

Spiritual Health: Need a due Importance in Medical Science

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1. Background

Health is defined by various authors in various ways. One describes health as a condition of being sound in body, mind and spirit and specially freedom from physical disease and pain (Webchster). Other describes health as a state of relative equilibrium of body form and functions which result from its successful dynamic adjustment to forces tending to disturb it (Perkins). And WHO describes "Health is a state of physical, mental and social wellbeing not merely an absence of diseases or infirmity so as to deal with socially and economically productive life"¹ Health is many directional, even WHO also considered three dimensions of health namely physical, mental and social. But as the knowledge and time grows many more other dimensions of health like spiritual, cultural, political, vocational etc are also having its importance.^{2,3} One has to enjoy health in its all dimensions perfectly as per perfect positive health but it seems to be mirage as everything in our life is subjected to change.⁴ Holistic concept of health is to recognize and enjoy all dimensions of health for overall wellbeing.¹

Health is a responsibility of a Nation, State and even more of individual oneself. It should be cared at each level of community organizations. An ancient saying is "Health is Wealth" and Hindu mythology says "*Pahalo Sukh Nirogi Kaya*" i.e. first pleasure is good health. So at every level there are health regulatory bodies, which are responsible for good health of their individuals.

"Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for health and wellbeing of oneself" as per article 25 of International Universal Declaration Document.⁵ So every individual has right to be healthy and enjoy health on its all dimensions i.e. enjoy sound social facet, cultural facet, political facet, vocational facet with sound mind, body and spirit.

2. Requirement for Spiritual Health

But by enlarge in medical science health has limited to just physical dimension of health and a bit of mental and social health. Even Medical Council of India (MCI)⁶ did not gave due weightage to spiritual health which can be seen in subjects included in MBBS curriculum i.e. Anatomy, Physiology, Biochemistry, Pathology, Pharmacology, Forensic Medicine, Community Medicine, Ophthalmology, ENT, Medicine Surgery and Gynaecology. All these subjects are related to physical body by enlarge and little bit to mental and social health.

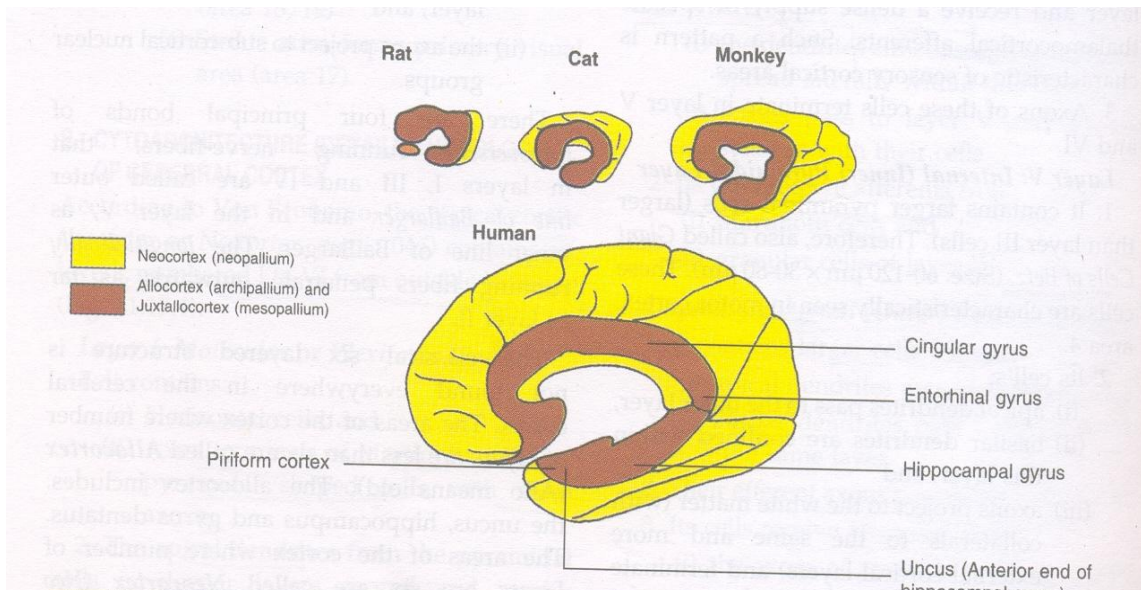
Many of the research studies were conducted on physical health, a very few rather countable studies were done on issues related to spiritual health.

Most of the authors agree with the fact that spiritual health is philosophy of the health as other dimensions of health can be enjoyed with sound spirit only. So first of all one should care for one's spiritual health.

There are many changes in the environment due to development of civilization but if our body is not able to cope with these changes then there will be disturbance in equilibrium between inside and outside environment of physical body. So there is need to make changes in inside environment of body as per the changes occurring outside environment of body. As inside body environment depend upon status of various hormones secreted which intern depends upon functions of brain.⁷ So, along with physical body, brain functions is to be understood. Then and when only the needed changes can be made to capable of withholding environmental changes due to development. So nowadays it becomes much more important.

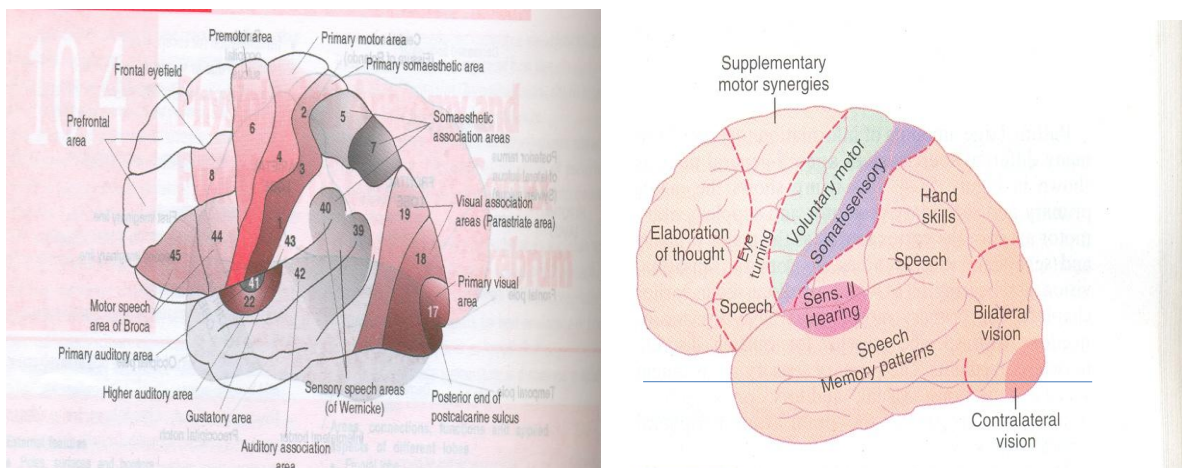
Have you thought about the life style diseases? Why these diseases occur in human being not in our pet animals or any other animal kingdom? They do not have these diseases as they do not have life style stresses in their life. But more developed brain of human being can act in both directions.

Figure 1: Neocortex in Various Species of Mammalians



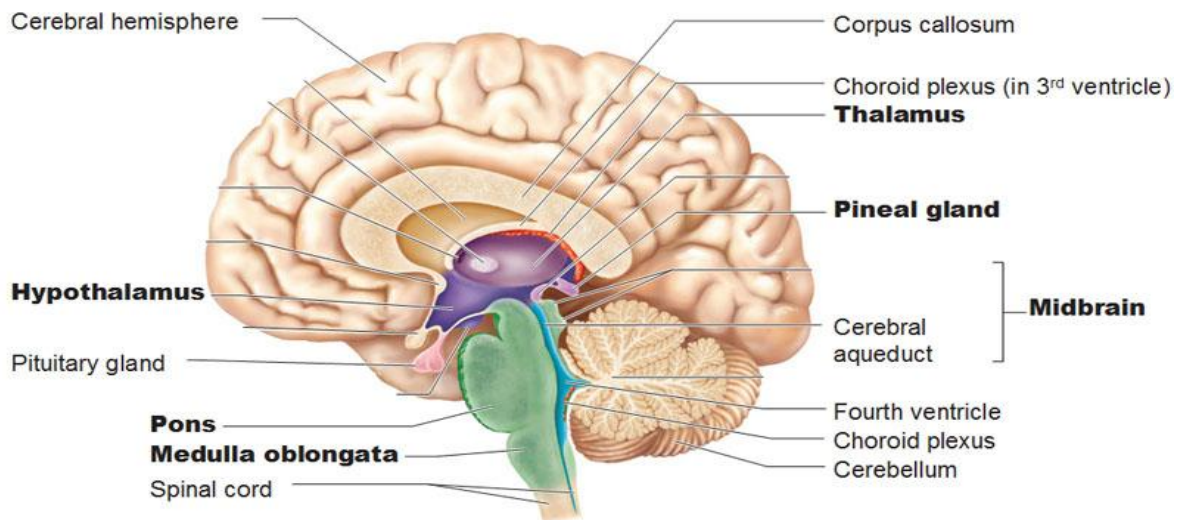
If, brain of human being and other animal kingdom is compared (Figure 1), it is found that Neocortex is significantly very large in human than in any other animal kingdom, which is responsible for analysing logically and getting inferences after perceiving sensations. This part of brain provides unique perception of individuals in same situation. And according to the perception of person various hormones released which may further affect on mental and physical health of individuals. So to enjoy health one should have proper perceptions from facts analysed in brain.

Figure 2: Anatomic Parts of Human Brain Figure 3: Physiologic Parts of Human Brain



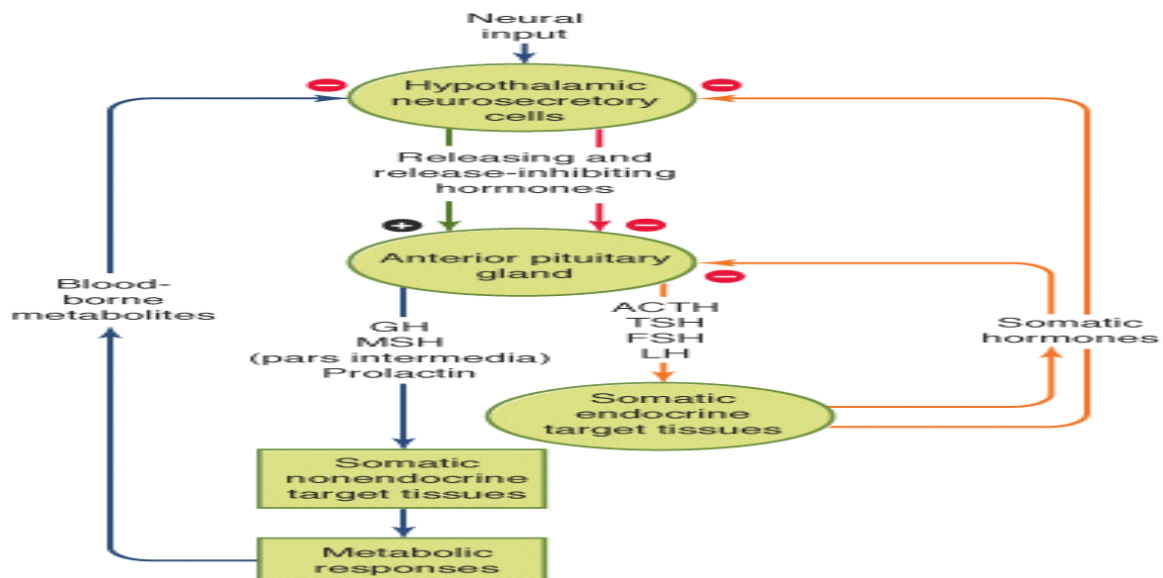
Another major difference between brains of human being and other animal kingdom is that of broad frontal and prefrontal areas which are engaged with elaboration of thoughts and subconscious mind. (Figure 2 & 3) This subconscious mind can be made conscious and super conscious with various methods.⁷ So there is a ability to increase power on logical analysis by making conscious the unconscious mind.

Figure 4: Pituitary and Pineal Glands in Human Brain



Another uniquely of human brain is pineal gland which is able to receive perceptions from logical analysis. This is a master gland and is centre for psychic awareness in human mind. It can affect every system of body and is responsible for expansion and control of psychic awareness, consciousness and divinity experiences.⁷ And according one’s own perception it is responsible for secretion of various hormones responsible for inside body environment.

Figure 5: Hormones Secretions Regulation



Nowadays it becomes much more important as we are going towards wordy development. This development has two way actions. In one way it’s making our life comfortable with invention of technology in other hand it is creating complex situations to understand. So complexity of situation is a side effect of development. So, nowadays one needs more logical analytic mind with proper perception of situations. That’s why, there is more need to strengthen spiritual health to deal with this complexity and enjoy health in true sense.

3. Difficulty and Solutions:

Difficulty in entering this era of spiritual health is that one cannot see one's spirit as one can see one's physical body. Almost same can be narrated for mind, but it is fact that mind control over body. So this is the law of nature that more the subtle more is powerful. So in this sense spirit is more powerful than mind also.

But to improve the status one needs to measure the present status and it becomes very difficult to assess the domain which cannot be seen by observation. There are the other ways to assess such domains.

For example to assess mind one cannot see mind but status of mind can be seen by its functions in the form of various types of behaviors. So in order to assess mental health of an individual various types of tools were developed based on various type of one's behavior.

Likewise, various attempts were made by many authors⁸⁻¹⁰ to develop tools to assess spiritual health and these tools are well documents. So they can be used to assess and/or to compare the spiritual health of individuals. These tools can be used to find out the effect of any intervention on spiritual health.

4. Future Aspect:

With the previous discussion it is well established that nowadays with the development of mankind one should be much more careful about their spiritual health because:-

- i. It is the base of other dimensions of health
- ii. It is required to enjoy health in true sense
- iii. It is required to deal with complexity of situations in changing developing world.
- iv. It is required for proper logical analysis and perception from these analyses to better manage the day to day situations, so civilization can withstand the change and can remain stable.

A recent trend¹¹ in health care is the self care i.e. health generating activities undertaken by the person themselves.¹² And improving spiritual health is a very good example of taking health care by themselves. So now there is urgent need to encourage researches in the field of spiritual health and its better management.

CONCLUSIONS

Spiritual health care should be given proper weightage along with physical, mental, social etc dimensions of health as it is the base of every dimension of health. Today in the era of complexity of day to day situation of fast growing world it becomes much more important to deal with complexity of changing world. There are very few studies regarding issues of spiritual health, so these studies should be encouraged.

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