

Dr. Dhanraj Gahukar – A Living Legend in the Field of Ayurveda

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ABSTRACT

Dr. Dhanaraj Gahukar was a renowned practitioner of Ayurveda. He works toward building a complete ecosystem of Ayurveda globally, which includes preventive and curative practices through advanced research. Ayurveda treatments supported by modern diagnostics tools, diet, and exercise management are the main mission of his life. He has many awards and honors like Ayurveda Panchakarma Bhishak Puraskar, Mother India Award for Health Excellence, and Rashtriya Vidya Saraswati Puraskar. He is working for the rehabilitation of patients with neurological and orthopedic disorders. He has special interest in paralysis patient rehabilitation, making them relearn skills that are suddenly lost. He has developed a new version of the Panchakarma instrument, and he treated many patients with these instruments. He passed on his experience by teaching more than 2500 students and also provided clinical support to set up their own Ayurvedic practices in India, Germany, the USA, UAE, the UK, and Australia. He has designed and executed various unique short-term courses for Ayurveda practitioners.

KEYWORDS: *Dhanaraj Gahukar, life profile, Panchakarma Ayurveda physician, rehabilitation*

KEY MESSAGE: Dr. Gahukar believes that his strong foundation in Ayurveda field and hands-on fieldwork experiences are qualifications that position him to make outstanding contributions to social welfare. I believe that the knowledge I gain in this field will play a pivotal role in my mission to aware people about Ayurveda maintaining a healthy life.

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INTRODUCTION

Dr. Dhanaraj Gahukar was a multifaceted genius—the Ayurveda Graduate with double Masters—M.D. Panchkarma and M.D. Ras-shastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana. He is a renowned practitioner of Ayurveda who embodies both preventive and curative practices through a comprehensive approach of cutting-edge research-backed Ayurvedic treatments supported by contemporary diagnostics, diet, and exercise management—with a personality that defies easy description. He followed a singular, boundless course in life. Along the way, he made significant contributions

to a variety of subjects, most notably Ayurveda, where he persistently worked to treat patients with paralysis, neurological conditions, and orthopedic illnesses. He also created a novel Panchakarma instrument. He pushed farmers to grow herbal drugs and made it easier for businesses to buy their goods.

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MATERIALS AND METHODS

Dr. Gahukar's life journey information was collected by Dr. Vanmala Wakode through direct interaction with Dr. Gahukar himself at his hospital with the help of formal sources. He was inspired by his mother-in-law.

Early life and education

Dr. Dhanaraj Gahukar was born on October 1, 1959, in Mohpa village of Nagpur district in Maharashtra [Figure 1]. He is second among three children of a poor farmer family. From childhood, he wished to be a doctor. From the seventh standard itself, he studied targeting for the medical stream. But the financial status of the family was not good, his father, Shri Vishweshwarrao Gahukar, and mother, Shrimati Mainabai Gahukar, worked on other farms and engaged physically strenuous work like digging wells and lifting stones, which gifted them many physical ailments. After seventh grade, he received a scholarship and also met his friend Dr. Deepak Anjankar, who, along with his family, has been very supportive and helpful in his studies.

He was good at studying science, which was his favorite subject. He got selected for Shivaji Science College, which is a very reputed college for science. After coming back from college practical, he would catch cockroaches, earthworms, and frogs and dissect them to study the internal organs. Because of this, he was always interested in becoming a surgeon. In twelfth

grade, he suffered from an abscess in his leg and found it difficult to attend college for two months. This had an impact on his studies, and he missed the allopathic seat by three marks. This opened doors for Ayurveda for him, and he took admission at the Government Ayurveda College in Nagpur. During his first year, he took an immense interest in anatomical dissections. He had participated as a representor of his college in a dissection competition with an allopathic hospital, which was held in Buty Hall in Nagpur, and his college got first rank in it. In his second year, he was able to do the herbarium project in the Dravyaguna department under the inspiration and support of the late Dr. Kundale.

The tradition then was to bring plant parts and stick them directly to pages; this would increase the size of the book and after some time form fungus on it. As he was interested and inspired by that work, he developed a new technique for herbarium. He took efforts in developing thin sections of the herb part and ironing them to make the tracing easy and comfortable. Many seniors and juniors praised it and liked it. In his third year, he again suffered from an axillary abscess between his examinations. He attended his practical and oral examination with a high fever and still got distinctions in many subjects and got a nice result. In his final year and during his internship, he had the opportunity to learn many surgeries. Later on, he did a demonstration ship and a residency in the surgery department and performed many surgeries in the hospital.

One patient came with skin burns due to the Bhallatak reaction during his duty, and he did skin grafting surgery, which was successful. He got a scolding from his HOD, Dr. Lavekar, because he had not taken permission from him. In this way, he completed his BAMS degree under difficult situations in 1983. He obtained a rare double postgraduate degree (MD)—one in Rasashastra and another in Panchakarma. In 1987, he was selected for post-graduation in Rasashastra at the Government Ayurveda College in Nagpur. He took the topic of preparation of Anu Taila and studied its efficacy in Suryavarta, Ardhabhedaka, and Anantavata under the guidance of HOD Dr. Rameshwar Pandey sir. Since then and until now, for a period of 35 years, he has been preparing his own medicines for practice with successful results. Later on 1997, the first MD seat for Panchakarma started at Shri Ayurveda College Nagpur, and he opted for the seat on the basis of his marks. Under the guidance of Dr. L.C. Jaiswal sir, he worked on the thesis, "A Critical Study of Vaman Karma and its Influence on Blood Chemistry." For the record, he is the first postgraduate in the Panchakarma subject in India.



Figure 1: Legend in the Field of Ayurveda-Dr.Dhanaraj Gahukar

Professional life

Dr. Gahukar was the founder of the Samadhan Ayurveda and Panchakarma hospital and Research Centre, which is a private Ayurvedic Panchakarma hospital with all amenities in Central India. A 100-bed integrative holistic hospital with state-of-the-art facilities is coming up in Nagpur.

He established Sanjivani Aushadhalaya, which manufactures Panchakarma kit and other low-cost high-effective medicine to improve the quality of medication. This kit is a unique innovative concept in Ayurveda health care which is the first FDA-approved kit to have patent (published), and it was appreciated by Honorable former Union Ayush Minister Shri Shripad Yesso Naik and many others. He did pioneer work in designing and developing instrument for Panchakarma, leading to the wide acceptance of therapy.

They have successfully treated paralysis, sciatica, spondylosis, myelopathies, arthritis, prolapse intervertebral disc, lifestyle disorders, skin diseases, and chronic diseases like multiple sclerosis, ulcerative colitis, etc. The hospital has all the facilities, like a Panchakarma department, a physical therapy section, a diet, and an Ayurvedic kitchen, for admission for 7/15/21/28 days. Ayurved Dham hospital (now MedAyu hospital) was established in 2016.

Dr. Gahukar is also an academic clinician with research interests. In the meantime, in his practice, he developed an interest in teaching the students, so he started Panchakarma reorientation courses for students and practitioners. The theory and practice of Panchakarma and how to practice Ayurveda were taught in 10-day, 1-month, and 6-month courses. Approximately 10,000 students from all over India and foreign countries have taken the course till now. When teaching Panchakarma, he developed a demonstration video for explaining the procedures.

The Panchakarma Reorientation Course was running successfully with batches of 40–50 students. In 1999–2000, one German orthopedic surgeon came to pursue a Diploma in Ayurveda from Banaras Hindu University in India. She knew about the course of Panchakarma from someone. Then, she attended the 10-day course and was satisfied. Then, she came for a 3-month residential course. She got an associate degree, and she invited them to Germany for 1 month, during which they gave many lectures for students, practitioners, and the general public. This was the first time Dr. Gahukar was introduced to Germany. He had presented his practical video cassette and lectures, which spread like wildfire among the Ayurveda physicians in Germany, and many practitioners became associates with him thereafter.

Then, he began visiting Germany on a regular basis, and they established four associate centers from which patients began coming to their hospital in Nagpur for treatment for the duration of 28 days, and this has continued to date. Foreign student courses also start every year. Samshodhanam Shastrokta and Prayogika Panchakarma book is recently in print.

Dr. Dhanaraj Gahukar has served as a Guru under the Guru Shishya Parampara, a certificate course under the Ayush Ministry since 2010. While he was practicing, he felt the need to develop instruments as per standard operating procedures to improve the quality and comfort of patient care and treatment. Because he had worked in the field of surgery, he was used to pre-procedure planning and sterilization. Many of these elements were missing in Panchakarma procedures. So, he planned with his wife Dr. Jyoti Gahukar to develop standard instruments. It would raise the standard of Vaman Karma,^[1] Virechan Karma, Basti,^[2] and all Poorva Karma. In their journey, they got a well-deserved appreciation and an opportunity as their designed Vaman Yantra was selected and placed in the Grassi Museum in Berlin, Germany, as a traditional instrument. Now, Gahukar's Ayurved Panchakarma Instrumental Engineering was founded to supply equipment for Panchakarma treatment.^[3] The instruments developed were highly appreciated and were installed in many Ayurveda colleges and hospitals in India and abroad.

They started a public awareness program in places like temples, gardens, and clubs, along with “Ayurveda Satsang” program for the general public. During the sessions, he shares his views on lifestyle modification, that is, Ahar, Vihar, Dinacharya, and Rutucharya based on Ayurveda principles. He also discusses preventive measures to avoid lifestyle disorders, explains health-related myths, and answers doubts. Dr. Gahukar has tried to achieve the program of Har Ghar Ayurveda. He also publishes a free quarterly magazine named “Ayurvedamrut” for the general population.

List of awards and honors

Sr no	Years	Awards	Honors
1	1994	Shri Bhawani Shankar Ayurved Award	“Best in Ayurveda,” by Marathwada University for his extraordinary service and dedication to profession
2	1995	Vd. Balshastr Lawgankar Panchakarma Puraskar	By Vaidhya Khadiwale Vaidyak Sansthan; Pune. For excellence in Panchakarma
3	1997	Ayurved Panchakarma Bhishak Puraskar	Best in Panchakarma – Nasik for their lifetime achievements

Sr no	Years	Awards	Honors
4	1998	Dhanwantari Sanman	By Association of Indian Medicines, Nagpur, for he contributed to Ayurvedic research and treatment
5	1999	Sanman Patra Gajanan Maharaj Sansthan, Reshimbag, Nagpur	For protecting the health and culture of the people from its origin till date
6	2001	Gandhi Smruti Ayurved Puraskar	Kaundanyapur
7	2001	Abhinandan Patra	By Shri Baidyanath Ayurved Bhawan Ltd. Nagpur for Excellence in Ayurveda
8	2001	World's Who's Who – Eminent Personalities of India	By International Biographical Research Foundation, India, for selfless efforts in serving patients
9	2003	Sanman – Patra By Sandu Brothers Mumbai	For Ayurveda for exemplary contribution
10	2006	Mother India Award	For health experience by Economic and Human Resource Development Association, DELHI for their work-related achievements in the health care

Sr no	Years	Awards	Honors
11	2006	Rashtriya Vidya Saraswati Puraskar	By the International Institute of Education and Management, DELHI for excellent teacher to have made significant contribution to the field of educations
12	2006	Excellence Award	For exemplary service in HEALTH CARE by The Himalaya Drug Company, Mumbai, for their contribution to the healthcare industry. Innovation, impact, and sustainability and scalability
13	2006	Indira Gandhi Excellence Award	By Indian Solidarity Council DELHI for their contribution to the healthcare industry by innovating for increased efficiency and improved performance of healthcare delivery at large scale

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In particular, Dr. Dhanaraj Gahukar is widely acclaimed for his use of modernized, standard instrumentation in his work on Panchakarma [Figure 2]. Using technology, he enhanced the benefits of conventional Panchakarma treatment.^[4] He won numerous accolades and honors. His well-known reorientation campaign disseminated Ayurvedic knowledge throughout India. He is an excellent educator. He has served as a Guru under the Guru Shishya Parampara, a certificate course under the Ayush Ministry since 2010. He is the first Panchakarma



Figure 2: Modernized standard Instrument for Panchakarma

Scholar in the state of Maharashtra. They have the effect of posing fresh obstacles. His financial circumstances improved without any assistance from his family. He participated in social interactions. He set up a number of public awareness campaigns for a wider audience.

Financial support and sponsorship

Nil.

Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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हिंदी सारांश

डॉ. धनराज गहूकर - आयुर्वेद के क्षेत्र में एक जीवित, प्रसिद्ध व्यक्तित्व

डॉ. धनराज गहूकर आयुर्वेद के एक प्रसिद्ध चिकित्सक थे। वे विश्व स्तर पर आयुर्वेद के एक पूर्ण पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र के निर्माण के लिए काम करते हैं, जिसमें उन्नत अनुसंधान के माध्यम से निवारक और उपचारात्मक प्रथाएं शामिल हैं। आधुनिक नैदानिक उपकरणों, आहार और व्यायाम प्रबंधन द्वारा समर्थित आयुर्वेदिक उपचार उनके जीवन का मुख्य मिशन है। उनके पास आयुर्वेद पंचकर्म भिषक पुरस्कार, स्वास्थ्य उत्कृष्टता के लिए मदर इंडिया पुरस्कार और राष्ट्रीय विद्या सरस्वती पुरस्कार जैसे कई पुरस्कार और सम्मान हैं। वे तंत्रिका संबंधी और हड्डी रोग संबंधी विकारों वाले रोगियों के पुनर्वास के लिए काम कर रहे हैं। उनकी पक्षाघात रोगी पुनर्वास में विशेष रुचि है, जिससे वे अचानक खोए हुए कौशल को फिर से सीख पाते हैं। उन्होंने पंचकर्म उपकरण का एक नया संस्करण विकसित किया है, और उन्होंने इन उपकरणों से कई रोगियों का इलाज किया है। उन्होंने 2500 से अधिक छात्रों को पढ़ाकर अपने अनुभव को आगे बढ़ाया और भारत, जर्मनी, संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका, संयुक्त अरब अमीरात, यूनाइटेड किंगडम और ऑस्ट्रेलिया में अपनी आयुर्वेदिक प्रथाओं को स्थापित करने के लिए नैदानिक सहायता भी प्रदान की। उन्होंने आयुर्वेद चिकित्सकों के लिए विभिन्न अद्वितीय अल्पकालिक पाठ्यक्रमों को डिजाइन और कार्यान्वित किया है।