

AYURVEDIC GUIDELINE FOR MENTAL HEALTH- A REVIEW ARTICLE

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ABSTRACT

Occurrence of mental diseases like Epilepsy, Depression, Schizophrenia, Alzheimer's disease etc. are increasing in number day by day in this modern era .WHO has recently declared this year for global campaign on depression. More than 300 million people are living with depression. The goal of this campaign is that more people with depression everywhere in the world get help. Let us contribute WHO by summaries some of the guidelines from *Ayurvedic texts* to maintain and improve the mental health. By which we enjoy 'Sukha' (happiness) in its real sense. Guidelines are as follows: *Dincharya and Ritucharya* (Daily and Seasonal regimen), *Aahar, Nidra, Maithuna* (Dietary regimen, sleep and sexual activity), *Samshodhan* therapies (Particular treatment methods), *Medhya Rasayana* (Nootropic drugs), *Achar Rasayan* and *Sadvritta* (Code of conduct).

Keywords: Daily regimen, Mental health, *Rasayana, Samshodhana*

INTRODUCTION

*Dosha, Dhatu, Mala hi Mulam Shariram*¹
Since the human body is constituted of humours (*Doshas- Vat, Pitta, Kapha*), excretions (*Malas - Feaces, Urine, Sweat, Nail, Hair*) and the fundamental principles (*Dhatus – Ras, Rakta, Mansa, Med, Asthi, Majja, Shukra*) etc.

A person with an uniformly healthy digestion, and whose bodily humors are in a state of equilibrium, and in whom the fundamental

vital fluids course in their normal state and quantity, accompanied by the normal processes of secretion, organic function, and intellection, is said to be a healthy person.²

Ayurved the ancient medical science of life believes that the entire worldly life depends on the combination of three tripoids³ (Mind, soul and Body). The trio includes eleven sense organs including mind along with their subjects, intelligence and ego the later two are

included under 'soul' while the former one under body. The mind occupies a very important place in this trio inasmuch the entire activities relating to the body are controlled by it. Whatsoever is useful after death, whatsoever is good for the present life, and whatsoever is supreme for attaining salvation are based on the tranquility of the mind of an individual.⁴ So we may not neglect the proper state of one's mind. To keep one's mind healthy (*Satvpradhan and free from Rajas and Tamasmanas dosha*) *Ayurveda* have lot of references. Some of these are as follows:

1. DINCHARYA & RITUCHARY (DAILY & SEASONAL REGIMEN):

Good health can be maintained in two ways that is by replenishing the used up *Dhatu* (tissue elements) of the body by proper diet and regimen and by removing the obstacles in the path of good health. The maintenance of the flame of a lamp may be cited here in this connection the flame of the lamp is maintained by providing oil and wick thereto and also by removing its extinguishing factor like insects, wind etc. the obstacles in the path of good health are of two kinds that is those vitiating *Vata* etc. due to non observance of the ethical rules, and also those natural factors which are difficult to overcome like the exposure to *Hemant* or Winter season which vitiates *Kapha*. **DINCHARYA & RITUCHARY** (daily and seasonal regimen) deals with the factors responsible for the maintenance of good health while the *Samshodhana* (Purification of the body-according to the Season) deals with the removal of obstacles in its way. The idea underlines the prevention of physical as well as

mental diseases are that one should follow daily and seasonal regimen with due regard to grow up and alleviate such of the aggravated *Doshas* as are liable to produce diseases in routine and due to seasonal effects.

Dincharya (Daily regimen) particular for mental health:

- **Dharaniya Vega** (Urges to be controlled) : Who is desirous of mental health and happiness in this life and hereafter (life in the other world) should control the urges of greed, envy, hatred, jealousy, love (desire) etc. and gain control over his sense organs.¹³
- **Nasya** (Medicated nasal drops): All sensory organs (ear, eye, nose, tongue and skin) become powerful and prevent related disorder⁵ *Pratimarsha Nasya* nourishes the vital centers of the brain internally and permanently. One can protect his *Dhee*, *Dhriti*, and *Smriti* (intelligence, capacity of retaining, memory power) for a long enough.
- **Shirah sneha** (Apply Oil over head): Daily applying oil by different methods like –*Shirodhara*, *Shiroabhyng*, *Shirahpichu*, *Shirobasti* etc. Applying oil on the scalp enhances the blood circulation and relieves fatigue, reduces tension and worries, increases peace and calm, produces sound sleep and cheerfulness.⁶ These are external methods and benefits will be temporary.
- **Dhoompan** (medicated smoking): Oral *Dhoompan* maintains the alertness of the mind. *Prayogik Dhoompan* should be used on daily routine⁷ to reduce drowsiness

(*Avarana* of *Kapha Dosha*) and increase sharpness of mind.

- *Prakshalana* (Cleans the feet and excretory orifices): Frequently cleaning the feet and excretory orifices (with water, earth etc.) promotes intelligence.⁸
- *Vastradhaarana, Gandhamala Nishevanam & Ratnadharan* (Use of clean dress, fragrance garlands and ornaments): It increases the pleasure of mind and auspiciousness.⁹
- *Danda Dharanam* (Use of hand stick): The use of walking stick averts fear from the attack of reptiles etc.¹⁰

The above mentioned daily regimen will help in enhance mental capacities (provoke *Stava* and reduces *Rajas* and *Tamas Dosha*) by eliminating the humors like vitiated *Vata, Pitta, Kapha*.

(Seasonal regimen):

Ritu that means seasons including winter, summer and rainy also described as time in *Ayurveda*. It is the most important factor inasmuch as it is indispensable in character. One should follow the dietetics and regimen according to seasons for fitness. Because the Seasonal regimen will maintain the physical health which automatically maintain the mental health , Mind is placed in the body and functionally both are interconnected. Natural *Kapha Prakop* in *Vasant*, *Vata Prakop* in *Varsha* and *Pitta Prakop* in *Sharad* will disturb the mental function with physical function and increase *Moha* (sleep like condition), *Chanchalta* (unsteady) and *Krodha* (Anger) like mental faculties accordingly

which may affect the performance, self control, personality, attitude, concentration, memory etc. By which one may sustain easily for mental disorders like Depression, Insanity, and Dementia etc.

To get rid from such conditions we must follow the detoxification procedure also with seasonal dietetics and regimen particularly recommended in *Ayurvedic* text e.g. in *Vasant* (spring season) – *Vamankarma* (Emesis), in *Varsha* (Rainy season)- *Bastikarma* (medicated Enema), in *Sharada* (autumn season)- *Virechana Karma* (Purgation)¹¹ to eliminate such provoked pathogenic *Doshas* like *Kapha, Vata, Pitta* accordingly .

In *Ritusandhikal* (Time between two seasons) diet of the running season should be reduce slowly and diet of the fore coming season should be adept for preventive aspect. So body can easily compensate with whether without any pathology.

2. AHAR, NIDRA, MAITHUNA (DIETARY REGIMEN, SLEEP & SEXUAL ACTIVITY):

When most people think of boosting their brain power, they think of learning something new or engaging in thought-provoking debate. As it turns out, one of the best ways to improve your mental health is through your gut. Like your brain, the gut has its own nervous system, which sends information to the brain via the vagus nerve. This helps explain why you might feel queasy when you're nervous or stressed. Just as the brain impacts the gut, what we put in our gut can impact the functioning of the brain. Here are some dietary intake methods and groups

shown in our literature that keep the mind working at its best:

a) Intake methods of Diet:

Aharvidhivisheshaayan: The eight factors which determine the utility or otherwise of various types of food are : 1) *Prakrti* (nature of the food articles.) 2) *Karana* (method of their processing) 3) *Samyog* (combination) 4) *Rasi* (quantity) 5) *Desh* (habitate) 6) *Kala* (time- stage of the disease or the state of the individual) 7) *Upyogsamstha* (Rules governing the intake of food) 8) *Upyokta* (wholesomeness to the individual who takes it). These eight factors are associated specifically with useful and harmful effects of diet and they are conditioned by one another. One should try to understand them and after understanding, he should resort to useful things alone. Neither due to ignorance nor intentionally, one should resort to such food articles or other things (drugs, regimens etc.) as are instantaneously pleasing but harmful in the long run leading to unhappy consequences.¹²

Aharvidhividhan : Healthy individuals as well as (some of the) patients should observe the following, even, while using such of the food articles as are most wholesome by nature: one should eat only that food in proper quantity which is hot, unctuous and not contradictory in potency and that too, after the digestion of the previous meal. Food should be taken in proper place equipped with all the accessories, without talking and laughing, with concentration of mind and paying due regard to oneself.¹³

Indicated food:

One should regularly take *Sashtika* (a kind of rice harvested in sixty days), *Shali* (*Oryza sativum* Linn.) , *Mudga* (*Phaseolus mungo* Linn.), *Saindhav* (Rock salt) , *Aamlaki* (*Emblica officinalis* Gaertn.), rain water, *Ghee*, meat of animals dwelling in arid climate and honey.¹⁴

Selected items from group of diet increase intelligence:

- *Jalavarga* (Group of water): Rain water stimulates the intellect.¹⁵
- *Dugdhavarga* (Group of milk): Cow milk increases intelligence.¹⁶
- *Ghee- Medhya (intelligence)*, *Smruti vardhaka (Memory booster)*¹⁷
- *Puran ghrit- Medhya*¹⁸
- *Navneet (Butter) – Medhya*¹⁹
- *Dhanya- Dhot odana (Rense Rice)– Manogna (suitable for mind)*²⁰
- *Shimbidhanya varga* (Group of legums or pulses): *Til* (*Sesamum*) increases intelligence.²¹
- *Kushmand* – the ash Gourd (*Benincasa cerifera*)– *Chetovikar (Mental disorders)*²²
- *Lasuna- Garlic (Allium Sativum)- Meghavardhaka (increase intelligency)*²³
- *Ksheer Palandu(Allium cepa)- Medhya*²⁴
- *Vastuk – Lambs Quarters (Chenopodium album)- Medhya*²⁵
- *Kandavarga- Vidari (Pueraria tuberosa), Kasher- Waterchestnu (Scirpuskysoor), etc. Megha Agni vardhaka*²⁶
- *Tiktaras (bitter taste)- Increase intelligence*²⁷
- *Shadras: Madhur ras (sweet)- Murchaaprashmanh (Improve*

*unconsciousness, Shadendriyprasadana (Suitable for six sensory organ)*²⁸

- *Amla ras (sour): Manobodhayti (increase awareness) Matulung Nimbu- Citron (Citrus medica)*²⁹
- **Mamsavaarga (Group of Meats):** *Titir-Medhya*³⁰
*Parishushka mamsa (Dried meat) – Bala, Megha, Agni vardhaka (Increase strength, intelligence and digestive power)*³¹
*Krakar & Mayur (meat of peacock) - Megha vardhak*³²
- **Aushadh (Medicine):** *Haritaki (Terminalia Chebula)*³³, *Bhallata (Semicarpus anacardium)*³⁴ increase intelligence
*Erand Taila- Caster oil (Ricinus communis)- Megha, Smrutivardhaka*³⁵
*Gomutra (Cow urine)- Medhya*³⁶
*Gambhari Phala (Gmelina arborea)- Medhya*³⁷
- Nidra (Sleep):** Happiness and unhappiness, nourishment and emaciation, strength and debility, sexual powers and impotency, knowledge and ignorance, life and death all are dependent on sleep.³⁸ One should take enough sleep up to 6 to 8 hours daily.
- **Maithuna (Sexual activity):** Good memory, intelligence, long life, health, nourishment, acuity of sense organs, reputation, strength and slow ageing accrue from disciplined (controlled) indulgence in the woman.³⁹
Above mentioned guideline are useful to maintain mental health. While therapies mentioned below are helpful to increase the strength of mental capacity.

3. SAMSHODHANA (PURIFACTORY THERAPIES- PANCHKARMA):

Before use of *Rasayana* (rejuvenation therapy) we must go for accordingly *Samshodhana* therapy (*Snehan, Swedana, Panchkarma & Raktamokshana*) to get excellent benefit of the single or compound drug for mental power. Like a dirty cloth couldn't catch the color without proper wash.

Sanshodhanafala- By the administration of *Samshodhan* therapy the vitiated *Dosha* are eliminated from the body through the elementary tract, the power of digestion and metabolism is enhance, diseases are cured and his normal health is restored, the sense faculties mind, intelligence and complexion become clear, he gains strength, plumpness, offspring's and virility, he is not affected by old age and lives long without any disease therefore one should take proper elimination therapy in time. Clarity of mental function and keenness of the sense organ, achieved by properly purification of body.⁴⁰

4. MEDHYA RASAYAN (NOOTROPIC DRUGS): *Mandukparni, Shankpushpi, Yastimadhu, Guduchi* -these drugs are wholesome for intellect, among of them *Shankpushpi* is the drug for excellence further promotion of intellect.⁴¹

Acharyas has mentioned some *Rasayana* therapies that increase the intellect, memory power etc. such are- *Brahmrasayana, Chyavanprash, Amlaki Rasayana, Haritaki Rasayana, Aindra Rasaya, Piipli Rasayana, Trifala Rasayana, Shilajit Rasayana* etc.⁴² *Chatushkuvalaya Ghrita* increase intellect in human being and in animal also.⁴³, *Chitrak*

*Rasyan*⁴⁴, *Bakuchi – Medhya pryog & Vacha-Buddhi smruti vardhaka*⁴⁵

4. **ACHARRASAYANA&SADVRITTA** **(CODE OF CONDUCT):**

Achaarrasayana: Persons who are truthful and free from anger, who don't indulge in violence or exhaustion, who practice *Japa*, cleanliness, stable and steady, charity and *Tapa*, who are habitual to take milk and ghee, regular awakening and sleep, who are experts in knowledge of rationality, ego free, who have good conduct, not narrow mind, who have spiritual knowledge, excellent sense organs conditions, who have reverence for seniors, *Astiks*, and persons having self control and who regularly study scriptures get the best out of rejuvenation therapy.⁴⁶ One who follows these *Acharrasayana* may not get any physical or mental disorder.

Sadvritta palana: The one desirous of his own well being should perform noble acts with proper care.⁴⁷

- One should not make friends with children, old, the greedy, the fools, persons under affliction or the eunuchs, not insult anybody.
- One should not inclination towards wine, gambling or prostitutes, should not expose secret part of body.
- One should not speak too much nor one should out's kins folk, persons attached, persons who had helped during the time of misery and those who know secrets.(One should speak appropriate to the occasion, with words which are good, in brief, which is not untrue and which is pleasing...⁴⁸

- One should not be impatient or over-bold, not neglect the maintenance of servants, not have non-reliance on his own kins man, not enjoy alone, neither rely on everybody nor suspect everybody.
- One should not have uncomfortable character, conduct, manners and diseases, not be too meticulous at all times.
- One should not be in the habit of postponing things nor should one indulge in any activity without proper examination.
- One should not be a slave to senses no one should let loose his fickle mind.
- One should not inflict too much burden over the intellect or the senses.
- One should not do things in a fit of anger or rejoicing, not be under continued grief, not be conceited over achievements nor be disparate in loss, and not lose spirit no one should remember his insults.
- One should always remember his own nature and have faith in the correlation of the cause and effect and should always act on it.
- *Yagna*- One desirous of his own well-being, should offer oblations to the fire with cow ghee, intact rice grains, *Tila* (Sesamum), *Kusha grass* (Demostachya bipianata Staff.) and mustard seeds .
- One should assiduously follow the path of *Brahmacharya* knowledge, charity, friendship, compassion, happiness, detachment and peace.

All human activities are meant for the happiness of all the living beings, such happiness is based on *Dharma* (righteousness, right moral conduct) hence every person should adopt righteousness always.⁴⁹

One should be very helpful even to his foes, even though they are not helpful. One should maintain a single mind (balance mind) during the period of wealth as well as during calamity. One should be envious of the cause of wealth, happiness, well-being etc. of others but not be jealous of the effect.⁵⁰

DUSCUSSION

Mental health professionals have significantly underestimated the importance of lifestyle factors as contributors to and treatments of multiple psychopathologies, for fostering individual and social wellbeing, and for preserving and optimizing cognitive function. There is no such mental health guideline available in modern science but in ancient literature of *Ayurveda* certain therapeutic guideline like *Dincharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Aahar*, *Nidra*, *Maithuna*, *Samshodhan* therapies, *Medhya Rasyana*, *Achar Rasayana* and *Sadvritta* are suggested to prevent abnormal condition of mind. The efforts are essential to keep the normal level of basic fundamentals – *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* as they are equally responsible for the fitness of physic as well as mind. Normal *Vata* restrains and impels the mental activities. Vitiated *Vata* perturbs the mind; it gives rise to fear, anxiety, bewilderments, humility and delirium. Normal *Sadhak Pitta* causes velour, joy and happiness while abnormal *Sadhak Pitta* creates fear, anger and bewilderments. Normal *Kapha* create enthusiasm, wisdom and awareness. Abnormal *Kapha* create laziness and ignorance. Likewise uncontrolled mental urges increase the *Raja* and *Tama* (*Manas Doshas*) and looses it's real property of intelligence,

memory, peace, concentration, cheerfulness etc. by which we can perform our mental functions properly. These urges also effect on the physical function like metabolism, hormonal secretion, circulation etc. as per example a lady with full of anger, envy etc. and lack of love cannot produce sufficient milk for her baby. Mentally disturbed man may not digest food properly. Anger may lead to state of hypertension, tendency of bleeding, fever etc. Fear may lead Diarrhea. In disease condition these urges if not controlled then the pathology will increase.

To control the mental urges elaborate descriptions like *Acharrasayana* and *Sadvritta* are helpful. The eminent *Acharya* further suggested if, on the other hand, the abnormal conditions have already been created, they can be cured by acting, in contradistinction with the place, time and once own constitution including temperament. So the positive health can be maintain by due performance of the acts as prescribed in scripture. One desirous of his own well being in this world and world beyond should try his level best to follow the principles of health relating to diet, conduct and action with proper care. Knowledge about the prescriptions of authoritative sages and assimilation of such instructions as mentioned above can only help to keep mind healthy.

CONCLUSION

The regimen for the *Dincharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Aahar*, *Nidra* and *Maithuna* will help in the maintenance of the equilibrium of the basic fundamental of the body that is *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Mala*. *Samshodhana* therapy will detoxify the body and improve cognitive

function. *Medhya Rasyana* will increase the potency of mind. *Achar Rasayana and Sadvritta* will change our negative attitude and approach into positive.

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