

THE ROLE OF ASHWAMAR KSHARA LOCAL APPLICATION IN THE TREATMENT OF ARSHA

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ABSTRACT

Arsha (Haemorrhoids) is included under the *Asthamahagada*. *Arsha* is an extremely common problem and it has been reported since thousands of years and its prevalence rate is highest among all anorectal disorders. The faulty dietary pattern and lifestyle, anatomical deformities and hereditary factors are the important etiological factors of this disease. *Arsha* is clinically an engorged condition of haemorrhoidal venous plexus along with abnormally displaced enlarged anal cushion. In modern medical science, many procedures are described for management of haemorrhoids, of which haemorrhoidectomy is commonly preferred by surgeons, but after sometime of excision there is great possibility of reappearance of the disease. But in *Ayurveda* management of *Arsha* has been indicated viz. *Bheshaj*, *Kshara Karma*, *Agni Karma*, *Shashtra Karma* (*Chedana*) according to chronicity and presentation of the disease. Local application of *Kshara* is the best one treatment as per the available treatment modalities of *Arsha*. It is easy to adaptability, convenient, cost-effective and curative results. This parasurgical procedure, various forms of *Kshara* application are used in treating the *Arsha* i.e., *Ksharasutra* ligation, *Ksharapatan* etc. *Ksharasutra* ligation is the surgical procedure and *Ksharapatan vidhi* means the local application and seem to be effective with an easy procedure. In this present study, *Ashwamar* (*Nerium Oleander*) *Kshara*, one among the best qualitative *Ksharas*, was locally applied directly on the different sizes, shapes and degrees of *Arsha*, to find out its effectiveness with or without any untoward effect. A total of 5 patients were treated by local application of *Ashwamar Kshara*. The local application of *Ashwamar Kshara* was done alternate day, for 7 days, and the result was assessed thoroughly on the basis of observation according to the specially designed proforma. *Ashwamar Kshara* was prepared as per the standard method described in *Ayurvedic* text books. Patients suffering from *Arsha* were selected by simple random sampling method, with the complaints of bleeding per rectum, *Vedana*, *Srava* and *kandu*. Lastly, it was concluded that the local application of *Ashwamar Kshara* had shown significant improvement in 1st and 2nd degree of pile masses without any side effect and complications.

KEYWORDS: *Arsha*, Haemorrhoids, *Asthamahagada*, *Ashwamar Kshara*, *Bheshaj Chikitsa*, *Ksharapatan*, *Ksharasutra*, *Kshara Karma* etc.

INTRODUCTION

Arsha is being described by all the classics of *Ayurveda*. *Kshara Chikitsa* has been in practice since 500 BC. As per *Acharya Sushruta*, the *Kshara* is prepared from 22 plants. There are two types of *Kshara* preparation: one is *paniya Kshara* for internal use while the other one is the *pratisaraniya Kshara* for external use. The *pratisaraniya Kshara* is further divided into three types, i.e., *Mridu* (mild in action), *Madhya* (moderate in action) and *Teekshna* (strong in action). In this study, *Teekshna Kshara* was taken into consideration for local application directly on the *Arsha*. The wide descriptions of *Arsha* including its treatment are available in the classics. But to emphasize its graveness, *Arsha* is enumerated under

the heading of *ashtomahagada* and occurs in *guda pradesha*, the seat of *sadyapranahar marma* which requires delicate management. Modern system of treatment has adopted a variety of methods like sclerotherapy (injection of sclerosant agent in submucous spaces of haemorrhoids), rubber band ligation, infra-red coagulation (IRC), cryosurgery (using N₂O gas), haemorrhoidectomy, etc., according to the nature and degree of pile mass, but these procedures have their own merits and demerits with limitations. *Acharya Charaka* has given more emphasis on the conservative treatment and prescribed suitable dietary regimes with drugs to the patients for curing of *Arsha* by improving *deepan* and *pachan Karmas* of the *agni* (enhancement of digestive

capacity) in the body. Further, he has also advised *Kshara* treatment for different types of *Arsha*. However, every system of medicine has given its own way of treatment for treating the *Arsha*. *Acharya Sushruta* has basically mentioned four types of treatments, i.e., *Bheshaja*, *Ksharakarma*, *Agnikarma* and *Shastrakarma* for *Arsha* and he has given more emphasis on *Ksharakarma* modality.

There are certain methods of *Ksharakarma*. One of them is *Ksharasutra* method which has been proved very effective in the treatment of fistula in ano, different types of haemorrhoids, fissure in ano and is being practiced widely. This effectiveness of *Ksharasutra* can be attributed only to the potency of the particular content, i.e., *Kshara*. Accordingly, the *Ashwamar*

(*Nerium Oleander*.) *Kshara* is said to be very useful in treating the haemorrhoids locally. In this regard, it is reviewed that several different preparations of plants have been tried locally to treat haemorrhoids by many investigators as well as the agencies. But *Kshara* in haemorrhoids and *Ksharasutra* therapy in fistula are found to be superior over the others. Hence, it is the need of the hour to search for different *Ksharas* of various plants in the treatment of different disorders as per indication in *Samhita*.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To study the efficacy of *Ashwamar Kshara* application in cases of *Arsha*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Drug review

| Name | Botanical Name | Family | Rasa | Guna | Vipak | Virya |
|----------------------|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| <i>Ashwamara</i> | <i>Nerium Oleander</i> | <i>Apochyanacy</i> | <i>Katu, Tikta</i> | <i>Laghu, Ruksha, Teekshna</i> | <i>Katu</i> | <i>Ushna</i> |
| <i>Kshara</i> | <i>Alkali Salt</i> | - | <i>Katu</i> | <i>Teekshna</i> | <i>Katu</i> | <i>Ushna</i> |
| <i>Nimbu Swarasa</i> | <i>Citrus limon</i> | <i>Rutaceae</i> | <i>Amla</i> | <i>Teekshna, Laghu</i> | <i>Amla</i> | <i>Ushna</i> |

Teekshna Ashwamar Kshara was prepared according to the classical views. The preparation of *Kshara* has been described in detail and pharmaceutical analysis is given below.

Pharmaceutical analysis

The pharmaceutical study of *Ashwamar Kshara* was done in the Shri. Venkatesh food Laboratory, Nanded. The findings are as follows:

| | |
|-------------------------|--------|
| pH | 12.05 |
| Moisture | 3.52% |
| Total ash | 93.24% |
| Acid insoluble ash | 4.75% |
| Water soluble extract | 15.30% |
| Alcohol soluble extract | 10.18% |
| Specific gravity | 1.1223 |

Organoleptic characters

- Color: Dull white
- Touch: Smooth
- Taste: Alkaline

Clinical study

In this study, a total of 5 patients of *Arsha* were selected by simple random sampling method, from OPD of the Department of *Shalyatantra*, Govt. Ayurvedic, Hospital, Vazirabad, Nanded. All the patients had completed the course of treatment with local application of *Ashwamar Kshara*.

Inclusion criteria

- Irrespective of age, sex, religion, education and

socioeconomic status, were included in this study.

- Patients of 1st and 2nd degree Internal haemorrhoids.
- Bleeding per rectum.
- Pain.
- Discharge.
- Pruritus

Exclusion criteria

- 3rd & 4th degree internal haemorrhoids.
- Patients suffering from hypertension, diabetes mellitus, carcinoma of rectum, and cardiac disorders.

Diagnostic criteria

Diagnosis was made on the basis of physical examinations by performing thorough P/R examinations, i.e.

- Inspection.
- Digital palpation.
- Proctoscopic examination.

Investigations

CBC, BT, CT, Random blood sugar, HbsAg, HIV.

Method of *Kshara* application

Kshara application was done locally on the haemorrhoids mass as per the classical technique called "*Ksharapatana vidhi*" in lithotomy position for 100 *Vaak Maatra* (till the colour of haemorrhoids changes to *Pakwajambuvata*) followed by *Dhawan* with "*Nimbu Swarasa*".

Duration of treatment

Ashwamar Kshara was applied on each pile mass

alternate day for 7 days.

Follow-up of the patient

It was done weekly for 1 month to see for recurrence of the symptoms and any adverse effect.

Assessment criteria

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Complete relief | 76–100% relief in symptoms, with complete reduction of pile mass. |
| Marked improvement | 51–75% relief in symptoms with or without reduction in pile mass |
| Improvement | 25–50% relief in complaint of patient |
| No improvement | 0% No relief in symptoms or reduction in pile masses |

Assessment of results

Assessment of results was done based on relief of sign and symptoms, i.e., bleeding per rectum, pain, pruritus, discharge and reduction of size in pile mass on the basis of scoring pattern.

RESULTS AND OBSERVATIONS

Table No.1: Sex wise distribution (n=5).

| Sex | No. of patients | % |
|--------|-----------------|----|
| Male | 4 | 80 |
| Female | 1 | 20 |

Table No.2: Prakriti of patients (n=5).

| Prakriti | No. of patients | % |
|--------------|-----------------|----|
| Vatapittaja | 3 | 60 |
| Vatakaphaja | 1 | 20 |
| Kaphapittaja | 1 | 20 |

Table No.3: Sign & Symptoms relief (n=5).

| Symptoms | No. of patient's | % |
|---------------------------|------------------|-----|
| Vedana | 2 | 40 |
| Gudadaha | 3 | 60 |
| Gudakandu | 1 | 20 |
| RaktaSrava | 4 | 80 |
| Size in haemorrhoids mass | 5 | 100 |

Table No.4: Clockwise position of haemorrhoids (n=5).

| Position | No. of patient's | % |
|------------------|------------------|----|
| 3,7 'o' clock | 1 | 20 |
| 7 'o' clock | 1 | 20 |
| 11 'o' clock | 1 | 20 |
| 3,7,11 'o' clock | 2 | 40 |

Table No. 5: % of relief (n=5).

| Effect | No. of patients | % |
|----------------------------|-----------------|----|
| Cured ($\geq 76\%$) | 00 | 00 |
| Markedly improved (51-75%) | 3 | 60 |
| Improved (26-50%) | 2 | 40 |
| Not improved ($< 25\%$) | 00 | 00 |

Observed in this study, male patients were more in number (80%). Maximum incidences of Arsha were observed in patients of Vatapittaja Prakriti (60%). Bleeding is directly related with Pitta Dosha, so more

incidence of Arsha had been found in Pitta pradhan Prakriti. Sign & symptoms according to the number of cases is shown. It shows that the maximum patients (80%) had RaktaSrava (P/R bleeding) as it was the cardinal symptom of Arsha. Maximum number of pile masses was situated in 7 o'clock position (60%).

The overall result: markedly improved result was in 60% of patients, whereas 40% of patients showed improved. Local application of Ashwamara Kshara therapy had provided 80% relief in RaktaSrava and Vedanta (40%), which was found statistically significant. Relief in Gudadaha was observed to the extent of 60%, whereas 20% relief was recorded in Gudakandu. In every patient there was reduction of size of haemorrhoids mass. In a few patients, burning sensation was observed after the Ksharapatan, which was managed with Takra and local application of Durva ghrta.

DISCUSSION

More numbers of patients were found in lower economic status, which may be due to their irregular dietary habits. It is also observed that labour class patients were more affected because of their style of work like sitting in Utkatasan which leads to Dushti of Apaana Vayu vigorously, a prominent etiological factor for causing Arsha. Most of patients was noted tobacco addiction and this was responsible for developing the Agnimandya which was also one of the causative factors for Arsha. Main reason Agnimandya was found in Arsha patients and this proved again the observation of the learned writer of the Astang Hridaya, i.e., Vagbhatta. This hypothesis has been further proven by the concept of Koshtha, more patients found with Mrudu Koshtha which was also possible due to the weakness of Agnibala. Family history of Arsha, which was also another important hereditary causative reason. Symptoms of Arsha like Rakta Srava (bleeding per rectum), Gudadaha, Gudasrava, Gudakandu, etc., subsided by treatment with local application of Pratisaraniya Kshara on Arsha satisfactorily. Kshara has properties of mainly Chhedan, Bhedan and Lekhan, and by virtue of these properties, Kshara produced shrinking effect on pile masses. Gudadaha also subsided. Daha is caused due to vitiation of Pitta and Rakta Dosha having Amla (acidic) property, which gets neutralized by Lavana anurasa of Kshara. Statistical analysis also proves that local application of Ashwamar Kshara has a significant effect in 1st degree and 2nd degree of haemorrhoids.

CONCLUSION

Concluded that the pile masses shrunk out with *Ashwamar Kshara*, without complete disappearance of pile masses. Hence, it could be stated that local application of *Ashwamar Kshara* is an effective method for the treatment of 1st and 2nd degree haemorrhoids. The important notable point was that there were no side effects or adverse effects shown after the treatment.

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