Dr Deepa Apté

Understanding your body type based on Ayurveda

This keynote lecture discusses the Ayurveda system of perceiving, diagnosing and treating bodies.

History of Ayurveda
Ayurveda is the ancient holistic medical system from India, based on achieving physical and mental harmony with nature, which has been practised for more than 5000 years. Ayurveda means “science of life” (“Ayu” meaning life and “Veda” meaning science). Ayurveda was created during a time of great enlightenment, when the sages of ancient India developed and refined the skills of Yoga, a technique that is being increasingly appreciated in the West today. Ayurveda and Yoga are complementary to each other; some Ayurvedic remedies consist of special Yoga exercises.

Holistic Approach
Ayurveda is a complete way of life. It is prevention-oriented, is free from harmful side-effects and treats the root cause of a disease rather than just the symptoms. Ayurveda views illness as caused by an imbalance in a person’s physical or mental constitution and therefore seeks to gently bring a person’s body back into a healthy balance. Ayurveda is not just for people who are ill but also for healthy individuals, because use of Ayurvedic techniques maintains good health.

Principles of Ayurveda
Ayurveda sees everything in the universe, including human beings, as composed of five basic elements - space, air, fire, water and earth. These five elements in turn combine with each other to give rise to three bio-physical forces (or Doshas) – Vata (air & space), Pitta (fire & water) and Kapha (water & earth).

Every individual has within them all three bio-physical forces, but it is the dominance of any one or two or all three that makes up a person’s individual constitution.