

## Combined effect of Virechana and Rose Water Shirodhara on Hamilton's Anxiety Scale

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Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) is a common and disabling condition characterized by ongoing worry, anxiety, and tension about various daily concerns, persisting for at least six months.[1] The symptoms of GAD bear resemblance to Chittodwega, an excited state of mind described in the classical Ayurvedic text, the Charaka Samhita, under the category of Manovikara (mental disorders). This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of two Ayurvedic therapies - Virechana and Rose Water Shirodhara - in treating anxiety disorders. A 23-year-old female patient presented with symptoms of anxiety, including difficulty breathing, chest heaviness, stress, irritability, concentration issues, sleep deprivation, and constipation, which had persisted for a year. She underwent Panchakarma therapy, incorporating Udwarthana, Parisheka, Rose Water Shirodhara, and Virechana. The patient's symptoms were assessed using the Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale before and after treatment. Results indicated a significant reduction in anxiety symptoms, suggesting that both Virechana and Rose Water Shirodhara were effective in alleviating the symptoms of anxiety. The findings support the use of these Ayurvedic treatments for managing anxiety.

**Keywords:** Anxiety, Chittodwega, Shirodhara, Virechana, Hamilton's anxiety scale

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## Introduction

Anxiety is a natural and adaptive reaction to perceived threats, helping the body prepare for a fight-or-flight response. However, some individuals experience anxiety about almost everything, which can lead to a diagnosis of generalized anxiety disorder (GAD). GAD is characterized by excessive and uncontrollable worry about various events or activities, occurring on most days for a minimum of six months.[2,3] The prevalence of GAD is approximately twice as high in women as in men. The anxiety and anxiety-related disorders are the most common mental disturbances worldwide, with a 12-month prevalence of 14% among persons aged 14 to 65.[4] Due to their high prevalence, chronic nature, and comorbidity, the World Health Organization (WHO) ranks anxiety disorders as the ninth leading cause of health-related disability. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, fifth edition (DSM-5), provides detailed criteria for diagnosing generalized anxiety disorder. The exact cause is unknown but it is believed that noradrenergic, serotonergic, and other neurotransmitter systems appear to play a role in the body's response to stress. This condition can be correlated to *Chittodvega*. [5] *Chittodvega* can be defined as a state of anxiety in the mind, where "*Chitta*" refers to the mind and "*Udvega*" means anxiety. It is a form of mental disorder (*Manasroga*) that arises due to an imbalance in the qualities of *Rajas* and *Tamas*, along with the *Doshas* of *Vata* and *Pitta*. Symptoms of *Chittodvega* include feelings of emptiness in the head (*Shirah Shoonyata*), anxiety, disturbed thoughts (*Dhyana*), chest tightness (*Hridgraha*), fatigue (*Ayasa*), mental agitation (*Unmattchittatvam*), and other signs similar to excessive worry, restlessness, fatigue, difficulty concentrating, irritability, and sleep disturbances.[6,7] Imbalance in *Manasika Doshas* i.e., *Raja* and *Tama*. [8] The case presented here is managed by *Virechana* [9] who acted upon the *Vikruta Doshas* and relieved symptoms and also rose water *Shirodhara* used to treat variety of condition related to cognition, sleep and anxiety. Continuous pouring of rose water on fore head for a specific period has tranquilizing effect and regulates rhythm *Mana* and *Prana Vayu* it induces sleep and relaxes the mind. The present case study is aimed to see positive effects of *Virechana* and rose water *Shirodhara* in an anxiety diagnosed patient.

## Case Report

### Chief Complaints

C\O Difficulty in breathing with heaviness of chest since one year.

### Associated Complaints

C\O Stress, not able to concentrate on work, irritability, sleep deprivation since one year.

### Case History

The patient is a 23-year-old female who was apparently healthy until one year ago, when her father had an accident. This event caused her significant stress, and since then, she has experienced ongoing difficulty breathing, along with a sensation of chest heaviness. She also reported constant conflicts between her parents, which further affected her mood. The patient noted increased irritability, even over minor issues, and a decreased ability to concentrate on her work. Additionally, she experienced a continuous, racing thought process and an inability to calm her mind, which disrupted her sleep schedule. She also complained of constipation. Due to these issues, she sought further management at SDMCAH, Hassan.

**Treatment History:** Nothing significant

**Surgical History:** Nothing significant

**Genetic Information:** Nothing relevant

### Personal History

Appetite - Reduced

Bowel - Altered (constipated) once in 2 or 3 days

Micturition - Unaltered 3-4 times/day

Sleep - Disturbed

### Systemic Examination

Respiratory system - NVBS Heard

Cardiovascular system - S1 and S2 heard, no murmurs

Gastrointestinal system - NAD

Central nervous system - Conscious, well oriented to place and person.

### Higher Mental Functions

### General Appearance and Behaviour

General Appearance - Healthy looking, Grooming Well-groomed, Dressing - Adequate

- Attitude towards Examiner - Cooperative attitude.
- Comprehension - Intact
- Gait and Posture - Normal
- Motor Activity - No Abnormal Involuntary Movement (AIM), Reaction time Increases occasionally
- Social Manner - Normal,
- Eye contact - Normal
- Rapport - Good
- Hallucinatory Behaviour - Absent

#### Speech

- Rate and Quality - Appropriate rate of speech, sometimes slow.
- Volume and Tone - Normal
- Flow and Rhythm - Smooth Mood and Affect: Anxious mood. Anhedonia - Present

#### Thought

- Flight of Ideas - Absent
- Blocking of Thoughts - Absent
- Thought Broadcasting - Absent
- Thought Control by Others - Absent
- Obsession and Fixed Ideas - Present
- Sudden strange ideas/ Pseudo religious Ideas - Absent

#### Perception and Motor Control

- Perception of Time - Intact
- Hallucination - Absent
- Illusion - Absent

#### Cognition

- Consciousness - Conscious
- Orientation - Well oriented to Time, Place, Person
- Attention - Attentive
- Concentration - Appropriate
- Memory: Immediate - Intact
- Intelligence - Normal
- Abstract thinking - Present
- Insight - Present

- Judgement - Not impaired

#### Intervention

The principles of management of *Chittodvega* are by doing *Samprapti Vighatana* of *Vata* and *Rajas*.

This can be achieved by alleviating *Vata Dosha* and maintaining the *Rajas*. In this patient *Shodana* by doing *Virechana* and rose water *Shirodhara*.

**Table 1: Panachakarma Procedures**

Procedure	Drug Used	Duration	Day/ Date
Sarvangam Udwarthana	Udwarthana Churna	20 minutes one day	First day - 8/8/24
Snehapana	Panchagavya Gritha	First day - 50ml	9/8/24
		Second day - 70ml	10/8/24
		Third day - 130 ml	11/8/24
		Fourth day - 180ml	12/8/24
Shirodhara	Warm water mixed with rose water and rose petals	20 minutes for six days	Procedure done on evening from 9/8/24 to 14/8/24
Sarvangam Abhyanga	Ksheerabala Taila	20 minutes for two days	Fifth and sixth day 13/8/24 to 14/8/24
Bashpa Sweda	Erandamoola Kashaya	15 minutes	Fifth and sixth day 13/8/24 to 14/8/24
Virechana	Trivrut Leha 60 gram followed by Triphala Kashaya 100ml	Last day	15/8/24 12 Vegas

#### Assessment Criteria

**Table 2: Ashta Vibhrama Assessment**

Vibhrama		BT	AT	Follow-Up
Manas Vibhrama	Frequency	4	2	1
	Severity	4	2	1
Buddhi Vibhrama	Frequency	3	2	1
	Severity	3	2	1
Sanjnajyana Vibhrama	Frequency	Absent	-	-
	Severity	-	-	-
Smriti Vibhrama	Frequency	Absent	-	-
	Severity	-	-	-
Bhakthi Vibhrama	Frequency	Absent	-	-
	Severity	-	-	-
Sheela Vubhrama	Frequency	Absent	-	-
	Severity	-	-	-
Chesta Vibhrama	Frequency	Absent	-	-
	Severity	-	-	-
Achara Vibhrama	Frequency	Absent	-	-
	Severity	-	-	-

0 - Not Present, 1 - Mild, 2 - Moderate, 3 - Severe, 4 - Very Severe

**Table 3: Hamilton's Anxiety Scale (HAM –A)**

Criteria	Before Treatment	After Treatment	Follow-Up
1. Anxious mood	4	2	1
2. Tension	3	1	1
3. Fear	4	2	0
4. Insomnia	3	2	1
5. Intellectual	1	1	0
6. Depressed mood	3	2	1
7. Somatic muscular	3	1	0
8. Somatic sensory	0	0	0
9. Cardiovascular symptoms	2	1	1
10. Respiratory symptoms	2	0	0
11. Gastrointestinal symptoms	2	1	0
12. Genito urinary symptoms	0	0	0
13. Autonomic symptoms	0	0	0
14. Behaviour at interview	1	0	0

0 - Not Present, 1 - Mild, 2 - Moderate, 3 - Severe, 4 - Very Severe

## Discussion

The treatment plan aims to reduce her anxiety levels and calm her mind. While her anxiety was manageable during childhood, it resurfaced due to challenging life situations. Initially, the symptoms were mild, but after her father's accident, they worsened significantly, leading to more severe symptoms, including difficulty breathing and a feeling of heaviness in the chest.

*Vata Dosha* governs and regulates the functions of the *manas* (mind). It supports the mind in carrying out its normal activities, including the ability to discern between good and bad. *Vata Dosha* also ensures the proper functioning of the *Indriyas* (senses). By understanding the *Karmukata* (functional actions) of *Vata*, we can better appreciate its role in maintaining the normal functioning of the *Manas*.<sup>[10]</sup>

*Virechana Karma* is performed in two primary ways. The first is its **systemic action**, where it gathers and transports the morbid *Doshas* from the peripheral regions of the body (*Shakha*) to the central area (*Koshta*). The second is its **local action**, which involves the evacuation of these *Doshas* in the form of waste (*Mala*) from the gastrointestinal tract, facilitated by its *Adhobhagahara* property. Together, these actions help in the purification and balance of the body's *Doshas*.<sup>[11]</sup>

The absorption of the substances used in *Virechana Karma* occurs through their *Veerya*, allowing them to travel to the *Hrudaya* (heart). From there, they reach the *Dasha Dhamani* (ten main channels) and continue to circulate through both the micro and macro channels within the body, including the *Sukshma* and *Sukshmati Srotas*. The properties of *Ushna* (heat), *Teekshna* (sharpness), *Vyavayee* (penetrative), and *Vikasi* (spreading) drive the morbid *Doshas* from the peripheral regions (*Shakha*) towards the central area (*Koshta*). Finally, due to its *Adhobhagahara* property, *Virechana* facilitates the expulsion of these *Doshas* from the body, flushing them out through the *Koshta*.<sup>[12]</sup>

*Shirodhara* is known to lower stress levels and enhance mood. Its effects are similar to those seen after deep meditation and profound relaxation, as shown in previous EEG studies, which reveal an increase in alpha waves and a reduction in beta activity.<sup>[13]</sup> Rose is a popular ornamental plant that can also be used as a natural remedy for various health concerns. Its accessibility, feasibility, versatility, and cost-effectiveness make it an ideal option. The *Hridya* property of rose further enhances its ability to help manage stress, making it a highly beneficial solution.<sup>[14]</sup> Key Actions of Rosewater are Anti-depressant, Anti-spasmodic, Aphrodisiac, Anti-bacterial, Anti-viral, Antiseptic, Anti-inflammatory, Blood tonic, Digestive stimulant, Expectorant Increases bile production, Menstrual regulator. Recent research work related to Rose water. Rose water has physiological and psychological relaxation, analgesic and anti-anxiety effects on humans.<sup>[15]</sup> Thus it calms the mind.

## Conclusion

The combination of *Virechana Karma* and *Shirodhara*, tailored to address the specific *Dosha* imbalances observed in the condition of *Chittodvega*, has proven to be highly effective. These treatments have successfully alleviated the signs and symptoms experienced by the patient, demonstrating significant therapeutic benefits and improving overall well-being.

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