



# MANAGEMENT OF AVABAHUKA (FROZEN SHOULDER) THROUGH AYURVEDA: A CASE STUDY

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## ABSTRACT:

*Avabahuka*, a disease affecting the *Amsa Sandhi* (shoulder joint), involves the neuromuscular system. Clinical features include pain, stiffness, and restricted movement of the shoulder joint. This study evaluated the efficacy of *Sahachar* (*Barleria prionitis* Linn.) *Taila* used in *ansa sandhi* (*sthanik basti*) alongside *Shamana Aushadhi* in treating *Avabahuka*. A 39-year-old female presented with pain and restricted movement in the left shoulder, extending to the left elbow. X-rays indicated mild straightening of cervical lordosis due to paraspinal muscle spasm and C5 – C6 disc space narrowing. She underwent a 7-day treatment involving *Panchakarma ansa sandhi* (*sthanik basti*) and *Shamana Aushadhi*, with a follow-up after 14 days. Subjective and objective assessments showed pain scores decreased from 3 to 1, stiffness from 3 to 0, and improved range of movement: flexion from 130° to 160°, extension from 50° to 60°, abduction from 125° to 145°, adduction from 35° to 55°, internal rotation from 70° to 85°, and external rotation from 80° to 90°. Significant improvements were observed in the clinical features of *Avabahuka* after treatment. This study indicates that *Ayurveda* offers effective management for *Avabahuka* by combining the therapeutic effects of *Panchakarma* and *Shamana Chikitsa*.

**KEYWORDS:** *Avabahuka*, *Panchakarma*, *sthanik basti*, *Ayurveda*, frozen shoulder.

## INTRODUCTION

*Avabahuka*, also known as frozen shoulder, is a condition that affects the *Amsa Sandhi* (shoulder joint) and involves the neuromuscular system. According to *Ayurveda Vata Dosha* seated in the *Amsa Sthan* (shoulder region), getting elevated causes *Soshana* (emaciation) of *Amsa Bandha* (shoulder joint) and *Akunchana of Sira* (constriction of the vein) to occur <sup>(1)</sup>. The clinical symptoms such as *Shoola*, *Sthabdata*, and *Bahupraspandan Haratvam* of

*Avabahuka* are due to the vitiation of *VataDosha* and *Kapha doshas* <sup>(2)</sup>. *Chikitsa* for *Vatavyadhi* in *Sushruta Samhita* includes *Snehana*, *Swedana*, *Basti*, *Sirobasti*, *Snaihika Dhuma*, *Sirosneha*, *Sneha Gandusha* and *Sneha Nasya*<sup>(3)</sup>.

It is characterized by pain, stiffness, and restricted shoulder joint movement, significantly impacting daily activities and quality of life. Traditional medical treatments often fall short of providing lasting relief, making *Ayurveda* an attractive alternative for holistic and comprehensive management. *Sirobasti*, *Basti* and *Nasya* in the general line of treatment for *Vatavyadhi*<sup>(4)</sup>. This article delves into a study exploring the efficacy of *Sahachar* (*Barleria prionitis* Linn.) *Taila* used in *Ansa Sandhi* (*sthanik basti*) therapy along with *Shamana Aushadhi* in managing *Avabahuka*.

## Pathophysiology of Avabahuka

Understanding the pathophysiology of *Avabahuka* is crucial for effective management. In *Ayurvedic* terms, *Avabahuka* is primarily caused by the vitiation of *Vata dosha*, leading to the obstruction of *Vata* in the *Amsa Sandhi*. This results in pain and restricted movement. The involvement of *Kapha dosha* is also considered, as it contributes to stiffness and heaviness in the affected joint. The vitiation of *doshas* can be attributed to various factors, including improper dietary habits, lack of exercise, and exposure to cold weather. *Apabahuka* is one such disease that hampers the day-to-day activity of an individual. The fact that *Vata vyadhi* is one among the *Ashta maha gada*,<sup>[5]</sup>

Conventional vs. Ayurvedic Treatment Approaches Conventional medical treatments for frozen shoulder often include pain management through nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), corticosteroid injections, and physical therapy. While these methods may provide temporary relief, they do not address the root cause of the condition. In contrast, *Ayurveda* offers a holistic approach that aims to restore the balance of *doshas* and promote overall well-being.

## Case Study: A Holistic Approach to Managing Avabahuka

### Patient Profile

The subject of this case study is a 39-year-old female patient diagnosed with *Avabahuka*, presenting with painful and restricted movement of the left shoulder joint, with pain radiating to the left elbow joint. An X-ray of the cervical region in AP and lateral views showed mild straightening of cervical lordosis due to paraspinal muscle spasm and C5-C6 disc space narrowing.

### Treatment Protocol

The treatment protocol included *Panchakarma Ansa Sandhi* (*sthanik basti*) therapy along with *Shamana Aushadhi* for 7 days, followed by a 14-day follow-up. The combination of *Panchakarma* and *Shamana Aushadhi* was chosen to provide both detoxification and rejuvenation, addressing the root cause of the condition.

#### 1. Panchakarma Therapy

*Panchakarma* is a traditional *Ayurvedic* detoxification process that aims to eliminate toxins (*Ama*) from the body and restore the balance of *doshas*. In this case, *Ansa Sandhi* (*sthanik basti*) therapy was employed, which involves the localized application of medicated oil (*Sahachar Taila*) to the affected shoulder joint.

*Sahachar Taila* (*Barleria prionitis* Linn.):

*Sahachar Taila* is known for its anti-inflammatory, analgesic, and muscle-relaxant properties. The oil was warmed and applied to the shoulder joint, followed by gentle massage to enhance absorption and improve blood circulation.

Procedure:

The patient was positioned comfortably, and a well-constructed dough ring was placed around the shoulder joint. The warm *Sahachar Taila* was then poured into the ring and retained for a specified duration. This process was repeated daily for seven days.

2. Shamana Aushadhi

*Shamana Aushadhi* refers to palliative treatment using herbal formulations that pacify the vitiated *doshas*. The patient was prescribed a combination of herbal medicines to complement the *Panchakarma* therapy.

3. Herbal Formulations:

The formulations included herbs like *Guggulu*, *Ashwagandha*, and *Nirgundi*, known for their anti-inflammatory, analgesic, and rejuvenating properties. These herbs were administered in the form of decoctions and powders, taken orally.

### Results and Observations

The patient was assessed using both subjective and objective parameters before and after the treatment. Significant improvements were observed in pain, stiffness, and range of motion.

Pain: Reduced from a score of 3 to 1

Stiffness: Reduced from a score of 3 to 0

Range of Motion:

Flexion: Improved from 130° to 160°

Extension: Improved from 50° to 60°

Abduction: Improved from 125° to 145°

Adduction: Improved from 35° to 55°

Internal Rotation: Improved from 70° to 85°

External Rotation: Improved from 80° to 90°

The improvements in the patient's condition were not



only significant but also sustained, indicating the long-term benefits of the combined *Ayurvedic* treatment approach.

## IMAGE

## DISCUSSION

The study demonstrates that *Ayurveda* offers an effective management strategy for *Avabahuka* through a combination of *Panchakarma* and *Shamana Chikitsa*. The localized application of *Sahachar Taila* in *Ansa Sandhi* (*sthanik basti*) therapy provided targeted relief by reducing inflammation, alleviating pain, and enhancing joint mobility. The herbal formulations in *Shamana Aushadhi* supported the detoxification process and promoted overall rejuvenation.

### Mechanism of Action

The therapeutic effects of the treatment can be attributed to the following mechanisms:

**Anti-inflammatory and Analgesic Properties:** *Sahachar Taila* and the herbal formulations possess potent anti-inflammatory and analgesic properties that reduce swelling, alleviate pain, and improve joint function.

**Improved Blood Circulation:**

The localized application of warm oil enhances blood circulation, which aids in the removal of metabolic wastes and promotes healing.

**Muscle Relaxation:**

The massage and retention of medicated oil relax the paraspinal muscles, reducing spasm and improving the alignment of the cervical spine.

**Dosha Balance:**

The holistic approach of *Ayurveda* aims to restore the balance of *Vata* and *Kapha doshas*, addressing the root cause of *Avabahuka* and preventing recurrence.

## CONCLUSION

The present study highlights the potential of *Ayurveda* in effectively managing *Avabahuka* (frozen shoulder) through a combination of *Panchakarma* and *Shamana Chikitsa*. The significant improvements in pain, stiffness, and range of motion observed in the patient underscore the benefits of this holistic approach. *Ayurveda* offers a promising alternative to conventional treatments, providing lasting relief and enhancing the overall quality of life for patients with frozen shoulder.

**Future Directions** Further research with larger sample sizes and longer follow-up periods is warranted to validate these findings and establish standardized treatment protocols. Additionally, exploring the synergistic effects of different *Ayurvedic* therapies and herbal formulations can provide deeper insights into the comprehensive management of *Avabahuka*.

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