

## [Ayurveda to the rescue of cancer patients](#)

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Pune : Ten ayurveda practitioners, nutritionists and field assistants in the city have undertaken an ambitious clinical research project for the benefit of cancer patients. Using traditional medicinal herbs available locally, the project seeks to help cancer patients maintain their overall nutritional health status while minimising the toxicity levels and other side-effects caused by chemotherapy.

While about 10,000 cancer patients, some of whom are terminally ill, will be included from Pune and neighbouring Pimpri-Chinchwad areas in the efficacy programme, the second phase of the programme would cover similar cases under the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation.

The 10-year project, being carried out in three stages, has been supported by the Indian Cancer Society and the SNDT Women's University. The project comes close on the heels of the union government seriously contemplating to set up ayurveda centres in major cancer hospitals of the country, including the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) and Mumbai based Tata Memorial hospital.

Satish Phirke, president of the Shri Saibaba cancer research and relief centre in Pune, said: "The basic idea is to evolve a suitable nutrition strategy for strengthening the resistance power and overall health status of the patients, so that they could better cope with the modern modes of treatment like chemotherapy."

According to him, details of 6,000 patients from the city have already been collected by the group. "We will start administering them a combination of 40 different herbs and 12 minerals from the first week of December."

While the project also aims at enhancing the body's resistance besides maintaining a haematic balance, Dr Neelambari Jankar said a group of oncologists have also been roped in for efficacy studies.

"We will carry out pathological tests every month after administering the herbal doses to study its efficacy," she said, adding that the treatment on those who do not show any signs of improvement, would be completely stopped after three months.

Phirke said the programme is also aimed at providing an alternative to 70 per cent of poor cancer patients who have no option but to die a slow death.

"Take for instance, the treatment for promyelocytic leukaemia. While chemotherapy can cost anything between Rs 2.5 lakh and Rs 3 lakh, the ayurvedic treatment costs only Rs 30,000," he explained. He, however, added that while ayurveda may not be able to promise cure for every patient, it can definitely improve their quality of life.

More information about Ayurveda:

<http://www.dreddyclinic.com/ayurvedic/ayurvedic.htm>