



PREVENTIVE ASPECT OF AYURVEDA IN COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

Ayurveda

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ABSTRACT

As we are aware about the COVID-19; it is a worldwide epidemic. People are in a panic. this is a very critical time. The current outbreak was officially recognized as a pandemic on 11 March 2020. The most common symptoms are fever, tiredness, difficulty in breathing and dry cough. Notwithstanding the fact that no system of medicine has any evidence-based treatment for COVID-19 as yet, clinical interventions are being done worldwide. Now, there is multiple variant of the SARS-CoV-2 that are different from the version first detected in china. Similar strategy is required to be implemented by Ayurveda system of medicine. Ayurveda being the science of life, propagates the gifts of nature in maintaining healthy and happy & long living. Ayurveda interventions become even more relevant by the fact that there is an elaborate description of causation and management of epidemic (Janapadodhwamsa) in Ayurveda. Acharya Sushruta, explained the symptoms of Janapadodhwamsa in the context of polluted air as cough, breathlessness, vomiting, cold, headache and Sthana Parityaga (social distance) which all holds good in present COVID pandemic & Rasayana Chikitsa is also an answer to epidemics and mention in preventive part as well by acharya Charaka. The present article is focusing on the Preventive measures taken in this Pandemic covid scenario, through Nasya, Kawala, Ushnodakapan, dravyas in Aaharopayogi & Haritvarga & Promotive measure like Rasayana through Ayurveda System.

KEYWORDS

COVID-19, Janapadodhwamsa, Ayurvedic Preventive Measures.

INTRODUCTION:

The COVID-19 pandemic has tightened its grip on India. COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) is an infectious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome corona virus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), previously known as 2019 novel corona virus. The first cases were seen in Wuhan, China. The current outbreak was officially recognized as a pandemic on 11 March 2020. The most common symptoms are fever, tiredness, and dry cough. Some individuals also develop aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat, or diarrhea. Now, there is multiple variant of the SARS-CoV-2 that are different from the version first detected in china in other areas like UK, Brazil, California, South Africa, Spain etc It was reported that traditional remedies may alleviate the symptoms of COVID-19. Ayurveda is the world's oldest medical system that can manage any disease without side effects. Ayurveda being the science of life, propagates the gifts of nature in maintaining healthy and happy living. We all know that prevention is better than cure.^[1]

Ayurveda has two basic aims: First, to preserve the health of healthy people. second, to treat illness and disease. The disease COVID has provided an opportunity to prove Ayurveda – its strength in both of these fields by prophylaxis & prevention through immunomodulators (Rasayana), Daily regimen (Dinacharya), Rule of Diet (Aahar), Sleep (Nidra), Life style regimen (Vihar).

DISCUSSION:

Covid-19-Disease Profile

COVID-19 is the disease caused by a new coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2. WHO first learned of this new virus on 31 December 2019, following a report of a cluster of cases of 'viral pneumonia' in Wuhan, People's Republic of China. The current outbreak was officially recognized as a pandemic on 11 March 2020. Multiple variants of the virus that causes COVID-19 are circulating globally. This variant was first detected in the US at the end of December 2020, in the US at the end of January 2021, similarly in Brazil, Japan, etc. Over 2.6 million new cases were reported last week, a 7% increase compared to the previous week, following six consecutive weeks of declines. The global case increase was driven by increases in the Eastern Mediterranean (14%), South-East Asia (9%), Europe (9%) and the Americas (6%).^[2]

As per WHO information-

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are

- Fever
- Dry cough

- Fatigue

Other symptoms that are less common and may affect some patients include:

- Loss of taste or smell,
- Nasal congestion,
- Conjunctivitis (also known as red eyes)
- Sore throat,
- Headache,
- Muscle or joint pain,
- Different types of skin rash,
- Nausea or vomiting,
- Diarrhoea,
- Chills or dizziness.

Symptoms of severe COVID-19 disease include:

- Shortness of breath,
- Loss of appetite,
- Confusion,
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest,
- High temperature (above 38 °C).

Disease Profile- Ayurvedic classical literature

Epidemics or outbreak is a sudden spread of the disease within a short time to a large number of people in a given population. classical Ayurvedic texts provide guideline for analysis of diseases not listed in the literature. *Ashṭāṅgahṛīdaya* points out that analytical understanding of a disease in terms of its finer constituents like *samprāpti*, site of manifestation and specific *nidānas* is more important than identifying it by its name.^[3] A new disease (*anuktavyādhi*) can be understood by study of *nidāna*, *doṣa*, *sthāna* and other factors involved in the disease causation, progress and clinical outcomes.

In Ayurveda, a concept similar to the epidemic is narrated by Acharya Charaka under a broad umbrella '**Janapadodhwamsa**'. The word '**Janapadodhwamsa**' comprises of two words Janapada (large population) & Udhvamsa (destruction) which means the diseases affecting & causing damage of a large number of people; similar to pandemic.

The *Carakasamhitā* devotes an entire chapter for discussion on epidemics and points out how people with different constitutions can be affected by the same disease due to the influence of common etiological factors like air, water, place and time, but does not list or

describe specific epidemic diseases.^[4] *Suśrutasaṃhitā* has described epidemic fevers presenting with cluster of symptoms like cough, breathing difficulty, vomiting and headache, which resembles fevers causing severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS).^[5] *Suśrutasaṃhitā* does not refer to a specific disease as a well-defined nosological entity in this context, rather only hints at the possibility of epidemic outbreaks of severe respiratory illnesses that resembles SARS and COVID-19 like illnesses.^[6] *Suśrutasaṃhitā* also lists fevers among diseases that are **contagious**.^[7] Out of the eight broad categories of fevers described in Ayurveda, the *āgantujvaras* are caused by external agents.^[8] *Abhiśaṅgajvara* is one of the sub-categories of *āgantujvara* which includes a sub-type of fever called *bhūtābhiśaṅgajvara*.^[9] *Cakrapāṇidatta* clarifies that *bhūta* means *viśakṛmi* or a virulent organism.^[10] Further, *Vijayarakṣita*, the commentator of *Mādhavanidāna* points out that diseases caused by *bhūtopasarga* (invasion of *bhūtas* like *viśakṛmi*) can be contagious and spreads from person to person.^[11] Microorganisms and contagion were well recognised in Ayurveda classical texts.

Avoiding modes of transmission of diseases described in Ayurveda like physical contact (*gātrasaṃsparśa*), inhalation (*niśvāsa*), sitting and sleeping together (*sahaśayāsana*).^[12] and even keeping away from places where there is chance of exposure (*sthānaparityāga*) have been advised as measures to mitigate the epidemic.^[13]

Preventive Measures:

The disease COVID has provided an opportunity to prove Ayurveda – its strength in both of these fields viz. prophylaxis & prevention. Many of the remedies are readily available in the Kitchen and known to a common man. Since, these remedies are a vital part of our routine life in form of spices, herbs, vegetables etc. its Quality, Safety & Efficacy assured. Along with the general measures of wearing a mask, hand hygiene, sanitization etc., Ayurveda prophylactic measures like Pratimarsha Nasya with Anu Taila, Kawala (gargling), Ushnodak pan (Drinking warm water) can act as a Protective shield. Katu-Tikta drayas or spices are there as prevention of the virus to progress further. Rasayana as a Restorative treatment of Ayurveda. These Rasayana formulations will help making the tissue robust and improve the host immunity.

1.1 Pratimarshya Nasya:

Pratimarsha Nasya is part of Dincharya mentioned in Ayurveda, where in Anu Taila Nasya is advised and flexibility is provided for instilling Nasya at any of the Fourteen Kaala mentioned in Sushruta Samhita for Pratimarsha Nasya. It can be advised at least while going out and after coming back home. Moreover, the other ingredients in the formulation of Anu Taila are beneficial for making the sensory organs strong,^[14] as loss of sensation of smell and taste are also involved in the symptoms of COVID 19. So, Nasya will be beneficial for these symptoms.

1.2 Kawala:

It gives strength to mandible and voice, take away bad odour of mouth gives good taste.^[15] It is traditional home remedy to soothe the sore throat. It can be done with warm water with pinch of turmeric & salt.

1.3 Ushnodaka:

Warm water (Ushnodaka) is specifically advised by Ayurveda in the conditions of Jwara and it acts as Amapachaka. It is also a part of Langhana, which itself proves its indication for the pandemic conditions like COVID 19. Warm water is an easily available and simple modality which anyone can adopt. Water boiled with dry Ginger, Coriander, Tulsi, Cumin seeds is way more effective in this scenario.

1.4 Dravya:

Kitchen is considered as the primary drug store and most of the occasions, the first aid for mild to moderate illness are readily available in Indian kitchen. Herbs and spices are well-known to boost immunity. The Ahara Upayogi varga and the Haritaka Varga mentioned in the Samhita has significant role as immune modulators.

Harita Varga:

Aardrak, Jambir, Sursa (basil), Dhanyak, Grunjanaka, Lasuna etc. It is good appetiser, digestive stimulant alleviator of vata -kapha & promote strength.^[16]

Aaharyoni Varga:

Shunthi, Pippali, Maricha, Hingu, Saindhava etc. It Promotes

digestion, alleviates Vata-Kapha dosha.^[17]

1.5 Rasayana:

In Ayurveda, immunity is referred to as vyadhikshamatva, many single drugs or compound formulation were mentioned as *Rasayana* to boost up Immunity (*Bala* or *Vyadhikshamatva*).

Guḍuchi:

(Giloy) is a wonder herb. It is especially mentioned under the Rogadhikara of Jwara. Moreover, it also is a drug of choice for Rejuvenation. Thus, its daily usage is beneficial as immune modulator and prevents the occurrence of communicable diseases.^[18]

Pippali:

It Balances vata & Kapha. Pippali Rasayana also indicated in kasa, shwas, Hikka, Vishama jwara, vaiswarya etc.^[19]

Chyawanprash:

A polyherbal formulation containing Amla as the main ingredient. Amla has proved to be effective immune booster, immune modulator, rich in vitamin C and effective in strengthening the tissues. Apart from Amla, Chyawanprash also has many other drugs acting on Respiratory system, Cardio vascular system and Digestive system.^[20]

1.6 Aahar (Diet):

Diet and lifestyle management are the important combination in Ayurveda management. The rules of Ahara as referenced in Ayurveda are detail regarding 12 Ahara Varga, Ashta Ahara Vidhi Vishesha Ayatanani, Ahara Vidhi Vidhana and Viruddha Ahara. This comprehensive description of Ahara includes what to eat, when to eat, where to eat, how to eat, how much to eat etc. Amongst those the foremost thing is to advice what to eat. The diet should be balanced not only in terms of its calorie value or in terms of carbohydrates, proteins, lipids, vitamins etc., but also from Ayurveda point of view, in terms of Shad Rasas, Panchabhautika Ahara, Chaturvidh Ahara (four forms of Ahara) etc. Regarding the time to eat, the food chronobiology of nature's clock has to be followed. *Freshly prepared Laghusupachya ahara (easily digestible, light diet) should be consumed.*

CONCLUSION:

The COVID-19 pandemic has tightened its grip on India. But Nothing is permanent in this world even, coronavirus will leave on its own accord. We have to keep our harmony, integrity, happiness and balance between body mind and consciousness. Ayurveda considers our relationship with ourselves, our family, our community, nature, and the environment as a vital element of our health. Our Agni (digestive fire) & Vyadhikshamatva (Immunity) plays an important role in maintaining health. We need to address our immunity, prioritizing prevention, and also about adopting Daily & Seasonal regimen, Healthy Diet.

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