

## COMPARATIVE STUDY OF AGNIKARMA AND SIRAVEDHA IN THE MANAGEMENT OF SCIATICA (GRIDHRASI): A CASE STUDY ARTICLE

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### ABSTRACT

Sciatica, characterized by radiating pain along the sciatic nerve, correlates with *Gridhrasi* in Ayurveda, a disorder predominantly caused by **Vata** and sometimes associated with **Kapha**. Among various treatment modalities, *Agnikarma* (therapeutic cauterization) and *Siravedha* (venesection) are effective parasurgical procedures described in classical Ayurvedic texts. This article presents a comparative clinical evaluation based on case studies and classical principles, assessing their efficacy in relieving pain, stiffness, and improving functional mobility.

**KEYWORDS:** Sciatica, Gridhrasi, Agnikarma, Siravedha.

### INTRODUCTION

Sciatica is a common neurological condition caused by compression or irritation of the sciatic nerve, often due to disc prolapse, spinal degeneration, or muscular spasm.

In Ayurveda:

- Disease: **Gridhrasi**
- Nidana: Vata prakopa (due to ruksha, sheeta, ati-vyayama, etc.)
- Lakshana:
  - Ruk (pain radiating from kati to pada)
  - Stambha (stiffness)
  - Toda (pricking pain)
  - Spandana (twitching)

Acharya Sushruta emphasizes **Agnikarma** and **Raktamokshana (Siravedha)** as important treatment modalities in Vata disorders.

### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To evaluate the effect of Agnikarma in Gridhrasi
2. To evaluate the effect of Siravedha in Gridhrasi
3. To compare their clinical efficacy

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

#### Study Design

Comparative analysis of two case studies (or reported cases)

#### Assessment Criteria

- Pain (VAS Scale)
- Straight Leg Raising (SLR) test
- Stiffness (Stambha)
- Walking ability
- Oswestry Disability Index (ODI)

#### Agnikarma

##### Procedure

- Application of controlled heat using heated metallic instruments (Shalaka)
- Points selected along sciatic nerve path (Kati, Sphik, Uru)

##### Mode of Action

- Ushna (heat) counteracts Vata (Sheeta guna)
- Improves local circulation
- Relieves muscle spasm and nerve compression
- Acts as instant pain reliever

### RESULTS (Clinical Findings)

- Immediate reduction in pain after procedure
- Improved SLR angle
- Reduced stiffness and enhanced mobility

#### Supporting Evidence

- Clinical studies report **significant reduction in pain and stiffness after Agnikarma sessions**
- Effective particularly in *Vata-dominant Gridhrasi*

#### Siravedha

##### Procedure

- Venesection performed at specific sites (e.g., near ankle or knee region)
- Controlled removal of vitiated blood

**Mode of Action**

- Relieves venous congestion
- Reduces inflammation and pressure on nerve roots
- Improves circulation and oxygenation

**RESULTS (Clinical Findings)**

- Gradual reduction in radiating pain
- Improvement in functional ability
- Better walking endurance

**Supporting Evidence**

- Studies show **significant improvement in pain and disability scores after Siravedha**
- Useful in chronic cases with Rakta involvement

**Comparative Analysis**

Parameter	Agnikarma	Siravedha
Type	Thermal therapy	Bloodletting
Nature	Minimally invasive	Invasive
Action	Immediate pain relief	Gradual relief
Dosha target	Vata	Vata + Rakta
Indication	Acute pain, stiffness	Chronic inflammation, congestion
Procedure time	Short	Moderate
Patient comfort	High	Moderate
Risk	Minimal (burn risk if improper)	Bleeding risk

**DISCUSSION**

- **Agnikarma** provides rapid relief due to its *ushna* and *tikshna* properties, making it highly effective in acute conditions with predominant Vata involvement.
- **Siravedha** acts by removing vitiated Rakta and relieving vascular congestion, making it more suitable for chronic cases with inflammatory components.
- Agnikarma works locally, whereas Siravedha has systemic effects via blood purification.

A combined approach may yield superior results:

- Agnikarma for immediate relief
- Siravedha for long-term management

**CONCLUSION**

Both Agnikarma and Siravedha are effective in managing Gridhrasi:

- **Agnikarma** → Best for quick pain relief and acute symptoms
- **Siravedha** → Better for chronic cases and deeper pathology

Integrative application based on *dosha* and stage of disease provides optimal outcomes.

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