



Ayurvedya Adhyan: Global Journal of Ayurveda, Yoga and Integrative Medicine

Received: 03/February/2026

AYUR: March-April, 2026; 2(2):22-24

Accepted: 10/March/2026

Treatment of *Unmada* through *Ayurveda*: A Case Study

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Abstract

Background: *Unmada* is described in *Ayurveda* as a severe disorder affecting the mind (*manas*), intellect (*buddhi*), consciousness (*samjna*), memory (*smriti*), behavior (*bhakti*), and conduct (*achara*). It is often correlated with psychiatric conditions in modern medicine such as psychosis or schizophrenia. This case study explores the Ayurvedic diagnosis and management of *Unmada* through a holistic approach including *Shodhana* (purification), *Shamana* (pacification), and *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* (psychotherapy).

Aims and Objective: To evaluate the efficacy of *Ayurvedic* management in a case of *Unmada*.

Methods: A 28-year-old male patient with psychotic features was treated with *Shodhana*, *Shamana*, and *Satvavajaya Chikitsa*. Assessment was done using clinical parameters and BPRS scale.

Results: Significant improvement was observed in symptoms within 45 days.

Conclusion: *Ayurveda* provides an effective complementary approach in managing *Unmada*.

Keywords: *Unmada*, *Ayurveda*, Psychosis, *Medhya Rasayana*, *Satvavajaya*.

Introduction

Unmada is described in classical *Ayurvedic* texts as a condition caused by vitiation of *Doshas* affecting *Hridaya* and *Manas* [1, 2]. It leads to disturbances in cognition, perception, and behavior.

According to *Charaka Samhita*, *Unmada* results from impairment of mental faculties such as *Buddhi* (intellect) and *Smriti* (memory) [1]. Modern psychiatry correlates it with psychotic disorders like schizophrenia [8].

In *Ayurvedic* classics like the *Charaka Samhita*, *Unmada* is defined as a condition caused by imbalance of *Doshas* (*Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*) affecting mental faculties. Etiological factors include improper diet, stress, trauma, and suppression of natural urges.

Etiological Factors (*Nidana*):

- Improper diet (*Viruddha Ahara*)
- Psychological stress and trauma
- Suppression of natural urges (*Vega Dharana*)
- Excessive indulgence in sensory pleasures
- Sudden emotional shocks (*Agantuja Hetu*)

Classification of *Unmada*

Ayurveda classifies *Unmada* into five types:

- Vataja Unmada* – marked by fear, instability, and incoherent speech
- Pittaja Unmada* – anger, irritability, hallucinations

- Kaphaja Unmada* – lethargy, dullness, withdrawal
- Sannipataja Unmada* – mixed symptoms (complex prognosis)
- Agantuja Unmada* – caused by external factors (trauma, infections, psychological shock)

Ayurvedic management includes *Shodhana*, *Shamana*, and *Satvavajaya*, aiming at both somatic and psychological correction [3, 5].

Materials and Methods

Case Presentation

A 28-year-old male presented with:

- Irrelevant speech (*Asamyak Vacha*)
- Aggression
- Hallucinations
- Insomnia
- Social withdrawal

Duration: 6 months

Past History: No major systemic illness

Mental Status Examination

- **Orientation:** Partially impaired
- **Memory:** Disturbed (*Smriti Bhramsha*)
- **Speech:** Irrelevant (*Asambaddha Vachana*)
- **Thought Content:** Suspiciousness and delusions

Clinical Examination

- **Pulse:** *Vata-Pitta* predominance
- **Mental Status:** Disorientation, impaired judgment
- **Sleep:** Severely disturbed

Diagnosis

Based on classical features:

- **Diagnose:** *Vata-Pittaja Unmada*¹
- **Dominant Dosh:** *Vata-Pitta*
- **Affected Channels:** *Manovaha Srotas*

Treatment Protocol**Shodhana Therapy**^[4] (Bio-purification Therapy)

- *Snehapana* with *Ghrita*
- *Virechana Karma* (Purgation therapy)

These procedures help eliminate vitiated *Doshas*^[2].

Shamana Therapy (Palliative Treatment)

- *Brahmi Ghrita* –10ml twice daily- Improves cognition and memory^[6, 7]
- *Ashwagandha Churna* –5 gm with milk- Adaptogenic and anxiolytic^[3]
- *Saraswatarishta* – 20 ml twice daily- Enhances mental functions^[3]

Satvavajaya Chikitsa

- Cognitive restructuring
- Emotional reassurance
- Relaxation techniques
- Meditation and mindfulness
- Counseling sessions

Satvavajaya helps control the mind and improve psychological stability^[5]

Daivavyapashraya Chikitsa (Spiritual Therapy)

Includes faith-based interventions:

- Mantra chanting
- Prayer and rituals
- Spiritual counseling

These help in stabilizing the psyche and improving emotional resilience.

Recommended (Pathya):

- Light, easily digestible food
- Milk, ghee, and fresh fruits
- Regular sleep routine

Avoid (Apathya):

- Spicy, oily, and processed foods
- Alcohol and stimulants
- Excessive screen time and stress

Assessment Criteria

- Brief Psychiatric Rating Scale (BPRS)
- Behavioral observation
- Sleep quality assessment

Aims and Objective

To evaluate the efficacy of *Ayurvedic* management in a case of *Unmada*.

Results

Significant clinical improvement was observed:

Table 1

Parameter	Before	After
Hallucinations	Severe	Mild
Aggression	High	Minimal
Sleep	Disturbed	Normal
Social interaction	Poor	Improved

- BPRS score reduced
- No adverse drug reactions observed

Discussion

Unmada is a disorder of *Manovaha Srotas* involving both physical and *Manasika* components^[1].

- *Shodhana* removes vitiated *Doshas* and clears channels^[2].
- *Medhya Rasayana* drugs like *Brahmi* improve cognitive function^[6].
- *Ashwagandha* acts as a neuroprotective and anti-stress agent^[7].
- *Satvavajaya* provides psychological balance^[5].
- *Ghrita* acted as a neuroprotective agent

Modern antipsychotics are effective but often associated with adverse effects⁸, whereas *Ayurveda* provides a holistic and safer alternative. *Ayurvedic* management of *Unmada* emphasizes a holistic biopsychospiritual approach. Unlike symptomatic treatment, it addresses root causes through *Dosha* balance, mental strengthening, and lifestyle correction. Integration with modern psychiatric care may enhance outcomes, especially in chronic cases.

Conclusion

This case study demonstrates that *Ayurvedic* management significantly improves symptoms of *Unmada*. A combined approach of *Shodhana*, *Shamana*, and *Satvavajaya* is effective and safe. This case demonstrates that *Ayurvedic* interventions can play a significant role in managing *Unmada*, particularly when individualized treatment protocols are followed. Further clinical studies are needed to validate efficacy on a larger scale.

Further clinical trials are needed to validate these findings.

Acknowledgment

The authors acknowledge the support of the institution and the patient for cooperation.

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