



ISSN 2456-3110

Vol 9 · Issue 10

October 2024

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**

# Satvavajaya - An Emerging Boon to Combat Stress

Anjee Bijwan<sup>1</sup>, Sharad Karande<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Post Graduate Scholar, Dept. of Kriya Sharir, Patanjali Bhartiya Ayurvedigyan Evam Anusandhan Sansthan, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India.

<sup>2</sup>HOD, Dept. of Kriya Sharir, Patanjali Bhartiya Ayurvedigyan Evam Anusandhan Sansthan, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India.

## ABSTRACT

The unforgiving pace and complexity in today's life is greatly challenging our ability to live healthier and fully in the present era. Today the world we live is full of competition and frustration to achieve the desired, leading to emotional stress and strain which adversely affects our physical, mental, social and spiritual health too. As per *Acharya Charaka*, *Chinta* (stress) and *Ati-Chintanam* (overthinking) are the causes of *Rasovaha Srotodushti* which ultimately become the aetiological factor for many of the diseases. Prolonged or inadequate response to stressors can impair the growth and development of the human body resulting in endocrine, metabolic, autoimmune, and psychological disorders. Number of research shows that untreated chronic stress results in serious health conditions, while finding positive and healthy means to manage it, may reduce the risks. In *Ayurveda* along with *Panchakarma* techniques like *Shirodhara*, *Abhyanga* etc., *Medhya Rasayanas* like *Shankhpushpi*, *Brahmi* etc., *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* plays an important role in the management of many mental ailments including stress. The word *Satvavajaya* constitutes of two words *Satva* meaning consciousness or mind and *Avajaya* meaning to conquer or win over. It aims to control mind (*Manonigraha*) and to restrain it from unwholesome thoughts or perceptions (*Ahita Arthas*). It is a unique non pharmacological treatment modality which adopts a comprehensive psychosomatic-spiritual approach to maintain the normalcy of mental health. Among all available techniques prevailing for control over mind, yoga offers one of the best methods as it stresses over *Chittavritti Nirodha* (control of mind from stressful thoughts).

**Key words:** *Chinta, Atichintanam, Satvavajaya Chikitsa, Manonigraha, Psychosomatic, Stressors.*

## INTRODUCTION

Stress is the word known to everyone. Stress is not a situation, or a condition during an adverse condition as it is assumed. In fact, it is a way by which the body overcomes a demanding or undesirable situation. Whenever we are in an unfavourable condition (whether physical or mental) our body tries to maintain homeostasis and protect itself by adopting some changes. Stress is actually a series of events our body follows to cope out with such situations. The stress

response involves both the nervous and endocrine system. Though stress management has still remained a big challenge we can manage stress by making little changes in our lifestyle.

*Ayurveda* is known for philosophical basis, and its approach to psychological ailments is quite different from the conventional system of management. *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* (ayurvedic psychotherapy) is basically a non-pharmacological approach aimed at control of mind and restraining it from any bothersome *Artha* (objects) or stressors. Thus, *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* is a treatment modality of self-control. The word *Satvavajaya* comprises of two words '*satva*' and '*avajaya*'. *Satva* is derived from *Sanskrit* root *Sat* by adding suffix *Ktva*. The word '*Avajaya*'- *Ava+ Ji = Achaparajaye Yenendriyalokabhavajayaya*' means overcoming, victory, conquer<sup>[1]</sup> and the word *Satvavajaya* refers to self-command, strength of mind or character. *Acharya Charaka* defines it as a mind controlling therapy in which a stress has been laid, on restraining of mind from any kind of unwholesome objects. Therefore, it includes all the methods for

### Address for correspondence:

Dr. Anjee Bijwan

Post Graduate Scholar, Dept. of Kriya Sharir, Patanjali Bhartiya Ayurvedigyan Evam Anusandhan Sansthan, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India.

E-mail: vyakhyabij@gmail.com

Submission Date: 11/09/2024 Accepted Date: 23/10/2024

### Access this article online

#### Quick Response Code



Website: [www.jaims.in](http://www.jaims.in)

DOI: [10.21760/jaims.9.10.16](https://doi.org/10.21760/jaims.9.10.16)

*Manonigraha* and *Ashtanga Yoga* being the primary tool to control mind.

## AIM

To understand *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* as emerging holistic approach in the management of stress.

## OBJECTIVE

1. To understand the efficacy of *Ayurveda* in the management of stress.
2. To establish *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* as emerging boon in the management of stress and other psychological ailments.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Ayurvedic classics including *Brihat-Trayi*, also papers published in various journals including PubMed and Medline databases related to provide information regarding *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* to prove its efficacy for the management of stress.

## Stress

Stress is simply a response to physical and emotional demands. Generally, when we talk about the stress in our lives we are talking about stressors. Any physical or psychological stimuli that disrupt homeostasis or the internal environment of body, result in a stress response. The stimuli are called stressors, which can be of many types: physical or physiological changes in the body, changes in the environment, life events or behaviours. Even an unreal situation can also act as stressor and could be a reason of stress.

Physiologically, a stress response is mediated through a complex interplay of nervous, endocrine and immune mechanisms, activating the fast response mediated by sympathetic-adreno-medullar [SAM] axis, the slow response mediated by hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal [HPA] axis and the immune system.<sup>[2]</sup> The stress response is adaptive to prepare the body to handle the challenges presented by an internal or external environmental challenge, such as stressors. For example, the body's physiological responses to trauma and invasive surgery serve to attenuate further tissue damage. Exposure to chronic stressors can cause

maladaptive reactions including depressions, anxiety, cognitive impairment and heart diseases.<sup>[3]</sup> The impact of stress on the body may not be the same in all people. It varies depending on factors like the genotype, sex, age, physiological conditions and past experiences of the person. Most of the effects are due to increased concentrations of corticoids and adrenaline. There are numerous instances to prove the serious damage that stress causes physically and psychologically, in addition to its direct effect on health, stress also produces some behavioural changes. People living in stressful environments are more prone to smoking and alcoholism which may even lead to cancer or many other serious ailments. Though, it may not be possible to avoid stress completely from our life, but it can be managed with the help of *Ayurveda*. As it is clearly said and understood that it is not an event but in fact the way you interpret it that causes the stress. A positive attitude is the best way to reduce stress. A method of self-control an age-old technique from ancient system of Indian Medicine aids in the management of stress.

## *Satvavajaya - An Emerging Boon for Mental Health:*

In the era of cut throat competition in every field and phases of life, the whole society is under the influence of *Rajas* which results into constant threat of being stressed. Excessive travelling, over consumption of stimulants like tea, coffee, non veg., processed food and preoccupied mind have depressing effect on the smooth functioning of brain. Each person is unique, one of his/her kind because of the discriminatory, creative and instinctive mind. Mind is a unique gift to mankind, which is very complex in nature. It has potentiality to act mainly as dual nature. It is creative as well as destructive, positive as well as negative, active as well as dull, happy as well as sad. This balancing nature of mind is getting deprived under the influence of growing stress and strain in life.

The method of treatment in *Ayurveda* as a whole has been classified into three categories by *Charaka*,<sup>[4]</sup> which is as follows:

1. *Daiva Vyapasraya* - divine therapy
2. *Yukti Vyapasraya* - rational therapy

### 3. Satvavajaya Chikitsa - psycho- therapy

*Satvavajaya Chikitsa* is one amongst the brain child concept of *Acharya Charaka*. It potentiates *Satva* with the intensions of modifying maladaptive symptoms caused by *Rajas* (arrogance) and *Tamas* (intolerance) which are considered as illness causing mental humours. Controlling or restraining the mind from desire for unwholesome objects is nothing but *Satvavajaya*. When overshadowed by two of the *Doshas*, *Satva* loses its predominance and manifestations are evident in the form of depression, anxiety-nervosa, and stress like ailments. Self-control of mind is one of the most difficult tasks and need a perfect combination of desire, determination and dedication. These mental restraints or the goal of *Satvavajaya* can be achieved by - *Manaso Jnana* (spiritual knowledge)

- *Vijnana* (skilled/ textual knowledge)
- *Dhairya* (patience & will power)
- *Smriti* (remembrance)
- *Samadhi* (concentration)<sup>[5]</sup>

The *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* works on the same ground as modern psychotherapy. The method of self-hypnosis, positive suggestions, and counselling is being used as *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* in present era. It is a full-fledged, non-pharmacological psychotherapy described in ancient literature. The comprehensive definition of psychotherapy given Wolberg states that 'Psychotherapy is the treatment, by psychological means, of the problem of an emotional nature in which a trained person deliberately establishes a professional relationship with the patient with the object of removing, modifying or mediating disturbed patterns of behaviour, retarding existing symptoms and promoting positive personality growth and development.'<sup>[6]</sup>

## DISCUSSION

As per *Charaka*, *Satvavajaya* is defined as *Ahitebhyo-Arthebhyo Manonigraha*. *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* is aimed at regaining the normal mental activity by conducting practice of *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Asana* and *Pranayama*.

These remedies ensure free circulation of *Prana Vayu* (O<sub>2</sub>) throughout the body resulting in removal of blockage of channels linked to brain. In *Ayurveda*, *Vata* largely represents the energy associated with the activities of nervous system; also *Vata* is *Rajas* in its fundamental constitution considered as *Mansik Dosh*. So, if the functioning of *Vata* is ever disturbed, it results into- anxiety, racing thoughts, appetite disturbances, insomnia, excessive worrying-like symptoms consistently.

In present scenario this treatment modality can be the benchmark achievement of Indian Traditional Medicine System, incorporating the ideas of *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* and applying it to our daily habits in the form of:

- *Avoiding Pragyapradham* - intellectual blasphemy i.e., impairment of *Dhee*, *Dhriti* and *Smriti*.
- *Concept of Dharniya Vega* - is to be engaged in our behavioural patterns i.e., controlling the impulses of greed, anger, fear, jealousy, excessive attachment and malice which are the basic components of stress causing factors, leading to numerous mental ailments.
- *Achaar Rasayana* - behaviour of a person i.e., consisting of the basic and easy methodology to gain a peaceful mindset.
- *Sadvritta Palana* - following good conduct code provided in our classical texts.
- *Chittavritti Nirodh* - cessation of fluctuating state of the mind by the use of *Ashtang Yoga*.

By utilizing these techniques assist our mind to develop a virtuous mindset and will aid to build integrity as a whole. Thus, emphasizing having a positive attitude and compassion towards life, warding off the *Rajas* and *Tamas* hovering over our mind making it to come at peace.

## CONCLUSION

As preached by *Lord Buddha*- just as an archer straightens his/her arrow, a wise person straightens his restless and unsteady mind". It is almost impossible to avoid, but by employing the principles and dimensions

of *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* in day-to-day life is a way to manage and cope with the challenges in life, majorly stress.

## REFERENCES

1. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita. Revised by Charaka and Dridhabala with the Ayurveda Dipika commentary of Chakrapanidatta. Edited by Yadavji Trikamji Acharya. Reprint ed. Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi.2004;16.
2. Mifsud KR, Reul JM. Mineralocorticoid and glucocorticoid receptor- mediated control of genomic responses to stress in the brain. *Stress*. 2018 sep;21(5):389-402. [PubMed]
3. Ketchesin KD, Stinnett GS, Seasholtz AF. Corticotropin-Releasing Hormone- binding protein and Stress: from invertebrates to humans. *Stress*.2017 sep;20(5): 449-464. [PubMed]
4. Agnivesha. Charaka Samhita. Revised by Charaka and Dridhbala with the Ayurveda Dipika commentary of Chakrapanidatta. Edited by Yadavji Trikamji Acharya. Reprint ed. Chaukhamba Sanskrit S ansthan, Varanasi. 2004; 77.
5. Monier Monier Williams, A Sanskrit English dictionary, reprint ed. Motilal Banarasidass. Delhi, 2005; 98.
6. The Technique of Psychotherapy; Lewis R. Wolberg, M.D., 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Grune & Stratton, New York, 1977, 2 Vols.,1343.
7. Satvavajaya and Daivavyapashray Chikitsa: Boon to Manas Vikara's; Dr. Purvi V. Rajput-30th June 2018.

**How to cite this article:** Anjnee Bijlwan, Sharad Karande. *Satvavajaya - An Emerging Boon to Combat Stress*. *J Ayurveda Integr Med Sci* 2024;10:105-108. <http://dx.doi.org/10.21760/jaims.9.10.16>

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

\*\*\*\*\*