



AYURVEDA APPROACH TOWARDS AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDER – A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Autism is a developmental disorder diagnosed on the basis of early-emerging social and communication impairments and rigid and repetitive patterns of behavior and interests. The manifestation of these varies greatly with age and ability, and the notion of an autism spectrum has been introduced to recognize this diversity. As per *Ayurveda* scriptures Autism is not explained independently, we can correlate with *Unmada* (insanity) cause by *beeja dosa dusti* (genetic material abnormality), *Matraj Pittraj bhava vikriti* (anomalous ovum and sperm), due to faulty *Garbhini paricharya* (antenatal care), vitiation of *Gharbhoupghatkar bhavas* (detrimental factors affecting fetus)) leads to impaired development of brain and mind, vitiation of *kapha* and *tamoguna* as well as *vata* and *Rajo guna* leads to genetic abnormality *Beejadusti* (atypical genetic material) .(1) The mental status of mother plays an important role for both physical and mental development of child. Currently available therapies in contemporary science are cognitive behavior therapy; behavioral management therapy, occupational therapy, nutrition therapy etc are effective while in *Ayurveda* specific *Medhya Rasayana* (brain tonic) can play indispensable role in treatment of autism. A five-year-old female child with parents reported in our OPD with diagnosed case of ASD. Course of 10 months *Ayurvedic* medication *Medhya rasayana* started, a remarkable response was observed in child clinical symptoms, growth and development achievement of milestones.

Keywords: *Unmada; beeja dusti; Garbhini paricharya; Medhya rasayana*

INTRODUCTION: Autism or Mutinies as it was earlier known was thought primarily to affect communication skills but with more studies, it was understood that autistic children display a wide range of symptoms, hence the word “spectrum” was added to autism disorder. Autism is the prototype disorder for pervasive developmental disorder which is believed to be a complex genetic and neurological disorder that generally lasts throughout a person life. (2) Current statistics shows that autism occur in all racial ethnic and social groups and recently there have been reports of an increase in the number of children receiving public services for

autism (3). Children with autism might have problem in talking with you or they might not look at you in the eyes when you talk to them. (4) Autistic children however show several sage skills and an excellent committal memory. Those who are educable gain high scores in their scholastic subjects but will not be able to abstract these learnt materials at a functional level [4]. Autism can be correlated with *Unmad*. *Acharya Charaka* has advised to avoid various dietetic regimens, habits and trauma in context of *Garbhopaghatakara Bhavas* (detrimental factors affecting fetus) which can lead to various psychological disorders like

Mudha (dull), *Nidralu* (inactive/sleepy), *Unmadi* etc. (5). *Sahaja nidana* (genetic factor): *Acharya Sushruta* mentioned in his text the state of health and disease are determined by the relative presence of *tridosha* since the formation of embryo in the womb. *Kapha* is *Tamobhuyistam* so that the predominance of *kapha* and *tamo guna* can contribute development of *vishada* (nostalgic), *nastikam* (skeptical), *adharmasheela* (irreligious), *budhinirodha* (intelligence evasion), *ajnanam* (unwise) in child, likewise predominance of *vata* and *rajas guna* contribute development of *dukhabahutwam* (sadness), *tadansheelata* (rebel) and *krodha* (anger) in children. (6) The genetic material is deranged as it leads to *beeja dusti* which is responsible for basic genetic susceptibility to develop the autism.

CASE REPORT: A Hindu, 5 years old female child came with parents in OPD of *Panchakarma, Rani Dulliya Smriti Ayurveda PG Mahavidhyalaya and Chikitsalaya Bhopal (MP)* with registration number 2129983 on 20/12/2021. Parents explained complain of poor communication, improper speech, not following the commands, urine leaking in clothes, soiling of clothes, stubborn, fast phobia. Associated symptoms include habitual constipation. Past history reveals, was able to crawl at 9 months, gave her first smile at 5 months, was able to sit by 8 months, stand by support at 11 months and walk at 15 months. She spoke irrelevant word by 2 years of age. At the age of 18-month parents recognized that her communication and response was poor so consulted with neurologist, diagnosed Autism. She was delivered by caesarian in view of postdated gestation and decreased AFI. Cried immediately after birth, postnatal period was uneventful. Mother has history of three spontaneous abortion? TORCH infection before her birth. Her

immunization done properly till date. She is a single child, belongs to educated; middle class socioeconomic, nuclear family. Preferring semisolid food to engulf, avoid chewable. Intake of food is mixed type veg & non-veg good in quantity. Parents written concern taken before examination and treatment of child.

General Examination

Gate normal, restricted behavior, not interested in communication, not following mothers command, stubborn saying two letter word only MAMA in age of 5 years Vitals stable, no edema, pink conjunctivae, smooth skin, clean nails

Systemic examination-Respiratory

System: AEBE & clear, Cardiovascular

System: S1, S2 both normal, Central

Nervous System: conscious, well oriented, poor communication, Fuzzy child

.Diagnostic criteria for autism spectrum disorder by DSM-5 Autism Diagnosis Criteria Social communication -Marked deficits in verbal and nonverbal social communication skills; social impairments apparent even with supports in place; limited initiation of social interactions; and reduced or abnormal responses to social overtures from others. For example, a person who speaks simple sentences, whose interaction is limited to narrow special interests, and how has markedly odd nonverbal communication. Restrictive, Repetitive behavior - Inflexibility of behavior, difficulty coping with change, or other restricted/repetitive behaviors appear frequently enough to be obvious to the casual observer and interfere with functioning in a variety of contexts. Distress and/or difficulty changing focus or action. (7)

SEVERITY LEVEL –GRADE 2 by DSM-5 Autism Diagnosis Criteria

IV. Loco motor System: Normal

V. Gastrointestinal System: Normal

ASHTHAVIDHA PARIKSHA

1 Nadi;DoshPradhanya: vata ,2 Mootra (micturation): atipravriti , Frequency: day & night
3. Mala (Bowel): baddha , 4 Jihva (tongue) -Niraama (Uncoated),5 Shabda - Aspasta
6.Sparsha: Unushna ,7 Drik- Prakrita 8 Aakriti -sam

1. Prakriti: - Shareera : vataakafaj ,2 vikriti-tridoshaj vata pradhana Manasika: raj tamo dusti 3vaya – bala avastha, 4 satva : avar,5 Sara : madhyama 6 Samhanana: madhyama 7.Pramana : sama 8. Satmya : Avar 9. Ahara Shakti : madhyama 10. Vyayama Shakti: madhyama

DASHAVIDHA PARIKSHA

TREATMENT AND ASSESMENT

Table no.1 -Assessment criteria

Date /Course	Treatment	Assessment in OPD	Parents Observation
20/12/2021 For 3 months	Tab. Suvarna Bhramhi ½ BD with honey Suvarna Prashana 10 drops BD Chawanprash ½ TSF in Rasayan kaal	18/2/21- Comfortable with people those are talking with her friendly, occasionally eye contact while interaction 07/03/22 - comfortable in OPD, making circle, triangle shape, trying to write capital alphabet ABC.	18/1/21 - allowing family members to interact, started to follow mother's instruction 07 /03/22 – no cloth wetting in the past 10 days, bladder control noted, going for urination for her ow. Psychological behaviour is improving as normal 4-5yrs kids are behaving. (1) Feeling jealous, much loving to some close person. Got emotionally hurt with firm behaviour of mother in front of others. Speech & Behavioural therapy are Interrupted from 1 month
21/03/2022 For 3 months	Tab Smritisagar Ras 1BD Tab.Manasmitrak Vati 1 BD Sarswatidi Gold, 5 Drops BD	Trying to communicate answering with interrupted words	April- communication with relatives improving, follows mother's command 06/05/22- started chewing chapati and solid food from last week, initially she uses to swallow the paste or mashed food.
06/05/2022	Tab. Manasmitrak Vati 1BD Sarsvatadi Gold, 5 Drops BD Chawanprash ½ TSF in Rasayan kaal	20/6/22 Recognizes alphabets A to Z,hindi varnamala (hindi alphabets) Writing skills improved 20/09/22	20/06/22 Understand and follow instruction of parents. Started poetry rhyming, going to toilet potty call 20/09/22 Recognizing vegetables and fruits

		Starting making shapes by holding pencil	07/11/2022 Now studying in nursery school with normal kids
		07/11/22 Introducing herself properly Convenience for <i>pratimarsha nasya</i> (introducing of oil drops in nostrils)	From last 6 months no episodes of cough cold fever, her immunity improved.

DISCUSSION: Autism is the condition who symptoms related to mental disorders, and these conditions broadly classified under the *unmada* in *Ayurveda* so the management of *unmada* based on *medhya* drugs. In *Ayurveda* direct correlation of autism is not mentioned. *Unmad* is broadly explained in *brihadtriya* with its management. Clinical presentation is characterized by poor communication, improper speech, not following the commands, urine leaking in clothes, soiling of clothes, stubborn, fast phobia, no eye contact with people, habitual constipation at the age of five year. Our line of treatment mainly based on *agni deepana*, *pachana* (improve metabolism) and *madhya rasayanas*. Approach was to work on *dhee* (grasping), *dhriti* (retaining power), *smriti* (memory) of patient gradually with regulation of *sharirik dosa* and *mansik dosas*. We got tremendous result in this 10-months course of *madhya rasayana*.

Suvarana Prashana is the one of the formulations explained in our scripture *Kashyapa samhita* mainly contains *suvarna bhasma* play role to encourage immune system, physical strength, *Agni* (digestive power) and improve grasping, retaining power and memory of growing children. *suvarna bhasma* is *snigdha*, *madhur*, *sheeta virya* vitalizer, effective in *anuloma kshaya*, *vaak shuddhikar*, *mana prasanna*, *indriyaprasadaka*

Chavanprasha promoting growth gives strength improve immunity, brain tonic. According to *Carak samhita*, *Chyawanprash* reduces excessive *Vata* and *Kapha* without aggravating *Pitta*. It is also said to preserve the harmony of three *doshas*. *Barhmi vati* is the brain booster, contains antioxidants, improve memory, specifically mentioned in treatment of *Unmada*. *Sarswatharistam* benevolent to slow learners and is salutary to enhance the intelligent quotient (I.Q.). In *avyurvedic* scriptures of material medica mention to prepare this formulation in a golden vessel as the effect of *saraswatarista* is potentiated with gold. *Manasmitrak vati* contains *medhya*, *balya*, *vaat shamaka* drugs which perform as a neuroprotective, anticonvulsant, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and rejuvenate nerve tonic. Conclusion is that all above medicines are responsible for the regulation of vitiated *vata* and *kapha*, brain tissue vitalizer, improve sensory motor conduction, enhance regaining and sustainability, judgement power, memory of brain. Boost learning capacity of brain. When we started treatment of child, she was two years delay in her milestones then now swiftly she achieved her milestones at age of 4 year. Patient gained her bladder control, motion sensation communication with society improved, her immunity boosted.

CONCLUSION: As no satisfactory treatment is available in modern medicine

till now, multi-modal treatment such as Ayurveda, behavioral therapy, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and early educational interventions might be beneficial to treat ASDs effectively. This case report will be a precursor in the prevention and management of ASDs with the Ayurveda approach in terms of *medhya rasayanas*. Due to behavioral pattern of Autistic children the application of detox treatment like *panchakarma* is difficult to perform initially. We got magnificent results only with *dosas* pacifying palliative treatment in the form of *saman chikitsa* (conservative treatment). Ayurveda opens a large door in the management of autism and similar condition and shows the glimpse of hope to the society.

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