

Ayurvedic Therapy's Impact on Addiction

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Abstract

Addiction is defined as a persistent, uncontrollable psychological behavior or physiological reliance on a substance. It is a long-term brain disorder that leads to compulsive drug use despite negative effects. In addition to its negative effects on society, addiction has a widespread negative impact on peoples. Addiction encompasses more than just a reliance on drugs like heroin or alcohol. A person suffering from substance dependence is one who is unable to quit using a specific drug or chemical. Rather than just providing a pill, Ayurveda assists addicts in their long-term recovery by altering their lifestyle. Ayurvedic therapy is typically implemented with a diet changes, herbal remedies, physical activity, massage therapy, individual counseling, and yoga. The goal of this article is to examine every treatment option available from the vast literature of Ayurvedic texts that can be applied to addiction recovery.

Keywords: Addiction, Diet, Ayurvedic therapies, Physical activity, Yoga & Counseling

Introduction: -

The psychological and physical incapacity to cease using a chemical drug or other substance is known as addiction. Even though it is hurting people physically and psychologically. For as long as there have been plants on the earth, addictive behaviors have existed in society. Everybody is aware of the negative aspects of addiction. Some people develop problems with substances like alcohol, cigarettes or narcotics, which not only impact the addict personally but also have an impact on friends, family, coworkers, and society at large. Financial, physical, psychological, emotional, familial, and social issues are faced by the addict. A kind of spiritual crisis is brought on by all of this suffering. These are problems that Ayurveda can solve. Ayurveda offers specialized therapies to treat both mental and physical illnesses. Many therapies that are offered by Ayurveda may be helpful for those in the process of overcoming addiction. As opposed to just handing them a pill to swallow generally, a balanced diet, herbal remedies, physical activity, massage therapy, individual counseling, and yoga are used in Ayurvedic therapy.

Aim and Objectives –

- 1) To assess, clarify, and have a discussion about addiction in light of Ayurveda.
- 2) To assess, expound upon and deliberate on Ayurvedic treatment for addiction

Materials and Methods – Several Ayurvedic textbooks, classic Ayurvedic samhita, reference books, magazines, and journals were looked up and examined for this review article.

Diagnosis of addiction according to Ayurveda - The first step in an Ayurvedic diagnosis is to obtain a thorough understanding of the traits, habits, sleep patterns, body type, and inherited qualities of the patient. Understanding the condition of the "Tridoshas" within a particular Vata, Pitta and Kapha will come next. Ayurveda holds that the imbalance between these doshas is what causes nuisance in the human body. Other methods of diagnosis that Ayurvedic practitioners often employ include tongue, nail, eye and pulse diagnosis. These diagnoses offer crucial hints regarding the character and inclinations of the person.

In Ayurvedic medicine, treatment for addiction includes the following methods: **Panchkarma Therapies** -

These are also referred as Panchakarma therapies, and their goal is to remove any toxins from the patient's body. These treatments are highly effective and are often carried out under the guidance of a qualified Ayurvedic practitioner. The treatment known as virechana involves ingesting a concoction of medicinal plants or their parts. Through the anal route, this therapy removes the toxic substance from the body. For this, herbs like Embelia, Cardamom, Ginger, and Cinnamon are used, among others. Vamana, also known as a vomiting therapy, is another widely used cleansing technique. This technique removes toxins from the body that are brought on by dyspepsia by cleansing the upper tract that leads to the mouth. By clearing the body's deep tissues of toxins, opening subtle channels, and introducing life-changing energy therapy that increases vitality, inner peace, confidence, and well-being, Ayurvedic Panchakarma aids

addicts in their recovery. A knowledgeable Ayurvedic doctor can assist in treating this terrible illness in an alternative manner.⁽¹⁾

Rasayana therapies — Rasayana therapies are another very impactful Ayurvedic treatment for deaddiction. The primary principles of Rasayana therapy are energy transmutation and conservation, which improve our mental and physical qualities and optimize our body's natural metabolic processes, all while supporting the immune system and brain

function. These treatments typically come after the body-purifying Panchakarma procedures. After Panchakarma, this series of treatments further nourishes and fortifies the body. Rasayana treatment for addiction-related issues involves dietary adjustments and the use of oral herbal medications.⁽²⁾

Oral medication –

Oral administration of variety of Ayurvedic medicines and it's combinations are intended for the treatment on physical and psychological issues of patients.⁽³⁾

Sr. No.	Clinical features	Medications
1	Anxiety and Agitation	Sarswatarishta, Jatamansi ghan vati
2	Insomnia	Kharjuradi manth, Ashwagandha churn
3	Nausea and vomiting	Shankhvati, Eladi churn
4	Loss of appetite	Chitrakadi vati, Panchkol choorn
5	Diarrhea	Kutaj ghan vati, Bilvadileha
6	Constipation	Triphala kwath, Abhayarishta
7	Headache	Pippalimool with honey

Massage therapy –

Abhyanga is a specific type of massage therapy used in Ayurveda, in which therapists apply warm oil infused with herbs to patients' bodies for 15 to 30 minutes. This will also introduce Ayurvedic drugs in body through skin. This massage is incredibly calming and stimulating, relieving tension, anxiety, and overwhelming feelings of addiction.⁽⁴⁾

Yoga and Meditation –

Yoga integrates the mind and body on a physical and spiritual level. It is a physical practice that incorporates breathing awareness, mindfulness, physical postures, and meditation. Regular yoga practice can enhance health and assist individuals in managing stress. Anulom-vilom pranayama and shavasana etc are found to be impactful in reducing stress, anxiety and depression. Additionally, the system has been suggested as a behavioral therapy for substance abuse (including alcohol abuse) and smoking cessation.⁽⁵⁾ For those in addiction recovery, meditation is a fantastic tool. It not only makes them more capable of handling stress, but it can also increase their ability to manage the stress and its trigger factors that occur in their life.⁽⁶⁾

Dietary changes –

The patient benefits from an Ayurvedic diet because it provides the affected organs with enough nutrition and rest. It is advised to eat a diet in good fat like ghee and high in proteins. The patient needs to consume lots of fiber meals and an abundance of raw veggies. Reduced consumption of tea, coffee and other beverages is advised and alcohol should be strictly avoided. Since most addicts are malnourished,

adhering to an Ayurvedic diet under the guidance of a trained dietician may be beneficial this is especially crucial in the early stages of recovery.⁽⁷⁾

Psychological counseling –

The role of psychological counseling in addiction recovery is significant. It is also mentioned in the Ayurvedic Samhita, which gives the patient the willpower to overcome their addiction and educates them about the negative effects of addiction. Raising awareness of the negative impacts of addiction is necessary. Any psychotherapy procedure starts with a warm, friendly, and sympathetic relationship between the therapist and the patient.⁽⁸⁾

Discussion:-

The main issue facing by the entire world including India is addiction. Rapidly increasing number of drug addicts in the nation, it is needed that general practitioners and the families of those affected comprehend the psychosomatic issues of patients. Not only one can become addicted to illegal drugs like heroin, cannabis, cocaine, or ecstasy, but prescription drugs like analgesics and tranquilizers can also cause addiction. A physical or psychological dependence on a substance is called addiction, so working with a trained dietician to follow an Ayurvedic diet may be helpful. This is especially crucial in the early stages of recovery. Acharya Chakrapani commented on Acharya Charak's concept of Oak- Satmya,⁽⁹⁾ which states that any substance that is considered unwholesome or apathy can become homologous (Satmya) through prolonged and continuous use, regardless of its level of harm. Because the long-term negative effects of

a substance depend on its nature, properties, dosage, duration, and mode of use, we can therefore conclude that addiction is a type of Satmya. Abhyang, virechana, and basti are useful from panchakarma therapy to help normalize the vitiated vata and to lessen anxiety, stress, and insomnia. The role of psychological counseling in addiction recovery is crucial. It is also mentioned in Ayurvedic Samhitas, which provide the patient with the willpower to overcome drug addiction and educate them about the negative effects of drug addiction. Since drug withdrawal manifests psychologically, addiction patients should also receive psychological counseling, meditation, yoga, and Rasayana therapy.⁽¹⁰⁾

Conclusion: -

Ayurveda encourages people to replace addictive behaviors with more beneficial ones rather than pressuring them to give up on them. Ayurveda helps to maintain physical and psychological equilibrium by panchakarma like vamana, Virechana and basti. Counseling and yoga with meditation has successful results and should be used in deaddiction therapy.

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