



# A Review on Chittodvega w.s.r to Generalized Anxiety Disorder and its Management

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## Review Article

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## Abstract

With the advent of modern science, human life has become much faster and more stressful. Psychiatric disorders are therefore expanding today, A wide range of psychiatric conditions have been described in Ayurveda. Ayurveda follows psychosomatic approach of health. Chittodvega is a Manasavikara mentioned by Charaka which is considered as a perfect word for highlighting the status of anxiety, Generalized Anxiety Disorder. Chittodvega can exist as a separate disease or can be an etiological factor for other psychic and psychosomatic diseases. Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) is a mental health disorder that produces fear worry and a constant feeling of being overwhelmed. This on-going worry and tension may be accompanied by physical symptoms, such as restlessness, feeling on edge or easily fatigued, difficulty concentrating, muscle tension or problems sleeping. Being an alarming disease, it requires effective management. In recent years several synthetic drugs have been introduced for the treatment of anxiety disorders. Clinical trials have shown that anxiolytic drugs alone have limited long term efficacy and one cannot avoid major side effects such as drug dependence, drug resistance, sedation etc. Ayurveda follows psychosomatic approach of health. Acharya Charaka explains three types of therapies of physical and mental disorders Daivavyapasraya, Yuktivyapasraya, Satvajaya Chikitsa. So the present study deals with systemic review of Chittodvega from all the classics of Ayurveda and its management.

**Keywords:** Chittodvega; Nidana; Mansika Roga Chikitsa; Manovikara

## Introduction

Man is approaching the Raja and Tama Prakopaka Ahara - Vihara in order to carve out a place in this fiercely competitive world, and as a result, he is leading an extremely stressful life. All of it contributes to the disruption of Vatadi Doshas, which creates an aberrant state in the body and mind. Ayurveda speaks of a number of psychological

problems that bear some resemblance to anxiety disorders; Chittodvega, one of the mental ailments that Acharya Charaka [1] describes, appears to be the term that most closely corresponds to anxiety disorders. In modern terms too, emotional disorders, including anxiety disorders are considered minor mental disorders. Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) is a mental health disorder that produces fear worry and a constant feeling of being overwhelmed. It is

characterized by excessive, persistent and unrealistic worry about everyday things. This worry could be multifocal such as finance, family, health and future. It is excessive, difficult to control, and is often accompanied by many non-specific psychological and physical symptoms. Excessive worry is the central feature of GAD [2]. Given the seriousness of the issue, safe and effective therapy is required. Despite its wealth of knowledge, modern medicine is not without its negative effects and environmental influences. Thus, extensive research is being done to determine which Ayurvedic treatment is the safest for treating this illness.

## Ayurvedic Review

According to Ayurveda psychic factors are involved in almost all the disease processes along with physical disturbance as both are interdependent. Mind is one of the substratum of diseases and having its own Doshas (Rajasa and Tamasa). Many psychological conditions caused by these Doshas like-Kama (passion), Krodha(Anger), Lobha (greed), Moha (confusion), Irshya (envy), Mana (conceit), Mada (arrogance), Chittodvega (anxiety), Bhaya (fear), Harsha (exhilaration) [3] etc. Chittodvega is a Manasavikara mentioned by Charaka which is considered as a perfect word for highlighting the status of anxiety, Generalized Anxiety Disorder. Chittodvega can exist as a separate disease or can be an etiological factor for other psychic and psychosomatic diseases.

Ayurvedic classics have mentioned many words related to mental status, which are

- Chittavibhramsha [4]
- Chittakshobha [5]
- Asvatha Chitta [6]
- Anavasthita Chitta [7]
- Chittodvega

## Etymology and Definition of Chittodvega

The term Chittodvega comprises of two words i.e. Chitta and Udvega.

Chitta is derived from root "Chit" which denotes the following meanings:

To perceive, fix the mind upon, attend to, be attentive, to observe, take notice of, to aim at, intend, to be anxious about, care for, to resolve, to understand, comprehend, know, make attentive, remind of. (Sanskrit – English dictionary of Sir Monier Williams)

Udvega: According to Sanskrit – English Dictionary of Sir Monier Williams

Addition of "Vin" Pratyaya to "Ud" i.e. Ud + Vin leads to Udvega, which has the following meanings: Trembling, waving, shaking, agitation, regret, fear, distress, admiration, astonishment.

With the above interpretations Chittodvega can be defined as –

Chitta (Mind) + Udvega (Agitation) = Chittodvega (Anxious state of mind).

## Vyutpatti

Chittam Manah i.e. Chitta is mind [8].

## Nidana

Specific Nidana for Chittodvega are not separately mentioned. But in general for all mental disorders basic pathogenic factors are Rajas & Tamasa. Vitiating of Raja & Tama is considered as prime factor in causation of Chittodvega. In Ayurvedic classics many factors are stated to be the cause of Manasaroga in various contexts, which can be correlated to the Nidana aspect of Chittodvega.

In general, common etiological factors of all Sharirika & Manasika Rogas has been stated to be

- Asatmyendriyarthasamyoga (Deficient, excessive or perverted use of senses)
- Pragyaparadha (Volitional transgression)
- Parinama (Deficient, excessive or perverted incidence of seasons.)

Charaka has explained certain Unmada Prakaran factors, like Alpasattva (inadequate personality), Hridaya Pradushya (As heart is the seat of Buddhi, alteration of Buddhi), and Deva Guru Dwijanam (condemning of God, teacher and brahmins or elders), which can cause derangement of Raja and Tama Doshas affecting Manovaha Srotas and act as etiological factors for the development of Manasik Vyadhi [9].

## Modern Review

Anxiety disorder, as defined by Harrison's principles of internal medicine is "a subjective sense of unease, dread, or foreboding, can indicate a primary psychiatric condition or can be a component of, or reaction to, a primary medical disease".

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V) specifically describes GAD as excessive worry and apprehensive expectations, occurring more days than not for at least 6 months, about a number of events or activities, such as work or school performance etc [10].

## Diagnostic Criteria

Patients will be diagnosed on the basis of signs and symptoms of General anxiety disorder (DSM-V criteria) [10]

1. Excessive anxiety and worry (apprehensive expectations) occurring more days than not for at least 6 months, about a no. of events or activities (such as work or school performance).
2. The individual finds it difficult to control the worry.
3. The anxiety and worry are associated with three (or more) of the following six symptoms (with at least some symptoms having been present for more days than not for the past 6 months):
  - Restlessness or feeling keyed up or on edge.
  - Being easily fatigued
  - Difficulty concentrating or mind going blank.
  - Irritability
  - Muscle tension
  - Sleep disturbance (difficulty in falling or staying sleep or restless, unsatisfying)
4. The anxiety worry or physical symptoms cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational or other important areas of functioning.
5. The disturbance is not attributable to the physiological effects of a substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, a medication) or another medical condition (e.g., hyperthyroidism).
6. The disturbance is not better explained by another mental disorder (e.g., anxiety or worry about having panic attacks in panic disorder, negative evaluation in social anxiety disorder [social phobia], contamination or other obsessions in obsessive-compulsive disorder, separation from attachment figures in separation anxiety disorder, reminders of traumatic events in posttraumatic stress disorder, gaining weight in anorexia nervosa, physical complaints in somatic symptom disorder, perceived appearance flaws in body dysmorphic disorder, having a serious illness in illness anxiety disorder, or the content of delusional beliefs in schizophrenia or delusional disorder).

## Management

As separate description of Chittodvega is not given in Ayurvedic texts. The disease can be managed according to the Mansika Roga Chikitsa given by Acharyas.

### Preventive Measures for Mental Disorders

Ayurveda has suggested several preventative strategies for both physical and mental problems since it feels that preventing diseases is superior to treating them. By following the advice given in the classics, Manovikara can be prevented. They are as follows:

- Sadvritta
- Achara Rasayana
- Dharaniya Vega Vidharana

**Sadvritta (good conduct):** Leading a good life, or Sadvritta, is the Ayurvedic phrase meaning great conduct [11]. Mano Doshas (Rajas and Tamas) give birth to a wide range of emotions, including fear, grief, jealousy, and rage. The Charaka Samhita prescribes a long list of good activities. These include, among other things, refraining from disparaging nobles and preceptors, acting appropriately, not being devout or unduly enthusiastic, and dedicating oneself to learning, almsgiving, friendship, compassion, joy, serenity, and indifference. Most of these are focused on social and ethical issues, but they are all concerned with the emotional and psychological components of life. The Sattva Guna prevails over Rajas and Tamas through Sadvritta practise, preserving excellent mental health, and Acharya Charaka has put out the principles to follow in order to achieve good health and control over sense faculties.

**Achara Rasayana:** In this way, Achara Rasayana is explained, and it is very important for treating Chittodvega [12]. Achara Rasayana is a method of mental and social behaviour that has the potential to have both physical and mental benefits. Additionally, it is proposed as a "Nitya Rasayana", which directly affects the potentiation of Mana's Sattva Guna. Some of the points given under Achara Rasayana described by Acharya Charaka are mentioned as below:

- Satya Vadinam (truthful)
- Akrodha (free from anger)
- Nivrutam Madhya Maithunat (devoid of alcohol and sex)
- Ahimsaka (do not indulge in violence)
- Anayasa (do not indulge in exhaustion)
- Prasantam Priya Vadinam (Peaceful and pleasing in speech)
- Japa Sauchaparam (Practice incantation and cleanness)
- Dharam (stable)

**Dharaniya vega vidharana (urges which should be controlled):** The Ayurvedic texts list a number of Dharaniya Vegas, including Lobha (greed), Shoka (grief), Bhaya (fear), Krodha (anger), Nirlajjata (shamelessness), Irshya (envy), Mana (vanity), Raga (excessive attachment), and Abhidhya (desire to take another's property) [13]. For the benefit of one's own and society's wellbeing, it has been proposed that these cravings be repressed. These Dharaniya Vegas have a negative impact on society, including family and kin, and cause a range of mental health issues at the level of the human psyche, leading to mental disease. Dharaniya Vegas is therefore more of a preventive strategy that, when used appropriately, will result in optimal mental health.

## Curative Aspect

Acharya Charaka explains three types of therapies of physical and mental disorders [14],

- Daivavyapashraya – Divine/ spiritual therapy
- Yuktivyapashrya – Rational/ physical therapy
- Sattvavajaya – Mental therapy

### Sattvavajaya and Daivavyapasraya

Acharya Charaka has added Sattvavajaya and Daivavyapasraya treatment modalities (nonmaterial therapy) under the category of Adravyabhuta Chikitsa. Bhaya Darshana (frightening), Vismapana (creating surprise), Vismarana (forgetting, engaged in other tasks), Tadana (beating), Kshobhana (administrating shock), and other methods are also stated under Adravyabhuta Chikitsa of Mansika Vikaras.

### Yuktivyapashray Chikitsa

**Ahara vihara:** Ahara plays an important role in the making up of mind and has a direct connection with mind e.g. Satvic diet increases the Satva Guna and calms the mind, on the other hand excessive intake of pungent, spicy, sour, hot etc increase Rajas Manas Dosha and cold tasteless, foul smelling food increases Tamasa Manas Dosha. Vihara like Vishamchesta i.e., abnormal motor activities like abnormal activities, violation of good conduct can be considered as etiological factors of Manasa Roga. Avoidance of these causative Ahara and Vihara can aid in the management of Chittodvega.

### Aushadha chikitsa (management through drug)

1. Antahparimarjana Chikitsa
  - Shodhana: It includes Virechana, Brihmana Basti, Snehana Nasya
  - Shamana Chikitsa:
    - Ekal Dravya- Shankhapushpi, Brahmi, Jatamansi, Ashwagandha, Giloya, Yashtimadhu
    - Ausadhsiddha Ghruta – Brahmi Ghruta, Maha Kalyanak Ghruta, Kushmanda Ghruta
    - Rasayana Prayoga- Brahmi Rasayana
    - Rasausadhi- Smritisagara Rasa, Krishnachaturbhuj
    - Arishta- Ashwagandharishta, Sarashwatarishta
2. Bahirparimarjana Chikitsa
  - Shiroabhyanga/ Shiropichu with medicated Taila.
  - Shirodhara- Various researches have shown that Dhara with Ksheera, Taila like Brahmi Taila, Kwatha made of Medhya Dravyas or even Jaladhara are very much effective in Chittodvega.
3. Pathya Apathya
 

“Pathyam patho anapetam yadyachokatam Manasa priyam” [15]

It means that the Ahara which is beneficial and nutritional

to the body and beside this also gives happiness to the mind is known as Pathya. So one needs to take wholesome and proper dietary regime which is agreeable to mind and senses, which will further provide Tushti (mental satisfaction), Urja (mental strength), and Sukha (happiness).

	Ahara	Vihara
<b>Pathya</b>	Patola, Brahmi, Kushmanda, Hari-taki, Ksheera, Ghruta, Dhatri	Sadvrutta Palan, Achara Rasayana, Dincharya- Ritucharya Palan
<b>Apathya</b>	Overindulgence in Meat, alcohol, Heavy and Spicy, Stale food etc	Suppression of sleep, hunger, excessive urges, excessive strain etc

**Table 1:** Ahara, Vihara by Pathya and Apathya.

## Discussion

There is scattered description about Chittodvega in Ayurvedic texts. It cannot be correlated exactly to any disease in modern medicine. Because of similarity in symptomatology, it has closest resemblance to anxiety disorder. Patient suffering from GAD tends to expect failure due to its severity of chronicity. Seeing the severity of symptoms and its deleterious effect in present scenario many researches are being done to see the best way to manage GAD. The current study is entitled as “Randomized comparative clinical evaluation of efficacy of Brahmi Taila Nasya and Yoga Module in Chittodvega (GAD)”. Nasya Karma and Yoga both can have tremendous effect in the treatment of mental disorders. Nasya Karma is claimed to cause clarity of sense organs, sound sleep, cheerful appearance, and can give mental and sensorial happiness. Yoga helps to restraint unnecessary mental fluctuations and thus help in stabilizing and calming the mind.

## Conclusion

Ayurveda has Psychosomatic approach to health. The condition of Dosha, Dhatu and Mala components effects both the Sharirika and Mansika Swasthya condition of the body. The current scenario of Manasa Roga also depicts the irregularities in diet and lifestyle. In this regard Ayurvedic diet and therapeutic regimes are of great relevance because of high efficacy with least side effects. It works in all the three domains preventive, curative and rehabilitative aspect.

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