




Role of *Charakokta Medhya Rasayana* in the Management of Psychosomatic Disorders

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ABSTRACT:

In Ayurveda, composition of *Sharira* (Physical body), *Indriya* (developed sensory apparatus), *Sattva* (mind) and *Atma* (the conscious element) is defined as *Ayu*, and *Sattva*, *Atma* and *Sharira* are stated as the three pillars of the world. This shows the strong inter relationship between the psyche and the body. So the state of health or disease mainly depends on these two, the mental status of a person affects his physical response to a particular condition as well as to handle stress. This affects the potential appearance and severity of psychosomatic disorders. The incidence of psychosomatic diseases has shown a tremendous increase throughout the world in past few years, and this is all because of faulty life style and stress full environment. *Ayurveda* is blessed with *Rasayana* to prevent these problems as it works not only on healthy peoples but on diseased too. In one hand it promotes the formation of better quality body tissues by this promoting the physical health; on the other hand it enhances the mental status of the individual and by this promoting the psychic health. *Ayurveda* describes a special class of promotive agents called *Medhya Rasayana* claimed to promote mental health. So rasayana therapy can be taken as a new approach for prevention and treatment of psychosomatic disorders.

Keywords: Psychosomatic disorders, *Rasayana*, *Medhya Rasayana*.

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, where the most of the communicable and nutritional causes of ill health have been almost eradicated, stress, worry, tension, anxiety, fear, grief provoke psychic impairment leading to many psychosomatic disorders. Persistent stressors if not managed properly, affect a number of neurohumoral, endocrinal, and metabolic functions results in related

physiological alterations. Usually, these physiological changes which are induced by stress are adaptive, compensatory, and self-limiting in nature but when it become frequent, intense, and supersede the threshold level, these physiological changes become relatively irreversible and pathological in nature turns into psychosomatic conditions.



Concept Of Psychosomatic Disorders In Ayurveda:

Psychosomatic means mind (psyche) and body (soma). The word "psychosomatic disorder" is primarily used to represent "a physical illness that is thought to be caused, or made worse, by psychological factors."¹ A psychosomatic disorder, by definition, is a stress disorder whose major cause is psychological in origin, but its manifestations are predominantly observed in the body.² Bronchial asthma, migraine, IBS, peptic ulcer, forms of colitis, mucous or ulcerative, insomnia, certain types of hypertension and of musculoskeletal disorder, rheumatoid arthritis, eczema and dermatitis, dental conditions such as Vincent's angina and periodontitis, disturbances of menstrual and sexual function, and endocrine disorders such as thyrotoxicosis, neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer, Parkinsonism, Dementia etc. are the disorders which varies according to psychological status.³

Ayurveda described numerous factors like *Chinta* (worry), *Shoka* (sorrow), *Bhaya* (fear), abusing deities and teachers, different type of immoral behaviors and other anti-rituals and rebellious activities which generate harmful effect on the psyche. This negative impact on mind leads to stress which in turn plays a major role in the manifestation and or aggravation of various psychosomatic disorders. These psychosomatic diseases are preventable by necessary environmental correction, personality training by practicing Yoga, moral and spiritual teachings, and *Medhya Rasayana* therapy. *Medhya Rasayanas* are drugs claimed to promote mental health also possess considerable degree of anti-anxiety, anti stress, adaptogenic and anti oxidant effect which can be used as promotive and preventive measures in various psychosomatic conditions.⁴

In Ayurveda a number of herbs have been mentioned as *Medhya Rasayanas* such as *Brahmi*, *Mandookaparni*, *Shankapuspi*, *Aswagandha*, *Yastimadhu*, *Guduchi* etc. *Acharya Charaka* had been described a group of four drugs as *Medhya Rasayana* in 1st chapter of *Chikitsa Sthana*, *Rasayana* (3rd Pada, *Karpratichiya*). These drugs can be used singly or in combinations. (Table 1 and Table 2)

1)Mandukaparni⁸: This Plant is described in *Tikta Skandh*, *Prajastapana* and *Vayasthapana Mahakashaya* of *Charak Samhita*.

Centella asiatica possesses this triterpene which is neuro protective and has anti-oxidant properties. *Centella asiatica* shows improvement in the central nervous system, experimental studies reported that it reduces intracellular

free radical concentration, protecting against the effect of β amyloid neurotoxicity, proves its neuroprotective effect. Leung and Foster studied the assessment of turnover of biogenic amines (nor-epinephrine, dopamine and serotonin) and showed significant reductions of these amines and their metabolites in the brain following administration of fresh juice. The decrease in amine levels was correlated to improved learning and memory in rats. Leung and Foster, observed that fresh juice of *Centella asiatica* have an anxiolytic effect, and reduces amines level which improves learning capacity and memory. Its Methanol and ethyl acetate extract shows Anxiolytic effects¹⁰ whereas antistress effect was reported in whole plant¹¹The whole plant/ leaves have been used for their anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, anti-convulsant, anti-depressant, antiulcer, wound-healing, sedative, immunostimulant, antidiabetic, neuroprotective, cardioprotective, hepatoprotective, antiviral, antibacterial, antifungal and anticancer properties.¹²

2)Yastimadhu⁸- This plant is described in *Kanthya*, *Jivaniya*, *Sandhaniya*, *Varnya*, *Sonitasthapana*, *Kandughna*, *Chardinigrahana*, *Snehopaga*, *Vamanopaga*, *Asthapanopaga*, *Mutravirajaniya Mahakasaya* of *Charak Samhita*.

The major constituent of *Glycyrrhiza glabra* useful in brain function is glabridin. Chemically it is a flavonoid polyphenol which is proven to attenuate cerebral injuries in stroke as it is neuroprotective. It is also proved in animal studies that it enhances memory retention. Since scopolamine induced amnesia was reversed by liquorice, it is possible that the beneficial effect on learning and memory may be because of facilitation of cholinergic transmission in brain. Peeled & unpeeled roots and stolans reported antistress property. **Yashtimadhu** is cytotoxic and its prolonged use may lead to pseudoaldosteronism, hyperkalemia, and hypertension.

(3) Guduchi⁸- This plant is described in *Vayahsthapana*, *Dahaprashamana*, *Trishna-nigraha*, *Stanya*, *sodhana*, *Triptighna Mahakasaya* of *Charak Samhita*. The major constituent of *Guduchi* is berberine which exhibits a peculiar action. Berberine helps prevent oxidation damage to biomolecules of brain, reduces peptides that interfere with memory function and lowers lipids that hamper cerebral blood flow. Hence it is *Medhya Rasayana*. The most likely antidepressant mechanisms involve inhibiting reuptake of amines in the brain. Improved level of nor-

epinephrine, serotonin, dopamine and GABA is observed. Central antioxidant and protective properties play an important role in improving cognition, concentration and memory, also beneficial in improving cerebral ischemia. Dried leaves and stem pieces reported anti-stress property whereas whole plant- posses adaptogenic activity.

4-Shankhapushpi⁸: Fresh whole plant juice is used for therapeutic purposes as Medhya (cognitive enhancer). effective in anxiety disorders. s is also mentioned in the treatment of some diseased condition of brain in Ayurveda like Unmada, Apsmara in different formulations like powder, ghrita, oil etc.¹³ The constituent convolvine is responsible for blocking M2 and M4 cholinergic muscuranic receptors. It potentiates effects of arecoline, a muscuranic memory enhancer that ameliorates cognitive defects. The isolated metabolites and crude extract have exhibited a wide of in vitro and in vivo pharmacological effect, including CNS depression, anxiolytic, tranquillizing, antidepressant, antistress, neurodegenerative, antiamnesic, antioxidant, hypolipidemic, immunomodulatory, analgesic, antifungal, antibacterial, antidiabetic, antiulcer, anticatatonc and cardiovascular activity, nootropic activity^{14,15}Dietary feeding of this plant has been found to increase protein synthesis in the hippocampus, thus enhancing memory and learning in experimental animals.

Previous Researches:

1-Effect on Grahani Roga WSR to IBS- Though it is difficult to have correlation between IBS & any particular disease in Ayurveda but many diseases described in Ayurvedic classics resemble with symptoms commonly found in IBS. Patients of IBS are evaluated for their mental health based on Hamilton's Anxiety Rating Scale, Hamilton's Depression Rating Scale & Brief Psychiatry Rating Scale along with Ayurvedic parameters. Total 30 patients selected randomly and divided into two groups were treated with: 1) *Kutajadi Avaleha* - a classical herbal formulation 10gm twice a day for 45 days and 2) *Kutajadi Avaleha* as above along with *Charakokta Medhya-Rasayana* granules 5gm twice a day for 45 days. Better therapeutic response has been observed in abdominal pain, gaseous distention and diarrhea with significant relief in disturbed psychic factors like grief, worry, anger etc. in *Medhya-Rasayana* group.^{16,17}

2-Effect on Amlapitta WSR to Dyspepsia: In this study total 42 patients of *Amlapitta* were registered, out of which 36 patients were completed the treatment. They were divided into two groups and treated with 1) *Chinnodbhavadi Yoga Ghana Vati* 500 mg tablets 2 T.I.D for 30 days.2) *Medhya Rasayana* Compound 500 mg tablets 2 T.I.D for 30 days. The patients were subjected to evaluation of cardinal sign and symptoms of *Amlapitta* on the basis of scores according to the severity before and after treatment. The results showed that *Medhya Rasayana* Compound provided very good results in the *Roga bala*, *Agni bala*, *Deha* and *Chetasa bala*.¹⁸

- 3. Effect on Vatika Shirahshula WSR to Tension Type Headache -** Based on symptomatology *Vatika Shirahshula* can be correlated with tension type headache defined as a bi-temporal and occipital pain. The pain increases in the evening with giddiness, disturbed sleep and loss of memory. In this study total 25 patients of *Vatika Shirahshula* divided into two groups were treated with: 1) *Dashamula Kwatha Shirodhara* for 30 minutes duration in the morning for 21 days, 2) *Medhyarasayana* formulation (*Brahmi*, *Shankhapushpi*, *Jatamansi*, *Pippalimula*) for one month. Result shows that *Shirodhara* provide very good results in chief complaints, *Manasabhava*, Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (H.A.R.S), Hamilton Depression Rating Scale (H.D.R.S), with quantitatively relief measured with GSR-biofeedback instrument. *Medhyarasayana* provide better relief in blurring of vision, stiffness of neck, phonophobia, memory loss, *Dhairya*, *Krodha*, *Mana*, *Medha* and *Smriti*.¹⁹
- 4. Effect on Twaka Vikara(Ekkakushta) WSR to Psoriasis:** All skin diseases can be included under the umbrella of *Kushta Roga. Ekkakushta* is a variety of *Kshudra Kushta* characteristically similar to Psoriasis. Clinical study aimed to compare the effect of *Navayasa Rasayana Leha* and *Medhya Rasayana* tablet along with *Dhatryadhyo Lepa* in patients of *Ekkakushta* (psoriasis) had been done with total 111 patients. Patients of group A (45 patients) were given "*Navayasa Rasayana Leha*" and "*Dhatryadhyo Lepa*" for external application. Patients of group B (49 patients) were given *Medhya Rasayana* tablet(*Anubhuta Yoga*, contains the following drugs in increasing proportions *Vacha*, *Haritaki*, *Jatamansi*, *Jyotishmati*, *Yashtimadhu*, *Shuddha-bhallataka*, *Guduchi*, *Brahmi* and *Shankhpushphi*) along with the external application of *Dhatryadhyo Lepa*.

The duration of the study was 3 months with follow up for one month. Both the groups showed highly significant results in all signs, symptoms and other parameters. Overall effect of therapy shows that complete remission was found in 16.32% patients in group B and 6.66% patients in group A, while marked improvement was found in 62.22% patients in group A and 40.81% patients in group B.²⁰

5. **Effect on *Shayyamutra* WSR to (Enuresis) in Children :** Double Blind Randomized study was done, both groups having 30 patients each, one group was given *Medhya Rasayana* Syrup with Behavioral Intervention and other group was given Placebo Sugar Syrup with Behavioral Interventions at OPD, Department of *Kaumarabhritya*, All India Institute of Ayurveda, New Delhi, for one month. *Medhya Rasayana* Syrup was used having four ingredients- *Mandookaparni*, *Yashtimadhu*, *Guduchi* and *Shankhpushpi*. The study has proved that *Medhya Rasayana* Syrup along with Behavioral Interventions is more effective in *Shayyamutra* than Behavioral Interventions alone.²¹
6. **Effect on *Rajonivritti* WSR to Menopausal syndrome:** Twenty patients of Menopausal syndrome had been studied to evaluate the role of *Manasbhava* (psychic traits) in etiopathogenesis and management of disease. A compound poly herbal formulation consisting of *Shankhapushpi*, *Mandukaparni*, *Yashtimadhu*, *Guduchi*, *Ashoka twak* all in equal quantity administered in the dose of 3 gm thrice a day for 3 weeks has shown, highly significant decrease in palpitation (63.64%), joint pain (70.00%), constipation (85.71%), hot flushes (66.67%) and headache.²²
7. **Effect on short-term memory of school-going children:** A comparative study was conducted comprising 90 subjects to know the efficacy of **Medhya Rasayana** and **Yogic** practices in short-term memory of school-going children. The study was conducted over a period of 3 months. It was an open, prospective, and randomized clinical study. The subjects of group A formed the control group and they were observed silently for 3 months without any intervention. The subjects in group B were administered with **Choorna** (powder) of four *Medhya Rasayanas*, *Mandukaparni*, *Yashtimadhu*, *Guduchi* and *Sankhapushpi*, at a dose of 2 g twice daily with milk. Subjects belonging to group C were advocated regular **Yogic** practices of **Asanas**, **Pranayama**, and **Dhyana**. Further study revealed that among the three groups, group B treated with **Medhya Rasayana** showed highly significant and most effective changes with respect to objective parameters in the tests, i.e. (1) short-term memory test pictures and (2) serial recall

effects test using memory scope. The treatment was cost effective and devoid of side effects, which can be beneficial for the community.²³

8. **Effect on *Jarajanya Smrtibhramsha* WSR to Senile Memory Impairment:** Senile Memory Impairment is a common condition characterized by mild symptoms of cognitive decline and occurs as a part of the normal aging process. It can be correlated to "**Jarajanya Smrtibhramsha**" according to **Ayurveda**. The present study deals with the efficacy of **Guduchyadi Medhya Rasayana** on Senile Memory Impairment. A total of 138 patients aged in between 55–75 years were registered and randomly divided into two groups as the trial and control groups. The drugs were administered for 3. The trial drug showed memory enhancement, anti-stress, anti-depressant and anxiolytic properties. The trial group showed better results in the management compared to the control group.²⁴

DISCUSSION:

The fundamental principle of the Ayurveda system of medicine is holistic treatment that takes into account the physical, psychological, social and spiritual well-being of an individual. *Sattva*, *Atma* and *Sharira* are stated as the three pillars and their harmony is responsible for the health. This shows the strong inter relationship between the psyche and the body. Any imbalance in these two will cause state of disease. In Ayurveda diseases are mainly classified in two types on the basis of *Adhithana*(place), *Sharirika*(physical/somatic), and *Manasika* (Psychological). *Acharya Charaka* mentioned that the somatic and psychic disorders following one another occasionally occur together. These *Sharirika* (Somatic) and *Manasika* (psychic) disorders in long term associated with each other as somatic to somatic, psychic to psychic, somatic to psychic, and psychic to somatic.²⁵ In recent years, due to faulty life style and stress the incidence of psychosomatic diseases has shown a tremendous increase throughout the world, and it is time to understand the psycho-somatic approach of Ayurveda.

The concept of *Rasayana* therapy is exclusive to *Ayurveda* and the plants used as *Rasayana* can regulate numerous biological events within the body. They are known to possess a wide spectrum of pharmacological properties, including antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, cardioprotective, neuroprotective, hepatoprotective, detoxifiers, antimicrobials, anticarcinogens and immunomodulators. *Medhya Rasayana* is the group of drugs supposed to be having specific influence on brain functions.

Medhya drugs act at different levels²⁶

- ✓ It acts as neuro-protective and brain tonic.
- ✓ It stimulates the neurotransmitters of our brain.
- ✓ At level of rasa
- ✓ Act by stimulating and improving the function of agni.
- ✓ Improves circulation of rasa by opening and cleaning the micro channel

and thus improving *medhya* function.

Ayurveda describes the list of drugs as *Medhya Rasayana* for neuro-protective activity that has multi-dimensional utility in various psychosomatic disorders. Treatment with *Medhya Rasayana* involves the person achieving sedation, calmness, tranquility, or stimulation of activities of the brain. *Medhya Rasayana* drugs help cure mental disorders of all age groups. They improve *Dhi*(Intellect), *Dhriti*(Retention power), *Smriti*(memory), and have a Neuro-nutrient effect by improving cerebral metabolism. *Medhya Rasayana* drugs are known to have a specific effect on mental performance by promoting the functions of "*Buddhi*" and "*Manas*" by correcting the disturbances of "*Rajas*" and "*Tamas*". This relieves the mental patient from stress, anxiety, and depression. Earlier reports indicated '*Rasayan drugs*' could be used in stem cell therapy. This may be advantageous to overcome challenging diseases to modern medicine i.e., regeneration of tissues after the disease condition like osteoarthritis, age-related macular degeneration (AMD), Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease, injuries, trauma, heart attack, stroke, etc.¹ There are many other indication of all the *Medhya* drugs such as *Jwara*, *Trushna*, *Vatarakta*, *Pandu*, *Kamala*, *Daaha*, *Prameha*, *Kushta*, *Krimi*, *Kandu*, *Raktha Arshas*, *Medoroga*, *Visarpa*, *Bhrama*, *Jara*, *Vrana*, *Shohta*, *Chardhi*, *Visha Roga*, *Kshaya*, *Kamala*, *Rakthapitta*, *Unmada*, *Anidra*, *Apasmara*, *Manasa Roga* and *Medhya* formulation for curing disease, good memory, voice, completion, long life, sense organ, improves digestive fire, wrinkles of the skin, grey hair, strength etc. which indicates their psychosomatic actions too.

CONCLUSION:

In the present era the incidence of psychosomatic disorders are constantly increasing due to disturbed lifestyle, faulty food habits and increased stress level. According to Ayurveda state of complete health cannot be acquired without proper harmonization of mind and body. Therefore prevention and management should be emphasized on both. On the basis of above review, it can be concluded that *Medhya Rasayana* drugs play a very crucial role in curing

psychosomatic disorders by acting simultaneously on mind and body and can be used for prevention and management of these disease.

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Table1-Charakokta Medhya Rasayana:

Name	Botanical Name	Synonyms	Form
<i>Yastimadhu</i>⁵/ <i>Liquorice</i>	Glycyrrhiza glabra Linn. Family– Fabaceae	<i>Yastimadhuk, Klitaka, Mulethi, Jethimadhu.</i>	<i>Churna</i> (Powder) 3-6gm/day mixed with milk
<i>Mandukaparni</i>	Centella asiatica Linn. Family – Umbelliferae	<i>Manduki, Twastri, Divya, Mahausadhi.</i>	<i>Swarasa</i> (Juice)
<i>Guduchi</i>	Tinospora cordifolia Willd. Family – Menispermaceae	<i>Amrita, Madhuparni, Chinnamula, Cakralakshanika, Amrita-valli, Chinna, Chinnodhbhava, Vatsadani, Jivanti, Tantrika, Soma, Somavalli, Kundali, Dheera, Vishalya, Rasayani, Candrasahsa, Vayastha, Mandali, Deva-nirmita,</i>	<i>Swarasa</i> (Juice)
<i>Shankhpushpi</i>⁶	Convolvulus plauricaulis Chois. Family – Convolvulaceae	<i>Ksheerpushpi, Mangalyakusuma.</i>	<i>Kalka</i> (Paste)

Table 2-Properties of Charakokta Medhya Rasayana^{7,8,9} :

Drug	Rasa	Guna	Virya	Vipaka
<i>Mandukaparni</i>	<i>Tikta</i>	<i>Laghu</i>	<i>Sita</i>	<i>Madhur</i>
<i>Yastimadhu</i>	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Guru, Snigdha</i>	<i>Sita</i>	<i>Madhur</i>
<i>Guduchi</i>	<i>Tikta, Kasaya</i>	<i>Guru, Snigdha</i>	<i>Usna</i>	<i>Madhur</i>
<i>Shankhapushpi</i>	<i>Tikta</i>	<i>Snigdha, Picchil</i>	<i>Sita</i>	<i>Madhur</i>