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CAUTION TOWARDS POISON FROM THE ERA OF SAMHITA TILL TODAY

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ABSTRACT

Agadtantra is the system of knowledge for conquering poisons. The science which deals with poisons with reference to their sources, properties, mode of action, symptoms which they produce, lethal dose, nature of fatal results, treatment, method of their detection & estimation and autopsy findings. A poison is a substance which when administered, inhaled or ingested is capable of acting deleteriously on human body, thus almost anything is a poison. There is no bounding between a medicine and poison, for a medicine in a toxic dose is a poison and a poison in a small dose may be medicine. Ayurveda has always elaborated every topic very vastly and regarding poisoning Acharyas have commented on visha, vishadana adhishtana i.e. methods of poisoning, vishadata lakshana and treatment in detail.

INTRODUCTION

In ancient time, the king has the threat of being poisoned by enemies through food, clothes, bed etc. It is also mentioned that during war, the king and his military faced the threat of vitiation of the path, water, shades, food, fuels, food of animals etc. by poison. The king on entering the enemy kingdom should examine the grass, water, path, food, smoke, air etc. that may be poisoned by enemy. In the context of poison, it is mentioned that women, desirous of luxuries and prosperity and also king's close relatives or associates inspired by enemies to destroy him, mix Gara or poison with food. In Kautilya's Arthashastra, several tactics that could be employed in war against enemies or traitors are mentioned. Among them, various poisoning methods are described, which are commonly adopted by weaker kings and by others in internal conflicts or conspiracies. Review.

Ayurveda is a unique science which has described many unique theories. Methods of poisoning are one of them. Ayurveda has described detailed sign and symptoms along with management. Detailed study of the topic may help today's researchers to analyze the area of study in depth. Even in the period of Sushruta it was so much developed that they have mention of various types of poisons in metals, plants, animals etc. Along with the mode of spreading of poison. Not only regarding poisonous plants, animals, even to protect the king how the food, flowers etc offered to king should be examined is mentioned in detail.

In first chapter named Annapana Rakshakalpa Adhyaya there is mention of saving king from poison, Yoga Vaidya in Pakashaala, Amashayagata Visha Laxana, Vishadata Pariksha, Vishadana Sadhana, Visha Mishrita Anna Laxana, Pakwashayagata Visha Laxana, Savisha Daravya Laxana, Savisha Kavala, Pratisheda, Lepa, Vastra, Mukha Lepa Vahana, Anjana Laxana and Chikitsa Visha Vyapti over Hrudaya and its Chikitsa, Vamana in Visha Bhakshana.¹ In second chapter there is mention of poison of vegetable, animal kingdom, metallic or mineral poison. Visha is of two types sthavara with 10 Ashraya and Jangama with 16 Adhistana.² Ten qualities of visha with its Karya. Vegas of visha with respective Chikitsa, Ajeya Ghruta, complications of visha and its Chikitsa is explained. In third chapter regarding 16 Adhistana of Jangama Visha is explained in detail. Also history regarding Visha Utpatti. Dushita Jala, Truna, Bhumi, Dravya Vayu, Dhuma Laxana and Chikitsa is described. At the time of snake bite removal of poison Sheetal Kriya in Visha Chikitsa, Visha Bakshana Laxana are described.³ During the Srishti Utpatti the energy of the terrific wrath went on increasing even after the destruction of the demon, at the sight of which the gods were greatly depressed in spirit. The term **Visha** (poison) is so called from the fact of its filling the gods with Vishada. After that the god of creation, having finished his task of creating this world, cast that wrath both into the mobile and the immobile creations. by Swayambhu Brahma,

daitya named kaitabha due to his ego he intentionally distracted it In fourth chapter types of snake, their vicharana kala, dosha prakopata varna bheda is being described. ⁴

In fifth chapter sarpa dasta chikitsa is explained along with speciality of visha chikitsa in garbhini, even treatment of visha in pashu, pakshi is described. ⁵

In sixth chapter named dundubhiswaniya kshara agada in sarpa visha, swedana nisheda, pathya apathya. ⁶

In seventh chapter named mushika kalpa 7–types of mushaka, it's dasta laxana, chikitsa. ▪ According to Sushrutacharya there are 18 types of Mooshika: Laalan, Putraka, Krishna, Hansira, Chikkira, Chuchundra, Alasa, Kashaayadanta, Kulinga, Ajita, Chapala, Kapila, Kokila, Aruna, Mahakrishna, Mahashweta, Mahakapila, Kapota. Mooshika Vishais difficult to cure because it is spreading in nature and is relapsing because poison may remain in the body and aggravated on cloudy days

In eighth adhyaya keeta kalpa upakrama is described which includes Various kinds of worms and insects (Kita) germinate from the semen, fecal matter, urine, putrid eggs and putrid carcasses of serpents ⁸In Astanga Samgraha along with other branches Agadatantra or Damstra also mentioned but the matters of Agadatantra or Visha Vairodhika was in scattered form all throughout the text.Hence the reader has to face difficulty in finding out all the concept about Agadatantra in the entire text. This ramified form of Ayurveda shows some disadvantages in treatment related to the physicians as well as to the readers

or scholars.But if we can arrange and collect all the data or concept in the form of Astanga Ayurveda in respect of each particular branch,it will be helpful to everyone to find out the matters according to their need. As an important and necessary branch among other eight branches of Ayurveda Agadatantra or Damstra has been mentioned in different Sthanas or chapters of Astanga Samgraha written by Acharya Vagbhat.23rd Chapter of Charaka Samhita Chikitsa Sthana is called Visha Chikitsa. It deals with symptoms and Ayurvedic treatment of poisoning due to snake bite, scorpion bite, food poisoning etc.

The 69th chapter of Madhava Nidana is-Visha Roga Nidanam which deals with Diseases due to Poison.

Conclusion

“A drug that is not understood perfectly is comparable to poison, weapons, fire and the thunderbolt, while the perfectly understood drug is comparable to ambrosia. The drug whose name, form and properties are not known, or the drug, which though known, is not properly administered, will cause disaster.“Even acute poison is converted into an excellent medicine by the right method of preparation. While, even a good medicine may act as an acute poison if improperly administered.the purificatory dose if improperly administered is like poison, and if properly administered, is like nectar.”⁹A poison is difficult to define with legalistic rigour. Even pure water is toxic when it is retained by the body in excess, and can kill

the patient (water intoxication). Even small quantities of water can cause death when inhaled into the lungs. The accepted pharmacological definition of poison is "any substance that, in relatively very small quantities, can cause illness or death in the living organism by chemical action." No reasonable definition of poison can exclude the thousands of substances which in small doses produce physiological changes which, being used customarily for the treatment of disease, are identified as drugs. William Withering, who defined the clinical use of fox glove leaves (*digitalis*) in heart failure and "dropsy", wrote in 1787: "Poisons in small doses are the best medicines; and useful medicines in too large doses are poisonous". That is to say that drugs are useful poisons, with selective toxicity. In fact pharmacology and toxicology go hand in hand. Over 400 years ago, Swiss alchemist and physician Paracelsus (1493-1541) cited: "All substances are poisons; there is none that is not a poison. The right dose differentiates a poison from a remedy." This is often condensed to: "The dose makes the poison." poisons became a global problem with the industrial revolution. Pesticides, asbestos, occupational chemicals, air pollution, and heavy metal toxicity maintain high priority worldwide, Poisoning almost always occurs as a result of ingestion of plant parts or liquid extracts of plants. Venomous Animals North American snake, spider, scorpion and hymenoptera species are capable of producing life-threatening envenomation in humans.

Hymenoptera

Hymenoptera include bees, wasps, yellow jackets, hornets and ants. Single stings may result in anaphylaxis in susceptible individuals. classic anticholinergic toxidrome may be seen, with typical antimuscarinic symptoms including tachycardia, mydriasis, flushed skin, dry axilla, hyperthermia, urinary retention, and diminished bowel sounds. Rhabdomyolysis is common.

Clinical Features of Animal Envenomation

With most envenomations, patients will experience immediate pain regardless of the type of animal responsible for the bite or sting. Grade 1 describes mild envenomations with symptoms limited to local pain. Grade 2 describes presence of paresthesias distal from the sting site. Moderate to severe envenomations (Grade 3 and 4) are characterized by neuromuscular agitation, with involuntary twisting of the torso and flailing of the extremities, dysconjugate roving eye movements, hypersalivation, and fasciculations.

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