

LIMITATIONS OF ALTERNATIVE MEDICINES IN OPHTHALMOLOGY

There are some eye conditions where Ayurved and Homoeopathic medicines have no role or a limited role to play in their management.

I will mention below limitations of alternative medicines in ophthalmic conditions.

Congenital anomalies: ptosis, microphthalmos, anisometropia, coloboma of iris or choroid, congenital glaucoma etc. All these ocular conditions are caused due to inborn developmental defect in different parts of the eye; so alternative medicines have got no role to play in their management.

Acute emergencies: central retinal arterial occlusion, retinal detachment, acute congestive glaucoma etc. require immediate medical and or surgical intervention; otherwise there is a possibility of permanent visual loss. So alternative medicines shouldn't be used in such cases.

Ocular injuries: mechanical injuries such as subluxation of lens due to trauma, perforating injuries, corneal or intraocular foreign bodies. Chemical injuries of cornea or conjunctiva caused due to acid or alkaline burns. In all such cases, alternative medicines have no role to play as a preliminary measure. However, in later stage, medicines can be used to reduce pain, inflammation, haemorrhages, conjunctival adhesions, corneal opacity, as well as it helps to promote early healing of wounds.

Diseases associated with irreversible organic changes: corneal decompensation after intraocular surgery, absolute glaucoma, mature cataract, advanced malignant conditions, dry eye syndrome associated with severe damage to mucin glands of conjunctiva, etc. Here, alternative medicines have got no curative role or it can play a palliative role to give a symptomatic relief to a patient.

Diseases associated with exciting or maintaining factors: in some patients, there are some factors that persist while he is undergoing treatment with alternative medicines such as contact dermatitis of lids associated with use of hair dye, dryness of eyes due to prolonged computer work without taking any break, symptoms of eye strain due to uncorrected refractive error, etc. Here, unless these exciting or maintaining causes are taken care of, the patient's symptoms will get only temporary relief with the medicines. So such factors should be identified and taken care of during treatment to get a permanent relief.