

## **Ayurvedic Wellness Growth Trends**

Ayurveda serves as the basis of the oldest recorded medical system, with seminal texts dating to the height of the Vedic civilization (circa 2000BC). Ayurveda continues to be formally taught around the world through today. Ayurveda originated in India, and it is recognized as primary care today in India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand where nearly 80% of the population uses it exclusively or combined with conventional (Western) medicine. The prevalence of Ayurveda in its country of origin has permeated the United States and has caused a rise in demand, popularity, research, and professional hallmarks such as regulation and definition of the scope of practice, educational standards, dedicated journals and publications, research, state approval and the certification of schools, professional associations, and advocacy efforts. (Halpern, 2018)

The 2002, 2007, and 2012 National Health Interview Survey indicated a substantial and consistent use of Ayurveda by U.S. adults. 154,000 adults reported using Ayurveda in 2002, 214,000 reported as such in 2007, and 241,000 reported usage in the 2012. As one of the original holistic medical systems, Ayurveda is practiced in a very individualized manner. The system, like Traditional Chinese Medicine and Tibetan Medicine, is based on the theory that there are several archetypal metabolic and energetic body types requiring different healthcare approaches. Treatments are prescribed according to each individual or combined type, and include a combination of diet, exercise (yoga), meditation, herbs, massage, exposure to sun, and breathing exercises. The 2002, 2007, and 2012 National Health Interview Survey indicated a significant and consistent use of such individual approaches that are at the heart of Ayurveda. Four such approaches were consistently in the top five used approaches in all three years. The use of natural product supplements was consistently the most commonly used complementary approach (roughly 18% of respondents) and deep breathing exercises were consistently the second most commonly used approach (roughly 12% of respondents) in all three years. The percentage of adults who practiced yoga increased substantially, from 5.1% in 2002 to 6.1% in 2007 and 9.5% in 2012. (National Center for Health Statistics, 2012; Clarke et al., 2015; Nahin, 2016)

Increasing interest and use of Ayurveda is also demonstrated by the level of commitment and rigor that modern research is adding to this ancient system through U.S. federal funding. National Institutes of Health funding has grown steadily for clinical trials to study the use of Ayurvedic herbs for a variety of clinical disorders. Twelve trials were funded in the five year period of 2013-2017, six trials in the previous four years (2008-2012), and just three trials in the prior ten years (1998-2007). The National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, and Environmental Protection Agency provided more than \$17 million in funding from 2005 to 2017 for 61 research grants involving some aspect of Ayurveda since. (National Library of Medicine, 2018; Star Metrics, 2018)

The growth of the field is also indicated by growing engagement in the National Ayurvedic Medical Association (NAMA). The number of training schools registered with NAMA increased from 21 U.S.-based educational providers in 2012 to 54 in January of 2017. NAMA professional membership grew from 500 members in 2012-2013 to 900 in 2016-2017. In addition, the National Ayurvedic Medical Association Certification Board was established in 2017 to provide training certification in three areas, reflecting the multiple professional applications of the field: Ayurvedic Health Counselor, Ayurvedic Practitioner, and Ayurvedic Doctor. (Academic

Consortium for Complementary and Alternative Health Care, 2013; National Ayurvedic Medical Association, 2018)

The U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics projects growth in the Ayurvedic field (as of January 2018). Its O-NET OnLine Education Crosswalk aligns the Ayurvedic Medicine/Ayurveda education program (CIP 51.3305) with the occupation Health Diagnosing and Treating Practitioners, All Other (SOC 29-1199.00). O-NET classifies this cluster as a Bright Outlook occupation with a faster than average growth rate of 10% to 14% for the period 2016-2026. (Employment and Training Administration, 2018)

Many Ayurvedic professionals are also licensed healthcare providers in other fields and Ayurvedic principles complement their primary practice. O-NET classifies each of these as a Bright Outlook occupation and projects growth potential in these fields during the period 2016-2026 (as of January, 2018). O-NET cites the use of Ayurvedic medicine as a core task for naturopathic physicians. (Academic Consortium for Complementary and Alternative Health Care, 2013; Employment and Training Administration, 2018)

Growth Rate: Much faster than average, 15% or higher	
Occupation	Projected Job Openings
Massage Therapist (SOC 31-9011.00)	21,900
Physical Therapist (SOC 29-1123.00)	16,800
Nurse Practitioner (SOC 29-1171.00)	14,400
Health Educator, Health and Wellness Coach (SOC 21-1091.00)	8,700
Family and General Practitioners (SOC 29-1062.00)	6,000
Growth Rate: Faster than average, 10% to 14%	
Occupation	Projected Job Openings
Yoga Therapist, Fitness Trainer/Instructor (SOC 39-9031.00)	54,800
Nutritionist (SOC 29-1031.00)	5,300
Naturopathic Physician (SOC 29-1199.04)	3,600
Acupuncturist (SOC 29-1199.01)	3,600
Midwife (SOC 29-9099.01)	2,600
Chiropractor (SOC 29-1011.00)	1,700

## **References**

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