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CONCEPTUAL STUDY OF SHAMAN CHIKITSA : A REVIEW

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Abstract - *Shamana Chikitsa* includes the use of herbal formulations, regulated diet, lifestyle modifications, and supportive therapeutic measures to restore internal equilibrium. Its therapeutic action is achieved through mechanisms such as *Dosha* pacification, stimulation of *Agni*, digestion of *Ama*, and maintenance of healthy *Srotas*. Various measures including *Deepana-Pachana Dravyas*, *Atapa Sevana*, *Maruta Sevana*, *Vyayama*, *Kshudha Nigraha*, and *Trushna Nigraha* contribute to improved digestion, metabolism, circulation, and overall physiological functioning. An important feature of this therapy is its individualized approach, where treatment is planned according to the patient's *Prakriti*, involvement of *Doshas*, and overall health condition. In addition to reducing symptoms, *Shamana Chikitsa* supports long-term wellness by improving the body's natural healing ability and promoting balance at physical, mental, and emotional levels. Due to its holistic and patient-centered principles, *Shamana Chikitsa* continues to remain an effective and relevant therapeutic approach in modern healthcare practice. The treatment aims to reduce symptoms, improve comfort, and restore balance with the help of medicines, diet, and lifestyle modifications.

Keywords - Shaman Chikitsa, Deepana, Pachana, Kshudhanigraha, Trushna nigraha, Vyayam, Atapa sevan, Marut sevan

Introduction -

“शोधनं शमनं चेति समासादौषधं द्विधा।”

(अ.न्ह.सू. 1/25)

Acharya Vagbhata has described two main therapeutic approaches in Ayurveda, known as *Dvidvidha Chikitsa Upakrama* — *Shodhana* and *Shamana*. *Shodhana Chikitsa* refers to purification therapy, which aims to eliminate accumulated and aggravated *Doshas* from the body. This detoxification process helps in both the treatment and prevention of diseases by removing the root cause of imbalance. In contrast, *Shamana Chikitsa* is a palliative form of therapy that works by pacifying and balancing the aggravated *Doshas* within the body itself, without expelling them. It mainly focuses on controlling symptoms and restoring internal equilibrium at the site of *Dosha* vitiation.

In traditional healing practices, Shamans are considered healers who connect with spiritual energies and guide individuals toward physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. When Ayurvedic principles are combined with such healing approaches, they may support overall wellness on multiple levels. This integrated approach not only focuses on physical symptoms but also considers mental, emotional, and energetic balance.

Ayurveda is a traditional healthcare system of India that focuses on maintaining harmony among the body, mind, and spirit for preservation of health and prevention of disease. Among the therapeutic modalities described in Ayurveda, Shamana Chikitsa is an important treatment approach aimed at balancing the aggravated Doshas within the body without expelling them. This therapy is especially useful in conditions where purification procedures are not indicated or when gentle management of disease is required.

“न शोधयति न द्वेष्टि समान्दोषांस्तथोद्धतान्।

समीकरोति विषमाशमनं तद्यथामृता॥”

(शा.सं.पूर्वखंड 4/2)

According to Sharangdhar, *Shamana Dravyas* are medicines that do not expel Doshas from the body, also does not disturb the *doshas* that are in their normal state. Their main function is to pacify the aggravated *doshas* and restore them to a balanced condition, thereby helping in the management of disease. Even after purification therapies, some residual *doshas* may remain within the body. In such situations, *Shamana Chikitsa* plays an important role in re-establishing internal balance and maintaining health. This therapeutic approach is commonly preferred during the early stages of disease and in conditions where mild to moderate management is required.

Shamana Chikitsa is a type of Ayurvedic treatment that helps to balance the aggravated *doshas* within the body itself, without removing them through purification therapies. It is mainly used when *Shodhana* therapy is not suitable for the patient. The treatment aims to reduce symptoms, improve comfort, and restore balance with the help of medicines, diet, and lifestyle modifications.

Overall, Ayurveda provides a comprehensive and individualized approach for managing chronic diseases. Instead of offering only symptomatic relief, it emphasizes understanding the root imbalance of the body and creating personalized treatment plans according to a person's constitution, imbalance in dosha, and overall health. The ancient wisdom and diverse treatment methods of Ayurveda continue to make it valuable and relevant in the modern era.

“न शोधयति यद्दोषान् समान्नोदीरयत्यपि।

समीकरोति विषमान् शमनं तच्च सप्तधा॥

पाचनं दीपनं क्षुत्तृड्व्यायामातपमारुताः”

(अ.ह.सू. 14 /6-7)

Shamana therapy is primarily administered through various medicinal formulations and therapeutic combinations. Along with the use of medicines, equal importance is given to appropriate diet, daily regimen, and lifestyle modifications for maintaining *dosha* balance. This therapy also includes measures such as the use of *Pachana Dravyas* for digestion of toxins, *Deepana* for enhancing digestive fire, *Atapa Sevana* (controlled exposure to sunlight), *Maruta Sevana* (exposure to fresh air), *Kshudha Nigraha* (regulation of hunger), *Trushna Nigraha* (control of excessive thirst), and *Vyayama* (physical exercise). These measures collectively help in pacifying the aggravated Doshas and promoting overall health and well-being.

Shamana Chikitsa is a palliative form of treatment in Ayurveda that helps to pacify the aggravated Doshas at their site of imbalance without expelling them from the body. This therapeutic approach mainly focuses on controlling and relieving the symptoms of disease, thereby improving the patient's comfort and overall well-being. It supports the restoration of balance in all the three dosha of body through internal medications, diet, and lifestyle modifications.

Table No.1. - Types Of Shaman Chikitsa

Sr. no.	Types of Shaman Chikitsa	Mode of action according to Ayurveda	Mode of action according to Modern Science
1	Pachana	Aampachana / digestives	1)Stimulation of Vagus Nerve which in turn secretes gastric juice. 2) Stimulates duodenum which leads to the secretion of digestive enzymes and hormones. 3)Stimulates liver to secrete bile. 4)Stimulates pancreas to secrete pancreatic juice.
2	Deepana	Hunger producing appetizer	1)Stimulation of Vagus nerve. 2)Stimulation of Glossopharyngeal nerve. 3)Stimulation of Fundus and Pylorus of Stomach.
3	Kshudhanigrah	Making the patient withstand hunger	Autophagy is a normal physiological process in the body that deals with cell destruction in the body. It maintains the homeostasis or normal functioning by protein degeneration and turnover of the destroyed cell organelle and new cell formation.
4	Trushnanigrah	Overcoming thirst/ avoiding drinking water	Associated with the activation of Midcingulate cortex, Amygdala and Periaqueductal grey.
5	Vyayam	Physical activities	Improves Oxygen utilization, Mitochondrial biogenesis, Mood stabilization.
6	Aatap sevan	Sun exposure	Production of Vit. D3, Avoid Rickets and Tb spread. Exposure to both UVA and UVB radiation can have direct neurosuppressive effects through upregulation of cytokinase.
7	Marut sevan	Fresh air exposure	Oxygenation of tissues, Parasympathetic activation.

Discussion –

Shamana Chikitsa acts through several interrelated mechanisms that help restore the balance of Doshas without removing them from the body. Its therapeutic action can be understood at different levels:

- 1. Pacification of Doshas**-The main aim of Shamana Chikitsa is to calm and normalize the aggravated Doshas. Through appropriate medicines, diet, and lifestyle regulation, the disturbed Doshas are gradually brought back to their balanced state, thereby reducing disease manifestations and improving overall health.
- 2. Enhancement of Agni and Digestion of Ama**-Shamana therapy strengthens Agni (digestive and metabolic fire) with the help of Deepana and Pachana Dravyas. These measures aid in the digestion and removal of Ama (undigested toxic material) from the body. Proper functioning of Agni supports healthy digestion, metabolism, and tissue nourishment.
- 3. Strotovishodhan** -Therapeutic measures such as Atapa Sevana, Maruta Sevana, and Vyayama help maintain proper functioning and *Srotomukhvishodhan*. Clear and unobstructed channels ensure effective circulation of nutrients, proper waste elimination, and smooth physiological activities within the body.
- 4. Supportive and Conservative Measures** -Practices like Kshudha Nigraha and Trishna Nigraha are supportive therapeutic approaches that involve controlled regulation of excessive hunger and thirst. These measures help reduce unnecessary stress on the digestive system, conserve bodily energy and support the natural healing process.

Overall, Shamana Chikitsa provides a holistic approach that promotes internal balance, improves metabolic functions, and supports the body's natural capacity to heal and maintain health.

Conclusion –

Shamana Chikitsa is a vital therapeutic modality in Ayurveda that focuses on restoring the natural balance of Doshas within the body. Originating from the traditional knowledge system of India, it adopts a holistic approach toward health by combining herbal medications, appropriate diet, lifestyle regulation, and supportive therapeutic practices. Its mode of action includes Dosha Shamana, stimulation of Agni, digestion of Ama, purification of body channels and other measures that contribute to physical, mental and emotional stability.

An important aspect of Shamana Chikitsa is its personalized method of treatment. The therapy is planned according to the individual's Prakriti, severity of Dosha imbalance, and overall health condition, making the management more patient-specific and effective. Along with symptomatic relief, it also helps in maintaining long-term health and preventing recurrence of disease.

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