

# AYURPATRA

Your monthly health e-newsletter

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Diseases of - Above Shoulder region

We are delighted to present to you our monthly e-feature about Ayurveda and health. Our web site (<http://www.ayurplanet.com/>) has helped millions of people. This newsletter will be loaded with lots of information, events and happenings related to Ayurveda including featured articles, details of very useful herbs, beauty tips and various herbal products and health supplements. The aim of this Newsletter is to serve humanity from health aspect by natural means.

## FEATURED HEALTH ARTICLE: - HYPERACTIVITY IN CHILDREN (Manah Asthairyeta)

**Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)** is a neurobiological condition seen primarily in the school-aged population that affects one's ability to maintain attention. Historically, other terms have been used for this disorder (*minimal brain damage, minimal brain dysfunction, hyperactive, hyperkinetic*), but these terms have changed as knowledge of the problem has increased.

### We should be alert if:

A child does not manage to pay attention to details or makes mistakes due to lack of care when doing homework, housework or other work.

### Who Has ADHD?

ADHD affects 3 to 5 percent of all children. Intelligence is normal or even gifted. Boys are 2 to 3 times more likely to be affected by the disorder than girls. ADHD often continues into adolescence, and sometimes into adulthood. The specific cause of ADHD is still unknown.

ADHD is a diagnosis applied to children and adults who consistently display certain characteristic behaviors over a period of time. The most common behaviors fall into three categories: *inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity*.

**Inattention.** People who are inattentive have a hard time keeping their mind on any one thing and may get bored with a task after only a few minutes. They may give effortless, automatic attention to activities and things they enjoy. But focusing deliberately, consciously attention to

organizing and completing a task or learning something new is difficult.

**Hyperactivity.** People who are hyperactive always seem to be in motion. They can't sit still. They may dash around or talk incessantly. Sitting still through a lesson can be an impossible task. Hyperactive children squirm in their seat or roam around the room. Or they might wiggle their feet, touch everything, or noisily tap their pencil. Hyperactive teens and adults may feel intensely restless. They may be fidgety or they may try to do several things at once, bouncing around from one activity to the next.

**Impulsivity.** People who are overly impulsive seem unable to curb their immediate reactions or think before they act. As a result, they may blurt out inappropriate comments. Or, they may run into the street without looking. Their impulsivity may make it hard for them to wait for things they want or to take their turn in games. They may grab a toy from another child or hit when they're upset.

The person's pattern of behavior is compared against a set of criteria and characteristics of the disorder. These criteria appear in a diagnostic reference book called the DSM (short for the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*).

According to the diagnostic manual, there are three patterns of behavior that indicate ADHD. People with ADHD may show several signs of being consistently inattentive. They may have a pattern of being hyperactive and impulsive. Or they may show all three types of behavior.

According to the DSM, signs of **inattention** include:

- Becoming easily distracted by irrelevant sights and sounds
- Failing to pay attention to details and making careless mistakes
- Rarely following instructions carefully and completely
- Losing or forgetting things like toys, or pencils, books, and tools needed for a task

Some signs of **hyperactivity** and **impulsivity** are:

- Feeling restless, often fidgeting with hands or feet, or squirming
- Running, climbing, or leaving a seat, in situations where sitting or quiet behavior is expected
- Blurting out answers before hearing the whole question
- Having difficulty waiting in line or for a turn

Because everyone shows some of these behaviors at times, the DSM contains very specific guidelines for determining when they indicate ADHD. The behaviors must appear early in life, before age 7, and continue for at least 6 months. In children, they must be more frequent or severe than in others the same age. Above all, the behaviors must create a real handicap in at least two areas of a person's life, such as school, home, work, or social settings. So someone whose work or friendships are not impaired by these behaviors would not be diagnosed with ADHD. Nor would a child who seems overly active at school but functions well elsewhere.

## **Ayurveda:**

Among the five elements, earth is the capacity for stability in the body and mind. Water is the capacity for flow and feeling. Fire is the capacity for discrimination and digestion. Air is the capacity for motion, both physical and the movement of thought. Ether is the capacity for expansiveness and creativity. In the case of hyperactivity and attention deficit disorder, there is excess in the qualities of air and ether and a deficiency in the qualities of earth. Hence, from the perspective of Ayurveda, ADD and ADHD are conditions of increased expansive and creative energies and a decrease in stability. The end result is a person who can go into creative spaces that others cannot enter and therefore thinks outside of the normal perceptive view of the general population. The loss of stability is required to enter the realm they are in. This is increase in the qualities of the elements air and ether a "Vata disturbance". While the condition has its creative advantages, it can also reach a degree of disturbance in which it becomes difficult to function well in the world of common experience.

Patients with Vata disturbances often experience physical conditions such as constipation and gas in the digestive system and dryness through out the body. Hence, a diet that is nourishing, oily and somewhat heavy is important as long as the patient does not become overweight. Overweight patients require a similar diet but with smaller portions. Nourishment is the key to increasing stability.

Spiritually-- Learning is an internal process of self-observation. While children find self-observation difficult, it is important that parents create a supportive environment for self-exploration at the child's pace.

On the mental level and emotional level, Ayurveda approaches the condition through the use of herbs. Ayurveda classifies herbs with a stabilizing effect on the mind as "medhya rasayanas". Along with Vata these herbs act on Sadhaka pitta to promote the intellect and deeply nourish the neurological tissues. They are nervine tonics. Many such as Ashwaganda (*Withania somnifera*) and Shankha Pushpi (*Convolvulus pluricaulis*) have a secondary mild sedative effect. Others like Vacha (*Acorus calamus*) have a mild stimulating effect. The most well known herbs for the condition are Brahmi (*Bacopa monierra*) and Gotu Kola (*Centella asiatica*).

In order to create the creative and expansive energies, Ayurveda recommends consistent routines surrounding bedtime and meals as well as the overall daily routine. Routines are essential to creating stability of the mind. The condition is exacerbated by irregular routines.

University of Illinois researchers studied nature as an ADHD natural treatment. This study showed that children with ADHD benefit from time outdoors enjoying nature with a significant reduction of ADHD symptoms. Researchers also suggested that daily doses of "green time" could supplement medications.

Here are just a few ideas for increasing "green time":

- Play in a green yard or ball field at recess and after school.

- Take after-dinner walks.
- Doing class work or homework outside or at a window with a relatively green view.
- Grow an outdoor garden.
- Bike, ski, sled, inline skate...
- Visit a nature center or zoo.
- Choose a greener route for the walk to school.
- Participate in local nature clean-ups.
- Take up bird watching.
- Star gaze.
- Fishing.

#### **ADHD Is Not Usually Caused by:**

- Too much TV
- Food allergies
- Excess sugar
- Poor home life
- Poor schools

**You may consult our Ayurveda experts through [on line consultation](#) or personally.**

#### **HERB OF THE MONTH: Vacha –Acorus calamus.**

Sweet flag is a grass-like, rhizome forming, perennial that can grow to 2 meters high, resembling an iris. This species inhabits perpetually wet areas like the edges of streams and around ponds and lakes, in ditches and seeps.

Acorus calamus, if taken orally through a funnel, relieves a cough.

Celsus records that the plant was readily available in the markets of India almost 2,000 years ago.

Calamus has been banned by the FDA as a food additive and within the last few years many herbal shops have stopped recommending or dispensing it.

#### **ACTIVE INGREDIENTS:**

The essential oil of rhizomes of Acorus calamus contains two isomeric substances a- and B-asarone.

Solvent extraction of oil from Acorus calamus gave a- and B-asarone, calamol and calamene.

Stabilised oil of A. calamus yields three monocyclic sesquiterpenes shyobunone, epi-shyobunone. Preisocalamendiol, isolated from A.

Calamus, on heating give dihydroxyisocalamendiol.

- Vacha is used in the children with delayed speech. A pinch of calamus root powder mixed with honey is rubbed over the tongue for few weeks.
- It is also used to induce vomiting while Vamana procedure.
- It helps in increasing the memory.

## BEAUTY TIP – FOR HEALTHY HAIR:

- To get rid of dandruff add 2 teaspoon of lemon juice in 50ml.of natural vinegar and massage over the scalp and leave for 30 minutes and wash with mild shampoo.

For personalized beauty related queries mail to: [beauty@ayurplanet.com](mailto:beauty@ayurplanet.com)

## FORTHCOMING EVENT:

**Event Name** : 2<sup>nd</sup> Nutraceutical Summit

**Date(s)** : February 3---5 ;2005

**Venue** : Intercontinental, The Grand;Connaught Place; New Delhi.

**Details** : [www.nutraceuticalsummit.com](http://www.nutraceuticalsummit.com)

**News:** N.E.J.M. (1/25/01); Circulation (1/23/01)

The great thing about opening a clogged artery with angioplasty--and keeping it open with a tiny stent--is that the treatment works 90% of the time. In the short term, at least. After six months the artery closes back up again in 1 patient out of 4. Now scientists have come up with a hot new idea: blast the treated vessel, stent and all, with radiation. Two preliminary studies suggest that the odds a zapped vessel will reclog are reduced as much as 90%.

*Is it good to let doctors' work on human body as experimental animals that too with certifications and approval with drug authorities? Is it a pharmaceutical way of functioning for earning or it's aim is to really help the humanity? Write to: [ayur@ayurplanet.com](mailto:ayur@ayurplanet.com)*

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