

# Review of Useful Panchakarma Modalities for Psychological Problems in Menopausal Syndrome

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**Abstract:-** Menopause marks the complete end of monthly menstrual cycles consequential from irretrievable changes at the hormonal and reproductive functions of the ovaries and is coupled with large number of symptoms associated with physical, psychological and genitourinary tract. Now the present scenario regarding the menopausal health demands priority due to increase in life expectation and ascendant population of menopausal women. The present conceptual study documents the useful Panchakarma modalities in relieving stress and anxiety during the menopausal symptoms.

Now-a-days, menopausal syndrome is getting attainment and magnitude in regular geriatric and clinical practice as a incessant exponential surge which has been noted over years. A group of symptoms completes the menopausal syndrome which is changing from patient to patient and involves physical, hormonal and psychological signs and symptoms. Inappropriate look up for these postmenopausal geriatric women health will plant a terrific damage and strain towards present healthcare systems of our country. Regarding the treatment modalities available, most of the physical problems are agreeably tackled by modern medical science, but eventually this modality does not always contribute in psychological or stress aspect. This disappointment strengthens the severity of the problem in long term. So wide variety of *Panchakarma* treatment modalities from *Ayurveda* are used to getrid of menopausal psychological problems. With a appropriate *Aahara*, *Vihara*, *Aushadhi*, *Panchakarma*, the ill effects of menopause especially psychological problems can be minimized to great degree.

**Keywords:-** Menopause, Ayurveda, Panchakarma, Hormones.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Amenorrhoea of 12 months from the occurrence of last menstrual period defines menopause. Menopausal syndrome is characterized by physical, psychological, neurological and urogenital symptoms. The figure of women close to menopause or having menopause is increasing nowadays and a majority of the women are living with larger part of their life in postmenopausal phase. Prevalence rate of postmenopausal syndrome is almost 78% of population, but only 19.5% of the symptomatic women tends to look up for

better solution through treatment. The major health concerns after menopause are urogenital atrophic changes, osteoporosis, cardiovascular disorders, dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Treatment includes Hormone Replacement Therapy which has complications like breast malignancy, endometrial malignancy, abnormal genital bleeding, active thromboembolic disease and active liver or gallbladder disease. Hence there is a necessity for ultimate and better management during the menopausal phase to improve the life superiority of individuals. In Western countries, women think the menopause as a "crisis." Earlier and also now a days, Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) is considered as the solitary practicable treatment. However, with the entry of nature based therapies and the rising persuasion of Ayurvedic remedial measures in Western countries, people are now considering and realizing that there are many natural healing alternatives to HRT. Sometimes, menopausal sign and symptoms are getting triggered by a hysterectomy or surgical removal of the ovaries, which produce hormones.

HRT, however, is not always successful and helpful to control the psychological symptoms linked with menopausal phase. An attempt to handle this with long-term use of anti depressants, hypnotics, and anxiolytic drugs leads to unwanted effects like lethargy, impaired motor function, memory loss, unsociable manners etc. Therefore, here made an effort to throw light on another side of the coin, i.e., the psychological aspects. A great ray of hope in Ayurveda to find a better therapy for the management of psychological phase and stress in syndrome which is now considered through the present context.

### Common symptoms of Psychological changes in menopause include:

Mixtures of symptoms are often reported as being part of a menopausal syndrome. These include hot flashes, night sweats, irregular menstruation, dry vagina and light-headedness.

Menopause is a accepted organic process. But the symptoms, such as hot flashes, emotional symptoms mostly interrupt your sleep creating insomnia, palpitations, depression, unusual headaches, lethargy, lack of energy concentration difficulty etc.

Most Common cause is naturally declining reproductive hormones which land in menopause. In late 30s, ovaries

produce less estrogens and progesterone which regulate menstruation. In 40s, your menstrual cycle may be converted into longer or shorter, heavier or lighter, and more or less frequent, in anticipation of menopausal phase. In due course by age 45 to 50 ovaries discontinue releasing ovum and you will be in menopause with no more menstrual cycle.

### **Consideration of Menopause in Ayurveda:**

*Ayurveda* describes *Rajonivritti* which means end of *Artava pravritti* (menstrual cycle). It occurs in *Jarapakwa shareera* at the age of fifty years. *Rajonivritti* is a sign of *Vruddhatwa* or *Jara* and is considered as a natural progression of life in women. '*Rajonivritti*' comprises of words "*Rajah*" and "*Nivritti*". In present context, *Rajah* is *artava or stripushpa* i.e. menstrual blood. The *Nivritti* is end or termination. The menses increase the *Pitta dosha*, while weight gain during this phase indicates the *Kapha* imbalance. Since the woman may have psychological symptoms with moody nature and *nidranasha* during menopause, strong indication of *Vatadosha* is observed. Ayurvedic treatment protocol includes *Rasayana chikitsa* (Rejuvenation and Revitalization therapy), *Panchakarma Procedures or therapy*, *Ashtanga Yoga*, *Pranayama*, *Dhyana* and *Satvavajaya chikitsa* (Assurance of Mind)

In Ayurveda, various psychological circumstances i.e. *Manas Bhava* like grief, fear, anger etc., have been well thought-out to play a role in the precipitation of illness. Many such *Manas Bhavas* influence the menopausal woman due to a mixture of reasons and lead in due course to psychological instability.

### **Ayurvedic Approach in Menopausal Symptoms**

*Ayurveda* through all classical books have been mentioning *Rajonivritti* around the age of 50 years. This phase is influenced by *Shareera shithilta* and *Vrudha avastha*. Dominated by *Vatadosha* specially with *Laghu and Ruksha guna* consequences in reduction in *Dravata of Rasa dhatu* leading to *Dhatukshya* starting from *Rasadhatu*, further respective *Updhatu kshaya* takes place. Ultimately leading to *Artava nasha* (amenorrhea). The vitiated *Vatadosha* also disturbs *Manasdosha (Raja and Tama dosha)* during this phase leading to various psychological disturbances and stress. Many women incident the emotional disturbances during this span which needs to be attended urgently.

Various studies show these psychological disturbances and stress can be managed by *Rasayana* drugs and *Panchakarma procedures*. When subjected to the *Panchakarma* procedure *Shirodhara* showed better effect in combating the disturbances of *Manas Bhavas* and psychological disturbances and stress of menopause.

- *Vatadosha* type menopausal symptoms include depression, anxiety, insomnia, etc.
- *Pittadosha* type menopausal symptoms are often angry and mainly suffer hot flashes.
- *Kaphadosha* type menopausal symptoms include weight gain, feeling of mental, and physical heaviness.

Some women who have *Nidranasha* (Insomnia) may use sleeping pills which may be of assistance when used for a shorter duration. As these medicines is not a treatment for insomnia. Inducing and developing healthy habits help out to get rid of medicines.

### **Psychological sign and Symptoms in Menopause**

**Depression & Anxiety:** The fluctuation of estrogens and progesterone can be for reason feelings of anxiety, nervousness or depression. But recurrent and disturbing panic attacks of these feelings are not a regular part of menopause. Women used to have anxiety in earlier life or who had postpartum depression are occasionally to have psychological disturbances and stress during menopausal phase. Panic disorders can be hard to identify because some symptoms due to physical symptoms such as sweating and palpitations etc. The drop in oestrogen levels mostly lead to hot flashes that creates sleep disturbances may be leading to anxiety and mood swings. As it is not easily diagnosed, that doesn't mean that it doesn't exist or that you can't treat it.

Experiencing symptoms of psychological disturbances and stress almost every day for two or more weeks, patient may need therapy to get out of it and it's probably time to get a *Ayurvedic Panchakarma* treatments.

### **Panchakarma modalities or Treatments for menopause:**

The type of *Panchakarma* treatment thinks of the *dosha* in which woman's menopause symptoms are getting observed. As lifestyle changing therapy, *Ayurveda* comprises of a holistic physiological system based on balance of *Tridosha* theory being constituted by "*vata*", "*pitta*" and "*kapha*" and *Panchamahabhuta* theory.

Ayurvedic lifestyle is essentially based on the principles of natural lifestyle with a lot of perseverance on discipline and control with medications consisting of mainly herbs and use of techniques such as *Yoga* means and *Panchakarma* therapy.

1. ***Abhyanga*** – Daily massage therapy with medicated oil is designed to loosen and mobilize the toxins which help in open up all the channels. This therapy provides physical and psychological relaxation and helps in improving the quality of sleep, mood swings and keeps the psyche in relaxed phase.
2. ***Shiroabhyanga*** - Use of specific medicated *dosha* related oils on the scalp followed by head massage. This procedure reduces stress and induces peaceful sleep regularly.
3. ***Udvardhana*** – In this a mixture of medicated herbs is made and used with or without sesame oil to be applied all over the body and massage it by gentle hands. They helps in improving the muscle tone and with relaxation of muscles.
4. ***Shirodhara*** – In this warm medicated or herbal oil is being poured with steady stream over the forehead for about 30 to 60 minutes. It helps to relieve all the negativity, fears, psychological junk etc. *Shirodhara* is the most distressful therapy and treatment which help to get out of psychological conditions arising from various

medical diseases. This therapy is profoundly calming and is effective in anxiety disorders and stress induced insomnia. *Shirodhara* is moreover made via medicated or herbal milk, this is an excellent remedy for troubled sleep, anxiety & stress. *Shirodhara* also helps for calming the nervous system and balancing the neurotransmitters.

5. **Shastishalipindasweda** – It is done by using hot milk mixed with rice and herbs. The massage is done all over the body with the help of bolus (basically an udder-like object filled with fluid). This provides strength and relaxation to the muscles with nourishment.
6. **Shiropichu** –An Application of medicated oil according to vitiated *dosha* over the head with a cotton padding. The procedure is especially valuable in psychological problems and stress induced insomnia.
7. **Virechana** – This is a treatment that cleanses the gastrointestinal tract and works to reduce excess *Pittadosha*. It is achieved through the ingestion of medicated purgative drugs such as castor oil etc.
8. **Nasya** – This treatment aims to lubricate sensitive nasal tissues with oil and other mediums. Primarily few drops of an herbal oil or ghee into the nostrils of patient help patient to get out of many stressful conditions. Nasya is gateway to head-neck and brain according to Ayurveda and is used in major psychological conditions and stress for the better relief.
9. **Padabhyanga** –An ancient Ayurveda treatment to massage foot with medicated oils or ghee is called *Padabhyanga*. It pressures and massages your vital points on the foot to boost physical and mental health. The foot is one of the almost important parts of your body. In an Ayurvedic tradition, 'Paada' is given special importance. According to ancient belief, the body and soul are embodied in the feet, making this organ a vital part of the body. Ayurvedic foot massage *Padabhyanga* is an excellent mode to provide necessary care to our feet. Massaging the feet with Ayurvedic oil relieves nervous tension, which ultimately improves our overall health. It activates your immune system to keep you away from autoimmune diseases. *Padabhyanga* Reduces mental stress and anxiety and provides peace of mind. It Promotes sound sleep and helps to reduce anxiety and calms our mind and body.
10. **Vasti** - Medicated enemas of herbal decoction or *oil/ghee* (*Vasti*) are administered for calming down the aggravated *Vatadoshas* and *Apana vata* which tends to be vitiated during menopause.

## II. DISCUSSION

When having Psychological Sign and symptoms in Menopause, it becomes an alarming problem for woman and this needs an effective and safe treatment. In contemporary science, Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) is solitary alternative for this natural illness by which one can get achievement in fighting the syndrome, but it has a wider range of secondary health worries. On the other hand, this therapy protocol is not effective to a great extent in the psychological manifestations. Managing them with use of sedative and anxiolytic drugs, ultimately go ahead towards

various side effects like drowsiness, non-social behaviours, drug dependence etc. Therefore, there is a ample scale of research to uncover harmless, potent, cost effective remedy from *Ayurveda*. It is well proved that these health hazards can be well managed with certain Ayurvedic therapeutic Panchakarma procedures useful for psychological well being. These *Ayurveda* procedures which are exceptionally well proved for their psychological and cognitive better effects as a special line of therapy. Despite this, the use of such treatments are getting widespread and increasing. Along with the proper *aahara*, herbs like *Shatavari*, *Ashwagandha*, *Ashoka*, *Guduchi*, *Jatamansi*, *Brahmi*, *Haritaki*, *Shankhapushpi*, *Bala*, *Yashtimadhu*, *Chandrashura* are rich in Phytoestrogens and are having similar activity to estrogen, do appear to have beneficial effects on psychological menopausal symptoms.

## III. CONCLUSION

Psychological problems and stress at menopausal phase correspond to imbalance in the body that was already on the rise in the body and diet plays a solution in balancing hormones during premenopausal stage and in menopausal phase.

*Ayurveda* describes that these stubborn symptoms will be tackled with the help of traditional *Ayurvedic* detoxification programme "*panchakarma*" useful to clear the body's channels and put on relief. Lifestyle management also plays a significant role in the time of menopause. Symptoms at menopause are mostly natural but put a label to pay more sincere attention to women health.

Regarding the present context, *Rajonivritti*, is a sign of *jara*, which can be better managed by *Panchakarma* procedures. Many case studies observing *Panchakarma* and *Ayurveda* protocol show better efficiency in the improving psychological symptoms and physical symptoms. Also with the help of *Panchakarma* modalities described in *Ayurveda*, the patient feels moderate relief in sexual symptoms with no adverse reactions. Thus, *Panchakarma* modalities described in *Ayurveda* can avoid the hazardous effects of Hormone therapy which is now considered as gold standard for the management offered by conventional system.

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