



COMMON DISEASES OF EAR, THEIR MODERN AND AYURVEDIC MANAGEMENT: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Karṇaroga (Diseases of the ear) mainly arises due to the deranged *Vayu* which produces aching sensation therein that can be described as *Karna-shula*. The morbid *Doshas* triggers pathogenesis of ears. The deranged *Kapha* can also affect hearing ability of ear. The *Atiyoga* and *Mithyayoga* of *Avshyaya* should be avoided to prevent pathogenesis of ear problems. Exposure to the pollutants may lead *Karna roga*. *Karnasrava*, *Putikarna* and *Krimi Karna*, etc. are major *Karṇaroga* which may occurs due to the involvement of causative factors like; *Avashyaya*, *Pratishyaya*, *Jalakrida*, *Karnakanduyana*, *Mithyayogen shastrasya*, *Shirobhighata* and *Prapakat vidradhe*, etc. Ayurveda advocated various approaches like *Karnapoorna*, *Karna Dhoopan*, *Pramarjana*, *Shirovirechana* and *dhawana/ Prakshalana*, etc. for the management of *Karṇaroga*. Similarly modern science described ear surgery, eardrum repair, otoplasty, cleaning of ear, uses of antibiotics and analgesics, etc. for the management of ear problems.

KEYWORDS: *Ayurveda*, *Ear*, *Karṇaroga*, *Karnasrava*, *Karnapoorna*.

INTRODUCTION

According to Ayurveda the major problems associated with ear are *Karnasrava* (discharging ear), *Putikarna* (foul-smelling ear) and *Krimi Karna* (maggots in the ear), etc. The major causes of ear diseases include ear infections, ear canal injury, earwax blocking, entry of water and exposure to the diversified climatic conditions, etc.^[1-3]

Karna Roga or ear disorders as per Ayurveda arise due to the vitiation of *Doshas*, on the basis of *Doshas* imbalance the symptoms of *Karna Roga* can be described as follows:

- *Vataja Karna Roga*: Imbalances of *Vata* causes discharge from ear, pain, ringing (tinnitus) and deafness, etc.
- *Pittaja Karna Roga*: Imbalances of *Pitta* leads swelling, redness, yellow discharge, burning sensation and tearing.
- *Kaphaja Karna Roga*: Imbalances of *Kapha* characterized with slimy discharge, itching, swelling and pain sometimes.
- *Sannipataja Karna Roga*: Simultaneous imbalances of *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*, leads colored discharge depending upon predominant *Dosha*.

Ear infection in the middle ear behind the eardrum caused by viruses or bacteria leads pus accumulation or abscess. Ear canal injury may occur due to the improper uses of ear bud. The entry of foreign body and water in the ear canal also causes ear blockage and pain.^[3-5] The major symptoms of ear diseases are depicted in **Figure 1**.



Figure 1: Major symptoms of ear problems.

Nidana

Avashyaya, *Pratishyaya*, *Jalakrida*, *Karnakanduyana*, *Mithyayogen shastrasya*, *Shirobhighata* and *Prapakat vidradhe*, etc. are major causes of *Karna Roga*.

- ❖ *Avashyaya* (Prolong exposure) can leads vitiation of *Kapha* which further produces itching & discomfort.
- ❖ *Pratishyaya* (common cold/allergy) causes *Vata* vitiation, infection of nasopharynx produces negative pressure in the middle ear. As per the *Acharya vagbhata*, *Pratishyaya* can be considered as a *Nidana* of *Karnasrava*.
- ❖ *Jalakrida* means water entry in the ear especially into the external auditory canal may results moistening of wax, this moistened wax further may swells up & occludes to produce giddiness, itching sensation, noises in the ear and blockage, etc. Swelling in auditory canal occurs along with *Srava*.
- ❖ *Karnakanduyana* is itching in ear, insertion of grass, stick, pencil and hair pin, etc. may rupture tympanic membrane which further becomes cause of itching. The *Kshataja vrana* may occur due to the insertion of contaminated object inside the ear. Further infection may convert *Kshataja vrana* to *Dushta vrana* with *Karnasrava*.
- ❖ *Shirobhighata* means head injuries sometimes becomes cause of *Karnasrava*, the *Raktasrava* observe initially and if remain untreated the pathogen may invades to produce infection characterized with purulent discharge.
- ❖ *Prapakat vidradhe* means formation of abscess due to the high level of inflammation. Abscess is localized with collection of pus and when get burst the collected pus drains out.^[5-7]

Ayurveda approaches for *karnaroga*

Avoidance of causative factors, *Pathya Ahar-Vihara*, herbs and classical Ayurveda formulation, etc. mainly advocated as therapeutic measures for *Karnaroga*. Cleaning the ear to avoid infection advises for maintaining health and functioning of ear. *Karna Pooran*, *Pramarjana*, *Karna Dhoopan*, *Prakshalana* and *Shirovirechana*, etc. are therapeutic procedures recommended in Ayurveda classics for curing *Karnaroga*. These procedures help to balances *Doshas*,

help to clean ear, prevent infection, cleans *Srotas* and reduces inflammation, etc. provides therapeutic benefits in *Karnaroga*.

Karnapoorna involves instillation of drug in the ear or putting medicines for delayed release. *Karna Dhoopan* involves fumigation inside the ear using natural herbs possessing antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory property. *Pramarjana* means ear cleaning while *Shirovirechana* offers response through vessels and *Prakshalana* includes cleaning of ear to remove ear wax, debris and foreign particles. Some specific approaches for *Karnaroga* are as follows:

- ***Unmantha chikitsaa***: *Abhyanga* & *Nasya*
- ***Dukkhavardhana chikitsaa***: *Parisheka* and *Abhyanga*
- ***Parilehee chikitsaa***: *Svedana* and *Lepa*

Ayurveda drugs

Ayurveda drugs like; *Laksmi Vilasa Rasa*, *Bhangra*, *Neem*, mustard oil, turmeric, cloves, *Jatamansi* and *Ashwagandha*, etc. are Ayurveda drugs which offers therapeutic responses in *Karnaroga*.

Laksmi Vilasa Rasa helps to treats inflammation in the ear. *Laksmi Vilasa Rasa* offers many health benefits when used with honey. *Bhangra* juice along with black *Tulsi* when applied in the affected ear then it offers quick relief. Juice of leaves of *Neem* offers anti-inflammatory and anti-microbial effects thus gives relief in ear infection and inflammation. Turmeric with mustard oil, prevent pus formation and may improves hearing. Cloves oil and coconut oil also used effectively for treating ear infection and pain. *Jatamansi* and *Ashwagandha* helps in vertigo and tinnitus.

Ayurveda also offers preventive measures to correct *Doshic* imbalance. Ayurveda suggested avoidance of causative factors, exposure to cold and wind conditions. The *Kapha* aggravating foods like curd, sour foods and citrus fruits, etc. should be avoided.^[6-9]

Modern approaches

- ✓ Cosmetic Ear Surgery (Otoplasty)

- ✓ Ear surgery
- ✓ Ear Candlering to remove earwax
- ✓ Eardrum repair

Aural toileting suggested for cleaning ear, removal of wax, discharge and debris, etc. The application of antibiotic and anti-inflammatory therapy helps to prevent infection and inflammation.^[10,11]

Pathya ahara

- ✚ *Yava, Mudga* and *Godhooma*, etc.
- ✚ *Shaaka, Patola* and *Vrintaaka*, etc.
- ✚ *Laavaa Maamsa* and *Mayoora Maamsa*, etc.
- ✚ *Dugdha* and *Ghrita*

Pathya vihara

Brahmacharya, Dhooma, Nasya, Sveda, Vamana, Virechana, Siraavyadha and *Gandoosha*, etc.

Apathya ahara

- ✓ *Guru Ahara*
- ✓ *Sheeta Ahara*
- ✓ *Dagdhi*
- ✓ *Madira*

Apathya vihara

- ✓ *Vyaayaama*
- ✓ Exposure to cold water and cold climatic conditions
- ✓ Excessive conversations and loud speech, etc.
- ✓ *Kaphakara Vihara, Dantadhaavana* and *Parisheka*

CONCLUSION

Karṇaroga are consequences of morbid *Doshas* and exposure to diversified climatic conditions mainly considered responsible for such types of diseases. *Karnasrava, Putikarna* and *Krimi Karna*, etc. are main *Karṇaroga* which mainly observed in common clinical practices. *Avashyaya, Jalakrida, Pratishyaya, Karnakanduyana, Shirobhighata* and *Prapakat vidradhe*, etc. are considered major causative factors of *Karṇaroga*. Ayurveda described *Karna Dhoopan, Karnapoorna, Shirovirechana, Prakshalana* and *Pramarjana*, etc. for the management of *Karṇaroga*. Ayurveda drugs like; *Laksmi Vilasa Rasa, Bhangra, Neem*, mustard oil, turmeric, cloves, *Jatamansi* and *Ashwagandha*, etc. are Ayurveda drugs which offers therapeutic responses in *Karṇaroga*. Modern science focuses on ear surgery, otoplasty, eardrum repair, uses of antibiotics and analgesics, etc. for the management of ear problems.

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