



## The Role of Psychological Factors in *Visha* w.s.r to Poison

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### ABSTRACT:

Psychological factors play a very important role in *visha*. The definition of *visha* itself gives the term depression. When the person is affected by *visha*, there are not only symptoms of body but mind is also involved. There are references of *shanka visha*, *sarpangaabhihata* etc. where mind is involved. From a psychiatric standpoint, exposure to toxins can increase the risk of depression, suicide, ADD/ADHD, learning problems, memory problems and dementia, brain fog, autism, temper outbursts, and psychotic behavior. Over the last four decades, there has been the unprecedented development and release of a swelling repertoire of potentially toxic chemicals which have the capability to inflict brain compromise.

The treatment of poisoned person depends on the mental status of that person, if the person is frightened, depressed the treatment given becomes of less effective. The treatment modalities of *visha* like *mantra*, *Sajna Sthapana*, *Harshana* and *Santvana* signifies the importance of psychological factors. This article highlights the importance of psychological factors in *visha*.

**Key words** - *visha*, *moorcha*, *bhaya*, *krodha*, psychological factor.

## INTRODUCTION

Long ago, *suras* (Gods) and *asuras* (Demons) conducted *samudra manthana* (churning of ocean) to procure *amruta* (nectar), before the origin of *amrutha*, *visha* (poison) was originated causing depression to the whole world<sup>1</sup>. There are many substances which cause depression to the body which is called *visha* according to classics. Similar definition is explained in toxicology that poison is any substance which when inhaled, ingested, injected cause harm to the body and mind.

Now a days, many people are suffering from some or the other mental disorders like depression, anxiety, stress, fear etc. due to lifestyle changes (alcoholism, drugs, medication etc.), diet (pesticide residue food, starvation etc). Psychological factor plays a very important role in *visha*. Psychology is the study of mind and behavior. This article is compiled information from *Samhitas* and other classical texts to highlight the importance of psychological factors in *visha*.



## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This review article is based on a literary review compiled from *Samhitas* and other classical texts.

Definition of *visha*<sup>1</sup>

*Vishada Jananatvaacca Visham Ityabhidheeyate.*

The term *visha* is derived for causing *vishada* or depression.

*Jagat Vishannam tam drushtva tenaasou Visha Sanjitaha*<sup>2</sup>.

The substance which causes grief to the world is called *visha*.

The definition of *visha* only signifies the direct involvement of mind.

In mythological origin of *visha*- during *samudra manthana* (churning of ocean), even before *amrutha* (nectar) evolved, a ferocious looking person who was magnificent with aura and who had four fangs, yellowish- brown hair and fiery eyes emerged called as *visha purusha*. The world became despaired at his sight and due to this he was called as *visha*<sup>2</sup>.

It indicates that *visha* has direct effect on mind.

According to *sharangadhara*- *madavaha* is *visha guna*, which is one of the psychological factors.

In *Visha vega*- the *visha* after entering the body, passes from one *kala* to another *kala* which are located in between the *dhatu*s and thus gives rise to the *vega*; As per Charaka- 1<sup>st</sup> *vega* is *moha*, 2<sup>nd</sup> *vega* is *bhrama*, fourth *vega* is *murcha*; As per Sushruta -1<sup>st</sup> *vega* is *murcha*, 6<sup>th</sup> *vega* is *sanjna pranaasha*<sup>3</sup>. By these *visha vegas* indicates that mind also gets affected and produces mental disorders.

In *Shankha visha*- When a person is bitten by something, in pitch darkness, the fear of suspicion of being bitten by a poison creature causes manifestation of symptoms of pseudo- poison which includes fever, vomiting, fainting, burning sensation, prostration, unconsciousness and diarrhoea. Treatment of *Shankha Visha* is internal medicine along with *saantvana*, *harshana*<sup>4</sup>. This implies that even the pseudo-poison causes fear (Psychological factor) to the person and the treatment modalities explained are related to bring back the mind to a healthy condition.

There are also references of direct involvement of mind in *visha* as follows<sup>5</sup>.

In *Visha Upadrava* - *mada*, *murcha*, *vishaada* is found.

In *Sthavara visha lakshana*- *moorcha* is one of the symptoms and in

*Jangama visha lakshana*- *tandra* is one of the symptoms.

*Moorcha* is one of the *lakshana of vrischika visha*.

In *Visha vriddikara bhava*<sup>5</sup> (factors modifying action of the poison) - *krodha*, *shoka*, *bhaya* which are the

psychological factors increase the intensity of *visha* (poison).

In *Vishahara* treatment also, *Acharyas* mentioned the formulations which also acts on mind which indicates that mind also affected in *visha* and making it in healthy condition is necessary. Some of the formulations are:

As per *charaka*- *Gandha hasti nama agada*- is useful in *unmada*, *apasmara* and *murcha*, *Ksheeraagada-apasmara*, *unmada*, *bhuta*.

As per *sushruta*- *kalyanaka grutha is graha* and *apasmara nashana*.

*Sanjna sthapana*<sup>6</sup>- one of the 24 *vishopakrama* (treatment of poison) is carried to bring back the mind in health state.

It is a procedure which is followed to revive the conscious state of an unconscious person. Acharya Charaka advises *sanjna sthapana* during the sixth stage of spread of poison. Acharya Sushruta advises the following procedure of *sanjna sthapana*:

- The person who is suffering from the effects of poison, when unconscious, with eyes wide open and neck bent, he should be administered strong *pradhamana nasya* with powder of anti-toxic drugs
- Venesection should be done immediately to the veins of the forehead and extremities of the patient.
- A drum smeared with antipoissonous drugs should be beaten near patients ears

In *Apathya* in *visha*- *krodha* and *bhaya*, the psychological factors also included which indicates its importance in alleviation of *visha* completely.

In *Dooshi visha lakshana*- *murcha*, *moha* are found and in rabies poison- *bhrama*, *mada* is found.

In *Jalasantrasa*<sup>7</sup>- hydrophobia- when the person bitten by a rabied dog gets frightened by water without cause that should be understood he has been afflicted with *jalahrasa*, which is a sign of death. Here *Bhaya* which is the psychological factor is involved.

*Visha mukta lakshana*- features of recovery from the poison as per Acharya Sushruta- *prasanna varna indriya chitta cheshtam*- has pleasing colour/ complexion, good working of the sense organ and the mind which clearly indicates that mind is involved in *visha* and bringing back to healthy state is important.

## DISCUSSION

*Visha* causes concern to all living being by making organism grievously ill, its functioning & leading to death in certain cases. It creates depression and sorrow in body & mind. *Gara visha* literally means the substance which is

easily taken orally & function as poison in the body. Acharya Sushruta and Acharya Vagbhata explained it as the poison which is formulated by the combination of *virusha Aushadhi*, *bhasma*, waste products of human beings & low potency toxic formulations which when administered kills the person slowly and may produce many diseases.

*Dushi visha* literally means flawed, spoiled, damaged, defective or ruined poison. The term *dushi visha* is a made up of different words *Dushi* which means denatured, attenuated, latent, vitiated. As the origin and definition of *visha* implies the importance of psychological factors with the term *vishada* and *bhaya*. Various references from *samhitas* and *other classical texts* collectively give the importance of psychological factors in *visha*. Acharya Charaka's quote '*Vishada is Rogavardhana*' signifies the importance of Psychological factors. While treating the *visha* in patients it is very important to understand and analyse the psychic factors of a person. There is classical reference to treat these psychic factors namely *mantra*, *sanjna stapanam*, *santvana*, *harshana*. When the treatment is successful and *visha* in the person gets eliminated, and he is said *visha mukta* person who is having *prasanna varna indriya chitta cheshta* (glowing, proper senses and stable mind) which signifies the importance of healthy mind in *visha*.

## CONCLUSION

When a person is affected by *visha*, there are not only physical symptoms present; mental symptoms are also present. There are examples of the mind being involved in *Shanka Visha*, *Sarpangaabhihata*, etc. The effectiveness of the treatment for a poisoned person depends on their mental state; if they are scared or depressed, it is less likely to work. Psychological factors play a very important role in *Visha* in both diagnostic and treatment aspects.

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