

# Dementia Treatment using Traditional Medication

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## Editorial

Dementia is the most common cause of mental and physical incapacity. Vascular dementia (VaD), which accounts for 10–15 percent of the dementia population, is the second most frequent cause of dementia after Alzheimer's disease (AD). There are currently no approved pharmaceutical alternatives for VaD, and typical anti-AD therapy provides very limited, short-term relief of VaD symptoms. Herbal remedies have been used for centuries to treat dementia-like symptoms and, due to their multicomponent and multi-target approach, may give effective therapy for VaD. This review is intended to provide an up-to-date assessment of the present state of herbal medicine research for the treatment of VaD or dementia, with a focus on Chinese herbal therapy [1].

Ayurvedic medicine is a customised system of traditional medicine that originated in India and the Indian subcontinent. It is based on a holistic approach to treatment that develops and maintains balance in several elements of human life: the body, mind, and soul. Popular Ayurvedic medicinal plants and formulations used to slow brain ageing and improve memory include Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*), Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*), Brahmi (*Bacopa monnieri*), Shankhpushpi (*Convolvulus pluricaulis*, *Evolvulus alsinoides*, and other species), gotu kola (*Centella asiatica*), and guggulu (*Commiphora mukul* and related species (*Acorus calamus*). Dementia is a phenomenon characterised by gradual impairments in memory and learning ability, cognitive skills, behaviour, daily living tasks, and quality of life. There are around 47.5 million people worldwide who have dementia, and 7.7 million new cases are added to the dementia pool each year. In Australia, there are about 353,800 people living with dementia, with the number expected to rise to 900,000 by 2050. Dementia has surpassed cerebrovascular disease and lung cancer to become Australia's second biggest cause of death. There are many different forms of dementia, with vascular dementia (VaD) being the second most common after Alzheimer's disease (AD). Parkinson's disease, dementia with Lewy bodies, frontotemporal dementia, and Huntington's disease are all frequent types of dementia [2].

Ayurvedic medicine is a customised system of traditional medicine that originated in India and the Indian subcontinent. It is based on a holistic approach to treatment that develops and maintains balance in several elements of human life: the body, mind, and soul. Ayurveda, like the other four wisdom manuals (Vedas) in ancient India, dates back to the Indus Valley civilization (about 3000 B.C.) and has been passed down through decades of oral tradition. The Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda, and Atharvaveda were written during the 12th and 7th centuries B.C. Ayurvedic medicine offers descriptions of about 5000 different diseases' signs and symptoms, as well

as 700 plants and 6,000 formulas to treat them. The primary symptom of VaD is cognitive impairment (particularly executive dysfunction), which can also induce mood and behaviour disturbances and affect quality of life. VaD is classified as large vessel dementia (multiple infarcts or multi-infarct dementia), small vessel dementia (small vessel disease and microinfarction), strategic infarct dementia, hypoperfusive dementia, dementia related to angiopathies (hypertension, amyloid), haemorrhagic dementia, and familial vascular dementia. The use of alternative medications in dementia therapy, such as plant extracts, differs according to cultural customs. Ayurvedic medicinal herbs influence the neuroendocrine and immunological systems and are high in antioxidants and anti-inflammatory substances [3].

In the absence of effective pharmaceutical treatments, many patients with VaD or dementia, as well as their caregivers, resort to complementary medicine. Herbal medicine, acupuncture, nutraceuticals, yoga, tai chi, and music therapy are prominent alternative medicine interventions for VaD and dementia, as well as dementia risk reduction. Herbal therapy was used to promote memory function and increase lifespan more than 2000 years ago in ancient China, where herbal medicines were utilised to boost memory function and increase longevity. There is preliminary experimental and clinical data to support the use of herbal medications for VaD, either as single herbal treatments or as complex herbal formulations [4,5].

## Conflict of Interest

None.

## References

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