



**Rx Research**

Medical Tourism in India

Page 2



**Rx Tools**

Alternative Therapies

Page 4



**Rx Review**

The Complete Book of Ayurvedic Home Remedies

Page 6



**Rx Extra**

Reach Out

Page 6

About Imprimis Life

Page 6

# RxRamble

Third Quarter 2006

Foreword

## The Alternative August!



'India to heal the world', is the new mantra being endorsed by key players in healthcare and pharmaceutical field. Some may feel that this is too grandiose a statement to make; but looking at the current market dynamics, the growth of the industry as well as sentiments of the industry analysts and associations, it might come true in the next one decade.

This particular industry movement was highlighted in our first issue of Rx Ramble ([www.imprimispr.com](http://www.imprimispr.com)) and we are taking it a step forward in the current issue. India's alternative system of medicines, places a notch higher than our neighbors, who are also intent on laying out the red carpet for medical tourists from the west. The need is to provide accurate information and help people make informed choices on a variety of options available. One must also keep in mind that people's curiosity with alternative and complimentary healing is growing day by day.

While we have the intrinsic strength necessary to succeed, it needs to be highlighted to the discerning global audience, using a mix of traditional as well as modern (New Media) communication.

Indian players need to recognize the role communication can play in shaping the opinion and perceptions of people. The emergence of top class tertiary hospitals and the opening of the insurance sector will dramatically affect the way this Industry has been conventionally operating. Increased emphasis on all health related sector - healthcare delivery, health insurance, third party administrators, healthcare software, medical equipment and health education will create many opportunities.

Today, alternative therapies are even included in the curriculum at some medical schools in the UK and US. Consumers are increasingly supplementing their visits to medical doctors with alternative treatments and therapies, often with support from insurance policies.

Indian players need to integrate their business processes, operations and specific elements, thereby highlighting the utilization of communication in order for people to realize the full potential of alternative therapies.

Welcome to a whole new healthcare world!

  
Aman Gupta  
CEO

# Medical Tourism in India



The health care sector in India has witnessed revolutionary changes in a very short time. Where once India used to import medicines, it is now one of the largest pharmaceutical industries in the world. It is self sufficient in drug production and exports drugs to more than 180 countries. Along with this, a growth in infrastructure in the private and voluntary sector has allowed the industry to thrive, with the availability of the most advanced, state-of-the-art technology. An estimated 75-80 per cent of health-care services and investment in India are now provided by this sector.

In India, this policy is being aggressively pursued. India's National Health policy 2002, says: "To capitalise on the comparative cost advantage enjoyed by domestic health facilities in the secondary and tertiary sector, the policy will encourage the supply of services to patients of foreign origin on payment. The rendering of such services on payment in foreign exchange will be treated as 'deemed exports' and will be made eligible for all fiscal incentives extended

*“India has the potential to attract one million tourists per annum, and the potential to contribute \$5 billion to the economy.”*

to export earnings". The formulation draws from recommendations that the corporate sector has been making in India and specifically from the "Policy Framework for Reforms in Health Care", drafted by the prime minister's Advisory Council on Trade and Industry, headed by Mukesh Ambani and Kumaramangalam Birla. Privatization of this

*“Foreigners should have confidence in India's medical system because many Britons and Americans are accustomed to being treated by expatriate Indian doctors...”*

Hari Prasad: Vice-president, Apollo Hospitals, Hyderabad.

sector has allowed the seamless blend of world-class facilities and treatments at Indian prices. Broadly, medical tourism can be defined as provision of 'cost effective' private medical care in collaboration with the tourism industry for patients needing surgical and other forms of specialized treatment. This process is being facilitated by the corporate sector involved in medical care as well as the tourism industry, both private and public.

The Apollo group alone has treated close to 95,000 international patients. Apollo has been a forerunner in medical tourism in India and attracts patients from Southeast Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. The group has tied up with hospitals in Mauritius, Tanzania, Bangladesh and Yemen besides running a hospital in Sri Lanka, and managing a hospital in Dubai. Another corporate group, Escorts, claims it has doubled its number of overseas

patients, from 675 in 2000 to nearly 1,200 this year. Recently, the Ruby Hospital in Kolkata signed a contract with the British insurance company, BUPA. The management hopes to attract British patients from the National Health Services soon.

According to CII (Confederation of Indian Industries), India has the potential to attract one million tourists per annum, and the potential to contribute \$5 billion to the economy. CII is of the opinion that India must leverage its competitive edge, especially its cost advantage.

As the concept of medical tourism gains momentum in India, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, following a meeting with the Ministry of Tourism, has stated that a National Accreditation Health Board has to be set up for maintaining international standards in our medical facilities. The board will decide price banding, hospital accreditation, quality control, categorization and selection of hospitals etc., which would facilitate foreign patients seeking treatment in India. The CII along with the Indian Healthcare Federation (IHCF) has already tied up with tour operators to promote attractive packages for Medical tourism. Last year, according to rough estimates, India was able to attract approximately 1.5 lakh patients to the country, which has the potential to increase.

The key "selling points" of the medical tourism industry are its "cost effectiveness" combined with the attraction of tourism and sightseeing. It simply involves capitalizing on the "exotica" of the country, combined with the packaging of health care incorporating traditional therapies and treatment methods. In India the strong tradition of traditional systems of health care in Kerala, for example, is utilised. Kerala

*“...we want to tell the world that our specialists have performed over 500,000 major surgeries and over a million other surgical procedures including cardio-thoracic, neurological, cancer, etc with success rates on par with international standards. Our success rate in the 43,000 cardiac surgeries we have done is 98.5 per cent. Our success in the 110 bone marrow transplants is 80 per cent. Our success rate in the 6,000 renal transplants is 95 per cent...”*

Vishal Bali, vice-president of Wockhardt Hospitals, points out as proof of quality that the US private health insurers Blue Cross and Blue Shield insure patients treated at his group's hospitals.

Ayurveda centres have been established at multiple locations in various metro cities, thus highlighting the advantages of Ayurveda in health management. The health tourism focus has seen Kerala participate in various trade shows and expos wherein the advantages of this traditional form of medicine are showcased. On the other hand, India has an immense pool of alternative medicines and treatments that they can offer to patients, but for the moment, no concerted effort has been made to consolidate these treatments into a package offer. The treatments that are on offer are Ayurveda, homeopathy, yoga, reiki, unani, siddha, kerali and allopathy.

Price advantage is, of course, the biggest attraction. The slogan, thus is, “First World treatment’ at Third World prices”.

The cost differential across the board is huge: only a tenth and sometimes even a sixteenth of the cost in the West. Open-heart surgery could cost up to \$70,000 in Britain and up to \$150,000 in the US; in India's best hospitals it could cost between \$3,000 and \$10,000. Knee surgery (on both knees) costs 350,000 rupees (\$7,700) in India; in Britain this costs £10,000 (\$16,950), more than twice as much. Dental, eye and cosmetic surgeries in Western countries cost three to four times as much as in India.

Reasons why India can become the world hub for health care:-

- Cost benefits and prompt service that foreign patients enjoy.
- There is a tremendous stock of intellectual capital in Indian healthcare and state-of-the-art treatment/world class surgeries are available in India.

Although India is facing stiff competition from various other countries, there are some things that make India stand apart, and it is exactly these that we must focus on. Although we have centuries of technical know how in the fields of alternative medicines, nothing has been done to institutionalize them. It would be wise to project India as a **“Health and beyond...”** destination to the foreign countries. India should be promoted as a destination for quality

*“...private facilities offer advanced technology and procedures at par with hospitals in developed nations. One Indian hospital director maintains, “In a corporate hospital, once the door is closed you could be in a hospital in America.””*

Yale Global

## Quick Facts

- In the Asian region, India faces four competitors, namely, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand.
- In addition to increasing funds allocated to the health sector in the 2004 state budget, Indonesia's 40 million poor people could enjoy free basic health services, if a bill drafted by the government gets the approval from members of the House of Representatives (DPR). The bill, which is to be submitted to the House in spring 2004, proposes that the government allocate up to Rp 3 trillion (USD 360 million) annually to pay basic health insurance premiums for the country's poor.

The Ministry of Health formulated this national health - insurance scheme in 2001. Under the scheme - called the National Health Insurance (JKN) - each Indonesian citizen would obtain a health insurance card guaranteeing the individual free basic medical care across the country.

- Indonesia doesn't have any specific unique selling proposition as such. Its situation is more like India with cheap healthcare. However, unlike India it doesn't have excellent intellectual capital nor does it have the range of alternative medicines found in India.

healthcare with the vast economic benefits and during the convalescence the patients can undergo any of the many alternative treatments.

A concerted effort is to be made to coalesce the highly fragmented alternative treatment industry with the modern medicine industry so they can be packaged together. Also needed are quality guidelines, which will help to legitimize the cause abroad.

# Alternative Therapies



Before the advent of modern-day allopathic medicines and therapies, there were those based on nature and tradition. These therapies incorporated the use of energy, life forces and vibes that were naturally given off by the human body.

Life has increasingly become stressful and the daily demands put forth tend to take their toll on the human body. Taking allopathic treatment is now fraught with much danger- resistance to antibiotics, adverse reactions to medication, strong dosages rendering you exhausted. Most alternative therapies on the other hand have minimal or no side effects, they are easy to practice, inexpensive and completely natural.

However, many of these therapies are also faith based, often having a “placebo effect”, which could also mean that a patient may require a traditional course of allopathy, but insists on practicing alternative therapy, thereby endangering his/her life.

Alternative therapies and medication are based on a few core beliefs. First and foremost it is found on a deep belief, of the healing power of nature. Alternative therapists believe that within us is a natural ability to heal, unlike conventional

medicines, which claim that healing is merely physiological and physical intervention.

Secondly, the treatment is patient centered, rather than being physician centered, this means that everything, right from what the patient thinks, to how he feels is taken into account. One primary goal of alternative medicine is to stimulate the body’s natural healing response and to let nature take its course. Therefore, it is slower than allopathic healing. Many alternative treatments use natural substances such as herbs, botanicals,

“*Life has increasingly become stressful and the daily demands put forth tend to take their toll on the human body. Taking allopathic treatment is now fraught with much danger- resistance to antibiotics, adverse reactions to medication, strong dosages rendering you exhausted.*”

homeopathy, nutritional supplements, and whole foods; there is a general belief among naturopathic doctors that the use of whole or natural products to treat illnesses, has proven to be more effective than their chemical and synthetic counterparts. Lastly, alternative medical systems work on the premise that health is a dynamic process, unlike conventional medicine, which believes

that health is based on tangible facts, such as fever, symptoms, etc., hardly are lifestyle factors and beliefs of the patient taken into account.

There are various alternative therapies in practice today. Among these are the more common Homeopathy, Acupuncture, Reiki and Pranic Healing etc. However, there are also those, which are outright bizarre and unusual, such as Uropathy, which advocates the drinking of one’s own urine, Flower Therapy, etc.



Reiki is based on the theory that energy, or the Universal Life Force, as it is better known, is the very basis of existence and that the human body, its thoughts and emotions, can all be expressed in terms of this energy.

Reiki claims that the body tends to store all negative thoughts and emotions, till they eventually form a block of some sort. These in turn, manifest as headaches, stomachaches and various other illnesses, including tumors. According to Reiki, all the obstructions in the energy path of the human body can be removed by the simple laying on of hands in certain positions over the entire body, which brings the body in touch with the higher vibratory frequency of the Universal Life Force Energy, thereby penetrating the body and overcoming these obstructions.

Homeopathy is based on the principle of “*Similia Similibus Curentur*,” which simply means “let likes be cured by likes.” Homeopathy acts by stimulating the body’s own healing mechanism. It activates the vital energy in our body. This energy is called ‘Chi’ in Chinese medicine, and ‘Prana’ in Sanskrit. According to Homeopathy the symptoms of a diseased person can be cured by administration of a drug that has been proved to produce a similar set of symptoms in a healthy human being. While allopathy treats only a targeted area at a time, homeopathy believes in treating the “whole.” Homeopathy also believes in a comprehensive background of the patient, including his lifestyle, beliefs, etc, rather than just focusing on his symptoms.

“*Pranic healing helps to enhance all aspects of a person’s life. It has simple and easy to learn techniques, which help to reduce stress and increase one’s energy levels. Thus, one can focus better, work more productively, be more tolerant and understanding and have stronger physical bodies.*”

Ms. Hina Goyal, Managing Trustee of Pranic Healing Foundation Delhi.

Aromatherapy is the use of essential oils for emotional and physical health. The essential oils taken from plants and used in Aromatherapy have been described as their “life force” - they are essential to the plants’ biological process and provides them with their scent. However, the practice of aromatherapy goes beyond smell. It involves “pure” essential oils that are believed to have a chemical effect on the body. People who practice aromatherapy believe that these

essential oils stimulate the immune system and have anti-viral, anti-infectious, and antiseptic properties.

Feng Shui is the Chinese art of design and placement of objects. Chinese believe that everything in the universe including living beings is made of energy called “chi”. A basic understanding of this energy is essential to bring in harmony and prosperity in our lives.

“*It takes time for energy to assimilate in cells so cells can use it as fuel to make the necessary repairs.*”

Stephen Co, a Master Pranic Healer based in USA

Ayurveda is the science of dealing not only with the treatment of diseases but it is also a complete way of life. It is the only known system of medicine, which incorporates suggestions and remedies for both healthy and diseased people. According to Ayurveda, every individual is composed of five elements, namely, Prithvi (Earth), Apa (Water), Tejas (Fire), Vayu (Air) and Akash (Space). While the structural aspect of the body is made up of these five forms, the functional aspect is composed of the ‘Tridosha,’ i.e. The Vatta Dosha, Pitta Dosha and Kapha Dosha.

Vatta governs the principle of movement and therefore can be seen as the force, which directs nerve impulses, circulation, respiration, and elimination. The Pitta Dosha governs the process of transformation or metabolism. Finally, the water and earth combine to form the Kapha Dosha. Ayurveda emphasizes on promoting and maintaining health rather than just treating a disease. The system states that every individual is unique rather than being just another sufferer of a particular disease.

Acupuncture is an ancient Chinese practice provides relief from illness by puncturing needles at specific points on the body. This form of alternative medicine is based on the concept of Chi, a vital energy force. According to traditional Chinese concept the structure of the universe is explained on the basis of Yin and Yang. They represent two aspects of energy, imbalance of which results in a disease condition. ‘Yin’ stands for all that is negative like peace endurance, weakness etc. And ‘Yang’ stands for all positive influences like strength, warmth, sun, heaven, male. Traditional Chinese medicine states that the body is made up of five hollow organs. These are represented on the body surface according to their energy flow on ‘Meridians’. Specific points or acupoints were charted out on these meridians. The stimulation of these points by needles leads to a balance of energy forces and this is responsible for cure of diseases caused by imbalance of body energy.

Pranic healing is an energy healing technique based on the overall structure of the human body. According to the precepts of pranic healing, our body is actually composed of two parts: the visible physical body, and the invisible energy body called the bioplasmic body or aura. The visible physical body is that part of the human body that we see, touch, and are most acquainted with. Our aura is that invisible luminous energy body, which interpenetrates the visible physical body and extends beyond it. Traditionally, clairvoyants and energy healing practitioners call this energy body the etheric body or etheric double.

There are numerous other forms of Alternative therapy, as well, but the ones mentioned above, are by far the most important. While these methods are usually safe and effective, like all other treatments, it is necessary to practice with caution and regularity. It is also advisable to seek the advice of a professional, before beginning any of these practices.

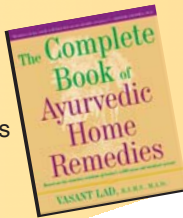
# The Complete Book of Ayurvedic Home Remedies

By Vasant Lad

Page: 336 Pages

Cost: \$10.85

Publisher: Three Rivers Press; Reprint edition (April 6, 1999)



psychological characteristics of each of the three doshas, or mind-body types—vata, pitta, and kapha. Once you have determined which type or combination of types you are, Dr. Lad helps you to begin your journey to the ultimate “state of balance” and well-being.

relief from a variety of conditions, such as cold and flu symptoms, headaches, toothaches, sore throats, high cholesterol, vision problems, anxiety, and depression. Dr. Lad also shows you how to use diet and specific Ayurvedic techniques to prevent future illness and to promote body consciousness and healthy living.

Based on the ancient healing tradition from India that dates back thousands of years, *The Complete Book of Ayurvedic Home Remedies* offers natural alternatives to conventional medicines and treatments with practical advice and easy-to-follow instructions. A leading authority in this field, Dr. Vasant Lad first explains the principles behind the science of Ayurveda, exploring the physical and

The book is an invaluable guide to treating common ailments and chronic problems with strategies tailored to your personal needs based on your Dosha. Dr. Lad explains why certain imbalances often result in illness and shows you how to restore your body to natural order. You'll learn which traditional Ayurvedic remedies—herbal teas and formulas, essential oils, meditation, yoga—offer

The *Complete Book of Ayurvedic Home Remedies* enables us all to experience the benefits of Ayurveda's healing properties that have been refined over thousands of years. Complete with an extensive glossary and resource list, this is the definitive guide to natural, safe, and effective remedies, everyday keys to a lifetime of vitality and well being.

## Reach Out

### Acumen Fund



Acumen Fund is a global social venture fund serving the four billion people living on less than \$4 a day.

The Fund aims to create a blueprint for building financially sustainable and scalable organizations that deliver affordable, critical goods and services that elevate the lives of the poor. At present the Fund has twenty investments in both equity and debt, in seven countries in South Asia and Africa in three portfolios: health, water and housing. Acumen Fund's focus on health care is on cost effective, high quality health care distribution infrastructure. Below are a few examples of Acumen Fund's investments in India:

*Medicine Shoppe:* A franchise pharmacy chain with over 100 outlets across the country, against an equity investment the

Fund aims to start up aggregated health care services to peri – urban and rural markets, through a single window solution consisting of a pharmacy, pathology lab, vision center, health insurance and telemedicine where appropriate.

*Drishtee:* A rural information and communications technology company which has over 1,000 computer kiosks in six states that are run by individual entrepreneurs, Acumen's equity investment in Drishtee is to start up a business services company “Quiver” that will identify services which consumers value and are willing to pay for. At present four services being launched are in health care, micro finance, education and e-governance.

*Water Health International:* A US based company with operations in the Philippines, Mexico and India, Acumen's equity investment in the parent company has enabled the India affiliate to start up the delivery of clean drinking water to rural communities through the manufacture, operation and maintenance of community scale filtration systems, currently operational in coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh

Total investments to date in India are USD 3,200,000 with plans to have assets under management of USD 6,000,000 by the end of 2006 leading to a significantly larger fund size by 2008. Acumen Fund's CEO is Jacqueline Novogratz based in New York, the India Country Manager is Varun Sahni based in Hyderabad.

For more information visit:  
[www.acumenfund.org](http://www.acumenfund.org) or  
email [info@acumenfund.org](mailto:info@acumenfund.org)

## About Imprimis Life

Imprimis Life is India's first dedicated Healthcare and Life Sciences communication consultancy focused on products, science & technology and services critical to enhancing life. We are present across more than 14 cities in India. We have unparalleled domain experience in Hospitals and Healthcare, Pharmaceuticals, HIV/AIDS (issues, products, organisations), Diagnostics, Foods and commodities, Biotechnology, Healthcare retailing and others. Our unique proposition lies in our ability to understand and balance the needs of key stakeholder groups. Our clients represent leading companies in the pharmaceutical, consumer health, and life science sectors; as well as patient, professional groups; healthcare providers; and government agencies.

## Contact Information

Imprimis Life PR, E-25, Saket, New Delhi +91-11-4166 4401, [www.imprimispr.com](http://www.imprimispr.com)

For subscriptions e-mail us at [info@imprimispr.com](mailto:info@imprimispr.com)

