

**REVIEW ON ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE W.S.R TO AYURVEDA****Dr. Vinodini Payghan<sup>1\*</sup>, Dr. Ratna Gadgil<sup>2</sup>**

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**INTRODUCTION**

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder in which a gradual memory decline, along with a loss of one area of higher intellectual function, is involved. The domains affected are cognition, daily functioning, and behavior. The cognition includes memory orientation and judgment. Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia among middle-aged and older adults. Although AD develops differently for every individual, there are many common symptoms. Early symptoms are often mistakenly thought to be 'age-related' concerns or manifestations of stress. In the early stages, the most common symptom is difficulty in remembering recent events, known as short-term memory loss. When AD is suspected, the diagnosis is usually confirmed with tests that evaluate behaviour and thinking abilities, often followed by a brain scan if available; however, examination of brain tissue is required for a definitive diagnosis. As the disease advances, symptoms can include confusion, irritability, aggression, mood swings, trouble with language, and long-term memory loss. As the person's condition declines, they often withdraw from family and society. Gradually, bodily functions are lost, ultimately leading to death. According to Ayurveda, the acquisition of knowledge is a result of the successive and complex interaction and coordination of Atma, Indriyas (cognitive organs), Mana (psyche), and Indriyartha (sense organs). The functioning of these factors is governed by Tridosha (Vata, Pitta, and Kapha) and Triguna (Sattva, Raja, and Tama) in a specific coordination and balance. Any disturbance in these Tridosha and Triguna will cause disordered functioning of Indriya (cognitive and motor organs), Mana (psyche), and Buddhi (intellect), leading to impaired memory. Ayurvedic drugs can help manage Alzheimer's by balancing the Tridosha and Triguna, and also by providing a medhya (intellect-promoting) effect to improve patients' memory.

**OBJECTIVES**

To review the Ayurvedic herbs acting on Alzheimer's disease.

**METHODS**

Literary sources: All major textbooks of Ayurveda were used for literary purposes.

Surveys, different websites, and various journal references were analyzed and used for the study. Tridosha and Cognitive Functions Dosha's play a vital role in maintaining cognitive functions. Any factors that impair the shareerika bhava's (physical factors) will also affect the Manasika bhava's (mental factors). Vata regulates the proper functioning of the Buddhi (intellect),

Indriya (cognitive and motor organs), and Manah (psyche). While pitta (body humour) enhances Medha (intellect) and Kapha (body humour) nurtures dheer (intelligence), dhriti (fortitude), and smriti (memory). Thus, the normalcy of tridosha (bodily humours) is essential for maintaining the cognitive functions. Causative Factors for Good Memory Charaka samhita narrates eight factors for improving the memory, namely, nimitta (knowledge of cause and effect), rupagrahanth (knowledge of form), saadrashya (knowledge of similarity), saviparyayat (knowledge of contrast), sattvanubandha (knowledge of mind), abhyasa (repetition), jnana yoga (attainment of metaphysical knowledge), and punahshrutat (subsequent partial communication). Repeated practice of the above-

mentioned factors will improve smriti (memory). Charaka Samhita narrates eight factors for improving the memory, namely, Nimitta (knowledge of cause and effect), Rupa Grahanat (Knowledge of form), Sadrashyat (Knowledge of similarity), Saviparyayat (Knowledge of contrast), Sattvanubandha (Concentration of mind), Abhyasa (repetition), Jnana Yoga (Attainment of metaphysical knowledge), and subsequent partial communication. Repeated practice of the above said factors will improve Smrithi (Memory).

In Ayurvedic classics, there is mounting evidence regarding the drugs and compounds that are indicated in various domains of cognitive deficits. The four Medhya Rasayana viz., Mandukaparni (Centellaasiatica), Shankhapushpi (Convolvulus pluricaulis), Madhuyashti (Glycyrrhiza glabra), and Guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia) are especially mentioned as intellect-promoting drugs. Also, various compound preparations like Smriti sagara rasa, Vachadi Ghrita, Sarasvatha arista, Brahmi ghrita, Manasamitravati, and kushmanda avaleha. These drugs can be used to enhance the memory power in the diseased. Various clinical and experimental studies with these Ayurvedic nootropic drugs provide evidence regarding improvement in cognitive functions and intellect-promoting, which may be helpful in improving memory. The review is based on the principle that the results of clinical studies providing evidence can be applied to manage the different conditions of cognition and memory deficits.

#### DRUGS USED TO IMPROVE MEMORY AND COGNITIVE FUNCTIONS

- 1) Brahmi (*Bacopa Monniera*)
- 2) Mandukaparni (*Centella Asiatica*)
- 3) Madhuyashti (*Glycyrrhiza Glabra*)
- 4) Shankhapushpi (*Convolvulus Pluricaulis*)
- 5) Jatamansi (*Nordostachys Jatamansi*)
- 6) Ashwagandha (*Withania Somnifera*)
- 7) Guduchi (*Tinospora Cordifolia*)
- 8) Jyotismati (*Celastrus Paniculatus*)

#### Diagnostic aspects of Alzheimer's disease as per Ayurveda

Depending on the lakshanas (signs and symptoms) exhibited by the patient, diagnosis should be done, the patient complaining of smritinasha (loss of memory), weakness in perception of subjects, and loss of concentration in daily activities due to nidana sevana (etiological factors) and other predisposing factors. AD falls under the category of jara (old age). It is swabavikaroga (natural), during jara, Vata vikrutha lakshanas are seen. These lakshanas (signs and symptoms) help in the diagnosis of AD. Management of AD. There is no cure for Alzheimer's disease; available treatments offer relatively small symptomatic benefit but remain palliative in nature. Current treatments can be divided into pharmaceutical, psychosocial, and caregiving.

Medications: Three-dimensional molecular model of donepezil, an acetylcholinesterase inhibitor used in the treatment of AD symptoms. Four are acetylcholinesterase inhibitors (tacrine, rivastigmine, galantamine, and donepezil), and the other (memantine) is an NMDA receptor antagonist. Psychosocial intervention: A specifically designed room for sensory integration therapy, also called snoezelen; an emotion-oriented psychosocial intervention for people with dementia. Psychosocial interventions are used as an adjunct to pharmaceutical treatment and can be classified within behaviour, emotion, cognition, or stimulation-oriented approaches.

Four folds of Rasayana Maintenance of Positive Health Improvement of 3 mental Faculties Dhee- Dhruithi - Smruti Resistance against Disease Longevity Drugs helping in learning and memory Rasayana oushadhas do not have a common rasa (taste), veerya (potency), or guna (qualities), but all are deepana (appetizers) and Srotosodhana (cleans the channels). Normal functioning of srotas (channels) depends on healthy dhatus (tissues). Sroto soushtava (normalcy of dhatus) is highly essential to convey the nutrients to every cell. Shodhana (purificatory therapies) therapy acts at the level of doshas (humours), but rasayana drugs act still deeper, that is, at the level of dhatus (tissues). Hence, in deep-seated disease where severe vitiation of dhatus (tissues) occurs, such as AD, rasayana chikitsa is the regimen of choice.

#### Conclusion

AD is classified as a neurodegenerative disorder. The cause and progression of the disease are not well understood; it is associated with plaques and tangles in the brain. Current treatments only help with the symptoms of the disease. According to Ayurveda, learning is a result of successive and complex interaction and coordination of Indriyas (cognitive and motor organs), Indriyartha (sense organs), Mana (psyche), Atma, and Buddhi (intellect). Drugs mentioned as Medhya (intellect-promoting) and those indicated to improve cognitive functions can be used successfully in cases of AD. The review indicates that Ayurvedic drugs like Brahmi, Mandookaparni, Shankhapushpi, Jyotishmati, Ashwagandha, Jatamansi, Madhuyashti, and Guduchi have the potential to provide a significant improvement in the memory and learning capacity of the elders suffering from AD. All these drugs improve the brain functions and also the sensory and motor systems as a result of their medhyaproperties and thereby can help in the management of various cognitive disorders, mainly AD.

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