

Effect of Shirodhara in Psychosomatic Diseases (Manas Rogas)

Dr Shraddha Sharma

M.D. (Ayu.), Assistant Professor, Kayachikitsa Department, Pt K.L.S Govt. Ayurvedic College & Hospital, Bhopal [M.P], India

Abstract: Psychosomatic means psyche (mind) and soma (body). A psychosomatic disorder is a disease which involves both mind and body. Some physical diseases are thought to be particularly prone to be made worse by mental factors such as stress and anxiety. In Ayurveda detail description is given about psychic(mansik),somatic (sharirik) and psychosomatic disorders (manodahic vyadhi), their mode of treatment. The word shirodhara is combination of two of two word shiro+dhara represent the "head" and "flow". Shirodhara is type of shiro abhangya. It is mainly indicated in manasabhava pradhan vikrasas (mental disorders) i.e, Raja and tama dosha pradhan (predominated).this procedures includes a relaxed state of awareness that results in a dynamic psychosomatic balance. Shirodhara is a form of Ayurveda therapy that involves gently pouring liquids over the forehead and can be one of the steps involved in panchakarma, Based on drugs - it helps both samanya and vishesha chikitsa overall, it helps to relieve from many diseases. Shirodhara is a classical and a well established ayurvedic panchakarma procedure popular across the world for its stress relieving effects.

Keywords: Mansik (psychic), Sharirik (somatic), Shirodhara, Stress, Manodahic (psychomatic)

1. Introduction of Shirodhara

The name comes from the Sanskrit word shiro [Head] and dhara [flow]. Shirodhara is an Ayurvedic method of treatment in which herbal oil, medicated milk or decoction is poured gently and steadily over forehead continuous stream a particular point from a definite height. It is Unique form of ancient therapy which is done by specific height, Specific period, Continuously and rhythmically.(1)

It is important therapeutic measure and Purifying and rejuvenating therapy which eliminates toxins and mental exhaustion and relieve stress. It is mainly works on the central nervous system.

Type of therapy	Relaxation therapy
Main indication	Stress disorders
Treatment duration	Minimum 30 minutes Maximum 60 minutes per sitting
Treatment course	Minimum 7 days Maximum 4 weeks
Effects and Mechanism	It produces soothing sensations on head, which pass through the superficial nerves to the brain it brings calmness and affects the serotonin levels in the brain which ultimately treats stress disorders
Dosha effects	Vata pacifier

Types of Shirodhara

Specialized forms of shirodhara(2)

- 1) Ksheerdhara – use of milk
- 2) Takradhara- use of butter milk
- 3) Taildhara- use of oil
- 4) Jaladhara- use of water or coconut water
- 5) Kwathadhara- use of decoction

Talia used is	Other liquids
Ksheera bala taila	Butter milk
Karpasasthyadi thailam	Decoctions
Chandanadi thailam	Milk
Dhanwantharam thailam	Coconut water

Indication

Disease or disorders related with head, Neck, eyes, ears, nose, throat and nervous system. Useful in psychiatry, psychosomatic and chronic degenerative conditions (3)

It is used in

- 1) Vata disorders- paralysis, epilepsy, ptosis of eyelids.
- 2) Nervous system- insomnia, Headache[migraine], stress, depression, anxiety, mental disturbance [OCD, schiznophrenia]
- 3) Hairfall, khalitaya, palitaya,
- 4) Hypertension,
- 5) Fatigue

Contraindication

- 1) Low blood pressure
- 2) Brain tumour
- 3) Pregnancy
- 4) Full stomach
- 5) Alcoholism
- 6) Rash ,cuts, skin injury(4)
- 7) Acute stage of head and neck injury(5)

2. Discussion

Probable mode of action of Shirodhara

- 1) Tranquillizing effect
- 2) Effect on autonomic nervous system
- 3) Effect on endocrine system
- 4) Regulation of emotional and behavioral patterns
- 5) Effect of temperature
- 6) Effect of pressure
- 7) Marma concept
- 8) Chakra concept
- 9) Asana concept
- 10) Manomaya concept

1) Tranquilizing Effect

Chemical constituent of medicated oil may acts as a neurotransmitter (for ex. serotonin) as deficiency of certain neurotransmitter can be checked hypothetically , if oil

circulate into the brain cortex as explained by Johnson while treating the patient of angina by nitroglycerin.

2) Effect on Autonomic Nervous System

Shirodhara may also have alpha adrenergic blocking effect and can thus block certain actions of adrenaline and noradrenaline. Shirodhara may also act on the adrenergic neuron, probably produce their effects by modifying the synthesis storage and uptake mechanisms of noradrenaline.

3) Effect on Endocrine System

Hypothalamus – main controller of endocrine secretions. Hypothalamic neurons secrete the regulatory hormones are themselves under the control of specialized monoaminergic, neurotransmitter neurons which arise in mid brain. These later release dopamine, noradrenaline and serotonin. In turn these mid brain nuclei are under the control of visceral brain and are responsive to stress and emotional disturbances.

4) Regulation of Emotional and Behavioural Patterns

Together with limbic system hypothalamus regulates the feeling of rage, aggression, pain, pleasure and behavioural patterns. Shirodhara may be having some effect on hypothalamus resulting in decrease of most of the psychic and somatic disorders.

5) Effect on Temperature

Vibration along with little temperature may activate the function of thalamus and the basal for brain. It brings the amount of serotonin and catecholamine's to the normal.

6) Effect of Pressure

According to modern physiology Pressure has an effect on nerve impulse conduction. Shirodhara produce a constant pressure and vibration which is amplified hollow sinus present in frontal bone. Vibration is then transmitted inwards through fluid medium of cerebrospinal fluid [CSF]. Nerve ending stimulates-ANS stimulates –acetylcholine[inactive]-activates fall of blood pressure-leading to decrease activity of CNS resulting in tranquility of mind.

7) Action of Shirodhara on Marma

Marmas[vitals spots]-critical spots in our body 107 marmas. 37 are shiras [head region]

15 are sadhyapranahara[injury of which result in instant death.]

5 are kalantara pranahara[injury of which result in delayed death.]

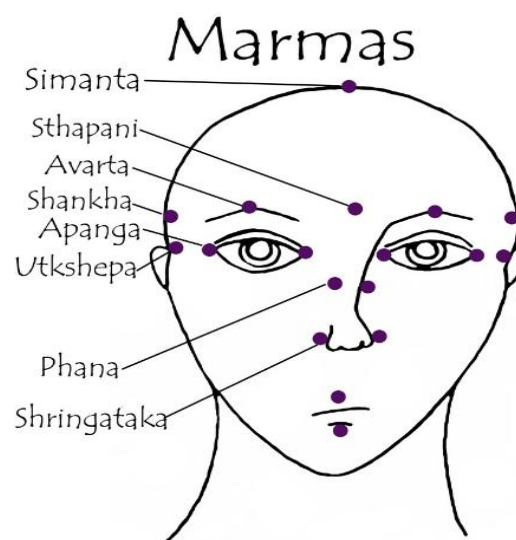
3 vishalyagna[death after removing foreign body]

14 vaikalyakara[injury to which results in physical impairment]

Most marma are agni[fire] and vayu[air] mahabhuta pradhana.

The site of sthapani marma-the site of pituitary gland and pineal gland exist at the same level. Function of pituitary gland is controlled by hormones or nerve signals. The gland activated whenever the stimulus from CNS or hormones. It has capacity to maintain all the endocrine system.

Positions of Marmas



8) Action of Shirodhara on Chakra Concept

Chakras [nerve plexuses]-7 chakras located in our body.

1. Muladhara [pelvic plexus]
2. Swadistana [hypogastric plexus]
3. Manipura [solar plexus]
4. Anahata [cardiac plexus]
5. Vishuddha [pharyngeal plexus]
6. Ajna [the plexus of command between two eye brows]
7. Sahastrara [the thousand petals lotus, the upper cerebral centre]-it has capacity to control all other six chakras.

Shiras [head] is the seat of both.

Ajnya chakras [6th chakra] is located at the level of external point of the eye brow. Ajnya chakra corresponds to pineal gland and medulla oblongata in brain. It is considered as third eye because of its position.

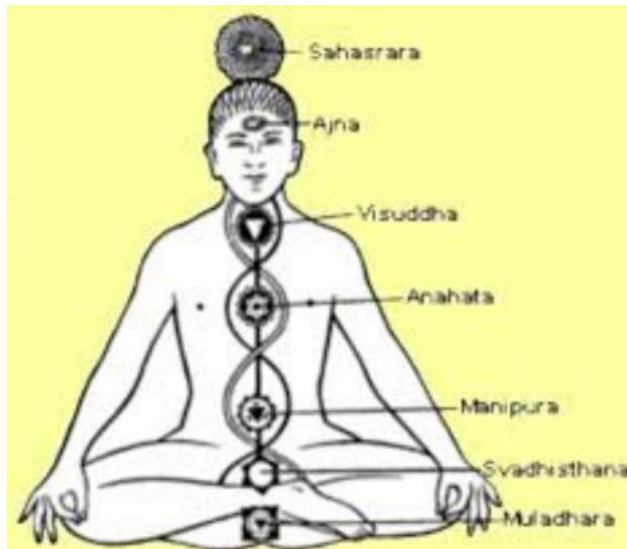
It is a Trigger point of concentration

Consider as centre of concentration or centre of consciousness.

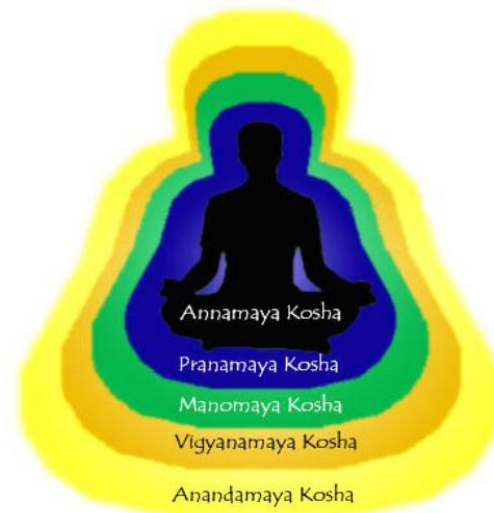
Centre of bodily systems and state of awareness are controlled.

Shirodhara treatment over ajnya chakra [pineal gland and medulla oblongata in brain]. It will stimulate sahastrara chakra. Pineal gland is responsible for rhythmic changes, sleep promotion and sexual behaviour. Medulla oblongata [brain stem]-equilibrium of body is controlled. Together both synergistically helps to produce desired effect of shirodhara.

Positions of Chakras



Koshas of Atman



Action of Shirodhara Based on Asana

Posture of shirodhara-shavasana [corpses pose]. This is one of the complete relaxation posture mentioned in yogashastra [text of yoga]. Present therapy may act as mechanical stimulus to the receptor which counterbalances the pain regulating centres [such as bradykinin, serotonin, histamine, potassium ions, acetylcholine etc.]. Mechanical, thermal and chemical stimuli. Shavasana is one of the very important yogic practice, provides total relaxation. Some recent researches suggested that it significantly reduces the subjective improvement in the symptoms like headaches, giddiness, nervousness, irritability and diminished sleep.

Action of Shirodhara based on Manomaya Kosha

Five koshas leads to manifestation of a progressive expression of life.

- 1) Annamaya [physical]
- 2) Pranamaya [vital]
- 3) Manomaya [mental]
- 4) Vijnanamaya [intellect]
- 5) Anandmaya [blissful]

Manomaya kosha refers to the emotional, mental and spiritual aspects of human being collectively frame our subjective experience of being alive which is composed of manas [mind]. Shiras is the seat of manas. Manas has four purpose

- 1) Remembrance
- 2) Reasonableness
- 3) Vision
- 4) Knowledge of bliss and ache based on responses from past deeds.

Body and mind both are innately interconnected hence healing process to mind indirectly heals process to body also. So dhara therapy hypothetically heals the mind in turn heals the body.

Hypothesis for Probable Mode of Action

It works on "law of conversion of energy"

Any substance situated at certain height have potential energy.

[P.E=mgh],

Potential energy=kinetic energy

[mgh=1/2mv²]

Potential energy of substance depends upon two things Mass of substance,

Height of the substance if height remains constant P.E depends upon mass of substance i.e., more the mass more will be the energy possessed by the substance.

Physiological Action

Momentum

When a moving substance collides with a resting substance it generates acceleration i.e. momentum. More will be the mass—more will be the momentum generated. When anything pour upon forehead from a certain height due change in the form of energy. It generates momentum.

Momentum-change in voltage-nerve impulse generation nerve impulse conduction.

Continues electric activity in brain-generates electromagnetic waves and recorded with the help of encephalogram [EEG]. The intensities of brain waves on the surface of the scalp ranges from 0 to 200microvolts and their frequency ranges from once every few second to 50 or more per second. The characters of these waves highly depend on the degree of the activity of cerebral cortex.

Benefits of Shirodhara

- Improves memory
- Improves mental clarity
- Lowers anxiety
- Removes headaches
- Insomnia
- Calming effects
- Reduces stiffness of neck and shoulder
- Best strokes treatment
- Aids in meditation and concentrations

3. Conclusion

From the above discussion it can be concluded that shirodhara works on the law of energy conservation. It modulates the secretions of various neurotransmitters and hormones by adjusting intensities of electromagnetic waves of brain.

Shirodhara has been hypothesized on the base of stimulation of pituitary gland and nerve endings of skin which in turn stimulates the central nervous system.

The incorporation of hypothetical aspects of chakra, shavasana posture and manomaya kosha would certainly help to predict hypothetical view of mode of action of shirodhara with subjective outcomes.

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