



SHORT REVIEW ARTICLE

ROLE OF SATVAVAJAYA CHIKITSA IN JARA W.S.R.TO SOCIO – PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS.

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ABSTRACT

Society nowadays tends to think that mental health problems are a normal aspect of ageing. Aside from experiencing dementia, the elderly can also experience emotional and psychological stress closely related to loneliness, isolation or loss of a loved one. But unfortunately these dilemmas are not taken into account by the medical or health care system. These can have a negative impact on overall health of an older individual and addressing these psychosocial problems is an integral component of senior's complex medical care.

Keywords: Ageing, *Satvavajaya chikitsa*, *Jara*, Socio Psychological problem, *Ayurveda*

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INTRODUCTION:

The changes occurring in the body is called *Vaya*. *Charaka, Sushruta, Vagbhatacharya's* have mentioned the stages of *vaya* and the duration, the changes occurring and the doshas dominant at that period. There is mention of life expectancy too. *Charakacharya* in *Vimana sthana* 3rd chapter says, as *dharma* goes on declining in one – one *yuga* and also the *panchamahabhuta's* and when the life span of all living organisms in that *yuga* depletes 100th part then one year in their life span gets reduced¹. That is life span in *kruta yuga* was 400yrs, in *dvapara yuga* it became 300yrs, in *treta yuga* 200yrs and in *kali yuga* it is 100yrs. Like this it continues to decline in further *yugas*. *Sharangadhara* has said that life span is of 100 yrs and every decade there are changes^{2,3}.

Table 1. Changes occurring in every decade of life span

10 yrs - <i>balya</i>	60 yrs - <i>drushti</i>
20yrs - <i>vrudhhi</i>	70 yrs – <i>shukra, vikrama</i>
30 yrs - <i>chavi</i>	80 yrs - <i>buddhi</i>
40 yrs - <i>medha</i>	90 yrs - <i>karmendriya</i>
50 yrs - <i>tvak</i>	100 yrs – no assurity of life.

Meaning of jara and its importance:

Visramsas i.e., features declining slowly according to age is *vrudhha* and the *lakshanas* are *palita, shukla kasha*⁴. *Charakacharya* has mentioned the word *jeerna*, which is one

among the synonyms⁵. *Sadvrutta* {good conduct} is the important concept we find in our texts. Paying gratitude to God, *Brahmana, Guru* and Elderly is always a part and parcel in all the activities mentioned in the classics. Today in present era, when we look into Preventive and Social Medicine books we find the same reference saying as older adults make important contributions to society as family members, volunteers and as active participant in the workforce.

Role of vata dosha in jara avastha:

All the acharyas have mentioned that *jara avastha* is dominated by *vata dosha*. Hence one should very carefully plan the line of diet and regimen, drugs, dosage as well as treatment. This is the reason why we see many neurological conditions as well as imbalance in the catabolism and anabolism mechanisms in the body.

Features of jara⁶:

1. *Dhatu ksheena* – {tissue depletion}- cellular level changes – decrease in power house function, decline in DNA formation or loss of sequence in DNA.
2. *Indriya ksheena* – {sensory organs depletion}- lens opacity occurs causing blindness. High frequency acuity diminishes causing deafness.
3. *Bala ksheena* – {decreased strength}- Reduced T- cell function, increased auto antibodies.

4. *Vali, Pali, Khalitya* –{greying and falling of hair}- As age increases growth rate of hair decreases and decrease in melanocytes within keratin.

5. Cognitive and Memory impairment – Because of dementia and delerium brain atrophy develops. Synthesis of catecholamines decreases and depression develops. Reduced 4th stage of sleep, insomnia develops.

Socio-psychological issues:

This can have a significant impact on life and both physical and mental health of seniors. Major contributors to social and psychological problems for seniors are as follows:

1. Loneliness – from losing a spouse, children, near and dear ones.
2. Changes of ageing – inability to independently manage regular activities of living, difficulty in coping and accepting physical changes, menopausal changes.
3. Frustration – with ongoing medical problems and increasing number of medications.
4. Social isolation – as adult children are engaged in their own lives.
5. Boredom – from retirement and lack of routine activity.
6. Financial stress – from loss of regular income.
7. Old age homes – a curse of 21st century as it is becoming the silent killer of the elderly.

Charakacharya has explained all these factors in one line i.e., “*Ishtasya allabha and Anishtasya labha*”⁷

Satvavajaya chikitsa⁸:

Mentioned in ch.su.11th chap. *Satva* represents knowledge, pleasure na love. *avajaya* is nothing but victory and *manonigraha* is control on *kama, krodha, lobha, moha, irsha* feelings. Subunits of this *chikitsa* are *dhee, dhairya, smriti, samadhi, gyana, vigyana*⁹.

Dhee- The knowledge of discriminating the good and bad is *dhee*. This treatment should be applied by the family members i.e., individual responsibility and family care. Family should make the elders analyse that they are part of them, they need them, they are not isolating them. This is because older people think all these in negative way i.e., nobody cares me, love me etc.

Dhairya- The ability to overcome the critical conditions in life is *dhairya*. This can be achieved with the help of again family members. Supporting, caring them when they lose their spouse or near ones, by understanding them and being patient to them. Making house safe for them, we see nowadays so many crimes on individual aged ones, by telling them not to be afraid, call immediately and saying “I have done all safety measures for you”.

Smriti- Giving time to elders,sharing their and our experiences,seeking advice from them,all these make elders to remember their past.Community too helps here,by organising recreational activities,medical check-ups etc.

Gynana- Making elders to watch their related spiritual serials,giving them holy books and sending them to holy places should be done.Should not hurt their beliefs.Elders should also spend more time in watching,reading,listening to spirituality.

Vignyana- Children should be made to read holy books,vachanas which help them to understand their tradition,culture and respect to elders.Elders in turn should try to learn new technologies like computer,mobile,internet so that they will get an idea as in which direction the generation is moving.

Samadhi- Making them to reach the ultimate goal of life.This dhyana,dharana,samadhi is done by counselors where they in depth counsel the person and treat.

Conclusion:

Charaka has mentioned three fold of chikitsa under which satvavajaya is placed after yukti chikitsa. When disease is of manasa origin yukti chikitsa wont help,hence satvavajaya chikitsa done.Socio-psychological problems faced by elderly population are purely manasika.Hence treating them with love,care,support and boosting their satva will

ultimately bring smile over their face and success to a physician.

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