



# Conceptual Study Of Anxiety And *Vata Dosha*

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## Abstract

Today is the world of competition and everybody is running day and night to achieve the best in their terms. The mankind is set into a new dimension of time where ceaseless activity throughout is making everybody restless. Overall result is the never ending physical and mental stress coming out in the form of variety of health disorders which can be called as anxiety related disorders like hypertension, coronary artery disease, arthritis, ulcerative colitis, irritable bowel syndrome, and behavioral disorders. *Ayurveda* mentions the anxiety and its impacts on the body as aggravation of *Vata Dosha* leading to lowered immunity and resulting number of diseases due to that, it also relates the stress to the degeneration in the body tissues causing early aging and reduced life span. Although *Acharya Charaka* states that in order to stay healthy and to save the life one should always avoid over-thinking himself, however, in today's world, anxiety is an inevitable part of life and so the anxiety induced diseases. Therefore, instead of looking for the stress avoidance strategy it is important to work on preventing the effects of stress on the body and increasing the coping capacity of the body by life style modifications, dietary interventions and other means.

**Keyword:** anxiety, *vata dosha*, *ayurveda*.

## Introduction

The *Charaka Samhita*, the principal medical text of *Ayurveda*, states: "The body and that which is called the mind are both considered to be a body of disease, likewise of well-being. The cause of well-being is their harmonious or concordant interaction." [1]

*Ayurveda* specifically addresses the connection between psychological and physiological aspects of health and illness. Almost every disease affects both the body and the mind, and these two aspects are inseparably linked and cannot be separated, regardless of the symptomatic manifestations of the disease. According to *Charaka*, there are only two possible states for everything in the world: healthy and unhealthy, and each has a cause. Nothing exists in the absence of a cause." [2]

According to *Ayurveda*, very often the root of a disease could be identified as an imbalance in dosha. The doctor can diagnose the imbalance through a few *Ayurvedic* diagnostic procedures like observation

(Darsana), palpation, including pulse diagnosis or Nadi vijanam(referred as sparsana), interviewing the patient( Prashna). However, the ancient healers also knew that certain diseases were not sufficiently accounted for solely by an imbalance of doshas; there existed illnesses they understood to be secondary causes less straightforward than tridosha derangement. This is known as the non-perceivable roots. Even the diseases which are known to have perceivable causes, they also work at non-perceivable level in subtler realms.

Actually, the basic etiology of all disease according to Ayurveda is an unobservable and undeniable attachment to material manifestation itself. Attachment to this is responsible for two major disease-producing aspects in the arena of human mind — Fear and Desire.

According to Ayurveda, the causative factor responsible for a disease is often due to an imbalance of dosha. Once the proper diagnosis has been made (dosas marma: whether vata, pitta or kapha and which body system is involved), other diagnostic Ayurvedic modalities such as detection through senses – visual inspection (darsana,) palpation/spitting touch( sparsanam) with electronic stethoscope that includes nadivignan- pulse study or interrogation of patient(prasnachikitsa)) are used to detect sense object imbalance. The ancient healers knew, however, that there were some diseases for which the theories of tridosha deficits alone provided an incomplete explanation — these explanations with respect to at their origins being more subtle than imbalance among kapha/pitta/vata.

These causes are called non-perceivable. Even diseases for which there are perceivable causes have non-perceivable causes operating simultaneously in the subtler realms. In truth, the fundamental cause of all disease, according to *Ayurveda*, is a non-perceivable yet very real attachment to the material aspect of the creation. This attachment has two major disease-producing consequences in the human mind: fear and desire.

## Material and Methods

This study is based on a review of data collected from classical text and various modern books, magazines, articles and research papers from various journals and various websites. The information available on the internet is also incorporated into the study.

## Discussion

Anxiety, represents fear and is considered in Ayurvedic medicine as Unmada (Insanity) generally. Sushruta illustrates Unmada as “imbalanced state of 3 Doshas settled in nervous channels leading to eccentric behaviour”<sup>[3]</sup> The disease is very pronounced in the physical and mental symptoms: dyspnea, dizziness, fainting such as manifestations of somatic nature;asthenia heart palpitations pain precordial headache paresthesias muscle tremors insomnia psychological anorexia Nervindiarrhea vomiting frequent Reports live sweats enuresis forgetfulness memory disorders phobias phonwartum-Based clays instability agitation oculi mutability friedensirrthlingen disturbance fremdfuhlrtheits clinging lament moral confusion debris flow. The cause of these three upper-body Doshas going deranged is some kind of fear, established itself in the Manas (mind) utilizing the passive mental faculties such as EMOTIONAL EXECUTIVE's calculated creativeness and will power.The antidote is in waking up to the fact this delusion of mind exists, that it has no reality nor substance and then rising above its nonsense.

The second perspective of Ayurveda on anxiety is by calling it as Pragyaparadh... Meaning transgression against knowledge. Pragyā means intelligence and aparādha is a mistake, on the very simple level then pragyaparadja can be equated with acting foolishly; e.g., lying all day long in sun. In a more general level those actions are generated by the self-centred desires of an individual being who have forgotten the universal rhythms and awareness. Out of the ignorance he attempts to manipulate interpretation for a personal gain that fulfills specific individual desires.

In fact, Charaka has this to say:- 'An act of unrighteousness done through ignorance and defective memory is termed prajnaparadha (volitional transgressions)'<sup>[4]</sup>

Pragyaparadha is then simply the life force being diverted towards unnatural tasks. Derived along the path of its phenomena-engendering potentiality (e.g., if conditions that promote disease are fulfilled, such energy can now persist as an electrolyte imbalance in one's body; a virus there; or acute anxiety neurosis elsewhere) and fully effects as a 'disease', whether it be mental or physical.

Another Ayurvedic perspective on acute anxiety is its individual Doshic imbalance. In this way will we be able to target if necessary which Doshas are predominant in any specific condition. This often serves to display the nature of treatment in total.

Non-corporeal conditions like anxiety frequently have many stressors at play, with no single factor being clearly identified as the primary cause. In that scenario, we can typically successfully treat the patient by addressing the deranged *Dosha(s)* without determining the exact cause.

Anxiety is a disease of Vata. The key sub-doshas involved are prana and vyana. In anxiety, Vata invades the manas (mind) and nerves. It is through prana Vata that prana ("life-force") is moved into the physiology from the air, food, and water we take in. Body, mind, and spirit are thereby woven together, like beads on a thread, by this prana. Crowned by Vyana Vata, the loss in anxiety equates to a disjointed soul whose mind, senses, and memory work in a haphazard manner. Originating in the heart, Vyana Vata circulates throughout the body, mainly around the organism, pervading and causing energies to move around, literally nervous energies. A person with an aggravated Vyana Vata may superficially appear to possess more creative energy than others, but a more detailed observation will reveal nothing more than a superfluity of agitated, disorderly vata dosha.<sup>5</sup>

## Treatment

Treatment of anxiety is really the treatment of Vata. These treatments always include Madhur and whatever Vata shamaka diet shall be taken and Vata shamakaushadha like oleation, heat and both internal and external. External oleation shall initiate first in the form of every day oil massages for fifteen to sixty minutes for five to seven days; these massages may be given by therapists or be self-administered. The best oils that may be used for massage are: Bala oil, Dhanvantram oil or Mahanarayana oil. Vata anulomana and internal oleation is next. This will consist of ahara like Cow's ghee, Sesame oil, Animal fats, Depending upon the prakriti of the individual and presence or absence of ama, The anxiety-stricken patient will benefit by taking this in adequate quantities, This should be followed by a mild purgative like castor oil or triphala. Internal oleation shall be reduced to a very minimal amount in the presence of ama, abdominal bloating, colic pain, or edema. Since these symptoms indicate obstruction of the srotas-rana of Vata, they will get further aggravated by extensive internal oleation therapy. A good many herbal-based preparations are used in the treatment of anxiety. They are most effective when preceded by the above oleation and heating treatments but can also be used as initial therapy. No single herb is regarded as efficacious; in fact, all of the most important medicines are in the form of ghritas, or medicated ghees. These are prepared according to precise instructions using accurate measures and often are fairly complex recipes. However any Ayurvedic physician can provide them.

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