

AYURVEDIC MANAGEMENT OF SPINAL DISEASES WITH *PANCHAKARMA*
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ABSTRACT

The spinal cord is the pathway for sensory impulses to the brain and motor impulse to spinal nerves. A number of problems can change the structure of the spine or damage the vertebrae and surrounding tissue. They include infections, injuries, tumours, conditions such as scoliosis, Bone changes that come with age, such as Spinal stenosis and Herniated disc. Spinal diseases often cause pain when bone changes put pressure on the spinal cord or nerves. They can also limit movement. In *Ayurveda* we can include spinal disorders in *Vatavyadhi*. *Vata* is situated at *Shroni* or low back its main function is movement and conduction of impulses. Indulgence of *Vata* vitiating *Ahara* and *Vihara* cause *Vata* vitiation which ultimately effects and changes in function of *Vata*. Abnormal *Vata* disturb functional of nerves system resulting abnormalities like convulsions, tremors, pain, difficulty in movements etc. *Panchkarma* including *Snehana*, *Swedana*, *Basti*, *Nasya* are indicated spinal diseases. Various kind of Ayurvedic formulations like *Agnitundi Vati*, *Yogaraja Gugglu*, *Vata Gajankush Rasa*, *Vata Vidhvanshaka Rasa* etc, are mentioned for the treatment followed by *Panchkarma*. So it can be said that with the help of *Panchkarma Chikitsa*, spinal diseases can be treated.

KEY WORD: *Ayurveda*, Spine diseases, *Panchkarma*.**INTRODUCTION**

The spinal cord is located within the vertebral canal of the vertebral column. The white matter of the spinal cord contains sensory and motor track, conduction of sensory nerve impulses toward brain and motor impulse from the brain toward tissue. Spinal nerves and the nerves that branch from them connect the CNS to sensory receptors, muscles and glands in all part of body. Disease of the spinal column results from the aging process or wear and tear that occurs to the bone and soft tissues of the spine. People who put increased strain on their necks and backs can increase the rate at which this wear and tear occurs many types of disorders that can occur simultaneously in the same patient.^[1]

There is no need to state that modern medicines has its own limitations in managing degenerative type of disease and Spine related problems is not an exception to this. In modern science efforts have been made to manage the disease with conservative as well as surgical treatment but none of both provide satisfactory relief.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To review the spinal diseases and evaluate the management of the spinal disorders with the help of Ayurvedic *Panchkarma Chikitsa*.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

- To fulfill the aims and objectives relevant Ayurveda and Modern literature, available information on internet etc. were searched.

Discussion^[2]: Spinal disease also known as a dorsopathy refers to a condition impairing the backbone.^[1] These include various diseases of the back or spine such as kyphosis. Dorsalgia refers to those conditions causing back pain. Herniated Discs, Spinal Stenosis, Degenerative Disc Disease. Presenting symptoms with

- Lower back pain that is generally made worse with sitting
- Back pain intensified by bending, lifting and twisting
- Walking and running may feel better than prolonged sitting or standing
- Desire to change positions frequently so alleviate pain

Precipitating causes: A number of problems can change the structure of the spine or damage the vertebrae and surrounding tissue. They include infections, injuries, bone changes that come with age, such as Spinal stenosis and herniated disc.

Type**Dorsopathies/spinal disease**

Deforming dorsopathies-
kyphosis, scoliosis, lordosis

Spinal curvature –

Other- Torticollis, Spondylopathy

Inflammatory

➤ Spondylitis -Ankylosing spondylitis

- Sacroiliitis
- Discitis
- Spondylodiscitis
- Pott disease

Noninflammatory

- Spondylosis
- Spondylolysis
- Spondylolisthesis
- Facet syndrome
- Neck pain
- Upper back pain
- Low back pain
- Coccydynia
- Sciatica

Intervertebral disc disorder

- Schmorl's nodes
- Degenerative disc disease
- Spinal disc herniation

As there is no direct references of spine diseases in classics, but it can be included under *Vatavyadhi*, hence it is understood that all these factors which vitiate *Vata* that can be taken as the causative factors of spinal diseases.

The main causative factor of *Vatavyadhi* is described by Aacharya *Charaka* Suppression of nature urges, excessive taking *Shita*, *Laghu* and *Ruksha* Diet, excessive loss of *Dosha* & blood, improper treatment of disease, Excessive exertion, Excessive worry, fear, angeriness, uncomfortable bed, Day sleep, Not taking food, loss of *Dhatu*s, Injury on vital parts),etc.^[3]

Pathogenesis:^[4] A large number of metabolic and endocrine disorders produce generalised skeletal disorders these includes osteoporosis, osteomalacia and rickets, Scurvy, hyperparathyroidism, skeletal fluorosis.

Osteoporosis is conventionally classified into two major groups: Primary and secondary. Primary osteoporosis results reduced physical activity, deficiency of sex hormones, combined deficiency of calcitonin and oestrogen, hyper parathyroidism, deficiency of vitamin D. Secondary osteoporosis is attributed a number of factors i.e starvation. Chronic anaemia, effect of medication.

Fluorosis fluorides replace calcium as the mineral in the bone and get deposited without and regulatory control. This results in heavily mineralised bones which are

thicker and denser but are otherwise weak and deformed. the patient develops bone deformities.

From *Ayurveda* point of view spinal diseases can be explained as, The *Vata Dosha* is aggravated due to different factors and *Vata* flows out of its *Ashaya* to circulate in the entire body and its constituents. During circulation it gets localized in the roots of *Majjavaha Srotas*. i.e. *Asthi Sandhi*. In the *Asthi* and *Majjavaha Srotas*, the *Khavaigunya* may already present. Because unless there is *Khavaigunya* of *Srotas*, the *Dosha* will not take *Ashray*. The chief qualities of *Vata* are *Khara*, *Ruksha*, *Vishada*, and *Laghu* create symptoms like pain difficult in movement etc. When aggravated *Vata* is localized into spine or whole joint, body and produce disease.^[5]

Samprapti Ghataka

Dosha: Vata dosha,

Dushya: Rasa, Asthi, Majja, Sira, Snayu, Kandra

Adhithana: Asthi, Majja,

Srotodushti: Vimarg gamana, Sanga

Kala: Asthidhrakala, Majjadhara kala,

Vyadhi svabhava: Kricchrasadhya

Management of spinal disorders

1. *Nidana Parivarjana*

2. *Panchkarma*

3. *Shamana*

1. Nidana Parivarjana

➤ *Nidana Parivarjanam* is first line of treatment.

➤ *Chikitsa* is “*Vighatana of Samprapti*”.

➤ According to *Charak* two factors are responsible for all *Vatavyadhis* i.e.

Dathukshaya and Srotoavrodha or Avarana.^[6]

➤ Hence main objective of treatment is to improve metabolic activities in *Dhatu* level, to rectify *Srotoavrodha* and to provide nourishment to depleted *Dhatu*s.

➤ Ghee oil, muscle fat, fomentation residence in windless place, covering the body with blankets, meat soup, different type of milk food ingredients which are sweet, sour and saline, and such other measures which are nourishing all these are beneficial.

➤ The patient suffering from disease caused by *Vayu* should take bath in a bath tub filled with the decoction of *vayu* alleviating leaves, milk or oil.

➤ **Physiotherapy:** Abduction, Adduction, Side rotation, Avoid Lifting Heavy Weights.

➤ **Useful Asana:** *Bhujangasana, Gomukhasana, Tadasana, Pavanmuktasana*

2. Panchkarama

➤ *Acharya Sushruta* and *Acharya Vagbhata* have advocated following in cases where *Vata* is located in *Snayu*, *Asthi* and *Sandhi*^[7] (Su.Chi-4/8). Hence this can be considered for Spinal diseases.

- ✓ *Snehana*
- ✓ *Svedana*
- ✓ *Basti*
- ✓ *Nasya*
- ✓ *Lepan*
- ✓ *Agnikarma*
- ✓ *Shamana Chikitsa*

Snehana: Method of massaging the body following application of oil massaging with squeezing effect on the muscle after applying the oil. As the anatomical structure of different parts of the body is different, oil may have to be applied differently according to its structure, Secondly depending upon the degree of *Snehana* effect desired in an individual patient, one may have to adopt different forms of oil application in order to get maximum effect.

There is no medication which excels oil in curing *Vatika* disease because of its property like pervades (the body before going through the process of digestion) hot heavy and unctuous property. When cooked or proceed with other drugs, it become more powerfull⁸. Cha chi 28 181

Indication: Relaxes of Spasm of affected joints and helps in the proper nourishment of muscles/ nerves/tendons, *Snayu Bala Vardhna*, *Kandara Shira Poshana*.

Sneha: *Tila Taila*, *Eranda Tail*, *Mahanarayana Tail*, *Vataghna Tail*, *Nirgundi Tail*, *Kshirbala Taila*, *Dhnavantar Taila*, *Vish Garbh Taila*.

Swedana^[9]: By definition the procedure that alleviates the stiffness of the body, relieves sense of heaviness and cures feeling of cold is called *Swedana*. *Swedana* is a form of treatment, employed to cure specific diseases or to relieve symptoms like pain, stiffness or contracture that may manifest as a symptoms in different disease conditions.

Upanaha Svedana: The process of including perspiration by applying warm paste of herbs on the body. *Svedana* corrects the imbalance of *vata* dosha. The Procedure is more effective in conjunction with *snehana* treatment. *Svedana* reduces the stiffness and hence improves the flexibility of the parts, relieves the stiffness in the joints and thus improves range of joint involvement and easy method to get quick relief from pain.

Material: meat of aquatic animal, Dashmool, Satavari, kulatha, Bdard, Masa, til taila, muscle fat, etc.

Valuka Sveda: Application of the heat and there by inducing perspiration by using heated pack of sand is known as *valuka Sveda*.

VA su 17-29

According to condition^[10]

Vata- Nadi or Baspa Sweda: *Nadi sweda* is a unique form of *swedana* procedure where perspiration is induced by passing steam over the body parts by using special instrument. Herbs added with water are boiled in this instrument to generate steam. To begin with oil is applied to the body part that is to be subjected to *swedana* treatment followed by passing the steam steam to the same part.

Vata-kapha: *Patrapinda Sweda* (*Nirgundipatra*, *Eranda-patra*) Application of the heat and there by inducing perspiration by using heated pack of specific herbe leaves is known as *patrapinda sveda*.

Dhatukshya: Pinda Sweda

Indication

Strengthens Para-vertebral muscles, Strengthens inter vertebral discs, Helps repair damaged myelin sheath, local anti-inflammatory effect

In classics unless the tree is uprooted from its root, it will grow. Such is the case with the vitiated *Doshas*. They go on causing diseases unless they are eliminated from their root. Vitiated *Doshas* alleviated by fasting and digestive drugs do at time get aggravated but they eliminated by elimination therapy do not reccur.^[11] Ch csu 16 -21.

Basti^[12]: The administration of the liquid medicine through the rectal, urethral or vaginal route is name by *Basti*. Any of the above routes is, but more particularly it refers to the therapeutic enema using the decoction through the rectal route *Basti* is describes as the best line of treatment to cure the imbalances of the *Vata*-*dosha*.

Spine is a main *Sthana* of *Vata*, also there is *Dhatu Kshaya Avastha* in later decades so administration of *Basti* can be best in these condition.

There is none other than *Vayu* which is most important causative factor of diseases in *Sakha*, vital spot including joints, *Vayu* is responsible for separation, combination. When it ges exceedingly aggravated there is no remedy other than *basti* for its allevation. Therefore, *Basti* is considered to be half of the entire therapeutic major. Cha si 1 .39

- *Anuvasanbasti*
- *Yapanabasti*
- *Madhutailikabasti*

Basti is specially useful or whose joint become stiff and contracted, whole limbs are afflicted by the movement of the different type of aggravated *vayu*.^[14] Ca.Si.1/32)

If *Dhatu Kshaya Janya Avastha* we can give *Kshira Basti, Majja Basti, Yapan Basti, Brihana Basti* is choice of drug.

Katibasti^[13]: Patients were asked to lie on their chest in a comfortable position, A brim made of *Masha kalka* (black gram paste) was prepared around the lumbar spine area with due care to expose the affected part of the spine. Warm oil was poured into the mash brim and constant temperature was maintained by replacing oil periodically at the prescribed time. *Kati Basti* is one such procedure were in immediate relief from the symptomatology may be obtained From the *Shamana* point of view, various medication which soothe the severity of pain, improves functional ability is best in *Gridhrasi*.

Materials: *Mahanarayana Taila, Vatanasaka Darvya Siddha Taila, Tila Taila, Rasnadi Taila.*

Indication: Lubrication of intervertebral joints, relaxation of lumbar muscles, Remove pain, Provide nutrition to *Snayu*.

Manya basti^[14]: Patients were asked to lie on their chest in a comfortable position or sit on a chair flexing their neck resting on a platform with extended arms to expand the cervical spine area. In this position the Para-spinal muscles are completely relaxed. A brim made of *Masha kalka* (black gram paste) was prepared around the cervical spine area with due care to expose the affected part of the spine. Warm oil was poured into the masha brim and constant temperature was maintained by replacing oil periodically at the prescribed time.

Material: *Sukhoshna Taila, i.e. Narayana Tail, Vataghna Dravya Sidha Taila, Shulahar Tail.*

Indication: Vertebral Joints Lubrications, Releases Compression from Cervical Nerves, *Vata Bramana*.

Shirobasti^[15]: Certain amount of oil is poured on the vertex and is made to remain there for specific period. Special hat preferably made of leather is fixed around the head just above the ear and eyebrow and the joint between the head and hat is made leak proof. On to this positioned hat lukewarm oil is poured, and is allowed to remain there for preferable period.

Nasya Karma: Administration of the medicines through nasal route is known as *Nasya*. Subjecting the face to *Abhyang* and *Swedana* followed by administration of medicine into the nostrils is the *Nasya Karma*.

Indication: *Udana Vayu Karya Niyantrana*, i.e. *Bala, Varna*, etc. Spine *Tarpana* & relaxation *Dwaram Hi Shirsho Nasa*^[16]: (Cha si 9 -89) Nose is the gateway of the head and as such drug administered by this route pervades the head and thus destroys the disorders there of.

Lepan^[17]: The medicines that are in the form of paste and use for external application are called as *lepa*. *Lepa* should be applied in the opposite directions of the hair follicles. The drugs get absorbed through hair roots, sweat glands and capillaries, while applying the *Lepa Sneha* should be added.

Dashang lepa, Sunthi- Jayaphala lepa
Indication: *Vedana Samaka, Shoth hara.*

Parishkek or **Dhara:** *Dhara* pot is meant for steady flow of decoction or oil. When any liquid is poured into the pot it steadily flows the bottom hole.

Material: *Sukhoshna Kwatha, Jala, Milk, Taila medicated with Vatahara Dravyas.*

Indication: *Dhatu Vridhi, Agni oja Vridhi, Varnaprasadana*

Agnikarma

Agni Karma -Ushna Guna - Qualities against *Vata*-pacified *Vata* and reduced pain

Pain cause any where in the body is due to *Vata, Agni Karma* being *Ushna Chikitsa*

Pacifies *Vata*, thus the pain is relieved immediately after *Agnikarma*. Due to increased local metabolism, the waste products (metabolites) which are produced, gets excreted, which normalize the blood circulation thus resulting in reduction in intensity of pain.

Site: On most painful point.

Indication: If all joints are involved then at base of right thumb *Agni Karma* is beneficial, in all types of joint pain like *Sandhitgatvata, Amavata*, frozen shoulder, cervical spondylosis etc. all types of *Vataja* disease like sciatica, heel pain, local release muscle spasm, *Vedana Shamaka*.

3. Shamana Chikitsa: *Rasayana: Lasun Kshirapaka, Bhallataka rasayana, Bhallatak Vati+til+gud, Amalaki Rasayana.*^[18]

Vajikarana Dravya use, *Majjadhatu Poshak Dravya* use, *Rasayana* Usefull in *Dhatu Kshaya Janya Vataprakop, Ashwagandha, kokilaksha, Musali, Makardhwaja, Vasantkusumakara Rasa.*

Yoga^[19]

Vatagajendra Rasa,
Vatagajankush Rasa,
Vatari Rasa,
Yogaraj Gugglu,
Dashmul Kwatha,
Rasna saptaka Kwatha,
Erand mula Kwatha,
Dashmularishtha,
Shilajit prayoga,

Vardhmana pippli prayoga,
Agnitundi Vati,
Balachurna
Vatachintamani Rasa,
Sarvang Sundara Rasa,
Vatakantaka rasa,
Sarvangsundara rasa,

CONCLUSION

Spinal diseases though are difficult to manage, but if proper diagnosis is made at proper time, many complications can be avoided. Various *Panchkarma* procedures doing with internal medicines can be best option of its management.

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