Role of Jaladhara in the Management of Anxiety Disorder (Chittodvega): A Conceptual Study

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Abstract

Anxiety usually helps us to get out of harm’s way and prepare us for the events. It also warns us whenever action is required. But if it is persistent, uncontrollable, overwhelming and interferes with daily routines; indicates that you may have an anxiety disorder. There are some allopathic medicines that help in such conditions, but they have their limitations. Therefore, the mankind is looking the safe and effective solution of the disorder. Considering the aspect in the present article, an effort has been taken to understand the therapeutic utility of Jaladhara in the management of Anxiety Disorder (Chittodvega) with its mode of action.

Keywords

Anxiety Disorder, Chittodvega, Jaladhara, Shirodhara
INTRODUCTION

In 1621, Robert Burton described the symptoms of anxiety attacks in socially anxious people in his book “The Anatomy of Melancholy”. Describing anxiety as “Many lamentable effects this fear causeth in man, as to be red or pale, shiver, sweat; it makes sudden cold and heat come over all the body, palpitation, syncope etc. It amazeth many men that are to speak or show themselves in public”\(^1\).

Anxiety disorder is a group of mental disorders, which include many disorders like generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, social anxiety disorder, agoraphobia, specific type of phobia etc\(^2\). Each one of them is having its own characteristics and symptoms but they all have common symptoms of anxiety\(^3\). The anxiety and fear both are characteristic symptoms of the anxiety disorder\(^4\). Here the anxiety means worry about future and fear means reaction to current events\(^4\).

Need of study:

Anxiety disorder is a severe chronic condition, which can be present in any age and may trigger suddenly after any stressful event.

Epidemiology: Anxiety disorder is the most prevalent psychiatric condition across the world. Globally, by 2010 approximately 273 million (4.5% of the population) had an anxiety disorder\(^5\). The prevalence of the disease is more in females (5.2%) than males (2.8%)\(^6\). According to large population based observations, up to 33.7% of the population is affected by an anxiety disorder during their lifetime\(^6\). Likewise, a number of observatory studies have shown that anxiety disorders are greatly prevalent and imperative causes for functional impairment. Thus it is need of the hour to find out an appropriate solution of the health problem.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

To evaluate the efficacy of Jaladhar\(a\) in the management of Anxiety Disorder (Chittodvega).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The literature for the study was compiled from Samhita, various Ayurvedic and modern books, published papers, e-media and thesis.

Ayurvedic View on Anxiety Disorder (Chittodvega):

Chittodvega is mentioned as a Manasa Vikara by Charaka\(^7\). It is considered as an appropriate word for the status of anxiety\(^8\). Ayurvedic literature has described
Chittodvega and its influence on a body while describing other diseases also. On the basis of above thoughts, it can be stated that Chittodvega is a minor mental disorder. In modern parlance also, the neurotic disorders including anxiety disorder are studied as a minor mental disorder as per Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5)\(^9\).

Raja and Tama are the main Dosas of any Manasa Vikara including Chittodvega\(^7\). Prana\(^10\), Udana\(^11\) and Vyana\(^12\) Vayu; Sadhaka\(^13\) Pitta and Tarpaka\(^14\) Kapha also play a major role in the pathogenesis of Chittodvega, due to their functions pertaining to Manasa. Hridaya is also vitiated due to Asharaya-Ashrayi Bhava of Manasa\(^15\). Manovaha Srotasa is also vitiated due to transportation channel of Manasa\(^16\). All these factors involved in the pathophysiology of disease are caused by stress and tension.

**JALADHARA:**

It is a very popular application of Panchakarma treatment of pouring liquid on one’s forehead with a certain distance and a certain period of time. It flows continuously and rythmatically on the forehead and head. Shirodhara is known as a stress relieving measure worldwide and very effective for skin diseases as well as used for many psychic and psychosomatic disorders\(^17\). On the basis of medicament used to perform the Shirodhara, it is identified by different names viz. Tailadhara, Kwathadhara, Takradhara, Kshiradhara and Jaladhara. This way, when it is performed with fresh water it is termed as Jaladhara\(^18\). For its stress relieving effect, Jaladharacan be advised in the condition like Chittodvega (Anxiety Disorder).

**DISCUSSION**

It is reflected from the previous references that the Acharyas knew the different condition of mental status. Among the terms used in Ayurvedic classics, Chittodvega\(^7\) is the most applicable term to illustrate whole anxious status. So in this study, the term ‘Chittodvega’ is compared with anxiety disorder.

Shirodhara is a type of Panchakarma therapeutic measures, recommended to calm the mind. Jaladhara is one of the types of Shirodhara, which useful to alleviate stress, anxiety etc. Moreover, it is also indicated in ‘Dharakalpa’ for psychic conditions\(^19\). Therefore Jaladhara has enough potency to relieve the anxiety disorder.
Mode of Action of Jaladhara:

Jaladhara is an effective and popular therapeutic procedure for alleviating stress by expanding one’s consciousness. With the procedural effect of Jaladhara, it can be understood that the mind, body and soul are an integral part of life. Jaladhara calms the stressful mind and relaxes the entire stress induced patho-physiology. In Jaladhara, when water dripped on the forehead, it induces the somato-autonomic reflex through the sensors of the skin, which helps to calm the mind.

From the Ayurveda point of view, Chittodvega is a malfunction of Vayu (Prana, Udana and Vyana), Pitta (Sadhaka) and Kapha (Tarpaka). Jaladhara establishes again the functional integrity among the Dosha with its mechanical effect.

As per the Yoga science, Savasana provides deep relaxation. Jaladhara is performed in the same position and availed same benefits of relaxation, too. Again Trataka Karma is performed during the Jaladhara as patient concentrates where Jala is poured. When a patient concentrates on the particular point, it helps to reduce the hyper thought process. Thus, the entire physiology is being relaxed.

As per the Yogic Chakra science, Agna Chakra is located at the space between the two eyebrows. It is also a place of the pituitary gland. Jaladhara regulates stimulation of this master gland by the penetrating effect, which helps to reestablish the endocrino-hormonal balance. It also decreases an elevated level of brain cortisone and adrenaline, thus it helps to tranquil the anxious mind.

As per Ayurvedic Marma science, there are many vital spots (Marma) were located on the forehead and head mainly Sthapani Marma, located at Bhrumadhyya. It is also a seat of Chitta (Mana) as per Acharya Bhela. During the Jaladhara procedure patient concentrates on the area of Bhrumadhya. Thus the harmony attains in the functions of mind.

In the concern of the Sharira Dosas, Chittodvega is mainly caused because of Vata and Pitta Prakopa. Jaladhara reduces Vata Dosa by its calming and centering effect, while it reduces Pitta Dosa by its cooling effect. Hence, Jaladhara is very beneficial in eradicating Chittodvega with its calming, penetrating and cooling effect.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the study, a conclusion can be drawn that anxiety disorder can be correlated with the Ayurvedic term Chittodvega, in which provocation of Raja...
and *Tama* along with vitiation of *Manasa* play a significant role in the etiopathogenesis as well as response to the treatment of the disease – *Chittodvega*. Hence, that type of treatment should be recommended, which pacify these disturbed *Dosha* and calm the mind. It can be accomplished by mental health promoting procedure like *Shirodhara*. 
REFERENCES


