

*Transcript for the cold, flu and covid management series.*

*This is an automated transcription, so there may be grammatical errors. This is intended as a support document for Episode 1 exclusively for members of the Ayurvedic Mentor.*

Welcome to the first episode in the cold, flu and covid management series.

Interestingly an old colleague of mine was a long term military medic. And I'm sure everyone's heard of the five p's -, proper preparation prevents poor performance, that was the guiding principle.

In combat medicine, you have to control the controllables, you have to know what to do in any given situation - that you're fully prepared for that. So you're not ever caught, or caught unprepared in a serious situation would be life threatening. And I think that applies to most areas of life, I think when managing health, and when trying to prevent and manage winter respiratory infections, those five P's become absolutely essential mandatory.

And that's true for general winter infections, lower risk winter infections and common cold's and tonsillitis. But when it comes to the current pandemic, when it comes to the risk, we're facing with COVID and the increasing prevalence of the virus. It's absolutely essential that we apply those five P's so that we know what to do. So if we wake up with the cough, with the raging temperature with the muscle aches, we don't have to think what do I do? We don't have to go to the health food shop or think, do I go to the pharmacy? How do I respond, we need to know exactly what to do. And we need to have everything at hand to intervene immediately. And that's the key thing to really emphasise is the speed at which we intervene.

By managing viral infections, we need to be able to act at the first sign of symptoms. So the whole aim of this series is to equip you with the knowledge of what you need to do. And, and to give you the results of how to do so in terms of the actual theory, but also in terms of what you need to stock in your house, how to blend those, how to dose them and describe them what vitamins we should be using, what minerals we should be using, and what kind of foods we should be eating. It is about wrapping up the whole framework.

Like I said, that's absolutely essential all the time, irrespective of what we're managing. But in light of the current covid pandemic, it becomes mandatory. And there's obviously a lot of fears and uncertainties about COVID. I think the fact numbers are peaking so early, we've still got all winter to go through. One of the things the media has done is really created this fear around this idea that we're powerless, we're helpless, there's nothing we can do, we just have to hope and pray that we one of the lucky ones is strong enough to fight it off on our own. And it's absolutely not the case, one of the biggest messages, important things to really emphasise from the series is that with this idea, we're not sitting ducks, we're not helpless. We're not powerless, we're not disempowered, we need to be proactive, we need to be very, very aggressive in wresting back control over the situation. So that if we do get an infection, we're giving our body the support, it needs to dominate the viral infection where we're targeting the key mechanisms the virus uses to proliferate in the body, we're supporting our immune system in a way that the evidence shows it is important to do.

So we're fuelling our body with the right food, we're giving up body every single bit of external support, we can give it and the resources to fight and dominate. And given the death rate for COVID is still miniscule in relation to how many people have tested positive for it. If you get it, if we get it the chances of dying are very slim, but the chance of being very unwell for a long period of time is very high. And that's because it's not being managed properly. We're just getting it and we're fighting it off and your body is doing a grand job in doing so. But it's not getting the external support the external antiviral profiles, it's not getting the support it needs to not just to slowly win the battle against the viral infection but to dominate that battle.

And that's the whole aim of the series is to is to wrestle that control back, to look at the evidence, to look at what specific pathways we need to be targeting and how to do so that the first sign of infection we have available to us the framework to do everything we can to really dominate that situation.

And I think, you know, as the pandemic has progressed since December last year, particularly from about March last year, because the search for vaccines hits so many dead ends. And because the search for an all encompassing anti viral has come to so many dead ends, the natural progression from that that's parallel that research is to explore in great detail, the herbal medicines. And I've never seen you know, I've worked in herbal medicine research for over 15 years, and I've never seen the sheer volume of publications and the volume of funding money being made available to research the chemical constituents contained within herbs against a specific problem, in this case, COVID. What that research is trying to do - is look at these whole selection of antiviral, immune-stimulating herbs that have

been used for centuries and millennia to manage infections. Looking at Chinese herbs, looking at Ayurvedic herbs, the Western North American herbs have been used by thousands of years as a first port of call for managing serious flu and respiratory infections, and then isolating those and extracting the chemicals that make them up and looking at how do these work? Do they work? Are they safe? If they do work? How do they work?

And that research has been so exciting to keep track of, it's been so exciting to immerse ourselves in over the last year. Because what it shows what most herbalists and practitioners of complementary medicine know and have known for hundreds of years, is that plant based medicines contain this powerful arsenal of components and tools that are now proven mechanistically to help inhibit and suppress the mechanisms by which the COVID virus penetrate cells.

And that's so exciting because it's not based on folk medicine. It's not based on anecdotal accounts. It's not based upon time tested approaches. It's based upon chemical laboratory based research. That's so exciting to see that something like COVID and is interesting as well, you look at some of the key herbs like Andrographis. You look at the Indian public health records in 1919, after the Spanish flu, and Andrographis was celebrated as the reason India had such a quick response to managing it is because 90% of the population treated it Ayurvedically. Andrographis is the key herb that you use to manage these acute respiratory infection, that had clear evidence upon suppressing that epidemic of Indian flu in 1919. So it's really, really exciting to see this research really coming into the fore in terms of Western evidence.

And over the last four or five months, that research has really reached fever pitch, it's exploded, and the publications have all been coming out very, very quickly, not just looking at herbal medicines. Also looking at vitamins and minerals, looking at dietary approaches, looking at lifestyle approaches. And we've read everything we can, we can immerse ourselves and spend more time because of lockdown, we've read and reviewed and critically assess every single bit of published evidence we can in terms of the natural and integrated management of COVID from the best available evidence that we can access.

We've sifted out the weak research, we've done away with the research isn't safe, we've done away with the research isn't robust enough. And what we've been left with is a core selection of approaches, and those approaches that make up our COVID-19 management protocols that will be discussed in detail over the coming series. And we'll obviously be exploring this in a lot of detail. We'll be breaking

down exactly why these protocols work - the mechanisms by which they attack the virus and how they do so.

If we look at the collective research what it shows is that we need a multifactorial approach that's absolutely key. Because the way the covid 19 virus invades the body is multifactorial. It's not a singular mechanism. So if you've got multiple mechanisms, you need multiple, a multifactorial treatment plan. And that's what herbal medicine is bringing to the equation if you just use echinacea, or you just use elderberry or we just use Andrographis you can get probably a clinically significant impact. But if you just use one herb, then there's at least one, probably two mechanisms that are not targeted by using complex multi factorial treatment plans.

The aim is to tick all the boxes that attack the main pathways that the virus uses to penetrate human cells, replicating in human cells and proliferate in human cells. So those three things, those three variables are the holy grail, the holy trinity of managing viral infections - penetration, replication, proliferation of virus in ourselves, and that applies not just to COVID, but to viral throat infections, common colds, seasonal flu, viral chest infections, viral pneumonia, it's all the same.

So when it comes to looking at those multifactorial pathways, the way the COVID virus proliferates -there is lots of different mechanisms and lots of different pathways. But there are four key ones that are more important than any others. If we are to have any chance of really, really succeeding in the way we treat an active infection we need to be proactively targeting and addressing in evidence based way, four key areas.

The first area is we need to use strong, proven antiviral herbs that work on several areas. We're talking about ace-2 modulators, we're talking about cytokine regulators, we're talking about the viral pathway inhibitors, but they're all antiviral herbs. So putting herbs into the body, that through different means suppress the way viruses are able to penetrate, replicate and proliferate in ourselves. We then need to use herbs that are powerful immune modulators, herbs that support our body's natural immune responses to a viral infection, giving the our immune system extra help, extra support to clear the infection, it's also really important that we manage the lymphatic system.

One, because its integral to the immune system and two because it's clear in the research that the lymphatic system becomes very suppressed during the covid infection. The third thing we need to do is target the main organ systems to the heart, the endothelial cells and the lungs, because that's particularly true in an acute infection, but also in those who have long term post covid syndrome.

Because we know that the heart can be heavily damaged, some evidence suggests about 70 to 75% of people have structurally significant heart damage after COVID. The lungs are obviously a very, very key organ to address we need to protect these systems, we need to protect these organ systems to ensure that we don't go into significant organ damage. And then lastly, and importantly, in terms of how we feel, but least importantly of collectively, is the need to just alleviate the symptoms you we've got COVID we're going to feel dreadful, and we can help to alleviate that discomfort. Alongside using paracetamol and other conventional medicines. How do we reduce the congestion? How can we help alleviate the cough? How can we manage the fevers? So the multifactorial pathway, we're looking at a streamlined around those four key areas. So if we're doing that the evidence suggests that we have the best chance of having a successful outcome in managing COVID using these natural herbal approaches. So over the coming weeks, we'll be addressing all of those areas in great detail, looking at why they so important, what are they? What are the best few herbs that we can use to target them?

When we know that, how do we blend these herbs to complex multi-herbs formulas rather than using one herbs? How can we combine herbs into complex more powerful prescriptions? And when do we source these herbs and make sure we are sourcing herbs that are licenced and proper? Where do we get them? How do we use them? So that's the real aim of this series.

So what about non covid infections? Because while the bulk of this series is drawing upon evidence that is about covid, for the simple fact that covid is something that is obviously pandemic at the moment. It's life threatening and that's where our priority needs to lie. But common colds, tonsillitis, sinusitis, bronchitis, seasonal flu it can be serious, it's still unpleasant. So we still need to know how to manage those kinds of problems. If you've got a sore throat or you've got tonsillitis, you've got the power and the knowledge and know how to treat that. And the good news is that the herbs and the approaches that are strongly advocated and tested for covid are also clinically indicated in terms of managing other viral and other bacterial infections.

So the COVID-19 management protocols have been targeted and designed specifically for covid. But they can also be pressed into service of managing less severe infections. And they'll definitely be slightly overkill, it is probably more aggressive than it needs to be. One of the papers I was reading was that taking a gun to a knife fight, you've got a common cold, the COVID protocols are going to be a lot more aggressive than they perhaps need to be for managing the

common cold. But that's not necessarily a bad thing. Because if we've got tonsillitis, if you've got sinusitis, you've got cold, we want to clear as quickly as we can.

So the bottom line is, if you get a respiratory infection this winter, whether it's in the lungs, whether it's in the throat, whether it's in the sinuses, whether it's in the ears, wherever these protocols can be applied to that infection, you can unleash it upon it. But having said that, it's designed primarily around the COVID mechanism, because like I said, that's obviously the area we need to prioritise right now. And really for me, possibly even more importantly, than managing acute infections, we need to really, really, really intervene aggressively to manage long term COVID syndrome, because it's something that I think is a ticking time bomb, I think it's a public health, catastrophe waiting to happen.

And that that that quote there from Professor Garner, who's a lead professor of infectious diseases at Liverpool, school of Tropical Medicine,

*The illness went on and on, the symptoms changed. It was like an advent calendar every day. It was a surprise, something new, a muggy head, acutely painful calf muscles, upset stomach, tinnitus, pins and needles, aching all over breathlessness, dizziness, arthritis in my hands, weird sensations in my skin. Gentle exercise or walking made me worse, I would feel absolutely dreadful the next day.*

That's just a snapshot, we can spend a whole series talking about what this long term covid syndrome looks like - it affects the brain, affects the heart, and affects the lungs, it affects the muscles, it effects the skeletal system, it effects the urinary system effects. But the big thing, the most important thing to emphasise is that over the next 6, 12, 18 months, we're almost certainly going to come up with some kind of vaccine. But we're never ever going to be able to develop a drug or medicine or a vaccine for managing long term COVID syndrome, it's impossible, the pathology is too diverse, it's too heterogeneous, it's not possible. In the same way that they'll never be a drug that can manage chronic fatigue syndrome, they'll never be a drug that can manage Fibromyalgia, never be a drug that can manage post viral fatigue, because it varies so much from person to person. How bad their infection was, where the virus attacks, any weaknesses in their own body.

And I think I think is so important, it really worries me. I mean, acute infections are obviously very unpleasant, they can kill people. But I think most people will have a 90% chance of recovery if they don't do anything. The aim of this series is to say rather than not do anything, lets really attack it to make the symptoms less

severe, to recover quicker and to make sure we don't fall prey to long term COVID syndrome.

But if the evidence suggests that up to 60 to 65% of people who have an acute infection will go on to experience and be affected by long term covid syndrome then that's almost certainly going to persist for years. Standard post viral fatigue, which comes with the back of a lower grade viral infection that can last for years, I'm convinced you know, that this is something that is going to be absolutely explode in our consciousness because one because there's never going to be a treatment for it. And if we if we extrapolate this, if we think about the significance of this, imagine if we take 60% of all of the hundreds of thousands of people, you know, millions of people in Britain who are going to get COVID - if we think about 60% of those having the significant symptoms over the next 6, 12, 18 months, the impacts of that on the economy, on absenteeism, on business, on family life, on health care provision, on GP waiting times, mental health, suicide rates, it's is unimaginable.

And I think it's unimaginable because long term covid syndrome is managed in the same way that you managing chronic fatigue syndrome. It requires an individualised and holistic, multifactorial approach. That's something that the NHS isn't designed to do, it can't do. So, for me, it's the thing that scares me most about this whole covid pandemic. And I'm sure that in five years time, the covid infection will be managed very well. But this long term covid syndrome, I'm convinced will be a really significant impact on our public health. So it's absolutely essential that if we fall prey to a covid infection, once we have recovered from that acute infection, we throw the kitchen sink at long term COVID syndrome, we support the body. And we support the mechanisms that long term COVID syndrome works through. So we protect the brain, we protect the nervous system, we support the lungs, we support the heart, we support the lymphatics, so that we suppress these mechanisms so that two or three months after an infection, you're back to full health back to the same level of healthy work before you actually cannot run the risk of getting long term COVID syndrome. Most people will get it for maybe for six weeks. That's just the nature of the COVID infection. But after that point, we cannot leave that to chance. It's so important for me to emphasise the significance of intervening to manage that. And we'll do that. We have a whole episode whole week devoted to managing long term COVID syndrome.

Once we look at the herbal protocols, we look at the use of vitamin and mineral and lifestyle practices. And again, because it's very clear evidence, actually it is

very compelling evidence around the impact of high blood levels of certain vitamins and minerals upon quicker recovery times, lower mortality rates, lower hospitalisation rates and lower ventilator rates. And there is clinical trials on herbs and vitamins like vitamin C, vitamin D, specifically, so we want to be looking at what are the protocols for acute prescribing of these supplement and these minerals, what the dosage requirements is, what the safety limits that we intervene with, we intervene with the herbal protocols alongside supplementation protocols. And then the lifestyle practices are also important. You know, there are simple things that we can do during acute infections that can really help the body and can really alleviate the symptoms. So for example, the research shows that people with acute infections don't drink enough, they become dehydrated, which affects a lot of the viral pathways, so we stay really well hydrated. We know that the position that we lie in and sleep in can help our lungs to help our oxygen exchange so can reduce the severity of our cough. Staying warm is really, really important.

Making sure we're using synthetic medicines properly. How do we use paracetamol? Is it safe to use nurofen? How do we regulate body temperature? All of these things we'll be discussing in detail because we can't afford, like I said the approaches needs to be multifactorial, both in terms of what we use, but also collectively, we want the whole the approaches working optimally. So we've got the herbs, we've got the essential oils, we got the vitamins, and minerals and the lifestyle practices. We want it all wrapped up into one powerful approach.

And that's where dietary support becomes so important. Because when the body is fighting off an infection like COVID it has to work very, very, very hard and we need to fuel the body, we can't not eat for 7,10 14 days. But in that capacity food can either profoundly heal or profoundly harm and there's clear evidence if we're putting in inflammatory foods, if we're putting in immunosuppressive foods and we're putting in foods that are hard to digest, it can really make things worse, if we're putting foods that are immune-supporting and antiviral, easy to digest and nourishing and can be very, very healing.

But what does that look like? What do those foods look like? What do we need to be eating? what foods are key? What should we be avoiding? How much should we be eating? What are the key ingredients, what kinds of recipes and this is something that's been researched for the last 20 years, there's absolute consensus of how we need to eat when we're managing acute respiratory infections and there foods that like I say support immunity, antiviral pathway

support and nourish the body give the body the energy they need. But don't put any load on the digestive pathways.

It's essential that's not the case because if we overload the digestive system, it creates a cascade of problems, because our gut, and our microbiome is intimately linked to our immunity and thus our infection fighting mechanism. So we want easy to digest soups, stews and broths are loaded with key foods and key herbs like shitake mushrooms and ginger and black pepper, and cloves and chilies and things like this.

So, we will go through a detailed dietary protocol.

So what does this series look like?

So next episode, we'll be looking at the first herbal formulas. We'll be looking at herbal antivirals, and we'll be looking at what herbs, the safety profiles and then the contraindications and looking at how we formulate the prescription.

In Episode Three, we're looking at how we target the immune and lymphatic system using herbal formulas.

In Episode Four, we're looking at how we target and protect the heart, lung, endothelial cells using complex herbal prescriptions.

Episode Five, looking at how we alleviate symptoms primarily by the use of strong herbal infusions.

Episode Six looking at the key dietary approaches what to eat, what to avoid, the key ingredients and some key recipes.

Episode Seven, looking at the vitamin and mineral protocols, dosing and the daily schedules, and also the lifestyle practices and effort.

In episode eight, we'll be looking there in detail at managing long term COVID syndrome which will be fragmented into a variety of different ways because that episode and the information contained in it is just so important, because the reasons I've just said.

But one caveat before we before we conclude and one caveat that is essential to emphasise before we launch into all of the content in the next episode is the all of the protocols we are using are integrative. So they're not alternatives to conventional medicine. They are not to be used instead of, they are to be integrated into conventional medical care.

Because if you have COVID, you want the best of this side. But you also want to make sure you're being managed conventionally. If you or someone in your house

wakes up at with COVID or COVID symptoms, you must phone 111 to log it and to get their support. If your conditions deteriorate, you must call for emergency medical support. Covid is life threatening and kills people. If you need acute intervention if you need to be hospitalised if you need support, or ventilator support, then you must do that - forgoing in is not an option. So these approaches are to be used in the capacity that most people with COVID don't need to be hospitalised they don't need, acute intervention in a hospital setting.

This is about how we support our bodies at home. But if you deteriorate, we do need medical care. This isn't a substitute for that, you must call 999 it is really important to put this in context. Okay.

So, the next episode, we'll be exploring these key anti antiviral, herbal medicines, looking at why they're so important. Looking at which ones we've chosen, looking at how we create unequal ratio, herbal prescriptions, looking at the safety profiles, contraindications, why they're so important looking how to blend them into these complex descriptions and where to source them from. So I look forward to really getting into the nitty gritty of this next week, and getting the first pathway out there in terms of the antiviral methods and so I look forward to sharing that with you in the next episode.