to integrating Ayurveda and Yoga with biomedical approaches as prophylactic, host-supporting measures."

**More information:** Girish Tillu et al. Public Health Approach of Ayurveda and Yoga for COVID-19 Prophylaxis, *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* (2020). [DOI: 10.1089/acm.2020.0129](#)

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