



## MANAGEMENT OF CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME THROUGH PANCHAKARMA: A REVIEW

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### ABSTRACT

Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) is a disease those very commonly seen in these days especially in middle aged women. The main symptoms of this disease are pain in the wrist joint with tingling numbness, and due to Carpal tunnel syndrome patient unable to do their routine works. Median nerve Compression is clinically termed as Carpal tunnel syndrome. Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) is the most common entrapment neuropathy of the upper limb. The median nerve travels down the arm into the hand through a narrow path. At the wrist, this narrow path is compressed by various physical and physiological reasons causing discomfort. The level of discomfort varies from a simple dull ache to complete numbness of the hand.<sup>[1]</sup> The symptoms include tingling sensations, numbness, weakness, and pain in the hand as a whole or restricted to some fingers, forearm and elbow. As per Ayurveda, based on *Hetu Sthana Visheshha*, Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is a disorder of *Kaphavata* vitiation. Considering treatment aspect, the *Vikalpa* of *Dosha* should be considered as per stage of progression of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome and appropriate treatment plan should be adopted. Here in this paper there is an attempt made to compress all the suitable *Panchakarma* therapies to treat this disorder. Therapies include *Ekanga Abhyanga*, *Pizhichil* with *Bala Lakshyadi Taila*, *Lepa*, *Upanaha*, *Ruksha Sveda* & *Patra Pinda Sveda*, *Nasya* with *Karpasthyadi Taila* or *Ksheerabala Taila* etc.

**KEYWORDS:** *Panchakarma* Therapies, Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, CTS.

### INTRODUCTION

Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) is a common disorder seen today's general practice. CTS is a medical condition it arises due to compression of the median nerve. The median nerve is located on the palm side of your hand (also called the carpal tunnel). Median nerve travels through the wrist between the transverse carpal ligament (also called the flexor retinaculum), the flexor tendon and carpal bones (Scaphoid and Trapezium). The median nerve provides sensation (ability to feel) to thumb, index finger, long finger, and half part of the ring finger.<sup>[2]</sup> (mahadevan) Carpal tunnel syndrome is more common in females than male, may affect one hand or both hands. It occurs in all age groups but commonly it seen in middle age females.

When someone is suffering from Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, or CTS, the 'tunnel' of bones and ligaments in their wrist has narrowed. This narrow tunnel pinches a nerve, causing a tingling feeling or numbness in a person's hand, especially in the thumb and first three fingers.

In literatures of Ayurveda many pathological conditions of upper limbs have been described under *Vatavyadhi*. Like, *Avabaahuka*, *Vishwaachi*, *Sandhigatavaata*, *Ekaangaroga*, etc.

But there is no disease describe in *Samhitas* which can be exactly correlated with carpal tunnel syndrome.

#### Causes (*Nidanas*):

- Any condition that exerts pressure on the median nerve at the wrist such as Inflammation may be the cause
- Obstructed blood flow.
- Lack of physical work out or too much strain at the wrist, Poor positioning of your wrists whereas using your keyboard or mouse, prolonged contact to vibrations from using hand tools or power tools and any frequent movement that overextends your wrist, such as playing the piano or typing.<sup>[3]</sup>

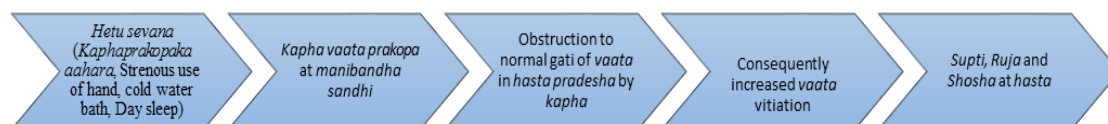
Some other conditions linked with carpal tunnel syndrome are

- Thyroid dysfunction
- During pregnancy women occurrence CTS due to hormonal changes (high progesterone levels) and water retention.<sup>[4]</sup>
- High blood pressure
- Rheumatoid arthritis and other diseases that cause inflammation of the flexor tendons.<sup>[5]</sup>
- Previous injuries including fractures of the wrist.<sup>[6]</sup>
- Repeated motion of your wrist contributes to swelling and compression of the median nerve.

### Samprapti:

Acharya Charaka says to that depending upon *Hetu Vishesha* and *Sthan Vishesha*, the vitiated *Vata* produces various diseases.

Acharya Bagbhatta says the cause of *Prasupti* that induced *Kapha* from vitiated *Vayu* reaching the skin gets dried up greatly and skin becomes pale with loss of sensation.



### Symptoms:

Main symptoms of CTS are

- Tingling sensation, Burning sensation or Numbness in the thumb index and middle finger and one half of the ring finger.
- Pain in wrist joint, it is also common but non specific symptoms.
- Weakness in hand
- In advanced cases wasting of muscles is seen.

According to Ayurveda main symptoms are-

- *Prasupti*
- *Vedana* or *Ruja*
- *Bala Hani*

### Diagnosis:

Early diagnosis and treatment are important to avoid permanent damage to the median nerve. Examination of the neck, shoulder, elbow, reflexes is performed to exclude other conditions. CTS is based on the main symptom of hand numbness. If the numbness in the fingers does not include the little finger, as the median nerve does not provide sensation to this finger

- The wrist is examined for
- Tenderness,
- Swelling,
- And discoloration
- Each finger should be tested for sensation.<sup>[8]</sup>
- Routine laboratory tests and X-rays can reveal diabetes, arthritis, and fractures.<sup>[9]</sup>
- In the Tunnel test, the doctor taps on or presses on the median nerve in the patient's wrist. The test is positive when tingling in the fingers or a resultant shock-like sensation occurs.<sup>[10]</sup>

### Differential diagnosis:

Differential diagnosis for carpal tunnel syndrome, is cervical radiculopathy. It can be mistaken for carpal tunnel syndrome since it can also cause abnormal or painful sensations in the hands and wrist. In contrast to

carpal tunnel syndrome, the symptoms of cervical radiculopathy usually begins in the neck and travels down the affected arm and may be worsened by neck movement.

### Treatment:

Treatments for carpal tunnel syndrome should begin as early as possible, under a doctor's direction. Underlying causes such as diabetes or arthritis should be treated first.<sup>[11]</sup>

Generally accepted treatments of CTS in modern system of medicine include

- Physiotherapy,
- Steroids either orally or injected locally,
- Splinting, and surgical release of the transverse carpal ligament.

In Ayurveda especially *Panchkarma* various methods of treatment are present. Like

- *Lepam*
- *Swedanam*
- *Abhyanga*
- *Agni Karma*

In *Ayurveda* considering the aspect of treatment for *Kapha Avrita Vata* is *Rookshan Karma* should be done, but in the case of CTS stage wise treatment may be considered as follows,

### *Lepam* and *Swedanam*:

Initially the patient of carpal tunnel syndrome take *Kapha Prakopaka Ahara* and *Viharas* then they cause *Kapha Prakop*, and due to *Kha Vegunya* at *Manivandha Sandhi*.

This vitiated *Kapha* cause to obstruction of normal *Gati* of *Vayu*. So in this stage *Rokshana Karma* external application of *Ruksha Lepam* and *Swedana* like,

*Kolkulathadi Lepam, Nagaradi Churna Lepam, Ruksha Swedanam, Patra Potali Swedanam, Dhanyamla Dhara Sweda*, are combat *Kapha Prakopa* may helpful which should at the same time not disturb *Vata*.

#### **Abhyanga:**

If patient not come in initial stage, the continuous obstruction to Gati of Vayu. It cause more vitiation of *Vata* which becomes same as *Kapha* vitiation on *Vikalp Samprapti*. So in this stage *Snigdha*, and *Ushna Chikitsa* are useful to combat *Vata* and *Kapha* both. So *Abhyanga* with *Taila* make with *Ushna*, *Teekshna*, *Kapha Vaatahara Dravyas* are more effective in this stage of carpal tunnel syndrome.

As *Sneha* properties like *Sookshma*, *Sara Guna* facilitate the transport of *Kapha Vaatahara* property targeting the *Madhyama Roga Marga*. This helps to relieve *Kapha Aavarana* and at the same time help to pacify *Vata*.

#### **Agnikarma:**

*Agnikarma* done with special pointed metallic instrument also known as *Shalaka*. *Agnikarma* acts directly on *Kapha Vata Dosha* and extenuating the causative factor of pain. After *Agnikarma* pain is reduced significantly with there lowest recurrence rates. As per research on *Agnikarma*, there is a transfer of heat energy (Proton-neutron-electron theory). Apart from this, the following local effects can be seen such as.<sup>[12]</sup>

- Improves blood circulation of particular local area
- Stimulation of regional nerves
- Increases tissue metabolism
- Decreases infection
- Muscle relaxation

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