

THE ROLE OF AYURVEDA IN THE MANAGEMENT OF POST COVID-19 MENTAL HEALTH

Dr. Kavya Kala*

Assistant Professor In Dept. of Kriya Sharia. Himalayiya Ayurvedic Medical College & Hospital (HAMHC), Fatehpur Tanda, Jeevanwala, Via Doiwala, Dehradun, Uttarakhand, India, 248140.

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*Corresponding Author

Dr. Kavya Kala

Assistant Professor In Dept.
of Kriya Sharia. Himalayiya
Ayurvedic Medical College
& Hospital (HAMHC),
Fatehpur Tanda,
Jeevanwala, Via Doiwala,
Dehradun, Uttarakhand,
India, 248140.

ABSTRACT

The world has experienced many pandemics but the pandemic of Covid-19 has left the indelible impressions on the lives of people. It has horrified the whole world with the fear of getting infection, quarantine and loss of their loved ones. The situation gets worsen with the lockdown as many people lost their jobs and some worked for lesser salaries. All these emotion pressure led to the serious psychological problem on many individuals. So, in this article some efforts are made to implement different Ayurvedic principles that can help an individual to prevent and Manage post Covid mental issues.

KEYWORDS: Covid-19, Pandemic, Ayurveda, Tridosha, saptdhatu, trimala and agni.

INTRODUCTION

Due to extreme severity and mortality rate of the disease Covid-19 the WHO has declared it as Pandemic on 11 March 2020. The world was facing the greatest challenge, therefore government all over the globe had imposed lockdown to decrease the spread of virus. Somehow the people Manage situation for few days or months but the situation got intolerable when the government extended the lockdown. Many private sectors got closed due to heavy loss, this resulted in that many people with lost their jobs, some were half paid. The Physical, mental & economic health of the people got degraded. The mental pressure increased with the news of spreading Covid-19 virus by TV, media, newspaper. All have the fear, for the future that how and when the condition will be normal or even, they will be able

to survive. These all conditions made us anxious, depressive, angry, fearful, irritable, stressed.

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a. Era of pandemic: - In the year 2019 when the first case of Covid-19 was reported in Wuhan City of China within four months it was spread to many countries worldwide. On 11th of march 2020 WHO declared it as pandemic. Till now it has infected over 25 million people across the world and affected lives of many. In order to control the spread of virus the government of many countries had put the lockdown, all public gathering were restricted all schools, offices and transport were closed. All the people were restricted to their home. Although the home confinement was proved to be beneficial to check the spread of virus but somehow it changed the lifestyle of many people including children, as all the physical activities, social lives all were restricted. Thus, this increases many emotional and behavioural changes in an individual.

b. Pandemic in Ayurveda: - All natural calamities including pandemic are described as ayurvedic classics that could be seen in Charak Samhita Nidaan Sathan Chapter 3 “Janopadhwansa” the diseases with similar sign and symptoms affected many people at that time and can destroy the whole province. The similar description is also seen in Shshurat Samhita where “Maraka” terminology was used for such pandemic and “Janamaar” by acharaya Bhela. Acharaya Charak mentioned four responsible factors which are involved in spread of disease as Vayu(Air), Jala(Water), Desha(land), and Kala(Seasons), any variation in these factors is the cause of disease. Covid-19 shows similar aetiology mode of transmission, prevention, even the treatment methods like Hetuviprit and vayadiviprit

chikitsa. It was also mentioned that one can survive in such conditions by following proper medications (Dravya collected before onset of disease) Panchkarma, Rasayna sevan. So, our ancient Indian system of medicine was aware of pandemics and even know how to Manage it properly.

c. Health according to Ayurveda: -In Ayurveda the health is define as equilibrium or Tridosha, Saptdhatu, Trimala and Agni along with Atma, Mana and Indriya. Any disturbance in factor will be the cause of disease in an individual. Acharya Charak defined Mana as mind and the factors responsible for its vitiation are Raja and tama, increase in these factors will cause mental disorder. It is clearly Mention in Charak Samitha Nidan Sthan Chapter no.07 “Unmaad”. This condition can be co-related with Covid-19 situation as ayurvedic perspective. Some psychological factors as fear of falling ill-Bhaya (Fear), loosing job due to lockdown-Chinta(stress), Isolation/Quarantine and loss of family and friends-Shoka(grief). Some diet related factors such as lack of food availability, uncalculated diet-Tamsik Aahaar, not proper eating routine and over eating-Visham Ashana, Sama Ashana, Adhva Ashana.

d. Post Covid-19 mental health: - Pandemic not only affected the physical health of people but it has also led to the high level of psychological distress in many. Especially venerable like health workers, pre-existing mental issues patients and female. It has left them struggling with anxiety, depression, personality changes, insomnia, anger, intolerance, grief traumatic disorders. These symptoms are not only common with the people who got infected but also seen in the people who does not get infected especially in females are very prone to such conditions.

e. Importance of mental health: - Mental illness conditions are very common in all countries but it is bitter truth that it mostly neglected by the society because of social stigma, uneducated people and unawareness towards it. There was about 25% increase in mental health sufferings after the Covid-19 first wave and even lot more were suffered in silence. But this needed a lot more attention, care and support, so that one can live healthy life. Although progressive work was done to increase awareness about Mental Health, during Covid-19 pandemic. government has started certain Program Like “National tele Mental Health program” or “District - Mental health program during lockdown”. CIP central Institute of Psychiatry has provided 24/7 Helpline number during Pandemic but these services still remained inaccessible to large number of people, because of certain reasons like language

gaps, as uneducated people, social stigma. In All these unfavourable condition Ayurveda emerged as a boon to everyone. It not only helped to Manage physical health but also helped people with mental health issues.

f.Ayurvedic Management: -Ayurveda classics offers certain useful treatments involve in balancing of all doshas present in brain (Tarpaka Kapha, Sadhaka Pitta and Pranava Vayu)

(i) **Satvavajaya:** - It is behavioural counselling It includes the counselling of the patient and cheering positive vibes to him by enhancing self-confidence, initiating the people for Yoga Meditation and pranayama. These all help them to cope up with their worries, fear, depression and anxiety.

(ii) **Medhya Rasayan Sevan**

- Single Dravya

1. Shankhpushpi (*Convolvulus prostratus* Forssk)

Triterpenoids, Flavanol glycosides, anthocyanins, and steroids may be responsible for Shankhpushpi nootropic and memory-enhancing properties. Psychostimulant, tranquilizer, reduces mental tension, brain tonic in hypotonic syndromes, induce a feeling of calm and peace, relief in anxiety neurosis, stress, mental fatigue, modulation of the neurochemistry of the brain, prominent memory improving drug.

2. Jyotishmati (*Celastrus paniculatus* Willd) The mechanism by which Jyotishmati enhances memory and cognition may be due to increased acetylcholine levels in the brain. The seed oil is used for stimulating intelligence, sharpening memory, and improving IQ in mentally retarded children. The seed oil improves the sensory and motor systems of the brain. It is rich in anti-oxidants that help in stress management.

3. Jatamansi (*Nordostachys jatamansi* Don) The sedative sesquiterpene Valerone is the major component of root essential oil. It is used to increase mental powers and sharpen the intellect. It acts as a natural nervine tonic and a memory booster. It relieves stress by inducing calming and relaxation effects. It prevents neurological degeneration due to its neuroprotective action.

4. Brahmi (*Bacopa monnieri* L. Wettst) Triterpenoids, Flavanol glycosides, anthocyanins, and steroids may be responsible for Shankhpushpi nootropic and memory-enhancing properties. Psychostimulant, tranquilizer, reduces mental tension, brain tonic in hypotonic syndromes, induce a feeling of calm and peace, relief in anxiety neurosis, stress, mental fatigue, modulation of the neurochemistry of the brain, prominent memory improving drug.

5. Shatavari (*Asparagus racemosus* Wild) Shatavari is a body and cerebrum rejuvenator and is brilliant for the mind. Shatavari is high in Saponins and Shatavarins which have antioxidant abilities. It is used to treat depression by impacting the neurotransmitters associated with depression. It prevents aging, increases longevity, improves mental function, and is also used in nervous disorders and neuropathy.

6. Ashwagandha (*Withaniasomnera*) It is helpful in moderate and serious anxiety.

- Compound drugs

1. Chavanprash
2. Brahmivati
3. Brahmighrit
4. Manasmitravati
5. Kalyanakgrita

(iii) **Panchkarma** - Panchkarma also help to reduces stress level in patient.

1. Shirodhara: - Most effective therapy by medicated oil. The oil is continuously poured over the forehead and then allowed to flow over the scalp for certain period of time. Bala taila and Mahanarayan taila are most effective to reduces the level of stress and relaxes the mind by controlling Adrenaline and Non- Adrenaline secretions.

2. Abhyang: - The process includes application of medicated oil all over the body. It provides energy & strength to the body. And thus stimulate our nervous system thus reduces the stress level in the body. Oil like Chandanadi, Mahanarayan and Bala taila is mostly used in the therapy

3. Nasya:- The Nose is the door to consciousness. The process includes the administering herbs infused oil to relief headaches, anxiety, stress and stimulate the nervous system. Example Anu Taila, Sadhabindu taila is mostly used in this therapy.

(iv) **Yoga & meditation:** - Yoga helps us in maintaining good mental & physical health. It restores, are emotional balance. It is growing evidence that yoga can have a positive impact over depression, anxiety stress and fear. Certain yogic kriya like Shavasana, Balaashana, Sarvangashana, Bharamari, helps us to maintain and manage our mental health.

CONCLUSION

Ayurvedic classics are very rich source of information which not only cures the disease but also provides long term benefits in many diseases and establish the equilibrium in the body to

maintain wellbeing of the individual. All these above-mentioned Managements proves to be very helpful in attaining positive mental health.

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