



## REVIEW ARTICLE

# Concept of Manas and Preventive Measures as Per Ayurveda: A Review

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## ABSTRACT

Ayurveda accords equal importance to mental (mānasika) and physical (śārīrika) health, recognizing that disturbances in manas originate primarily from an imbalance of the three mental doṣas—sattva, rajas, and tamas. Caraka and Suśruta Samhitās describe the nature, functions, and afflictions of manas along with preventive and promotive measures. The present review discusses the conceptual framework of manas, causes of mānasika vyādhi, and preventive strategies such as sadvṛtta, ācāra rasāyana, medhya dravyas...

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda defines health as the equilibrium of doṣas, dhātus, agni, and malas along with a pleasant state of ātmā, indriya, and manas (Caraka Samhitā, Sūtrasthāna 1/15). In today's era of increasing mental health disorders, revisiting classical Ayurvedic frameworks provides preventive and integrative solutions. The concept of manas, its guṇas and vyāpāras, and

associated preventive measures are foundational in Ayurvedic psychology.

## Concept of Manas in Ayurveda

### Definition and Nature

Caraka describes manas as ubhayendriya, functioning as both sensory and motor faculty, serving as the bridge between ātmā

and śārīra. Its subtlety (anutva) and singularity (ekatva) make it unique (C.S. Śārīrasthāna 1/18, p. 677, Chaukhamba 2014). The objects of manas include dhyeya (goal), saṅkalpa (resolution), vikalpa (cognition), and others (C.S. Śārīrasthāna 1/17–19, p. 677). Its principal functions include indriyābhigraha, svapna, saṃjñā, vicāra, and prayatna (C.S. Śārīrasthāna 1/20–24, p. 678).

#### Devanāgarī citation:

मनसश्च लक्षणमनुत्वमेकत्वं चा (चरक संहिता, शारीरस्थान १/१८, पृ. ६७७)

#### IAST:

manasaśca lakṣaṇam anutvam ekatvaṃ ca. (Caraka Saṃhitā, Śārīrasthāna 1/18, p. 677)

#### Translation:

The characteristics of manas are subtlety (anutva) and singleness (ekatva).

#### Guṇas of Manas

Caraka identifies sattva, rajas, and tamas as mental doṣas (C.S. Sūtrasthāna 1/57). Sattva promotes clarity and stability, rajas produces agitation and activity, while tamas leads to inertia and ignorance. Mental health is sustained when sattva predominates, whereas rajas and tamas precipitate disease.

#### Causative Factors of Mānasika Vyādhi

- Prajñāparādha (intellectual error):** Caraka states that prajñāparādha is the root cause of all diseases (C.S. Sū. 1/102).
- Asatmya-indriyārtha-samyoga:** improper contact of senses with objects, leading to overuse, underuse, or misuse.
- Kāla (time/seasonal factors):** external temporal changes influence manas. These lead to expressions such as śoka (grief), krodha (anger), bhaya (fear), lobha (greed), moha (delusion), ultimately resulting in mānasika vyādhis.

#### Preventive Measures in Ayurveda

- Sadvṛtta (ethical discipline):** Caraka prescribes compassion, truthfulness, non-violence, and control of senses as essential for mental stability (C.S. Sū. 8/18).
- Ācāra Rasāyana (rejuvenative conduct):** includes humility, respect, social harmony, and virtuous living, which replenish sattva.
- Vega-dharana (regulation of urges):** inappropriate suppression or indulgence of natural urges disturbs manas.
- Medhya Rasāyana:** Brahmī (Bacopa monnieri), Śaṅkhaṇḍī (Convolvulus pluricaulis), Yaśṭimadhu (Glycyrrhiza glabra), and Aśvagandhā (Withania somnifera) enhance intellect and resilience.

5. **Manonigraha (mind discipline):** Caraka emphasizes cultivation of jñāna, vijñāna, dhairya, smṛti, and samādhi (C.S. Sū. 1/58).

6. **Yoga and Dhyāna:** classical and modern evidence support meditation and yoga as effective in reducing stress and balancing sattva-rajās-tamas.

#### Suśruta's Perspective

Suśruta elaborates on manovaha srotas, their mūla in hṛdaya and ten dhamanīs, and their importance in mental health (Suśruta Saṃhitā, Śārīrasthāna 5/20, p. 366, Chaukhamba Orientalia 2012)—injury to these leads to mānasika vikāras like moha and unmāda.

#### Critical Appraisal and Comparison with Modern Psychiatry

The Ayurvedic construct of mānasika doṣas parallels modern models of cognition, affect, and behavior. Prajñāparādha resembles cognitive distortions described in CBT. Sadvṛtta and Ācāra Rasāyana are comparable to lifestyle psychiatry, emphasizing ethical living and social connectedness. Medhya Rasāyanas, now studied as nootropics and adaptogens, show neuroprotective and anxiolytic effects. Yogic practices correlate with mindfulness and stress reduction techniques that have been validated in modern psychology. Thus, Ayurveda's conceptual framework can supplement preventive psychiatry.

#### CONCLUSION

Ayurveda's holistic framework integrates mental, physical, and spiritual health. By cultivating sattva and regulating rajas and tamas through sadvṛtta, ācāra rasāyana, yoga, and medhya dravyas, Ayurveda offers sustainable preventive strategies for mental health. Bridging these ancient insights with modern psychiatry can enrich integrative approaches.

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