



Holistic health destination

Christine Stossier, cofounder of VIVAMAYR, a luxury health resort in Austria, talks about modern Mayr medicine

BY BINDU GOPAL RAO

Where do Chelsea Handler, Elizabeth Hurley, Ranveer Singh, Deepika Padukone, Alia Bhatt, Karan Johar and other cinema A-listers head to for health and beauty breaks? Well, it is to the luxurious VIVAMAYR retreat in Austria. Bengaluru's premium wellness centre, RESET, recently invited Dr Christine Stossier, cofounder and assistant medical director, VIVAMAYR, for a talk on 'metabolic diseases and biological strategies.' In an exclusive interview, Christine talks about her journey into the world of Mayr medicine.

Tell us something of your early days, education and career.

I was born and brought up in Carinthia and studied at the Medical University of Graz. After my practice years in a private hospital, I specialised in Mayr medicine, orthomolecular medicine and functional muscle diagnostics (FMD). Soon after that, we (my husband, Dr Harald Stossier, and I) started working. We got an offer by an investor to open a health clinic related to

what we studied. We got an excellent team to execute our ideas on health therapies, based on the knowledge of Dr Mayr, the FMD and the principles of orthomolecular therapy.

What was it about health that attracted you to make a career of?

Medical students spend years to learn and understand diseases and pathologies. I used to wonder why one person gets sick and the other does not. Both my husband and I found ourselves asking this question—what are healthy people doing different than the ones falling sick? What is key to stay healthy? At university, we couldn't find answers, so we started searching in traditional medicine and found books, written by Dr F. X. Mayr. This was the beginning of a long and still ongoing journey into a fascinating field of medicine.

What brings you to Bengaluru?

RESET, Bengaluru, invited us to explore the city for future prospects. During this first-time two-day visit, we spoke to the press and also pre-

sented VIVAMAYR philosophy and modern Mayr medicine at private events. VIVAMAYR and RESET firmly believe in a balance between mental and physical wellness. We believe that being healthy goes beyond physical fitness or body aesthetics and would like to see how both can partner to bring more education and strategies for both the public and medical sector.

What is holistic health all about?

It is the overall optimal capacity of the body to compensate any "negative" influence. As our health is under "fire" attack every day in different aspects, the holistic approach to cure is characterised by the treatment of the whole person, taking into account mental and social factors, rather than just the symptoms of a disease. We can say that 'holistic' means 'networking', but we need to understand what is the net. The sooner we realise that the parts of something are intimately interconnected and explicable only by reference to the whole, then we can approach health holistically.

When did you start VIVAMAYR and what was the idea behind it?

We opened VIVAMAYR medical centre in 2005 in Maria Wörth and then we opened a second institute in Altaussee—both are in Austria. Our principles are based on modern complementary medicine based on the diagnostics and therapy, according to Dr F. X. Mayr, in combination with functional myodiagnosics and orthomolecular medicine. We treat people with fasting and detoxification to get rid of their complaints and diseases. We use fasting as a medical strategy along with a wide range of complementary methods to help people with their health issues.

What are the various programmes that you offer?

We customise the programme for an individual based on the results of physical examination, FMD, blood tests and physical capacities. We do not have prefixed programmes, as this is completely against our medical principles. The most important therapy is that we want to re-educate the eating habits of our guests. So, we advise people to eat slowly, chew well, take time to consume their meals and create a routine to help the digestive tract to work on the food in a better way. During the stay at the centres in Austria, we support people in their process of cleansing by using epsom salt to cleanse the intestine or a colonic irrigation. We administrate daily manual abdominal treatments to improve the function of the intestine. We do massages, water applications and a lot of orthomolecular supplementations. This is necessary, because many people have deficiencies and because of that we also have established a wide variety of intravenous applications of minerals, vitamins and trace elements. We also support people in their emotional cleansing, because that's also an important part and we have a lot of information and training programmes to help people to implement the most important things in their daily routine.

What is Mayr therapy?

Mayr Therapy is based on the oldest cleansing and regenerative method called 'therapeutic dietary modification.' It is carried out under a physician's supervision. Developed by Dr F.X. Mayr, this method focuses on bringing your digestion closer to its ideal condition, thereby reducing ailments. It works on three principles—rest, training and cleansing. In accordance with modern medicine, it has two additional principles—rhythm and conscious abstinence.

The digestive tract is one of the most important organs. Our energy, our quality of life depends on the work of the intestines. The cells of the body get better quality of nutrients when the intestines work properly. Its malfunction can impair metabolism and also cause fermentation and putrefaction. Those processes produce a lot of toxins which lead to a leaky gut syndrome. We produce a lot of toxins in our intestine which are reabsorbed and then spread over the whole body. This is often the beginning of a disease and most of our diseases are related to these intestinal problems. Therefore, it is important to focus on the quality of the digestive tract and we also know in the meanwhile that the intestinal flora has a lot of influence on our general health. We also do improve the health of the intestinal flora.

Why are your programmes so popular?

I guess that is driven by the therapeutic results that the patients achieve. VIVAMAYR is also committed in becoming a lifelong companion if one takes the responsibility to fol-

low the lifestyle changes. Our clients experience this in an enhancement of evidence-based university medicine, as we focus on the origin and not so much on treating the symptoms of illness and complaint. Medical-guided cleansing, rest, substitution, individual diet, teaching of physiology and sport-scientific guidance are the tools helping our clients to achieve sustainable rejuvenation and better metabolism.

Give us some easy ideas on how one can detox oneself?

Fasting is a great idea for detoxification. Try to reduce your dinner intake and eat early, eventually dinner cancellation is the best. Beginners should start to drink more water (according their body weight). Most of my patients don't drink enough. Enough free liquid in the body is basic to get rid of metabolic toxins. Herbal teas which support the liver and kidney are helpful too. Alkaline diet and alkaline powders also help.

How do you help guests to implement good health practices after they leave VIVAMAYR?

I hope to create a deeper understanding of the nature of the client's body. I hope that they may understand, experience and take responsibility of their daily habits especially their eating. While they are in VIVAMAYR, they find a shift in their overall health by practising a daily rhythm and that is the initial motivation to continue it when they leave.

What are some health trends you are seeing?

Everyone looks at food constantly as a source of weight or weight loss. Currently intermittent fasting is the trend. Unfortunately, most people are practising it wrong and not following it according to their body rhythm. But at least it is one meal less, that is still a certain release for the metabolism. We hope that one day everyone will follow the trend called 'balance' and 'rhythm of life.' □