Till early eighties, it was widely believed that heart disease was virtually irreversible. This meant that once developed, the disease ran a progressive course until the coronary arteries were completely blocked. But recent studies have proven beyond doubt that not only it is possible to stall the process of artery blockage but also the blockage can be really reversed. This implies that through measures other than angioplasty (ballooning) or bypass surgery, it is quite possible to increase the blood flow to the areas of the heart that receive less than adequate blood supply due to clogging of the coronary arteries.

It is quite disheartening that the highly technological approach of the modern medicine literally bypasses the underlying causes of the heart disease. Ayurveda, on the other hand, aims at striking at the very root of the disease. A real cure for this disease is only possible if we adopt a holistic approach as the one advocated in Ayurveda and address the problem at its very root. Shunning the age-old principles of healing described in the Vedas- the great Indian heritage, as unscientific only just because they are old, is most unfortunate. However, due to the intensive research work of some doctors in the west, people now have come to believe that Heart Disease can be reversed.

There are some very effective natural treatments for regulating and strengthening the heart. Here are some of the recommendations that Ayurveda makes:

**Nourishment**: Use of Amla fruit as an excellent anti-oxidant that can help to prevent arterial damage from free radicals as well as nourishing the heart tissue. Amla can help boost the immune system and nourish the heart. Chywanaprash is a delicious
nutritive herbal jam that contains Amla and is a real boost to the strength of the heart.

**Increase circulation:** A major cause of heart problems is due to hardening, inflammation or congestion of the arteries which can restrict blood flow as well as putting pressure on the heart muscle and tissue. Arjuna is one of Ayurveda’s wonder herbs for strengthening the cardiac muscle, reducing arterial congestion and lowering blood pressure.

Reduce Blood fats and high cholesterol: If you suffer from high cholesterol try Triphala Guggul which combines a range of herbs known to tackle the causative problems of high cholesterol as well as reduce high levels of blood fats.

**Relaxation:** If you suffer from excess tension try using Ashwagandha. It is a wonder herb for helping reduce tension in the body and mind as well as strengthen the heart muscle.

**Dietary suggestions:** Eat a nourishing diet that removes all processed foods, poor quality dairy, poor quality oils, hydrogenated oils. Increase foods that are excellent for the heart. Use garlic, turmeric, ginger and saffron. Include whole grains, pulses and foods high in essential fatty acids such as hemp seed oil. EFAs are renowned for helping to keep arteries clean and the heart strong.

Avoid over-eating and eating frequently. Eat a light breakfast and dinner. Lunch should be the main meal. Milk products, fried foods, cold foods and acidic foods should be taken in small quantities. White flour products and foods that contain chemical preservatives and additives should be avoided. Animal products, especially red meat, are not good as they take a long time to be digested, and create a lot of toxins in the stomach. Seasonal fruits and fresh vegetables (steamed or cooked), Brown bread or Chapatti, salad, sprouts, vegetable soup, buttermilk, cottage cheese (paneer), a little quantity of fresh milk and ghee
clarified butter) prepared from cow’s milk, make up an ideal list of food items to choose from. Anything sweet should be taken in moderation. Honey and jaggery are healthier than purified sugar. Fried things, pulses and their preparations, and groundnut oil are prohibited. Ayurvedic physicians allow butter or ghee, and not groundnut oil. Cow’s ghee, cow’s milk and cows’ butter are useful for the patient. Buffalo ghee and buffalo milk are not recommended. Stimulants like tea, coffee and alcoholic drinks are very harmful for such patients.

In addition to maintaining a healthy eating pattern, specific foods are often recognized as particularly heart-healthy. One of the most popular of these healthful foods is fatty fish with its high omega-3 fatty acid content. A recent study determined that women who consumed more omega-3 fatty acid laden fish (two servings weekly) had a reduced rate of death due to heart disease. These researchers found that this was independent of cardiovascular risk factors or other dietary sources that may influence the development of heart disease. Good sources of omega-3’s besides fish are: flaxseeds, flaxseed oil, canola oil, olive oil, sesame oil, peanut butter and oil, sunflower seeds and oil, avocado, soybean oil, and safflower oil. Additionally, flavonoids found in tea and cocoa have been recognized for their antioxidant benefit. By blocking oxidative damage to LDL cholesterol and reducing platelet clumping, flavonoids may help to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. An inverse association between dietary fiber intake and cardiovascular disease risk has also been proposed. This underscores the recommendation for increased consumption of fiber-rich whole grains, legumes, fruits and vegetables.

**Lifestyle:** Your heart needs a regular supply of oxygen and it also must not be overstressed. Practice light aerobic exercise and regular relaxation. Ayurveda would recommend some nourishing yoga practices, such as the dynamic ‘Sun Salutation’ as well as daily breathing practices (Pranayama). Ayurveda suggests
exercising within your own limitations and does not encourage excessive exercise that leaves you tired. Yoga is exercise that leaves you energised and fitter. A very common cause of heart diseases is mental stress. Regular practice of yoga and Pranayama (breathing exercises) reduces stress levels. Also, meditation has been scientifically proven to prevent as well as cure heart diseases. Ayurveda considers the functions of heart and mind inter-linked. Disturbance in one affects the other. Therefore, patients having heart disease are advised to refrain from anxiety, worry, excessive sexual intercourse and wrathful disposition. All efforts should be made for the patient to have good sleep at night. Even
rest during the day is essential. He should never be permitted to remain awake at night for long.

The patient’s bowels should move regularly. If there is constipation, he is advised to take a glass of water early morning and go for a walk every day. A gentle laxative like Triphala choorna may be used if required.

**Panchakarma:** A gentle head massage with or without oil several times a week is very beneficial. A full-body self-massage with oil once a week is also good.

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Heart disease before the age of 80 is not God’s will but is due to our own fault’s. Heart has major role in our body system. In Ayurveda, heart is concerned not only through its physical value, but mental and spiritual also, thus the care of heart most important.

According is ancient Indian philosophy and Ayurveda, heart takes higher position not only by its anatomical and physiological but also by its mental and spiritual value.

In Ayurveda heart is seat of – Par ojas, Vyan vayu, adhaka Pitta, Avalambak Kaph and Mana.

According is charak, heart has been mentioned as the seat of Consciousness. The human body consists of six component (four limb, trunk & head & neck), the Indriyas (Five Sensory organ
along with their object), the wisdom, the mind and the soul – all of these dependent upon normal functioning of the heart

The ancient Indian Physician laid down basic principles for the maintenance of normal positive health and pronounced certain preventive measures against the cardiac ailments, they have laid stress on:

* Achaar – normal conduct
* Ahaar – diet
* Vyayaam – physical exercise
* Yoga – yoga.

**Causes of heart disease in Ayurveda** -
* Physical exertion
* Drastic & excessive purgation & enema.
* Anxiety.
* Fear
* Terror
* Faulty management of disorder.
* Suppression of vomiting & ama.
* Injury

**Symptoms of Heart Disease**:
* Abnormal Complexion.
* Fainting
* Fever due to Inflammatory heart disease.
* Cough
* Hiccough due to mitral Regurgitation or stenosis.
* Breathlessness.
* Distaste of mouth due to coronary insufficiency.
* Tendency of Emesis.
* Anorexia.
* Thirst
* Chest Pain
* Giddiness
Prevention of heart disease

Diet:
Protein – Normal intake of 50 – 60 gms.
Fat – Cholesterol is to be kept in low limit. Avoid animal fat, pork, beef, meat, fats. Dairy products like cream butter, ghee.
Carbohydrate – Carbohydrate are responsible for endogenous synthesis of cholesterol and triglycerides hence excessive is to be avoided.
Calories – Obesity burdens the heart. Reduction of calories help to lose weight.
Vitamin – Nicotinic acid reduces lipids in blood.
Adequate potassium & calcium in blood required to prevent arrhythmias
Miscellaneous : Smoking & alcohol are restricted.
Use less amount of salt (daily 2-3 gm)
Take food before three hour when going to sleep.
Take large amount of fibrous food like (Salads) High Roughage diet.
Take adequate amount of Garlic & Ginger because Garlic lowers the Cholesterol level & Ginger reduces the blood clot.
Morning walk upto 2-3 km.
“Sawashan” is very useful in heart disease.
Avoid the hostile life style.

Treatment of heart disease
The primary approach to health care in Ayurveda was the prevention one & then came the role of drugs. A combination of some herbal medicine is very useful in heart disease.

* Arjun (terminalia arjuna).
* Bramhi (bacopa monnieri)
* Jatamansi (nordostachys jatamansi)
* Guduchi (tinospora cardifolia)
* Punarnava (boerhavia diffusa)
* Yestimadhu (glycyrrhiza glabra)
* Kutki (picrorhiza kurroa)

Heart problem generally begins after the age of 45 years. However presently we are living in polluted atmosphere and following irregular food habits, which are causing this disease even among young people. Initially chest pain begins, which remains till some time. If the pain persists for more than half an hour then it should be taken as an indication for Coronary
Thrombosis caused due to the deposition of blood clots in the heart. Before beginning of the pain the person experiences restlessness and heaviness in chest. Sometimes this pain begins without any kind of warning. This pain begins in heart, left side of heart and left hand and sometimes on the right side. Many times the pain spreads to neck, lower jaw, teeth and waist as well. There are many cases when the patient does not experience any pain at all and gasps for breathe. The patient feels stiffness in the chest. He feels pain while working, walking, climbing up the stairs; the stomach swells after eating food, or due to disorder in digestive system. The heartache begins due to mental anxiety or anger. The patients feel as if somebody had tied his heart with a rope. The stomach feels to be swollen, and the patient thinks it to be simple digestion related problems and tries to cure it. The risk of heart problem increases in winter season.

This disease can also take place when physical or mental work is done immediately after meals. Therefore one should take rest after meals. It is also suggested to avoid heavy, oily food, meat, coffee, tea, tobacco, alcohol, cigarette etc as all these things increase the risk of heart disease. Here some medicines are being suggested which strengthen the heart, make it healthy and disease free. You can use some medicines depending on the body constitution and tolerance.

**Home Remedies:**

1. Grind equal quantities of Arjuna chaal and Akarkara churna and take half spoon in case of discomfort, palpitation, pain, vibration and weakness.
2. Boil 20 to 25 gm each of Kulanjan, dry ginger powder and Akarkara in 400 ml water till it reduces to 100 ml and drink it.
3. Grind 10 gm fresh pomegranate leaves in 100 gm water, sieve and drink it twice daily in case of palpitation.
4. Take 20 to 25 ml of pomegranate juice daily in case of heart
disease. Take dry pomegranate leaves churna with fresh water to control palpitation, blood impurities, leprosy, and discharge of vital humours, chronic wounds, and fever due to pitta, vata, and kapha.

1 In case of heartache, take three parts of dry raisin juice, one part honey and half part clove and take it for some days for relief.
1 If heart beat increases to 150 or more, take a glass of tomato juice with spoonful Arjuna chaal regularly for relief.
1 Take one-cup skimmed milk with spoonful Arjuna chaal powder twice daily to cure all heart diseases. This strengthens the heart and normalizes heartbeat.
1 Roast 20 gm wheat flour in ghee made with cow milk and add three gram Arjuna chaal and 40 gm sugar candy. Pour 100 gm boiling water and make halva eat it in case of heartache, restlessness, palpitation and other problems.
1 Cook wheat and Arjuna’s internal skin in goat and ghee made with cow milk, add sugar candy and honey and lick it for relief.
1 Four to six drops of Guldaudi extract or Gulkand normalizes heartbeat caused due to cold, it strengthens the heart and brings cheerfulness.
1 Take one spoon honey everyday to strengthen heart. One spoon pure honey gives 200 calories.
1 Avoid non-vegetarian food, consumption of alcohol, smoking, tobacco, coffee and other such things. It is also advisable to reduce the intake of salt, hot spicy food, fried and heavy food, fast food and junk food like chocolates, burgers, pizzas, pastries, ice creams etc, besides fattening things like ghee, butter, coconut oil, processed food, tinned food, milk products like sweets, cream, Rabadi etc should also be avoided.

Management by Yogasana and Pranayama:

Heart patients should practice pranayam and yoga asana for benefits. Nature therapy should be followed along with the
practice of yoga. Kapalbhati, Anulom-vilom, Brahmari pranayam are very beneficial for heart patients. These are helpful in maintaining the overall health apart from heart.

**Yogasana:**

**Shashakasan:** Regular practice of this asana works like natural massage for the heart. Hence it is very beneficial for the heart patients. Along with this, it strengthens the intestines, liver, pancreas and kidneys. It relieves mental diseases, stress, anger, irritability etc, it strengthens the uterus in women and reduces fat from stomach, waist and hips.

**Mandookasana** is very beneficial for the heart patients. It activates the pancreas and cures stomach disorders.

**Shavasana** is the best asana in case of mental stress, high blood pressure, heart diseases and insomnia. It relieves nervous weakness, tiredness and negative thinking. It gives complete rest to the body, mind, brain and soul.

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