

REVIEW ARTICLE ON VISARPA

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ABSTRACT

Skin is the outermost covering of the body serving as a barrier between the external and internal environment. It is the largest organ of the body which acts as a first line of defense in providing resistance to the body. The aggravation of various Dhatus and Doshas result in skin diseases. More than one-fifty skin related diseases are mentioned in various Ayurvedic texts. They are categorized as Visarpa, Kustha, Shotha, Upadansh etc. Visarpa is a very common disease mentioned in Ayurvedic texts which spreads in body in various directions. It is said to be caused by Varicella zoster virus as per modern concept. It manifests as Daha, Jwara, Anunnatashopha and Vedana. Ayurveda consider Raktmokshan (blood sucking) and Pradeha (local application of drugs) as the best suitable treatment modalities for Visarpa. Virechana can help in faster healing of the lesion and provide the relief for various symptoms. The details about Visarpa, its modern perspective and classical treatment are described here.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, Visarpa, Skin, Raktmokshana, Pradeha.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the ancient and well documented science which prior insist upon the prevention of diseases rather than adopting the curative measures. According to Ayurveda, the first line of treatment is Nidan Parivarjan means to avoid all the causative factors. So, in order to make people disease free and to make people aware, Study of concept of Nidana as a diagnostic tool will be presented in this Work. Ayurveda has explained the five tools for manifestation of disease known as Nidanpanchak. They are Nidana, Poorvaroopa, Roopa, Upshaya and Samprapti which are the objective as well as subjective for understanding of disease.^[1] Nidana helps us to know about etiology, symptomatology and pathogenesis. For proper diagnosis of disease Nidana is one of the most important points for diagnosis of disease.

The knowledge of Nidana is useful in five different ways,

- For maintaining the health of a healthy individual
- Diagnosis of the disease
- Differential diagnosis
- Prognosis of the disease
- For treatment of the disease.

So, Nidana is prerequisite for Chikitsa. Reference of Nidana have been scattered in Ayurvedic texts, so here an attempt has been made to systematically compile the literature of Nidana as mentioned in Charaka Samhita.

Nidana is defined as the eternal cause of the disease. Diagnosis is never complete without the elicitation of all the factors associated with the diseases.

Visarpa is one of the commonest skin disorders which is widely explained in Ayurveda by all the Acharyas and is one of the most common skin ailments suffered by large population worldwide. The clinical features contemplate Herpes viridae, which is a large family of DNA viruses that cause infections and certain diseases in animals, including humans. The members of this family are also known as herpesviruses.^[2]

Around 20 - 30% population suffer from skin ailments. More than 90% of adults have been infected with at least one of these, and a latent form of the virus remains in almost all humans who have been infected and from lower socio-economic strata.^[3] These problems vary from age, locality and season.^[4] Among all type of dermatological condition herpes gains immediate notice of a doctor due to its severity in localized spread, pain and burning sensation.^[5] Herpes viral infection closely resemble to a condition called Visarpa which is described in Ayurveda.

Classification of Visarpa

Ayurvedic scholars have classified Visarpa into following categories: • Vataja Visarpa • Pittaja Visarpa • Kaphaja Visarpa • Agni Visarpa • Kardama Visarpa • Granthi Visarpa • Sannipataja Visarpa Hetu of Visarpa (etiology) Dietary factors such as excessive intake of Amla, Katu, Ushna and Lavana food stuffs aggravates Doshas. Frequent and excessive consumption of Shukta, Mandaka, Sura, Kilata, Kurchika, Asatmya and Viruddha Ahara along with vitiated Doshas affect the element of the body which results Vyadhi like Visarpa.

Etiopathogenesis and Lakshana of various types of Visarpa

Various etiological factors cause aggravation of all the Doshas in the body affecting muscular and vascular tissues. Vitiated Doshas result in diminished Agni which causes development of Ama in the digestive tract. Ama spreads and causes vitiation of Mamsa, Rakta and Twak. Then Dosha-dusya Sammurchhana takes place either in Abhyantara or Bahya path resulting into Visarpa. This combination of aggravated Doshas and Dushya results in Visarpa. According to modern medicine, Herpes is caused by Varicella zoster Virus which affects the central nervous system, internal organs and predominantly mucocutaneous surfaces. Virus enters into the body through abraded skin or wound and affects sensory and autonomic nerve endings. It is transported to the nerve cell bodies and then spreads by involving new skin and thus covers more area. After receiving treatment for the primary infection, sometimes the virus goes into the dormant stage in the ganglion. Due to some triggering agents such as trauma, ultraviolet light, change in cell mediated immunity, the virus gets reactivated again. Vatika Visarpa is the result of obstruction caused by aggravated Doshas. It shows resemblance to the acute skin infections such as Erysipelas. Its clinical features are burning sensation, fever, pain, affected area becomes edematous and red, small blackish or reddish blisters with thin clear reddish and scanty discharge are seen. Pitta dominant Visarpa causes various problems such as fever, pain, burning sensation etc. Pustules are formed in the affected part causing intense pain and burning sensation. It can be co-related with the skin diseases such as Erysipelas, Herpes and burns etc. Kaphaja Visarpa spreads slowly in the body and it shows resemblance to the Erysipelas. It causes fever, vomiting, chills etc. The affected area becomes edematous, red with pale coloured eruptions covered by thick skin. They can leave deep seated ulcers also if not treated on time. Agni Visarpa is a very serious condition resembling septicemia. Affected area gets covered by red coloured blisters. Person suffers from severe burning sensation and becomes restless. It spread rapidly to the vital organs and it is considered as incurable.

DISCUSSION

As the disease origin from its respective Nidanaja factors similarly here the excessive and continuous intake of food articles which are predominantly in Amla, Lavana, Katu Rasas have been mentioned as the most important contributing factors for Visarpa. Lavana Rasa Atisevana leads to Pitta Prakopaka, Raktamvardhana, Amla Rasa Atisevana leads to Pitta Prakopaka, does dushana of Rakta, Katu Rasa Atisevana results in Shareeratapamupajanayati and causes different types of Vataja Shula. Madhya, Dadhi being Amla Vipaka, Ushna Viryatmaka and is not suitable for persons suffering from Rakta, Pitta and Kaphaja Vikaras Chardivegavidharana will lead to the accumulation of the toxins in the body, it will spread in all the Srotas and lead to the manifestation of the skin diseases. Diwaswapna will lead to an imbalance in the Kapha, Ratrijagarana leads to an imbalance in the Vata and Pitta Doshas. The Nidanakara Dravyas which predominantly have Vikasi & 'Asthira' Gunas causes the vitiation of Doshas, gains the nature of Ashuprasara and attains Asthira Avastha. The external trauma which includes Shastra Prahara, Nakha, Dantapeeda vitiates Pitta and Rakta immediately. According to Acharya Vagbhata, the vitiated Tridoshas with the predominance of Vidahi properties tend to spread to different parts of the body very rapidly. Gangadhara also opines that the nature of spreading is ashuprasarana as an effect of Asthira Guna of Doshas. The vitiated Doshas spreads quickly in the body and does the dushana of Rakta, Tvak, Mamsa and Laseeka. These factors exacerbate the Kushta Avastha and leads to formation of Sphota and their bursting are seen in Visarpa.

The treatment of Visarpa is based on Doshas and its site. If the vitiated Dosha are located in the Kapha Sthana, then Langhana and Vamana therapies are useful. Such a patient should be given ingredients having Tikta Rasa. If Dosha are located in the Pitta Sthana, abode of Pitta then Rakta –Mokshana and Virechana therapies should be specially

administered to such patients. And if these Doshas are located in the Vata Sthana, then Virukshana therapies should be administered in the beginning. Visarpa is Pitta Pradhana Vyadhi and if Jwara associated then it can be treated with Virechana therapy by Triphala Kwatha, Trivrit Churna and Ghrita. If the Visarpa is due to vitiation of either of Kapha or Pitta or both Kapha and Pitta, then the patient should be given with Vamana, by administering any one or in combination the following Dravyas - Madana Phala, Madhuka, Nimba, Vatsaka Phala. After Shodhana of body from inside, removal of morbid Doshas from the Twacha and Mamsa is very necessary. The affected part of the body should be anointed with the Lepa of the ingredients having Snigdha and Sheeta Guna.

CONCLUSION

Visarpa is one of the dangerous diseases having Dushya as Rakta, Mamsa, Laseeka and Twak are mainly involved in this condition which leads production of Vistruta, Anunnata Shophya that has Sarpana Prakruti associated with Daha and Vedana. Treatment modalities such as Virechana Kashaya provide relief to the symptoms such as Daha, Kandu and helps in drying of lesions. Lepa helps in relieving burning sensation and Raktamokshana is helpful in stopping the pathology of disease and its spread. Visarpa shows a tendency of relapse thus repeated Shodhana Chikitsa is suggested after considering patient's health status and proper Pathya Apathya.

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