



A REVIEW ON MODE OF ACTION OF VIDDHA- AGNIKARMA BY VIRTUE OF PAIN MANAGEMENT IN MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS.

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Abstract

Ayurveda offers many gentle and effective treatments, and one of the most remarkable ones is Viddha-Agnikarma. It's a special method within Ayurvedic practice that swiftly relieves pain and manages musculoskeletal diseases. The roots of Agnikarma are found in ancient texts like the Sushruta Samhita, while Viddha Karma is mentioned in classics such as Brihatrayee and Laghutrayee. Dr. R.B. Gogate has further developed this combined treatment.

Viddha-Agnikarma works by using heated needles to pierce the skin, instantly easing pain. This process clears blockages in blood vessels, improving circulation and stimulating nerve fibers. By doing so, it reduces the transmission of pain signals from the affected area. This holistic approach addresses both the symptoms and the root causes of musculoskeletal disorders. By blending ancient wisdom with modern insights, Viddha-Agnikarma offers gentle and effective relief without compromising safety. It's a testament to the enduring relevance of Ayurveda in providing holistic healthcare solutions.

Keywords: Viddha-Agnikarma, Musculoskeletal Disorder, pain reduce

Introduction: *Agnikarma* is combination of two words i.e., *Agni* and *Karma*, it means procedure done with the aid of *Agni* to treat the disease. *Agnikarma* is the application of heat either directly or indirectly to the affected part of body. Sushruta mentioned the superiority of *Agnikarma* among all the para-surgical procedures and its importance explained in separate chapter in *Sutrasthana*.¹ *Viddha* is means to pierce or penetrate by sharp pointed object. *Agnikarma* is the cauterization. *Viddha-agni* is fusion procedure of *Viddha* and *Agnikarma* where pointed needle is penetrated and heat passed through needle at specific point in the body in order to relieve pain.²

According to latest data published by WHO, 20–33% of the world's population is suffering from various types of chronic musculoskeletal pain.³ Musculoskeletal pain is defined as acute or chronic pain that affects bones, muscles, ligaments, tendons, and even nerves. This pain is a common medical and socioeconomic issue globally. Chronic MSK pain hampers the daily activities, increases consumption of analgesic drug even steroids too. These drugs have short term analgesic effect and patients has to take these drugs again and again. For that, patient has to visit the consultant frequently and repeatedly which increases the economical Burdon on patient. Continuous drug consumption results in multiple side effects in the body. Overall, there is a significantly diminished quality of life.

In ayurveda *Agnikarma* is an effective and unique treatment modality for management of musculoskeletal disorders. *Viddha-agnikarma* is type of *Agnikarma* which has same potential in reducing pain.⁴ Recently many clinical trials were conducted for the management of pain through *Viddha-agnikarma*. The results were encouraging with good success rate with minimal recurrence.

OBJECTIVES

1. To review the research work related to *Viddha-agnikarma* for pain management on different musculoskeletal disorders.
2. To analyse the collected data and study the efficacy of *Viddha -agnikarma* on pain management in various musculoskeletal disorders.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The related data was collected from various dissertations, published research articles and from search engines like Google Scholar, PubMed and from the classical texts of Ayurveda

OBSERVATION AND RESULT

P.Yadav and D.Shukla the case study centred on a 43-year-old female grappling with chronic plantar fasciitis, which had proven unresponsive to prior treatments. In a bid to alleviate her condition, the patient underwent *Viddha-Agnikarma*, a traditional Ayurvedic therapy entailing the application of heat through red-hot needles inserted at tender points on the heel. This regimen was repeated thrice, with each session spaced a week apart. The outcomes were striking, showcasing a notable improvement in pain intensity and associated symptoms following each intervention. Remarkably, complete pain relief was achieved post the third session. *Viddha-Agnikarma* was not only well-tolerated by the patient but also provided immediate relief, thereby facilitating her daily activities. Furthermore, the procedure emerged as cost-effective, minimally invasive, and time-efficient, thereby positioning it as a promising therapeutic avenue for addressing chronic plantar fasciitis.⁵

Dr. Shivalingappa J Arakeri investigates in this study the efficacy of *Viddha-Agnikarma*, a modified form of *Agnikarma*, in treating *Avabahuka*, a condition similar to Frozen Shoulder. A 49-year-old male with shoulder pain underwent three weekly sessions of *Viddha-Agnikarma*, resulting in significant pain reduction and improved range of motion. The procedure, involving heat application through punctured needles, shows promise as a cost-effective outpatient treatment for *Avabahuka*, aligning with traditional Ayurvedic practices.⁶

The case study "Viddha-Agni Karma in Achilles Tendinitis" by Nagarathna and Srinivas Masalekar, explores the effectiveness of *Viddha-Agni karma*, a fusion technique of *Viddha* and *Agnikarma*, in treating Achilles tendinitis. Achilles tendinitis poses challenges for patients and physicians due to varied responses to treatment. Factors like poor muscle flexibility and inappropriate footwear contribute to this condition, which correlates with "Vata Kantaka" described in ancient Ayurvedic texts like the *Sushruta Samhita*. The study involved a 28-year-old female with Achilles tendinitis who underwent three sessions of *Viddhagni karma* over a week. Before and after treatment, parameters such as pain, tenderness, movement, and swelling were assessed. Significant improvement was noted post-treatment, indicating the efficacy of *Viddhagni karma* in managing Achilles tendinitis. This research contributes to the integration of Ayurvedic interventions into modern medical practice.⁷

The study by Dr. Pradnya P. Sabade and Dr. Jae Sunil Parvatkar assessed *Viddhagni Karma's* efficacy in treating Calcaneal spur pain. Modern treatments often have limitations like incomplete pain relief or nerve damage. *Viddhagni karma*, a blend of *Agnikarma* and *Viddha karma*, was administered to 15 patients over 35 days, with significant pain relief observed in 66.67% of patients. Only mild or moderate pain persisted in 33.34% of cases, with no adverse effects reported. Statistical analysis confirmed a noteworthy reduction in pain scores ($p < 0.0001$). These findings suggest *Viddhagni Karma* as a promising alternative for Calcaneal spur pain management for patients unresponsive to conventional therapies.⁸

PROCEDURE OF VIDDDHA-AGNIKARMA

In Ayurveda, *Viddha karma* and *Agnikarma* constitute part of *Asthviddha Shastrakarma*. Individually, these procedures serve as effective modalities for pain management, as evidenced by various research articles and case studies. According to Dr. R.B. Gogate, *Viddha-Agnikarma* represents a synergistic approach to alleviating pain associated with diverse musculoskeletal disorders. During this technique, a half-inch 26-gauge needle is delicately inserted into the most tender area to a depth ranging from 1mm to 3mm. Subsequently, cautery or *Shalaka* is utilized to apply heat to the needle for a duration of 1 to 2 minutes. Upon completion, the needle is carefully withdrawn, followed by the application of *ghrit*. This process is typically repeated thrice, with a weekly interval between sessions, tailored to the individual needs of the patient.

DISCUSSION: Musculoskeletal disorders are widespread globally, mainly marked by pain and limitations in mobility. Given their higher prevalence, this study primarily focuses on non-inflammatory conditions, including back pain, hip pain, Achilles tendinitis, calcaneal spur, frozen shoulder, and plantar fasciitis. According to Ayurveda, these diseases can all be linked to an imbalance in the vata dosha. Charak Acharya suggested treatments like oil massages, steam therapy, and gentle cleansing to address this imbalance. However, even after trying these treatments, some

patients still suffer from ongoing pain.⁹ In such situations, Sushruta Acharya recommended siravedha, or bloodletting therapy, which he found to be effective in relieving pain.¹⁰ In the context of managing musculoskeletal disorders, modern medicine prioritizes initially employing straight forward and safe interventions. In this study, the focus was on administering viddha-agnikarma treatment to patients suffering from localized pain. According to Acharya Sushrut, pain is the primary symptom of imbalanced Vata Dosha, and it does not occur without it. During viddha-agnikarma treatment, a fine hollow needle is inserted into the painful area, expelling the imbalanced Vata Dosha and resulting in immediate pain relief for the patient. Additionally, a small amount of blood may also be released during the process, providing effects similar to bloodletting therapy. According to Dr. R.B. Gogate, viddha-agnikarma treatment is highly effective in reducing pain by piercing the needle into the most tender part and transferring heat through the shaman vata and kapha dosha, resulting in pain relief. The procedure is simple, cost-effective, and appropriate for outpatient settings, providing instant pain relief to roughly 50% of patients. After undergoing viddha-agnikarma treatment, patients describe feeling a sense of lightness at the painful site, facilitating movement of the affected body part. While viddha-agnikarma treatment doesn't tackle the root cause of the disease, it delivers immediate pain relief. However, to tackle the underlying pathology of the disease with a low recurrence rate, patients may require additional treatments.

Conclusion: Musculoskeletal disorders have witnessed a resurgence of ancient practices like Viddha and Agnikarma within contemporary medicine due to their proven efficacy in pain management and treating various conditions. Viddha involves the precise insertion of specialized needles into specific sites, stimulating the immune system to release endorphins, natural pain-relieving agents. This mechanism offers significant alleviation of discomfort associated with musculoskeletal issues, showcasing notable results in reducing pain severity and providing relief to sufferers. Furthermore, the fusion of these two procedures, known as viddha-agnikarma, combines the piercing of needles with the application of heat through these needles. This combined approach has shown promising results in reducing pain. According to the above study, patients perceive this treatment more favorably compared to Agnikarma because it does not involve burning the skin. The integration of viddha-agnikarma presents a holistic strategy for pain management and disorder treatment, effectively addressing pain and managing musculoskeletal disorders, ultimately enhancing patients' quality of life.

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