

AYURVEDA VIEW ON ANORECTAL DISORDERS AND CRITICAL
CONSIDERATIONS OF THEIR CLINICAL INTERVENTION

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Article Received on 23/11/2018

Article Revised on 15/12/2018

Article Accepted on 07/01/2019

ABSTRACT

Anorectal disorders, known as Gudagata Vikara, pertain to afflictions of the anus and/or rectum. This category encompasses various conditions such as Arsha, Bhagandara, Parikartika and Guda Kandu, etc. These disorders commonly affect individuals, with Hemorrhoids and fistula-in-ano being the predominant issues, affecting a significant proportion of the population globally. The vitiation of Doshas, leading to Mandagni and Apanavayu imbalances, is often a consequence of improper dietary practices and lifestyle habits. This imbalance results in the stagnation of Mala in Gudavali, eventually culminating in anorectal disorders. Ayurveda surgery and para-surgical approaches gives several advantages in the management of such types of conditions. This study aims to provide a comprehensive and scientifically-backed analysis on the prevalence, prevention and management of anorectal diseases.

KEYWORDS: Anorectal, Arsha, Fistula, Ksharsutra, Surgery, Guda.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda, often regarded as the science of life, holds the principal objective, as outlined by *Acharya Charak*, of preserving the well-being of the healthy while treating the illnesses of the unwell. In today's fast-paced and highly competitive modern world, people's prioritization of securing their future often leads to neglect of personal health. Moreover, extended periods of sedentary work, irregular shifts and inadequate sleep patterns have become common predicaments for many individuals, resulting in the disruption and imbalance of the *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha Doshas*, ultimately leading to diminished digestive power. These all conditions initiate pathogenesis of some ailments and Ano-rectal disorders are some of them.^[1-4]

In the context of Ayurveda, *Gudagata Vikara* denotes afflictions of the anus and rectum, encompassing various common disorders like Haemorrhoids, Fistula-in-Ano and Fissure-in-Ano, etc. A haemorrhoid (*Arsha*) is classified under the category of *Ashtamahagad Vyadhi*, denoting severe and incurable ailments. *Arsha* emerges within the crucial site of *Guda*, known as a *Marma*, likened to a formidable adversary. Fistula-in-Ano (*Bhagandara*) signifies a condition that results in a tear or discontinuity in the *Guda* and *Vasti* region. Fissure-in-Ano (*Parikartika*) is a condition of pervasive cutting and tearing pain, primarily localized in the *Guda*. Rectal

prolapse (*Gudabhramsha*) is associated with the protrusion of the rectum. Straining and diarrhea can lead to *Gudabhramsha*.^[4-6]

Causes of Anorectal Disorders

Diseases often stem from various imbalances, namely the *Hina*, *Mithya* and *Ati* engagements with the *Kaala*, *Artha* and *Karma*. Conversely, their appropriate coordination is fundamental for the maintenance of good health. Dietary choices, specific occupations (driving professions), aging, irregular lifestyle patterns and poor hygiene practices, etc. can also trigger the prevalence of *Gudaroga*. The *Samprapti* of *Gudaroga* is depicted in **Figure 1**.

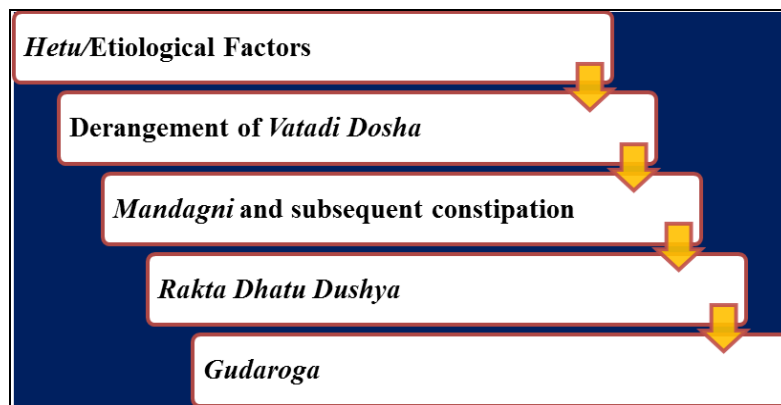


Figure 1: Pathological events associated with *Gudaroga*.

Symptoms

- Bleeding
- Pain and burning sensation
- Diarrhea and pus discharge
- Persistent itching and swelling
- Visible cracks in the anus
- Gas, lumps and bloating

Treatment

Several treatment methods have been recommended by both modern and Ayurvedic sciences. Modern medicine typically manages these conditions through the administration of stool softeners, topical therapies such as nitroglycerin and surgery, etc. Ayurvedic treatments involve drug therapy, *Kshara karma*, *Agni karma* and *Shastra Karma*. Ayurveda places greater emphasis on preventive measures rather than curative interventions. In this context, the primary cause often lies in constipation due to *Mandagni*. To rectify *Mandagni*, considerable attention must be paid to the *Ahara* and *Vihara*.^[6-8]

Ayurveda mainly focuses on following treatment methods:

- ✓ Medicinal treatment
- ✓ Treatment with *Kshar*
- ✓ Treatment with *Agni*
- ✓ *Shastra Karma Chikitsa*

Medicinal treatment mainly employed in the case of new and less severe piles, where the *Doshas* are minimally involved and symptoms are mild. It is crucial to consider the patient's digestive capacity when devising the treatment plan for *Arsha*. *Vagbhata* emphasizes the significance of assessing the patient's digestive capacity in diseases such as *Arsha* and *Atisar*. Furthermore, it is essential to differentiate between bleeding and non-bleeding piles. *Vagbhata* recommends *Bhallataka* for non-bleeding piles and *Vatsak* for bleeding piles. In all types of *Arsha*, *Takra* is considered the preferred medication to rebalance vitiated *Doshas* and enhance the patient's strength. *Sushruta* recommends *Panchakarma* treatment for *Vata dosha* predominant *Arsha* and *Virehan* for *Pitta* predominant *Arsha*. *Shunthi* and *Kulith* are suggested for *Kapha Pradhan Arsha*. *Swedan*, *Avagaha*, *Raktamokshana*, *Lepa*, *Basti* and *Anulomana*,

etc. are also advocated for the management of ano-rectal conditions.

Treatment with *Kshar* recommended for soft and deep piles. *Sushruta* recommends *Kshar* in *Vatakaphaja* and *Pitta Raktja* types of *Arshas*. This procedure is best suited for patients with robust strength. The treatment involves positioning of patient appropriately, introducing an *Arshoyantra* and applying *Kshar*. Subsequently, the pile mass should be cleansed with *Kanji* or curd. Adequate dietary recommendations are advised, and the treatment can be repeated after few days if necessary.

Agni Chikitsa is recommended for rough, large, and immovable piles. Additionally, *Vata Kapha Pradhan Arshas* should be treated using *Agni Karma*.

Shastra Karma Chikitsa is suggested for piles with small pedicles and an elevated appearance. *Sushruta* advocates excising such piles using appropriate instruments and promptly cauterizing the area.^[7-10]

Modern perspective on anorectal disorders

There are various forms of anal and rectal disorders, ranging from minor nuisances like itching or warts to more severe issues such as pain and incontinence. Anal or rectal abscess, anal fissures, anal fistula, hemorrhoids, fecal incontinence and rectal prolapsed are major ano-rectal conditions classified in modern medical system.

Diagnosis and Treatment

- ❖ Physical examination
- ❖ Digital rectal examination
- ❖ Colonoscopy
- ❖ Imaging tests like ultrasound or MRI

The treatment for anal or rectal disorder varies, potentially incorporating lifestyle adjustments such as: incorporating a fiber supplement into diet, application of topical ointments or creams, avoiding prolonged periods of sitting, increased water intake, augmenting fiber consumption through increased intake of fruits and vegetables, sitz baths and colorectal surgery, etc.

CONCLUSION

Anorectal disorders, also known as *Gudagata Vikara* in the context of Ayurveda, refer to ailments concerning the anus and/or rectum. This category encompasses various conditions like *Bhagandara*, *Arsha*, *Guda Kandu* and *Parikartika*, etc. These disorders commonly affect individuals, with hemorrhoids and fistula-in-ano emerging as the predominant concerns, impacting a significant portion of the global population. The vitiation of *Doshas*, which results in *Mandagni* and *Apanavayu* imbalances, often arises from improper dietary practices and lifestyle habits. This imbalance leads to the accumulation of *Mala* in *Gudavali*, ultimately culminating in ano-rectal disorders. Ayurvedic surgical and para-surgical approaches offer several advantages in managing such conditions. Drugs therapy, treatment with *Kshar*, treatment with *Agni* and *Shashtra Karma Chikitsa* are major approaches of Ayurveda recommended for the management of ano-rectal disorders.

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