



THE SIGNIFICANT ROLE OF RAKTAMOKSHANA (SIRAVEDHANA)

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ABSTRACT

Siravedhana was regarded by Acharya Sushruta as half of the therapeutic measures (Ardhachikitsa) in Shalya Tantra, similar to Basti Karma in Kaya Chikitsa. The surgical technique of siravedha, which involves puncturing a vein and performing Raktamokshana (Bloodletting), is detailed. This widely recognized approach is employed to treat disorders where Rakta Dhatu is vitiated. With the aid of Raktamokshana, conditions where Rakta dhatu is primarily vitiated along with other doshas are readily curable. The importance of Siravedhana in helping the veins rid themselves of vitiated dosha has been highlighted by Acharya. They explained that in an emergency, Raktamokshana will be used if someone is unable to complete the fivefold purification method due to time constraints. In surgical circumstances with inadequate venous drainage, they specifically addressed Siravedhana.

KEYWORDS: Siravedhana, Raktamokshana, Ayurveda.

INTRODUCTION

Among the eight major divisions of Ashtang Ayurveda, the Shalya Tantra is an ancient Ayurvedic surgical discipline that has been referenced in numerous writings as one of its most effective branches. The famous Acharya Sushruta wrote the Sushruta Samhita, an extensive repository of surgical knowledge. Acharya Sushruta made a significant contribution to ancient surgery. With just few modifications, Acharya Sushruta's historical principles and methods still hold true today. In the Shalya Tantra, Acharya Sushruta refers to Siravyadha, a kind of Raktamokshana, as Ardha Chikitsa. Because it cures the symptoms right away, siravedhana is the recommended treatment for illnesses like these where the primary symptoms are pain and redness. For the majority of patients, one of the main reasons they contact a doctor is pain. In Ayurveda, it is referred to as Ruja, which is a synonym for illness. Patients' bodily and emotional states are impacted and disturbed. For the majority of Vyadhi, pain is a primary symptom (Disease). Ayurvedic principles state that all pains are Vataja in origin and can be resolved by correcting Vata imbalances inside the body. Acharya makes reference to Siravedhana in his description of the course of treatment for many Vata Vyadhi.

General principles of raktamokshana

Pramana of raktamokshana

Charaka samhita

The amount of Rakta removed should be according to strength of body & Dosha. (Ca.Su.24/19)

बलदोषप्रमाणाद्वा विशुद्ध्या रुधिरस्य वा।

रुधिरं स्त्रावयेज्जन्तोरशयं प्रसमीक्ष्य वा।।

(Ca.Su.24/19)

Sushruta samhita

The maximum amount of Rakta removed from Balavana (strenghtful), Bahu Dosha (excessive vitiated Rakta), Vayaastha (adult) is one Prastha (648 ml) (Su.Sa.8/16)

बलिनो बहुदोषस्य वयःस्थस्य शरीरिणः।

परं प्रमाणमिच्छन्ति प्रस्थं शोणितमोक्षणे॥

(Su.Sa.8/16)

Vagbhata samhita

The maximum amount of vitiated Rakta removed in a Balavana is one Prastha. If Rakta removed beyond this limit can cause Mrityu (death) and Daruna Chalaamaya (complicated Vata Vyadhis). (Ah.Su.27/42)

अशुद्धौ बलिनोऽप्यस्त्रं न प्रस्थात्स्त्रावयेत्परम्।

अतिस्सुतौ हि मृत्युः स्याद्धारुणा वा चलामयाः ।।

(Ah.Su.27/42)

Shrangdhara Samhita and Bhavaprakasha Samhita

The amount of blood removed should be Amaya Prasamikshaya (in accordance with the amount of vitiation of Rakta or the quantum of disease). It could (324ml) or Ardhaardha (one fourth) be either Prastha, Ardha (half) Prastha Prastha (162ml). (Sh.Ut. 12/1) (Bh.Pa. Shonita- sravavidhi.109)

शोणितं स्रावयेज्जन्तोरामयं प्रसमीक्ष्य च।

प्रस्थं प्रस्थार्द्धकं वाऽपि प्रस्थार्धार्धमथापि वा। (Sh.Ut. 12/1) (Bh.Pa Shonitasravavidhi.109)

The interpretation of the description of texts are The thumb rule for blood letting is it should be in accordance of strength of body, Dosha, amount of vitiation of Rakta or the quantum of disease. In maximum vitiation and strength and in adult individual the amount of blood should not exceed one Prastha. In medium vitiation, strength and non adult or aged individual the amount of blood should not exceed half Prastha. In minimum vitiation and strength and non adult or aged individual the amount of blood should not exceed one fourth Prastha. The consequences of excessive blood letting is it can cause mortality or severe Vata Roga.

Types and Important role of raktamokshana

Bloodletting, also known as raktamokshana, is the process of taking a patient's blood in order to treat or prevent an illness. Phlebotomy is the term for bloodletting in modern medicine. In certain situations, such as polycythemia vera, porphyria cutanea tarda, etc., therapeutic phlebotomy is used to lower the red blood cell count. In addition, bloodletting is a significant component of Hildegard, Ayurvedic, Unani, and traditional Chinese medicine systems. Rattamokshana was included by Acharya Sushruta as one of the five fundamental detoxifying methods (Panchakarma procedures). The term Raktamokshana means "to let out blood" since it is composed of the words Rakta, which means blood, and Mokshana, which means to leave or expel out.

According to the literature, there are two primary categories of Raktamokshana: Shastra Visravana and Anushtra Visravana. These two categories can be further subdivided into the following subtypes:

1. **Shastra visravana:** Metal instruments can be used to accomplish this. It can also be separated into two subtypes:
Siravyadha (Venepuncture) and Pracchana (bloodletting by numerous incisions).
2. **Anushastra visravana:** Metal instruments are not used in this practice. It is further separated into the following three subtypes:
 - (a) Sucking through a horn, or Shrungavacharana, is mostly mentioned in Vata dushti.
 - (b) Jalaukavacharana, or the use of leeches; primarily mentioned in Pitta dushti.

- (c) Alabu (Vacuum extraction with a bottle gourd and Alabu): primarily recommended in Kapha dushti.

Out of all the varieties, Siravyadha (Venepuncture) is recognized as the most effective method with higher therapeutic benefits.

The siravedhana

It involves performing the Raktamokshana surgically by puncturing a vein for a medicinal purpose. In all circumstances when Raktamokshana is indicated, it is indicated. Even so, Siravedhana is superior to other Raktamokshana methods in specific diseases. Those that are bold and physically strong tend to exhibit it. When Rakta Dhatu morbidity is generalized, Siravedhana is the most effective treatment.

View of classical ayurvedic text in sushruta samhita

According to Acharya Sushruta, Siravedhana can be performed as an emergency for prompt management and the desired outcome in disorders for which Snehana and Lepadi therapeutic methods are insufficient. Whereas Siravedhana is utilized to drive out vitiated doshas along with Rakta dhatu in cases where Rakta dhatu predominates, Panchakarma remedies are used to purify vitiated doshas. According to Acharya Sushruta, Rakta is the fourth dosha. To preserve health or eradicate illness, vitiated Rakta from the associated veins should be released. With a well-organized Suravedhana, we can identify symptoms like Laghavama (freshness of the body and painful area) and Vedanashanti (pain decrease).

Siravedhana can be used for conditions where pain is a major contributing element since it indicates that the pain associated with a condition will lessen and then the disease's symptoms would decrease.

Ashtang sangraha

An illustration of the significance and effectiveness of Siravedhana in this literature is as follows: When a field's borders are removed, water leaks out and the plants die; similarly, vitiated blood leaks out and venepuncture automatically cures the illness. A sickness should be considered vitiated blood-borne and treated by venesection if it does not go away even after receiving the precise and suitable course of treatment.

Ashtang hridaya

When discussing the attributes and characteristics of Raaktamokshana and the ailments for which it can be used, it is mentioned that Sadya Raagruja Samana is the preferred patient since it quickly reduces pain and redness.

DISCUSSION

Whereas the vitiated Dosha in Panchakarma Chikitsa are purified, the vitiated Dushya in Siravedha are released together with vitiated Dosha in which Rakta Dhatu is prevalent. Rakta's sensitivity to impurities is so broad that the classical scholars were forced to designate it as

the fourth Dosh. To preserve health or eradicate sickness, Dushita (vitiating) Rakta from the associated Siras (veins) should be released. Because Pitta is dependent on Rakta, Raktamokshana reduces the amount of Pitta enhancement; as a result, the therapy also relieves or cures Dosh and Pittaja Vyadhi. In the Astanga Samgraha, Acharya Vagbhatta mentions the likely mechanism of action of Srivedhana. Purva karma is recommended to liquefy doshas and move them into the bloodstream. Siravedhana removes that Dosh from circulation thus its act on removal of disease.

One significant para-surgical treatment that signifies the release of tainted blood from the body is raktamokshana.

While there are several Raktamokshana modalities that can be used, Siravyadha is one of the Shastravacharana. Naturally, it seems strange that several locations have been recommended for various illnesses. Why is it not possible to select a common site for all diseases? This is the issue that needs to be understood in this context. Various hypotheses and pathophysiological mechanisms might be used because cells are the fundamental building blocks of the body.

Particularly, every cell uses a unique method to carry out its tasks. The purpose of circulation is to carry waste products out of the body and meet the demands of the tissues for things like nutrition, oxygen, and hormones.

Tissues that are actively moving require increased blood flow. Normally, the heart can only beat four to seven times each minute. As a result, increasing blood flow cannot occur throughout the body. Instead of controlling local blood flow to the level required by the tissue, micro-vessels in each tissue monitor its needs, including the availability of oxygen and nutrients as well as the buildup of waste products. This allows for enhanced flow as necessary. Every type of bodily tissue has a unique microcirculation that is arranged to meet specific needs. Each cell has its own microcirculation to keep its inside environment consistent.

In Ayurveda, the application of a specific therapy for a given condition relies on its properties, such as Rasa, Guna, etc. Treatment consists solely of correcting vitiated doshas to restore tridosha equilibrium. When Pitta and Kapha are associated with Vata dosha, or when Pitta and Rakta are in vyadhi, Siravedhana operates primarily on Pitta, Rakta, and Kapha.

When Vata prakopa develops, it is caused by Avarana of Pitta and Kapha doshas. Siravedhana can eliminate these doshas, indirectly paving the way for Anulomana, which in turn cures Pitta or Kapha dosha and Vatika symptoms. Patients also experience immediate pain relief.

From a modern perspective, pain signals from several body segments or even from the same region are

suppressed when vast sensory fibers from peripheral touch receptors are stimulated. There is a local lateral inhibition as a result.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda uses techniques like Siravyadha to reveal glimmers of perfection. Within Ayurveda, all therapeutic treatments stated in the Shalya tantra (surgery) are considered ardhha chikitsa, or siravyadha or bloodletting. It is recommended for both prophylactic and therapy. It should be used on an increasing number of patients in order to standardize and promote it as one of the better therapy modalities because it can alleviate a variety of health issues. When treating illnesses where pain is a primary symptom, siravedhana is an easy, affordable, secure, and efficient therapy option. Hospitalization is not necessary for this surgery. When alternative treatments are ineffective at producing the desired effects or do not immediately relieve symptoms, it can aid in the illness's cure. As opposed to other purification techniques, it is beneficial to remove doshas straight from the shakhas.

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