

## **DIET AND LIFE STYLE IN ANXIETY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Anxiety is commonly experienced by virtually all humans. Anxiety disorders are widespread and disabling conditions with a lifetime prevalence of nearly 30% in the United States. Anxiety is an alerting signal; it warns of threat, external or internal, and it is probably lifesaving, more than once in a life time (Textbook of Postgraduate Psychiatry). Pathological anxiety is an inappropriate response to a given stimulus by virtue of either its intensity or duration. A person's genetics, biochemistry, environment and psychologic profile all seem to contribute the development of anxiety disorders. As the most common mental disorder, anxiety presents an urgent problem that affects people of all ages. Treatment protocols for the management of anxiety and the reduction of stress are continuously being sought to mitigate the effect of these prevailing health risks. Alternatives to benzodiazepines such as Ahar (diet) and Vihar (lifestyle) and other prescription medications are of great interest, with intentions to lessen exposure to harmful adverse effects affiliated with these drugs.

**KEY WORDS :** Anxiety, Benzodiazepines, Ahar, Vihar.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Anxiety disorders are one of the commonest psychiatric disorders in general population, which profoundly interferes with the ability to participate in relationship, careers and other aspects of life. Such type of symptoms and disorders are increasing day by day because of present day's lifestyle as well as the challenges of materialistic competitive world.

Ayurveda "The Science of Life" covers the physical, mental and spiritual health of human being. According to Ayurveda Life is a combination of senses, mind, body and soul. Ayurveda not only deals with body or physical health but also gives comprehensive knowledge about spiritual, mental and social health. The balance of mind, body and soul is considered as complete health in Ayurveda.

The three gunas of Mind (manasaguna) as Satwa (Balance), Raja (Arrogance) and Tama (Indolence) describes the state of mind. The possibility for disease is due to imbalance of the 'tamas' or 'rajas' in the mind which are the reactive tendencies which vitiate the mind leading to emotional imbalance. Imbalance of these Rajas and Tamas results in psychological disturbances, hence Rajas and Tamas are termed as 'Doshas of mind'. The reason for any unhealthy condition is the toxins create by the accumulated 'Dosha'. These negative feelings are emotional toxins accumulate in the mind. If they are not driven out of the body in a stipulated period of time, they give rise to or may lead into various chronic mental disorders like anxiety, neurosis, depression, insomnia, etc. The set of emotions like Kama (Lust), Krodha (Anger), Lobha (Greed), Moha, Irsya, Dwesa, Harsa (Happiness), Visada (Grief), Mana (Pride), Cittodvega (Anxiety) etc. are considered as basic components of psychopathology. Susruta also explains that all the ManasVikaras are produced due to various types of Iccha i.e. desire and

Dvesa. Hence, the Raja and Tama are the causative factors of mental disorders, which produce various types of desire and hates and in the end of the process all the mental disorders are generated. Manasadosas are also get affected by sharirikadosas as imbalance in vata and kapha gives rise to rajas and tamasDoshic symptoms.

Anxiety can be closely corelated with 'Chittodvega' explained in Ayurveda texts. The term Cittodvega comprise of two words i.e. Citta and Udvega 'Anxious status of a mind'. Anxiety is mainly due to rajas dosa (Raja vriddhi and satwakshyaya). Anxiety is the dominance of Vata and Raja. Raja and Tamas increases when satwa quality goes down. According to Indu, mind is vitiated by Ragadivikara giving rise to anxiety, delusion etc.

#### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This is a review article based on the collection of materials from available source in Ayurveda and Mordern texts

#### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE:**

Treatment principle in Ayurveda is to alleviate the elevated dosas and to bring the decreased dosas in to balanced state. In

anxiety(chittodvega) our treatment module should control vata and raja and induce satwa. According to Ayurveda treatments into three parts viz.

SatwawajayChikitsa, Yuktivyapashray and DaivyapashrayChikitsa.Sattvavajaya as psychotherapy, is the mental restraint, or a "mind control" as referred by Caraka, is achieved through "spiritual knowledge, philosophy, fortitude, remembrance and concentration". According to Ayurveda, "volitional transgression (prajnaparadha)" is "the main etiopathological factor" in mental illness, and can be corrected through psychotherapy or sattavavajaya. Sattvavajaya is that method of treatment through which one tries to bring the intellect (dhi), fortitude (dhrti) and memory (smrti) of the patient into a proper condition.

Acara Rasayana described in this respect is very essential for the treatment of Cittodvega. Acara Rasayana is a procedure of social and mental conduct, which can acquire the Rasayana effect on body and mind. It is also suggested as a 'NityaRasayana' (Ca. Ci. 1/4-34) which has direct effect on the potentiation of SattvaGuna of

mind. All these conducts are very necessary for the prevent or to treat the psychological conditions. Though modern psychotherapy plays very important role to care anxiety disorder, but Acara Rasayana are far better procedure then it. In this way, Ayurveda can open new horizon in treatment filed of Cittodvega (anxiety disorder).

### DIET IN ANXIETY

It is stated that "PraninamPunarmoolamaaharam" – the route of all beings is nothing but food itself. In Ayurvedic classics it is mentioned foremost among the three basic pillars (i.eAhara (Wholesome Food), Nidra(Adequate Sleep) and Brahmacharya(Celibacy).

AshtangaHridayam mentions some of the articles like Ksheera (milk), Ghritha (ghee), Shashtikashali ( a variety of rice which is harvested for 60 days), Amalaki (gooseberry), Godhuma (wheat), Yava (barley), Mridweeka (grapes), Mudga (greengram), Sarkara (palm jaggery), Madhu(honey), Dadima (pomogranate), Saindhavalavan (rock salt) etc. are considered as Hitahara (the one which is beneficial for the body to sustain).

Ahara is said to be ShadindriyaPrasadaka – Pleasing all the six Indriyas viz. five sense organs and the mind. If a person takes the TamasikaAhara like the food which is kept overnight, devoid of or altered taste, stale, contaminated etc. it covers the mind of a person leading him to darkness.

"Na

RaagaatNaapiAvijnaanaadaahaaraanup  
ayojayet-

ParikshyaHitamashniyaatDeho Hi  
AaharaSambhavaha" ||

One should not take food when he is afflicted with Raga i.e (Kama(Desire), Krodha(Anger), Lobha(Greed), Moha(Delusion), Mada(Pride), Matsarya (Selfishness), Bhaya ( Fear) Shoka (Sorrow) and Avijnana( Ignorance) etc. Body is the replica of food what we intake. Thus one should take it only after proper analyzing what is wholesome and what is unwholesome.

Satvikaahara, meaning they are pure and convert easily to Ojas (The essence of nutrition which is necessary for vital strength). They are Medhya, supporting the physical brain, and enhancing the coordination of mental

functions, such as Dhi, Dhriti and Smriti (learning, retention and recall). When the mind remains strong, it is able to effortlessly command the senses, like a skilled charioteer who can guide wild horses without force. The mind that rules the senses, rather than the other way around, makes positive choices and engages in positive behaviors.

Tamasa foods are the opposite of Satvik—they break down the coordination between mind and body and inhibit the experience of pure consciousness. They create darkness rather than light. Tamasik foods include alcohol, garlic, onions, red meat, leftovers, and packaged foods, which have little life force.

Following the rules relating to eating create rejuvenation in a person. In addition, following a Satvik diet and life style, speaking the truth, practicing non-violence, living in harmony with the nature, following social ethics and conducts, are all helps in the complete well-being of a person. Following these principles leads to formation of high quality Dhatus (tissues) and increases the quantity and quality of Ojas, a vital factor for health and immunity. By

following these factors the SatvaGuna(The pure state of mind) get increased which helps one to realize himself hues attainment of spirituality.

### ROLE OF YOGA-

Mindfulness refers to the process of intentionally bringing one's attention, in a nonjudgmental manner, to the internal and external experiences that exist in the present moment. This may include awareness of sensations, thoughts, bodily states, consciousness, and the environment, while simultaneously encouraging openness, curiosity, and acceptance. Asana is defined as 'Sthirsukhamasanam'. The comfortable posture is known to be Asana. Poor balance is the result of a restless mind or distracted attention. Balancing Asanas like Vrksasana (Tree Pose) and ArdhaChandrasana (Half Moon Pose) demand our full, wakeful attention in a way that other standing poses do not. While performing these Asanas, body's center of gravity is aligned with the earth's gravitational field. There is physical equilibrium with a fundamental force of nature. These poses require intense, unwavering alertness. The three essential elements

of balance are alignment, strength, and attention. Alignment of the body with gravity is crucial; it makes balance physically possible. Strength gives the power to create, hold, and adjust alignment. And attention continually monitors alignment. Improved mindfulness can be achieved through the regular practice of meditation.

### DISCUSION:

The belief in ayurveda is that "We are what we eat" therefore from ayurvedic point of view , a good diet and lifestyle is of great importance it not only helps the body health and vility but also has great effect on welbeing of the mind. According to Ayurveda ,atruly healthy human being is the one who has a strong body and sound mind.

A well balanced and nutritious diet helps to maintain the balance of the three doshas and promotes the good health. Ayurveda classifies various types of food like shaakavarga, phalavarga,dhanyavargaetc on the basis of their energies and the effect they have on tthe body and mind such as hitaahara - ahitaahar. This can help us in choosing the foods that are good for our indivdual constitution, while

avoiding the one which are likely to be harmful to the body and mind. Improved mindfulness can be achieved through the regular practice of Yoga and meditation.

### CONCLUSION

“Mana Eva ManushyanaamKaranam Bandha Mokshayoh”– for all the deeds of a man the root cause is Manas. It promotes him to do either good or bad deeds. If his mind is predominant with Satva it leads to good activity. On contrary if it is full of Rajas and Tamas he will suffer from various diseases and fall into darkness. Thus to have control over one’s mind spiritual understanding is very essential and it is achieved by following good diets, conducts and self-realization.

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