

EFFICACY OF AYURVEDIC TREATMENTS IN STRESS MANAGEMENT***¹Dr. Saloni Gulabrao Patil, ²Dr. Pallavi Nibe, ³Dr. Shrikant B. Darokar**¹PG Scholar Department of Rachana Sharir, PMT's Ayurved College Shevgaon.²Associate Professor of Rachana Sharir, PMT's Ayurved College, Shevgaon.³HOD Department of Rachana Sharir, PMT's Ayurved, Shevgaon.***Corresponding Author: Dr. Saloni Gulabrao Patil**

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ABSTRACT

The significance of stress in the development of various diseases is acknowledged in both Ayurvedic knowledge and contemporary medicine. In Ayurveda, stress is known as sahasa. Due to sahasa leading to ojahksaya, or decreased immunity, the body is rendered more susceptible to various health issues. The most effective strategy is to minimize stress whenever you can. If this isn't possible, the body must be adequately safeguarded by consuming a nutritious diet and obtaining sufficient rest, which is essential for proper functioning. Regularly consuming a range of rasayana herbs is also advised to enhance the body's resilience. Ayurveda addresses both the physical body and the mind in individuals. The traditional medical system is the only one that addresses the sick while also supporting the healthy in maintaining their well-being. The Ahar vihar, Aushad, and Sanshodhan principles of Ayurvedic medicine are included. The traditional texts of Ayurveda categorize medications into two types: external and internal. Internal medicine denotes a range of herbal and herbal-mineral combinations known as "Medhya medicines." Many of these plants, such as Mandukparni Brahmi, Vacha, Shankhpushpi, Giloy, Jyotismati, Ashwagandha, Tagar, and others, have been shown to effectively alleviate stress in both scientific research and therapeutic settings. Shirodhara and various Panchakarma techniques are examined regarding external medicine.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, rasayana, Avasad, Herbs, Shirodhara, stress, Antistress.**INTRODUCTION**

Stress may be the most undesirable and unavoidable aspect of contemporary society. As per biological definitions, stress refers to anything that presents a real or perceived danger to an organism that could adversely affect it. Various factors, such as environmental shifts, extreme temperatures, high elevations, limitations, fear, anger, anxiety, surprise, sorrow, pain, and similar influences, can lead to it. Stress, commonly known as "eustress," is a normal form of stimulation that our bodies are capable of managing and is essential for our physical and social health. Yet, stress becomes "distress" when someone cannot cope with it. As a result, eustress contributes to improved performance, whereas distress is associated with various clinical issues, including but not limited to hypertension, coronary artery disease, peptic ulcer, asthma, migraine, ulcerative colitis, irritable bowel syndrome, diabetes mellitus, thyrotoxicosis, mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety, among many other ailments.^[1]

Stress, often referred to as sahasa in Ayurveda, is believed to have a significant impact in the aetiology of many ailments. Sahasa is not recommended by Caraka since it has negative effects on the body. Numerous physical, psychological, and environmental stimuli are known to vitiate dosas, which are linked to the aetiology of various disorders. Sahasa because it results in ojahksaya, a lack of immunity that makes the body more vulnerable to a range of infectious disorders.^[2] Thus, one should try to avoid sahasa as much as possible and take good care of the three sub-pillars of life: nutrition, sleep, and celibacy (traya upastambhaiti, aharah, swapnoh, brahmacharyamiti). Sleep in this context refers to the necessary amount of rest that the body needs.^[3]

Additionally, it is recommended to regularly consume rasayanas to enhance the body's coping ability. Many of these rasayanas have shown considerable stress-reducing effects in animal studies, and research is continuing to

effectively apply rasayana herbal formulations in managing stress.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To study the concept of stress and its factors.
2. To study the ayurvedic modalities in stress management.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study's primary materials included traditional Ayurvedic classics like the Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita as well as contemporary textbooks using digital media, the Ayush Research Portal, PubMed, Google Scholar, and other subject-related websites on the internet.

STRESS FACTORS

Stress-inducing factors identified by Ayurveda can be divided into two categories: psychological (such as anger, fear, grief, anxiety) and environmental (such as high altitudes and prolonged exposure to intense heat from the sun and fire). Physical stressors include excessive physical exercise, vigils, fasting, injury, exhaustion, and uneven body postures.^[4]

All kinds of morbidities are caused by unhealthy eating, an irregular and unsuitable schedule, and mental disturbances such as krodha (anger), soka (grief), loba (greed), moha (attachment), ayasa (confusion), and bhaya (fear). Under stress, an individual's ability to make sound decisions is typically impaired, and poor decision-making, or pragyaparadha, is a significant contributing factor to the development of various illnesses. As a result, a vicious cycle develops that makes an already stressed-out individual even more worried. Stress results from further excess of any regular input, and the individual's ability to cope with life's challenges determines how much is too much. In addition to causing stress, suppressing one's natural desires has been linked to the genesis of a number of illnesses.^[5]

Stressors such as poor diet, erratic and incorrect schedules, and mental disturbances can lead to a variety of morbidities. All of the tissues, or dhatus, exhibit degenerative changes, and the immune system, or ojas, also declines. The primary dosa that is vitiated by prolonged physical stress is vata. atiyoga, vyayama, vegasandharana, anasana, abhighata, vyavaya, udwega, soka, sonitatiseka, jagarana, visama, sariranyasebhya atisevitebhyo vayuh prakopam apadyate.^[6]

Various disease have been postulated to be a consequence of vata vitiated in such a manner, like jwara, gulma, madhumeha, and sosa. Psychological stress, like udvega (excitement), soka (anxiety) also leads to disequilibrium of vata dosa, whereas, pitta is the main dosa vitiated by krodha (anger)". anger, exhaustion and excessive exposure to intense sun and fire vitiate pitta, an important contributory factor in the causation of various diseases.^[7]

Physical stress was the most prevalent kind of stress in the society in which these writings were written. A sizable portion of the population made agriculture their primary occupation, and there were no advanced farming tools accessible. Physical stress vitiates vata primarily and can lead to a number of ailments depending on the contributing circumstances. Therefore, it is undeniable that vatavyadhi, or diseases resulting from the vitiation of vata, are referred to as mahavyadi, or the most severe type, and that the vitiated vata-asiti vatavikarah causes 80 different types of ailments. Regular eating patterns, a diet high in fiber and low in calories and fat, and prolonged sun exposure are further characteristics of physical laborers. As a result, pitta is frequently the codosa that is vitiated along with vata, whereas kapha is either low or unaffected. Because of the combination of vata and pitta, the dosas with opposite distinctive traits, these instances are challenging to cure. These patients are also underprivileged and have limited resources.^[8]

STRESS MANAGEMENT

The fact that 'prevention is better than cure' is well recognized in Ayurveda, as its foremost objective is maintenance and promotion of the health of the healthy. To prevent stress there are two approaches.

1. To avoid factors inducing stress and vitiating dosas.
2. To increase the coping capacity of the body.

Avoiding Stress: Logically, addressing the underlying cause is the best course of action, and this is especially true for stress management. Caraka, who asserts that one should always refrain from overexerting oneself in order to protect one's life, has the greatest understanding of stress avoidance. But in today's world of intense rivalry, stress is an unavoidable corollary of success. The benefits that come with stress also make it justified, yet ailments brought on by stress are intolerable. Thus, while avoiding stress is the best course of action, it is not the most effective one. Instead, stress should be controlled by enhancing the body's ability to adapt to stress. The body's ability to cope can be enhanced through dietary changes, medication treatments, and/or lifestyle adjustments. These interventions are grouped together under rasayana therapy, one of the eight divisions of traditional Ayurveda.^[9]

Herbs Effective in Stress

Ayurvedic medications have a crucial role in the treatment of mental and psychosomatic diseases. Ayurveda offers a list of plants that are valuable in many different contexts and are recognized for their nootropic properties. The study being done currently is an improvement on our understanding of pharmacological characteristics. Ayurvedic pharmacopeia plants were selected, and their key chemical components, therapeutic activity, safety, preclinical investigations, and potential mode of action were all analyzed. It also allows for increased study and standardization of nootropic plants.^[10]

Mandukaparni (*Centella asiatica*)

It's Laghu Guna, Madhur Vipaka, Sita Virya, and Tikta Rasa. Not only does it stimulate neuroprotective brain growth, but it also inhibits AChE, which lessens the memory impairment caused by scopolamine. Glutamate, epinephrine, nor-epinephrine, and brain-regional lipid peroxidation can all be effectively reduced by mandukaparni. It helps delay neuronal death, prevent beta-amyloid plaques from developing as a result of oxidative stress and glial cell activation, and improve mental ability and fatigue resistance in stressed patients. Mandukaparni also helps to minimize oxidative stress, enhance mood, enhance cognitive function, and treat mental retardation. effects of antidepressants. It lessens anxiety and improves mental capacity. Ayurveda is widely known for treating stress and mood disorders, with symptoms including agitation, angry outbursts, anger, aggravation, despair, restlessness, suicidal thoughts, and violent behavior. All these symptoms go down and the mind becomes calmer when Pitta aggravation in the brain is reduced. Tension, stress, anxiety, and insomnia are reduced by its sedative, tranquilizing, and relaxing effects. Mandukaparni is used in Ayurveda to improve memory, speech, and intelligence.^[11]

Brahmi (*Bacopa monnieri*)

Numerous phytochemical investigations indicate that the primary constituents of Brahmi include the alkaloids brahmine, herpestine, nicotine, saponin, and monierin hersaponin. Bacosine, bacosides A1, A2, A3, and B, and bacogenins A1 through A4 are examples of triterpene steroids. Three more triterpenoid glycosides, referred to be bacopasides III-V, have been discovered in addition to the bacopa saponins A-F. Most of the pharmacological effects of Brahmi extract are attributed to its principal active component, saponins. The renowned property of brahmi is its capacity to reduce tension. It has a reputation for reducing cortisol, a stress hormone. By controlling the hormones involved in the stress response, this plant reduces the negative consequences of stress. It calms your nerves and sharpens your focus even further while revitalizing your brain cells.^[12]

Vacha (*Acorus calamus*)

Among the therapeutic chemicals identified in this medicinal plant are beta-asarone, beta-gurjunene, (Z)-asarone, aristolene, (E)-asarone, sequester-nersequesterpine, calamusin A-H, and beta-daucosterol. Vacha is a semi-aquatic perennial monocotyledonous plant. Vacha is well known for improving memory and lowering anxiety. Similar to a nerve tonic, it promotes calmness and eases tension. Vacha enhances cognition and memory to maintain healthy brain function.^[13]

Jyotishmati (*Celastrus paniculatus*)

Celastrus paniculatus shows that all four extracts—aqueous, petroleum ether, chloroform, and ethanolic—contain alkaloids, tannins, and fixed oils. Aqueous and ethanolic extracts include sterols and triterpenoids, but

only the aqueous extract include carbohydrates, phenolic compounds, flavonoids, and saponins. It is often recommended for boosting intelligence and has properties that improve memory. Additionally, it enhances memory, focus, and other cognitive abilities. It might have an impact on the brain's acetylcholine levels, which improve cognition. Because it decreases reactive species like malondialdehyde and increases glutathione and catalase, it may have neuroprotective, antioxidant, and cognitive-improving effects. Jyotishmati may have neuroprotective properties because of its antioxidant activity, which reduces oxidative damage to the neurons. In actuality, Ayurveda claims that it has nerve stimulating properties. It improves reasoning and cognitive function, sharpens focus and alertness, and aids in the management of illnesses linked to stress. Additionally, it lowers the rate at which neurons degenerate.^[14]

Sankhpushpi (*Convolvulus pluricaulis*)

It consists of Madhur Vipaka, Sita Virya, Snigdha, Tikta Rasa, and Picchil Guna. It reverses the stress brought on by social isolation, lessens the effects of pentobarbitone on sleep, and enhances total motor activity and stress-induced antinociception in an animal paradigm. Enhances mood and memory; reduces brain aging; promotes dendritic arborization, the neural foundation for enhanced learning and memory; increases AGhE activity in CA1 with AS and CA3; and has anxiolytic properties. Research has indicated that Sankhpushpi may support the regeneration of brain cells and dendritic arborization. It provides the neuronal framework for enhanced memory and learning. Preserving the neuron cell bodies in specific brain regions may potentially be beneficial. Shankpushpi calms the brain and eases tension and anxiety. Its presence is claimed to act as a brain tonic and improve memory because Medhya is known to stimulate intellect.^[15]

Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*)

Alkaloids (isopelletierine, anaferine, cuseohygrine, anahygrine, etc.), steroidal lactones (withanolides, withaferins), and saponins are the chemical components of *Withania somnifera* (WS). Stress-relieving sitoindosides and novel acylsterylglucosides are found in ashwagandha. The vitamin-and amino-acid combination known as adaptogen ashwagandha increases energy, endurance, and stamina while also assisting the body in adjusting to stressful situations. In addition, it balances bodily energy to alleviate insomnia and facilitates restorative sleep. In addition to supporting a healthy immune system, promoting mental well-being, good sleep, and enhanced cognitive performance, ashwagandha is used to reduce stress and anxiety. It might also have anti-inflammatory qualities that help reduce inflammation brought on by specific inflammatory diseases. Because ashwagandha can raise GABA levels, a neurotransmitter that controls stress and anxiety, it is frequently used as a stress reliever. Furthermore, it promotes the maintenance of cortisol

equilibrium, which is advantageous for the treatment of long-term stress-related illnesses like sleeplessness and depression.^[16]

Giloy (*Tinospora cordifolia*)

Among the essential plant components in Giloy are lignans, steroids, alkaloids, and terpenoids. One plant that can be utilized as an adaptogen is giloy. An adaptogen is a medication that supports the body's ability to adjust to stress. Because this health tonic enhances memory and helps the body eliminate toxins, it can help lower anxiety.^[17]

Tagar (*Valeriana wallichii*)

The rhizomes and roots include cyclopentapyrans, acacetin-7-O-rutinosides, valerate, didrovaltrate, linarin iso-valrinate, valepotriates, iridoid ester glycoside, and valerosidatum, which have sedative, tranquilizing, and bactericidal properties. Pentapyrans Cyclopenta. Tagara dichloromethane extract has shown antidepressant effects because of its tendency to increase dopamine and norepinephrine levels in the forebrain. According to Ayurvedic principles, stress should be relieved when a patient displays passive indicators of stress, such as apathy, lethargy, sloth, or sleepiness (Kapha Symptoms). When it comes to stress-related aggressive symptoms that indicate elevated Pitta Dosha, it is ineffective, particularly when taken in high dosages. Its rhizome extract showed antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects on the brain. It reduced the quantity of oxidants and raised the quantity of antioxidants in the brain.^[18]

Shirodhara

Shirodhara is one of the special types of therapeutic techniques. In this method, therapeutic oils, milk, Kwatha, or buttermilk are continually poured across the front head for a predetermined amount of time. This is helpful in the treatment of mental diseases. When this procedure is carried out perfectly, it stimulates the crown and third eye chakras, opens the inner knowledge and insight, and produces miraculous healing. Reduces stress, anxiety, depression, and insomnia by naturally releasing melatonin, dopamine, and serotonin. It supports mental clarity and attention. Relax the body and mind deeply. Improves sleeping habits, calms the Vata and increases mental focus and attention, while reducing anxiety, restlessness, impatience, nervousness, fear, and excessive thinking.^[19]

DISCUSSION

People today encounter daily stressful situations like excessive media exposure (conflict, severe weather, disease, and death), family-related challenges (divorce, single-parent households, addictions, illness, and death), and often internalize these issues or respond in harmful or damaging ways. Unlike Avsada, Ayurveda perceives stress in a different way. Vatanatamaja vikaras is Avsada. Avasad is associated with both moderate and severe depression and is recognized as one of the Manasik Rogas. All Mansika vikaras (mental disorders) arise from

Rajas and Tamas; therefore, Avasad is generated by the Nidanas of Rajas and Tamas impurities. Avasad is a condition where Tamas surpass Rajas. There are three types of chikitsa: Daivyapashrya chikitsa, Satavavajaya chikitsa, and Yuktivyapashrya chikitsa. Among them, Satavavajaya and Daivavyapashrya chikitsa were given for psychological conditions. Some herbs like Mandukarni, Brahmi, Vacha, Shankhpushpi, Giloy, Jyotismati, Ashwagandha, Tagar, etc., can help alleviate stress; Shirodhara can also benefit children. The Shirodhara method appears to induce a soothing effect irrespective of the medication used. During shirodhara, individuals feel a sense of calmness both mentally and physically.

Rasayana herbs in Stress Management

A variety of illnesses, such as psychiatric disorders like depression, anxiety, and cognitive impairment, along with immunosuppression, and endocrine issues including diabetes mellitus, peptic ulcer disease, hypertension, and ulcerative colitis, have been associated with stress as a potential aetiological factor. Our contemporary way of living makes us more vulnerable to stress and illnesses related to stress. An individual already experiencing stress becomes significantly more stressed due to the exhausting treatment and testing regimen along with the financial strain of the illness. Consequently, the destitute individual is ensnared in an endless loop that hastens the onset of stress-related diseases. Therefore, antistress medications are necessary to break this cycle.

A reliable antistress treatment is still missing in today's healthcare system. Regardless of opposing assertions, drugs like fluoxetine and diazepam fail to satisfy the criteria for being a true, secure, and focused antistress substance. In modern medicine, panax ginseng is recognized as a natural treatment for various clinical issues and is valued as an antistress solution. Nevertheless, it is currently acknowledged to lead to several adverse effects, including "Ginseng abuse syndrome." Research indicates that rasayana herbs can serve as antistress agents, suggesting that the answer for a safe and effective antistress remedy may lie here. Numerous rasayana herbs known for their hepatoprotective effects, including *Tinospora cordifolia* and *Picrorrhiza kurroa*, have shown antioxidant and immunomodulatory effects. These herbs can also be utilized as xenobiotics. As chronic stress exerts an immunosuppressive influence that detrimentally affects the body's defense systems and heightens susceptibility to various illnesses, rasayana is beneficial in regulating the immune response. *Asparagus racemosus*, *Picrorrhiza kurroa*, *Curcuma longa*, *Withania somnifera*, *Tinospora cordifolia*, *Piper longus*, *Azadirachata indica*, and *Holorrhena antidysentrica* are a few plants that have been demonstrated to have a notable immunomodulatory effect. When the immune system is weakened, rasayana medications seem to strengthen it; this is how they vary from traditional immunostimulants. Through their effects on immune function mediators, they have been

demonstrated to affect humoral as well as cellular immunity. Therefore, rasayana medications are probably going to be extremely valuable in treating immunosuppression brought on by medications and radiation, as well as chronic sickness and unmanageable prolonged stress.

CONCLUSION

The use of Ayurvedic medicine is logical in addressing disorders where oxidative stress and chronic stress are connected to the underlying causes. Nonetheless, before they gain widespread acceptance, the required scientific proof must be established. Consequently, it is essential to conduct targeted studies on the antistress benefits of Ayurvedic herbs and the possible mechanisms underlying these effects. Unfortunately, there are few scheduled clinical trials to evaluate the effectiveness of Ayurvedic herbs in alleviating stress. Moreover, acute stress models, which hold minimal therapeutic value, have been applied in most pharmacological studies. The experimental model employed to examine the antistress activity involves a type of mild, unpredictable, continuous, persistent stress with no options for coping strategies. Consequently, comprehensive and thoughtfully designed research on Ayurvedic antistress herbs, similar to the studies conducted on adaptogenic herbs, is urgently required for their extensive application as antistress agents in challenging circumstances and as supplementary options in chronic disease management.

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