

## **Ayurveda and Traditional Perception, Preparedness and Public Awareness Related to the Outbreak of COVID-19 in Sri Lanka – A Pilot Study**

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In Ayurveda, *Acharya Caraka* and *Susruta* both describe pandemic diseases and their causes, modes of *transmission*, preventive and therapeutic measures under *Janapadodvamsa* and *Aupsargika Roga*. COVID-19 is a deadly disease, transmitted through droplet infection which was initially identified in Wuhan, China. There was a trend in China to implement traditional preventive measures but hard to find existing information in Sri Lanka. Therefore, this survey was conducted to study the public awareness of Ayurveda and Traditional perception, preparedness related to the COVID-19 outbreak. A cross-sectional survey was conducted to obtain data from an educational institute in the Kandy district during June to August 2020. The data collection tool was a self-administered questionnaire. It was designed and developed referring to Ayurveda and Sri Lankan Traditional Medical texts. It was validated with subject expertise and a pilot study with ten individuals. The sample was selected randomly and the size was 50. The responses to the study were evaluated by percentages. 46 responses were collected out of 50 questioners, 93.6% of them were females and 6.4% were males. 85.1% of the responded were aware that there are Ayurveda/ Traditional medicines available for pandemics. Results showed that 57.4% have applied *Perumkayam*, *Vadakaha* during the pandemic and 91.5% of them knew that they are capable of enhancing immunity. Also, 78.7% of the sample have inhaled medicated steam during COVID-19, out of them 84.6% have used hot water, 30.8% included *Pawatta* leaves and 12.8% added *Maduruthala* leaves. Overall 61.7% from the sample agree to the idea of having an Ayurveda or Traditional treatment protocol for *COVID-19*. Therefore a treatment protocol from Ayurveda or Traditional medicine can be proposed since there is no specific treatment to cure COVID-19 yet. This survey can be conducted island wide to make the public aware on Ayurveda and Traditional perceptions of COVID-19.

**Keywords:** Ayurveda, Traditional medicine, COVID-19 pandemic