



AN HOLISTIC APPROACH ON BALA-GRHA WITH THEIR PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Kaumarabhritya is a branch of *Astanga Ayurveda* that defines an unique concept regarding the disease caused by unidentified entities known as *Balagraha*. Material for the present review was collected from *Ayurvedic* text book. An effort has been done to understand the concept of *Balagraha* on modern parameters and its clinical application in day to day practice. After thorough study of *Balagraha* concept, the unidentified entities are thought to be microbes which cannot be seen by our naked eyes but produce group disease of multi systemic origin and syndromes.

KEYWORDS: *Astanga Ayurveda, Balagraha, Kaumarabhritya, Microbes.*

INTRODUCTION

Disease caused by unidentified factors are termed as idiopathic in modern science but in *Ayurveda* these are known by *Balagraha, Jataharani, Adibal pravritta, Jatibal pravritta, Matrika* etc. which are attributed to goddess, sins, bad deeds in our life. The *Graha rogas* are different from other disorder. Their etio-pathogenesis, clinical features, severity, complication and management are entirely different from other disorder. Their incidence in human bodies are very rapid with high morbidity and mortality rate. Such type of disorders are characterized by *Balagraha roga*.

- *Balagraha* abbreviates for *Bala* as pertaining to children and *Graha* stands for grasp or seize.
- *Sushruta* conveyed that wounds are to be protected from *grahas* and neonate must be nursed like a wounded person.
- *Graha rogas* are fond of *rakta, mamsa and ojas*.
- These resides at water tanks (*Shitputana*), ruined house (*Putana*), bases of tree (*Pitragraha*) and cow shades (*Mukhmandika*).
- *Jataharini* is highly contagious which attacks to pregnant women and fetus.

This description of microscopic morphology, innumerable in number and present in positive culture medium (blood medium), sustained in darkness exactly indicates about the presence of *graha roga* but no other than the microorganism like bacteria, virus etc.

Characteristics of *Balagraha*

Acharya Kashyapa has described in detail about morphology, habitat and characters of *grahas*.^[1]

Grahas are only visible to divine vision (*Shastra chakshusa*)

Type of *Balagraha*:

1. **Charaka:** *Acharya Charaka* told about the innumerable numbers of *balagrah rogas*.^[2]
2. **Shusruta:** *Acharya Shusruta* has shown more importance to *Bala graha* and detail account on this aspect. *Bala graha* are nine in number named as *Shakuni, Revati, Putana, Andhputana, Shitputana, Skanda, Skandapasmara, Mukhmandika and Naigamesa*.^[3]
3. **Vagbhatta:** *Acharya Vagbhatta* has told twelve *graha roga*, out of which seven as male *graha roga* and five as female *graha roga*. These male and female *bala graha roga* is considered as Gram positive and Gram negative microbes. Male *graha* are *Skanda, Vishakha, Mesha, Swagraha, Pitragraha* while female *graha* are *Putana, Shitputana, Andhaputana, Shakuni, Revati, Shushkrevati and Mukhmandika*.^[4]
4. **Kashyapa:** In *kashyapa Samhita*, *Bala graha* references are scattered at many places namely first reference is in *Sutra sthana* where monk described the vitiation of breast milk of wet nurse by *graha* like *Putana, Shakuni, Skanda and Shasthi* which is the only contribution of *Kashyapa* but the description is incomplete due to extinction of manuscript.^[5]

Second reference is in *Indriya sthana* where saint describe the symptoms of affected child with various *graha* like *Skanda*, *Skandapasmara*, *Pitragraha*, *Pundrika*, *Revati*, *Shuskrevati*, *Shakuni*, *Mukhamandika*, *Putana* and *Naigmesa*.^[6]

Third references in *Chikitsa sthana* about the treatment of *graha rogas* viz. *Revati*, *Putana*, *Amdhaputana*, *Shitputana*, *Kataputana* and *Mukharika (Mukhamandika) grahas*.^[7]

Etiopathogenesis of Balagraha

1. Children are mostly affected by *graha roga* because they are dependent on others, so, unable to maintain proper hygiene by themselves. Children are unable to tackle down the various infections because of poor immunity, therefore, more susceptible for various influences including bala graha.
2. *Acharya Sushruta* opines that grahas enters the body without any perceptions. He again illustrates different causative factors into two major categories.^[8]
 - i. One is related to unhygienic condition of child or mothers such as feeding in unclean and torn vessels with unhealthy condition. These opportunities provide susceptibility for the perception of unhygienic environment in concomitant with less immunity of the child which can easily invite the infections.

- ii. This is related to psychological aspect of child which is showing irrelevant behavior in front of priest, teachers and guest. This signifies bipolar mood disorder.

Etiology of Balagraha

Acharya Vagbhatta has mentioned clearly about the etiology of grahas which moves around the world in various shapes to attack the people for threefold purpose.^[9]

1. **Himsa**- This is pathogenic in nature and causes disease e.g. DIC, bleeding disorder, Sepsis
2. **Rati**- This illustrate microbes reproduce and increase their progeny in host (child), complete their life cycle and produces diseases e.g. Typhoid, Malaria etc.
3. **Bali**- The host are exploited by microbes for their nutrition. e.g. Worm.

Hence, the hygiene in terms of *shuchi* and *shuddhi* play a major role to prevent and cure the *graha rogas*.

Prodromal Symptoms: Only two prodromal symptoms are mentioned in *Ayurvedic* text, these are weeping and fever.^[10]

General Symptoms: The symptoms appearing in child is due to affection of *balagraha* and this may depend upon the conflict of that particular *graha roga*.

Graha roga and its similarities with modern

1. <i>Skandagraha</i>	Facial palsy, Hemiplegia, Polio.
2. <i>Skandapasmara/Vshakha</i>	Epilepsy, Convulsion.
3. <i>Meshagraha/Naigameshagraha</i>	Meningitis.
4. <i>Shwagraha</i>	Hydrophobia/Rabies.
5. <i>Pitragraha</i>	Diarrhea with dehydration.
6. <i>Shakuni</i>	Impetigo, Stomatitis.
7. <i>Putana</i>	Diarrhea with hypokalemia, Paralytic ileus.
8. <i>Sheetaputana</i>	Diarrhea with hypocalcemia and hypomanesemia.
9. <i>Andhaputana</i>	Diarrhea with vitamin A deficiency along with secondary infection.
10. <i>Revati</i>	Diarrhea with anemia.
11. <i>Shushkarevati</i>	Abdominal Tuberculosis.
12. <i>Mukhamandika</i>	Childhood Cirrhosis, Nephrotic syndrome.

Management of Balagraha

The primary management of *Balagraha* is achieved by providing absolute hygiene and immunity to the children besides symptomatic management.^[11]

External Medication

- **Bali and Snanam:** This is administered by *Tila*, *Tandula*, *Mudaga*, *Mamsa*, *Matsya* etc.
- **Parisheka (washing):** It should be done with decoction prepared from *Agnimantha*.
- **Abhyanga (oleation):** It should be done with oil *Priyangu*, *Lochana*, *Tagara*, *Jatamansi*.
- **Dhupana (fumigation):** This is administered by *Gridha-mala*, *Sarpakubusa* etc.

Internal Medication

- **Churna:** This should be prepared from *Kharjura*, *Narikela*, *Khasha*, *Mustaka*, *Madhuka* etc.
- **Kwatha:** This should be prepared from *Kulattha*, *Bimbi*, *Badari*, *Madhuka*, *Gambhari*, *Yava*, *Laghu panchmula*.
- **Ras aushadhies:** *Rajamriganka Rasa*, *Kumar Kalyana Rasa*, *Jayamangala rasa* etc.
- **Oil:** *Kshirabala oil*, *Jyotishmati oil*, *Mahamasha oil*, *Prasarini oil*.
- **Ghrita:** *Balahitakari ghrita*, *Astamagala ghrita*, *Mahapaishachika ghrita*, *Balagrahanashaka ghrita*.^[12]

DISCUSSION

In ancient period there was no advanced technology for the diagnosis, equipment for treatment. Modern terminologies are more specific and specified causative organism of diseases. Modern science techniques are more advanced to visualize microbes and identify them as bacteria, virus etc.

Balagraha is one of the important portion of *Ayurvedic* text, it need proper explanation for understanding the *balagraha rogas*. Therefore, with the help of modern laboratory techniques, *graha rogas* can be easily understand and diagnosed.

CONCLUSION

It is very clear that *Balagraha* are compared with different microbial infection. *Balagraha roga* can be treated with holistic approach of therapeutic and psychiatric management. Maintenance of cleanliness and hygienic measures is mandatory for early prevention of *Balagraha rogas*. Hence, hygiene in term of *Shuchi* and *Shuddhi* (asepsis and antisepsis) play an important role their treatment. In relation to cleanliness, pregnant women and child should be fumigated by various protective measures prescribed for child and puerperal women are real measures to prevent infections.

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