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STRESS MANAGEMENT THROUGH AYURVEDA

- Parth Sorathiya¹, Yogesh Deole²

e-mail : parthsorathiya6486@gmail.com

Abstract :

Stress play an important role in manifestation of several diseases. The word 'aayasa' is used for stress. The available statistical data shows that prolonged isolation, pandemic lockdown, issues of personal life have negatively affected professionals in India more than other places in the world. According to the study 57% respondents were suffering from mild stress, 11% were feeling moderately stress, 4% were facing moderately severe symptoms of stress and 2% reported severe stress. The chinta (worries), shoka (grief), bhaya (fear) increases stress. Prajnaparadha (intellectual errors) is a cause for stress in today's era. When a person's dhi, dhruti, smruti are impaired, he performs improper activities leading aggravation of all dosha. It increases stress level in individual. Stress increases the risk of obesity, heart disease, Alzheimer's disease, diabetes, depression, gastrointestinal problems and asthma etc.

The available literature of Ayurveda and research articles are screened to review the concept of stress in Ayurveda and contemporary sciences.

The negative mental factors like anger, grief, exertion beyond capacity cause depletion of oja, that is responsible for immunity. These factors cause decreased mental strength and increased susceptibility to stress. This can cause many somatic and psycho-somatic diseases. Many therapies like daivavyapashraya, yuktivyapashraya and sattvavajaya therapies, dinacharya, ritucharya are described in Ayurveda to prevent stress and related diseases.

Stress free person have comparatively more mental strength. Three upastambha of life i.e. aahara, nidra, brahmacharya are the important pillars. These factors play vital role in management of stress. Proper diet and lifestyle, sleep patterns, and brahmacharya have direct impact on our mental status.

Ayurveda can provide better solutions for management of stress.

¹4th year B.A.M.S. ²Professor & Consultant, Department of Kayachikitsa (Medicine), G. J. Patel Institute of Ayurvedic Studies & Research, Anand, Gujarat-388121.



Key words: *Oja, aayasa, diet patterns, lifestyle, psycho-neuro-immunology, immunity, diseases.*

INTRODUCTION-

Today, stress has become one of the most hazardous and unwanted companion of civilization. Stress is defined as anything which would adversely affect the individual. Stress is experienced when body responds to any kind of excessive demands. Stress can be caused by good and bad experience. It can be induced by physical factor and/or mental factors like grief, anger, worry, sorrow, etc. It also includes environmental factors, social factors etc. As far as body is able to cope and tackles it, a stress act as a normal stimulus required for our physical and social well being known and is better known as “positive stress” or “eustress”. And the other hand stress become an “distress” or “negative stress” when the individual is unable to cope with it.

The positive stress / Eustress helps in the improving the performance, whereas the distress is known for manifestation of various disorders like hypertension, coronary heart diseases, peptic ulcer, ulcerative colitis, irritable bowel syndrome, diabetes mellitus, thyrotoxicosis, behavioural disorders like anxiety, depression, attention deficit-hyperactivity disorders (ADHD),

emotional disorders, oppositional defiant disorder (ODD), insomnia, etc.

The stress play an important role in the aetiology of several diseases. It is well recognised in Ayurveda, where the stress is known as “aayasa”. In Charak Samhita Sutra sthana, it is mentioned that आयासः सर्वापथ्यानां.... (aayasa sarva apathyanam). It means stress or straining self is foremost in unhealthy /unwholesome regimen (sarva apathyanam). Sahasa, vyayam , anashana, chinta, bhaya, shoka are responsible factor for ojakshaya. Oja can compare with immunity according to modern science. Ojakshaya is ultimately loss of immunity and increases the susceptibility body to various infectious diseases.

So that aayasa should be avoided as fast as possible. It can be managed by following traya upastambha (aahar, nidra and brahmacharya) Further, regular practice of rasayana also increase the coping capacity of the body. Several rasayana have shown an significant stress attenuating effect. The coping capacity of the body can be increased by lifestyle modifications, drug treatment. Achara rasayana also play an important role in management of stress.

Material and methods

Thorough review of literature including Ayurvedic Classical text viz. Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita and Ashtanga Hridaya is done. Text books and journals



in contemporary sciences are reviewed for the parallel findings regarding the view of stress. The material is collected, reviewed and then organized according to the conceptual understanding.

Observation and results

The concept of pragnaparadha, manasa dosha like rajas and tamas, effect on oja were observed in reference to stress. The negative mental factors are listed to infer their role in etiopathogenesis of stress and related disorders. These references are elaborated as below:

Pragnaparadha

The most important factor for stress is pragnaparadha in today's era. Impairment of dhi, dhruti, smruti are responsible for harm to the mental faculties and causes stress. The person whose dhi(intellect), dhruti(patience), smruti (memory) are impaired, subjects himself to Pragnaparadha by his/her bad deeds. ¹ This pragnaparadha aggravate all the sharirika and manasika dosha.

Clinical feature of pragnaparadha are indulgence in following activities:

1. Suppression of natural urges
2. Exhibition of undue strength
3. Over indulgence in sexual act
4. Negligence of treatment protocol
5. Initiation of action in improper time
6. Disrespecting those that deserve respect
7. Friendship with person of bad character and habits
8. Avoidance of the sadvrutta
9. Not following daily and seasonal regimen
10. Suffering from malice, fear, worry, anger, greed, avoidance.

Impairment of dhi (intellect), dhruti (patience), smruti (memory), deeds and unwholesome contact with objects of senses could be counted as a factor responsible for causing misery. Miseries is one of the causative factor for aayasa (stress).

Table no.1: Clinical features of stress in vata dosha dominance

Physical symptoms	Behavioural symptoms	Psychological symptoms
Palpitation	Restlessness	Doubt everything
Anxiety attacks	Emotional outbursts	Erratic thoughts
Headaches	Anger	Divaswapna (daytime sleep and dreaming)
Insomnia	Disturbance in relationship	Sad/ depression
	Abnormal quietness	Not feeling well
		Emotional detachment



Table no.2: Clinical features of stress in pitta dosha dominance

Physical	Behavioural	Psychological
Profuse sweating	Hyper hostile nature	Firm decision making power
Tremors	Possessive relationship	Violent thoughts
Perspiration	Aggressive behaviour	Moderately stressed
		Happy mindset
		Emotionally attached

Table no.3: Clinical features of stress in kapha dosha dominance

Physical	Behavioural	Psychological
Weight gain	Cool minded	Stable mindset
Fluid retention	Stable relationship	Positive thoughts
Fatigue	positive behaviour	Mild stress

Biological process of stress

Autonomous nervous system (ANS) has the central role in related to mechanism of stress in body. Sympathetic nervous system become activates and it starts to respond the stressful condition and regulate the physiological process of body.. Amygdale has role in emotional processes and act as a regulator of mental factor like anger, grief, fear , etc. during responding to stress. Adrenal glands are responsible for production of stress hormone which would be secreted at the time of stress response. ²

Negative mental factors and stress:

The factors which are responsible for stress are chinta (worry), shoka (grief), bhaya (fear), krodha (anger), etc. These are mentioned in our ancient literature of Ayurveda as causative factor, as complication or as a principal of treatment (by avoiding it).

The references of negative mental factors as causes of diseases found in chikitsa sthana of Charak Samhita are mentioned in table 4 below. In nine out of thirty chapters, mental factors like chinta, bhaya, shoka, etc are found as causative factors for diseases. So it accounts for 33% of all diseases mentioned in chikitsa sthana.



Table no.4: References of negative mental factors as causes

Adhyaya	Vyadhi	Stress causing factors	Reference / note
Jwarachikitsa	Jwara	Krodha	Manifest by anger of lord Rudra(shiva) (Cha.chi. 3)
Apasmarchikitsa	Apasmara	Chinta, bhaya, shoka	Cha.chi. 10/5
Panduchikitsa	Pandu	Chinta, bhaya, shoka, krodha	Cha.chi 16/9
Hikkachikitsa	Hikka	Krodha (anger)	Mentioned in treatment protocol to avoid krodha
Kasachikitsa	Pittaja kasa	Krodha (anger), bhaya (fear), shoka (grief)	Mentioned in treatment protocol to avoid that mentioned factor
Visarpachikitsa	Visarpa	Krodha (anger)	Cha.chi. 21/115
Visha chikitsa	Visha (poisoning)	Krodha (anger)	Cha.chi. 23/228 Mentioned in treatment protocol to avoid that mentioned factor
Trimarmiya Chikitsa	Nasal disorders	Krodha (anger)	Cha.chi. 26/126
Vatashonit Chikitsa	Vata rakta	Krodha (anger)	Cha.chi. 29/7

Manifestation of stress

Stress factors like physical, mental, social, etc. can cause all type of morbidities.(Cha.Chi. 1/2/3). These are factors responsible for degenerative changes in dhatus(body tissues) and oja kshaya(a decrease in immunity).

Psychological/mental factor as mentioned earlier,are also responsible for a stress. Raja and Tama Guna become dominant over sattva that can increases stress level in individual. Raja is become aggravate due to krodha, chinta, while tamas becomes aggravated due to bhaya,

shoka, moha, etc. When Raja and tamas overcome the mind,it will result in manifestation of stress. Mental stress directly proportional to sattva of mind. If it is overcome by Rajas and tamas then it leads to decrease in mental strength or one that is not able to cope with stress.

Management of stress

प्रयोजनं चास्य स्वस्थस्य स्वास्थ्यरक्षणमातुरस्य विकारप्रषमनं च। (Cha.su. 30/26)

Management of stress can be done in two ways:

1. By avoiding the factors which are inducing the stress and vitiating dosha



2. By increase the coping capacity of body by following dinacharya, rutucharya, saddvrutta, achara rasayana and rasayana therapy as a treatment protocol.

By avoiding the stress

As we discussed earlier physical and mental factors are responsible for stress.

1. Physical factor

Ati-vyayam (excessive physical exercise), ati-vyavaya (excessive sexual intercourse) and sahasa (strain beyond capacity) should be avoided. As mentioned earlier, vata dosha is responsible for rajas dominance also.

2. Mental factor

Mental factors like shoka, bhaya, krodha, chinta, etc are responsible for causing stress. As mentioned in Charak Samhita Yajjapurushiya Adhyaya शोकः शोषणानां.. shoka is responsible for shosha (emaciation), विषादो रोगवर्धनानां... Sattva will be overcome by increased rajas and tamas. It responsible for the hyper activity of mind.

By increase the bala (strength or coping capacity) of the body

By following dinacharya, rutucharya, sadvrutta and achara rasayana, one can increase own coping capacity. These all are can include under rasayana therapy, which is the one of the branch of ayurveda.

1. Trayo upastambha

2. Rasayana therapy

Two types of rasayana

1. Achara rasayana
2. Ajasrika rasayana
3. Aushadha rasayana

1. Achara rasayana

The achara rasayana suggests a regular code of conduct to remain stress free like one should speak the truth, avoid anger, abstain from sexual intercourse, be calm and peaceful, do regular prayer to gods, give respect to teachers, preceptor and aged persons. One should have a self control. One who follows the achara rasayana in daily life can remain free from stress by staying away from the mental factors which can cause the stress. To obtain the maximum benefits of rasayana therapy, one should regularly follow the achara rasayana and ajasrika rasayana (dietary guidelines).

2. Ajasrika rasayana

The aahara which has six rasas is consider as a best aahara. The aahara should be according to prakruti of an individual, desha, kala, bala, etc. in disease condition, one should consume aahara according to state of dosha.

3. Aushadha rasayana

Aushadha rasayana is the drug treatment. It becomes more effective when



achara and ajasrika rasayana are followed properly.

The purpose of rasayana therapy to achieving healthy dhatus(tissues). Ultimately it improves ojas (the excellence of all dhatus). Rasayana act in various ways. Like,

1. Rasayana therapy may act on rasa dhatu.
2. By achieving the optimal functioning status of srotas. Function of srotas in our body is to carry respected components of that dhatu and carry

forward the nutrition for subsequent dhatus. Like pippali rasayana, amalaka rasayana, bhallataka rasayana, etc.

3. By improving the function of agni. Agni is responsible for digestion and metabolism at gross and micro level. Poshaka rasa also formed by action of agni agni and it's quality also depends on the status of agni.

In modern era, rasayana drug / therapy are known to have immunomodulators, anti-depressant, antioxidant, anxiolytic, etc.

Table 5: Herbs with it's action / properties

Action / Properties	Herbs
Immuno-modulators	Katuki (Picrorrhiza kurroa), satavari (Asparagus recemosus), ashvagandha(Withania somnifera), guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia), Pippali (Piper longum)
Hepatoprotective	Guduchi (Tinospora corfifolia), katuki (Picrorrhiza kurroa)
Medhya(acts on brain)	Mandukparni (Centella asiatica), sankhapushpi (Convolvulus prostrates), guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia), yashtimadhu (Glycyrrhiza glabra)

CONCLUSION

The diseases occurred due to chronic and oxidative stress can be managed by rasayana therapy. Achara rasayana, dinacharya, rutucharya (daily and seasonal regimen), drug treatment (aushadha rasayana etc.), are effective to prevent and manage stress. Various ayurvedic herbs have anti-stress and anti-oxidant properties. In this way, Ayurveda can provide better solutions for management of stress.



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पेज नं. 51 का शेष

मनुष्याणां स्वस्थवृत्तेः विधेः नियमानुसारं स्वकीय स्वकीय दोषस्य विपरितगुणयुक्तान आहारस्य, विहारस्य सेवनं कर्तव्यम्, तथा च समधातु प्रकृतियुक्तान मनुष्यान् सर्वदा सर्वरसाणाम् सेवनं अनुकूलम्।

निष्कर्ष—

आयुर्वेदे आहारस्य विस्तृतं वर्णनं कृतमस्ति आहारग्रहणकर्तुः सम्बन्धितान् नियमान् ध्याने संस्थाप्य मात्रापूर्वकं हितकाराहारस्य, उचितकाले सेवनेन मनुष्यस्य स्वास्थ्यं उत्तमं भवति। एवं च सः मनुष्यः दीर्घायुं प्राप्नोति। आहारस्य उचितरूपे प्रयोगः न करणेन विभिन्नप्रकाराणाम्, रोगाणां उत्पत्तिः भवति, एव च आयु अपि न्यूनं भवति। अतः मनुष्यान् स्वास्थ्यरक्षणदृष्ट्या आयुर्वेदे वर्णितनियमानुसारं आहारस्य ग्रहणं कर्तव्यम्।

सन्दर्भग्रन्थसूची:—

1. चरसंहिता, सविमर्श "विद्योतिनी" (हिन्दी व्याख्या) भाग-1 पं. काशीनाथपाण्डये, डॉ.गोरखनाथ चतुर्वेदी: प्रथमे संस्करणम् चौखम्भा भारती अकादमी, वाराणसी।
2. चरक संहितायाम्, चरकचन्द्रिका, हिन्दी व्याख्या भाग-1 डॉ. ब्रह्मानन्द त्रिपाठी, तृतीय संस्करणम् प्रकाशकः—चौखम्भा संस्कृत संस्थानम्, वाराणसी
3. अष्टङ्ग संग्रहः आचार्य प्रियव्रतशर्मा, चौखम्भा ओरियन्टालिया, वाराणसी।
4. अष्टङ्ग संग्रह — हिन्दी व्याख्या, रविदत्त त्रिपाठी, प्रकाशकः—चौखम्भा संस्कृत प्रतिष्ठानम्—दिल्ली।