

## The History of Methods of Healing

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### Abstract

Different methods of healing that have been developed over time have increased the ability of medicinal professionals to meet the challenges that arise with expansion of their professional roles. The methods of healing of cave people were undeveloped. The methods of Chinese medicine were focused on balancing the internal and external energies. Holistic and sophisticated system of healing represents Ayurveda. Egyptian medicinal texts show a close relationship between the supernatural and empirical healing. Illyrians applied hydrotherapy and physiotherapy. Experiences in the field of religious medicine and initial medicinal institution had Thracians. Healing in Ancient Greece was based on the law of similarity. Greek physicians favored diet and life adaptations in relation to the use of drugs. With the Roman sanitary legislation were regulated public hygiene and sanitation facilities.

Galen made efforts to balance the fluids in the sick person using drugs with opposite nature. Rational drug therapy in Middle Ages decreased and was replaced with Church knowledge. Arabic physicians have rejected the old idea that a bitter pill act best, instead of this they prepared their dosage forms tasty and attractive by silver or gold plating and use of syrups. Paracelsus pioneered in chemically prepared drugs out of raw plants and mineral substances. He used special drug for a particular disease. In the Renaissance, a great jump is made in the preparation of drugs.

For a period of about 300 years, significant discoveries were made in the chemistry of drugs. Today, current gene therapy has the potential to prevent, correct, modulate gene or acquired diseases.

**Key words:** Healing, history, method, drug, idea

### Introduction

One of the features of Homo sapiens is a tendency to heal the disease. According to archaeological evidence the need to relief the intensity of a pain is as old as the desire for exploring of new tools. As hardship flint, used for making knives and axes, drugs in nature rarely occur in its most useful form. Active ingredients and medicinal components must first be collected, processed and prepared for inserting in curative form (1).

Introduction to the development of ideas related to drugs, manner of healing and the evolution of the profession increase the ability of medicinal professionals to respond to the challenges that arise with expansion of professional roles.

**Healing through the history:** In the Stone Age healing is developed spontaneous instinctive, by observing the birds and beasts. The first applications to relieve any pain it was that what was on the immediate man reach like cold water, leaves, earth and mud. Although the healing methods of cave people were undeveloped,

many of today's drugs are used as they were on the availability of prehistoric man (2).

Medicinal plants in the Neolithic period have been recognized and used as food, spices, or spells. Through trial and error, grew folk knowledge about medicinal characteristics of certain natural substances. When healers will be faced with a disease, they have put it in the context of their understanding of the world around them, plenty of good and evil spirits. The healing consisted in the use of beneficial medications with prescribed supernatural significance. Spells of wizards challenged by the magical substances could win diseases. Magical drug beverages were part of the duty of the tribal Shaman healer. Knowledge of this treatment, the shamans kept secret. He (or she) prepared medicines and served as a link between the material and spiritual world. Shaman was usually responsible for all or most supernatural things in the tribe, so they performed the diagnosis and treatment of serious or chronic illnesses. Although primitive people discovered only a small number of effective medications, the concept of the possible impact on body functions through external force, must be considered as one of the greatest human achievements. Holistic approach to healing has taken over many techniques from Shamanism as visualization, altered state of consciousness, hypnotherapy, meditation, positive conception and stress reduction (2,3).

The traditional Chinese medicine offers detailed health care system with a wide range of applications from preventive health care and maintenance, to diagnosis and treatment of acute and chronic disorders. Methods are focused on rational use of internal and external energies employing diet, herbal treatments, acupuncture and breathing techniques (2,3).

Ayurveda (ayus life, ved knowledge) is a complete system of healing which appears in the II millennium in India. Its purpose is to provide a guide towards diet and lifestyle of people in order to remain healthy and the sick people to improve their health. Healing includes herbal treatments

(including cinnamon and cardamom), massage, meditation and exercises for posture and breathing, for balancing and forcing the health. Ayurveda observe the interdependence on individual health and the quality of its social life. It is a holistic and sophisticated system where body functioned through the interaction of vital energy, tissues and secreted products (3).

Treatment in ancient Egypt shows greater pharmaceutical improvement with more dosage forms with more complex formulas. Egyptian medicinal texts have a close relationship between the supernatural and empirical treatment. Recommended recipes usually began with prayers or incantations. Herbal remedies were the basic means of treatment with laxatives and enemas as the most important. There were individuals specializing in the collection, preparation and sale of drugs, as was the case with curative practice in Mesopotamia (3).

Illyrians practiced religious, magical medicine and psychotherapy. They believe in more Gods. Medaurus is Illyrian god of drugs and Bindus and Thana were gods of healing mineral springs. Illyrians applied hydrotherapy combined with physiotherapy (3).

Thracians believed in their Thracian's gods. Asclepius was the god of drugs. They had an experience in the field of religious medicine, methods of treatment and in the initial medical facilities (3).

In the earliest records of ancient Greece has been found a similar mixed concept of a drug or pharmakon, word which means magic, drug or poison. Homer (800 BC) in *Odyssey* underlines the respect for the physicians' wisdom in Egypt, illustrating the outflow and flow of the antic knowledge much earlier than the written word. Early Greek physicians described by Homer, entitled as *demiourgoi*, have progressiveness to diagnose the natural reason for the disease (but they did not rule out the supernatural healing in combination with empirical medicine). Some people, obsessed by persistent pain, traveled to the temple of the god Asclepius. They slept in

the temple in the hope that during the night will be visited by the Asclepius or his daughter Hygeia, which carry a magic snake and jug with curative medication. Rational tradition in the Greek medicine evident by Homer was processed and inserted in the contents of the literature connected with the name of Hippocrates of Cos (425 BC). Based on the benefits acquired from previous natural philosophers i.e. as Thales (590 BC), Anaximander (550 BC), Parmenides (470 BC) and Empedocles (450 BC), Hippocratic physicians formed their rational explanation of the disease. This was achieved through the establishment of a hypothetical relationship among surrounding and humanity, by connecting the four elements air, soil, fire and water with four leading fluids in the body: black bile, blood, yellow bile and phlegm {mucous liquor}. Greek - trained physicians (iatros) which has followed by Hippocrates method favored diet and life adaptations in relation to the use of drugs. If these conservative methods are not giving results, the Greek physician prepared his own drugs or would left a prescription to the members of the family to prepare and apply. Healing has been based on the laws of the similarities (2,3).

The health culture of the ancient Macedonian state was folk - empirical. But Macedonian kings showed great interest in its improvement and development. Under the influence of medicine of the previous nations for their protectors are declared the same gods that its supernatural power to treat they handed to the priests, who treated the sick man in temples dedicated to Asclepius. Treatment was performed with psychotherapy, diet fasting, bathing in warm water and massage. Drugs of plant origin were given and were conducted operations for rigging broken bones and dislocated joints. Alexander's Medical School in Alexandria saved ancient Greek medicine from a century of stagnation caused by the appearance of dogmatism. Influenced by the medical thought of the Egyptians and oriental Asian nations, successfully continued the development of natural, rational scientific

medicine of Hippocrates, with notable additions of anatomical, physiological, toxicological and surgical knowledge (3).

Romans as a militant people, because of their conquering goals are falling behind in the way of treatment in relation to other nations. Their science and medicine are at lower level. Romans have shown a great interest in the discovery and use of mineral waters for medicinal purposes. Since that time are known the famous Katlanovo spa, Kosovrasti and Banjishte spa near Debar, Kezhovica spa near Stip, Bansko spa near Strumica etc. Roman period is important in health legislation with which were regulated the public hygiene and sanitation objects (4, 5, 6).

Medicine in classical antiquity has reached its top with Galen, so that registrars that followed later insisted on to be compilers and commentators on his work, not highly original thinkers. The impact of Galen was so imbued among medical practitioners that the basis of his medical approach - the balance of the four bodily fluids through various drugs - mixed with folklore and superstition lead the people in their own treatment of the disease. In the western half of the Roman Empire, this medical knowledge has become especially appreciated. Through the Galen's knowledge and writings, who has worked in Rome in the second century of our era, humoral system in medicine obtains the predominance in the following 1500 years. Leaving on side the conservative use of drugs of the orthodox Hippocratic physician, Galen created elaborated system through which he made efforts to balance the fluids on the sick man with the use of drugs with expected opposite nature. For example, for medical treatment on outer inflammation, one of the Galen's followers, probably would use cucumber, cold, and moist folk drug, or perhaps the same Galen's follower would tried to cause bleeding, also known as the preferred treatment for the eliminating of the evident blood excess, which cause the disease. Besides the suspected practice of bleeding, Galen represents the use of poly pharmaceutical preparations or to today would be so-called as

“shotgun Recipes “. He thought that the body of the patient will drown out from the complex mixture of substances those which were needed for reestablishing the humoral balance (2, 3).

Middle Ages not made any changes in relation to the manner of medical treatment. As more methods of treatment become alienated of practical experiences more prominent expression of mysticism and superstition was appearing so that medicine in Byzantium represents pale and disfigured image of Greek - Roman medicine. The church became a cultural stabilizing force in the emergence of local feudalism which replaced the centralized government. Rational drug therapy decreased and was replaced with Church's teaching which preached that sin and disease are closely related. Monasteries became centers for healing, both spiritually, and physically, because they essentially are not considered different (2, 3).

At the beginning Arabs totally accepted the authorship of the then known medical manuscripts. However, with the growth of their culture, Islamic medical scholars as Rhazes (860-932 AD) and Avicenna (980-1063 AD) completed the works in the field of medicine. The Arab's invasions brought new drugs and spices in the Centers of Learning. In addition, the Arab's physicians rejected the old idea that the tablets with the bitter taste act best. Instead of this they made a huge effort to prepare their dosage forms more attractive and taste, through coating the pills with silver and gold and the use of syrups. These new more sophisticated drugs demanded more complicated preparation. In this period classic scientific and medical knowledge again prevail in Europe through the Arabic culture (2, 3).

A significant change in the use of drugs to appear, this educational approach ought to be overcome and to approach the suspicious, monitoring methodology. Such drastic changes following the experimental period now called the Renaissance. The time of the Renaissance was mature for the overthrow of the old Galen's

concepts of diseases and drugs. New and unknown drugs were arriving from distant lands. Tremendous incentives for these early studies are the discoveries of new drugs in newly discovered countries. As Galen not knew all the diseases of the then known world, and Dioscorides (40-90 AD) and his Arab associates not knew all the drugs. Tobacco, quina, alder buckthorn, ipecacuanha were among the newly discovered drugs from the new world. Galenic physician developed system of balancing the fluids by using drugs with opposite characteristics could not explain the efficiency of quina against malaria. Besides healing malarial fever, quina showed weaker effect in various states followed with fever. After satisfaction the needs of religious books (Bibles, hymns, etc.) appeared a new field of interest among printers, issuing the medical and pharmaceutical works, in which abound and detailed illustrations were of enormous benefit. On the side of medicine, this trend is presented with anatomical best work of Andres Vesalius (1514-1564 AD). Although critical to the progress of medicine, almost-modern, precise works of Vesalius and Fuchs did not affect the treatment of the disease as many speculative, mystical colored literary works of the traveling Swiss surgeon who called him selves as “Paracelsus”. Born as Philippus Aureolus Theoprastus Bombastus von Hohenheim in 1493, this medical insurgent well presented the associated behaviors of the common man, the educated physician, practical surgeon and Alchemist. The battles of Paracelsus against the static ideas of Galen, Avicenna and other traditional authorities opened a window into the complicated mind of the Renaissance. He was one of the proponents of chemical prepared drugs from raw plants and mineral substances, but still firmly believes that the collection of these substances should be astrologically determined. At the same time Paracelsus supported the “doctrine of signatures”. It is the belief that God set up his sign on healing substances that demonstrates their use in certain diseases. Although Galen could not accept the opinion of the existence of a special medication for certain illness,

Paracelsus propagates it as the only truth. However his efforts for chemically prepared medications stimulate the development of the modern pharmaceutical sciences. Chemical processes, especially distillation, allowed the followers of Paracelsus to isolate healing substances from the drug. Also, the effectiveness of some drugs was clarified. They were involved in professional medicinal practice and were documented in the medical literature. In this period a large jump in the history of pharmacy was the preparation of drugs (2, 3).

The necessary tool in the science - chemistry, was used for preparation of the oldest tools of humankind - medications. Although Paracelsus and his followers criticized the pharmacists, they quickly took up positions on the front of chemistry during the 16th century. For a period of about 300 years, a small number of pharmacists have made significant discoveries in the chemistry of drugs, by isolating many drugs that are still in use and made great contribution to the general knowledge of chemistry. During this time of researching the newly discovered world pharmacists, studied much smaller but equally exciting world in their laboratories. Approaching to this problem in a more contemporary way of seeing these people wanted to isolated pure, crystalline chemical substances which can be chemically identified and quantified. Medicinal plant preparations, no matter how carefully were prepared, show significant differences in strength due to the natural variation of the active ingredients in the plants. The discovery of active principles was not an easy task, and it fascinates pharmacists' researchers for a period of nearly 300 years. To search for the ingredients and to separate, characterize and identify them in the simplest plant was as challenging as any other research. These new, pure active substances with known potency were quickly adopted by the physicians.

This crisis of opinions prompted by the efforts towards further understanding of those advocating for chemical drugs, has supplanted the therapeutic concept of Galenism which lasted

for almost 1500 years. Entered a period of about 250 years therapeutic chaos, which lasted until the era of modern pharmacology (2,3).

#### **Today's Ways of Treatment**

**Conventional (Western) medicine (About 200 years old) :** Conventional (Western) medicine was founded on the philosophical opinion of Rene Descartes (1596-1650) who considered the spirit and body separately and on Isaac Newton's (1642-1717) view, presenting the universe as a large mechanical clock which act's in a linear and sequential form. Conventional (Western) medicine considers health as the absence of disease. Also there is an influence of a Darwin's theory (2, 3).

Physicians are trained to treat the defective parts by using drugs, radiation, surgery or to replace body parts. It is better to do something than to build personal power of resistance and ability to overcome the disease.

Conventional (Western) medicine successfully manages acute emergency cases, trauma injuries, bacterial infections and some highly sophisticated surgical interventions. Priority intervention is to resist and overcome the symptoms of the disease, and not the cause. (e.g. The usage of analgetics, anesthetics, anti-inflammatory drugs, antipyretics, etc.). Because the conventional medicine is engrossed with parts and symptoms rather than building the whole operating system, energy, thought and feelings do not well opposes the systemic diseases of long duration (e.g. arthritis, cancer, diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, mental illness and mental etc.).

Today, is actual the gene therapy (drugs and vaccines), a newer class of therapeutics that has the potential to prevent, corrected or modulate the gene or acquired diseases (2, 3).

**Homeopathy (from the Greek: *homoios-similar and pathos-feeling*) :** Homeopathy is a therapeutic system about 200 years old developed by German physician and chemist Samuel Hahnemann (1755-1843). It is based on

treating of the disease with small amounts of the substance which in larger amounts will give the same disease symptoms. Available are more than 2000 compounds (2, 3, 7).

***Unconventional medicine (so-called Alternative Medicine)***: Pharmacy primitive skills probably were studied by all those who have dealt with unconventional medicine. It is based on the whole system of mental, emotional and spiritual components that should be considered equally for the human health. Symptoms of the disease are an expression of the wisdom of the body to heal its imbalances and diseases. The concept of treatment is that the own internal healing process exists in each person, time and patience are the main healers of disease (8, 9, 10, 11, 12).

#### **Conclusion**

There should not be a conflict in the practicing of Western medicine (allopathic or conventional medicine) and unconventional medicine; on the contrary they should complement each other.

In the case of emergency (appendicitis) Western medicine should be practiced and unconventional medicine is good for prevention and health maintenance.

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