

Ayurvedic Concept of Vishada (Depression) and its Healing Through Traditional Regimen: A Review Article

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Abstract:- According to Ayurveda, activities of mana and its diseases (mental diseases) are directly related with functioning of ‘Shirah’ as well as ‘Hridaya’. Shirah controls all the senses and their activities. Hridaya acts as propagator for mental functions like medha, harsha, vishada, bhaya etc. Therefore, any sort of imbalance in these two organs lead to manifestation of various mental misbehaving conditions. Vishada (depression) is a mental imbalanced condition which brings inability of mind to perform its routine functions effectively. In Ayurveda numerous factors are playing a main role for pathogenesis of Vishada like Prakruti, Deha Prakruti, Manas Prakruti, Manas Bhava, Triguna and Tridoshas etc. Acharya Charaka has explained that there is a relationship between depression and immunity. He says “vishado rogavardhananam” means vishada is the foremost factor in worsening the disease condition. Various traditional regimens described in Ayurveda like Dinacharya, Ritucharya, Sadvrutta along with rules of ahara-vihara-achara are said to be very effective to get control over various mentally impaired conditions including Vishada. They fairly demolish Mano-Chanchalata (the inconstancy or fluctuations of mind) and brings-up Chittaprasadana (serenity).

Keywords:- Vishada, Manas vyadhi, Traditional Ayurvedic regimen.

I. INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is one of the most ancient systems of medicine in the world. It is a science of life, health and cure based on the eternal laws of nature. It reminds us that health is the balanced and dynamic integration between our environment, body, mind, senses and spirit. Mind-body relationship and its significance in Ayurveda can be illustrated by number of fundamental issues such as psychological concept of evolution of universe, identification of psychosomatic factor in causation and presentation of several diseases. Ayurveda provides a special language for understanding mental physiology and pathology also. The term Vishada is more applicable term to illustrate depression in Ayurveda and manas is used at the place on mind.

In samhitas, Vishada is categorized under Vata nanatmaja vikara[1] and also considered as Apararpanjanya vyadhi[2]. Vayu which is one of the tridoshas (the three bio entities viz., Vata, Pitta and Kapha which are generally more related to sharira) is said to be the controller and promoter of manas. It is also said that the aggravated vayu depresses mind, gives rise to fear, grief, stupefaction, feeling of helplessness, delirium etc. While indicating the need of mental poise for drug action Ayurveda says that no one who has not rid oneself of the evils of both mind and body beginning with the gross one, can ever expect to reap the benefits resulting from vitalization therapy. Basic principles like Dinacharya, Ritucharya, Sadvrutta along with rules of ahara-vihara-achara are described in very initial chapters of each samhita. This clearly indicates how important these principles are for preventive as well as therapeutic aspects in any health related condition. Regular practice of the principles of Dinacharya vidhi (daily rituals) according to specific Ritu (season) along with Sadvrutta are said to be very effective to get control over various mentally impaired conditions including Vishada. They fairly demolish Mano-

Chanchalatva (the inconstancy or fluctuations of mind) and brings-up Chittaprasadanam (serenity of mind).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Categorization of Manas Vyadhi[3]

Acharya sushruta in the very first chapter of sutrasthana has discussed about Chaturvidha Vyadhi as- Agantu, Sharira, Manas and Swabhavika. Vishada is enlisted among the types of manas vyadhi. In the Dalhana commentary of Sushruta Samhita, the definition of vishada is given as- *“Asiddhibhayat vividheshu karmeshu apravritti vishada”*

Vishada is a condition originated from apprehension of failure resulting into incapability of mind and body to function properly. There is a major reduction in both the activities. This condition arises out of low self-worth. Low self-worth results in low performance expectation that again ends up in Udvignata (high anxiety) and Apravritti (reduced effort).

B. Definition of Vishada

Shabda Kalpadruma and Vachaspatyam and Hemachandra referred Vishada as Avasada.

Vishada = Manoavasada = Swakarya Akshamatva = Inability of mind to perform its routine functions effectively[4].

III. HETU OF VISHADA(ETIOLOGY):-

When the desires in mind doesn't fulfill almost everyone appears to be stressed and confused, which can lead to mental disability[5].

As the hetu for vishada has not been explained separately, the common hetus of manas roga can be considered for vishada. Acharya Charaka mentions following causes for manas roga or Vishada[6]:-

- Lack of coordination between mental functions of Dhi (learning), Dhriti (retention) and Smriti (long time memory)
- Imbalance or weakling of Prana Shakti (Life Force)
- Pragyapradha[7] (violation of nature and virtues)

After review of some ayurvedic treatises the hetu for vishada can be summarized as-

- 1) Sharira, manas hetu, lakshana, upadrava swarupa e.g., Ajeerna, Atisara, Unmada, Grahani, Murccha vyadhi
- 2) Manas (rajas-tamas) dushti e.g., *“Ishtasya labhat- alabhat ch anishtasya upajayate”*= Obtaining undesired things and non-acquiring the desired ones.
- 3) Indriya dushti/ Indriya vikruti janita e.g. Ati-Hina-Mitthya yoga of Indriya; Buddhi upaghata; Pradnyaparadha

➤ **Association of Dosha and Mana:-**

Sharira Dosha	Normal functions	Abnormality in Vishada
Prana Vayu(Main)	Buddhi, Hridaya, Indriya, Chittadharana.	Mano bhrama, Anavasthitachitta, Chittodvega, Asiddhi bhayat.
Sadhaka Pitta	Abhiprarthita manoratha sadhanam	
Tarpaka Kapha	Indriya tarpanam	
Manas Dosha	Normal functions	Abnormality in Vishada
Tamas(Main)	Jadata, Nishkriyata, Achetanata, Akriyata	Avasada, Bhaya, Atmano Ashakta Jananam, Apravritti.
Rajas	Gati, Samvegata, Iccha, Lobha, Kama	

➤ **Samprapti Ghataka of Vishada**

Dosha	Manas – Tamas, Rajas (Predominantly Tamas) Sharira - Vata, Pitta, Kapha (Predominantly Vata)
Dushya	Manas, Sarvadhātu
Srotasa	Manovaha Srotas (specifically)
Agni	Jatharagni
Udbhavasthana	Manas (Hridaya)
Adhishtana	Hridaya (Shirohridaya)
Vyaktisthana	Manas, Sarvasharira
Purvarupa	Alpavyakta
Rupa	Manas - Mano bhrama, Anavasthitachitta, Avasada, Atmano Ashakta Jananam, Chittodvega, Asiddhi bhayat, Karmeshu apravritti, Kheda, Dukkhatvam, etc. Sharira - Vepathu, Prasveda, Romaharsha, Gatrasada, Mukhshosha, etc.
Rogamarga	Madhyam

IV. SAMPRAPTI OF VISHADA

Classically, mental imbalances or Manas vikruti, are caused by three bodily humors (vata, pitta and kapha) and two mental humors (rajas & tamas). In case of Vishada aggravation of Tamas and imbalance of Rajas happens at manas level. And depletion of Vata dosha and vitiation of Kapha dosha happens at sharira level.

Acharya Charaka says in 1st chapter of sharir sthana that “Upadha” (desires) is the main etiological factor to produce dukkha (physical and mental

pain/disease/disturbance) in the body. Non-fulfillment of such desires or happening of undesired things leads to imbalance of manas dosha and consequently sharira dosha in a human being. This imbalance has a strong effect on hridaya and buddhi causing utsaha hani (lack of enthusiasm).

Bhakti Vibhrama is an important sign in Vishada on which Chakrapani comments that there is significant loss of interest in the objects previously likened by that person. Mano Vibhrama, Buddhi Vibhrama, Smriti Vibhrama, Sheela Vibhrama and Aachara Vibhrama are some other associated features in Vishada which develop as a result of avasada on Hridaya and Buddhi.

V. MENTAL EXAMINATION FOR VISHADA

The various schemes of clinical examination described in samhitas like Trividha, Ashtavidha, Dashavisha Pariksha; Nidana Panchaka Parikshana do not apply with the same force while examining manas vikara as they do while examining sharira vikara.

Charaka has given the inferences for understanding of certain physical as well as mental aspects briefly. This is included in Anumana Pariksha and such aspects are described as Anumanajanya Bhava. By using this concept Vishada is understood by Bhaya[8].

VI. REGIMEN FOR HEALING FROM VISHADA:- ADRAVYABHUTA CHIKITSA

Wellness is an approach to life where the aim should be at recognizing the risk factors that could lead to life-threatening diseases in the future and thereafter work towards reducing them. In support of its concepts on preservation and promotion of health and prevention of illnesses, Ayurveda lays due stress on various measures to be adopted in order to promote mental health and prevention of health and prevent mental disorders. These measures find lucid descriptions in the chapters devoted to dinacharya (daily regimen), ritucharya (seasonal regimen), sadvritta (code of virtues), roganutpadana (prevention of diseases) and annapanavidhi (rules pertaining to food and drinks), in the classics of ayurveda.

A. Dinacharya -Daily Regimen

Right from waking up in the morning till sleeping at night, all the daily routines is called dincharya and has been given utmost importance in Ayurveda. The approximate times of these Ayurveda contends that routines help establish balance and that understanding daily cycles are useful for promoting health.

- *Snana*[9] - Regularly bathing rejuvenates, relaxes & de-stresses the mind-body, promotes well-functioning of all the senses, brings sound sleep. One should wear clean and sober clothes following snana karma. This makes the mind refreshed and calm[10].
- *Nasya*[11] - As it is well described in Ayurvedic literature, nose is the route to brain or mind. The application of medicated oil or ghee in the nostrils is the

process of Nasya karma. Regular practice of it brings Shirotarpana (nourishment to the mind), Feeling of lightheadedness, sound sleep, Improvement of functional activity of Senses and Mind.

- *Abhyanga*[12] - The word Abhyanga means movement of oil over body parts. This is the best therapy to pacify the provoked vata dosha in the body. As vata is the main dosha for development of Vishada, Abhyanga proved to be best preventive as well as therapeutic remedy for it.
- *Shirobhyanga*[13] - Regular head massage with oil pacifies headache, promotes proper functioning of all the senses, calmness of mind and sound sleep.
- *Padabhyanga*[14] - It is a process of application of oil to the feet. It is best remedy to pacify the vitiated Vata dosha, which is the main culprit for causing mental instability. Regular doing the padabhyanga promotes sound mind, sound sleep; Rejuvenates, relaxes & de-stress body; Tackles depression/ anxiety and other mental instabilities.
- *Nidra*[15] - Proper sleep at night brings mind and body relaxation, calmness, appropriate activities of all the senses, balanced state of tridosha.

B. Ahara-Diet Therapy

Diet is given maximum importance in healthy as well as in diseased status. It is said in ancient Indian literature that if dietetics is followed, medicine is not needed and if dietetics is not observed, even medicines are not useful. Hita Ahara is responsible for the happiness and formation of the body. As per Ayurveda, food affects the mind by causing either an increase or decrease in the three qualities of mind, i.e., Satvaguna, Rajoguna and Tamoguna. Acharya Charaka emphasizes on food which are Satmya(wholesome) to the body like Shaali, Mudga, Yava, Saindhava, Jangala Mamsa etc[16]. They should be consumed regularly for the maintenance of psychosomatic health. Each individual is recommended to follow specific diet & activities based on his Prakriti, as Prakriti determines predisposition to diseases as well as therapy and life-style regime to a large extent.

C. Ritucharya- Seasonal regimen

The human beings' lives are ruled by the seasons, as the seasons' power and temperature automatically change the natural low of the body. By being the time cycles, seasons bring birth, life sustaining, aging and also death. With the proper knowledge on seasons, one can follow the right way of diet and behavior that can harmonize and maintain a stable mind and body[17]. Especially, the various psycho-somatic disorders manifestations will decline by following the correct diet and behavior. Proper seasonal regimen maintains the climatic homologation in the form of Dosha Samya (equilibrium) in different seasons to promote Swasthavrutta on which Ayurveda has laid a great stress because prevention is better than cure. Specific regimen has been mentioned for the six seasons (Shishira, Vasanta, Greeshma, Varsha, Sharad, Hemanta) which also include body purification therapeutic procedures like- Vamana in Vasanta Ritu; Virechana in Sharad Ritu; Basti in Varsha Ritu[18].

D. Vyayama-Exercise[19]

Regular light exercises help one relax and have sound sleep, improves appetite and maintains physical as well as psychological health. It gives the body the ability to withstand exertion, fatigue, and changes in the climate such as fluctuations in temperature.

Also, Yoga and Pranayama helps establishing serenity of mind. To control on Rajas and Tamas one can perform Meditation. Other various means of maintaining mental health are music, yoga, chanting, charity, etc. It enhances sattva guna of mind.

E. Avoidance of Sharira Vega dharana-

Dharana of sharira vega has very strong effect on Hridaya, Shirah, Mana and Indriya[20]. One should avoid holding the natural urges which in turn hampers proper functioning of Marma like Hridaya and Shirah. As the sites of mana are Hridaya and Shirah, vega dharana may be a major cause for various mental disorders including Vishada.

F. Sadvritta-Codes of Conduct-

In order to live a healthy and active life, a sound mind in the sound body is very essential. Therefore, to maintain the healthy status of the mind, Ayurveda prescribes a code of social as well as personal conduct, known as "Sadvritta"[21]. This is the code of conduct for work place, society and family.

Acharya Vagbhata defines sadvritta as compassion for all creatures, sacrificing, control of mind in physical, mental and verbal actions with aid of his wisdom and considering others' feelings as his own and behaving accordingly. Sadvritta is also called as Sadachara. It gives hita-ayu (life beneficial to society) and Sukha-ayu (life which gives individual happiness).

VII. DISCUSSION

Ayurveda considers sharira (body) and Sattva (mind) are interrelated with each other and both follow each other's pattern in terms of functioning. When sharirik dosha get disturbed eventually mansika dosha (rajas and tamas) aggravate thus along with physical illness, mental illness also occurs and vice versa. In Ayurveda numerous factors are playing a main role for pathogenesis of Vishada like Prakruti, Deha Prakruti, Manas Prakruti, Manas Bhava, Triguna and Tridoshas etc. Acharya Charaka has explained that there is a relationship between depression and immunity. He says "*vishado rogavardhananam*" means vishada (depression) is the foremost triggering factor in worsening the disease condition. Chronic illness like kushtha, apparent lesions on body, physical debilities like paralysis etc. eventually demolishes Sattva guna of mind and cause depression. Similar causes can be traced in ayurvedic texts. Apart from psychological factors, dietary factors like incompatible, contaminated and distasteful food also play a major role in causing psychological demotivation.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Ayurveda is essentially preventive in approach; it also has a comprehensive system of curative medicine. Practicing the various swasthya-varadhaka methods in order with ahara-vihara-achara will definitely encourage maintenance of healthy body and mind. The above guidelines on ideal daily and seasonal routines, diet and behavior in management of various mental disorders, Ayurveda prove to be beneficial. Positive and healthy mind helps to build sattva guna, recovers physical ailment fast and keeps body healthy and it can be best achieved by Ayurvedic psychological approach.

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