



BLOOD DONATION (RAKTA-MOKSHAN)- A SECREAT OF HEALTHY LONG LIFE

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ABSTRACT

In these days, there is much more lack of knowledge & fear regarding blood donation even in literate class also then what about the illiterate other people of the world ? This is very unfortunate thing that, I have need to explain the importance of blood donation. In this article, I am not only explaining the physical & mental benefit of blood donation as per modern medical science but also an ayurvedic perspective view regarding blood donation i.e. **Raktamokshan**. In Ayurveda, our great Rishies very well known about the Rakta dosha. Eventhough Rakta is not included in Tridosha but in Dhātu. Rakta is a 2nd no. of Dhātu which has function of “**Jeevan**”, which is most important for life. But this Dhātu is also get impure by various reasons that's why it needs purification .Blood purification but how ? we can replace it with limitations by blood donation i.e. Raktamokshan. Rakta-vistravan is included in **Ashtavidh Shastra-karma**. In old era, there was no such facility or technology was available so Rakta -vistravan was only the choice of treatment. But now a days, it is dual beneficial for donor that donate the blood & save the life as well as purify his blood. Blood (Rakta) is counted as a 4th Dosha in Unani.

KEYWORDS: Blood donation (Rakta-Mokshan), Physical & mental benefits, healthy long life.

INTRODUCTION

Everybody have a car or bike & we are regularly doing the servicing of our vehicle like, washing, over – oiling & change of engine oil, etc.

If we are caring about our instruments / vehicles so much, then why not our body ? which is gifted freely by nature.

Change of engine oil is equivalent to blood donation. You better know, what is the benefits of regular changing of engine oil at certain KM driven but doesn't know the several benefits of blood donation.

Old changed engine oil contains dust particles, many more other radicle along with lost its lubricant capacity. Moreover, we change the engine oil regularly, same way our old circulated blood contains much more unnecessary dead cells, extra burden of iron in it which are not destructed by liver due to it's failure & it has no role in physiology of our body. They harming the body by depositing in the system like cardio-respiratory, cerebro-vascular, excretory system & consequences are like heart attack, cerebral stroke & renal failure. In this way, you cleaning your body yourself by donating the blood.

Let us discuss scientifically this topic in this research article.

After a certain period, our blood cells destroyed & newer form, this is a physiological phenomenon of every living body. When there is any kind of pathology develop due to any reason, this phenomenon gets disturbed. Then the various system of our Body gets ill. After some period our blood become thick, its viscosity increased but there are very small venules in our body at the end part of blood circulatory system brain, heart, kidney, so the blood ingredients, nutrients could not reach / transform in the last tissues & cells due to the increased viscosity of blood but if you regularly donate your blood it will works for you as a change of engine oil & your body generate it with in 48-72 hours.

Raktavishravan (Blood donation) is a part of shodhan chikitsa –

शोणितं तु आग्नेयम् ।

सु.सू.-14-7

शोणितं = Blood

Blood is pitta pradhan. In this article, we are discussing regarding **Rakta-vistravan** only not about other details of Raktadushti.

कुर्याच्छोणितरोगेषु रक्तपित्तहरि क्रियाम् ।

विरेकमुपवासं च स्त्रावणं शोणितस्य च ॥

च.सु.24-18

Diseases arises from blood impurities, in those all diseases to be treated as Rakta Pitta treatment like virechan, (Purgation), Langhan (starvation), Raktamokshan (Blood letting) that we can say blood donation.

Aims of study

1. To illustrate the importance of blood donation by Ayurvedic view.
2. A easy way to achieve health benefits for everyone.

Significance of Blood Donation

Blood is a essential for life.

It is also ascribed as the '**fluid of life**', eventhough it's donation is more beneficial for donar rather than receiver.

Vital for living and maintaining body mechanisms, blood provides nourishment to body tissues and the organs. There are innumerable reasons as to why one needs blood. The need for blood may arise out of medical conditions, injury, road traffic accidents and obstetrics related complications.

'On time' access to blood transfusion is a life-saving measure or one that can treat a serious illness in patients. The reason why people engage in the noble act of blood donation is indeed social belongingness and responsibility towards society.

Blood handles the basic functions that sustain life. So call a function of '**Jeevan**' in Ayurveda. Its primary functions include transporting oxygen from the lungs to body tissue, carbon dioxide from body tissue to the lungs and hormones from glands throughout the body. With a dysfunction of any of these functions, millions of people can succumb to blood loss if it is not given in time to nourish and cleanse their body.

Donating blood becomes more important because not everybody has the same blood group. In all, there are four blood types (blood groups) categorised on the basis of Rh factors. Blood extracted through a transfusion must match the blood group of the patient. To obtain a perfect match, patients make autologous blood donations before heading for the surgery.

- In simple terms, blood can be defined as the fluid present inside our body that carries oxygen from the lungs to other regions
- Blood also takes along the waste that is needed to be disposed off the body
- Blood supplies body tissues with nutrients such as glucose, amino acids and fatty acids
- Blood also looks after immunological functions (circulation of white blood cells and detection of harmful radicals by antibodies), body's self-repair mechanism (coagulation), regulation of body's pH,

regulation of core body temperature and hydraulic functions

- An adult's body has about 4-6 litres of blood
- Your blood can gift life to someone, who cannot make blood within a limited duration. It is our moral duty to help those in need. You may require blood at any point of time due to some unfortunate or medical condition.
- Here is your opportunity to make a unique contribution to the health and survival of others. Not everyone gets such an opportunity to participate in a noble cause. If you have a chance, save a life!

Health Benefits of regular blood donation

Donating blood not only helps you fulfill your social responsibility it also provides you with many health benefits. Everytime you donate blood, you gain from it physiically & mentally. Here are, reasons you should give blood regularly.

1. The good social act

A small needle pricking pain transform you into a superhero. This could be because every time you donate blood, you save up to three human lives. And not just the person on the receiving end is benefitted, there are proven gains for the person donating blood. Here are some advantages of being a responsible and caring human.

2. What is needed for blood donation ?

Donating blood is a very safe procedure and is not harmful to the donor. You will be assessed for your eligibility by a medical personnel before you can donate blood. The bare minimum requisite is a minimum 16 years of age weighing at least 50 kilograms.

Donating blood helps to do away with the excess of iron in the bodies.

While donating blood, people get screened for diseases like hepatitis and HIV.

Apart from the wonderful feeling that comes after helping someone in need, donating blood also helps to have a positive impact on your health. If you are wondering about how donating blood may affect, it would be important to consider the various benefits it gives.

3. Iron reduction

Intake of iron beyond the amount necessary leads to production of free radicals. These can disrupt cellular functioning by the changes they cause. The problems created by excess iron intake are especially found in red meat eaters. Donating blood helps to do away with the excess of iron in the bodies of such people.

Risk of cardiovascular diseases increase due to high iron content in the body. Women before their menopause control the iron content in their bodies through

menstruation, but men and women after menopause do not have any such mechanism of removing excess iron from their body. They can do with blood donation. If you have any doubts regarding whether the iron content in your body is above normal or not, there is nothing to worry. Blood donation always follows a test in which the iron level of the donor is checked to make sure it is not too low.

4. You can be screened for health conditions

The normal procedure before allowing a person to donate blood serves to tell the donor about the various parameters of his health. Donors tell their health history in brief and they are then told about their health parameters such as blood pressure, pulse, cholesterol level, haemoglobin level and body temperature.

Moreover, donors are screened for various infectious diseases such as hepatitis and HIV. There is always a chance that an unaware blood donor learns about the infection he is carrying after these tests. In fact there are some donation sites that refer donors with potential health risk to counseling and improved health care. Even if medical help is not provided to the donor, he is nonetheless made aware of the health concerns if any. This can be treated with the services of a regular physician.

5. Accumulation of public health data

The researchers can make use of the data collected by blood donation centres as they provide all the relevant details of the donors' medical condition. This gives them the ability to determine the major risk factors of public health. They can use this data to inform the public about the major health problems that they are likely to face in the coming years. Thus, the accumulation of public health data through blood donation centres helps to sound the alert about health problems of public.

6. Better heart/brain & kidney health

When you donate blood, your overall cardiovascular, cerebrovascular & excretory system health improves. The iron levels in your blood may increase and raise your chances of getting a heart disease. Donating blood regularly keeps the iron levels in check. This can help reduce the chances of heart attack by as much as 88%. Additionally, regular blood donation can lower the risk

of severe cardiovascular events such as stroke by 33% & renal failure rate by 30%.

7. Enhances new blood cells production by liver

With blood drawn, the donor's body immediately starts replenishing the lost blood. The bone marrow produces new cells within 48 hours of donation and it takes only a month or two to completely replace the red blood cells lost during the donation.

8. Burns calories

When you donate one pint of blood, which is equal to 450 ml, your body burns 650 calories. This is why, donating blood on a regular basis can also improve fitness. Regular blood donation has been reported to provide an invigorated and reenergized feeling in the elderly.

9. Cuts the risk of cancer/ DM / High BP / DVT & much more diseases

Donate blood to lower your risk of developing cancer. Lower chances of getting various cancers, including that of liver, lung, colon, stomach and throat have been associated with consistent blood donation, reports by Miller-Keystone Blood Center. Risk levels drop in correlation with how often participants donate blood.

It is very useful in controlling metabolic syndrome. Metabolic syndrome is the name given to a host of difficulties affecting people who are obese. This includes insulin resistance, glucose intolerance, dyslipidaemia and hypertension and leads to an increased risk of diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Since it is known that accumulation of iron in the body is also associated with hypertension and diabetes researchers from Berlin and University Duisburg-Essen randomly assigned patients with metabolic syndrome into two groups, those undergoing iron reductions by phlebotomy and controls.

The iron-reduction patients had 300ml of blood removed at the start of the trial and between 250 and 500ml removed four weeks later. Six weeks later, allowing plenty of time for blood volume to be replaced, the patients who gave blood had a significant reduction in systolic blood pressure (from 148 mmHg to 130 mmHg) as well as reduction in blood glucose levels and heart rate, and an improvement in cholesterol levels (LDL/HDL ratio) (*BMC Medicine*, 2012.).

For DVT

ग्रंथितं तु जलौकोभिरसृग्व्यापि सिराव्यधैः / अ.सं.- सु.स्था.- 35-10

प्रच्छानं पिन्डीते वा स्यादवगाढे जलौकसः // अ.सं.- सु.स्था.- 35-11

The great Acharya Vagbhatta has described in his scripture, Ashtang Samgrah, Sutra-Sthan that if blood is deposited abnormally in the vein, then that clot should be dissolved by Jalauka application on the skin over the area affected in considerable number & if the impure blood is in the whole body, then that should be drained by vein

rupture (sira-vedh) & moreover, if impure blood is deposited superficially then by scrapping & if blood clot situated in deep vein, then there should be use of Jalauka to dissolve the deep vein blood clot.

Great acharya **Sushruta** says,
 त्वग्दोषा ग्रंथयः शोफा रोगाः शोणितजाश्च ये ।
 रक्तमोक्षण शीलानां न भवन्ति कदाचन ॥
 सु.सू.14-34

A person who is doing blood donation (Rakta-Mokshan) on proper time, he will never suffer from blood related diseases, skin diseases, tumours & painful swellings also.

10. Makes you feel good

When you donate blood, you impact not only the patient whose life may depend on your donation, but also all those who depend on that patient. The entire community will benefit from the spirit of generosity. Donor gets glossy & fair skin (Rakta saar pususha lakshan).

Samyak Yog Lakshan – (after Blood donation)

लाघवं वेदनाशान्तिर्व्याधेर्वेगपरिक्षयः ।
 सम्याग्विस्त्राविते लिंगप्रसादो मनसस्तथा ॥
 सु.सू.14-33

By proper way blood donating done, then a donor person feels lightness in the body, subsides the pain, decrease the intensity of disease & mind becomes happy, all these symptoms take place instantly after Rakta – vishravan (Blood donation).

Concept of Blood letting in Ayurveda Let him bleed...

Yes, friends, let him bleed. He is bleeding for his own good. He is bleeding for his own health. He is bleeding for his own wellbeing. For example, when BP is raised then nasal bleeding starts & stops automatically amount of blood letting. This is a natural phenomenon of body, not pathological, this has to be understood. Let him bleed. Because it is autumn. When the rainy clouds are shying away and when sourness in the nature is at its peak, let him bleed. The fire is so high in the body that let him bleed. Let the fire leave him to calmness, to peace. Because the fire is two sided weapon. When he controls the fire, it is the light, it is the warmth and when the fire controls him, then it is a disaster, it is destruction. Let the destruction go away so that the *tejas* will illuminate his body, mind and soul.

We are talking about one of the rules for the health of the body. Let the blood out in measured way of the body in autumn. It is called as *Raktamokshana* in Ayurveda. *Raktamokshana* is one of the important preventive rules described by Ayurveda. It means that in this season of October, every person has to let around 40 to 100 ml of the blood. Under medical supervision, a phlebotomy (Sira-Vyadhan) is done, which is an OPD procedure. It is similar to what you have experienced in pathological lab when they take your blood out for investigations. Or as an option, you can donate the blood. The blood donation

day is on 1st of October. So if you are donating blood on October, you achieve more. You can save someone's life and you can cleanse your own body at one stroke.

How does it happen?

A small amount of blood lost gives stimulation to the haemopoetic system in the body. So that the fresh blood in the form of new red blood cells, white blood cells and other factors come onto the vascular system. This is proved by different studies in recent times. One of them is the Stockholm study in which it was proven that the small amount of blood letting can lead to improve the anaemic status in the post radiotherapy and chemotherapy patients.

But the bloodletting is not only about getting the fresh blood into system. It's much more than that. It helps a lot in skin disorders. By nature, many skin disorders are tenacious. They take a lot of time to get cured, by any system of medicine. And they have a habit of recurring. Skin is very much dependent on the blood for its normal metabolism. In Ayurveda this blood is called as *raktadhatu* and "impurities" in blood are responsible for these toxins in the skin. So right from allergic dermatitis (*peetaam*) to psoriasis, this treatment is very much useful. Above all, It prevents many skin disorders like acne, vitiligo etc.

Bloodletting is also useful to prevent eye disorders. So, recurrent conjunctivitis, recurrent uveitis, recurrent vitreous haemorrhage, this treatment is useful in variety of dreadful and not so dreadful diseases.

We frequently use this therapy in hepatitis also and other liver related disorders as the liver or *yakrut* is related with the *raktadhatu*.

Along with these diseases, when a blood-donation is done on a regular basis, its useful to improve digestion, improve concentration and memory and reduce stress, and in certain cases of neurosis also in herpes, glandular swellings, abscesses, inflammations, joint disorders, high uric acids, heel pains, sciatica, tennis elbow etc.

मर्महीने यथासन्ने देशेऽन्यां व्यधयेत् सिराम ।

वा.सू.27-18

Moreover, if someone not found the particular vein at that site then what to do? Acharya **Vagbhat** clarify that, then one should go for 'Sira-vyadh' near to disease site except Marm-sthan i.e. vital point of the body.

Moreover, he also very clearly mentioned in his scripture regarding which sira (vein) is not to be Vyadh (Puncture). This proves that, Ayurveda have eternal principles, which are constant through its origin.

Ayurveda offers many simple solutions for major disorders. It has an array of treatments for the prevention of many diseases. *Raktamokshana* is one of them.

Miracle of Raktamokshana (Therapeutic Blood Letting)

The father of Ayurvedic internal medicine Charaka describes the five Panchakarma procedures as Vamana (Therapeutic emesis), Nasya (Nasal medication), Virechana (Therapeutic purgation) and two types of Basti (Therapeutic enema). Another great Ayurvedic surgeon Sushruta combined the two types of basti into one category and added Raktamokshana (The therapeutic withdrawal of blood from the body, blood letting) as one of the Panchakarma therapy.

Although Raktamokshana is the most limited of the five major procedures, it provides a rapid and sometimes dramatic reduction of symptoms in certain acute disorders, especially where time is a critical factor. When Pitta dosha is vitiated they get lodged in the blood. In acute conditions when you need quick relief, and there is no time for the various phases of Panchakarma like Purvakarma (Preparation for Panchakarma), etc. Raktamokshana can be helpful. Raktamokshana gives relief from acute symptoms very quickly. After that Panchakarma regimen and internal herbs can be advised.

Different types of Raktamokshana procedures are mentioned in Ayurvedic texts for treating various conditions. There are many types of Rakta-Mokshan advocated in Ayurveda - Shrung, Alabu, Ghatika, siravyadhan & Jalaukavacharan etc. for various pathological conditions. A properly trained Ayurvedic physician should do all the Panchakarma procedures especially Raktamokshana as it required close observation at every stage. Raktamokshana is performed individually for each person after analyzing his or her Prakriti (Body type) and medical condition.

What is exceptional about Raktamokshana among the Panchakarma is that it can be done even without Ayurveda. Panchakarma has a systematic approach that includes pre-Panchakarma techniques, a sequential approach of five methods and post Panchakarma procedures in the form of a complete package. was giving instant results in pain relief if it is due to Pitta aggravation. Raktamokshana was done in many disease conditions – psoriasis, pemphigus, eczema, leucoderma and other skin problems, various eye disorders, Pitta predominant PMS and menstrual problems, some types of headache, hypertension and even in aneurysm.

Importance of Rakta-Mokshan (Blood Donation)

सिराव्यधश्चिकित्सार्थं शल्यतन्त्रे प्रकीर्तितः ।

यथा प्रणिहितः सम्यग्बस्तिः कायचिकित्सिते ॥

सु.शा. 8-23

Those diseases are not cured or not give response to other treatments, those diseases cured instantly by Rakta-Mokshan (Blood donation). Sira-Vyadhan (Rakta-Mokshan) is a half treatment in surgery as a Basti is in Kay-Chikitsa.

There are particular type of siravyadhan for particular diseases. But this is a another vast topic to discuss & not to be elaborate here. For example – In Colitis – siravyadfnhan is to be done over both pelvic region on 2 Angul.

Migraine is a very common form of headache, seen in nearly 15% of the population. Women are more likely to suffer from migraine, than men. In people with migraine, it is observed that there are usually some trigger factors that bring on the migraine attack. Migraine is a vascular disorder caused by vasoconstriction and vasodilatation of the blood vessels in the head, neck and scalp. Vasodilation (dilatation of blood vessels) may last from few minutes to several hours, increasing blood flow into the area. This increase in blood flow is what is responsible for the “throbbing” of the migraine headache. The pain of a migraine attack is believed to be due to greatly increased amplitude of pulsations in the cranial arteries. Tightening of sternocleidomastoid muscle puts pressure on the carotid sheath which contains the internal jugular vein causing the internal jugular vein to compress, thereby reducing the outflow of blood from the head potentially causing intra cranial pressure to increase with resistant pressure on.

In acute migraine attack, Raktamokshana from the Jugular vein is beneficial. The patient is made to lie down on a cot with the head slightly lowered and turned to one side. Then the jugular vein is tapped with the the three fingers (index, middle and ring finger) noticing the elevation and then syringe is inserted and vitiated blood is withdrawn intravenously which gives relief in pain within few seconds and the migraine attack does not even recur for years. Maximum 100 ml of vitiated blood can be removed at one time and not more. The patient is monitored for 30 minutes to 1 hour after Raktamokshana.

But there must some Pathya & Apathya (Do & Don'ts) which ever body should fallowed strictly to achieve more benefit of blood donation for further 4-5 days which are described in deatails by Sushruta in Sharir sthan 8-24.

For example, Not to have Asatya-aahar, not having sex & specially preserve the Agni (Jatharagni) & take a food according to Jatharagni. This is very most important point which is mentioned in Ayurveda & not by modern science till today. That's why Ayurveda called as not only a science but life science.

Then internal herbs, diet and lifestyle changes are advised for a specific period of time. It is also advisable to avoid known trigger factors like different food substances (e.g., alcoholic beverages, cheese, chocolate,

nitrate-containing foods such as hotdogs, and a number of other substances), disrupted schedules, lack of sleep, irregularity in meals especially missed meals, strong smell, glare, flickering lights (such as fluorescent lights or CRTs) and physical and emotional stress.

Thus Raktamokshana is one of the five Panchakarma procedures, which is effective in curing the disease as well as preventing the recurrence.

In this way, by blood donation (Rakta-mokshan) one can achieved physical & mental health.

One can donate his blood on the day of his birth day.

Now it's time to change the slogan.

A blood donation every year, keeps disease away.

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