

ROLE OF AYURVEDA IN COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

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ABSTRACT

Background: Health is never an issue until someone gets sick, it is the reality in current situation. Because of improper diet, lack of exercise, stress, low quality of food grains & global warming overall health status of individual is poor & they are getting easily prone to communicable diseases. Covid-19, H1N1 influenza, Ebola are the recent examples. They are big challenges & creating a burden over health care system. Ayurveda though an ancient medical science has clearly described such communicable diseases & their causes, mode of transmission, prevention as well as cure. Charak has quoted *Janapadodhwansa*, (mass destruction) & its 4 reasons as *dushitavayu* (Air), *jala* (Water), *kala* (time), *desh* (region). Sushrut has already

mentioned *aupsargikarogas* (communicable diseases) i.e, *kushtha* (*Skin diseases*), *jwara* (*Fever*) etc. & their mode of transmission. Prevention as well as cure of disease is goal of Ayurveda. Through maintenance of *Dincharya*, *Rutucharya*, *Sadvritta*, person's physical and mental health is secured. With the help of *Panchakarma*, *Aushadha*, & *Rasayana* these diseases can be cured. In this literary work effort has made to find how Ayurveda can help in facing the growing challenge of communicable diseases.

KEYWORDS: *Janpadodhwans*, *Aupsargik*, *Rasayana*, *Panchakarma*, *Sadvritta*.

INTRODUCTION

Due to advancement of science and research life span of human being has been increased but simultaneously threat of communicable disease has increased day by day. Communicable disease^[1] spread from person to person or from an animal to a person. The spread often happens via air borne viruses or bacteria's, but also through blood or other bodily fluids. It may also spread easily due to large population, crowd, unhygienic conditions and low immunological status of individual.

Covid-19, H1N1 Influenza, Ebola virus are the recent example of such diseases. Because of its contagious nature, a large number of individual are getting infected at the same time thus creating great pressure over public health.

Ayurveda though being an ancient life science clearly mention's about such disease conditions. A detailed chapter on *Janapadodhwansa*^[2] in *Charak Samhita Vimansthan* 3rd Adhyaya explains epidemic disease and its etiological factors. In *Sushrut Samhita KUSHtha Nidana* Adhyaya they had given a good description on mode of transmission of disease. They are called *Aupasargik rogas*^[3] (Communicable diseases).

From these references we come to know that in ancient time there were also such epidemics. A detailed regimen for such diseases is also described in *Charak Samhita* as use of *Panchakarma* and *Rasayana* along with *Sadvrittapan*. Ayurvedic approach to communicable diseases will be discussed in this paper.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Charak Samhita Vimansthan 3rd Adhyaya

Aacharya Charak has described the term *Janapadodhwansa*^[2] meaning destruction of a population living in an area. It is similar with epidemics. People having different *prakriti*, *sarata* and *aahar* but some factors like air, region are common to them and vitiation of these factors leads to disease production and death which is termed as *Janapadodhwansa*.

“Tattu khalu emevbhavaha samanyajanpad updeshubhavanti tadyatha vayu, udakam, deshah, kal eti” (ch.vi.3/6)

Janapadodhwansa occurs due to vitiation of *vayu*, *jala*, *desh*, *kala*. They are nothing but modes by which infectious diseases spread.

Aacharya Charaka has mentioned *Adharma*^[4] as the root cause of *Janapadodhwans*. Not following one's duty to a community is termed as *adharma*. *Pradnyaparadh*^[5] is also included in it. Not following *Dincharya* (daily regimen), *ritucharya* (seasonal regimen), *vegavidharan* (suppression of urges), *paap karma* (sins) is included in *Adharma*. All these things are responsible for hampering immunity of an individual. Thus not directly but surely *Adharma* is responsible for *Janapadodhwans*.

Sushrut Samhita Nidansthan Adhyaya 4th Kushthnidanadhyaya

Aacharya Sushrut has mentioned *Aupasargikrogas*^[3] in *Kushthanidan*. They are contagious diseases which spread through direct contact or contaminated objects of patient.

“prasangat gatra sansparshaat nishwasat sahbhojanat Sahshyayayaashant vastramalyaanulepnat Kushthamjwarash shoshach netraabhishyandev ch Aupsargik rogash sankramak itya annantaram” (su.ni.5/33,34)

By physical contact, expired air, eating with others in same plate, sharing bed (sexual contact also) using clothes, garlands and paste (*anulepa* or cosmetics) infectious diseases spread from person to person. Meaning of *Prasang* is excessively and frequently performed according to Aacharya Dalhana.

Ayurvedic Management of communicable disease

“yeshananam mrutu samanyam samanyam n ch karmanam”

Some diseases are incurable if *arishtalakshana* (fatal signs) are present, while others even without such signs are incurable because of certain *purvajanmakrut karma* (fatal past deeds). Ayurveda emphasizes on treatment of *sadhyavyadhis* only. Thus treatment of those who don't show the fatal signs is mentioned in the following quotation.

“Karmpanchavidhantesham bhaishjyamparamuchhyate Rasayanamvidhivat upyogah prashasyate”

1. Karma Panchavidham (Appropriate use of Panchakarma)^[1]

Vaman, Virachan, Niruhabasti, anuvasanbasti and shirovirechanarepanchakarma^[6] described by Aacharya Charak. Aacharya Sushrut and Aacharya Vagbhat included *Raktmokshana* among *shodhanupkramas*^[7] Depending upon *Doshabala*, *vyadhibala* appropriate remedy from above should be selected and implemented.

2. Rasayanam Viddhi Vaat Upyoga (Use of Rasayana)^[1]

According to Aacharya Charak treatment is of two types.^[8]

1. Promotive- It is of two type

- a) Which provides strength and immunity to healthy person- *Rasayana* (rejuvenation) The *Rasayana* is of two types. i.e. *Kutipravesik* and *Vatatapika*. In case of communicable disease *vatatapik Rasayana* can be used. It has minimal precautions and

can be easily used in day to day life. In Charak Samhita Chikitsasthanaadhyay 1 various *Rasayana* and their indications, benefits have been mentioned. Out of which *Chyavanprash*, *TriphalaRasayana* etc will prove helpful.

b) Which promotes sexual vigor- *Vajikaran* (aphrodisiacs)

2. Curative- treatment which cures the disease of suffering people.

3. *AacharRasayana and Sadvrittapan*

These rules and regulations help in maintenance of mental and spiritual wellbeing of a person. Truth, sympathy, respecting elders and teachers, helping needy people, eating nutritious and *Satvikaahar* e.g. milk, ghee etc. in daily food. Properly following these rules will benefit the person in the same way as that of consuming *Rasayana*. Hence it is called *AcharyaRasayana*.^[9]

Along with this regimen treatment of symptoms as per mentioned in *chikitsasthana* can be done.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

From the above discussion we can conclude that ancient *acharyas* had knowledge of communicable diseases that's why a thorough description is given in *Samhitas* regarding them. Treatment of patients not showing fatal signs is given as *Panchakarma* and use of *Rasayana* as mainstream treatment. Thus by improving immunity of individuals spread of communicable diseases can be controlled.^[10] Further research should be done in order to implement Ayurveda against infectious diseases, in Public health for worldwide acceptance of Ayurveda.

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