

**THERAPEUTIC CONTRIBUTION OF PANCHAKARMA TOWARDS THE
MANAGEMENT OF MENTAL ILLNESS****Dr. Ranjana Chandrakant Jadhav^{1*}, Dr. Rohini Laxmanrao Thakkarwad², Dr. Swati Ambadas Thakare³**¹Assistant Professor, Panchakarma Department, Government Ayurved College, Nanded, India.²Assistant Professor, Panchakarma Department, Government Ayurved College, Nanded, India.³Professor, Panchakarma Department, Government Ayurved College, Nanded, India.***Corresponding Author: Dr. Ranjana Chandrakant Jadhav**

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ABSTRACT

Panchakarma, a Sanskrit term translating to 'five actions' or 'five treatments,' encompasses a set of therapeutic procedures. These five treatments encompass emesis, purgation, enema, nasal administration of medicated oils and bloodletting, etc. *Panchakarma* is meticulously crafted to purify the body by expelling toxins and restoring harmony to the three *Doshas*. In today's world, stress has become an omnipresent challenge, leading to mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, cardiovascular and hypertension ailments. *Panchakarma* treatment offers a multifaceted approach to alleviate stress and enhance mental well-being. Cleansing enemas, *Abhyangam* and *Shirodhara*, etc. are approaches of *Panchakarma* which provides therapeutic benefits against mental illness. Present article explains therapeutic contribution of *Panchakarma* towards the management of mental illness.

KEYWORDS: *Ayurveda, Panchakarma, Abhyangam, Shirodhara, Mental Illness.***INTRODUCTION**

Ayurveda, an ancient holistic healing science, offers comprehensive wisdom on maintaining harmony within the life energies or *Doshas*, nurturing mental and physical well-being. Despite its ancient origins, Ayurveda remains adaptable and relevant to contemporary lifestyles, effectively addressing various ailments and promoting overall wellness. *Panchakarma* treatment regimen incorporating healing, preventive and promotive measures to detoxify the body through cleansing and rejuvenation procedures.^[1-3]

Panchakarma stands as a potent Ayurvedic methodology designed to purify and detoxify the holistic trinity of mind, body and soul. Its primary objective lies in the restoration of the optimal functioning of the five sensory organs. *Panchakarma* involves five therapies which includes; *Vamana, Virechana, Nasya, Basti* and *Raktamokshana*. Through *Panchakarma*, the body undergoes a revitalization process that rids it of pernicious toxins while also preventing their accumulation within the body and mind. This comprehensive approach not only revitalizes the five sensory organs but also targets the underlying causes of anxiety, stress, depression and various mental afflictions.^[2-4]

Panchakarma therapy offers a myriad of advantages, including the enhancement of the body's inherent self-healing capacity, ultimately leading to improved mental health. By reinstating the optimal functioning of the five sensory organs, it uncovers the underlying causes of depression, anxiety and other mental challenges stemming from toxin accumulation. This pivotal process establishes a harmonious equilibrium among the soul, body and mind, creating a healing foundation for mental and emotional well-being. Additionally, it harmonizes the *Doshas* responsible for our individual constitutions, ensuring their return to a state of equilibrium. This restoration aids in calming the mind and revitalizing concentration. The specific approaches of *Panchakarma* recommended for mental illness is depicted in **Figure 1**. The method depicted in Figure 1 mainly considered good for mental well being however Ayurveda also recommended some other purification measures for mental issues.^[4-6]

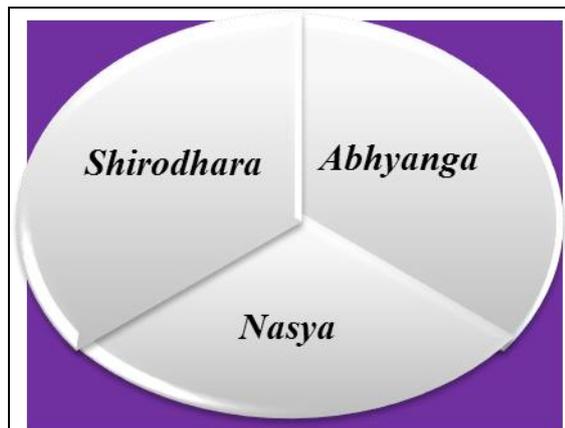


Figure 1: Approaches of Panchakarma recommended for Mental Illness.

Herbal oil massage enhances circulation and stimulates the removal of toxic residues; herbal nasal drops clear nasal passages and maintain unobstructed airways, fortifying immunity. Herbal laxatives facilitate regular bowel movements and promote colon functioning. It is advisable to undergo *Panchakarma* treatment at least once a year, as per the guidance to prevent and treat mental illness.

Advantages of Panchakarma in Promoting Emotional Wellbeing.

- The human body accumulates toxins and waste, leading to feelings of lethargy and diminished well-being. These accumulations can also have a significant impact on mental health. *Panchakarma* offers a comprehensive approach to restoring both mental and physical health, ultimately fostering a profound sense of well-being.
- It serves as an effective means to reset and rejuvenate mind and body.
- *Panchakarma* achieves purification through a series of lubrication therapies, reinforcing bodily tissues to function optimally. The removal of toxins infuses the mind and soul with positivity, resulting in an enhanced mental state.
- This therapy promotes mental relaxation and fostering a tranquil mind free from incessant thoughts.
- This approach alleviates stress, clearing blocked channels, allows healing energy to flow freely through our bodies, contributing to improved mental health.
- *Panchakarma* resets *Doshas* to their natural equilibrium, thus provides mental happiness and vibrant health.

Therapies for Mental Health

Abhyanga is a profound herbal oil massage renowned for its relaxation property. It promotes increased blood circulation throughout the body and to the brain. Specialized points and energy channels are activated, facilitating stress release and mental relaxation. The application of herbal oils serves as an effective

countermeasure against *Vata* imbalances, a primary contributor to mental illnesses. *Abhyangam* expel out metabolic waste and toxins from the body. It stimulates essential pressure points, resulting in nervous system activation and reduction in stress, depression and anxiety, etc. This therapy involves two therapists meticulously applying herbal oils from head to toe in a rhythmic and synchronized manner, exerting the appropriate pressure. *Abhyangam* effectively harmonizes the *Doshas* and addresses mental and emotional ailments. Furthermore, this therapy bolsters immunity and promotes overall well-being by preemptively combating stress, insomnia and depression, etc.^[7-9]

Shirodhara a precious gem from the ancient realm of Ayurvedic healing stands as one of the most calming and relaxation therapies. In this deeply tranquil procedure, the scalp and forehead experience a gentle, continuous flow of lukewarm medicated herbal oil, following an ancient pattern that stimulates points across the entire forehead. *Shirodhara* serves as a rejuvenating elixir for the central nervous system, often obstructed by the remnants of stress and occupational pressures. This therapeutic massage entails the uninterrupted pouring of medicated oil onto the forehead, creating a pendulum-like motion for a specific duration. The continuous oil stream onto the forehead has a calming and soothing effect on the hypothalamus, facilitating relaxation and reducing stress to induce sleep. *Shirodhara* amplifies the immune system's resilience and enhances blood circulation around the head and face, making it an effective treatment for insomnia and depression, etc.

Shiro Abhyanga involves the gentle massage of the head with medicated oil resulting in a relaxed state of mind.

Nasya also known as nasal therapy is an integral part of Ayurvedic healing. The nose serves as the gateway to consciousness, and nasal therapy plays a vital role in clearing and lubricating the sinus passages. This practice involves the gentle administration of herb-infused oils into the nasal cavity, offering relief from headaches, migraines, anxiety and stimulation of the nervous system. This therapeutic approach activates vital brain centers to address issues such as anxiety, depression, insomnia and stress.^[8-10]

CONCLUSION

Panchakarma, treatments encompass processes like emesis, purgation, enema, the nasal administration of medicated oils, and bloodletting, among others. *Panchakarma* is a meticulously designed system aimed at purifying the body by eliminating toxins and reinstating balance to the three *Doshas*. In the contemporary world, stress has emerged as a pervasive challenge, contributing to mental health issues such as depression and anxiety, etc. *Panchakarma* treatment offers a versatile approach to mitigate stress and enhances mental well-being. Approaches within *Panchakarma*, such as cleansing enemas, *Abhyangam*

and *Shirodhara*, among others, provide therapeutic benefits in addressing mental illnesses.

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