



## MEDICAL TOURIST POTENTIAL IN PUDUKKOTTAI DISTRICT

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### ABSTRACT

Many people travel to India to avail the opportunity of the world class healthcare services offered by the best experienced healthcare professionals at the technologically most advanced medical facilities in complete privacy and at affordable costs. Tourists have their own ideas and objectives based on which they tour different places. Medical Tourism is slightly different from usual tourism. Tamilnadu is one such state which is famous for the Medical Tourism, There is several world class facilities equipped with the latest testing facilities available. Every day tourists from many places visit Pudukkottai district after knowing the value of traditional medical systems prevailing here. This reveals the Medical importance of the district. The present paper focuses the traditional medicinal value and growth of domestic tourism in this district

**KEY WORDS:** Medical Tourism, Medical system, traditional medicine, Pranic healing.

### INTRODUCTION

Medical tourism is an important element in tourism industry. It is also known as medical travel or health tourism. As costs of the treatment has increased people have started to travel or health tourism. Now days, Medical Tourism has emerged as the fastest growing segment in India. Many people travel to India to avail the opportunity of the world class healthcare services offered by the best experienced healthcare professionals at the technologically most advanced medical facilities in complete privacy and at affordable costs. Tourists have their own ideas and objectives based on which they tour different places. Medical Tourism is slightly different from usual tourism. Normally people get treatment after staying for a few days while some others stay for more time to get treated.

Tamilnadu is one such state which is famous for the Medical Tourism, There is several world class facilities equipped with the latest testing facilities available. One can come to Tamilnadu for a specific treatment or even go for a mental health check up while on holiday. Tamilnadu is famous for the treatment of cardiac care, Transplant, Eye care and cosmetic surgery. Apart from allopathic treatment Tamilnadu is famous for Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani, Homeopathy, Acupuncture, healing and Reiki.

All native medical systems including Indian Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, Naturopathy and Homoeopathy are commonly termed as "Traditional medicine". Practice of traditional medicines is highly influenced by factors like history, civilization, culture, and philosophy. The Traditional Medical systems are considered to be safe because of its long historical use, including experience passed on from generation to generation. Medical treatment is varied in nature. In spite of the advancements made in Allopathic medicine, traditional/Tamil medical system enjoys its own popularity. The Tamil Medical system include:  
1. Rural/Country medicine 2. Herbal medicine 3. Naturopathy 4. Siddha medicine

The above systems have had been in vogue since the hoary past. Later, the allopathic system has advanced a lot along with its various methods of performing operations. Still, it is a matter of wonder to see the traditional medical system to hold its pride of place.

Pudukkottai district as one of the princely states of Tamilnadu holds rich cultural heritage with Fortresses, Palaces, Temples, Cave Paintings and many other historical monuments. Medical tourism too adds to the greatness of the district. Every day tourists from many places visit Pudukkottai district after knowing the value of traditional medical systems prevailing here. This reveals the Medical importance of the district. The present study focuses on the analysis of trend of medical tourists in Pudukkottai in the recent years. It also aims to examine the factors that contribute towards the growth of medical tourism in Pudukkottai.

The study was conducted keeping in mind the following objectives 1. To analyze the trend of medical tourism in India 2. To explore the reasons behind growing popularity of India as a medical tourism destination. The study is based on secondary data. For the present study, data and information have been collected with the help of newspapers, Research articles, E-journals, Report of Ministry of Tourism, Report of World Travel and tourism council and various government and non-government websites.

### **The traditional medical systems vogue in Pudukkottai**

1. Treatment for jaundice --- Kadiyaapatti
2. Treatment for bone –fracture --- sengapatti
3. Nuda treatment -- perungudi
4. Treatment for dog bite --- kundraandaar kovil
5. Treatment for eye ailments--- Temmaavoor
6. Blowing the intestine --- Keeranur
7. Nature cure for Tuberculosis ---- Pudukkottai
8. Cancer research centre -- pudukkottai
9. De-addiction centre --- Arimazham
10. Spiritual healing systems

### **The Medical Systems:**

Since time immemorial, Siddhars, Rishis and the learned have had contributed a lot with their writings on various systems of medicine. These were brought into practice by the later-practitioners. Also, there are many treatises on Tamil Medical system like –Bhokar Aayiram, Akathiar Aayiram, Akathiar Gunavaatakam, Sirupanchamoolam and Tirikadukam. These are real gifts to the field of Tamil Medicine. Later, Ramalingar has contributed a lot of information on Tamil medical system. Those who have the knowledge of all these, employ these natural medical methods even today.

#### **1. Treatment for jaundice:**

Jaundice is a dreaded disease. Though nowadays, scientific/allopathic treatment is available to this disease, Naturopathic treatment has been given for generations, at Kadiyaapatti, a place situated 15 kilometers away from pudukkottai on the way to Rayavaram. Every day hundreds of Medical tourists visit this place for treatment. Except on Wednesday and Saturday, on other days, between 5 am., to 7 a.m medicine is imparted to patients, from children to adults. At present, as per the Allopathic system, treatment should be taken for at least six months. But a single dose of medicine taken at Kadiyapatti cures jaundice. The treatment method is easy and economic. Those who have medicine here, never suffer from jaundice thereafter. Having been aware of this, people come and stay at night and take medicine in the morning and make their trip fruitful. It is great to find that there is no other centre for treating jaundice which could match the contribution of the treatment centre at Kadiyapatti, Pudukkottai District.

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## 2. Treatment for bone-fracture:

Sengapatti, 15 kilometers from Pudukkottai (located near Annavaasal) and Viraalimalai are the two important centers for treating bone-fracture in Pudukkottai District. In the Sengapatti centre, all kinds of bone-fractures are cured without operation by simply bandaging. Those who got treatment here opine that bone ailments from any part of the body is cured within six months by getting bandaged in the centre. Though operations are performed nowadays to cure bone-fracture, the Sengapatti-treatment method too enjoys great popularity.

## 3. Nuda Treatment:

Nuda Vaithiyam means treating flesh and bone related ailments in human body, sprain and muscle dysfunctions. There is one, Perunkudi Bhattar who is running a Nuda Medical centre at Santhaipeitai, Pudukkottai. Here, every day hundreds of people wait from the morning and get treatment. While it takes time and more money in the Allopathic method, Bhattar's treatment is cost-effective and time-effective. Tourists from various districts come to Pudukkottai to get treatment from Bhattar.

## 4. Treatment for dog-bite :

Dog bite has lasting effects over man. Especially bite by stray-dogs will have severe effects. Though, modern medicine is available nowadays for dog bite, traditional treatment is offered for dog-bite at Kundraandar Kovil, Pudukkottai District. In the medical centre here, medicine is given before 12 Noon, all seven days in the week. It is said that the medicine given here tames the poisonous effects of dog-bite. In spite of the availability of Allopathic treatment, the popularity of this traditional treatment remains to this day and many visit the place to get treatment, every day.

## 5. Treatment for eye ailments:

Eye is a vital organ for man without which one cannot do life's functions properly. For the eye's getting affected by the intrusion of alien objects, treatment is given at Temmaavoor village, Pudukkottai. Here, the patient has to come before dawn and the woman who treats here, removes the alien objects in the eye, by her tongue in seconds. She charges mere Rs.50 for this. Daily, people with eye-ailments visit this place to get treatment. This treatment method remains popular among villagers and is still in vogue.

## 6. Blowing the Intestine:

It is intestine where the human food gathers. When undigested food gather and cause trouble, through traditional method of treatment, they are easily removed (without resorting to operation and endoscopy). This is really a matter of wonder. Patients have to go to the medical centre, located near the Shiva temple at Keeranur, Pudukkottai District before 10 a.m. The woman who treats here, puts her mouth on the mouth of the patient and effortlessly removes the objects. Though this is seemingly dangerous, still this treatment is in vogue. One has to take this as a traditional method of treating ailments. Degrees and Research Laboratories are not required for these traditional systems. One can conclude that the success of these kinds of treatment is based on faith and temperament.

## 7. Tuberculosis treatment centre:

Tuberculosis is dangerous disease affecting humans and is of spreading nature. At East Second Street, Pudukkottai Tuberculosis was detected and treated by V.K.Ramachandran Pillai. He is famous for his ability to detect and treat tuberculosis in his centre. Of course, today, we have modern medicine like DOTS. Still, people in large numbers daily come and get treatment for Tuberculosis in his centre. Thus, Pudukkottai has gaining popularity in this respect.

### 8. Cancer Research and Treatment Centre:

Cancer is a life-threatening disease affecting humans. Dr.Muthulakshmi Reddy, a pioneer in cancer treatment, hails from Pudukkottai. Through the Adayar Cancer Research and Treatment centre founded by her, many cancer patients have been benefitted. In the Government Medical College Hospital, Pudukkottai (the birth place of Dr.Muthulakshmi Reddy), during March 2018, a Cancer Research and Detection Centre was started and has been in use since then.

Really, this is a proud moment for Pudukkottai, the birth place of Dr.Muthulakshmi Reddy, the founder of Adayar Cancer Research Centre. The seeds sown by her have grown into a big tree, benefitting many.

### 9. De-Addiction Centre:

A majority of men suffer from their addiction to alcohol and other intoxicating substances. It is a real challenge to de-addict these people. A de-addiction centre namely, CARD-De-addiction centre has been functioning near Arimazham, Pudukkottai District. Those who suffer from addiction, stay in this centre and get cured between three months to one year. This centre cures the addicts and makes the period of their stay here, a fruitful one.

### 10. Government Medical College Hospital:

In Pudukkottai, the land where the first woman – doctor of South India, Dr.Muthulakshmi Reddy was born, the Government Medical College Hospital has been constructed at Thanjavur road, spanning an area of several kilometers. This institution caters to the medical needs of the people of the district and houses one hundred and fifty students who pursue medicine. This hospital keeps expanding and is a treasure for the district.

### 11. Spiritual Healing:

In spite of the advancements made in the modern medical field, still people keep faith on spiritual and religious activities. They still believe that the seasonal pox, pimple, physical and mental diseases can be cured only by the divine. Hence, when they get cured, there is a tradition of thanks-giving by offerings made to temples.

### 12. Pranic Healing Centre

The GMCKS Pranic Healing Centre, Pudukkottai was established in 2017. The GMCKS is affiliated to the World Pranic Healing Foundation India Pvt. Ltd. and The Institute for Inner Studies (IIS), Manila, Philippines. Pranic Healing has been described as a simple and yet very powerful technology that can be employed with immediate benefits to the patients. This quality of [Pranic Healing](#) makes it the perfect [Healing](#) modality for millions of people suffering from a variety of illnesses who have no access to medicine. It was with this idea in mind that Grand Master Choa Kok Sui decided to bring Pranic Healing to the poor and under developed areas of the world. Pranic Healing is an ancient science and art that has been adapted and systematized by the founder. It has been used to heal countless people through the ages. The principle is simple. We know that every living being possesses the inborn ability to heal itself. Pranic Healing simply enhances this healing process by utilizing the energy of life.

### CONCLUSION:

Though, not everyone makes medical tourism, still, this has special relevance to Pudukkottai District. Since, the district boasts of traditional treatment centres for various diseases, people visit them regularly.

Also, the government has announced places like Naarthamalai, Pommadi Malai, Thevar Malai as “Protected Places” considering their herbal potential. Practitioners of Traditional medicine use the herbs available in these hills.

In this research, it has been pointed out that how the traditional medical systems prove to be time-effective and cost-effective. It has also been pointed out that all these systems are still in vogue in Pudukkottai District. Those who come for treatment visit the nearby tourist places and derive pleasure.

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