

MANAGEMENT OF STRESS INDUCED ACID DYSPEPSIA WITH AYURVEDIC MEDICATION AND STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUE -A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Stress is a natural physical and mental reaction to life experiences. Everyone expresses stress at different points of time. Anything from everyday responsibilities like work and family to serious life events such as a new diagnosis, war, or the death of a loved one can trigger stress. The present article discusses a case of stress induced acid dyspepsia which was managed by Ayurvedic medication and stress management technique in the form of breathing exercise and progressive muscle relaxation

Keywords: Dyspepsia, Breathing Exercise, Progressive Muscle Relaxation

INTRODUCTION

Stress is any external factor that threatens to disturb the organismic equilibrium. Stress can be mental or physical, although in the context of this article the focus will be mental stress. Mental stress involves challenge, threat or worry about future adverse events. Such stress activates the brain's stress response systems, which in turn affect the body. Many of the body's major systems are altered by stress (cardiovascular, muscular, urinary, gastrointestinal, sweat glands, etc) often with adverse consequences. Gastrointestinal function is particularly influenced by stress. Common gastrointestinal symptoms due to stress are heartburn, indigestion, nausea and vomiting, diarrhea, constipation and associated lower abdominal pain.¹

Treatment requires internal and external intervention followed by stress management techniques. Drugs which have *medhya* (nootropic) properties enhance the patient's ability to cope up with the associated stress. Internal medicines help in reducing the symptoms of Acid dyspepsia. Breathing exercises and progressive muscle relaxation are the kind of stress management therapies adopted. Repeated practices of the procedure make the person able to come out of the stress.²

Patient information:

A 36 year old male patient from Tumkur visited the Outpatient department on November 20th 2017. Patient complained of abdominal pain, sour belching,

associated with sleeplessness, chest pain since 3years. Patient was normal before 3years. 3 years back his mother expired. After this incident gradually he started developing occasional abdominal pain. He consulted a physician and was on Antacids, after which he showed slight improvement. After 1 year his elder brother also expired which increased his stress levels. He is a goldsmith by profession and his somatic complaints increased whenever he had more work stress. This incident deprived him of sleep and appetite also. He was not able to manage his stress levels and later the stomach issues increased to sour belching, heart burns and occasional chest pains which made him more concerned about his health.

Clinical findings:

The vital findings were normal on admission with pulse of 72 per minute, blood pressure 130/90. mm of Hg, body temperature of 37.6⁰C and respiratory rate of 16 per minute.

Body weight- 63Kg, Height- 154 cm

Per abdomen examination:

Inspection – no scar marks and no visible veins

Auscultation – bowel sound heard

Palpation – soft, non-tender

Percussion – dullness noted

Personal History:

Appetite was poor since the onset of illness, bowel constipated, micturition regular and sleep is disturbed with difficult in initiation and maintenance of sleep.

Habit: Tea- 3 times/day

No history of smoking

Occasional consumption of alcohol

EXAMINATION

Mental Status Examination

General appearance: well dressed, grooming – normal

Attitude - co operative

Eye contact- present, slightly restless

Speech –tone, pitch- normal

Content-appropriate

Mood: anxious, irritable

Affect –mood congruent

Thought-excessive thought about future

Perception –normal

Consciousness- conscious, awake, alert and responsive

Orientation-oriented to time, place and person

Intelligence-intact

Memory-intact

Insight-present

Judgment-intact

Diagnostic assessment:

a) Diagnostic methods: Hematological evaluation, chest X-ray and ECG was done.

b) Diagnostic challenges: The patient was evaluated for other systemic diseases. All laboratory investigation concerning the disease was found within normal limit. Following this patient was subjected to psychological evaluation where chronic stressors were elicited. Later the level of stress was assessed using perceived stress scale (PSS).³ The results on PSS score came 18 which indicate a high score on stress level. Hence the condition was understood as stress induced Acid dyspepsia.

c) Prognostic characters: Mild and moderate stress are manageable with appropriate internal medicine and stress management technique. There by associated somatic symptoms can be managed effectively.

Therapeutic interventions:

Samprapti:

Due to *nidana sevana* like *krodha udwegadi manasika bhava* and *pittakara ahara vihara* leads to *pitta prakopa*. *Agnidushti* in the form of *teekshnagni* producing *vidagdhajeerna* attains *shuktata* and *amotpatti* produces *amlapitta*.

Dashavidha pareeksha:

Prakriti- VPSatmya- madhyama

Vikriti- VP, raja &tama Satva-avara

Sara- madhyama Ahara shakti- heena

Samhanana-madhyama, Vyayama shakti- madhyama

Pramana-madhyama Vaya- madhyama

The patient reported of more of somatic features along with the psychological ones as associated to the somatic complaints. Treatment was planned for

both the complaints. External treatment aimed to improve both physical and psychological state of the patient. Internal medicine is shaman line of treatment. Along with that stress management therapy

was done through breathing exercise and deep muscle relaxation. The details of treatment adopted are given in tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: Yukti vyapasraya Chikitsa

| Treatment | Medication | Duration | Improvement |
|------------------------------------|---|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>Takradhara</i> ⁴ | Medicated takra | 3 days | Sleep improved |
| | Chitrakadi vati ³ 2-2-2 B/F | 3 days | Appetite improved |
| <i>Snehapana</i> | Sukumara ghritam ⁶ - 30ml,70ml, 120ml, 180ml | 4 days | Burning pain in abdomen reduced |
| <i>Sarvanga abhyanga</i> | Mahanarayana tailam ⁷ | 3 days | Joint pain reduced |
| <i>Virechana</i> | Trivrit lehya ⁸ -70gm Triphala+draksha kashaya-100ml | 1 day Total vega-14 | Subjective wellness |
| <i>Samsarjana karma</i> for 3 days | | | |
| Internal medicine | -Madiphala rasayanam- 1 tsp TID , Before food -Yashtimadhu Ksheerapaka-100ml BD, After food | | For 15 days |

Table 2: Satwavajaya Chikitsa

| Days | Techniques | Details |
|---------------------|---|---|
| 1 st Day | General introduction, detail work up on history | Rapport building |
| 2 nd Day | Stress management | Realize your strengths and foster a positive perspective on life |
| 3 rd Day | Supportive therapy | Enhancement of the self -esteem |
| 4 th Day | Maximum performance | Ensuring faster recovery and positive attitude towards wellness |
| 5 th Day | Breathing exercise ⁹ | 1)4-7-8Breathing 2) Roll breathing 3) morning breathing. It sends a message to brain to calm down and relax |
| 6 th Day | Progressive muscle relaxation ¹⁰ | Tense a group of muscles as you breath in and you relax them as you breath out. This method to relieve stress |
| 7 th Day | Lifestyle changes and personal appreciation | Sleep, eat and exercise properly, enhance your mood to see a healthier you in the mirror |

OUTCOME AND FOLLOW UP:

After the completion of treatment patient was assessed using Perceived stress scale (PSS). The scoring was 13 which show average level of stress. There was a reduction in sour belching and pain abdomen. The different techniques employed for the psychological wellbeing included a detail work up where the history taking and rapport building with the patient was attained. The second day patient was asked to give his own suggestions for the stress

management and we reinforced his own ideas into therapy. Third and fourth day the supportive therapy and motivation was done to boost up confidence levels so as to overcome stress. Fifth day patient was taught breathing exercise for improvement in concentration levels and overcoming stress. Breathing exercises reduce the cortisol levels there by reducing stress.¹¹ Sixth day progressive muscle relaxation technique which is considered as one among the best techniques for relaxation was employed. Patient was

advised *satvika ahara* (healthy diet) like milk, buttermilk, fruits, dairy products, nuts, ripe vegetables, legumes and whole grains.

Patient was advised with internal medicines such as madiphala rasayana one tea spoon three times a day before food and yashtimadhu Ksheerapaka 100ml twice a day after food. Patient was instructed to practice breathing exercises and relaxation techniques.

DISCUSSION

Ayu, the life is composed of 4 elements. This signifies the concept of psychosomatism in Ayurveda from the beginning. *Sharira* follows *satwa* and *satwa* follows *sharira*¹². Ideal physician is the one who treats both psychic and somatic sufferings. The analogy of *taptajya ghata* also signifies interrelation of mind and body.¹³

Manasika bhava such as *krodha*, *shoka*, *bhaya* hamper the digestive fire, which is said to be the root cause for all diseases.¹⁴ In the present case chronic familial and occupation stress lead to Acid dyspepsia by disturbing the equilibrium of GIT. Stress has acted as both precipitating as well as perpetuating factor. Hence the intervention was planned considering both psychic and somatic symptoms.

In the present case, oral administration of *Chitrakadi vati* has helped in improving *Agni*. *Takradhara* has helped in vasodilatation of all the channels and thereby improving their circulation which in turn improves the blood circulation to the brain. This improves the higher intellectual functions also. So by this process improvement in psychic symptoms was achieved.¹⁵ *Virechana* was planned to eliminate the morbid *dosha*, as the condition was chronic. Moreover it has helped in providing a sense of wellbeing along with the reduction of symptoms. *Sukumara ghritha* was selected based on its action of alleviating *pitta* and *vata dosha*. *Madiphala rasayana* was prescribed as a *pittika vikara*. *Yashtimadhu* is a well-known drug for its *pittahara*, *medhya* and *rasayana* property. It has anxiolytic and anti-stress activity.

Breathing exercises and progressive relaxation techniques bring down the cortisol levels in plasma thereby reducing the stress.¹¹ Healthy diet which have antioxidant property help in bringing down the ill effects of improper eating.

CONCLUSION

Incidence of psychosomatic disorders shows tremendous increase world wide. Sound mind in a sound body derives the health. The unique concept of Mind and body approach through Ayurveda is needed for an effective management of any psychosomatic illness.

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