



ISSN 2456-3110

Vol 6 · Issue 5

Sept-Oct 2021

Journal of
**Ayurveda and Integrated
Medical Sciences**

www.jaims.in

JAIMS

An International Journal for Researches in Ayurveda and Allied Sciences



Maharshi Charaka
Ayurveda

Indexed

Role of *Abhyanga* in *Manovikaras* w.s.r. to Mental Disorders: A Review Article

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ABSTRACT

In today's world mental disorders are increasing due to rapid modernization of world, negative lifestyle factors, stress problems etc. In Ayurveda we call these mental disorders as *Manovikaras*. *Manas* plays very important role in these *Manas Vikaras*. The management of these mental disorders demand modification of behavioural habits which helps to maintain *Mansik Swasthya*. Ayurveda has given daily regimen in a very specific way i.e., *Dinacharya*. By following proper *Dinacharya* we can fight very effectively with factors like negative lifestyle, stress, anxiety, depression. This ultimately helps us to stay away from mental disorders. *Abhyanga* is a one of the *Karmas* in *Dinacharya*. *Abhyanga* is nothing but the application of oil on skin. *Abhyanga* helps to relax the body and mind. As we know, *Abhyanga* relaxes mind but how application of oil or medicated drugs on skin help to resolve our mental disorders is very mysterious. Here we made an effort to elaborate and connect the point from *Samhitas* to get exact action of *Abhyanga* in *Manas Rogas*.

Key words: *Abhyanga, Dinacharya, Manas Roga, Sparshanendriya.*

INTRODUCTION

In today's world of modernization and urbanization, with high expectations from life, human being is suffering from anxiety, worry, disappointment and depression. In 2017, 197.3 million people had mental disorders in India in which 45.7 million people had depressive disorders and 44.9 million people had anxiety disorders.^[1] One in seven Indians were affected by mental disorder in 2017. This is a very serious issue faced by homo sapiens. The baggage of maintaining wealth and prosperity throws a man into

the ocean of endless thinking which ultimately disturbs the mental health of a person. These super powers of thinking and intelligence may only be possible with presence of *Manas* (psyche) and *Atma* (Soul). Ayurveda, the eternal science of life, credibly explains the term *Manas* and its functions. *Aacharya Charaka* defined the term '*Ayu*' as life is a combined state of *Sharir* (body), *Indriya* (sense), *Sattva* (psyche) and *Atma* (soul).^[2] While stating the *Avayawa* (organs) *Uttapati* 'in 5th month of pregnancy *Manas* is objectified' which indicates the coexistent nature of mind and body.^[3] It is stated that healthy mind resides in a healthy body and to maintain balance between mental and physical health we must follow healthy and disciplined routine in day-to-day life.

Ayurveda, the supreme science of life, gives a treasure of ideal daily routine i.e., *Dinacharya* which is a solution for almost every problem in today's electro mechanized world. *Dinacharya* means *Din* - Daily and *Charya* - Regimen. "*Dine Dine Charya Dinasya Wa Charya Dincharya Charan Charya.*"^[4] Regimen done daily called as *Dinacharya*. Ayurveda gives more significance to prevention of disease rather than

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Submission Date: 21/09/2021

Accepted Date: 22/10/2021

Access this article online

Quick Response Code



Website: www.jaims.in

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Ayurveda Organization, Vijayapur,
Karnataka (Regd) under the license CC-
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treating one.^[5] *Acharyas* have said that by following *Dinacharya* we can live healthy and disease-free life. Ayurveda in its literature has given detailed rituals that one should follow every day to establish the balance of *Tridosha* in our body, which helps to regulate a person's biological clock and synchronize us to nature's circadian rhythm. From waking up in the morning up to the sunset, whatever activities are done should be considered in *Dinacharya* and from sunset to waking up in the morning are considered in *Ratricharya*.^[6]

Abhyanga is one of the rituals of *Dinacharya*. It is defined as a procedure of application of *Sneha Dravyas* over the body in specific direction i.e., same direction of hair follicle. It is beneficial for maintaining health and also used as a medicine in treatment of certain disorders. *Acharya* said that one should practice *Abhyanga* daily and it is appropriate for everyone. *Abhyanga* helps to strengthen the body, pacifies *Vata*, relieves tiredness, rejuvenates skin, produces sound life and nourishes sense organs.^[7]

OBJECTIVES

1. To evaluate the mode of action of *Abhyanga* in mental disorders.
2. To evaluate relationship between *Sparshnendriya*, *Vata* and *Manas Rogas*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Collection of data and critical analysis was done by using *Ayurvedic Samhitas* like *Bruhatrayi*, compendium textbooks and standard online database. A link between *Vata*, *Manas Rogas* and *Abhyanga* was found to elaborate the mechanism of *Abhyanga* in treating the *Manas Rogas*.

DISCUSSION

Definition of *Manas*

Through which knowledge is perceived is *Manas*.^[8] A substance, which is responsible for the presence or absence of knowledge, is called as *Manas*. *Manas* is also defined as the medium which build the contact between *Atma* (soul) and *Sharir* (body) and regulates the functions of *Indriyas*.^[8]

Objects of *Manas*^[9]

1. *Chintya* - thing required to think about to do or not to do with objectified manner.
2. *Vicharya* - critical analysis, which is enough to direct the mind in right direction or otherwise.
3. *Uhyam* - logical thinking or speculation or conjecture about a thing.
4. *Dhyeya* - fixation of fluctuating mind towards aim or knowledge.
5. *Sankalpa* - a thing about which merit and demerit is considered.

From above objects, we can understand that it has central theme of thinking with different views.

Fuctions of *Manas*^[10]

1. *Indriyabhigraha* - controlling of *Indriyas* (sense organs)
2. *Svasyanigraha* - controlling of own functions
3. *Uhya* - reasoning
4. *Vichara* - deliberation about accepting or rejecting things.

Manovah Strotas

Ayurveda elaborates the functions and role of *Manas* very well. But *Manovaha Strotas* is not described in *Strotoviman*. We get a reference of *Manovaha Strotas* in *Charak Indriyasthanas*^[11] and *Chikitsasthanas*.^[12] *Acharya* mentioned *Moolsthana* of *Manovaha Strotas* as a *Hridaya* and *Dasha Dhamani*. *Charaka* said *Budhirniwas Hridaya* as the main location of *Manovaha Strotas*. It is also called as *Chetanavahi Strotas* and *Samgyavahi Strotas*.^[13] We can define *Manovaha Strotas* as channels from which impetus is transported and provide *Chetana* to all over the body. In *Ayurveda* we consider brain as *Hridaya* according to its *Moolsthana*. *Nirukti* of *Hridaya* is *Hrunati*, *Da Dadati*, *Yayati* means a place where something is taken something is given and place of exchange. As brain gives commands (motor function) and receives information (sensory function) we can understand the relation of *Hridaya* and brain.

As skull has 10 openings from which 12 cranial nerves and spinal cord pierces out. We can correlate this structure of *Hridaya* with 10 exits of skull as a *Dasha Dhamani*. The functions of *mana* explained by *Charakacharya* i.e., control of sense organs, self-restraint, hypothesis and consideration represent the action of mind.^[140] Heart doesn't have any psychological, cognitive and intellectual function. So, we can consider *Mana* and its site as a brain.

Manas Rog Nidan

Sushrutacharya describes the features of a healthy person, *Doshas* (*Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*), *Agni* (metabolic states), *Dhatu*s, *Malas* (excretory system) are in balance and *Atma* (soul), *Indriya* (sense) and *Manas* (mind) are peaceful is said to be *Healthy*.^[141] When these *Prakrit Dosh*a, *Agni*, *Dhatu* and *Mala* get vitiated by practice of *Nidan*, *Vyadhi* is occurred. The main *Nidana* for mental disorders are considered as follows. *Asatmendriyarth*a *Sanyoga*, *Prajnaaparadh* and *Parinam*.^[145] Improper contact of *Indriya* (sense organs) with their *Artha* (objects) i.e. *Asatmendriyarth*a *Sanyoga*.^[146] *Prajna* (*Budhhi*) and *Aparadh* (offence) i.e., harmful actions done by a person in against wisdom.^[147] *Parinam* also referred as *Kala* i.e., natural, artificial or physical transformation occur against time.^[148] Another *Nidan* for *Manas Vikaras* are imbalance of *Raja* and *Tama Gunas*.^[149] Mainly *Raja Guna* is responsible for all activities and it promotes *Tama Guna* also. So, when *Raja Guna* gets vitiate in people with low esteem, low forbearance (i.e., *Awara Satva*) it causes *Manas Vikaras*. In today's transcendental society, human has become mechanized, less productive and rat racer, which contribute to more production of *Kama*, *Krodha*, *Lobha*, *Bhaya*, *Shoka*, *Chinta* and *Irsha* like *Manas Vikaras*.^[150] Other *Nidanas* are not following code of conducts of life i.e., *Sadvritta*, *Vegdharana* i.e., suppression of natural urges, *Purvajanmakrit Karma* i.e., bad deeds of previous life.

Manas Roga Chikitsa

Ayurveda explains three types of treatment for *Manas Vikaras* viz. *Daivavyapasraya Chikitsa* (divine or spiritual therapy), *Yuktivyapasraya Chikitsa* (logical

therapy) and *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa* (psychotherapy).^[121] *Daivavyapasraya* means which can't be explained by the humans existing knowledge which can be taken as fortune, destiny etc. It includes *Mantra*, *Mani*, *Bali*, *Uphara* etc. *Yuktivyapasrya* means therapeutic measures done by thinking of *Doshas*, *Dushya*, *Mala*, *Dhatu* etc. It includes *Aahar*, *Vihar* and *Aushad*. Third is *Sattvavajaya*. It means restrict the mind from desire of noxious objects.^[122]

In the management of *Manas Vikaras*, *Acharya Charaka* said that diseased person must understand the difference between beneficial and unhealthy things and act according to it. One must practice the *Hitkar* things like food, exercise, *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kama*. Avoid *Ahitkar* things like lies, earning money from robbery, sex with other women etc. Always stay with old and experienced person and gain knowledge about your *Desh* (place), *Kul* (clan), *Bal* (strength), *Shakti* (power).^[123]

Abhyanga procedure

As Ayurveda emphasises on the concept of maintaining the health of a healthy person, it has suggested various *Karmas* under the heading of *Dinacharya* (daily regimen). By following *Dinacharya* we could be able to prolong life, keep the mind calm and quiet, help in increasing the strength of *Indriyas*, prevent all diseases and maintain normal health.^[124] In the procedure of *Abhyanga*, firstly patient is asked to sit or lie-down. Then lukewarm oil is applied on a body with *Anulom* (in the direction of hair follicle) direction and on joints oil is applied in circular motion. Then uniform pressure is applied all over the body. Though there is sufficient description of *Abhyanga* and its benefits are mentioned in text. But the technique of *Abhyanga* is not elaborated in significant way. Only *Acharya Dalhana* explained that *Abhyanga* should be applied in *Anulom* direction.

While considering *Manas Vikaras*, *Abhyanga* is one of the best *Karmas* (treatment). In the management of *Sadhya Unmad Chikitsa Sutra Acharya* specially mention *Abhyanga Chikitsa*.^[125] *Abhyanga* is nothing but the application of *Snehadravys* (oil) on skin. It is a type of *Bahya Snehan*. In Sanskrit the word *Sneha*

means 'Oil' and 'love' and the effects of *Abhyanga* are similar to the effects of saturation of love. Both experiences can give a deep feeling of warmth, comfort and stability. According to *Ayurvedic Dinacharya* one should do daily *Abhyanga* and if it is not possible then at least oil should be applied to the head, ears, feet to maintain a healthy lifestyle.^[26] According to *Dosha Dushti*, *Acharya Dalhana* said *Pratilom Gati* used in *Kapha Dushti* and *Anulom Gati* used in *Pitta Dushti*.^[27] By performing *Abhyanga* on daily basis, the body gets stronger and resistance is built up against stressful situations. *Acharya* also explained the duration of application of *Abhyanga* on the basis of *Sapta Dhatu* as shown in table no. 1.^[28] So, that we can easily calculate the duration of *Abhyanga*. According to *Acharya* it is as follows.

Table 1: Showing duration of *Abhyanga* needed to reach respective *Dhatu*s.

<i>Dhatu</i>	<i>Matra</i>	Time
<i>Roma Kupa</i>	300	95
<i>Twak</i>	400	127
<i>Rakta</i>	500	159
<i>Mansa</i>	600	190
<i>Meda</i>	700	220
<i>Asthi</i>	800	254
<i>Majja</i>	900	285

Samvahan

It is a type of *Abhyanga* and comes under *Bahirparimarjan Chikitsa*. *Samvahan* means *Sukhsparsha Mardanam* i.e., 'mild gentle massage'. It is defined as gentle massage that enhances affinity, sleep, virility.^[29] *Sushrutacharya* also explains *Samvahan* in *Dinacharya Krama*. It plays very important role in mental disorders. *Samvahan* eliminates *Kapha*, *Vata* and helps to get relief from tiredness.^[30] It also improves properties of *Mansa*, *Rakta* and *Twak* & induces pleasure. Modern science also said that massage has a sedative effect on the central nervous system if applied monotonously with slow rhythm which can be demonstrated very easily.

It is also said that slow massage releases the β -endorphins which is linked with the pain relief and feeling of warmth and well-being.^[31] Hence when we do *Samvahan*, patient feels affinity and vigour which ultimately decrease the stress level and patient feels good.

Acharya explained the *Moolsthana* of *Manas* as *Hridaya*. If we take it as *Hridaya* we can get the exact mechanism of *Samvahan*. *Hridaya* is a place where *Sattva*, *Raja* and *Tama Guna* resides. As *Acharya* said, *Samvahan* helps to enhance affinity and induce pleasure. In development of *Manas Vikaras* like *Kam*, *Krodh*, *Bhaya* etc. *Vikrut Sadhaka Pitta* is one of the reasons. This *Sadhak Pitta* resides in *Hridaya*. So, by doing *Sukhsparsha Mardanam* we can able to relax our heart which ultimately regulate *Triguna* and increases *Sattva Guna*. It also helps to maintain *Sadhaka Pittas Prakrut Karya*. So, by doing this we can regulate the *Manas* and keep the *Manas Roga* away.

Role of Sparshanendriya

It stays in *Ashraya* of *Twak*.^[32] *Sparshanendriya* is the only *Indriya* which is present in all *Indriyas*. As skin is present all over the body it is the easiest way to reach the other organs. Modern sciences also consider the skin as the largest organ of the body.

Table 2: Showing *Panch-Panchak*^[33]

<i>Indriya</i>	<i>Indriya Dravya</i>	<i>Indriya Adhithana</i>	<i>Indriyarth</i>	<i>Indriya Buddhi</i>
<i>Shrotra</i>	<i>Akasha</i>	<i>Karna</i>	<i>Shabda</i>	<i>Shrotra</i>
<i>Twak</i>	<i>Vayu</i>	<i>Twak</i>	<i>Sparsha</i>	<i>Sparshan</i>
<i>Chakshu</i>	<i>Jyoti</i>	<i>Akshini</i>	<i>Roopa</i>	<i>Chakshusha</i>
<i>Rasana</i>	<i>Aap</i>	<i>Jivha</i>	<i>Rasa</i>	<i>Rasan</i>
<i>Ghrana</i>	<i>Bhumi</i>	<i>Nasika</i>	<i>Gandha</i>	<i>Ghran</i>

Twak and Manas relation

As *Acharya Charaka* said *Twagendriya* and *Manas* has (*Samvay Sambandha*) interrelation.^[34] Though *Manas* has quality of subtleness (*Anutvam*),^[35] it still occupies the whole body with the help of skin. It means that *Manas* has a control or power all over the body by means of *Sparshanendriya*. So, when we want to reach the *Manas*, *Twak* is the best medium.

Role of Vata

Vata Dosha controls and regulates the function of *Manas*.^[36] It also promotes the *Manas* to do its normal functions. It also helps to distinguish the good and bad things and encourages to do good things. *Vata Dosha* also promotes the *Indriyas* to do its work. *Vata* directs the *Indriyas* towards the objects and take the object towards *Indriyas*.^[37] As we not objectify the *Manas* but by understanding the work of *Vata* we can say that with the help of *Vata Dosha Manas* goes to *Indriyas* and encourage it towards their objects. Subtypes of *Vata* also play important role in *Manas* as follows.

Table 3: showing Vata Dosha, its types and their Karma.

Dosha	Karma
Vata	Niyanta Praneta Cha Manasaha, Sarvendriyanam Udyojakaha, Sarvendriyaarthanam Abhivoda, Akshinam Patava.
Prana	Indriya and Chitta Dharan
Udana	Mano Bodhan
Vyana	Prayah Sarva Kriya

Role of Pitta

Acharya Vagbhata said the functions of *Pitta* as *Prabha*, *Medha* and *Dhee*.^[38] More specifically, *Sadhak Pitta* is related with the functions of brain such as *Medha*. It also helps in understanding subjects of *Bhrajak Pitta* present beneath the skin. It absorbs the medicated oil, *Lepa* applied on skin, digest that very effectively and give magical result. *Chakshu Vaisheshik* and *Budhhi Vaisheshik* are two types of *Pitta* especially mentioned in *Bhel Samhita*.^[39] It mainly works for perception, retention and recalling of knowledge. So, for achieving one's own ambition and desires, *Pitta Dosha* plays important role. It is interrelated with brain functions and psyche. It indicates that if *Manas* (mind) is disturbed, *Pitta Dosha* alters the function of brain and vice versa.

Table 4: Pitta Dosha, its types and Karma.

Dosha	Karma
Pitta	Prabha, Medha, Dhee
Sadhak Pitta	Buddhimedha Abhimandhairyabhipretartha, Sadhanat
Bhrajak Pitta	Bhrajanat Twakam
Buddhi Vaisheshik	Grahan, Dharan, Pratyudharana, Smaran

From all the above information we can clearly get the relation between *Manas*, *Vata* and *Sparshanendriya*. *Sparshanendriya* is present all over the body. As *Manas* and *Sparshanendriya* has *Samavay Sambhandha*, *Manas* is also present all over the body. The functions of *Vata Dosha* and *Manas* are quite similar. *Vata* regulates and promotes the *Manas* as mentioned in table no. 3. *Manas* do its work like *Indriyarth Grahanam*, by means of *Vata*. Therefore, *Vata* and *Manas* are interrelated and *Vata* is present in *Sparshanendriya*. When this *Vata* get vitiated by various *Nidanas*, it indirectly hampers our *Manas* and causes *Manas Rogas*. As *Vata* is the main *Nidana* for *Manas Rogas*, if we alter this *Vata Dosha* we can easily treat the *Manas Rogas*.

In *Abhyanga* we apply oil on skin. As oil has opposite *Gunas* of *Vata* it pacifies *Vata*. So, by doing *Abhyanga* we can regulate the functions of *Manas* by regulating *Vata* and using *Twak* as a best medium. If *Manas* is *Swasthya* then no *Mansik Vicaras* will occur. Hence, we get magical results in *Manas Roga* by doing *Abhyanga*. This is the reason why *Acharya* told *Abhyanga* as a treatment in *Mansik Vikaras*. It also explained in *Dincharya Krama*. By doing *Abhyanga* daily we can able to prevent *Mansik Rogas* and maintain *Mansik Swasthya*.

Mechanism of Abhyanga

Though it is an external procedure, it almost affects every system of the body. It affects circulatory system, nervous system, metabolic system, respiratory system, lymphatic system, skin & gives

magnificent results. While massaging, osmotic pressure forces internal fluid of the skin to move. Due to this pressure fluid forces out and enters into extra cellular compartment, tissues, viscera which dilute the accumulated toxins. After removing pressure peripheral vessels refills and toxins are expelled out into circulation and get out of the body by excretion process.^[31]

While massaging we apply pressure in a good amount and rhythm which creates magnetic field and electricity in the body. By this charging conductivity of the nerve increases. The nerve fibres has a myelinated sheath in which mainly lipids are present. Na⁺ and K⁺ ions are responsible for the repolarization in nerve fibres. This action done with the help of melatonin, as a result, serotonin and other neuro chemicals cause pleasant and soothing effect. Because of this we get magical results in mental disorders.^[40]

CONCLUSION

Advancement in every aspect of living hood, has changed the social, religious and behavioural pattern of human being. It has affected mental and physical health very badly. Now a days people easily take medicines for physical disorders but mental disorders are still a social stigma in our society. Ayurveda has given solutions for mental disorders a long ago. *Mana* and *Mansik Swasthya* are very important entities for living healthy and prosperous life. By acquiring *Ayurvedic* measures we can prevent and cure *Manovikaras*. *Dincharya* helps us to keep away many diseases. *Abhyanga* is one of the daily processes explained by *Acharyas*. It gives soothing and relaxing effect and helps in preventing and curing *Manovikaras* as well.

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How to cite this article: Sayali Wakde, Archana Belge. Role of Abhyanga in Manovikaras w.s.r. to Mental Disorders: A Review Article. J Ayurveda Integr Med Sci 2021;5:186-193.

Source of Support: Nil, **Conflict of Interest:** None declared.
