

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*



Greentree Group

Received 12/07/16 Accepted 25/07/16 Published 10/09/16

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 etc². Each one of them is having its own characteristics and symptoms but they all have common symptoms of anxiety³. The anxiety and fear both are characteristic symptoms of the anxiety disorder⁴. Here the anxiety means worry about future and fear means reaction to current events⁴.

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 disorder⁵. 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 lifetime⁶. 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 *Jaladhara* 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 anxiety⁸. *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 rhythmically 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 disorders¹⁷. 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, *Jaladhara* can 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 conditions¹⁹. 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 life²⁰. *Jaladhara* calms the stressful mind and relaxes the entire stress induced patho-physiology²¹. 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 mind²².

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 effect²³.

As per the *Yoga* science, *Savasana* provides deep relaxation²⁴. *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 relaxed²⁵.

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 balance²⁶. It also decreases an elevated level of brain cortisone and adrenaline, thus it helps to tranquil the anxious mind²⁷.

As per *Ayurvedic Marma* science, there are many vital spots (*Marma*) were located on the forehead and head mainly *Sthapani Marma*, located at *Bhrumadhya*²⁸. 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 mind²⁵.

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 effect²³. 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*.

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