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Role of *Satvavajay* and *Dhyana* as a preventive and therapeutic measure through Ayurveda and Yoga: A Review

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ABSTRACT

Satvavajay is an important *Chikitsa* to prevent and treat psychological diseases by avoiding unwholesome physical, psychological and verbal acts. *Dhyana* is a scientific technique of prolonged attention with awareness of mind as per Yoga. Ayurveda is a health science deals with the preventive and therapeutic knowledge to preserve longevity of healthy life. Guidelines in Ayurveda to prevent all type of diseases and to promote health are described at physical, psychological, social, intellectual and spiritual levels. Ayurveda has mentioned *Pradnyaparadha* as a route cause of all the diseases. Technique to control mind and *Indriyas* for avoidance of unwholesome practices are helpful to prevent diseases and promote the health status in healthy individual. *Raja* and *Tama* are responsible for *Pradnyaparadha*. Preventive and promotive measures to enhance *Satva Guna* is one of the objectives of Ayurveda, for mental, emotional health. *Susruta* has described criteria for *Prasanna Manas* which is in *Satva Guna* predominance and all regimens are advised for controlling *Rajas* and *Tamas*. Charaka has mentioned *Chikitsa* for psychological diseases as *Jnana* (spiritual knowledge), *Vidnyana* (scriptural knowledge), *Dhairya* (non-elevation of mind), *Smriti* (recollection of experienced thoughts) and *Samadhi* (concentration of a mind into a self by detaching it from senses. Meditation is useful for improving health and to treat diseases in integration. Ancient and modern literature review has been carried out and preventive and therapeutic application of *Satvavajay* and *Dhyana* is found helpful.

Key words: *Dhyana*, *Prevention*, *Promotion*, *Satvavajaya*, *Therapy*, *Yoga*

INTRODUCTION

Health is advised to maintain through proper conducts in daily regimen in Ayurveda. Guidelines are described in Ayurveda and Yoga at physical, psychological, emotional, intellectual and social levels to achieve healthy long life.^[1] Those measures related to control

one through unwholesome practices are important for prevention.^[2] *Satvavajay* is an important *Chikitsa* to prevent and treat psychological diseases by avoiding unwholesome physical, psychological and verbal acts.^[3] *Dhyana* is a scientific technique of prolonged attention with awareness of mind as per Yoga.^[4] Meditation is a scientific technique to gain control over the mind and to get deep awareness. Ayurveda and Yoga are complimentary sciences in which guidelines and description are given to preserve psychological health too. Control over the mind is essential to gain for healthy long life. *Dhayna* according to Yoga texts has significant role to maintain health.^[5]

Ayurveda also mentioned *Pradnyaparadha* is a route cause of all diseases.^[6] Diseases are classified as physical, mental and *Aagantu* in Ayurveda.^[7] *Pradnyaparadh* and *Asatmyentriyatha Samyoga* have significant role in manifestation of Physical,

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psychological and psychosomatic diseases *Manovikaras* are mentioned as *Krodha, Shoka, Bhaya, Harsha, Vishad, Ershya, Abhyasuya, Dainya, Matsarya, Kam, Lobha etc* in *Susrut Samhita*.^[8] Charak has enlisted all above in *Mithya yoga* of mind.^[9] Mental diseases are due to unwholesome practices of *Indryas, Manas* and *Buddhi*. Research studies done before have collected in which *Satvavajay* is suggested to be effective for treating mental diseases, Covid 19 related health issues, adolescents' mental health issues.^[10] Data is searched related to prevention of physical, mental and *Agantu* diseases. *Agantu rogas* are mentioned as *Bhutaj, Vishaj*. All type of diseases may be prevented by avoidance of *Pradnyaparadha*. Mind control and mental health is important to achieve for complete health. Mind consists positive and negative *Guna* and *Doshas* as *Sattva, Raja* and *Tamas* respectively. ^[11] Therefore, fundamental concept of mind control is an effort to enhance *Satwa* and to diminish *Rajas* and *Tamas*.

This article is an effort to study role of *Dhyana* and *Satvavajay* practices as a preventive and therapeutic measures in not only psychological but also in psychosomatic and physical diseases based on the concepts of Ayurveda and Yoga. Previous publications have mentioned application of *Satvavajay* and *Dhyana* in psychological diseases, Rheumatoid Arthritis, psychosomatic disorders and a few more. *Dhyana* is one of the techniques of *Satvavajay Chikitsa* with other tools as counseling may be effective as a preventive and therapeutic measure in most of the diseases including Covid 19. This perspective is studied and enlightened in this article on the basis of ancient and modern literature.

AIM

To study the role of *Satvavajay* and *Dhyana* as a preventive and therapeutic measure through Ayurveda and Yoga.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study *Satvavajay* and its effects on health and diseases.

2. To understand role of *Satvavajay* as a preventive and therapeutic measure.
3. To study *Dhyana* and its effects on health and diseases.
4. To understand role of *Dhyana* as a preventive and therapeutic measure.

METHODOLOGY

Ancient and modern literature are reviewed and relevant references are collected. Research updates from various database, websites are reviewed related to topic. *Satvavajay* from Ayurveda texts and commentaries from Yoga and Ayurveda literature are referred. Web libraries like Google scholar, PubMed, Scopus, and Dhara online were used to search by searching keywords as *Satvavajay, Dhyana, preventive measures, therapeutic measures*.

Satvavajaya

Satvavajaya Chikitsa is mentioned for psychologic diseases in Ayurveda by Charak while describing classification of therapies as *Daivavyapashray, Yuktivyapashraya* and *Satvavajaya*. It prevents the disturbances of *Dhee, Dhriti* and *Smriti* by controlling mind from *Ayog, Heenayoga* and *Mithyayoga*. The word *Satwa* refers to *Mana* (mind). *Avajaya* indicates to win over.^[3] Fundamental concepts related to mind, inter relation between body and mind, role of mind for happy life are described in details in *Charak Samhita*.^[12] According to that control of mind is important for prevention of *Pradnyaparadha* and *Asatmyendriyarth Samyoga*.^[1]

Satvavajaya is a practice of controlling mind to think and act in wholesome way through physical, psychological and verbal acts. *Asatmendriyarth Samyoga* is mentioned as one of the major causes of disease. Preventing *Ati, Hina, and Mithya Yoga* of *Chintya, Vicharya, Uhya, Dhyeya* and *Sankalpa* is beneficial to cure disorders. *Asatmyendriyarth Samyoga* (Incompatible contact of *Indriyarthas*) is related as one of causes of disease (physical or mental). So, avoidance of *Hina Mithya Atiyoga* (excessive, deficient and or erroneous) is advised.



Fig. 1: Causative factors of diseases according to Ayurveda

Many therapies in Ayurveda are beneficial to promote mental health like *Satvavajaya Chikitsa*, *Daiva Vyapashrya Chikitsa*, *Adravyabhuta Chikitsa* and *Yuktivyapashrya Chikitsa*.^[10] *Sadvritta* and *Achar Rasayana* are mentioned as a preventive and promotive guideline by *Charak*. Many of guidelines are mentioned to avoid transmission of diseases.^[13] Stable and aware mind is advised to develop for prevention and promotion in *Sadvritta*. Tools to develop it are described to practice moral conducts, *Jap*, *Dhyan*, *Shouch*, *Satya*, *Akrodha* as *Sadvritta* and *Achar Rasayana*.^[14]

Regular practice of given guidelines helps to maintain hormones and neurotransmitters and chemical mediators like histamines, and interleukins to maintain a normal situation. Regular practices are useful for parasympathetic functions in the body.^[15]

Satvavajay Physician for Mental diseases

Mental and emotional diseases are occurred due to gain and loss of liked and unliked objectives. Overthinking, lack of proper thinking, false thinking is listed reasons for disturbance in mind. *Charaka* has advised to refer to *Tadvidya/ Manas Vyadhi Bheshaj Veda*.^[16] This is a scope of *Satvavavajay Chikitsa* for psychological disturbances.

Preventive and promotive measures to enhance *Satva Guna* is one of the objectives of Ayurveda, for mental, emotional health. *Susruta* has described criteria for *Prasanna Manas* which is in *Satva Guna* predominance and all regimens are advised for controlling *Rajas* and *Tamas*. *Satva Prakkruti* and *Satva* predominant individuals consists following characteristics as described in Ayurveda texts.^{[17],[18]}

Table 1: Satva Guna predominant characteristics

1. To perceive proper knowledge	2. Focused
3. Prasanna	4. Chintya
5. Vicharya	6. Uhya
7. Dhyeya	8. Sankalpa
9. Smrutimanta	10. Bhaktimanta
11. Krutadnya	12. Pradnya
13. Shuchi	14. Mahotsava
15. Daksha	16. Dheera
17. Tyaktavishadha	18. Kalyan Abhiniveshi
19. Gambhir Cheshta	20. Gambhir Bhuddhi
21. Samar Vikranta	22. Jitatman
23. Lekhastha Vrittam	24. Adhyayan
25. Meditative	26. Savyavasthitgati

Therapeutic role of Satvavajay

Charaka has mentioned *Chikitsa* for psychological diseases as *Jnana* (spiritual knowledge), *Vidnyana* (scriptural knowledge), *Dhairya* (non-elevation of mind), *Smriti* (recollection of experienced thoughts) and *Samadhi* (concentration of a mind into a self by detracting it from senses).^[19] Body and mind both are site for diseases where both are interconnected. Author *Vd. Priyavat Sharma* in his text has mentioned *Charaka's* equal emphasis on body and mind. *Satvavajay* is supportive for psychosomatic and noncommunicable disease. It is recommended in *Janapadodhwamsa* to enhance physical and mental strength.^[20]

Sattvavajaya Chikitsa may be helpful to an adolescent to be mentally and physically healthy to cope with the ASD References Modalities of *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa* in research are found effective.^[21] *Satvavajay* is supportive for noncommunicable disease as Diabetes.^[22] It is the only hope in Geriatrics diseases as

it creates positivity in mind.^[23] *Satvavajay* is helpful as a psychotherapy.^[24]

Dhyana in Yoga

Dhyana is seventh limb in *Ashtang Yoga* by *Patanjali*. *Yoga* is a science deals with the study of mind, methods to control it. Meditation is a practice to focus mind on a single object with awareness. *Dharana* (concentration) is an initial practice whereas *Dhyana* (Meditation) is a continuation of it.^[4] *Patanjali* has described psychology in details as *Vrittis* and obstacles in pathways of yogic practices of meditation.^[25] Role of meditation in gaining strength of mind is mentioned in section *Vibhutipada*. *Kayasampat* (excellency in physical health) in extreme is mentioned as benefit of meditation.^[5] Detachment from all state of being in meditative is described to have great strength of body and mind by reducing *Raja* and *Tamas* (*Prakashavarana Kshaya*).^[26]

Dharana and *Dhyana* are two practices of concentration and meditation described in *Ashtang Yoga*. It is helpful for getting control over the mind for sublimation. The same times Meditation is useful for improving health and to treat diseases in integration. Meditation is the art of management of neurobehavioral energy. Meditation practice can be categorized as either open monitoring or focused attention. In a study, *Dharana* and *Dhyana* found benefits such as better emotional intelligence as an occupational supportive in one study, and improvement in state of consciousness in another study.^[27]

Dhyana in Ayurveda

Dhyana is described as a state of mind stable at self by *Charaka*. Control over the mind is described as *Samadhi*.^[19] Human life consists of union of body, mind, *Indrias* and self as per *Ayurveda*. Mind contains *Triguna* and *Rajas* and *Tamas* are said as *Doshas* among them. Acts performed by body, mind and speech can be modified by training of meditative and *Satvavajay* practices for preventive and therapeutic effect. *Dhyana* is described with reference of mind and its role in healthy and happy life. *Naithiki Chikitsa* is mentioned for sublimation.^[28]

Preventive and therapeutic role of Meditation

Yogic practices as truthfulness, nonviolence, *Japa* (repeated chanting of mantra), *Samadhi*, *Dhyana* are advised to practice as a preventive measures and therapeutic use. Psychological practices which enhance *Satva* and diminishes *Raja* and *Tama* are effective as a preventive and therapeutic measures. The practice of *Yoga* generates balanced energy which is vital. In cases of *Agantu Rogas* as *Bhutaj* and *Vishaj* diseases can be prevented by avoidance of *Pradnyaparadha* in which meditation can be effective. *Karmaj Vyadhies* are caused by unwholesome deeds where yogic practices are indicated as therapy.^[29] In *Janapadodwamsa* diseases for pacifying *Karmas* and preventing from death, it is advised to practice *Sadvritta* and code of conducts.^[30]

A review study has mentioned that three main *Chikitsa* modalities of *Ayurveda* *Yuktivyapashray*, *Daivavyapashray* and *Satvavajay* are stepping stones in the management of *ASDs* (which is a life-long condition), giving a ray of hope and indicating the need towards more research in this area.^[31]

Meditation is the art of management of neurobehavioral energy by being in an absence of reactive pattern of mind with continuous observation of the object. Review of published articles consists details related to topics as parasympathetic activity is improved by *Yoga*. It creates balance in the autonomic nervous system. It is mentioned as *Yoga* has effects on *GABA* (Gamma-Amino Butyric Acid) and *Yoga* reduces stress hormones such as cortisol.^[32]

Effects of Yoga on Health

Yoga improves the blood circulation in order to supply the oxygenated blood. Modern neuroscience has identified the function of nervous system of to focus on oneself under natural, mind wandering conditions; termed the "default mode network" (DMN). Meditation helps to enhance psychological well-being and reduces reactivity.^[33] Yogic practices inhibit the areas responsible for fear, aggressiveness and rage, and stimulate the rewarding pleasure centres in the median forebrain and other areas leading to a state of bliss and pleasure as per recent research. This

inhibition results in lowering anxiety, heart rate, respiration.^[34]

Yoga has been shown to be beneficial in heart disease and hypertension. Yoga reduces anxiety and promotes well-being too. It improves quality of life. It may be used as complementary therapeutic regimen under medical supervision and is appropriate and could be worth considering.^[35]

DISCUSSION

Somatic, psychological and *Agantu* diseases can be prevented by practicing *Sadvritta*, moral conducts, avoidance of *Pradnyaparadha* and *Asatmyendriyarth Samyoga*. Mind has a physiological role to control itself and *Indriyas* from unwholesome practice. *Satvavajay* is mentioned as one of the treatment for psychological diseases which must be practiced for preserve and promote mental health. Controlling mind from unwholesome physical, psychological and verbal acts, overthinking, lack of thinking and false thinking is *Satvavajay*. Methods of practicing are not mentioned in detail. Guidelines for management of psychological diseases can be applied in the context of *Satvavajay*, *Dhairya*, *Samadhi* are mentioned to practice. Preventive importance of *Samadhi* is mentioned by *Charakacharya*.^[36] According to *Patanjali*, *Dharana*, *Dhyana* and *Samadhi* are continuation of meditative practices whereas *Samyama* is mentioned as outcome of the three. *Jnana*, *Vigyana*, *Dhairya*, *Smriti* and *Samadhi* are factors which are developed in *Satvavajay Chikitsa*. Many studies are reviewed related to the topic. Meditation may be helpful as a preventive, promotive and therapeutic measure. Yoga is a science as per its aim not directly described for health, it is found beneficial for health. Yoga can be helpful to enhance immunity during Covid 19.^[16] Yoga can be a valuable complementary therapy for individuals with rheumatoid arthritis.^[37] The practice of Yoga encompasses various elements, including *Asana* (physical posture) *Pranayama* (breath regulation), *Dharana* (concentration), and *Dhyana* (meditation), all of which contribute to the improvement of physical and mental health in individuals with RA.^[37]

Conducted research shown that a regular practice of Yoga can protect the individual against inflammatory diseases by favourably altering pro-inflammatory cytokine levels.^[38] Review suggests that regular practice of Yoga has positive changes on the hippocampus, amygdala, prefrontal cortex, and cingulate cortex.^[39]

Awareness of self through meditation, being a *Satva* predominant is a key for mental and emotional health. Review of related literature have mostly therapeutic and a few occupational references. *Satvavajay* and meditation have shown improvement in diseases and further it may be a part of life style as a preventive and promotive measure.^[1]

Satvavajaychikitsa may consists all other multi-modal treatments as counselling, meditation and breathing awareness.

CONCLUSION

Satvavajay may be effective as a preventive and therapeutic measure. Meditation is effective as a therapy as well as preventive measure.

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