



Review Article

DESCRIPTION OF OCCUPATIONAL DISORDERS IN AYURVED AND THEIR MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Everyone needs to do an occupation in the life and every occupation has its own hazards. Many occupational disorders and their preventive and curative management have been described in Ayurved. Due to industrialization, many occupational disorders have been emerged which can be treated by Ayurvedic medicines. Many occupational disorders can be prevented by using advance technology. We should try to prevent the occupational disorders than to treat them. Lifestyles mentioned in Ayurved should be followed to prevent various occupational disorders. We should follow the rules of *Dincharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Adharniya* and *Dharniya Vegas*, *Ahar-vihar* to prevent occupational disorders. *Yoga* is also beneficial to maintain occupational health. Chapters regarding occupational health can be added in the syllabus of UG and PG courses of Ayurveda. Post Graduate Diploma in Occupational Health (PGDOH) course can be started by the government. Such doctors can take care of employees in maintaining the occupational health. It is better to prevent occupational disorders than to treat them. *Acharya Charak* also emphasizes on prevention of diseases by explaining *Swasthasya Swasthyarakshnam* at first.

INTRODUCTION

Occupational disorders have not been explained as a separate topic in Ayurvedic texts. But many points related to this topic have been described in many chapters of different Ayurvedic texts. When people get disorders due to their own occupations these are known as occupational disorders. As *Acharya Charak* has explained in *Charak Samhita* that scholars, servants, prostitutes and shopkeepers are always patients.^[1] In ancient times, maximum occupations were related to business, service or farming. Therefore, disorders related to these occupations have been explained in our ancient text books.

After the industrialization, different occupational disorders developed due to different industries.

When employees exposed to hazards due to their own occupations, they suffer from occupational diseases. Protection and management of these disorders are right of employees. For that, many acts for employees have been made in many countries. In India, there is Ministry of Labour & Employment in Government of India, to take care of employees. After the establishment of ILO and WHO, these issues were raised internationally and many works were done regarding this. According to ILO/WHO, occupational health should aim at the promotion and maintenance of the highest degree of physical, mental and social well being of workers in all occupations.^[2] Preventive medicine and occupational health have the same aim – prevention of disease and maintenance of health. The occupational health is the application of preventive medicine in all employments.^[3] Ayurved also emphasizes on *Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshanam* i.e., preventive management and for that *Ritucharya* (seasonal regimen), *Dincharya* (daily regimen), *Adharniya & Dharniya Vega* (non-suppressible and suppressible urges), *Ahar-vihar* (dietary and life style plan), etc have been explained in Ayurved. Many preventive health measures have been explained in Ayurved according to different occupational disorders.

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Review

Acharya Charak has explained that persons having sedentary lifestyle are more prone to be *Pramehi* (diabetic) and for these persons, walking and consumption of *Katu*, *Tikta* and *Kashay rasa* is essential. *Acharya Charak* has explained that excessive labour and travel is the cause of *Shosha* disease and for that one should take rest and use *Ghrit* and *Mams rasa*.^[4] *Acharya Susruta* has explained that person who always walks due to his occupation gets painful cracks in soles known as *Padadari* or *Vipadika* (cracks). In this disease, *Acharya Susruta* has advised to do the *Siravedhan*, *Swedan*, *Abhyang* and *Lepana* of medicated *Ghrit*.^[5] Due to regular contact with contaminated water or mud, the space between toes gets affected with itching and pain known as *Alas* (T. Pedis/Candidiasis). Its management includes washing the feet with *Kanji* (an acidic solution) and then local application of paste of *Neem*, *Til*, *Kasis*, *Haritaki*, etc. and *Raktmokshan* (bloodletting).^[6] *Sthaulya* (obesity) is very common occupational disorder in the present time due to lack of physical work and inappropriate diet. *Acharya Susruta* advised to overcome the obesity by *Sudh Shilajatu*, *Sudh Guggulu*, *Gomutra*, *Trifla Churna*, *Rasanjan*, *Shahad*, *Yava*, *Mung*, etc. Regular

exercise and use of *Lekhaniya Vasti* is also beneficial for the management of obesity.^[7] Excessive physical exertion causes *Karshya Roga*. Due to this habit person becomes very much lean and thin which causes many diseases. According to Ayurveda management of these disorders is done by *Kshirkakoli*, *Ashwagandha*, *Vidarikand*, *Shatawar* and *Vrihan Vasti*.^[8] Excess physical works, fighting against a stronger man, falling from a tree or other work done by applying more force are causes of *Antravidhi* disease (inguinal hernia). *Agnikarma* (cauterization) is indicated by *Acharya Susruta* in inguinal hernia. *Agnikarma* is done in the middle of right toe in left inguinal hernia and middle of left toe in right inguinal hernia.^[9] Employees working in night duty suppress the urge of sleeping causing headache, body pain and eye disorder. For that proper sleeping and oil massage is indicated.^[10] Regular sitting on hard seat, horse riding, camel riding are the causes of *Arsh* (piles) disease. In this disease use of *Takrarist*, *Abhyarist*, *Dantyarist*, etc are much effective.^[11] Due to excessive workload persons get insomnia and tension and for this *Pranayam* and *Shirodhara* are effective. Working too much on the computer causes dry eye syndrome and for that *Akshitarpan* should be done.

Table 1: Occupational Disorders Described in Ayurved

| S. No | Cause | Occupational Disorders | Management |
|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Sedentary lifestyle | <i>Prameh</i> (diabetes) | Walking and consumption of <i>Katu</i> , <i>Tikta</i> and <i>Kashay rasa</i> . |
| 2 | Always walking | <i>Padadari</i> or <i>Vipadika</i> (cracks) | <i>Siravedhan</i> , <i>Swedan</i> , <i>Abhyang</i> and <i>Lepana</i> of medicated <i>Ghrit</i> . |
| 3 | Regular contact with contaminated water or mud | <i>Alas</i> (T. pedis/ Candidiasis) | Washing the feet with <i>kanji</i> and then <i>Lepana</i> of <i>Kalka</i> (paste) of <i>Neem</i> , <i>Til</i> , <i>Kasis haritaki</i> and <i>Raktamokshan</i> (bloodletting)) |
| 4 | Lack of physical work and inappropriate diet | <i>Sthaulya</i> (obesity) | <i>Sudh shilajatu</i> , <i>Sudh guggulu</i> , <i>Gomutra</i> , <i>Trifla churna</i> , <i>Rasanjan</i> , <i>Shahad</i> , <i>Yav mung</i> is used. Regular exercise and use of <i>Lekhaniya vasti</i> |
| 5 | Excessive physical exertion | <i>Karshya roga</i> (Asthenic body) | <i>Kshirkakoli</i> , <i>Ashwagandha</i> , <i>Vidarikand</i> , <i>Satawar</i> and <i>Vrihan vasti</i> |
| 6 | Excess physical work, fighting against a stronger man, falling from a tree | <i>Antravidhi</i> (inguinal hernia) | <i>Agnikarma</i> (cauterization) and <i>Shashtra karma</i> (surgery) |
| 7 | Regular sitting on hard seat, horse riding, camel riding | <i>Arsh</i> (piles) | Use of <i>Takrarist</i> , <i>Abhyarist</i> , <i>Dantyarist</i> |
| 8 | Excessive workload | Insomnia and tension | <i>Pranayam</i> and <i>Shirodhara</i> |
| 9 | Working too much on the computer | <i>Shuskakshi</i> (Dry eye syndrome) | <i>Akshitarpan</i> (Eye lubrication) |

Many occupational disorders developed with the development of industry in the world. In mining and ceramic industry, workers are exposed to free silica causing silicosis which is characterized by cough, dyspnoea and chest pain. Rigorous dust control measures and good house-keeping should be followed. ^[12] In textile Industry, workers are exposed to cotton fiber dust causing byssinosis which is characterized by cough, bronchitis

and emphysema. Dust control should be maintained to prevent it.^[13] Employees are exposed to bagasse (sugarcane dust) in sugarcane industry causing bagassosis which leads to dyspnea, cough and fever. Dust control and personal protection should be maintained^[14] Workers are exposed to asbestos dust in asbestos industry causing asbestosis which is characterized by pulmonary fibrosis and carcinoma. For this, safer types of asbestos should be used and rigorous dust control should be followed.^[15] Glass industry, rubber industry and printing and pottery industry cause lead exposure to workers producing gastro-intestinal and neurological problems. EDTA is used as chelating agent.^[16] In farming and chemical industry, workers are exposed to radiations and chemicals which cause skin cancer and dermatitis. For this, personal protection should be maintained.^[17] Coal and construction industry causes accidents of workers. For this, technology should be upgraded and workers should be trained.^[18] Thus, there are so many occupational disorders in different industries and for that their preventive measures should be followed.

Table 2: Occupational Disorders Caused by Industry

| S. No | Industry | Occupational Disorders | Management |
|-------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Mining & Ceramic industry | Silicosis, cough, dyspnea and chest pain | Rigorous dust control and good house-keeping |
| 2 | Textile industry | Byssinosis, cough, bronchitis and emphysema | Dust control |
| 3 | Sugarcane industry | Bagassosis, dyspnea, cough and fever | Dust control and personal protection |
| 4 | Asbestos industry | Asbestosis, pulmonary fibrosis and carcinoma | Safer types of asbestos uses, rigorous dust control |
| 5 | Glass, rubber, printing and pottery industry | Lead poisoning, gastro-intestinal and neurological problems | EDTA is used |
| 6 | Farming and Chemical industry | Skin cancer and Dermatitis | Personal protection |
| 7 | Coal and Construction industry | Accidents of workers | Technology should be upgraded and workers should be trained. |

There are three main *Doshas* in Ayurved – *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* and their actions in the body can be describe in the form of *Prakriti*. The purpose of telling *Prakriti* is to explain about the sensitivity of a person to a particular environment. Although it is difficult but if the constitution of person is checked before joining the occupation, then it will be helpful in decreasing the occupational hazards. If the *Prakriti* is examined before an occupation then seasonal cleaning therapy for the specific *Dosha* should be administered to control the respective *Doshas* e.g. *Basti* for *Vata*, purgation i.e. *Virechan* for *Pitta* and medicated vomiting i.e. *Vaman* for *Kaphaj Prakriti*.^[19] People involved in agriculture get prolonged contact of contaminated water, mud and sunlight. Fungal infections, dermatitis and sunburn are common problems of farmers which can be managed by proper personal protection. Navy also monitors the common problems of respiration and visibility of the soldiers in water for a long period. Space organizations take care of the astronauts for their common problems of blood pressure, respiration, blindness and bone loss. Diseases caused by different industries and different environments like cough, dyspnea, etc. can be managed by *Pranvah Srotas Ausadhi*; dermatitis, injury, etc. can be managed by *Vranaropam Ausadhi*; gastro-

intestinal disorders can be managed by *Deepan-pachan Ausadhi* and neurological disorders can be managed by *Vatshamak Ausadhi*.

DISCUSSION

Every occupation has its own challenges but it is not possible for everyone to quit the occupation. Therefore, one should do his or her occupation following preventive measures for minimizing the challenges. In ancient times, there were different occupations and occupational disorders were also different. But in present time, due to development of technology many occupational disorders have been emerged causing different occupational disorders. Nowadays, farmers, businessmen, defense personnels, labours, etc. have their own occupational disorders. Preventive management is always better than curative management. Ayurved also emphasizes on preventive management. Therefore, it is better to prevent occupational disorders than to treat them. There are many preventive measures for different occupational disorders. Person who does excess physical work should take rest properly and take proper diet. Person who does excess mental work should do physical exercise daily. *Yoga* is beneficial for both physical and mental working persons.

Dust is the main problem in many industries. Advance technology should be used producing less dust and employees should be given high quality of mask to prevent dust. Temperature of working place should be maintained by using technology in very hot and cold areas. Rules of *Dincharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Adharniya* and *Dharniya Vega*, *Ahar-vihar*, etc should be followed to prevent the diseases. If person got the occupational disorder then its management should be done properly which has been mentioned in this article.

CONCLUSION

Occupation is an essential part of our life which can never be ignored. Everyone has to do any occupation and to face its hazards or challenges in the life. We should try to prevent the occupational disorders by using Ayurvedic methods mentioned above. We must use modern equipments to prevent industrial occupational disorders. Thus, we can prevent and cure the occupational disorders by Ayurved and live a healthy life today. Like postgraduate diploma in *Panchkarma* and *Ksharsutra*, a course of Post Graduate Diploma in Occupational Health (PGDOH) should be started by the government and such doctors should be posted in every hospital. There is no any significant research work in *Ayurveda* regarding occupational health till now. Therefore, there is a big scope of research in this field in *Ayurveda*.

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