

# Be pain free

Arth, an Ayurvedic centre, is offering treatment for various ailments, including back problems. Praveen Mull profiles the centre.

**A**s you enter the premises of Arth, you inhale an aroma of fragrant herbal oil which not only soothes and relaxes the mind, but also instills a feeling of well-being in you.

Arth, an Ayurvedic Health Centre, Bangalore was started in 1999 by Dr Prashanth S Acharya, Medical Director.

Under Dr Prashanth's leadership Arth has carved a niche in the Ayurvedic arena over the last five years. He and his team of doctors and trained therapists, offer remedies and treatments which are scientific, yet natural, in a state-of-the-art centre.

The Arth team professes to be experts in *Panchakarma*, the five detoxification therapies of Ayurveda, and has successfully carried out treatment for several diseases ranging from diabetes to neurological disorders. Says Dr Prashanth: "For us Ayurveda is not merely a science, but a way of life and we intend to establish it as a lifestyle."

Dr Prashanth is one of the very few in India to have specialised in Ayurveda and treatments for backache. Around 80 per cent of people in the age group 40-65 years suffer from back related problems at some stage or other, he says.

Arth has formulated a unique drug combination and treatment procedure to cater to patients suffering from slip disc, muscle pull or sprain, to more serious problems like inter vertebral disc lesion, disc bulge, disc herniation, disc prolapse and even disc degeneration.

"The procedure can actually shrink the disc bulge. We are even in the process of patenting this drug combination," Dr Prashanth says.

Treatment for back pain begins with a thorough physical examination and SLR (straight leg raising) to find out the intensity of the pressure on the nerves. The treatment spreads over 7 to 28 days, depending on the intensity of the pain.

It includes a process called *Kati Dhara*, a localised treatment for back pain, during which a continuous stream of warm medicated oil is poured over the affected area, so as to release the stiffness of muscles.

The next step is *Abhyanga*, an Ayurvedic medicated oil massage for 45 minutes for relaxing the body muscles. The third process called *Kati Basti*, involves placing wheat or black gram flour dough in the shape of a well on the affected area. Warm medicated oil is then poured into the well. A steaming process known as *Patra Pinda Sweta* then follows, by which medicated steam is compressed on the afflicted area through a bolus, a ball of fresh medicinal herbs.

Fresh herbal juice is absorbed by the body, providing relief from the pain. The final process, and the most vital, called *Matra Basti*, involves administration of Ayurvedic medication through the rectal route.

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