

## SCOPE OF AYURVEDA IN NEURODEGENERATIVE DISORDERS

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## ABSTRACT

Ayurveda the ancient holistic science of India is treating neurological diseases since its inception. Neurological problem in Ayurveda described mainly in the context of Vatavyadhi. Ayurvedic treatments for neurological disorders will aim to rectify this Vata imbalance and bring the Vata dosha in harmony with Pitta and Kapha dosha so as to eliminate the disease. People worldwide are affected by neurological disorders. There are over 600 known neurological disorders and conditions that affect the human nervous system and for many of them treatment options are extremely limited. The aim of this study is to analyze the different neurological problems described in Ayurveda and their treatment perspective. Recent advancement of Ayurvedic Clinical Research shows that so many incurable neurological problems can be successfully treated by Ayurvedic medicines and Panchakarma therapies.

**KEYWORDS:** Ayurveda, Vatavyadhi, Panchakarma, Vata, Pitta and Kapha dosha.

## INTRODUCTION

The nervous system is a complex, sophisticated system that regulates and coordinates the body's basic functions and activities. Our whole body is controlled by nervous system. Starting from the digestion up to endocrine function, everything is depending upon the complex neurophysiology. It is made up of two major divisions, including the central nervous system (consisting of the brain and spinal cord) and the peripheral nervous system (consisting of all other neural elements).

Ayurveda the ancient holistic science of India is treating neurological diseases since its inception but the terminology was something different. Ayurveda considers neurological disorders to be the result of a Vata disorder. The vitiation of Vata dosha causes an imbalance and disharmony in the human system that leads to neurological disorders. Ayurvedic treatments for neurological disorders will aim to rectify this Vata imbalance and bring the Vata dosha in harmony with pita and Kapha dosha so as to eliminate every type of disease in an individual.

There are over 600 known neurological disorders and conditions that affect the human nervous system and for many of them treatment options are extremely limited. Hundreds of millions of people worldwide are affected by neurological disorders. Approximately 6.2 million people worldwide die because of stroke each year; over

80% of deaths take place in low- and middle-income countries. More than 50 million people have epilepsy worldwide. It is estimated that there are globally 35.6 million people with dementia with 7.7 million new cases every year - Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia and may contribute to 60–70% of cases. The prevalence of migraine is more than 10% worldwide.

**Table 1: Shows common neurological diseases and their Ayurvedic terminology.**

|                    |                                |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| Ardit              | Bell's palsy                   |
| Avabahuk           | Frozen shoulder                |
| Apatantrak         | Hysteric convulsion            |
| Apasmar            | Epilepsy                       |
| Akshepaka          | Convulsion                     |
| Biswachi           | Brachial neuritis              |
| Gridhrasi          | Sciatica syndrome              |
| Grivashool         | Cervical spondylitis           |
| Hanugraha          | Lock jaw                       |
| Jibha stambha      | Glossal palsy                  |
| Kampavata          | Parkinsonism                   |
| Katishool          | Lumber Lumber                  |
| Kalayakhanja       | Lathyrism                      |
| Khanja             | Limping                        |
| Khalli             | Cramps fasciculation           |
| Manyastamba        | Neck rigidity                  |
| Pangu              | Poliomyelitis                  |
| Pakshaghat         | Hemiplegia Paraplegia          |
| Pakwasayagata Vata | Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) |
| Sirogragha         | Trigeminal neuralgia           |
| Sukragata vata     | Sexual neurosis                |
| Twachagata Vata    | Peripheral neuritis            |

**Management of neurological disorder in Ayurveda**

Whole management can be categorized in following manner.

**1. Herbal/ Herbo-mineral classical Ayurvedic preparations**

| Common name | Scientific name        |
|-------------|------------------------|
| Aswagandha  | Withania Somnifera     |
| Bala        | Sida cordifolia        |
| Bramhi      | Bacopa monnieri        |
| Bhallataka  | Semecarpus anacardium  |
| Eranda      | Ricinus communis       |
| Guduchi     | Tinospora cordifolia   |
| Guggulu     | Commiphora wightii     |
| Jatamansi   | Nardostachys jatamansi |
| Kapikacchu  | Mucuna prurita         |
| Kuchila     | Strychnos nuxvomica    |
| Mandukparni | Centella asiatica      |
| Nirgundi    | Vitex negundo          |
| Pippali     | Piper longum           |
| Rasana      | Pluchea lanceolata     |
| Sarpagandha | Rauwolfia serpentine   |
| Shallaki    | Boswellia serrata      |
| Vacha       | Acorus calamus         |

**2. Panchakarma therapy**

Table 2: Some effective herbs used in the management of neurological disorder- Panchakarma therapy in the management of Neurological disease, Panchakarma is fivefold treatment modalities which are basically divided in to three parts, namely Purva Karma (preparatory procedure), Pradhan Karma (main operative procedure) and Pacchat Karma (post operative regimen).

Panchakarma procedure purifies various system of the human body and expel out the accumulated toxic metabolites from the body. Basically Panchakarma is a bio-cleansing procedure which detoxifies the body and helps in increasing bio-availability of drugs, diet etc.

Purva Karma (preparatory procedure): It includes carminative (Deepan), digestive (Pachan), oleation (Snehan) and medicated sudation (Swedan). These are beneficial for lubricating, liquefying of toxic waste products/ metabolites accumulated in various channels of the body and also helps for easy elimination from the body through nearest route.

Pradhan Karma (main operative procedure): After Purva Karma (preparatory procedure), as per requirement the Pradhan Karma (main operative procedure), i.e. therapeutic emesis (vamana karma) and therapeutic purgation (virechan karma) to be done, then one should follow medicated enema (vasti karma) and medicated nasal drops/ application (nasya karma).

Pacchat Karma (post operative regimen): After the every process of Pradhan Karma (main operative procedure) one should follow a special dietary regimen called Samsarjan karma. It is essential to restore the normalcy of body tissue and system as well as helps to rejuvenate the person.

**Table 3: Some effective Oleation (snehan) process useful in Neurological diseases.**

| Oleation (Snehan) Process   | Neurological diseases   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Abhynaga (External Massage) | All neurological diseases except compressive neuropathy           |
| Akshitarpan                 | Optic nerve atrophy, Ptosis                                       |
| Griva vasti                 | Cervical spondylitis, IVDP  |
| Kati vasti                  | Lumber spondylitis, Sciatica, IVDP                                |
| Mardana                     | Muscle wasting  |
| Murdha taila                | Insomnia, Stress, Cerebral atrophy, Cerebral ataxia, Parkinsonism |
| Picchu dhara                | Cranial neuropathy  |
| Sirodhara                   | Insomnia, Stress, Anxiety neurosis, Cranial neuropathy            |
| Sirovasti                   | Cerebral palsy, Cerebral ataxia, Parkinsonism                     |
| Udavartana                  | Hemiplegia, Paraplegia  |

**Table 4: Some effective Sudation (Swedana) therapy useful in Neurological diseases.**

| Sudation therapy (Swedana) | Neurological diseases                                  |
|----------------------------|--|
| Avagahan Sweda             | All neurological disorder specially sensory neuropathy |
| Baspa Sweda                | All obstructive neuropathy                             |
| Nadi Sweda                 | Lumber & Lumber Spondylitis, Sciatica, IVDP            |
| Patrapinda Sweda           | Hemiplegia, Paraplegia, Compressive myelopathy, MND    |
| Shali Pinda Sweda          | Muscular atrophy, Duchene muscular dystrophy           |

**Table 5: Some effective Enema (Vasti) therapy useful in Neurological diseases.**

| Enema (Vasti) therapy           | Neurological diseases   |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Dasamula Niruha Vasti           | Hemiplegia, Paraplegia  |
| Lekhan Vast                     | IVDP                    |
| Matra Vasti (Mahanarayan Taila) | Hemiplegia, Paraplegi   |
| Vaitaran Vasti                  | Sciatica Syndrome, IVDP |

**Table 6: Some Neurological disease and their effective Classical Ayurvedic Treatment & Panchakarma Therapy.**

| Name of the diseases                                 | Therapy and Medication  |
|--|---|
| Paralysis, Hemiplegia due to CVA (infraction)        | Therapy: Snehan → Swedana → Virechana → Vasti Medicine: Ekangavir Rasa, Kaishore Guggulu, Sanjivani Vati, Brihat Vatachintamoni Rasa  |
| Cervical myelopathy                                  | Therapy: Grivavasti Medicine: Trayadasanga Guggulu, Mahavata Vidhama/ Vatagajankus Rasa, Brihat Vatachintamoni Rasa   |
| Transverse myelitis                                  | Therapy: Nadi Swedana → Kativasti Medicine: Kaishore Guggulu, Maha Yogaraj Guggulu, Ekangavir Rasa, Sanjivani Vati, Brihat Vatachintamoni Rasa  |
| Lumber Spondylitis/ Spondylosis                      | Therapy: Abhyanga → Nadi Swedana → Kativasti Medicine: Trayadasanga Guggulu, Mahavata Vidhama/ Vatagajankus Rasa, Brihat Vatachintamoni Rasa, Dasamularista/ Aswagandharista  |
| G.B. Syndrome  | Medicine: Yogendra Rasa, Ekangavir Rasa, Kaishore Guggulu   |
| Cervical Spondylitis/ Spondylosis                    | Therapy: Abhyanga → Nadi Swedana → Grivavasti Medicine: Trayadasanga Guggulu, Mahavata Vidhama/ Vatagajankus Rasa, Brihat Vatachintamoni Rasa, Dasamularista/ Aswagandharist  |
| Sciatica Syndrome                                    | Therapy: Abhyanga → Nadi Swedana → Kativasti Medicine: Trayadasanga Guggulu, Mahavata Vidhama/ Vatagajankus Rasa, Ekangavir/ Khanjankari Rasa, Brihat Vatachintamoni Rasa, Balarista/ Aswagandharista               |
| Ankylosing Sponylitis                                | Therapy: Shali Pinda Sweda Medicine: Trayadasanga Guggulu, Maha Yogaraj Guggulu, Mahavata Vidhama Rasa, Maha Rasnadi Kwath/ Dasamularista/ Aswagandharista  |
| Cerebral Palsy                                       | Therapy: Sirovasti Medicine: Bramhi Vati, Kumar Kalyan Rasa, Saraswatarist  |
| Bell's Palsy   | Therapy: Abhyanga → Swedana → Nasya; Sirovasti Medicine: Yogendra Rasa, Ekangavir Rasa, Kaishore Guggulu  |
| Nerve Root Compression/ PIVD with leg muscle wasting | Therapy: Nadi Swedana → Kativasti & Lekhan Vasti; Traction Medicine: Trayadasanga Guggulu, Mahavata Vidhama/ Vatagajankus Rasa, Ekangavir/ Khanjankari Rasa, Brihat Vatachintamoni Rasa, Balarista/ Aswagandharista |

**CONCLUSION**

Ayurveda considers neurological disorders are the result of a Vata dosha disorder. Above study reveals that

neurological problems can be successfully treated by Ayurvedic System of Medicine. Ayurvedic treatments involves, use of Ayurvedic medicine, Panchakarma therapies i.e. Snehan (Oleation/ External Massage),

Swedana (fomentation), Virechana (medicated purgation), Vasti (medicated enema), Vamana (medicated emesis), Shirodhara, Sirovasti, Murdha Taila (head massage) and use of Nadi Swedana (herbal steam) etc.

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