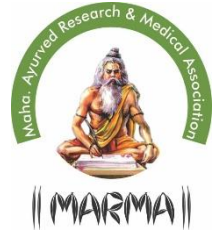




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PAIN MANAGEMENT IN AYURVEDA

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Abstract : Pain is the most common symptom, it is universally accepted as a signal of disease that brings the patient to a physician's attention. It is a sensation in which additional factors like mental or spiritual distress can cause the same overarching sensation as a physical damage. Anxiety is a common side effect of any pain, whether mild or severe. It interferes with the patient's daily routine. Patient gets apprehensive or concerned about getting pain relief. Ayurveda ,the science of life has its own methodology and hypothesis to manage all kind of diseases.

In Ayurveda Agnikarma is a para-surgical procedure, advocated by Acharya Sushruta for asthi, sandhi, sira and snayugata vata vikaras and it is highly effective without producing any further complications in comparison to modern surgical procedures. Leech therapy or Jalaukavacarana, universally accepted around the globe, is an integral part of Ayurvedic medicine especially Panchakarma. Although not directly indicated for pain-management in Ayurveda texts, various studies have identified the presence of analgesic enzymes in leech's saliva that can be effective in pain management in musculoskeletal disorders⁶

Similarly siravedha herbal formulations, panchakarma, viddha karma procedures are useful in pain management now a days.

Key words : Pain, Agnikarma, Viddha karma, Panchakarma

Introduction:

WHO defines pain as "an unpleasant sensory or emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage, or described in terms of such damage". Pain can be described as any physical suffering or discomfort caused by illness or injury. No matter however mild the pain is anywhere in the body it lands you in a state of discomfort and affects your day to day activities.

NSAIDs (Nonsteroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs), Opioids are preferred choice in pain management. But all these also have so many considerable serious long term complications and adverse drug effect in body. In this respect the orientation of Ayurveda to the management of pain is holistic with the consideration of overall integrity of its various Patho-Physiologies. According to Ayurveda, Pain is predominantly due to vitiated vata dosha. Depending upon the type of pain, many terms like Ruk, Toda, Shoola, Vedana, Dukha etc. have been used in Ayurveda to denote pain. Many disease conditions have nomenclature reflecting dominance of pain e.g. Annadrava shula, Ardhavbhedaka, Hrit-Shoola etc.³

Pain in Ayurveda

According to the philosophy of Ayurveda, the five elements in the body merge in pairs to form the three basic functional principles or doshas (also called humors).

These humors are called vata dosha, pitta dosha and kapha dosha. The internal functions of the body, including those of the mind, are controlled by these humors. When these humors are balanced, a person remains healthy. When these humors are out of balance, they lead to ill health.

VATA DOSHA – Responsible for pain

Pain is a protective body mechanism, which alerts the person about the harmful condition or experience that occurs in the body. Pain can be somatogenic or psychological. The somatogenic pain occurs due to physiological causes or external injuries. The psychological pain does not have any physical cause, but it occurs due to the some disturbance in the mind.

In Ayurveda, all types of pain are considered under vata aggravation⁴. According to Ayurvedic theory, pain can only occur due to the vata involvement and it cannot occur if vata is not involved in it. vata dosha is responsible for every movement and action in the body. The hindrance in vata flow leads to the pain. vata is energy belongs to the Vacuum and Air elements. It is present in the hollow organs, nerves, blood vessels, all other body channels. It allows the other pitta and kapha humors to function in the body. pitta and kapha cannot work without the help of vata humor. Therefore, vata should flow easily in the body without any obstruction. The obstruction in vata flow causes pain. "If pain appears in any disease, it indicates the involvement of vata humor." "All ayurvedic treatments and therapies treat the vata humor if a patient experiences pain anywhere in the body⁵"

Management of pain:

Jalwakawcharan (Ayurvedic Aspect) :-

As said by Ayurveda stalwarts, pain doesn't occur without vitiation of Vata. For Vata vitiation, there must be either Dhatu Kshaya or Margavarodha, and due to a modern lifestyle in the majority of patients, Vata vitiation mostly occurs due to Srotavarodha or Margavarodha. This Srotavarodha or blockage of channels primarily occurs due to the stagnation of Kapha/Rakta or Pitta. Leech therapy removes vitiated Rakta and/or other Doshas, which in turn leads to Srotoadha (clearance of blocked channels) at that particular site and nearby area. Srotoadha causes Anulomana (proper movement) of stuck or vitiated Vata locally. Due to the Anulomana of Vata, its primary symptom, pain gets relieved. This can be a reason behind this analgesic action of leech therapy ⁷.

Jalwakawcharan (Modern Aspect):-

According to modern science, also according to the modern science, leech application not only removes blood from that site but also injects biologically active substances which help to manage various ailments. It injects anti-inflammatory, analgesic, and bacteriostatic substances like hirudin, hyaluronidase, histamine like vasodilators, inhibitors of kallikrein, superoxide production and poorly characterized anaesthetics and analgesic compounds with its saliva which can be helpful in subsiding inflammation and pain⁸. These substances might reach deeper tissue zones and possibly the joint spaces. Various bioactive substances in leech saliva may also be as pharmacologically potent as hirudin and thus exert substantial effects in peri-articular tissue and adjacent structure ⁹.

Siravedha (Ayurveda aspect):-

Raktamokshana means letting out of blood which is mainly indicated in certain illness especially when there is raktadushti. These procedures destroy the raktaja vikara from its roots. It cleanse the vitiated blood and thus make the person become lusturous, indriya become clear or are able to recognize their objects in a ideal manner, his digestive fire functions well, is enriched with happiness, good nourishment and strength ¹⁴.

The one in which direct elimination of these vitiated or increased Dosha is done is known as a Shodhan Chikitsa whereas when the increased Dosha are not directly eliminated but brought into an equilibrium with the help of various medicines, then it is called as Shaman Chikitsa. Among different types of Shodhan therapies, Raktamokshana is considered as best for Pitta and Rakta Pradoshaj vedana Vyadhi. Acharya Susrutha and Acharya Vagbhata included Raktamokshan under Panchshodhan. Raktamokshana, which means to let out blood, is primarily recommended in certain illnesses, particularly when Raktadushti is present ¹⁵.

Siravedha (Modern aspect) :-

Phlebotomy, sometimes referred to as venesection or bloodletting, is a significant medical procedure that has been utilised by many cultures

from antiquity to the present. In the past, phlebotomy was done with leeches, acupuncture, or cupping. When treating blood disorders, therapeutic phlebotomy is the best option because it effectively manages symptoms and complications by removing serum iron or red blood cells ¹². A number of physiological mechanisms underlie therapeutic phlebotomy. For instance, bloodletting stimulates bone marrow stem cells to produce new red blood cells (RBCs), which in turn need the movement of iron from the body's reserves in the ferritin form to produce haemoglobin (Hb). Because of this decrease in the patient's total iron levels, therapeutic phlebotomy is the recommended course of treatment for blood disorders where removing serum iron or RBCs is the most effective way to manage the symptoms and complications ¹³.

Agnikarma (Ayurveda aspect): -

Agnikarma is one of the parasurgical procedure that has spell bound effects in pain management along with curing the disease. In Ayurveda the "Ruja" or the musculoskeletal pain is caused due to vitiated Vata Dosha. There are several painful diseases like Gridhrasi, Avbahuka, Sandhivata, Manyastambh, etc where there is involvement of vitiated Vata and Kapha Dosha that causes the Ruja. The answer to all these painful suffering is Agnikarma which acts by its Ushna, Tikshna, Sukshma, Laghu, Vyavayi and Vikasi Guna. All these properties work against the Vata and Kapha Doshas and thereby relieves the pain, stiffness at the local site ¹⁰.

Agnikarma (Modern Aspect) :-

The probable mode of action of Agnikarma can also be explained through the gate control theory of pain. This theory explains that non-painful input closes the nerve gates to painful input which prevents pain sensation from travelling to the CNS. This theory explains how non-painful sensations can override and reduce painful sensations. The local heat act as touch stimulus which increases large fiber activity and it has inhibitory effect on pain signals ¹².

According to Vant Hoff's principle the basal metabolism of the body increases by certain percentage for every 1 degree rise in body temperature. Rise in temperature induces relaxation of muscles and hence muscle spasm with inflammation and pain gets reduced. Muscle relaxes most readily when tissues are warm which in turn reduces the spasm, inflammation and pain ¹¹.

Summary :

As parasurgical methods like agnikarma , siravedha, jaluakavcharan, marma chikitsa, viddha karma are more beneficial parasurgical methods. According to ayurveda prakutpit vata dosha are the reason for pain hence by above mentioned practices work on prakutpit vat , make vata dosha in sama stiti. as a result pain can be subsided.

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