

## Siddha System of Medicine [UPSC Notes]

The Siddha system of medicine is primarily practised in parts of southern India. It is one of the world's oldest traditional medicine systems, treating not only the physical body but also the mind and soul. In this article, you can read all about the Siddha System of Medicine for the [UPSC exam](#).

### Siddha System

Siddha was born in India, which is the birthplace of many traditional philosophies. The origins of this system can be traced back to the ancient Tamil civilization.

- The Siddha system of medicine is a traditional medical system that uses a scientific and holistic approach to provide preventive, promotive, curative, rejuvenating, and rehabilitative health care.
- The word "Siddha" comes from the root word "Citti" which means "perfection," "eternal bliss," and "accomplishment."
- Siddha medicine has deep roots in the Indian subcontinent, reflecting the country's culture, tradition, and heritage.
- The Siddha system has four main divisions:
  - Chemistry/Iatrochemistry Alchemy
  - Treatment
  - Yogic Practices
  - Wisdom

### Origin of Siddha System

The word Siddha is derived from the Tamil word Siddhi, which means "to achieve" or "perfection" or "heavenly bliss."

- Agastyar, also known as Agasthya, is thought to be the founder of Siddha Medicine.
- In ancient times, the "Siddhargal" or Siddhars were the foremost scholars of this system. Siddhars, mostly from Tamil Nadu, laid the groundwork for the Siddha medical system.
- As a result, it is known as Siddha medicine. Siddhars were spiritual masters with the ashta (eight) siddhis, or special abilities.

### Major Milestones in the Development of the Siddha System

Period	Major Milestones
<b>3000 BC</b>	Tirumantiram written by Tirumular deals elaborately with Mind - Body relationship, Embryology (Karuvurpatti), Five element theory
<b>1400</b>	Tolkāppiyam, the earliest extant Tamil grammar book deals with the concept of five basic

<b>BC</b>	elements (Aimputam)
<b>600 BC</b>	Jain literature - Philosophy of Siddha medicine
<b>200 BC</b>	Tirukkural - A chapter on medicine -- Maruntu Atikaram
<b>AD 200</b>	Manimekalai -- Theory of Logic (Alavai)
<b>AD 1925</b>	Government School of Indian Medicine was established in Madras to teach Siddha, Ayurveda and Unani (institutionalizing Siddha medical education)
<b>AD 1940</b>	Sir Mohammed Usman Committee was constituted to develop Indian systems of medicine in Tamil Nadu
<b>AD 1970</b>	A separate department was established as Directorate of Indian Medicine and Homoeopathy by the Government of Tamil Nadu
<b>AD 1971</b>	Central Council of Indian Medicine (CCIM) was constituted under the IMCC Act, 1970
<b>AD 1999</b>	The National Institute of Siddha was established by the Department of AYUSH in Chennai. It was formally inaugurated by the then Honorable Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh in 2005
<b>AD 2001</b>	Initiation of the project Traditional Knowledge Digital Library by Department of AYUSH
<b>AD 2010</b>	Central Council for Research in Siddha (CCRS) was established under Department of AYUSH, Government of India by bifurcating the erstwhile Central Council for Research in Ayurveda and Siddha

### Siddha System - Features

- Siddha medicine claims to be able to revitalise and rejuvenate disease-causing organs.
- Siddha medicine's specialities include:
  - Kayakarpam, a unique combination of medicine and lifestyle
  - Varmam therapy
  - Vaasi (Pranayamam)
  - Muppu, the universal salt
- According to legend, Shiva revealed the Siddha system of medicine to his consort Parvati, who then passed it onto Nandhidevar, who in turn passed it on to the 18 Siddhars. As a result, it is known as 'Shiva Sampradayam' (Siva's tradition) or 'Siddha Sampradayam.'

### Principles of Siddha

- The Siddha system of medicine sees the individual as a microcosm of the universe, which is made up of
  - the five natural elements: earth, fire, air, water and space; and
  - three humours: vatham (movement), pitham (digestion or metabolism) and kapham.

- A healthy soul can only be developed through a healthy body, according to Siddhars. As a result, they devised techniques and medications to strengthen their physical bodies and, by extension, their souls.
- Pulse, Perception by palpation, Tongue, Complexion, Speech, Eye, Faeces, and Urine are the eight diagnostic tools used in Siddha.

#### **National Institute of Siddha (NIS), Chennai**

- The National Institute of Siddha (NIS) in Chennai is a self-governing organization under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's Department of AYUSH.
- The capital expenditure for the institute is divided 60:40 between the Indian government and the state government, and the recurring expenditure is divided 75:25.
- Aims:
  - To provide medical care and conducting research
  - To promote and propagate Siddha Medicine
  - To offer postgraduate courses and doctoral research programmes

#### *Siddha Medicines*

- There are several types of medicines developed under the Siddha branch of medicine, each containing a different combination of metals, minerals, and other products.
- Uppu: This medicine system contains 25 different inorganic compounds that are water-soluble and made up of various alkalis and salts.
- In Siddha medicine, sulphur and mercury play an important role.
- Half of these drugs are natural, while the other half are synthetic.
- Metals like gold, silver, copper, lead, and iron are also commonly used in the preparation of a variety of medicines.
- Seven other drugs are heated as well, but they release vapours and do not dissolve in water.
- Panchasutha: Mercury is used in five different forms, namely rasam (mercury), lingam (red sulphide of mercury), veram (mercury perchloride), pooram (mercury subchloride) and rasa-chinduram (red oxide of mercury)

#### *Siddha Medicine Global Scenario*

- Siddha is a Dravidian system that primarily serves people in southern India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Singapore, Mauritius, and other South-East Asian countries.
- In Sri Lanka, Malaysia, and Singapore, where there is a large Tamil population, the Siddha system of medicine is practised.

- Siddha practice is regulated by the Malaysian government, which registers practitioners under the Traditional and Complementary Medicine (TCM) division.
- In Sri Lanka, a Siddha department affiliated with Jaffna University and another institute affiliated with Eastern University in the Trincomalee Campus provide Siddha education (undergraduate course).

#### CCRS (Central Council of Research in Siddha)

The Central Council for Siddha Research (CCRS) is a self-governing body established under the Societies Act.

- It works under the Ministry of AYUSH, Department of AYUSH, Government of India.
  - It is India's apex body for initiating, conducting, formulating, developing, coordinating, and promoting scientific research in Siddha.
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