

ROLE OF LEECH APPLICATION IN VATRAKTA CASE SERIES

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is a life science which not only deals with curative but also preventive aspect of disease. *Vatrakta* is a disease which is caused by vitiation of *Vata* and *Rakta Dosha*. Incidence rate of this disease is increasing day by day. This *dosha samuchhaya* gets accumulated in different small joints of the body causing redness, pain, edema on the affected site. According to modern science *Vatrakta* can be correlated with gout. Gout is caused by increased uric acid level in blood. Uric acid is the waste product of purine metabolism which is component of nucleic acid. Uric acid gets crystalized and these crystals are deposited in small joints, tendons & surrounding tissues. Leech application (*Jalouka Avacharan*) is one of the best treatments mentioned in texts for *Ayurveda* for *Vatrakta*. Five diagnosed patients of *Vatrakta* were selected. Clinical criteria's for diagnosis were *sandhishool* (joint pain), *daha* (burning sensation at joints), *shotha* (swelling at joints), and results were assessed on the above criteria. *Amrutadi guggulu* was given as internal medicine with *Jalouka avacharan* (Leech application) to the selected patients and significant results were obtained in *Vatrakta*.

KEYWORDS: *Vatrakta*, *Jalouka avacharan*.

INTRODUCTION

Vatrakta is included in locomotor disorders.^[1] It is considered as an important metabolic disorder which is mainly caused by vitiation of *vata* & *rakta*. This vitiated *vata* along with derranged *rakta* circulates all over the body by the virtue of its *sukshma* (minute) and *drava* (liquid) *guna* (characters) respectively & undergo *dosh-dushya sammurchana* in *sandhi sthana*.^[2] *Vatrakta* primarily affects *pad-anguli sandhi* (big toe).^[3] Gout affects mostly meta- tarso-phalangeal joints. Uric acid level is increased in the manifestation of the disease. Uric acid is the end product of purine metabolism in human body in which crystals of monosodium urate

monohydrate are formed because of increased uric acid levels in body fluids which will produce arthritis, bursitis, tophaceous deposits.^[4] In Maharashtra, prevalence of gout is 0.1%. The incidence and prevalence is doubled over last two decades.^[5] The reason behind it is the lack of physical exercise /activities, faulty sitting, slipping positions, obesity, dietary habits etc.

There are two types of *Vatrakta*^[6]

1) *Utthana* (superficial) 2) *Gambhira* (deep) Symptoms of *utthana* and *gambhira vatrakta* are as follows.^[7]

Tabel 1: Symptoms of *utthana* and *gambhira vatrakta*.

<i>Utthana vatrakta</i>	<i>Gambhira vatrakta</i>
<i>Daha</i> (burning)	<i>Stambha</i> (stiffness)
<i>Ruka</i> (pain)	<i>Shvaythu</i> (oedema)
<i>Kandu</i> (itching)	<i>Tamravarna</i> (discoloration)
<i>Toda</i> (aching)	<i>Daha</i> (burning)
<i>Spurana</i>	<i>Paka</i> (suppuration)
<i>Aakunchana</i> (contraction)	<i>Arati</i> (pain)
<i>Shyava twaka</i> (dark skin colour)	<i>Sphurana</i>

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

To study the role of leech application in the management

of *Vatrakta*. To find combined therapy effect in *Vatrakta*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Leech (*jalouka*),

Amrutadi guggulu 500 mg three times a day after breakfast, lunch and dinner with a cup of lukewarm water.

Treatment is given in 5 selected & well diagnosed patients of *Vatrakta* from O.P.D & I.P.D of Shree G.N.T. Hospital of Vidarbha Ayurved College.

Leech application is carried out 3 times at regular time interval of 1 week.

Inclusion criteria

- Patients showing classical symptoms of *Vatrakta*.
- Either of the both sex.
- Age between 16-60 yr.

Exclusion criteria

- Having h/o of DM, HTN, HIV infection
- Patients contraindicated for blood-letting (*raktavisrtawan*) as said in *Ayurveda* text, such as ascites (*udar-roga*), anemia (*pandu*), piles (*arsha*),

4) *Sandhi Shool*: (joint pain)

0	No pain
1	Occasionally pain
2	Moderate pain
3	Severe pain

ANC (*garbhini*), and swelling (*shopha*).^[8]

Clinical criteria

A) Subjective criteria

1) *Sandhi Shopha*: (swelling at joints)

0	No oedema
1	Occasionally oedema
2	Pitting oedema relieved by rest
3	Oedema pitting in nature & not relieved by rest

2) *Sandhi Vaivarnya*: (joint erythema)

0	No erythema
1	Mild erythema
2	Moderate erythema
3	Severe erythema

3) *Sandhi Daha*: (burning sensation at joints)

0	No Daha
1	Mild <i>daha</i>
2	Moderate <i>daha</i>
3	Severe <i>daha</i>

B) Objective Criteria:

- 1) Serum uric acid
- 2) Hb %
- 3) ESR

Treatment protocol

Karma	Vidhi	Duration
<i>Raktmokshana</i>	By Leech application	3 sittings

Leech application is carried out 3 times at regular time interval of 1 week

Shaman drug	Dose	Kala	Duration
<i>Amrutadi guggulu</i>	500mg	Three times a day after breakfast, lunch and dinner.	45 days

OBSERVATIONS

Patient A.

	BT	1 st sitting	AT 2 nd sitting	3 rd sitting
<i>Sandhi shopha</i> :	+++	++	+	+
<i>Sandhi vaivarnya</i>	+++	+++	++	++
<i>Sandhi shoola</i>	+++	++	+	+
<i>Sandhi daha</i>	+++	++	+	+

Patient B.

	BT	1 st sitting	AT 2 nd sitting	3 rd sitting
<i>Sandhi shopha</i> :	+++	+++	+	+
<i>Sandhi vaivarnya</i>	+++	++	++	+
<i>Sandhi shoola</i>	+++	+++	++	+
<i>Sandhi daha</i>	+++	+	+	+

Patient C.

	BT	AT		
		1 st sitting	2 nd sitting	3 rd sitting
<i>Sandhi shopha:</i>	+++	++	+	+
<i>Sandhi vaivarnya</i>	+++	++	+	+
<i>Sandhi shoola</i>	+++	+++	+	+
<i>Sandhi daha</i>	+++	+	+	-

Patient D.

	BT	AT		
		1 st sitting	2 nd sitting	3 rd sitting
<i>Sandhi shopha:</i>	+++	+++	+	+
<i>Sandhi vaivarya</i>	+++	+++	+++	+++
<i>Sandhi shoola</i>	+++	+++	++	+
<i>Sandhi daha</i>	+++	+	+	+

Patient E

	BT	AT		
		1 st sitting	2 nd sitting	3 rd sitting
<i>Sandhi shopha:</i>	+++	++	+	+
<i>Sandhi vaivarnya</i>	+++	+++	++	+
<i>Sandhi shoola</i>	+++	+++	++	+
<i>Sandhi daha</i>	+++	+	+	+

RESULT

In 60 % patients, *Sandhi shopha* & *Sandhi shoola* reduced after 2nd sitting while in remaining 40% patients, effect was seen after 3rd sitting. In 40 % patients, *Sandhi vaivarnya* reduced after 2nd sitting while in remaining 40% patients the effect was seen after 3rd sitting and 20 % patients showed no result. In 80 % patients *Sandhi daha* reduced after 2nd sitting while in remaining 20% patients the effect was seen after 3rd sitting of leech application.

DISCUSSION

In *Vatrakta*, vitiated *Vata* obstructs vitiated *Rakta* path affecting mostly metatarsal phalangeal joints of the lower limbs. *Raktamokshana* is the main treatment of *raktapradoshaja vyadhi*.^[9] Properties of *pitta* and *rakta* are similar & hence when *pitta* gets vitiated, it vitiates *rakta* dhatu. In the conditions like *daha* and *shoola* leech application is indicated in *pitta* and *rakta* *pradoshaja vyadhis* as per *Sushruta Achary* hence it is used in *pittaj vyadhi*.^[10]

Amruta guggul is drug of choice of *Vatrakta*. It corrects purin metabolism and checks uric acid production. Anti-inflammatory properties of *guggul* relieves in inflammation & it act as an analgesic properties relieving pain and tenderness in *Vatrakta* patient.

According to modern point of view secretion of salivary glands of leech contains more than 100 bioactive substances which have analgesic,

bacteriostatic, anti-inflammatory, antiviral action.^[11]

Leech application is performed at the local site of pathogenesis, it will suck the vitiated *rakta* along with vitiated *dosha* due to which obstruction of *vata dosha* be reduced.

CONCLUSION

According to *Ayurveda* text *Vatrakta* is *rakta-pradoshj vikar* and blood-letting (*raktmokshan*) is best treatment. *Raktamokshan* by leech application relieves the signs and symptoms as the vitiated blood (*rakta*) i.e the root cause is removed in *Vatrakta*. Good results were obtained in pathogenesis as the main cause is the obstruction of the vitiated *vata* by vitiated *rakta*. Thus leech application breaks the pathogenesis of *Vatrakta* by removing obstruction of *vata dosha*.

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