



A Holistic Approach to Cardiovascular Disease Management: Insights from Sri Lanka's Traditional Medicine

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) remains a leading cause of mortality worldwide, driven by lifestyle factors, poor diet, and stress. While modern medicine provides effective interventions, there is growing recognition of the benefits of holistic approaches, particularly those rooted in traditional medicine. Sri Lanka, with its rich heritage of Ayurveda and indigenous (Deshiya Chikitsa) healing, offers time-tested remedies that can complement modern CVD management.

The Sri Lankan Traditional Medical Perspective on Heart Health

In Sri Lankan traditional medicine, the heart is considered the seat of Ojas (vital energy) and is closely linked to digestive health (Agni), circulation, and mental well-being. Treatments focus on balancing Doshas (Vata, Pitta, and Kapha) and improving cardiovascular function through:

Herbal Formulations – Botanical extracts are used to enhance heart health and reduce risk factors like hypertension, high cholesterol, and inflammation.

Dietary Modifications – A heart-friendly diet emphasizing herbal decoctions, spices, and functional foods.

Lifestyle and Mind-Body Practices – Stress reduction through yoga, meditation, and breathing techniques.

Key Herbal Ingredients for Cardiovascular Support

Sri Lanka's traditional medicine utilizes powerful herbs with cardioprotective properties:

- Aralu** (*Terminalia chebula*) – A potent antioxidant that supports lipid metabolism and prevents oxidative stress.
- Bulu** (*Terminalia bellirica*) – Known for its cholesterol-lowering and anti-inflammatory effects.
- Nelli** (*Emblica officinalis*) – Rich in vitamin C and polyphenols, enhancing vascular function and reducing oxidative damage.



4. **Sri Lankan Cinnamon** (*Cinnamomum verum*) – Regulates blood sugar, reduces cholesterol, and improves circulation.

5. **Gotu Kola** (*Centella asiatica*) – Strengthens blood vessels and improves cognitive function, reducing stroke risk.

6. **Garlic** (*Allium sativum*) – Lowers blood pressure and prevents arterial plaque formation.

Integrating Traditional Medicine with Modern Science

While Sri Lanka's traditional medicine provides valuable insights, scientific validation is essential to integrate these approaches into mainstream healthcare. Research on Ayurvedic and indigenous formulations has demonstrated their efficacy in:

Lowering LDL cholesterol and triglycerides.

Improving endothelial function.

Reducing systemic inflammation and oxidative stress.

Enhancing overall cardiovascular resilience.

Clinical trials and quality control measures are necessary to standardize formulations, ensuring safety and efficacy.

The Future of Holistic Cardiovascular Care

By bridging traditional wisdom with modern pharmacology, Sri Lanka has the potential to offer evidence-based, holistic solutions for CVD management. Investing in research, promoting awareness, and incorporating these remedies into preventive healthcare can pave the way for a more integrative approach to heart health.

As the world moves towards personalized and preventive medicine, Sri Lanka's traditional knowledge serves as a treasure trove for sustainable and natural cardiovascular care.