



Review Article

A PRAGMATIC PLAN FOR THE MENTAL HEALTH CONSEQUENCES DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC THROUGH AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Beyond infection, the COVID-19 pandemic has also affected individuals through associated mental illnesses like anxiety and stress and has caused a collateral damage. Ayurveda has described 3 main factors which are responsible for the occurrence of diseases, one of them is *Prajnaparadha*, which is stated as the main cause for all the mental illness. The threefold treatment principles of *Daivavyapashraya*, *Yuktivyapashraya* and *Satvavajaya* targeting the *Ahara*, *Achara* and *Chesta* is an ideal plan to deal with stress built up in this pandemic.

Materials and methods: The Ayurvedic classical textbooks and the peer reviewed articles focusing mental health researches were reviewed. This plan involves the implementation of *Daivavyapashraya*, *Yuktivyapashraya* and *Satvavajaya* based on the exposure and exhibition of symptoms of COVID-19. *Daivavyapashraya Chikitsa* is employed by *Vishnusahasranama* recitation/listening, *Yuktivyapashraya Chikitsa* is employed by the various drugs like *Bramhi*, *Shankapushpi*, *Ashwagandha* etc. and formulations which have psycho-neuro-immune-response, *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* by the process of counseling.

Results and Discussion: The interdependent nature of immunity and psychological state is already well established and it decides the outcome of disorders. An immune response can be largely affected by mental well-being and mental illness can negatively affect its outcome.

Conclusion: The three fold treatment plan centering the pshycho-neuro-immune action is a complete health promotive, preventive and curative plan and will certainly help in the revival of mental health in the times and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

INTRODUCTION

The cause of the psychological effects of COVID-19 is likely to be multifaceted. It includes direct effects of viral infections (including brain infections), cerebrovascular disease (including the context of procoagulant status) and level of immune system (e.g. increased levels of inflammatory cytokines and antibody production), The social isolation and stigma of this potentially dangerous illness causes serious Psychological impact.

The immune response to sars-cov-2 infection includes a hyperinflammatory state similar to that observed in haemo phagocytic lymphohistiocytosis where there is an increase in the concentration of the active proteins c, ferritin, and interleukin-6.^[1]

The link between inflammation and depression is well-defined and may explain other mental illnesses.^[2] Previous epidemiological studies suggest that a variety of neuropsychiatric symptoms may arise in the context of acute viral infection, or after a variety of periods. Reports from the 18th and 19th Century Influenza suggest an increase in the incidence of various neuropsychiatric symptoms, such as insomnia, anxiety, depression, mania, psychosis, and delirium.^[3]

In SARS and MERS, after recovering from an infection, sleep disturbances, frequent recollection of traumatic memories, emotional debt, impaired

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concentration, fatigue, and dysfunctional memory were reported in more than 15% of patients in the follow-up period ranging from six weeks to 39 months.^[3]

Chinese researchers tested psychological responses during the onset of the COVID-19 epidemic in large populations. They found that 53.8% of respondents rated the psychological impact of emergence as moderate or severe, 16.5% reported moderate to severe symptoms, and 28.8% reported moderate and severe anxiety symptoms.^[3] A study in China during the COVID-19 epidemic showed that about 35% of respondents suffered from depression.^[4] There were also many research works quoting that negative emotions such as anxiety, depression, and anger increased.^[5]

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To address the influence of COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of the public
- Conceptual study of the *Manovikaras* w.r.t. *Vishada* (depression), *Chittodwega* (anxiety), and *Aswapna* (insomnia) in the present scenario.
- An approach to propose a pragmatic plan of Ayurvedic intervention for the mental health consequences in three fold treatment plan which includes *Daivavyapashraya*, *Satvavajaya* and *Yuktivyapashraya Chikitsa*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Various research articles from different databases such as PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, DHARA were reviewed. Articles were searched to establish a connecting link between COVID-19 and Mental health. Ayurvedic textbooks such as Brihatrayees and Laghutrayees were reviewed to study the understanding of mental health disorders and their treatment. Research papers containing the detailed information about the *Vishada*, *Chittodwega* and *Aswapna*; role of *Satvavajaya*, *Daivavyapashraya* and *Yuktivyapashraya* were studied in detail.

Ayurveda and Manas

Satva, *Atma* and *Shareera* are called *Tridanda*, a strong support system of the body.^[4] The medical system successfully since the ancient times was well aware of the importance of the mind. The definition of *Swastha Purusha* by *Sushrutan* includes *Prasanna atmaindriya Mana* which means that the mind, soul and senses contribute to human health.^[5]

Tamas, *Rajas*, *Satva* are the three *Gunas* of the mind, if the balance is lost between them the pathology begins. Charaka's view of life is based on the paradox of the interconnected world. This can be determined by *Sharira* (body), *Indriya* (senses), *Satva* (mind), *Atma* (Complete consciousness). *Vishada* and *Chittodwega* are grouped under *Vataja Nanatmaja Vikaras*.^[6] *Nidra* is the sumtotal of *Tamo Bhava* and *Kapha dosha* and

involved *Manas* in its manifestation^[7]. *Nidra* is also one of the *Trayoupastambha* which is essential for a healthy life. The features of *Vishada* can be correlated to depression and *Chittodwega* with anxiety disorders, *Aswapna* with insomnia. For all the *Manovikaras*, *Gyana* (*Atmagyana*, knowledge of the self), *Vigyana* (*Shastragyana*), *Dhairya* (*Dheerata*, Courage), *Smriti* (*Smaranashakti*, Memory) and *Samadhi* (focusing on oneself not the thoughts created by own) are the five important treatment principles.^[8]

Thus, a critical study of the classics offers certain clinically useful treatment principles and descriptions pertaining to the treatment of *Manasavikaras* in Ayurveda.

Daivavyapashraya chikitsa

In ancient Ayurvedic tremors one can find the use of *Daivavyapashraya Chikitsa*. Charaka Samhita employs *Daivavyapashraya Chikitsa* as one of the three therapies mentioned for *Sharirikadosha* (bodily elements) and *Manasikadosha* (Psychological attributes). Acharya Chakrapani explains that *Daivavyapashraya Chikitsa* is the first to be mentioned among the three types of treatment because its mechanism of action cannot be analysed as it acts due to *Prabhava* (unknown / unexplained action method).^[9]

- Employed by playing *Vishnusahasranama* (*Vishama jwaraprakarana*) / *Shivastotra* (*Unmadaprakarana*)
- Or any *Stotra* (hymn) known by the patient.
- Chanting done twice daily (morning and evening).
- If not able to chant, it is made to listen twice daily (morning and evening).

Satvavajaya chikitsa^[10]

The word "Sattva" springs from the Sanskrit root "Sat" + "ktva" = Manas. *Avajaya* - translated as "victory over" or "defeat" which also means to take over or to uplift. These means *Satvavajaya* is not only victory over mind but it is victory with upliftment of mind (Fig.1) It is achieved by withdrawal of mind from unwholesome *Arthas*, it consists of *Manoarthas* (*Chintya*, *Vicharaya*, *Uhya*, *Dheyaand Sankalpa*) and *Gyanaarthas* (*Shabda*, *Sparsha*, *Rupa*, *Rasa* and *Gandha*) *Ahita* (*Heena*, *Mithya* and *Atiyoga*).

In the present era combined medication and psychotherapy have become the most common way to plan psychiatry in the current practice. *Satvavajaya* involves a process of counseling and empowerment of the individual. *Satvavajaya*, in short, is a mental exercise designed to carry out the process of guiding a persons mind in dealing with natural stress and calming and balancing emotional stresses. (Table 1)

Yuktivyapashraya chikitsa

Yuktivyapashraya chikitsa is the logical use of *Ahaara* and *Aushadha*.^[12]

Considering the above discussed principles a Pragmatic Plan has been proposed for the management of mental health consequences (Table 2).

Post COVID Management

- *Mridu Panchakarma-Vamana, Virechana, Basti, Nasya*
- *Shirodhara*
- *Shirobasti*
- *Sarvanga Abhyanga* followed by *Sarvanga Swedana*
- *Anjana Prayoga*
- *Dhumapana*

Ayurveda Drugs and their Role in Mental Health Disorders

- *Brahmi (Bocopa monnieri)*- Neuroprotective, effective in acute stress and chronic unpredictable stress, anti-depressive.^[11]
- *Jatamams I (Nardostachys jatamansi)*- Stress modifying antioxidant, herbal anxiolytic.^[12]

- *Tagara (Valeriana wallichii)*- Effective against insomnia, antidepressant.^[13]
- *Vacha (Acoros calamus)*- Anti-depressant, effective against neurosis and anxiety.^[14]
- *Kushta (Saussurea lappa)*- antianxiolytic, anti-depressant.^[15]
- *Yashtimadhu (Glycyrrhiza glabra)*- Effective in *Anidra*, antidepressant, anxiolytic.^[16]
- *Amalaki (Phyllanthus emblica)*- Effective in postnatal depression, effective menopausal depression.^[17]
- *Ashwagandha (Withania somnifera)*- Reduces stress, neuroprotective, anti-depressant, anxiolytic.^[18]
- *Shatavari (Asparagus racemosus)*- Anxiolytic.^[19]
- *Kushmanda (Benincasa hispida)*- Anti-depressive, effective in bipolar disorder and obsessive compulsive disorder, effective in generalized anxiety disorder.^[20]

Table 1: Treatment principles of Manasika Vikaras (Psychiatric illness) of Ayurveda

<i>Jnana</i>	<i>Adhyatama Jnana</i>	
<i>Vigyana</i>	<i>Shastra Jnana</i>	Knowledge of the self and the higher self - Hope
<i>Dhairya</i>	<i>Anannunati Cheatsaha</i>	Knowledge about the scriptures, about how to overcome difficulties, in the present situation the knowledge about the spread and prevention of COVID -19 - Skill to overcome and face difficulties
<i>Smriti</i>	<i>Anubhutartha Smarana</i>	To be brave, calmness of mind - Courage
<i>Samadhi</i>	<i>Vishaebhyo Nivartyatmani Manaso Niyamanam</i>	To think about the other people who are facing the same and also thinking about the family Support system - Awareness
		Not allowing the mind to over think but focus on the good and the inner self - Focus

Table 2: Ayurvedic Management of Mansaika Vikaras (Psychiatric illness) in Ayurveda

Disease	Unexposed individuals	Individuals in quarantine / high risk group	Mild-moderate symptoms of COVID-19
<i>Vishada</i>	1. <i>Vachachurna</i> (3g)+ <i>Madhu</i> (q.s) 2. <i>Brahmi swarasa</i> (10ml) + <i>Madhu</i> (10ml) 3. <i>Dinacharya</i> + <i>Pathyasevana</i>	1. <i>Vacha Kwatha</i> (20ml) + <i>Kushtachurna</i> (2g)+ <i>Madhu</i> 2. <i>Saraswatachurna</i> (3g-6g) with <i>Ghrita</i> (10ml) + <i>Madhu</i> (5ml) 3. <i>Brahmighrita</i> (10g) 4. <i>Dinacharya</i> + <i>Pathyasevana</i>	1. <i>Ksheera</i> + <i>Shatavarichurna</i> (3g-6g) 2. <i>Tilataila</i> (5-10ml)+ <i>Lashunaswarasa</i> (10ml) 3. <i>Panchagavyaghrita</i> 10ml 4. <i>Vacha Kwatha</i> (40ml) + <i>Kushtachurna</i> (2g) + <i>Madhu</i> 5. <i>Brahmiswarasa</i> + <i>Madhu</i>
<i>Chittodwega</i>	1. <i>Kushmandaphalaswarasa</i> (50ml)+ <i>Kushtachurna</i> (1g)+ <i>Madhu</i> (10g) 2. <i>Kushmandabeejamajja</i> (10g)+ <i>Madhu</i> (10g) 3. <i>Dinacharya</i> + <i>Pathyapalana</i>	1. <i>Kushmandaghrita</i> (10g) 2. <i>Ashwagandha</i> (3g-6g) with <i>Ksheera</i> (10-15ml) 3. <i>Manasamitravataka</i> 2-2-2 4. <i>Dinacharya</i> and <i>Pathyapalana</i>	1. <i>Kalyanakaghritaprayoga</i> (10ml) 2. <i>Brhamighrita</i> (10ml) 3. <i>Ashwagandha Shatavari</i> (3g) with <i>Ksheera</i> (10-15ml) 4. <i>Kushmandarasayana</i> 10g 5. <i>Pathyapalana</i>
<i>Aswapna</i>	<i>Advise</i> 1. <i>Vyavama</i>	1. <i>Tagara</i> 1-1-1 2. <i>Brahmivati</i> 1-1-1	1. <i>Shirolepa/talam</i> with <i>Jatamamsichurna</i> +

2. <i>Dhyana</i> 3. <i>Dinacharya</i> and <i>Pathyapalana</i> 4. <i>Tagara</i> 1-1-1 5. <i>Murdhni taila</i>	3. <i>Dhyana</i> 4. <i>Vyayama</i> 5. <i>Dinacharya</i> and <i>Pathya palana</i> 6. <i>Murdhni taila</i>	<i>Amalakichurna</i> 2. <i>Shatavari + Ashwaganda with Ksheera</i> 3. <i>Brahmivati</i> 1-1-1 4. <i>Dhyana</i> 5. <i>Pathya palana</i>
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DISCUSSION

A Pandemic is not just a medical issue, it affects people and the community and causes anxiety, anxiety, depression, depression, stigma and other related factors. The effects of this pandemic on your mental health have not been studied for a long time and are still unknown. Currently, all efforts are focused on understanding clinical features, infectious diseases, transmission mechanisms and management of COVID-19 outbreaks. There have been very few concerns expressed about the consequences for one's mental health and discrimination prevention strategies. In this time of extreme crisis the nation's response to the pandemic has raised questions about the mental health and resilience of its people. In the last few decades, there has been growing Ayurveda recognition of clinical practice and research in the field of psychiatry. According to Ayurveda mental health is brought about as a result of harmony between oneself, with others and that of the environment, and influenced by biological and social factors. The vitiation of *Mansikadoshas*, *Raja* and *Tama* and vitiated *Dhi*, *Dhriti* and *Smriti* affect the daily routine of people which are the root causes of mental disorders. The mental disorders viz. *Unmada* (psychosis), *Apasmara* (convulsive disorder), *Apatantraka* (hysteria), *Atattvabhinivesha* (obsession), *Gadodvega* (hypochondriasis), *Chittodvega* (anxiety), *Vishada* (depression) etc. are described in Ayurveda. *Daivavyapashraya*, *Yuktivyapashraya* and *Satvavajaya* are the three major modalities for the treatment of mental disorders the three fold treatment plan upholds these principles and is the need of the hour to calm minds and help us to hold on and fight against the pandemic situation.

CONCLUSION

The three fold treatment which includes *Daivavyapashraya*, *Satvavajaya* and *Yuktivyapashraya* will definitely be effective in the mental health consequences during and also after the pandemic. The mechanism of Neuro-psycho-immune mechanisms of the drugs and formulations impart complete health which promotes longevity and happiness to the population.

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