

ROLE OF SWASTHAVRITTA AS AYURVEDIC REMEDIES IN MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISORDER

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ABSTRACT

Mana is regarded by Ayurveda as a significant *Ubhayendriya* that controls *Buddhi*, *Smriti*, *Sankalpa-Vikalpa* and emotional balance; thus it is essential to preserving *Sharirika* and *Manasika Swasthya*. Mental illnesses have a negative effect on the quality of our lives, mainly through the three *Gunas* of the mind: *Satva*, *Raja* and *Tama*. According to Ayurveda; disturbances in *Raja* and *Tama* are responsible for the onset of mental disorders leading to different emotional and psychiatric imbalances; *Raja* and *Tama* are *Doshas* of the mind and have a negative impact on mental health. The psychological disorders associated with modern lifestyles are insomnia; bipolar disorder; depression and anxiety, etc. Ayurveda also explains how emotional and behavioural factors such as *Krodha*, *Murcha*, *Bhrama*, *Maddattaya* and *Tandra* contribute to the development of mental disorders. Proper conduction of concept of *Swasthavritta* mainly *Sadvritta* and *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* along with *Yoga*, lifestyle modifications and Ayurvedic medications can provides benefits to persons with mental disorders. Taking these factors into account, this article emphasizes the Ayurvedic view of *Manasa Roga* and how to treat them, with a focus on *Swasthavritta*, *Yoga* and lifestyle changes.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, Swasthavritta, Sadvritta, Mental Illness, Yoga.

INTRODUCTION

A person's overall well-being (physical, emotional and mental) has a significant impact on their quality of life. There is an increase in the prevalence of conditions like stress, anxiety, depression and psychosomatic disorders in today's world due to factors such as unhealthy lifestyle choices, social disparity and emotional disturbance. While Western medicine attributes these issues to neurobiological and psychological imbalances, Ayurveda takes a holistic approach to preserve mental health. Within Ayurvedic philosophy, *Sadvritta* is a foundational component of physical and mental health. The guidelines outlined in various classical texts provide guidance on appropriate behaviors to create a sense of *Sattva Guna*, while controlling the unfavorable effects of *Rajas* and *Tamas*; both of which are considered to be contributing factors to poor mental health.^[1,4]

Ayurvedic principles are applied through the *Swasthavritta* branch of Ayurveda which emphasizes prevention of disease and promotion of health through the application of lifestyle, diet, *Yoga* and daily routines. The use of specific daily practices including *Dinacharya*, *Ratricharya*, *Ritucharya* and *Rasayana* therapies comes under the umbrella of *Swasthavritta* principles. Daily practices such as rising early, maintaining good hygiene, participating in physical activity, receiving regular oil massages, meditation and obtaining adequate rest positively contribute to an individual's physical and mental health. Similarly, proper dietary practices and use of *Rasayana* therapies improve the functioning of numerous systems in the body including digestion, immunity and overall well being. The function of *Swasthavritta* in enhancing overall health and preventing anxiety related diseases is covered in this article.^[4,7]

Role of Swasthavritta in Mental and Behavioral Disorders

In Ayurveda, it is believed that the *Manas* is an important part of good health, there are many reasons that cause people to experience mental disorders that come from the aggravation of *Rajas* and *Tamas Gunas*. Common mental disorders that are associated with mental state are anxiety, depression, insomnia, bipolar disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, etc.

The causes of psychological disturbances can be attributed to factors such as anger, confusion, intoxication, and poor lifestyle choices, etc.^[6,8]

The Ayurveda utilizes various methods (**Figure 1**); *Satvavajaya*, *Daivavyapashraya* and *Yuktivyapashraya* for preventing and managing *Manasaroga* (mental illness).

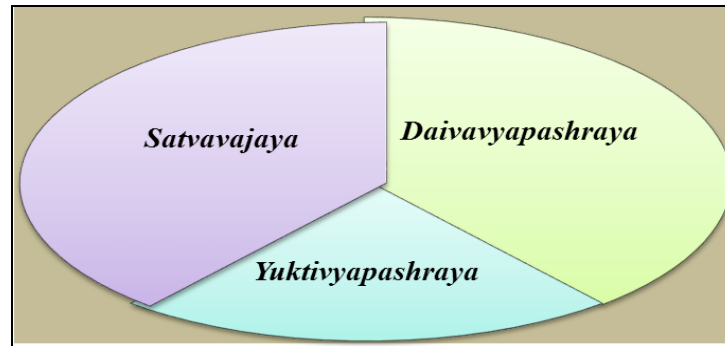


Figure 1: Ayurvedic approaches for managing *Manasaroga*.

As mentioned above *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* is about gaining control of and developing the mental ability through the use of *Yoga*, meditation, living a moral life, developing discipline and preparing for good health with activities that promote positive behaviors. *Daivavyapashraya* includes spiritual support such as prayer, chanting, worship and performing religious activities for peace of mind and stability in feeling. *Yuktivyapashraya* is about restructuring the disturbed mental *Gunas* by eating correctly, using medications (*Tanmar*) for treating mental disorders and using rejuvenating therapies, detoxification methods and having a healthy routine. *Satvavajaya* is regarded as very significant in treating mental illness since it directly impacts the increase in strength of the mind. The common practices of these therapies (*Satvavajaya*, *Daivavyapashraya* and *Yuktivyapashraya*) greatly covered by the principle of *Swasthavritta* thus various regimens of *Swasthavritta* helps to prevent and treat diseases associated with mental problems.^[7,9]

Role of Dietary Practices (*Ahara*)

Improving mental health is mostly dependent on changing one's lifestyle. Brain function and emotional stability are improved by a healthy diet high in leafy vegetables, whole grains, legumes, seafood, omega fatty acids, vitamins, magnesium, zinc and folate. Because it calms the mind, lowers stress, enhances memory, and avoids anxiety and irritation.

Role of *Nidra*

Ayurveda recommends avoiding midday sleep and late-night awakenings, as well as sleeping in accordance with the biological clock. Proper sleeping pattern improves mental coordination, lower depression and relaxes mind thus reduces anxiety level.

Role of Spiritual and Social Activities

Spiritual activity like *Mantra* chanting, meditation and worship have a relaxing and soothing effect on the mind and increase emotional resilience. Because it encourages relaxation, enhances focus, balances mood and lessens anxiety and sadness. Social isolation can exacerbate depression and insomnia, therefore social connection and family involvement are also crucial.

Yoga and Meditation

Yoga is particularly helpful for mental illnesses. Emotional stability is supported by breathing techniques and meditation, which encourage the release of feel good chemicals like dopamine and endorphins. Certain yoga poses, such as *Garudasana*, *Virabhadrasana*, *Natarajasana*, *Vajrasana*, *Padmasana*, *Chakrasana* and *Vriksasana*, etc. are said to be beneficial for enhancing mental clarity, emotional equilibrium, attention and general psychological well-being.

Mechanistic Correlation of *Swasthavritta* and Mental Health

Swasthavritta includes proper hygiene, balanced diet, speaking truthfully and respectfully, controlling emotions, being compassionate, having patience and practicing self-discipline. According to Ayurveda, these practices are essential to preventing disease, having stable mental health and promoting health. *Swasthavritta* enhances *Sattva Guna* (calmness and emotional balance) while reducing *Rajas* and *Tamas* (qualities associated with mental disorders) that can negatively affect mental state.

Certain characteristics of moral conduct contribute positively to mental health in both the Ayurvedic and psychology fields. Ethical conducts create mental stability, which can prevent mental disorders associated

with anger and fear. Modern therapeutic interventions like cognitive behavioral therapy and mindfulness therapies also recommend for ethical value based behaviors and achieving emotional regulation; thus

subsequently decreasing stress and depression [8-10]. Various mental and behavioral disorders can be managed effectively by following principles of *Swasthavritta* as mentioned in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Role of *Swasthavritta* in different mental disorders.

Mental Illness	Role of <i>Swasthavritta</i> Practices
Anxiety Disorder	<i>Swasthavritta</i> practices help to reduce mental and physical stress and improve coping ability. Meditation, <i>Pranayama</i> , <i>Abhyanga</i> and <i>Satvika Ahara</i> promote mental relaxation and emotional stability.
Depression	Practices such as regular sleep-wake cycles, physical exercise, sunlight exposure, meditation, positive thinking, social interaction, and wholesome diet help to improve mental strength and emotional balance.
<i>Anidra</i>	Proper sleep hygiene is an important component of <i>Swasthavritta</i> . Maintaining fixed sleep timings, <i>Padabhyanga</i> and meditation improves sleep quality and mental relaxation.
Bipolar Disorder	Meditation, yoga, emotional discipline, and limiting excessive sensory stimulation help to maintain mental equilibrium and reduce triggers of mania and depression.
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)	Meditation, mindfulness, <i>Satvik</i> lifestyle, ethical behavior and mental discipline described in <i>Sadvritta</i> help to reduce obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviors.
Psychosomatic Disorders	<i>Swasthavritta</i> helps to maintain mind-body harmony by reducing stress, improving digestion and mortal coordination. These measures help to reduce psychosomatic symptoms.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda outlines a number of methods for preventing and treating *Manasa Roga* as well as preserving equilibrium between the *Satva*, *Raja* and *Tama Gunas* in the mind. *Krodha*, *Murchha*, *Bhrama*, *Tandra* and *Maddattaya* are thought to be the causes of mental diseases such as sleeplessness, anxiety, ADHD, depression and bipolar disorder, etc. In addition to *Yoga* and healthy lifestyle changes, Ayurvedic concepts like *Sadvritta* and *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* are crucial for enhancing mental health. Mental well-being is greatly influenced by a healthy diet, enough sleep, regular exercise, social interaction and spiritual practices. *Yoga* poses like *Natarajasana*, *Virabhadrasana*, *Anjaneyasana*, *Vajrasana*, *Vriksasana* and *Padmasana*, etc. are thought to improve mental equilibrium, calmness, focus and emotional stability.

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