



# An Observational Study of Stress Level in Young Adult Female Population And Its Resolution Given In Ayurveda.

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Upesh M. Likhar , <sup>2</sup>Dr. Ramesh M. Bansode , <sup>3</sup>Dr. Prachi Upesh Likhar

<sup>1</sup>Associate Professor, <sup>2</sup>HOD & Professor, <sup>3</sup>Assistant Professor

<sup>1</sup>Department of Kriya Sharir

<sup>1</sup>Poornayu Ayurved Chikitsalaya Evum Anusandhan Vidyapeeth, Jabalpur

## ABSTRACT

In today's Society, we thrive on performance, competition and perfection, which leads to an insidious increase in stress. Stress touches all social groups and all ages. According to latest health reports, stress is said to be one of the largest killers of human today.

Our young population also is not untouched by this. The increasing scope of social media in their lives, altered dietary habits, and daily routine may be responsible for their stress level.

*Ayurveda* is an extensive system of holistic healthcare that originated in ancient *vedic* times in India.

*Ayurveda* texts have mentioned various measures for *Manah udveg* or increased stress level. By adopting these measures we can keep the stress level under control.

Keywords – Stress, Holistic healthcare, *Vedic* time, *Manah Udveg*

## INTRODUCTION –

Stress in young population is a growing concern for a nation today. This can ultimately have negative consequences for achieving the goal of the nation and also meeting the needs of the individual.

Everyone in their work is exposed to stress. In the current circumstances, Stress is becoming a major issue and Stress management is the need of the hour.

. Women's role has changed tremendously today and is making greater impact in our society. Many years ago women's contribution to society was limited. Women are now taking multiple roles and are managing them well by multitasking, right from the young age. But with all these, level of stress is also rising in young females. The reason for stress in them may be academic worries or financial worries, career distress or family obligations. Youth age is the critical period because at this time youth faces lots of changes in their life. They are expected to be elites in the society. Hence, increasing stress in young females deserve utmost attention.

Numerous studies have shown that modification in life styles, practice of pranayama and yoga, physical and psychological support given to an individual by their family members, friends, teachers or other significant person have produced beneficial outcomes while dealing with stress.

#### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES -

- 1) To study stress level in young adult female.
- 2) To study cause of stress in young female population.
- 3) To study *Ayurveda* literature related to stress and *Manas Chikitsa*.

#### MATERIALS –

- 1) Data from Perceive stress scale (PSS)
- 2) The literary work was done with the help of ancient *Ayurveda* and modern texts.

#### METHODOLOGY -

- 1) Study type – The study is an observational study.
- 2) Study population – Young adult female of age group 18 – 22 years.
- 3) Sample size – Study was performed on 100 female students of age group 18 -22 years.
- 4) Sampling Technique – By random sampling method
- 5) Method of selection of study subjects (Eligibility criteria) –

#### Inclusion Criteria-

- 1) Young adult female students in the Age group of 18 to 22 years, irrespective of religion, Socio Economic status.
- 2) Young adult female students who were ready to give written consent after knowing the objectives of the study.

### Exclusion criteria-

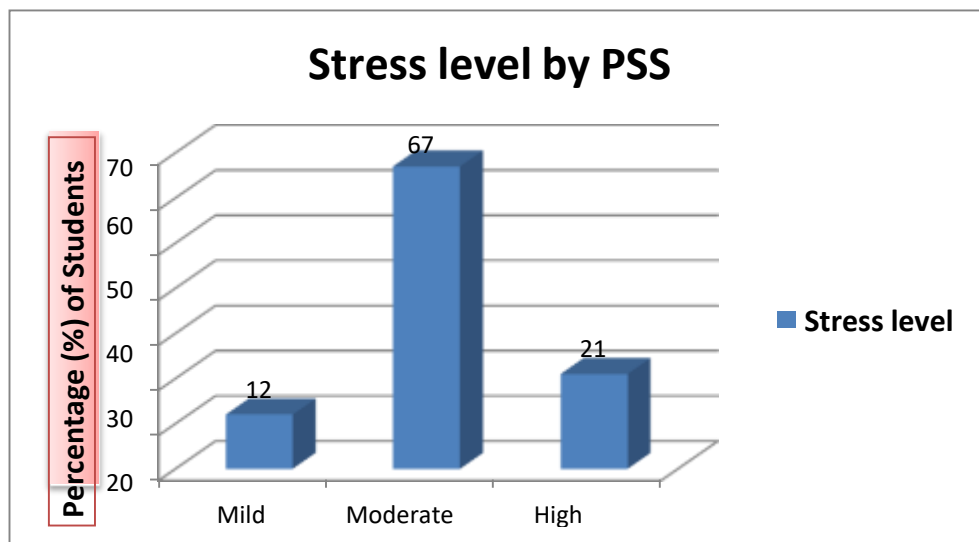
- 1) Persons suffering from any major physical, Mental and systemic illness.
- 2) Persons taking any type of medical treatment.
- 3) Pregnant Women & Lactating mothers.
- 4) Person who have recently suffered physical or mental trauma.
- 5) Person who has just recovered from a serious illness.

### METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION-

- a) Young adult female students of age group 18 to 22 years, who were ready to give consent, were explained Perceive stress scale (PSS) parameters and their General examination was done.
- b) PSS format was provided to them in the form of Google form and asked to fill the format and submit it.
- c) Level of stress was compared with the help of data provided by the Perceived stress scale Google form.

### OBSERVATION –

When data were collected by PSS response, Maximum number of subjects, that is 67% of total subjects studied, were found in Moderate stress level group, and then 21% of subjects were in High stress level group. Minimum number of subjects, that is only 12% of total subjects studied, were found in mild stress level group. This conveys that maximum number of the population is moderately stressed.



Showing Percentage of students according to Stress level by PSS

## LITERARY REVIEW –

Stress can be defined as any situation which tends to disturb the equilibrium between a living organism and its environment<sup>1</sup>. Stress is the part of life and is necessary for providing challenge to physiological and psychological development. However too much stress over a period of time combined with poor coping ability may cause physical, chemical and hormonal imbalance in the body leading to disease<sup>2</sup>.

The physiological mechanisms of stress are extremely complex, but they generally involve the work of two systems—the sympathetic nervous system and the hypothalamic- pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis<sup>3</sup>. When a person first perceives something as stressful, the sympathetic nervous system triggers arousal via the release of adrenaline from the adrenal glands. Release of these hormones activates the fight-or-flight responses to stress, such as accelerated heart rate and respiration. At the same time, the HPA axis, which is primarily endocrine in nature, becomes especially active, although it works much more slowly than the sympathetic nervous system. In response to stress, the hypothalamus (one of the limbic structures in the brain) releases corticotropin-releasing factor, a hormone that causes the pituitary gland to release adrenocorticotrophic hormone (ACTH). The ACTH then activates the adrenal glands to secrete a number of hormones into the bloodstream; an important one is cortisol, which can affect virtually every organ within the body. Cortisol is commonly known as a stress hormone and helps provide that boost of energy when we first encounter a stressor, preparing us to run away or fight. However, sustained elevated levels of cortisol weaken the immune system and leads to the development and progression of a variety of physical illnesses and mental disorders<sup>4</sup>.

According to Ayurveda Disease (Vyadhi) can be developed in two Shelters – Sharir (physical body) or Mana (Mind). When Mana is vitiated, it causes development of diseases like Mada, murcha, Sanyas, Graha, Unmad, Apasmar etc.<sup>5</sup>

Raja and Tama, these two doshas are responsible for vitiation of Mana. These both doshas are developed by dukh (Sadness) and Avidhya ( Ignorance and illusion)<sup>6</sup>.

Perceived stress is a measure of the degree to which situations in one's life are appraised as stressful<sup>7</sup>. The appraisal of this perceived stress is considered to supersede the assessment of stressful life events<sup>8</sup>. Perceived Stress Scale is used as a psychological instrument to measure the Perceived stress. It was developed by Sheldon Cohen and his colleagues. It was published in 1983. It is a self-report measure intended to capture the degree to which persons perceive situations in their life as excessively stressful relative to their ability to cope<sup>9</sup>.

### Causes of stress in young female population –

1. Physical inactivity –In today's era, the physical activities of youth are decreasing. Today youth engage in digital activities like mobile, net gaming, more than physical activities. This Sedentary behavior is associated with increased risk of stress. Because when person involves in physical activities, his body releases endorphins, neurotransmitters such as Dopamine and Serotonin. Which help body to cope up with stress and reduce risk of anxiety and over thinking<sup>10</sup>.
2. Psychosocial environmental factors - Social behavior of youth is changing due to excessive involvement of digital tools like mobile in life. They have started liking to be alone more. The effect of mobile is also visible in their thinking and taking decisions. Also Marital status, family and friend's conflict, worry about education, hormonal changes, long working hours, wrong sleep pattern and sleep duration increases the stress in this age.
3. Addiction – Because of Addiction like Alcohol consumption, tobacco use, excessive activation of the neural reward system leads to its dysfunction and to hyper activation of the brain's stress response, resulting in an increase in reward thresholds ( reward deficit and stress surfeit).
4. Dietary intake – It was seen that the risk of depression increased in women who consumed fast food, ketchup, mayonnaise, refined grains and high amount of sugar and fat<sup>11</sup>.

### Resolution methods for stress

1. Regular Exercise- Physical activity helps reduce stress hormones and promote the release of endorphins, which are natural mood filters.
2. Healthy diet- Eating a balanced diet rich in fruits,vegetables ,whole grains and lean proteins can brace overall well-being and stress management .
3. Adequate sleep- Prioritize good sleep hygiene by maintaining a consistent sleep schedule and creating a restful bedtime routine.
4. Pranayam, Mindfulness and relaxation- Techniques such as meditation, deep-breathing exercises and progressive muscle relation can lend a helping hand to reduce stress. Pranayama like Bhramari calms down even the extremely fickle mind, increases concentration and memory, improves sleep and voice.
5. Social support- Connect with friends and loved ones, as social relationships can provide emotional support during stressful times. Researches suggests that social support can be a significant protective factor for mental health, particularly among young women.
6. Hobbies and interests- Engage in activities one enjoys to relieve stress and promote a sense of fulfilment.
7. Practicing gratitude- Keep a gratitude journal to focus on positive aspects of life and reduce dwelling on stressors.

According to Ayurveda the best treatment of vitiated Mana (Mind) are Dhi, Dhairya and proper knowledge of Atmadi tatva<sup>12</sup>.

Dhi is to impart knowledge of the benefits and harms of external spiritual feelings in a subtle form.

Dhairya implies stability of mind. Which does not involve itself in prohibited matters and does not stop in beneficial matters.

To know the Paramatma through yogabhyas and Samadhi is Atma Vigyan

Ayurveda defined the advantages of *sadvritta* to keep one's mind healthy.

According to Acharya charaka, a person who follows *sadvritta* or the entire code of good conduct, he will enjoy a healthy life and invoke healthy peace. He has given following codes for maintaining good psyche in society<sup>13</sup>-

1. One should not be impatient or overexcited /over exhilarated.
2. One should not be the person who does not support his attendants, confide in his kins ,be happy alone and have unpleasant conduct behaviour and attendance.
3. One should not rely on everybody nor suspect all and should not be critical at all time.

Ashtanga Hridayam has given detailed knowledge of *sadvritta* or good conduct<sup>14</sup>.

According to this text, impurities of mind needs to tackled using right behaviour and conduct. Impurities of mind are often the root cause of many diseases. Hence, Ashtanga Hridayam lays down deep details how one should conduct thoughts and feelings and social actions to keep mind and body healthy. The principles behind these guidelines are relevant and timeless.

Ashtanga Hridayam recognizes that all human activities are meant for the happiness of all the living beings. Such happiness is based on dharma (righteousness, right moral conduct). Hence every person should always adopt a conduct of righteousness.

Ashtanga Hridayam notes ten sins that one must avoid to be on the morally righteous track that is conducive to healthy mind and body<sup>15</sup>.

*Himsa* (causing injury,torture,etc) *Steya* (stealing ,robbing) *Anyathakama* (unlawful sexual activity or unlawful desiring for others. *Parishunya* (abusive speech or backbiting), *Prusha vachana* (harsh speech), *Anruta vachana* (speaking untruth), *Sambhinna alapa* (speech causing separation or breaking of company), *Vyapada* (intention of harming others), *Abhidhya* (jealousy, not tolerating good of others), *Drugviparyaya* (Finding faults,misunderstanding faithlessness,etc,with scriptures,elders,etc.)

Following are the *sadvritta* or good conducts according to vagbhata acharya that should to be adopted for sound mental health:-

1. One should serve friends who want your welfare with devotion and good deeds, whereas the others, who do not want your welfare, should be kept at a distance.
2. God, cow, *brahmanas vaidyas*, king and guests should always be respected. One should not turn away those who have come to plead with you, nor disrespect the pleader or speak harsh words to them.
3. One should be very helpful even to their foes, even though they are not helpful. In other words, one should be nice even to the enemy who harms you.
4. One should maintain a balanced mind both during calamity (*vipatti*) and prosperity (*sampat*). That is, one should not be extremely happy during times of happiness and extremely sad during times of sadness.

5. One should not be envious towards wealth and happiness of others. That is, one should not be jealous of the results or not be jealous of good results (cloths, ornaments, etc) of others.
6. Person should speak only on the right occasion. Should speak little, as per necessity and should speak good, pleasant words. Person should not argue and do not say untrue things. Be the first to greet or start conversation when meeting someone. Have a smiling face, have good character, be courteous, be soft in speech and activity.
7. Do not be a person who likes to be alone always.
8. Do not believe everything around you and do not suspect everything around you.
9. Do not mention your enemy to anyone. That is, he is my enemy or I am someone else's enemy, one should not mention this to anyone.
10. Do not publicly talk about insults that you underwent.
11. Do not publicly talk about disaffection towards your king or master.
12. Keeping in mind the nature of the people, one should deal with them in such a manner that it pleases them and become well versed in the art of adoring others.
13. *Indriyas* should not be strained very much nor should they be fondled very much.
14. Follow all religions by being a mediator (without attachment and hatred). Respect all regions without having any insistence on any religion.

## CONCLUSION –

The study showed that most of the young adult female population is in moderately stressed condition. The reason for this is attributable to the contemporary lifestyle changes like over reliance on digital tools, faulty eating habits, physical inactivity and increased addiction to substances such as alcohol, drugs, etc., among the youth.

The results of the study also shows that the mental health of young female adults deserve attention, as this group of population is the backbone of families and are crucial to the growth and development of communities. By following *Sadvritta* or conducts of righteousness, practicing *yoga*, *pranayama* and *asanas* and by practicing other resolutions mentioned in *Ayurveda* texts, unnecessary elevation of stress can be prevented and physical and mental health of young female adults can be improved.



## REFERENCES-

- 1) Ranabir S, Reetu K, Stress and Hormones.Indian J Endocrinol Metab.2011;15:18-22. [PMC Free Article] (PubMed)
- 2) Manglione-Garves CA,Kravitz L.Cortisol Connection: Tips on Managing Stress and Weight (Last assessed on 2017 May 21) Available from <https://www.unm.edu/~lkravitz/Article%20Folder/Stresscortisol.html>.
- 3) <https://openstax.org/books/psychology-2e/pages/14-1-what-is-stress>.
- 4) Butler.G.Definitions of Stress.Occas.Pap R Coll Gen Pract,1993,61:1-5. [Google Scholar]
- 5) Dr.Brahmanand Tripathi,Ashtang Hriday,Sutra Sthana, Adhyaya – 1, Shloka – 20-, Page no. 40, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Pratishthan, Delhi, Reprint – 2012
- 6) Dr.Brahmanand Tripathi,Ashtang Hriday,Sharira Sthana, Adhyaya – 1, Shloka – 21, Page no. 40, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Pratishthan, Delhi, Reprint – 2012
- 7) Feizi A, Aliyari R,Roohafza H.Association of Perceived Stress with Stressful life events,lifestyle and sociodemographic factors:A large Scale community based study using logistic quantile regression. Comput Math Methods.Med.2012;2012:15:1865 [PMC Free Article] (PubMed) (Google Scholar)
- 8) Cohen S. Contrasting the hassles Scale and the Perceived stress scale:who's really measuring appraised stress?American Psychologist.1986;41:716-8 (Google Scholar)
- 9) Resmy A Raj, M.Abhilash, Chitra M.Gawande,Jeevan Jadadeesh Kulkarni- APriliminary Study on Correlation between Stress & Satva among students of Ayurveda College. Journal of Ayurveda,Volume 15,Issue 3,July-September 2021.
- 10) Pearce M,Garcia L, Abbas A, Strain T, Schuch FB,Golubic R,Kelly P, Khan S, Utukuri,Laird Y,Mok A,Smith A,Tainio M, Brage S,Woodcock J. Association Between Physical Activity and Risk of Depression: Asystematic Review and Meta-analysis.JAMA Psychiatry. 2022 Jun 1;79(6):550-559.doi: 10/1001/jamapsychiatry.2022.0609. PMID;3541641; PMCID: PMC9008579.
- 11) Crawford GB,Khedkar A,Flaws JA,Sorkin JD,Gallicchio L.Depressive Symptoms and self-reported fast-food intake in midlife women.Prev Med.2011 Mar-Apr;52 (3-4):254-7. Doi 10.1016/j.ypmed.2011.01.006. Epub 2011 jan 27.PMID:21276813;PMCID: PMC3062726.
- 12) Dr.Brahmanand Tripathi,Ashtang Hriday, Sutra Sthana, Adhyaya – 1, Shloka – 26, Page no. 41, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Pratishthan, Delhi, Reprint – 2012
- 13) Acharya Vidyadhar Shukla,Prof.Ravidatta Tripathi,Charak-Samhita, Volume -1, Sutra Sthana, Adhyaya -8, Shlok -40, Page no. 182, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Pratishthan, Delhi, Reprint – 2009
- 14) Dr.Brahmanand Tripathi,Ashtang Hriday, Sutra Sthana, Adhyaya – 2, Shloka – 21, Page no. 50, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Pratishthan, Delhi, Reprint – 2012
- 15) Dr.Brahmanand Tripathi,Ashtang Hriday, Sutra Sthana, Adhyaya – 2, Shloka – 36, Page no. 53, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Pratishthan, Delhi, Reprint – 2012