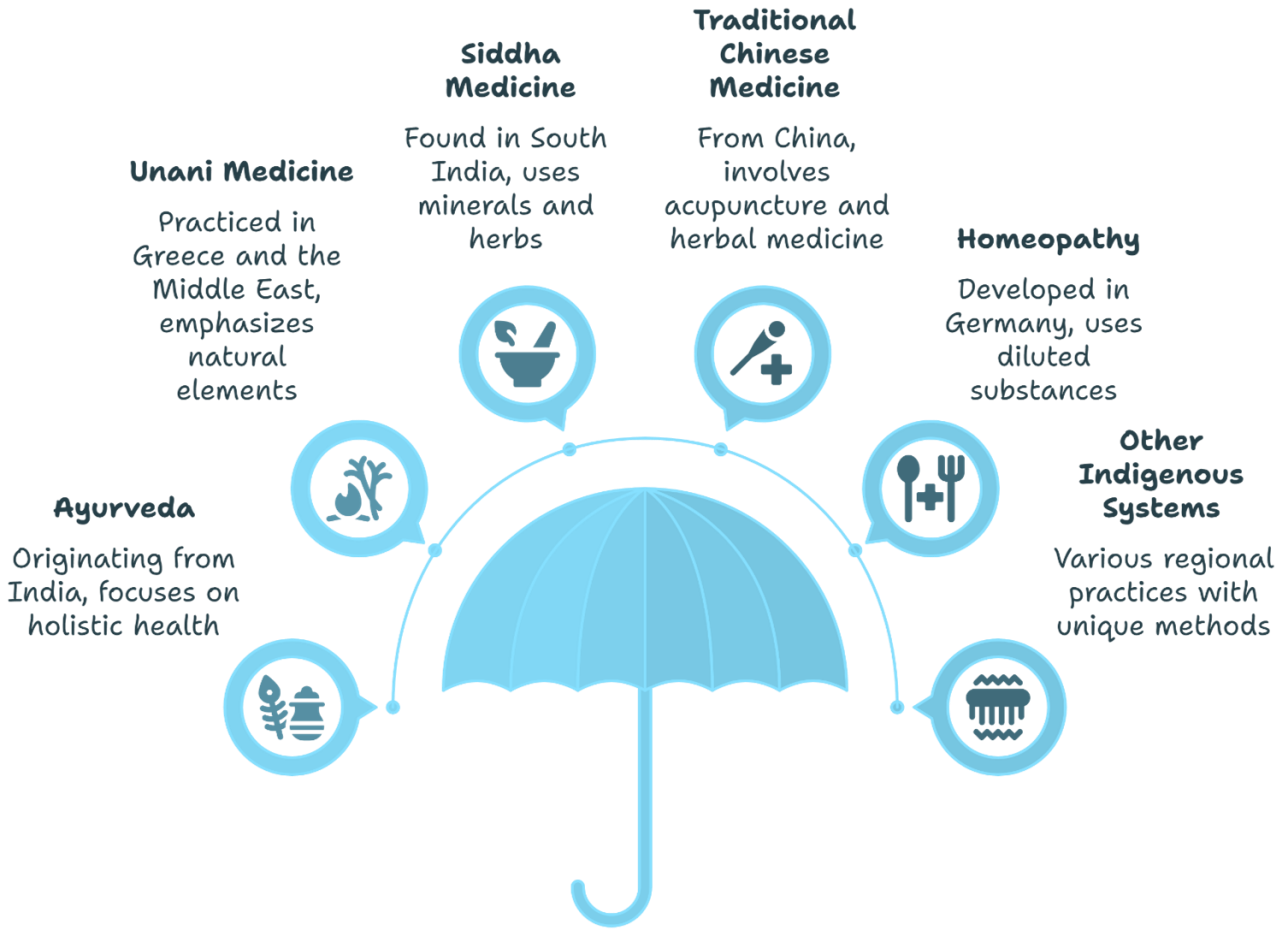
Pharmacognosy in Various Systems of Medicine

Traditional Systems of Medicine

- Traditional systems of medicine refer to healing practices that have been used for centuries in different cultures.
- These systems are based on natural remedies, including plant-based medicines, minerals, and animal products, to treat diseases and maintain health.
- They follow holistic approaches that focus on restoring balance in the body rather than just treating symptoms.

Major Traditional Systems of Medicine



- Ayurveda (India)
- Unani Medicine (Greece & Middle East)
- Siddha Medicine (South India)
- Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) (China)
- Homeopathy (Germany)
- Other Indigenous Systems (Various Regions)

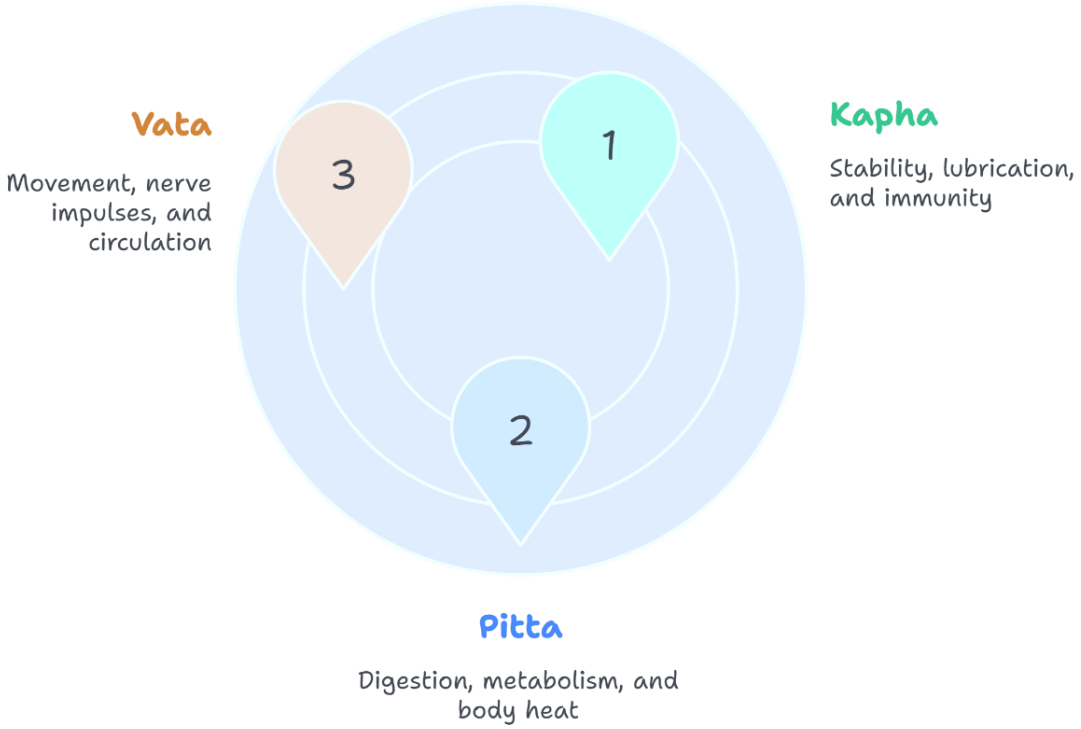
Copyright © 2025 by Engacy Learning Private Limited. All rights reserved. Reproduction or distribution without written consent is strictly prohibited.

Ayurveda

- Ayurveda is one of the oldest holistic healing systems, originating in India over 5,000 years ago. The term **"Ayurveda"** is derived from Sanskrit words:
    - **"Ayur"** meaning life
    - **"Veda"** meaning knowledge or science
- Ayurveda focuses on maintaining the balance of bodily functions through diet, lifestyle, herbal medicine, and spiritual practices.

Principle

- The fundamental concept in Ayurveda revolves around the **Tridosha theory**, which states that the human body is governed by three doshas:



1. **Vata (Air & Ether)** – Controls movement, nerve impulses, and circulation.
2. **Pitta (Fire & Water)** – Regulates digestion, metabolism, and body heat.
3. **Kapha (Earth & Water)** – Maintains stability, lubrication, and immunity.

- A balanced state of these doshas leads to health, while an imbalance results in disease.

Diagnosis in Ayurveda

- Ayurvedic diagnosis involves a detailed understanding of the individual’s constitution (**Prakriti**) and current imbalances (**Vikriti**).
- Diagnosis methods include:

Copyright © 2025 by Engacy Learning Private Limited. All rights reserved. Reproduction or distribution without written consent is strictly prohibited.

- Nadi Pariksha (Pulse Diagnosis)
- Darshan (Observation)
- Sparsh (Palpation & Touch)
- Prashna (Questioning)
- Examination of Dosha, Dhatu (Tissues), Mala (Excretions), and Agni (Digestive Fire)

Role of Pharmacognosy in Ayurveda

1. **Herbal Drug Identification** – Pharmacognosy helps in identifying and authenticating Ayurvedic herbs like **Ashwagandha, Brahmi, Tulsi, and Triphala**.
2. **Quality Control** – Standardization of raw materials, ensuring purity and preventing adulteration.
3. **Phytochemical Analysis** – Understanding active constituents like alkaloids, tannins, flavonoids, etc.
4. **Formulation Development** – Developing traditional formulations such as Churna (Powders), Ghrita (Medicated Ghee), Asava & Arishta (Fermented Liquids), and Bhasma (Metal-based Preparations).

Unani Medicine

Overview

- Unani medicine, also known as **Greco-Arabic medicine**, originated from the teachings of **Hippocrates (Greece) and Galen (Rome)**, later developed by Arab and Persian scholars like **Avicenna (Ibn Sina)**.
- It is widely practiced in India, the Middle East, and South Asia.

Principle

- The Unani system is based on the **humoral theory**, which states that the human body contains four humors:
    1. Dam (Blood)
    2. Balgham (Phlegm)
    3. Safra (Yellow Bile)
    4. Sauda (Black Bile)
- The balance of these humors ensures good health, while an imbalance leads to diseases.

Diagnosis in Unani Medicine

- Nabz (Pulse Diagnosis)

Copyright © 2025 by Engacy Learning Private Limited. All rights reserved. Reproduction or distribution without written consent is strictly prohibited.

- Urine Examination
- Stool Examination
- Observation of Skin, Eyes, and Tongue
- Detailed case history analysis (Temperament and Humoral Imbalance)

Role of Pharmacognosy in Unani Medicine

1. **Identification of Medicinal Plants** – Pharmacognosy helps in identifying key Unani medicinal herbs like Gilo (Tinospora cordifolia), Saffron, Aloe Vera, and Senna.
2. **Standardization of Herbal Drugs** – Ensures quality control through microscopic and chemical analysis.
3. **Development of Unani Formulations** – Used in making Sharbat (Syrups), Majoon (Confections), Hab (Pills), and Roghan (Oils).
4. **Safety and Efficacy Studies** – Validating the traditional claims of Unani herbs through phytochemical and pharmacological research.

Siddha Medicine

Overview

- Siddha medicine is one of the oldest systems of medicine, developed in **South India**, particularly in Tamil Nadu.
- It is attributed to **Siddhars (ancient spiritual scientists)** who had profound knowledge of medicine, yoga, and alchemy.

Principle

- Siddha medicine is based on the concept that human body functions are controlled by five elements (Pancha Bhoota) and three humors (Tridosha system):
    1. **Vatham (Air)**
    2. **Pitham (Fire)**
    3. **Kapham (Water & Earth)**

Diagnosis in Siddha Medicine

- Naadi (Pulse Diagnosis)
- Neerkuri (Urine Examination)
- Envagai Thervu (Eight-fold Examination)
- Tongue, Voice, and Eye Observation

Copyright © 2025 by Engacy Learning Private Limited. All rights reserved. Reproduction or distribution without written consent is strictly prohibited.

Role of Pharmacognosy in Siddha Medicine

1. **Herbal and Mineral Identification** – Ensuring proper identification of plants like Karisalai (Eclipta alba), Thuthuvalai (Solanum trilobatum) and metals like Mercury and Sulfur.
2. **Purification Methods** – Pharmacognosy helps in detoxifying minerals before use.
3. **Phytochemical Standardization** – Chemical analysis of Kashayam (Decoctions), Lehiyam (Paste), and Mathirai (Tablets).
4. **Quality Assurance** – Preventing contamination and adulteration in herbal and mineral preparations.

Homeopathy

Overview

- Homeopathy was founded by Dr. Samuel Hahnemann in the late 18th century in Germany.
- It is based on the principle of "Similia Similibus Curentur" (Like Cures Like).

Principle

- Homeopathy believes that substances that cause symptoms in a healthy person can treat similar symptoms in a diseased person when given in ultra-diluted doses.

Diagnosis in Homeopathy

- Detailed Case-Taking (Physical, Mental & Emotional Symptoms)
- Repertorization (Symptom Matching with Remedies)
- Constitutional Treatment Approach

Role of Pharmacognosy in Homeopathy

1. **Source Identification** – Most homeopathic remedies come from plants (Belladonna, Arnica), minerals (Sulfur, Arsenic), and animal sources (Apis, Sepia).
2. **Potentization Process** – Ensuring the correct **dilution and succussion (vigorous shaking)** of medicines.
3. **Standardization and Purity** – Ensuring homeopathic tinctures contain active ingredients.
4. **Quality Control** – Avoiding contamination and maintaining the efficacy of homeopathic dilutions.

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM)

Overview

Copyright © 2025 by Engacy Learning Private Limited. All rights reserved. Reproduction or distribution without written consent is strictly prohibited.

First Hope

FREE PREVIEW

Click here to visit our website

PHARMACY PREMIUM NOTES

Complete subject and semesters are available on FirstHope app only.

Scan or click here

Click here to get the app >

Available on Google Play

JOIN THE FIRSTHOPE COMMUNITY

Join our Telegram channel

Click here to join Telegram >

Scan or click here

@FirstHopeNotes

Instagram

@firsthope.official

Click here to follow >

YouTube channel

FirstHope-Pharmacy / Live streams

Click here to watch >

WhatsApp channel

Follow FirstHope on WhatsApp

Click here to join >

FirstHope website

firsthope.co.in

Click here to visit >

B.Pharm / D.Pharm / M.Pharm / Pharm.D

Preview notes. Complete subjects and semesters in the FirstHope app.