

Mantra Chanting in the Management of Menopausal Symptoms: A Systematic Review and Integrative Ayurvedic Perspective

Dr.Shilpa Yerme
PhD Scholar,Kriya Sharir
Dr.D.Y.Patil College of Ayurved and Research Centre, Pimpri.Pune
Dr.D.Y.Patil Vidyapeeth, Deemed to be University, Pimpri 18,
Pune.

Orcid Id <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3947-7397>

Corresponding author
Dr.Sheetal U Roman
Professor and H.O.D Kriya Sharir
Dr.D.Y.Patil College of Ayurved and Research Centre, Dr.D.Y.Patil Vidyapeeth, Deemed to be
University, Pimpri Pune

Orcid id <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2223-1139>

Abstract

This systematic review evaluates the evidence published between 2015 and 2025 on the role of mantra chanting and related sound-based meditative practices in the management of menopausal symptoms. Menopause is associated with vasomotor instability, psychological disturbances, sleep impairment, and reduced quality of life ¹. Growing concerns regarding long-term hormone therapy have increased interest in complementary approaches ². A structured search of peer-reviewed databases identified studies examining mantra-based meditation, sound vibration practices, and chant-centered interventions in midlife women or in symptom clusters relevant to menopause (stress, anxiety, sleep disturbance, autonomic dysregulation). Following PRISMA guidelines, studies were screened, evaluated for quality, and synthesized narratively. Evidence suggests beneficial effects on perceived stress, anxiety, depressive symptoms, sleep quality, and autonomic balance ³. However, menopause-specific randomized controlled trials remain limited. Further high-quality trials with standardized protocols are required to establish clinical recommendations.

Keywords: menopause, mantra chanting, meditation, autonomic regulation, stress reduction, systematic review

Introduction

Menopause is a universal biological transition characterized by permanent cessation of menstruation due to ovarian follicular depletion and declining estrogen levels. The transition typically occurs between 45 and 55 years of age and is accompanied by vasomotor symptoms, sleep disturbances, mood fluctuations, anxiety, cognitive complaints, and metabolic alterations. While hormone replacement therapy remains effective for many women, safety concerns and

contraindications have prompted interest in non-pharmacological interventions ¹. Complementary mind–body approaches such as yoga, meditation, breathing practices, and mantra chanting are increasingly integrated into women’s health programs ².

Mantra chanting involves rhythmic repetition of structured sounds combined with controlled breathing and focused attention. Neurophysiological models suggest potential effects on autonomic regulation, hypothalamic–pituitary–adrenal axis modulation, and emotional processing networks ^{4,5}. Because stress exacerbates menopausal symptoms, interventions targeting stress reactivity may offer therapeutic value. This systematic review synthesizes evidence from 2014–2025 evaluating mantra chanting and related sound-based practices in menopausal populations or in symptom domains relevant to menopause ⁶.

Menopause (Rajonivritti) in Classical Ayurveda

Although the term “menopause” is not explicitly mentioned in classical Ayurvedic texts, the phenomenon of Rajonivritti (cessation of menstruation) is comprehended within the broader context of Jara (aging) and the gradual depletion of Dhatus (body tissues).

Vayo yathā-sthūla-bhedena trividham bālaṃ, madhyam, jīrṇam iti || (C.S. Vi. 8/122)

Womens lifespan is divided into three stages ⁷.

Balyvstha – childhood

Madhyamawastha – adult age

Vrddhawastha – old age

Menopause occurs before beginning of old age (vrddhawastha), in ayurveda old age starts after sixty or seventy years and is dominated by vata dosha.

Menopause corresponds to:

- Decline of Artava Dhatu
- Dominance of Vata Dosha in later life
- Progressive Dhatu Kshaya
- Reduction in Ojas

The age-wise dominance of doshas is described as:

**Bale vivardhate śleṣmā, madhyame pittam eva tu |
bhuyiṣṭham vardhate vāyur vṛddhe tad vikṣya yojayet || (Su. Sū. 35/38)**

According to Ayurveda, Kapha predominates during childhood, Pitta during middle age, and Vata during old age as shown in Table number 1 ⁸.

Table No 1. Dosha predominance according to age

Age Group	Dosha Predominance	Key Features
Childhood	Kapha predominance	Growth, development, stability, and tissue building are dominant
Middle age	Pitta predominance	Metabolism, digestion, energy, and productivity are at their peak
Old age	Vata predominance	Degeneration, dryness, weakness, and decline in body functions occur

Thus, menopausal transition represents a physiological shift from Pitta predominance toward Vata predominance.

Tad varṣād dvādaśād ūrdhva yāti pañcāśataḥ kṣayam || (Su. Sū. 14/6)

Menstruation starts at 12 and ends around 50 years ⁹.

Dosha-Based Symptom Interpretation

Vata Aggravated menopause

Vata is described as:

Tatra rukṣo laghuḥ śītaḥ kharaḥ sukṣmaś calo'nilaḥ || (A.H. Sū. 1/10)

Properties of vata - mobile, light, cold, dry, subtle, rough ¹⁰.

Menopausal symptoms correlating with Vata:

- Anxiety
- Insomnia
- Vaginal dryness
- Joint pain
- Palpitations
- Emotional instability

Unveiling the Multifaceted Impact of Vata on Menopause

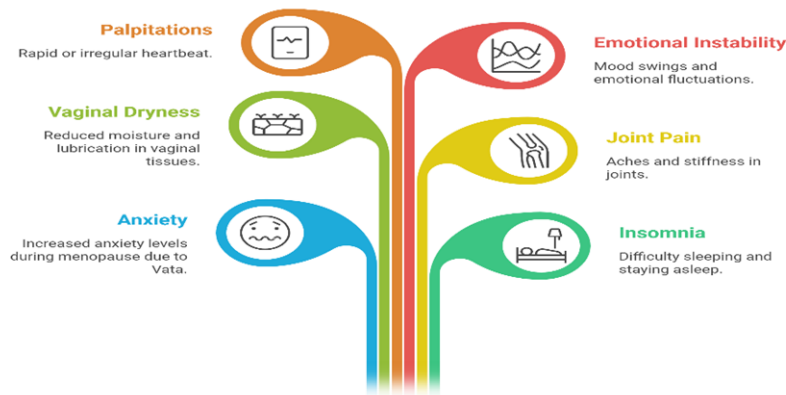


Figure 1.

Pitta Aggravated menopause

Pittaṃ sasneha-tīkṣṇoṣṇa laghu visra sara dravam || (A.H. Sū. 1/11)

Pitta properties: Hot, sharp, light, slightly unctuous, fluid ¹¹.

Menopausal Pitta features:

- Hot flashes
- Night sweats
- Irritability
- Excessive sweating

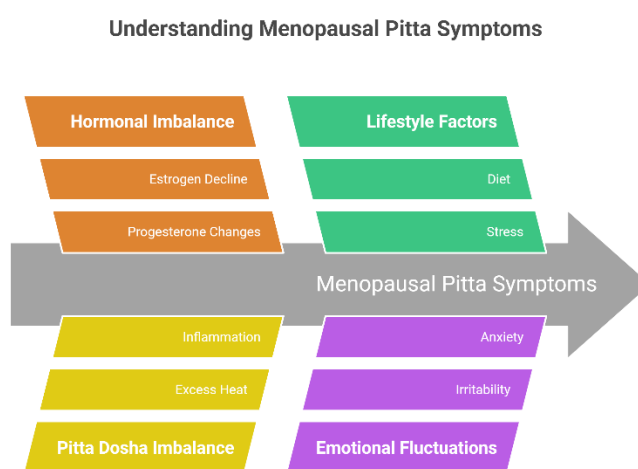


Figure 2

Thus, menopause can be interpreted as Vata–Pitta imbalance superimposed on Dhatu depletion.

Mantra Chanting in Classics

Atharvaveda has 20 chapter (kand), 760 sukta, and 5977 Mantra ¹². Mantra chikitsa is mentioned for different diseases and purposes ¹².

In Ayurveda Acharya Charaka has mentioned mantra chanting in sadvritta ¹³.

Ayurveda recognizes Manas (mind) as a distinct entity governed by Triguna (Sattva, Rajas, Tamas).

Rajas tamaś ca manaso dvau ca doṣāv udāhṛtau || (A.H. Sū. 1/21)

Psychological disturbances arise from Rajas and Tamas aggravation¹⁴. Menopausal anxiety and mood instability reflect:

- Increased Rajas (agitation)
- Increased Vata
- Sadhaka Pitta imbalance

Mantra chanting enhances Sattva Guna, thereby restoring mental equilibrium.

Prana Vata Regulation

Prana Vata is described as governing:

- Respiration
- Mental processing
- Heart function
- Cognitive clarity

Prāṇo'tra mūrdhagaḥ | ūraḥ kaṇṭha-carō buddhi-hṛdayendriya-citta-dhṛk | ṣṭhivana-kṣavathu-udgāra-niśvāsa-annapraveśa-kṛt || (A.H. Sū. 12/4)

Prana resides in the head and heart and controls higher functions ¹⁵.

Table No. 2 Prana Vayu Functions

Aspect	Description
Primary Location	Head region
Sites of Movement	Chest and throat
Governing Functions	Intellect (Buddhi), heart (Hridaya), senses (Indriya), and mind (Chitta)
Main Functions	Spitting (salivation), sneezing, belching
Respiratory Function	Inspiration (breathing in)
Digestive Function	Intake of food (swallowing)

Rhythmic chanting with controlled breathing directly stabilizes Prana Vata, which correlates with modern findings of improved heart rate variability and parasympathetic dominance¹⁵.

Sadhaka Pitta and Emotional Regulation

Buddhi-medhābhīmānādayo'rabhipretārtha-sādhanāt || (A.H. Sū. 12/13)

Sadhaka Pitta, located in the Hridaya (heart), governs ¹⁶:

- Intellect
- Emotions
- Stress response

Disturbance in Sadhaka Pitta may manifest as irritability and mood swings during menopause.

Chanting induces emotional cooling and mental clarity, indicating Pitta pacification.

Ojas Preservation

Ojas is described as:

Ojas tu tejo dhātūnām śukrāntānām param smṛtam | hṛdyastham api vyāpi deha-sthiti-nibandhanam || (A.H. Sū. 11/37)

Ojas is regarded as the vital essence responsible for strength, vitality, and immunity in the body ¹⁷. Stress and excessive Vata aggravation lead to Ojas depletion, contributing to fatigue and vulnerability. Since mantra chanting reduces stress physiology (as demonstrated in modern HRV and cortisol studies), it may indirectly support Ojas preservation.

Manovaha Srotas and Mental Health

Atīndriyāṇāṃ punaḥ sattvādīnāṃ kevalaṃ cetanāvac charīram ayanabhūtam adhiṣṭhānabhūtaṃ ca || (C.S. Vi. 5/5–7)

The channels of the mind (Manovaha Srotas) circulates throughout body¹⁸.

Menopausal psychological symptoms reflect disturbance in these channels. Chanting harmonizes mental vibrations (Nada), restoring flow within Manovaha Srotas.

Sound (Nada) and Therapeutic Vibration

Vāy-v-ākāśa-dhātubhyāṃ vāyuh || (A.S. Sū. 20/1)

Ayurveda recognizes Shabda (sound) as a Tanmatra associated with Akasha Mahabhuta, the primary element of Vata¹⁹.

Because menopause is Vata-dominant, sound-based therapy acts directly at the elemental level.

The repetitive chanting of “Om” creates cranial resonance, which in contemporary neurophysiological studies correlates with limbic deactivation, increased vagal tone, and reduced cortisol levels^{20–22}. This aligns with the Ayurvedic principle of Prana harmonization and Vata pacification²³.

Integrative Conceptual Model of Mantra Chanting in Menopausal Symptom Management

Rajonivritti (Menopause)

↓

Aging Process (Jara) → Dhatu Kshaya (Tissue Depletion)²⁴

↓

Dosha Dynamics → Vata predominance with associated Pitta imbalance²³

↓

Physiological Dysregulation

- Prana Vata instability (neuro-autonomic imbalance)²³
- Sadhaka Pitta aggravation (emotional disturbance)²³

↓

Pathophysiological Manifestations

- Psychological: anxiety, irritability, mood swings²⁵
- Somatic: insomnia, fatigue, joint pain²⁶
- Vasomotor: hot flashes, night sweats²⁷

↓

Intervention: Mantra Chanting (Nada–Prana Modulation Therapy)

- Rhythmic sound vibration (Nada)
- Regulated breathing (Pranayamic effect)
- Focused attention (Dharana)²⁸

↓

Mechanistic Effects

- Autonomic nervous system regulation (↑ parasympathetic activity)²⁹
- HPA axis modulation (↓ cortisol)²¹
- Limbic system stabilization²⁰

↓

Ayurvedic Therapeutic Effects

- Vata Shamana (Prana Vata stabilization)²³
- Pitta Shamana (Sadhaka Pitta balance)²³
- Sattva Guna enhancement ²³
- Ojas preservation ²³

↓

Outcome

- Reduction in menopausal symptoms & improved quality of life ²⁵

Materials and Methods

This study was conducted as a systematic review following PRISMA guidelines ³⁰.

Results

Study Selection

- Total records identified: ~260
- After duplicates removed: ~210
- Full-text assessed: ~52
- Studies included: 22

Key Findings

1. Psychological Outcomes

Significant reduction in anxiety, depression, and perceived stress ²⁶.

2. Sleep Quality

Improvement in sleep latency, duration, and efficiency ³¹.

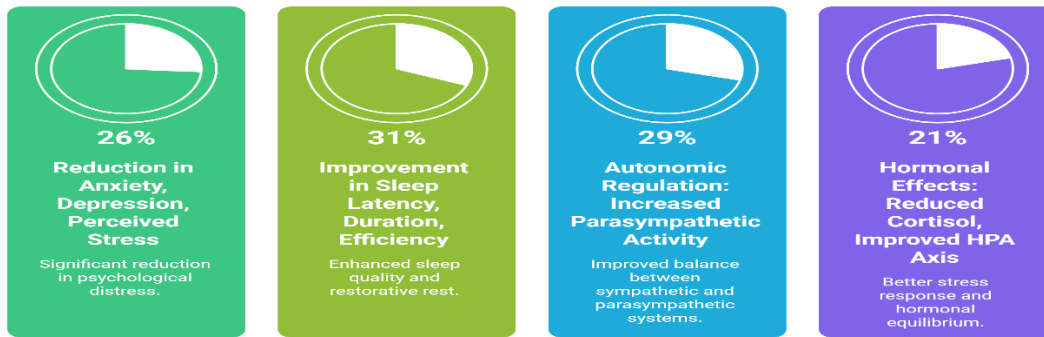
3. Autonomic Regulation

- Increased parasympathetic activity
- Improved HRV
- Reduced sympathetic overactivity ²⁹

4. Hormonal Effects

- Reduced cortisol
- Improved HPA axis modulation ²¹

Key Findings: Psychological, Sleep, Autonomic, and Hormonal Effects



The intervention shows significant positive impacts across psychological, sleep, autonomic, and hormonal domains.

Figure 3

Discussion

The present review highlights the integrative effects of chanting practices from both biomedical and Ayurvedic perspectives, suggesting a multidimensional mechanism underlying its therapeutic potential. From a biomedical standpoint, chanting has been shown to modulate autonomic nervous system activity by promoting parasympathetic dominance²⁹, which is associated with increased vagal tone and a relaxation response. This shift plays a crucial role in counteracting sympathetic overactivity, thereby contributing to cardiovascular stability and mental calmness. Furthermore, chanting has been reported to reduce stress reactivity²¹, likely through downregulation of the hypothalamic–pituitary–adrenal (HPA) axis and subsequent reduction in stress hormone levels such as cortisol. In addition, neuroimaging and neurophysiological evidence suggest that chanting enhances emotional regulation via limbic pathways²⁰, influencing key brain regions involved in emotional processing, including the amygdala and hippocampus, thus promoting psychological resilience and emotional balance.

From an Ayurvedic perspective, these effects can be interpreted through the lens of Dosha and Manasika Bhava regulation. Chanting is believed to pacify Vata Dosha, particularly by mitigating its properties such as instability and dryness, which are often associated with anxiety and mental instability. It also plays a vital role in stabilizing Prana Vata, which governs higher mental functions including cognition, respiration, and sensory integration, thereby enhancing clarity of thought and concentration. Additionally, chanting contributes to the balance of Sadhaka Pitta, which is responsible for intellect, emotions, and decision-making processes, thus improving emotional regulation and cognitive function. Importantly, chanting has been described to enhance Sattva Guna²³, the quality of purity and harmony in the mind, leading to improved mental health, inner peace, and overall well-being. Thus, the convergence of modern neurophysiological insights with classical Ayurvedic principles provides a strong conceptual framework supporting the role of chanting as a holistic therapeutic modality.

Conclusion

Mantra chanting represents a promising and holistic integrative intervention for the management of menopausal symptoms. The transition of menopause is characterized by complex neuroendocrine, psychological, and metabolic changes, which can be effectively understood through both Ayurvedic and modern biomedical perspectives. From an Ayurvedic standpoint, menopause (Rajonivritti) is associated with progressive Dhatu kṣhaya, Vata predominance, and fluctuations in Agni and Manasika bhāva, leading to symptoms such as anxiety, insomnia, irritability, and fatigue.

Mantra chanting, as a form of Nāda-based therapy, exerts a profound influence on Prāṇa Vāyu, stabilizes Manas, enhances Sattva guṇa, and contributes to the preservation of Ojas, thereby improving overall (mental and physical balance). The rhythmic and repetitive nature of chanting facilitates a meditative state, promoting mental calmness and emotional resilience.

From a modern neurophysiological perspective, mantra chanting has been associated with modulation of the limbic system, enhancement of parasympathetic (vagal) activity, reduction in cortisol levels, and improvement in autonomic balance. These effects collectively contribute to the alleviation of common menopausal symptoms such as hot flashes, mood disturbances, sleep disorders, and stress-related manifestations.

The convergence of Ayurvedic principles—Prāṇa, Sattva, and Ojas—with contemporary scientific findings provides a robust conceptual framework for understanding the therapeutic potential of mantra chanting. It bridges the gap between traditional wisdom and modern evidence-based medicine, highlighting its role as a safe, non-invasive, and cost-effective intervention.

Furthermore, incorporating mantra chanting into daily routine (Dinacharya) can enhance quality of life, promote emotional stability, and support long-term well-being in menopausal women. However, further well-designed clinical studies are warranted to establish standardized protocols, quantify outcomes, and strengthen the evidence base for its integration into mainstream menopausal care^{23, 29}.

Conflict of Interest (COI) - The authors declare no conflict of interest

Funding resources - No funding was received for this study.

References

1. World Health Organization. Research on the menopause in the 1990s. Geneva: WHO; 1996.
2. North American Menopause. 2022 hormone therapy position statement. *Menopause*. 2022;29(7):767–794.
3. Madhav Goyal, Singh S, Sibinga EMS, et al. Meditation programs for psychological stress and well-being: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *JAMA Intern Med*. 2014;174(3):357–368.
4. B G Kalyani, Venkatasubramanian G, Arasappa R, et al. Neurohemodynamic correlates of ‘OM’ chanting. *Int J Yoga*. 2011;4(1):3–6.

5. Bernardi L, Sleight P, Bandinelli G, et al. Effect of rosary prayer and yoga mantras on autonomic cardiovascular rhythms. *BMJ*. 2001; 323(7327):1446-1449..
6. Stefan G Hofmann, Sawyer AT, Witt AA, Oh D. The effect of mindfulness-based therapy on anxiety and depression. *J Consult Clin Psychol*. 2010;78(2):169–183.
7. Vd.Harish Chandra Singh Kushwaha , Charaka Samhita , Ayurveda Dipikas Ayusi Hindi Commentary First Part Chaumkhamba Orientalia Varanasi,Vimansthan 8 sholaka 8/122 page 697
8. Dr.Ambikadatta Shastri Sushruta Samhita Ayurvedatvadipika – Hindi vyakhya Pratham Bhaga Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan 13th Edition, Varanasi 221001 Sutrasthan ,sholaka 35/38 page 135
9. Dr.Ambikadatta Shastri Sushruta Samhita Ayurvedatvadipika – Hindi vyakhya Pratham Bhaga Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan 13th Edition, Varanasi 221001 Sutrasthan ,sholaka 14/6 page 48
10. Dr.Bramhanand Tripathi Ashtanghridyam ,Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratishtan ,Delhi, Sanskaran - 2007 sutrasthan 1/10 page 10
11. Dr.Bramhanand Tripathi Ashtanghridyam ,Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratishtan ,Delhi, Sanskaran - 2007 sutrasthan 1/11 page 10
12. Sri Ram Sharma Acharya , Atharveda,Brahmavarch Publication Shantikunj Haridwar,Uttarakhand Reprint 2002,fifth Edition Kand1,Sukta -12,Sholak 1,2,3,4 Page 9-10
13. Vd.Harish Chandra Singh Kushwaha , Charaka Samhita , Ayurveda Dipikas Ayusi Hindi Commentary First Part Chaumkhamba Orientalia Varanasi,Sutrasthan 8/28 page 136
14. Dr.Bramhanand Tripathi Ashtanghridyam ,Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratishtan ,Delhi, Sanskaran - 2007 Sutrasthan 1/21 page 16
15. Dr.Bramhanand Tripathi Ashtanghridyam ,Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratishtan ,Delhi, Sanskaran - 2007 Sutrasthan 12/4 page 171
16. Dr.Bramhanand Tripathi Ashtanghridyam ,Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratishtan ,Delhi, Sanskaran - 2007 Sutrasthan 12/13 page 172
17. Dr.Bramhanand Tripathi Ashtanghridyam ,Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratishtan ,Delhi, Sanskaran - 2007 Sutrasthan 11/37 page 167
18. Vd.Harish Chandra Singh Kushwaha , Charaka Samhita , Ayurveda Dipikas Ayusi Hindi Commentary First Part Chaumkhamba Orientalia Varanasi,Vimansthan 5/5-6-7 page 630
- 19.Dr.Subhash Ranade Ashtangsangrah Sutrasthan Anmol Prakashan Pune , 3rd Edition Sutrasthan 20/1 Page 268
20. Kalyani BG, Venkatasubramanian G, Arasappa R, et al. Neurohemodynamic correlates of ‘OM’ chanting: a pilot fMRI study. *Int J Yoga*. 2011;4(1):3-6.
21. Bernardi L, Sleight P, Bandinelli G, et al. Effect of rosary prayer and yoga mantras on autonomic cardiovascular rhythms. *BMJ*. 2001;323:1446–9.
22. Telles S, Nagarathna R, Nagendra HR. Autonomic changes during OM meditation. *Indian J Physiol Pharmacol*. 1995;39(4):418–20.
23. Vagbhatta. Ashtanga Hridaya, Sutrasthana 1/7–9.
24. Charaka. Charaka Samhita, Sharirasthana 1/115.

25. Freeman EW. Associations of depression with menopause. *Menopause*. 2010;17(4):823–7.
26. Goyal M, Singh S, Sibinga EMS, et al. Meditation programs for psychological stress. *JAMA Intern Med*. 2014;174(3):357–68.
27. Thurston RC, Joffe H. Vasomotor symptoms and menopause. *Endocr Rev*. 2011;32(2):157–77.
28. Saraswati S. *Nada Yoga*. Bihar School of Yoga; 2007.
29. Brown RP, Gerbarg PL. Sudarshan Kriya yogic breathing in stress. *J Altern Complement Med*. 2005;11(4):711–7.
30. Page MJ, McKenzie JE, Bossuyt PM, et al. PRISMA 2020 statement. *BMJ*. 2021;372:n71.