



AYURVEDA VIEW ON GOUT, W.S.R. TO SAMPRAPTI AND MANAGEMENT THROUGH NATURAL WAYS

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Article Received on 20/08/2021

Article Revised on 09/09/2021

Article Accepted on 30/09/2021

ABSTRACT

The gout is a painful pathological condition which can be correlated with *Vata Rakta* or *Aadya Vata* in Ayurveda science. Gout (*Vata Rakta*) mainly involves vitiation of *Vata dosha* and *Rakta Dhatu*. As per modern science gout is an inflammatory condition characterized by red, hot, tender, swollen and painful joints. This condition arises due to the elevated levels of uric acid in blood may be due to the dietary, environmental and genetic factors, etc. Excessive intake of *Lavana*, *Katu*, *Amla*, *Tikta*, *Ushna* and *Kshara* foods, consumption of *Ulavalu*, *Blackgram*, sour curd and incompatible foods, etc. can cause gout. *Vataprakopak* and *Raktaprakopaknidan* are involved in *Samprapti* of the disease, therefore *Vata* and *Rakta* pacifying therapies suggested treating disease. Ayurveda described many treatment options for managing gout including *Snehapanam*, *Virechanam*, *Abhyanga swedam*, *Pizhichil*, *Elakkizhi*, *Vasti* along with internal medicines, dietary & lifestyle modifications, etc. These Ayurveda treatments help to relieves symptoms of disease and eliminates uric acid from the body. Present article explores Ayurveda view on gout, its pathogenesis and management through natural ways.

KEYWORDS: *Ayurveda*, *Gout*, *Vata Rakta*, *Aadya Vata*.

INTRODUCTION

The term Gout is described for pathological condition in which urate crystals deposits leading to the inflamed and painful joints. Gout is type of arthritis associated with pain and swelling in joints, mainly affects big toe, heel, ankle and wrist, etc. Gout is common in middle or elderly people and risk is more in overweight peoples. Hyperuricemia means increased levels of uric acid is major pathological consequence responsible for gout.^[1-4]

The major causes of gout are ageing, alcohol consumption, high protein diet, seafood, meat, salty, sour, pungent food, medications like salicylate, exposure to lead, obesity, diabetes, renal insufficiency, environmental and genetic factors. These all factors can lead pathogenesis of gout.

The sign and symptoms of gout are intense pain in the joints, this condition affect joints of knees, ankles, elbows, fingers and wrist. Redness and inflammation, joints becomes warm, tender and swollen. Lingering discomfort, restricted motion and deteriorated quality of life are associated consequences of *Vata Rakta*.

Acharya Charka describes two types of *Vata Rakta* i.e.; *Uttana* and *Gambhira*. *Uttana* is superficial condition while *Gambhira* is deep seated condition of gout. *Uttana Vatarakta* possesses symptoms of itching, burning, pain, pricking sensation, contraction and discolouration of joint and skin. *Gambhira Vatarakta* possess symptoms of edema, joint stiffness, joint hardness, pain in interior body, burning sensation and suppuration of joints.^[3-7]

Samprapti

This disorder produced by the vitiated *Vata* and *Rakta* *Raktadhatu* gets vitiated. The etiological factors vitiate *Raktadhatu*, the involvement in *Vata-prakopakahara* and *Vihara* causes *Vata-vridhhi*. Vitiated *Raktadhatu* obstructs path of aggravated *Vata* which becomes *Aavrut* with vitiated *Raktadhatu*. Finally *Vridhhi* and obstructed *Vata* further vitiate *Raktadhatu* and this continuous process of *Vata-vridhhi*, *Vata* obstruction and *Rakta Dushti* manifested as *Vatarakta*. Severe pain, tenderness and inflammation are symptoms of *Vata* aggravation, *Vatarakta* affects *Asthidhatu* leading to the *Ruja* which spreads as like *Aakhorvisha*. The vitiated *Rakta* finally accumulates in hand and feet, later on the disease spread in all over the body due to the mobile and subtle nature of *Vata* and *Rakta*.

As per modern science the pathogenesis of gout depends upon disturbed metabolic functioning and renal problems along with other causative factors. This condition arises due to the elevated levels of uric acid in blood may be due to the dietary, environmental and genetic factors, etc. Purine is the nitrogen bases found in body, enzyme xanthine oxidase converts purine into uric acid, this compound further excreted out from body via urination. The improper metabolism and reduced renal functioning causes deposition of uric acid in the body especially in joint area leading to the gouty arthritis. The other factors responsible for pathogenesis of gout are intake of purine rich food, alcohol, obesity, hypertension and genetic factors. Uric acid convert into crystals and these crystals deposit in joints and initiates symptoms of gout.^[6-9]

Pathological progression

The stages of gout resembles pathological progression of disease, the various stages of gout as depicted in **Figure 1** indicates severity of gout.

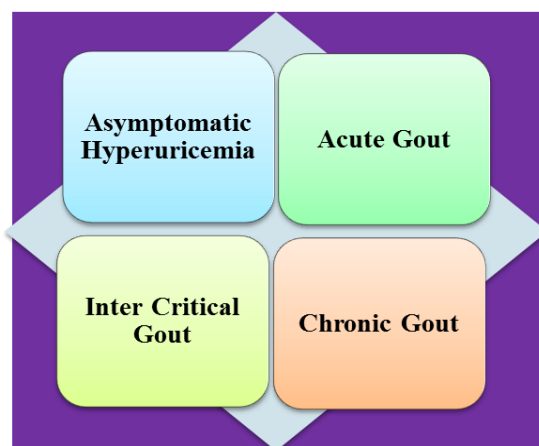


Figure 1: Stages of gout based on pathological severity.

Asymptomatic Hyperuricemia is the stage in which level of uric acid in blood get elevated. Uric acid crystal deposition may start but symptoms are absent.

Acute Gout is the stage in which uric acid crystals deposited in joint leading to the pain and inflammation.

Inter Critical Gout is the stage of period after acute gout, this period involves gouty flares and painful inflammation varies from months to years.

Chronic Gout is the stage of most debilitating type of gout, involving permanent damage of kidneys and joints. In this condition big lumps of uric acid crystals deposited around joint area and quality of life get affected severely.

Treatments of Gout

Vatarakta chikitsa involves many approaches including *Shodhana*, *Shaman* and *Bahyachikitsa*, etc. *Raktamokshana*, *Snehana*, *Virechana* and *Basti*, etc. are indicated for treating *Vatarakta*. There are many herbs

and classical ayurveda formulations which provides significant relief in gout. These Ayurveda drugs are; *Triphala*, *Giloy*, *Neem*, *Turmeric* and *Ginger*, etc.

Triphala offers anti-inflammatory effect thus helps to reduce inflammatory symptoms associated with gout. Moreover this drug pacify *Doshas* thus reduces aggravation of *Vata* in gout. *Giloy* helps to suppress level of uric acid, provides anti-inflammatory and pain-relieving effects. *Neem* reduces inflammation and suppresses gout flare. Bitter gourd alleviates *Vata* ailments therefore prescribed for the treatment of gout. *Turmeric* contains curcumin as active ingredient which is considered effective for joint pain and gout.

Some ayurveda formulations such as; *Vatari Guggul*, *Punarnava guggulu*, *Saarivaadyasava*, *Brhanmanjishthadi Kavatha*, *Mahayograjaa Guggul*, *Kaishore Guggulu*, *Nimbadi churna*, *Pinda taila*, *Vataraktantaka rasa* and *Guduchi lauha*, etc. also used for treating joint pain, arthritis and gout.

These ayurveda formulations facilitate pacification of *Vata Dosha* and purify *Rakta*, also offers symptomatic relief in joint pain, tenderness and stiffness. The *Ushna Veerya*, *Katu Vipaka*, *Tikta & Kashaya Rasa* of drugs imparts *Vata kapha Shamaka* property. The *Rasayana* property of some classical formulation improves quality of life and *Vatashamak* property reduces pathological progression of disease. *Ushna guna* is helpful to reduce pain while anti-inflammatory properties of these drugs relive all symptoms of gout.^[8-11]

Recommended Ahara (dietary suggestions)

- ❖ Healthy foods including nuts and vegetables, etc. along with fruits, while sour, salty and pungent foods are to be avoided.
- ❖ *Langhanam* to reduce weight in case of obese patient suffering from gout.
- ❖ Carbonated drinks, junk food, alcohol, sugar and purine rich foods are to be avoided.

Recommended Vihara (Life style modification)

- ❖ Activities causing mental and physical stress are to be avoided; it is also advised not to put pressure on joints and weight wearing activities.
- ❖ Some Yoga posture helps to relives *Vata* thus provides benefits in gout.
- ❖ Mild to moderate exercise that causes profuse sweating thus reduces uric acid can be useful for controlling pathogenesis of gout.
- ❖ Involvement in sedentary life style is to be avoided.

CONCLUSION

Gout is a painful disease occurs due to the deposition of uric acid in the joints. Gout mainly affects ankles, knees, joints of hands, feet and wrist, etc. The major causes of gout include diets, genetics, obesity and life style related factors, etc. The common symptoms of disease are swollen joints, pricking pain, itching, burning sensation,

change of the colour of skin and pain in the small joints of body. Ayurveda described gout as *Vatarakt* in which *Vata Dosha* mainly affects *Rakt dhatu* and vice-versa. Pathologically disease involves accumulation of impaired *Doshas* at the smaller joints through *Dushit Rakta*. Ayurveda suggested many therapeutic options for gout including *Shodhana* and *Shaman* therapies. The drugs which facilitate removal of uric acid and reduce inflammation can be used for the management of gout. The special procedures like *Dhanyamladhara*, *Tailadhara* and *Tiktaksheer Basti*, etc. can also be useful for gouty arthritis. Leech therapy indicated to purify *Rakta* thus helpful in case of gout. Similarly *Podikkizhi* (herbal powder massage), *Ilakkizhi* (herbal leaves massage) and *Nhavarakkizhi* (medicated rice massage) are advocated to protect joints affected by gout. Ayurveda formulations such as *Punarnava guggulu*, *Saarivaadyasava*, *Vatari Guggul*, *Mahayograj Guggul*, *Pinda taila*, *Vataraktantaka rasa*, *Guduchi lauha* and *Brhanmanjisthadi Kavatha*, etc. also recommended for treating gout.

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