

## Study and Diagnosis of Mental Disorders – Ayurveda and Forensic Psychiatry

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### Abstract

Ayurveda is complete science of life which describes 'purusa' which consist of body, organs, mind and aatma of a person. Great importance is given to the mind in every concept of Ayurveda. It is stated that both body and mind are the locations of disorders as well as pleasures. According to W.H.O. complete health is sound mind in sound body. Mental health is the successful performance of mental function, resulting in productive activities, fulfilling relationships with other people and providing the ability to adapt to change and cope with adversity. In today's era, due to unlimited use of technology, changing lifestyle there is great increase in mental disorders. In Ayurveda, involvement of mind is taken into consideration while describing diseases as well as their treatment. Hence in examination of every patient, examination of Manovaha srotas is included. Thus concept of diseases as well as treatment remains incomplete if we do not talk about mind. When the severity of the mental diseases increases, it affects the health of the person, his family and the society. Mental illness is therefore a social problem and medically it takes the form of various types of mental diseases. The term mentally ill person is used to designate any member of the community who is unable on account of mental illness to look after himself and manage his own affairs or is dangerous to himself or to others. This disorder may be so great or of such a kind (certifiable mental illness /legal insanity) that it becomes advisable in the interest of the pt. or the community to segregate such an individual and deprive him of his liberty and his rights as a citizen. The law assumes that a mentally ill person is not responsible for his actions and therefore if such a person commits a crime he is not punished for it. While this is perfectly reasonable, it leads to the plea of mental illness being put forward on totally inadequate grounds even in many trials for murder. Knowledge of this aspect of mental disorders is must for everyone in medical practice which is mentioned in Forensic Psychiatry. This article will prove helpful as conceptual study of Diagnosis of mental disorders mentioned in ayurveda and forensic psychiatry.

**Keywords:** sattva, cetas, mental diseases, ayurveda.

### Introduction

'Mind' is very vast subject to think, talk or to write about.

According to Ayurveda, there are three types of diseases – innate, exogenous. Psychic is that which is caused by non-fulfilment of desires and facing the undesired.

When sense organs along with mind having been deranged due to excessive, negative and perverted conjunction with their sense objects, the respective sense perception gets disturbed. Again with their balanced use, when all this returns to normalcy, it promotes the respective sense perception.

Mental disorders are health conditions characterized by alterations in thinking, mood or behaviour associated with distress or impaired functioning.

According to W.H.O. Mental disorders comprises a broad range of problems, with different symptoms and generally characterized by some combination of abnormal thoughts, emotions, behavior and relationships with others. e.g. depression, schizophrenia.

Psychiatry is that branch of medical science which deals with the study, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental illness. Forensic Psychiatry deals with the correlation and application of the knowledge of Psychiatry to purposes of law.

Legally according to the Mental Health Act, mentally ill person means a person who is in need of treatment by reason of any mental disorder other than mental retardation. Such illness covers psychoses (organic and functional), neurotic disorders and various organic disorders.

## Aims & Objectives

1. To review description of manas vyadhi in Ayurveda.
2. To study Modern classification of mental disorders.
3. Diagnosis of mental illness.

Materials & methods -: For this article Ayurvedic samhitas, modern books and references from websites are taken.

## Description of Manas Vyadhi in Ayurveda

Insanity refers to any mental impairment severe enough to be apparent and/or to cause problems. Insanity is of 5 type such as - those caused by vata, pitta, kapha, sannipata and exogenous. The four type caused dosas arise shortly in person like these such as - intimid, those with distressed mind and aggravated dosas, who use dirty, damaged and unsuitable food items irregularly observing the rules of dieting, apply tantrika practices improperly, practice other body posture in a complicated way, are extremely emaciated, having giddiness due to intensity of (other ) diseases, whose mind is inflicted by passion, anger, greed, exhilaration, fear, confusion, exhaustion, grief, anxiety, excitement etc. and in those who are frequently injured or whose mind gets damaged and intellect becomes unstable, in this state the aggravated dosas spreading to the heart and obstructing the mind - carrying channels give rise to insanity.

Vayu aggravated by the intake of rough, deficient and cold food, excessive evacuation, wasting of dhatus and fasting affects the mind which is already afflicted with anxiety etc. and thus deranges intellect and memory quickly.

Just there after insanity arises. these are the specific feature of insanity such as - constantly moving about , sudden movement of eye, eyebrows, shoulder , jaw, forearm, legs and other parts. Constant and incoherent speech, foaming of mouth, frequent and inopportune smiling, laughing, dancing, singing, playing musical instruments, imitating uncalmly the sounds of lute, flute, conch, samya and tala, moving on non-vehicals decorating with non-adorning material, longing for non- available , eatable while disregard and strong dislike for the available ones, emaciation, ruffness, projected and reddish eyes, unsuitability of things opposite to the suitability for vata- these are the symptoms of vatika insanity.

Pitta accumulated by the intake of uncooked, pungent, sour, burning and hot edibles and intensely aggravated

takes shelter in the mind of the person without self-restraint and thus gives rise to violent insanity quickly..

Intolarence, anger, inopportune excitement inflicting injury to own people or others with weapons, brickbats, whips, wooden sticks and fists, running about, desire for shade, cold water and food, excessive heat for long, coppery, greenish, yellowish and congested eyes and unsuitability of things opposite to the suitability for pitta - these are symptoms of paittika insanity.

In the person with excessive saturation and slow activities, kapha along with heat (pitta) increased in mind impairs intellect and memory and thus by deranging mind produces insanity.

Standing in one place, observing silence, little walking, oozing of saliva and nasal mucus, aversion to food, liking loneliness, loathsomeness, dislike for cleanliness, frequent sleeping, swelling on face, white, moist and dirty eyes, unsuitability of things opposite to the suitability for kapha- these are the symptoms of kaphaja insanity.

The exceedingly terrific insanity arising from sannipata is caused by all the above etiological factors. It bears althe above characters and because of antagonistic treatment is rejectable. .(ch.chi.9/15)

Insult to gods, sages, gandhrvas, pisacas, yaksas and forefathers, unmethodical performance of religious duties and vows etc. and past deeds are the causes of exogenous insanity. ch.chi.9/16

Its prodromal symptoms are these such as - vacantness of head, excitement in eyes, dizziness in ears, increase in inspiration, excessive salivation, aversion to food, anorexia and indigestion, stiffness in cardiac region, meditation, exhaustion, bewilderment and excitement without occasion, constant horripilation, frequent fever, abnormalcy in mind, urticarial patches, facial expression as if affected by facial paralysis, frequent appearance in dreams of rolling moving, unstable and inauspicious visual objects, riding over the wheel of oil press, being churned by whirl winds, drowning in a whirl of turbid waters and divergence of eyes( these are the prodromal symptoms of insanity caused by dosas).

In case of combination of 3 dosas, it should be known as sannipatika which is said as incurable by the experts.

These are the different features of initiation of insanity in the subject by the insanity-producing agents such as the gods produce insanity by the cursing forefathers by

exposing [themselves], gandharvas by touching, yakshas by entering, raksasas by getting their odour smelled and pisacas by riding and driving.

It has these symptoms such as-supernatural strength, energy, manliness, prowess acquisition, retention, knowledge, speech and understanding and uncertain time of paroxysm.

### Epilepsy

Epilepsy is defined as the transient appearance of unconsciousness with loathsome expression due to derangement of memory, intelligence and mind.

There are four types of epilepsy e. g. caused by vata, pitta, kapha and sannipata.

Epilepsy arises shortly in such human beings as those whose mind is disturbed by rajas and tamas, who have scattered, abnormal and plenty of dosas; use dirty, damaged and unclean eatables observing the dietetic rules improperly, apply tantrika practices improperly, practise other uneven bodily postures or due to wasting, dasas get vitiated and, in those having mind disturbed by rajas and tamas, spread over to hrdaya, the best seat of inner self, and also seats of sense organs and stay there dominantly. While staying there when they are excited by [emotions such as] passion, anger, fear, greed, confusion, exhilaration, grief, anxiety, agitation etc. and fill up the hrdaya and seats of sense organ suddenly the person attacked by epilepsy.

Specific features of [the type of] epilepsy such as frequent fits, regaining consciousness instantaneously, protruded eyes, crying recklessly, emitting froth from the mouth excessively swollen neck, puncturing pain in head, irregularly contracted fingers, unstable hands and feet, reddish, rough and blackish nails and eyes, face and skin, vision of unstable fickle, coarse and rough objects, unsuitability of vata-aggravating things and suitability of otherwise -these are the symptoms of vatika epilepsy.

Frequent fits, regaining, consciousness instantaneously, groaning sound, striking against the earth; greenish, yellowish, and coppery nails, eyes, face and skin, vision of bloody, agitated fire, luminous and irritated objects, unsuitability of pitta-aggravating things and suitability of otherwise these are the symptoms of pittika epilepsy.

Delayed fits and also delayed recovery, falling down, expression not very loathsome, emitting saliva, white

nails, eyes, face and skin, vision of white, heavy and unctuous objects, unsuitability of kapha -aggravating things and suitability of otherwise - these are symptoms of kaphaja epilepsy.

In combination of all the symptoms, the epilepsy should be known as sannipatika which is said as incurable.

### Modern Classification of Mental Disorders

1. Mental retardation (mental subnormality, mental handicap)
2. Organic psychoses
  - a) Dementia
  - b) Drug induced psychoses
  - c) Confusional state
  - d) psychoses following epilepsy, pregnancy and child birth, trauma, general diseases.
3. Functional psychoses
  - a) Schizophrenia
  - b) Paranoid states
  - c) Affective disorders (mania, depression – bipolar disorder) manic (depressive psychosis)
4. Neurotic disorders
5. Personality disorders (e.g. sociopathic personality)
6. Sexual deviations.

### Dementia

After normal stage of development mind shows signs of deterioration, decline of intellectual functions of memory and emotional changes. 3 forms are seen-

- a. Organic dementia –lesion of brain causes impairment of mental faculties. Early signs - restlessness, irritability with delirium, excitement or depression. Then progressive mental deterioration with marked loss of memory, confusion of time and place mistakes as to identity, childishness.
- b. Senile Dementia:- Onset in old age, loss of memory, childishness, in later stages pt. become suspicious and animose towards family members.
- c. Dementia Paralytica:- initially, loss of interest, negligent, apathetic, blunting of moral sense, pt. may micturate in public or commit a petty theft. Loss of control of sex is observed.

## Drug Induced Psychoses

Certain drugs such as alcohol, heroin, morphine, cannabis indica, cocaine used habitually may produce mental conditions.

## Confusional States

- a) Acute Delirium -: cases like continuous high fever, severe mental stress. Initially, pt. is irritable, restless and sleepless. Then he talks wildly, pt. may die from exhaustion in a week or two.
- b) Stupor -: Temporary suspension of mental function. S/s - pt. is apathetic expressionless, superseded speech, does not care for food or even call of nature, mind is dominated by obsession or delusion.

## Epileptic Psychosis

This may be studied in three types

- a) Pre-epileptic confusional state -: Psychiatric disturbance arise before the motor discharge. Before the onset of the fits (convulsions) moody irritability is seen. Then consciousness is clouded with delusions and hallucinations and he may perform crime. Normal state is gained after passing of the convulsions.
- b) Post-epileptic Automatism -: Psychiatric disturbance arise after the motor discharge. There is lapse of consciousness, pt. performs the act without volition and has no recollection of them when consciousness returns.
- c) Masked or Psychomotor Epilepsy -: Psychiatric disturbance replaces the motor discharge by some violent act. No convulsions i.e. mental disturbances causes convulsions to be replaced by epileptic equivalent like murder. Attack on stranger, no motive of attack, no preparation for attack and no attempt to hide the crime.

## Psychoses – Psychoses due to

- a. pregnancy and child birth
- b. trauma
- c. general diseases
  - a. pregnancy and child birth – time – may occur at any time from the beginning of pregnancy to the end of lactation. During pregnancy, delusions, dislike towards the husband, tendency to suicide.

Post-partum psychosis – mania with tendency of homicide (may kill her infant)

Psychosis late in puerperium - depression with tendency of suicide.

Lactation Psychosis – mental confusion, hallucinations, and depression, delusions may lead to suicide or infanticide.

## Psychoses due to trauma

H/O- head injury/damage to the brain at birth /in childhood followed by mental impairment, (temporary or permanent), there may be non-specific brain damage seen in by abnormal EEG

**Psychoses due to general diseases** –E.g. venereal diseases gives feeling of uncleanness, thyroid deficiency shows mental symptoms.

## Schizophrenia

Disorder of thoughts and disintegration of emotional stability (split personality)

- a) **Schizophrenia simplex** -: At the stage of early adolescence, pt. gives up hobbies, loss of interest, indifference with his surroundings.
- b) **Hebephrenic Schizophrenia** -: Thought disintegration by hallucinations, illusions and delusions and become impulsive and may commit any crime.
- c) **Catatonic Schizophrenia** -: Stage of stupor may lead to suicide and Stage of excitement may lead to homicidal attack.
- d) **Paranoid Schizophrenia** -: Pt. may believe that everyone is against him and try to harm him.

**Neurotic disorders** - pt. suffers from emotional or psychological disorders but do not lose touch with reality.

Depressed mood and suicidal attempt seen, homicidal outbursts may be seen though previous personality is good.

**Depression – more common than mania**, feeling of depression, loss of interest in normal activity, refusal to take food, lack of personal attention suicidal tendency, hallucinations, delusions present, constant feeling of evil or danger irresistible impulses like mother throwing a child out of window.

**Mania** –pt. is excited, restless, talkative, euphoria. Delirious mania is disorientation, impulsiveness, auditory and visual hallucinations, may commit violent act.

Insanity is defined as wandering about of mind, intellect, consciousness, knowledge, memory, inclination, manners, activity and conducts.

**Paranoid states** – No disturbances of mood but delusion with or without hallucinations, personality is well preserved, middle age or later.

### Diagnosis of Mental Illness according to Ayurveda

Diagnosis of mental illness can be made as follows-

Inopportune laughing, smiling, dancing, singing, speaking, movement of body parts, roughness, emaciation, reddish complexion and aggravation of the disease after digestion of the food. These are the symptoms of the insanity caused by vata.

Intolerance, agitation, nakedness, terrorising, excessive movements, heat, wrath, desire for dense shade, cold food and drink and yellowish lustre are the symptoms of the insanity caused by pitta.

Slow speech and movements, anorexia, liking for women and loneliness, excessive sleep, aggravation on taking meals and whiteness of nails are the symptoms of the insanity caused by pitta.

The prodromal symptoms of epilepsy such as throwing aside of eyebrows, frequent abnormal movement of eyes, hearing of sound in its absence, excessive oozing of saliva and nasal mucus, aversion to food, anorexia, indigestion, stiffness in cardiac region, distension of abdomen, debility, tearing of pain in bones, body-ache, mental confusion darkness before eyes, fainting, frequent giddiness and dreams of narcosis, dancing, piercing, aching, trembling, falling etc.

Also examination of pt. according to Ayurved, i.e.

Astvidha pariksha,

Dasavidha pariksha,

Examination of Manovaha srotas is important.

### Diagnosis of Mental Illness

**Family history:** Specific inquiries should be made about the incident of serious illness or nervous breakdown in the family. More intensive investigation need to be undertaken in these field if there is evidence of a strong genetic factor in these illness

**Personal history:** This carries the history from infancy upto the present personal, marital or occupational difficulties and the development of personality. This must also cover use any intoxicating drugs and all serious illnesses both structural and functional to which the patient has been subjected.

**Physical examination:** this is important whether or not there is any evidence of deformity and malformation or patient complaint of physical symptoms. The main points to note are the following.

1. Head-big, small, normal.
2. Eyes - slanting, proptosis, normal.
3. Pupils- reaction, accommodation
4. Bridge of the nose- flattened, normal.
5. Lips- thick, normal.
6. Tongue- large, foul, furred, normal.
7. Extremities- long, short, normal
8. Hands and feet- flat, broad, moist with sweat, normal.
9. Fingers - any extra digits, long, short, normal.
10. Skin - dry, mottled, wrinkled, hairy, normal.
11. Genitals- infantilism, precocious development, normal.

### Discussion

- 1) As there is very close relationship between mental disorders and crimes, the responsibility of diagnosis of mental diseases is on the part of medical practitioner. e.g. The plea of epileptic automatism is frequently used in serious crimes when no other defence is available. It is therefore necessary to understand this condition clinically.

Hence it very very important for every medical practitioner that he should possess the knowledge regarding diagnosis of mental disorders.

- 2) In well defined cases of mental illness, severe mental retardation, there is no difficulty in diagnosis, but are in stages of any mental illness even psychosis, diagnosis is difficult as the behaviour may appear normal. Besides, there is significant difference between a certifiable mental disorder (legal insanity) and mental illness. The law tends to regard mental illness as a disease of the intellect, whereas it usually affects the emotional sphere of the mind. therefore, when a medical witness is called to give an expert evidence he should make a clinical appreciation of facts at his disposal of obtained from a detailed (1) family history (2) personal history (3) physical examination (4) mental condition (5) laboratory investigation when required and (6) such other sources of information that may possible.
- 3) Symptoms of mental disorder are occasionally feigned by persons accused of criminal offence in order to prevent a trial. The detection of such cases is

responsibility of medical person. Therefore knowledge of True Insanity and Feigned Insanity is important.

If necessary, the person should be kept under close observation during which period his manners and movement should be carefully watched before giving a definite opinion as to whether he is mentally ill to an extent as to warrant legal restraint (certifiable mental disorder).

### Conclusion

1. This study will give guidelines for medical practitioner regarding diagnosis of Certifiable mental illness.
2. There is very wide scope for study and research in this subject- e.g. to find out correlation between ayurvedic concepts like signs and symptoms described in vataj, pittaj and kaphaj types of insanity and epilepsy with modern terminology.

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