



TRADITIONAL AND MODERN ANAESTHESIA AT A GLANCE

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda the science of life is the most ancient science known to man. Pain management is great challenge of surgery. So there is much more importance of anaesthesia in surgical practices. The oldest and perhaps the first ever reference of the use of anaesthetic herbal drug was noted in an Ayurvedic text called *Sushruta Samhita*. *Sushruta*- the father of surgery in Ayurved was the first person to make use of opium, Alcohol (wine) etc to sedate a patient for plastic surgery of a cut nose 2000 B.C. Modern Anaesthesia too describes two similar functions of anaesthetic drugs Analgesia and Hypnosis/Sedation. Objectives comprise study of traditional and ancient anaesthesia with respect to the drugs and their mode of action. Recent sciences have divided anaesthesia on the basis of its components into four stages i.e. Analgesia, Excitement, Surgical Anaesthesia Overdose (should be avoided) detailed of study explained in the full paper.

KEYWORDS: Anaesthesia, Sangyahan, sensation, pain.

INTRODUCTION

“FOR WHILE SOME MUST SLEEP, SOME MUST WATCH” -Hamlet

Anaesthesia as a medical discipline is recent. Its roots and evolution however date back to centuries ago.

FARTHER WE LOOK BACK, FURTHER WE CAN SEE INTO THE FUTURE

Ayurveda the science of life is the most ancient science known to man. It originates from the era when the *Devas*, *Danavas* and *Manushyas* were part of the *srushti*.

The oldest and perhaps the first ever reference of the use of anaesthetic herbal drug was also noted in an Ayurvedic text viz. *Sushruta Samhita*. *Sushruta*- the father of surgery in Ayurved was the first person to make use of opium, Alcohol (wine) and Indian hemp to sedate a patient for plastic surgery of a cut nose, 2000 B.C.

This was just the beginning of a new trend to relieve pain (*Vedanashaman*) and sedate (*Sangyahan*) a patient during surgical procedures.

Modern Anaesthesia too describes two similar functions of anaesthetic drugs -

- a) Analgesia
- b) Hypnosis/Sedation

Similarity is obvious in the description of the various stages, types and side effects, patient care etc. Here we make an attempt to highlight the salient features of the traditional and modern techniques of anaesthesia.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 1) To study Traditional and ancient anaesthesia with respect to the drugs and their mode of action.
- 2) To pin-point the similarities above stated.

TRADITIONAL ANAESTHESIA:

“पाक् शस्त्रकर्मणः श्रेष्ठभोजयेदन्नमातुम् ।

मद्यपंपाययेन्मद्यंतीक्ष्णं यो देहनाक्षमः॥

नमूर्च्छयत्यन्नसंयोगात्मकः शस्त्रं नृपुण्यते”

S.S.17/11, 12

“ततो राजाऽपितयाकृतम् । ततश्चापि राजानं

मोहचूर्णेन मोहयित्वा शिखः कपालमदाय....।”

Bhoj Prabandha-21

From the above sutras it is obvious that the *Ayurvedacharyas* have tried to describe the components of anaesthesia viz.

- 1) Hypnosis
- 2) Analgesia
- 3) Muscle relaxation

To fulfil these components, herbal drugs such as *Madya*, *Sura*, *Moha*, *Ahifen* and *Afim* were commonly used.

MODERN ANESTHESIA

Aesthesia - Sensation

Anaesthesia - Absence of all Sensation.

Recent sciences have divided anaesthesia on the basis of its components into four stages.

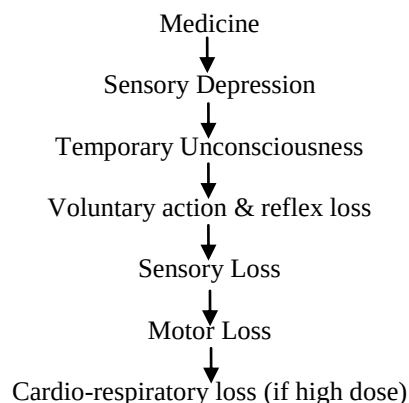
- 1) Stage of Analgesia
- 2) Stage of Excitement
- 3) Stage of surgical Anaesthesia
- 4) Overdose (should be avoided)

From his purpose following drugs can be employed.

- 1) Pentathol Sodium
- 2) Ketamine
- 3) Ethyl Chloride
- 4) Ether
- 5) Halothane etc.

SAMPRAPTI

The possible action of an anaesthesia drug according to both *Ayurvedic* and modern sciences can be explained as follows.



DISCUSSION

Based on the literary search of both sciences all anaesthesia drugs seem to show the same components.

Their action on the patient can also be said to be similar. Recent advances in science have aided in tracing a clear pathway of the action of such drugs.

Ayurvedacharyas too expected and obtained the same performance from drugs such as *Afim*, *Moha*, *Madya* etc. however their exact mode of action was not clearly explained.

The drugs previously used (*Afim*, *Moha*, *Madya*) are now outdated due to the advent of newer ones

They play the same role but

- Are easy to administer and show
- Quick action
- Have minimum side effect

Ayurvedacharyas have quoted four stages (*Avasthas*) of *Madatyaya* which are very similar to the stages of anaesthesia.

- Eg. *Guru Bhojana* followed by *Madyapan* was the pattern used by *Sushrutacharyato* obtain the condition of anaesthesia. Here *gurubhojana* can be considered as a pre-anaesthetic measure to ensure fast action (due to *Nidra_adhikya*) and *Madya* is the anaesthetic drug. Nowadays however drugs such as *fortwinphenergan* etc. are used as pre-anaesthetic medicine and *Madya* has been replaced by *ketamine* *Na pentathol* etc.
- The muscle relaxant action expected from an anaesthetic drug can be observed even using a drug such as *Afim* or *Madya* (One of signs of the third stage of the action of these drugs).

CONCLUSION

- 1) A literary search of both sciences highlighted the similarities with respect to the drugs and their mode of action.
- 2) The *Samprapti* of an anaesthesia drug has been explained.
- 3) Similarities in the action and stages of anaesthesia have been pinpointed giving examples.

Thus to conclude it can be said that traditional anaesthesia has slowly but surely, with the help of latest research and new formulation, evolved into a spectrum of hope and vision of the future to the surgeon.

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