

CHROMOTHERAPY AND AYURVEDA - A CRITICAL REVIEW

Fathima Shameena¹, Roshy Joseph C^{2*}, Parthasarathi PS³

1. Resident Medical Officer, Sri Mahadeva Iyer's Sarada Ayurveda Vaidhyashala, Nagrecoil, Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu, India.
2. Assistant Professor, Dept. of Rasa Shastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana, Govt. Ayurveda Medical College & Hospital, Kottar, Nagercoil, Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu, India.
3. Professor & H.O.D., Dept. of Rasa Shastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana, Mannam Ayurveda Co-Operative Medical College, Pandalam, Pathanamthitta, Kerala, India.

Received: 12-05-2019; Revised: 21-07-2019; Accepted: 20-08-2019

Abstract

In Ayurveda both for diagnosis and treatment purpose colours are given much importance. As how in chromotherapy colours are used directly for subsiding the condition, there are various references in Ayurveda, mentioned indirectly for treating diseases. Based on colour aggravation of doshas are understood but for reducing the condition whether colours are used indirectly. But the various colors were used to promote balance and healing the manas (mind) and the sharira (body) and are one of the most ancient healing therapies used by many races for thousands of years. Both the purusha (man) and loka (nature) receive the solar light, which is busted up into seven main rays (VIBGYOR) and then circulated to physical and energetic body. Water (solarized water) and oil exposed to sun for specified hours in colored bottles and colored glasses are used as devices of chromo therapy. In Ayurveda Hamsodhakam is used. Hamsodhakam is the water heated by sun rays, cooled by moon rays and detoxified by Agastya star. It is pure and pacifies three doshas; Hence in the present article an attempt was made to review the influence of colour therapy in Ayurveda and the importance of chromotherapy.

Key words: Ayurveda; Colours; Chromotherapy.

*Address for correspondence:

Dr. Roshy Joseph C, M.D., Ph.D. (Ayu)
Assistant Professor, Dept. of Rasa Shastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana,
Govt. Ayurveda Medical College & Hospital,
Kottar, Nagercoil, Kanyakumari,
Tamil Nadu, India – 629 002.
E-mail: himaroshy@gmail.com

Cite This Article

Fathima Shameena, Roshy Joseph C, Parthasarathi PS. Chromotherapy and Ayurveda - A critical review. Ayurpharm Int J Ayur Alli Sci. 2019;8(8):107-113.

INTRODUCTION

The Chromo therapy (color therapy) uses the colors to promote balance and healing in the manas (mind) and the sharira (body) and is one of the most ancient healing therapies used by many races for thousands of years. The nature and humans need the light of the sun to live. The entire universe receives the solar light, which is made up into seven main rays (VIBGYOR) and then circulated to physical and energetic body. If there is an in-balance of these colors in our energetic field, this reflects on the physical body as a mental or physical illness. While screening the Origin of chromatherapy it was found that the ancient Egyptians used specially built solarium rooms with different colored glasses through which the sun would shine through the colored glass onto the patient. In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), each organ is associated with a color. In Qigong healing sounds are also associated with a color, which in turn corresponds to a specific organ and emotion. Some others used different colored silk clothes to filter varying shades of light onto their bodies. However, Chromo therapy is believed to be followed in AYURVEDA indirectly based on the idea that every substance contains the five basic elements of the universe (Panchapanchikaranam). In Ayurvedic science colors are taken into consideration in treating certain diseases.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Application of chromotherapy

Water (solarized water) and oil exposed to sun for specified hours in colored bottles and colored glasses are used as devices of chromo therapy.

Application of chromotherapy in Ayurveda

In Ayurveda Hamsodhakam is used. Hamsodhakam is the water heated by sun rays, cooled by moon rays and detoxified by

agastya star. It is pure and pacifies three doshas; it is neither abishyandhi nor ruksha. It is as good as elixir; it is desirable for all uses in sarat ritu (season).

In Rasashastra bhanupaka is mentioned while processing loha. Bhanupaka means processing the loha by exposing to sunlight for particular time duration. Exposing to sunrays enhances the quality of the final product. There are references of taila processed under sunlight for eg aditya paka

While explaining panchakarma, technique of chroma therapy is adopted. In swedana karma, niragniswedana is explained. Niragniswedana is nothing but aatapasevana.^[1] While explaining the saptachikitsa of lankhana, aatapasevana is mentioned as a treatment modality.^[2] All the Acharyas have mentioned the ways to increase the rakta by intaking same coloured foods and fruits. In switra treatment after the application of oil the particular part is exposed to sunlight.

Chromo(colours) and the Tridosha

Shyama, Aruna, and Krishna are the colours which help to understand the vitiation of vata therefore these colours could be considered as vitiating colours of vata. Peeta and Rakta are the colours which help to understand the vitiation of Pitha. Swetha and Pandu are the colours which help to understand the vitiation of Kapha. So hypothetically the opposite colours will be the alleviating colours. For eg if the skin colour is reddish with burning sensation it is understood pitha dosha is vitiated so lepas (external ointments) like chandana lepa and if in case of burns sarjarasa malahara is used which can be said hypothetically colours indicates and proves to reduce the condition.

Chromo therapy and the vargas^[3]

In Rasashastra for various pharmaceutical procedures like bhavana etc vargas like rakta

varga, peeta varga, shweta varga, krishna varga are used for enhancing the quality of the medicine.

- Rakta varga (group of drugs having red color): Kusumba, Khadhira, Laksha, Manjista, Rakta chandana etc.^[4]
- Peeta varga (group of drugs having yellow color): Kimshuka, Kranikaara, Haridra, etc.^[5]
- Shweta varga (group of drugs having white color): Tagara, Kutaja, Gunja, Jeevantika etc.^[6]
- Krishna varga (group of drugs having black color): Kadali, Kaaravellaka, triphala etc.^[7]

Chromo therapy and the ratnas in Ayurveda

Ratnas (Gem stones) are being used as cosmetics and mainly to focus energies of navagrahas, which help the individuals to be more balanced both health wise and wealth wise. It is thought that gemstones have an unknown and strange ability to focus the universal energies. That is their crystalline structures can collect, focus and even emit electromagnetic energy. All crystals are not alike. The energy within the gem can be tapped into while being worn in the body. It balances all doshas and dhatus.

Manikyam – Ruby (Surya graha), Mukta – Pearl (Chandra graha), Pravala – Coral (Bhuda graha), Tharkshya – Emerald (Mangala graha), Pushparaga – Topaz (Guru graha), Heeraka – Diamond (Sukra graha), Neela Mani – Sapphire (Shani graha), Gomeda – Zircon (Raagu graha), Vidhurakam - Cat's eye (Kedhu graha).^[8]

Chromo therapy and the colors

Chromo therapy utilizes VIBGYOR and certain colors based on their electrical and heating properties as some colors are cool and

soothing while some can excite and heat the blood. Few examples are listed below.

RED

Red color is used to stimulate and increase the action of arterial blood. It gives courage and strength and is related to strength and stability. It is stimulating and energizing therefore helpful for tiredness and lethargy, low Blood Pressure, to boost sluggish circulation etc.

ORANGE

Orange color is an excellent color for creativity. It stimulates the respiration, digestion, thyroid activity; relive muscle cramps and spasms and increases mother's milk.

YELLOW

Yellow color refers to self-respect, intellect and can be helpful with study and where concentration is required. It consists of anti-bacterial and decongestant properties. Stimulates the digestive and the lymphatic system. Used for the conditions of the stomach, liver, intestines, speeds up digestion and assimilation, aids scarred tissues in healing itself.

GREEN

Green refers to self-love and is the calming color and thus useful in times of stress. Green is the color of nature and is used in conditions like stimulation of heart, growth hormone, immunity, rejuvenation, builds up muscles, bones and tissues, cleans and purifies from germs, bacteria and rotting material and has effect on kidneys.

BLUE

Blue refers to self-expression. It is calming, relaxing and healing. It cools down inflammations, fever, high blood pressure,

stops bleeding, reliefs bursting headaches, calms strong emotions like anger, aggression, anti-itching and anti-stress.

INDIGO

Indigo refers to self-responsibility. It is a sedative and helps to open our intuition. It's the color of divine knowledge and the higher mind. It is meant for treating the ailments of the eyes and the ears.

VIOLET

Violet refers to self-knowledge. It is the union with higher self, with spirituality and higher consciousness. It stimulates the spleen and the white blood cells and is used in sleep difficulties and stress.

The other colours are

WHITE

White refers to purity, cleanliness, completion and truth. It gives peace and helps in the fastest way to bring about healing.

PINK

Pink is regarded as feminine color. It symbolizes softness, sweetness and tenderness. Helps in healing grief and sadness, restores youthfulness and brings us in contact with our feelings.

TURQUOISE

Turquoise tones the general system. It awakens newer inventions, techniques, originality and humanism.

The colors used in various diseases are shown in Table 1. Aversion to a color shows that,

Red: active-less, calm, fearful.

Orange: too materialistic, difficulties with sensual enjoyment of life.

Yellow: emotionally disappointing, constant changing activities.

Green: interested in independence, keep a distant relationships.

Blue: aversion of commentary or restriction.

Violet: serious attitude towards life, rejects everything regarding.

White: does not wish to achieve perfection.

Magenta: overwhelming, jealousy, difficulties with exposing deep emotions.

Pink: challenging in expressing softness and tenderness.

Turquoise: looking for solidity and security in society, reluctant to walk new paths.

Brown: instability in health and attitude, against normal boring life.

Grey: demands clarity and no time for political and tactical attitudes.

Black: fear for the unknown, desires to be free from dependency.

Chromo therapy and the diet

The rainbow diet - The rainbow diet is simply a balance of attractive colors in foods we eat, but it plays an important part as to what the body needs in that moment. The color energy of fruits, vegetables, vitamins and minerals all come into play when furnishing our bodies with the proper nourishment. It promotes weight loss without hunger, cravings or feelings of being out of control.

Red whole foods - Red foods are great sources of protein, Vitamins and minerals such as vitamin-C, Beta-carotene and lycopene (anti-oxidants). Iron-formation of red blood cells calcium-bones and teeth. Eg: Strawberries, Raspberries, Cherries, Tomato, Red onions, etc.

Orange whole foods - Orange foods are rich in beta-carotene, vitamin-C, calcium, copper, selenium and zinc. Helps in maintaining good vision, immune system, bone and tooth development and for the healthy skin and hair.

Table 1: Colours and the diseases treated

Sl.No.	Colours	Diseases treated
1	Red	Paralysis, TB, Rheumatism, Piles, Colitis, Crohn’s disease, Frost bite, Urinary problems, Hypotension
2	Orange	Menstrual problems, Pre-menstrual syndrome, Endometriosis, Uterine fibroids, Ovarian cysts, Irritable bowel syndrome, Testicular and Prostatic diseases
3	Yellow	Diabetes, Pancreatitis, Liver diseases, Peptic ulcers, Coeliac disease, Gall stones
4	Green	Heart diseases, Carcinoma, Ulcers, Nervous conditions, Immunity disorders
5	Blue	Thyroid problems, Anorexia nervosa, Asthma, Bronchitis, Tinnitus, Upper GIT problems (ulcers, sore throats, tonsillitis)
6	Indigo	Tension headache, Visual defects, Short sightedness, Glaucoma, Cataracts, Sinus problems
7	Violet	Depressions, Parkinson’s disease, Schizophrenia, Epilepsy, Senile dementia, Psychic disorders, Dizziness

Eg. oranges, apricot, mango, sweet potato, carrot, orange / yellow pepper etc.

Yellow whole foods - Yellow foods generate power and are rich in immune stimulating properties, vitamins minerals such as vitamin-A, B complex, E, sodium, potassium, selenium and chromium. When we lack yellow energy it will lead to poor memory, lack of concentration, tension, irritability, digestive problems and lack of proper absorption of nutrients. Many grains, omega-3 fatty acids fall into this category. It includes lemon, bananas, rice, wheat, eggs, fish oils etc.

Green whole foods - Green whole foods is essential for all day energy, greater focus under stress, sense of well-being, strengthened immune system, fewer food cravings and optimum synergetic balance of essential nutrients for total health. It is rich in anti-oxidants, vitamins, minerals, amino-acids, active enzymes, bioflavonoids, chlorophyll and other phytonutrients necessary for optimal cellular metabolism, repair and protection. Eg. Asparagus, spinach, broccoli, green apple, avocados, green pepper, etc.

Blue, Indigo and Violet whole foods - The pigments found in blue and purple foods are high in anti-cancer properties. Blue foods are good for the voice, organs and glands of the neck, while indigo and violet are good for pineal and pituitary gland.

They also contain water soluble vitamins that strengthen tiny blood vessels which can help swollen feet / ankles, speed up healing of bruises and healthy collagen for fewer wrinkles.

Eg. For blue and indigo foods: Black currents, blue berries, purple cabbage, Vit-E, seaweed and iodine products.

Eg. For violet foods: red grapes, cranberry juice and foods that include sugar and alcohol because of their action on the brain.

Colors and the tridoshas

By colours the vitiated doshas are understood. For eg. Shyama, aruna, krishna colours denote the vitiation of vata dosha; Peeta, rakta colours denote the vitiation of Pitha dosha; Shweta, Pandura colours denote the vitiation of Kapha dosha. (Table 2)

Colors and the Sat chakras

The chakra explained in yoga samhitha, are conceived as focal points where psychic and bodily functions merge and interact with each other and each chakra is related to a colour. (Table 3)

Colors and the Vaastu Sastram (Astrology)

- The different Vaastu elements and the colors they prefer are shown in Table 4.

Table 2: Doshas and vitiated colors

Doshas	Vitiating colors
Vata	Shyama, aruna, krishna
Pitham	Peeta, rakta
Kapha	Shweta, Pandura

Table 3: Chromo therapy and the Sat chakras

Chakra	Location	Related organs	Endocrine gland	Colour
Mooladhara chakra	Base of the spine.	Vertebral column, hips, legs, kidney, bladder.	Adrenal gland	Red
Swadhistaana chakra	Genital organ	Uterus, large intestine, Prostate	Ovaries and testis	Orange
Manipuraka chakra	Umbilical region	Liver, spleen, Stomach, small intestine.	Pancreas	Yellow
Anaahatha chakra	Heart	Heart and breast	Thymus gland	Green
Vishudha chakra	Throat	Throat and lungs	Thyroid gland	Blue
Aanja chakra	Between the eyebrows	Eyes, lower head and sinuses	Pituitary gland	Indigo
Sahasra chakara	Top of the head	Brain	Pineal gland	Violet

Table 4: Colors and the Vaastu Sastram

EARTH	WATER	FIRE	AIR	SPACE
It is predominant in the South-west direction. Colors associated are brown, cinnamon, soil, burnt orange etc.	The direction of this element is North-east. Associated colors are blue, blue-green and other cool shades.	It is predominant in the South-east direction. The combinations of colors that acknowledge fire is recommended in this direction. Eg. The fiery shades like golden orange, golden yellow, red, orange and other fiery hues.	The direction of this element is North-west. As air is an elusive element and is difficult to portray as a single color one could use airy colors like silver, white, silvery-blue, light gray etc in this direction.	Space is expansive so there is no single color linked with it. It is most lively in Center of the home and this area may be painted luminous golden. Gold is a beautiful color that is precious, rare and also highly spiritual.

According to Chinese principle, the five elements (Pancha mahabhuta) that we have are considered by them as five phases or five movements” and they are: EARTH, WOOD, FIRE, METAL, WATER and their respective colors and directions are black and North, yellow and Center, green and East, red and South, white and West respectively.

CONCLUSION

Chromo therapy is a complementary therapy in treating some disorders and illness and may be an effective treatment for promoting relaxation and overall well-being. However, the individuals with serious chronic or acute health problems should not be treated only with the chromo therapy.

Colours have a great role in treatment and colours are given much importance for diagnosis etc. Yet literary and clinical researches should be conducted to prove that chromotherapy is indirectly rooted in Ayurveda

REFERENCES

1. Charaka. Charaka Samhita (Ayurveda Dipika Commentary of Chakrapanidatta). Jadavaji Trikamji Acharya, editor. 1st ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha orientalia; 2011. Verse, 14/64.
2. Vagbhata, Astanga Sangraha, Vol.1. Srikanta Murthy KR, editor. 1st ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Orientalia; 1995. Verse, 14/6.
3. Rasavagbhata. Rasarathna samuchaya. Ambikadatta shastri, editor. 8th ed. Varanasi: Choukambha Amarbharati Prakasha; 1988. Chapter, 10/92.
4. Rasavagbhata. Rasarathna samuchaya. Ambikadatta shastri, editor. 8th ed. Varanasi: Choukambha Amarbharati Prakasha; 1988. Chapter, 10/88.
5. Rasavagbhata. Rasarathna samuchaya. Ambikadatta shastri, editor. 8th ed. Varanasi: Choukambha Amarbharati Prakasha; 1988. Chapter, 10/89.
6. Rasavagbhata. Rasarathna samuchaya. Ambikadatta shastri, editor. 8th ed. Varanasi: Choukambha Amarbharati Prakasha; 1988. Chapter, 10/90.
7. Rasavagbhata. Rasarathna samuchaya. Ambikadatta shastri, editor. 8th ed. Varanasi: Choukambha Amarbharati Prakasha; 1988. Chapter, 10/91.
8. Rasavagbhata. Rasarajthna samuchaya. Ambikadatta shastri, editor. 8th ed. Varanasi: Choukambha Amarbharati Prakasha; 1988. Chapter, 4/6.

Source of Support: Nil

Conflict of Interest: None Declared