



SCOPE OF AGNIKARMA IN CURRENT PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

Acharya Sushruta, Father of Surgery has described various surgical procedures along with some parasurgical measures. Agnikarma is one of the parasurgical modality mentioned in Ayurveda lauded for its magnificent results. Agnikarma= agni+ karma, means application of heat directly or indirectly at the affected part by different materials. It has been given a special place in surgery by Acharya Sushruta and is believed that diseases treated by agnikarma never reoccurs, while diseases which don't get relieved by other measures are relieved with agnikarma. Modern cauterization procedure has its basic origin from agnikarma. In this fast lifestyle, patients need instant relief for pain. Agnikarma is one of the fast procedure to reduce different vedana i.e. pain. Along with this, it is one of the best ways for hemostasis. Apart from this Acharya Sushruta has mentioned different variations of agnikarma using different dravya which needs to be evaluated as they not only give immediate result but also do not have any side-effects. This paper deals with details of various aspects of agnikarma, their applications according to different disease and dravya along with different techniques. Sushrut samhita and its commentaries are the main source of this paper.

KEYWORDS: Agnikarma, Cauterization, Pain, Hemostasis.

INTRODUCTION

Shalya Tantra, one of the eight branches of ayurveda, was developed by the great Maharshi Sushruta. Sushruta mentioned different methods of management of diseases, such as Bheshaja karma, Kshara karma, Agni karma, Shastra karma and Raktamokshan. Among these, Agnikarma holds a special place, which is application of Agni i.e., heat, directly or indirectly with the help of different materials to relieve patient's disease. In this therapy part ortissue is burnt with the help of various special materials. Sushruta has indicated Agnikarma in various disorders of skin, muscles, vessels, ligaments, joints and bones. As well he has also mentioned agnikarma in rakt-sthambhan management as 'Dahan' karma. Modern cauterization therapy holds its basic roots from agnikarma. Some sterilization methods also apply agnikarma therapy.

CLASSIFICATION

Agnikarma can be described according to different types of its application.

1) According to Dravyas used-

- Snigdha Agnikarma: performed by means of madhu, grith, tailam used for Agni karma to treat diseases

situated in Sira, Snayu, Sandhi, Asthi.

- Ruksha Agnikarma: performed by means of pippali, shara, shalaka, godanta used for Agni karma to treat diseases situated in Twak and Mamsadhata.
- 2) According to site-
 - Sthanika (local)- As in vicharchika, kadara, arsha.
 - Sthanantariya (Distal to site of disease)-As in visuchika, apachi, gridhrasi etc.
- 3) According to Akriti
 - Valaya - Circular shape.
 - Bindu - Dot like shape. According to Acharya Dalhanashalakashould be of pointed tip.
 - Vilekha - Making of different shapes by heated shalaka. Vilekha type of agni karma is further subdivided by Acharya Dalhana into three types according to the direction of line- Tiryak (Oblique), Riju (Straight), Vakra (Zigzag)
 - Pratisarana-Rubbing at indicated site by heated shalaka and there is no specific shape.
 - Ardhaachandra- Crescent shape.
 - Swastika- Specific shape of Swastika Yantra.

- Ashtapada - Specific shape containing eight limbs in different directions.
- 4) According to Dhatus
- Twakdagdha
 - Mamsadagdha
 - Sira snayudagdha
 - Sandhi asthi dagdha

DAHAN-UPAKARANA

Dahan-pakarana are various accessories like drugs, articles and substance used to produce therapeutic burns during Agni karma Chikitsa. They are classified as follows according to various Acharyas;

They could be classified as:

- Upakarana of plant origin: Pippali (PiperLongum), Yashtimadhu (Glycyrrhiza GlabraLinn.), Haridra (Curcuma longa), Guda (jaggery) Sneha Taila, Sarjarasa (herbal).
- Upakarana of animal origin: Ajashakrita, Godanta, Madhoochchhishta (animal-origin)
- Metallic and other upakarans: Panchadhatu shalaka is made up of Tamra (copper) 40%, Loha (iron) - 30%, Yasada (zinc) - 10%, Rajat (silver) - 10%, Vanga (tin)- 10% Use of these materials has been told according to the site of use. For superficial diseases involving skin Pippali, Ajashakrita, Godanta, Shara, Shalaakaa should be used. For diseases involving muscle Jambavaushtha, Panchadhatu Shalaakaa Kshaudra should be used. For diseases of Siraa, Snaayu, Sandhi, Marma diseases Madhu (Kshaudra), Guda (Jaggery), Sneha should be used.

CAUTERIZATION –THE MODERN CONCEPT

Cauterization is a medical practice or technique of burning a part of a body to remove or close off a part of it. It destroys some tissue in an attempt to mitigate bleeding and damage, remove an undesired growth or minimize other potential medical harm, such as infections.

Cauterization methods include burning the affected area with acid, hot metals, or lasers.

The main forms of cauterization used today are electrocautery and chemical cautery. Electro cautery - Electrosurgery has been described as high-frequency electrical current passed through tissue to create a desired clinical effect. Electrosurgical technology offers essentially two types of devices for energy delivery: monopolar and bipolar. Another form of cauterization is chemical cautery- Many chemical reactions can destroy tissue and some are used routinely in medicine, most commonly for the removal of small skin lesions (i.e., warts or necrotized tissue) or haemostasis. The disadvantages are that chemicals can leach into areas where cauterization was not intended. For this reason, laser and electrical methods are preferable where practical.

APPLIED ASPECTS AND SCOPE OF AGNIKARMA

In today's fast-forward lifestyle, musculo-skeletal problems have increased widely and have become common not only for old aged people but also for younger ages. People are demanding greatly for treatment that not only relieves pain quickly but also with least medicines and side-effects. Agnikarma provides fast relief and has no side-effects.

Some external growths or tags are easily excised with minimal scar with help of agnikarma.

It is also commonly used and more reliable process for achieving hemostasis in any operative procedures which in modern method is known as electrocautery.

Wax therapy (wax bath) is also a good example of snigdha agnikarma which is gaining popularity. Due its quick action relief, agnikarma is gaining immense popularity in every socio-economic class.

CURRENT PRACTICE OF AGNIKARMA

- Sciatica.
- Mechanical backpain.
- Peri-arthritis shoulder pain.
- Osteoarthritis knee joint in early-stage.
- Cervical pain.
- Tennis elbow.
- Plantar fasciitis.
- Frozen shoulders.
- Anal tags.
- Moles.
- Warts.
- Corns.
- Psychological disorders.

CONCLUSION

Agnikarma and its uses are described in Ayurveda much earlier than its utility was discovered by surgeons of rest medicine branches. The technique and equipments have become advance but the basic principles are still the same.

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