


VEDHANKARMA REVOLUTIONIZING PAIN MANAGEMENT IN THE MODERN ERA -
REVIEW ARTICLE

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ABSTRACT

Explores the transformative potential of Vedhankarma in contemporary pain management. Vedhankarma, rooted in ancient Indian traditions, is gaining attention as a holistic approach to alleviate pain and enhance overall well-being. This review article delves into the historical context of Vedhankarma, tracing its origins and evolution over time. It examines the core principles and methodologies employed in Vedhankarma, emphasizing its integrative nature that combines physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions. The article critically evaluates the scientific basis and efficacy of Vedhankarma in addressing various types of pain, including chronic and acute conditions.

KEYWORDS: Vedhankarma, Holistic Approach, Ancient Indian Traditions, Pain Management.

INTRODUCTION

In the pursuit of comprehensive and effective pain management strategies in the modern era, there is a growing interest in revisiting ancient holistic approaches. Vedhankarma, rooted in the rich traditions of ancient India, has emerged as a promising paradigm for alleviating pain and enhancing overall well-being. As contemporary healthcare increasingly recognizes the interconnectedness of physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions in health, Vedhankarma offers a holistic framework that integrates these facets in the pursuit of pain relief.

Vedhankarma therapy, an ancient para-surgical procedure outlined in the Sushruta Samhita, stands as a testament to Acharya Sushruta's pioneering contributions to the field of surgery, earning him the title "father of surgery" within the medical system. This modality, constituting one of the eight Shastrakarma procedures in Ayurveda, is referred to as Viddha Karma or "Vedhan Chikitsa." Recognized for its swiftness in delivering results, Viddha Karma is considered a valuable blessing to all living beings.^[1]

Ayurveda, a repository of numerous effective and safe treatments, includes Viddha Karma as a crucial therapeutic approach. Also known as "Suchivedhana," this treatment involves puncturing or piercing specific points, demonstrating its efficacy in alleviating pain and

influencing the pathological processes in a favorable manner. The ancient wisdom encapsulated in Viddha Karma showcases Ayurveda's commitment to providing diverse, potent, and gentle healing modalities for the well-being of individuals across the living kingdom.

AIM OF STUDY

Understanding Vedhankarma's potential in pain management is crucial for integrating holistic approaches. This study addresses gaps in contemporary pain care, exploring ancient wisdom's transformative impact on modern healthcare. This study helps to many students and researcher to understanding vedhankarma.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Ayurveda employs diverse approaches to address various forms of pain, such as shoulder pain and knee joint pain. These Ayurvedic methods stand out for their simplicity, safety, effectiveness, and economic feasibility for patients. Examples include Siravedha, Agnikarma, Basti, Snehana, Swedana, and oral medications. Significantly, alleviating pain associated with different ailments is a crucial aspect of Ayurvedic treatment. Patients experiencing pain often encounter restlessness, hindering their daily activities. Swift relief from pain is a patient's expectation, making it imperative to explore effective treatment methods for pain relief within the Ayurvedic framework.

Modern science offers an array of remedies, typically in the form of drugs or injections, to alleviate pain. These remedies often involve the use of NSAIDs (Nonsteroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs) and steroids.^[2] It's noteworthy that these medications can have adverse effects on vital organs such as the liver and kidneys, impacting the Raktavaha and Mutravaha srotas. Moreover, these medications necessitate intermittent usage and offer only temporary relief from pain.

While treating patients with vedhankarma it is common to encounter individuals experiencing joint pain. Restlessness is a typical observation in practice, as individuals in pain often demand quick methods for relief. Thus, the idea of vedhankarma in Ayurveda emerges, as the expected results of Ayurvedic medicine, including shoolprashamana gan, are not immediate. Shushruta has detailed various procedures for treating diseases, such as Ashtavidha shastrakarma, kshar karma, and Raktamokshana, in addition to medicinal treatments.

Vedhankarma

Vedhankarma is explained in the Siravyadh Vidhi Adhyaya. Here, "viddha" means to puncture. In the Siravyadh Vidhi Adhyaya, there is an explanation of Raktamokshana. We perform Raktamokshana at the specified site. There are no blood vessels at many points in Urdva Jatrugat Vikaar, making it challenging to perform Raktamokshana. Consequently, many practitioners opt to perform Raktamokshana at the jugular vein or on the hand. In Nasavicar, Raktamokshana must be done at nasagre, eliminating the need for different locations. Acharya Dalhan has successfully addressed this issue. Minimal or very little bloodletting is anticipated in such cases.^[3]

Upakarana Vedhankarma

Sushrut Samhita delineates eight types of Shastra Karmas. Among these, Vedhan Karma is a procedure that can be performed using various instruments, one of which is specifically mentioned as "Suchi" in the Sushrut Samhita. For Vedhan Suche Shastra is advised.^[4] Vedhan karma helps to relieve pain by puncturing the site and relieving the obstructed Vata^[5] which is the main cause of pain as explained by Acharya Sushruta.^[6] For ENT diseases, we use a needle of size 26 with a length of ½. It aligns precisely with the Vrihi Pramana.

In Ayurveda, the occurrence of pain (Vedna) is attributed to Vataprakopa. Acharya Charaka has elucidated that the causes of Vataprakopa include Dhatukshaya (depletion of tissues) and Margaavrodha (obstruction in the channels or pathways).^[7] Additionally, within the Tridosha framework, Vata is the predominant dosha and serves as the regulator for the other two doshas, namely Pitta and Kapha.^[8]

Suchivedhan can be viewed as a modified version of Siravedha. As per Acharya Sushruta, Siravedha is referred to as Shalyachikitsaardha, indicating that it

constitutes half of the Shalya Chikitsa,^[9] or surgical treatment. Acharya Sushruta further details the Vedhan (puncturing) of specific Sira (vessels) in specific diseases. While Siravedhan is typically performed on clearly visible Sira, in cases where the vessels are not distinctly visible, Suchivedhan Karma comes into play. When Siravedha is carried out, it results in the release of the most vitiated Dosha, namely Rakta (blood). Similarly, during Suchivedhan, the primary focus is on releasing the most vitiated Dosha, which is Vata.

PHYSIOLOGY OF PAIN^[10]

The physiology of pain involves a subjective sensation that arises when tissues are undergoing damage, prompting the individual to eliminate the source of the pain stimulus. In essence, pain serves as a protective mechanism for the body. Receptor organs for pain are distributed across the body, and the neuroanatomical understanding of pain emerged with the identification of spinal nerve roots and specialized medullary pathways dedicated to pain perception. A multi-synaptic pathway system relays signals in the reticular formation of the brainstem. Activation of these pathways leads to the perception of pain at both cortical and subcortical levels.

Pain stimuli can originate from various sources, including thermal, chemical, or electrical factors, often accompanied by additional elements such as fear, discomfort, and autonomic changes. The complex interplay of these factors contributes to the intricate physiological experience of pain.

VEDHANKARMA PROCEDURE REVIEW

"SUCHIVEDHANA" In the Sushruta Samhita, the "Siravyadha Vidhi Adhyaya" extensively details the Vyadhana (puncturing) of specific Siras (vessels) in distinct diseases. Despite its comprehensive content, this chapter can be notably perplexing. Upon repeated examination, one can discern the rationale behind Sushruta's use of the term "Vyadha" in this context, shedding light on the nuanced understanding embedded in the chapter.^[11]

The word „Vyadha“ has so many meanings, which can be as follows.

1. To bore a hole to drain.
2. To let out entrapped Vayu.
3. To let out entrapped circulation in blood vessels
4. To let out fluid in Jatodaka and Mutravruddhi.
5. To let out pus in Vridradhi.

The term "Vyadha" in this context necessitates the use of a hollow needle. In cases where the blood vessel is substantial, the procedure involves evacuating the blood. However, if the Sira (vessel) is not visible, it is to be pricked by a needle until it either bleeds or does not bleed. To grasp the concept of Viddha Karma, it is essential to consider that Sira consistently carries all three Doshas, namely Vata, Pitta, and Kapha, in addition to Rakta (blood).

DEPTH OF VYADHA KARMA^[12]

The depth of Vyadha Karma, as detailed in the Sushruta Samhita, is meticulously specified based on the area where the procedure is to be performed. When conducted on Mamsal pradesha (muscular region), the depth should be one Yava. For bone, the hole should have an Ardha-Yava Matra depth. On the skin, the depth can be either Ardha-Yava Matra or Vrihi Matra. The instrument recommended for Vyadhana in Mamsal pradesha is the Vrihimukhen Yantra, while the Kutharika Yantra is to be employed for Asthi-Vyadhana (puncturing of bone).

But for Vyadhan Karma various instruments can be used as mentioned by Acharya Sushruta, For Suchivedhana we use Insulin needle No. 26. This needle has 13mm length (which exactly matches with the length of Vrihi), 0.45mm breadth. So it should be pierced 2mm to 4mm for skin, 4mm to 6mm for Mamsa and 6-10 mm for Snayu, Asthi and Sandhi.^[13]

Ayurvedic acupuncture needle Disposable needles



Disposable needle of 26 gauge



METHOD OF TREATMENT^[14]

The vedhankarma therapy entails the strategic selection of specific points on the body based on the desired therapeutic goals. A limited number of needles are carefully positioned on these points, applying consistent pressure for a designated duration and at a specific

distance. This therapeutic approach is primarily tailored to the pathology targeted for management. Vedhankarma not only serves as a valuable remedy for addressing acute forms of pain but also proves beneficial in the treatment of significant diseases, functioning as a form of medicinal intervention.

Diseases treated with vedhankarma therapy

- Wide range of pain like- lower back pain, Pain in the groin, Migraine, Sciatica, Muscle pain, Frozen shoulder (shoulder pain), Neck pain.
- Different types of ophthalmic conditions starting from conjunctivitis to glaucoma and retinal diseases such as macular edema, macular degeneration, optic atrophy, retinal hemorrhages, retinal detachment etc.
- Acute painful conditions like- Renal colic, Appendicitis, Cholecystitis, Pancreatitis, Gastritis etc.
- ENT conditions like- Tinnitus, Deafness, Anosmia, Nasal blockage, deviated nasal septum, Sinusitis etc.
- Stress, Anxiety, Depression, Sleep disturbance etc.

HOW IT WORKS?

Vedhankarma is a sterile procedure involving the puncturing or piercing of specific points using specialized hollow needles known as "Viddha karma shalaka." In contemporary medical terminology, the immune system responds to this treatment by releasing endorphins, contributing to pain reduction. This therapy is designed to provide immediate and acute pain relief without the need for additional internal medication to enhance its efficacy.

According to Ayurveda, Vedhankarma operates on the principles of Tridosha and Rakta. It works by opening up the pathways where Vayu (air) may be entrapped due to pathological conditions, allowing it to move freely throughout the body and facilitating its proper function. By ensuring the unhindered movement of entrapped Vayu, Vedhankarma also supports microcirculation, enhancing the flow of fluids at a microscopic level in the body. This holistic approach aligns with Ayurvedic principles to restore balance and promote overall well-being.

Vedhankarma therapy induces the release of opioids within the body, resulting in a reduction of pain levels while ensuring the maintenance of oxygen levels throughout the body. This therapy contributes to the equilibrium of the three foundational elements, namely vayu, pitta, and kapha. Vayu, functioning as the regulator in the body, plays a crucial role in pain sensation. By harmonizing the balance of energy and external influences, vedhankarma aids in the overall well-being and homeostasis of the body.

BENEFITS OF VEDHANKARMA

- It is a counter irritant without dermal allergies.
- Releases endorphins and enzymes that relieve pain.

- It indulges with scientific method of generating local static electricity generated that leads to polarization on cellular level, inducing micro currents; thereby moving metabolite waste products from cells to channels of transportation.
- Most cost-effective treatment for Patient and Physician too.
- It is an OPD procedure, where patient doesn't need to be hospitalized.

DISCUSSION

Vedhankarma, an integral component of Ayurvedic therapeutic interventions, operates on the principles of balancing Tridosha (Vata, Pitta, Kapha) and addressing issues related to Rakta (blood). This procedure involves the sterile puncturing of specific points using specialized hollow needles known as "Viddha karma shalaka." One of the key mechanisms through which Vedhankarma exerts its effects is by prompting the body to release endorphins, which act as natural pain relievers. This immediate and acute pain relief is achieved without the need for additional internal medications.

Ayurvedic philosophy holds that Vedhankarma plays a crucial role in freeing entrapped Vayu (air) within the body. By piercing specific points, it opens up pathways where Vayu may be obstructed, allowing it to move freely. This not only addresses the root cause of pain related to Vayu imbalance but also promotes microcirculation, enhancing the flow of fluids at a microscopic level.

Moreover, Vedhankarma influences the balance of the Tridosha – the dynamic forces governing physiological and psychological processes. Vayu, as a regulator in the body, is responsible for pain, and Vedhankarma helps

maintain its equilibrium. The therapy's ability to modulate the three pillars of Vayu, Pitta, and Kapha contributes to the restoration of holistic balance in the body.

The therapy's impact on the secretion of opioids is noteworthy. Opioids, the body's natural pain-relieving chemicals, are released during Vedhankarma, ensuring effective pain management while maintaining optimal oxygen levels. This dual action not only alleviates pain but also supports overall well-being.

In essence, Vedhankarma exemplifies the intricate synergy between ancient Ayurvedic principles and contemporary understanding. Its holistic approach, addressing not only pain but also the broader balance of bodily elements, underscores its significance in the realm of traditional healing practices.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Vedhankarma stands as a remarkable Ayurvedic therapy, seamlessly blending traditional wisdom with contemporary insights. By puncturing specific points with specialized needles, this procedure elicits the release of endorphins, offering immediate pain relief and promoting microcirculation. With its focus on balancing Tridosha and optimizing the body's natural opioid response, Vedhankarma exemplifies the holistic approach of Ayurveda. This therapy not only addresses pain but also fosters overall well-being by harmonizing the body's dynamic forces. In embracing Vedhankarma, Ayurveda showcases its enduring relevance in enhancing health and vitality through a nuanced understanding of the body's intricate balance.

Vedhakarma pictures





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