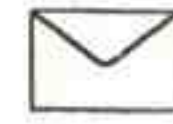


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An honour for ayurveda

INTERVIEW



“Through conferring Padmashree on me, the science of Ayurveda has been honoured. And the Government of India has stated that the award is for my works in the field of medicine. This means they recognize Ayurveda as a system of medicine,” says P R Krishna Kumar, Managing Director of The Arya Vaidya Pharmacy (Coimbatore) Ltd.

A renowned physician, he was chosen for the Padmashree award this year for his unstinting efforts to promote Ayurveda. He has been toiling for decades to gain international acceptance for Ayurveda as a system of prevention, treatment and cure, by promoting clinical and drug research.

His herculean efforts have now yielded results. “Unlike in the past, many foreign countries have turned to us seeking treatment. Till recently it wasn’t so. We had proved that Ayurveda could cure even cancer. But conditioned minds were not ready to accept that. The present change is we get many chances to prove our ability. That is a reward in itself,” he says.

Krishna Kumar initiated the first ever clinical research in traditional medicines under the WHO and the ICMR in 1977 to study the efficacy of Ayurvedic

thrititis.

He has successfully adapted science to popularize Ayurveda by transforming some liquid medicines into the form of tablets. These types of changes have made Ayurveda popular and financially viable.

It is popularly perceived that Krishna Kumar’s main achievement is modernization of Ayurveda. But he demurs, “Ayurveda itself is modernized. Due to ignorance, people curtailed its possibilities as a system of medicine. Ayurveda is meant not only for arthritis, but to correct all types of imbalances. I prefer to term it as imbalance, instead of disease. As far as I am concerned, everything is there in Ayurveda. Nothing has to be found out, just apply it. So the situation is that Ayurveda can, but can the doctor?”

Years back, Coimbatore Arya Vaidya Pharmacy ran an Ayurveda college at Mankara, near Coimbatore imparting Gu-

rukula system of education. But due to the inflexible norms of Indian Medical Council it had to be closed. That college had the services of eminent gurus and free education was also provided. The students who passed out were testimony to the robustness of the Gurukula

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system.

Krishna Kumar is now happy with the amity between Allopathic and Ayurvedic systems. “Earlier the relation was not healthy between us. But now the situation has changed. Many Allopathic doctors recommend Ayurveda in certain cases, and they themselves too prefer this treatment,” says Krishna Kumar.

But he is totally against the concept of super specialty system in the medical field. “It’s all a sham, part of marketing. Everything is related to one another. Then how can one treat a single organ? Ayurveda is about holistic knowledge beyond the body, so any doctor can treat any patient,” says Krishna Kumar. “But now our patients are very conditioned; they diagnose themselves and demand appropriate treatment. This mindset has to be changed first,” he adds.

Presently, he organizes free medical camps in rural and tribal areas for the poor. So what does the Padmashree signify? “Nothing in particular. I feel that I have only started out, and want to do more. Normally awards come in the final stage, but for me this is the initial stage!” Yes, he is all set to begin his Ayurvedic saga.

