



VIRECHANA KARMA AND ROLE OF VIRECHNA DRAVAYA IN THE PHYSIOLOGY OF THERAPEUTIC PURGATION

Rohini Laxmanrao Thakkarwad^{1*}, Ashwini Anandrao Yemalwad² and Ranjana Chandrakant Jadhav³

¹Assistant Professor, Panchakarma Department, Government Ayurvedic College, Nanded, India.

²Associate Professor, Dravyagun Department, Government Ayurvedic College, Nanded, India.

³Assistant Professor, Panchakarma Department, Government Ayurved College, Nanded, India.

*Corresponding Author: Dr. Rohini Laxmanrao Thakkarwad

Assistant Professor, Panchakarma Department, Government Ayurvedic College, Nanded, India.

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ABSTRACT

Panchakarma represents a designed series of some therapeutic procedures which are aimed to purifying body. This process balances homeostasis of body, promotes rejuvenation and enhances therapeutic effects of medications. The removal of waste substances from the body is referred as *Shodhana* which is carried out in three phases including preparatory, main and post-operative phases. *Virechana Karma* helps to treat conditions of *Srotorodha*, improper functioning of *Agni* and imbalances of *Tridoshas*, etc. *Virechana Karma* removes obstructions of body channels, normalizes *Agni* and restores balances of *Tridosha*, thus helps to treat many pathological conditions mainly associated with *Pitta* vitiation. *Virechana dravaya* offers some specific properties which contribute towards the therapeutic physiology of *Virechana Karma*. Present article emphasizes some aspects of *Virechana Karma* along with role of *Virechana dravaya* in the physiology of therapeutic purgation.

KEYWORDS: *Ayurveda, Virechana, Panchakarma, Dravaya, Purgation.*

INTRODUCTION

The term '*Vireka*' signifies the process of purging or evacuation, which ultimately facilitates detoxification of body. *Virechana* is one of the five purification techniques of *Panchakarma*. *Virechana* is effective in expelling the imbalanced *Pitta dosha*, primarily recommended for diseases of gastro-intestinal tract, etc. Waste elimination can be accomplished through the lower routes of body in the main procedure of *Virechana Karma*. Additionally *Shirovirechana* is used for the expulsion of morbid *Dosha* from the supraclavicular region. *Virechana Karma* mainly performs to eliminate *Dosha* from the intestines for therapeutic purpose. This therapeutic purgation induces bowel movement due to the some specific properties of medications used for *Virechana Karma*.^[1-4]

Virechana Karma involves expulsion of *Doshas* from the lower excretory tracts, which is considered as the site of *Pitta Dosha*. Drugs like *Aragvadha*, *Katuki* and *Trivrut* mainly employed for *Virechana* purposes, while *Snuhi* can be used for *Tikshana Virechana* whenever required. The action of *Virechana* drugs is attributed to their properties such as; *Sransana*, *Anulomana* and *Rechana* actions. The scraping and purging effects of *Virechana* drugs promotes downward flow of the waste materials to facilitate evacuation from the body. These *Virechana*

drugs administered based on the conditions and mode of action of medicines as depicted in **Figure 1**. *Snigdha* drugs (castor oil) indicated in conditions of excessive dryness in gut or constipation. While *Ruksha* drug (*Haritaki*) used in the conditions associated with excessive unctuousness in gut. Therapeutic purgation is advises in case of *Pitta dosha* aggravation. Vitiation of *Rakta*, *Mamsa* and *Meda Dhatus* can be managed significantly by this technique. Similarly condition associated with *Pitta Dosha* along with *Kapha dosha* can also be control by *Virechana Karma*.^[4-7]

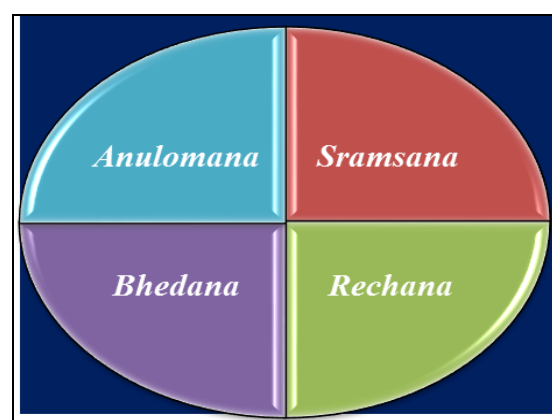


Figure 1: Purpose or action of virechana drugs.

Therapeutic purgation is conducted in late morning to aligning with the decrease of *Kapha Dosha* and increase of *Pitta Dosha*. Purgative medication administered on an empty stomach, during this process it is advised to respond promptly to pass stool and taking rest after the process of stool passing. To facilitate this urge, drinking of warm water and gentle massaging of abdomen is also recommended. Suppression of urge for defecation should be avoided and warm water may be used for drinking and cleaning after the intake of purgative medicines. The success of procedure depends upon the sequential expulsion of feces and *Dosha*, feeling of lightness after therapeutic purgation, cleaning of body channels, improvement in digestion process and relieving of disease symptoms for which therapy is recommended.

Virechana Substances and Physiology of therapeutic purgation:

Virechana drugs possess *Vyavayi Guna* which support their absorption and *Vikasi Guna* contributes in the softening and loosening of *Pitta Dosha*. *Ushna Guna* of these drugs promotes migration of *Dosha* into the lower abdominal tract, and their *Prabhava* effect is considered responsible for ushering morbid *Dosha* into this region. Furthermore, *Tikshna Guna* of *Virechana* drugs plays a vital role in breaking down and facilitating the rapid elimination of morbid *Pitta Dosha* and waste materials. The *Anulomana* effects induce a downward movement of *Malas*, while *Sramsana* effects assist smooth passage of *Malas* through the anal route. Lastly, *Bhedana* effects disintegrate *Malas* and *Dosha*, making their elimination easier and more efficient.^[6-8]

Various medications are recognized for their capacity to induce Virechana with their following characteristics:

- ✓ Substances with the inherent ability to trigger *Virechana* predominantly exhibit the dominance of *Prithvi* and *Jala Mahabhoota* in their composition.
- ✓ Medications capable of causing *Virechana* possess qualities such as *Ushna*, *Tikshna*, *Sukshma*, *Vyavayi* and *Vikasi Gunas*.
- ✓ These substances have an intrinsic *Virya* that contributes to their *Virechana*-inducing effects.
- ✓ Medications can initiate *Virechana* exhibit an inherent *Prabhava* that enables them to do so.

Virechana dravyas imparts systemic action and local evacuation, systemic action involves the movement of *Doshas* (*Pitta*) from the *Shakha* to *Koshtha*. Local evacuation focuses on the expulsion of these *Doshas* in the form of waste materials from the gastrointestinal tract. *Virechana* drugs are characterized by qualities such as sharpness, subtleness, pervasiveness and spreading, thus facilitate detoxification of body waste.^[7-10]

As per modern science laxatives drugs having potential to influence fluid dynamics of mucosal cells in the gastrointestinal tract (GIT), this can lead to the accumulation of fluids in the gut by either impairing

water and electrolyte absorption through the inhibition of Na^+ and K^+ ATPase in villous cells or by increasing water and electrolyte secretion through the stimulation of adrenal cyclase in crypt cells. Additionally, *Virechana* medicines induce hyperemia through intestinal mucosal inflammation. This can affect permeability and result in the transport of more protein-rich fluids across vessel walls into the gut. Ultimately, the increase in fluid content in the gut leads to evacuation.

Anulomana effect of virechana medicines:

- ✚ Expulsion of waste products after they have undergone complete digestion.
- ✚ Stimulation of digestive and metabolic processes; enhances *Dravaguna* and mobility.
- ✚ *Anulomana* medicines promoting downward movement of waste substances.
- ✚ *Anulomana* can potentially influence *Samanavata*, its action is directed towards the gastrointestinal tract.

Sramsana effect of virechana medicines:

- ✚ Involves expulsion of waste, waste materials, adhering to the gut eliminated through the anal route, either in a digested or undigested state.
- ✚ *Sramsana* medicines are believed to work primarily on the latter part of the small intestine and the motility of the large intestine.

Bhedana effect of virechana medicines:

- ✚ Involves the elimination of waste whether in a solidified state or an unformed state.
- ✚ The *Abaddha* or *Baddha* fecal matter is forcefully expelled out by this way.
- ✚ This approach involves drugs that are *Tikshna*, *Ushna* and *Laghu* in nature.
- ✚ *Bhedana* effect causes intense purgation by virtue of purgative medicines.
- ✚ *Bhedana* medicines act on the large intestine, promoting intestinal motility.
- ✚ *Bhedana* drugs induce potent contraction of the gallbladder, resulting in the expulsion of a greater quantity of bile into the gastrointestinal tract.

Rechana

- ✚ Involves expulsion of waste in a watery form.
- ✚ This affects large intestine, increasing intestinal secretions and motility.
- ✚ This approach involves uses of stimulant purgatives, which causes forceful bowel evacuation in a watery form.^[8-10]

CONCLUSION

The mechanism of action of *Virechan dravya* becomes apparent through the properties of *Virechan* drugs, which include *Ushna*, *Teekshna*, *Sukshma*, *Vyavayee*, *Vikashi* and *Adhobhagahar prabhav*. *Virechan* stands out as an excellent purification procedure, particularly for disorders associated with excess *Pitta dosha*. It offers simplicity in expelling a greater quantity of *Doshas* with

less stress and is generally associated with fewer complications compared to other therapies.

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