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A REVIEW ON TREATMENT STRATEGIES OF ARSHA (HAEMORRHOIDS/PILES)

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ABSTRACT

Arsha (hemorrhoids) is engorgement of the hemorrhoidal venous plexus, characterized by bleeding per rectum, constipation, pain, prolapse and discharge. It is manifested due to improper diet, prolonged standing and faulty habits of defecation causing derangement of *tridosha*, mainly *vata dosha*. Vitiated *dosha* localizes in *guda vali*, *pradhana dhamani* and *mansdhara kala* and vitiates *twak*, *mansa*, *meda* and *rakta*, resulting in the *annavaha sroto dushti*. Modern management of *arsha* needs, mainly, a surgical approach, i.e. hemorrhoidectomy, wherein the result was found to be less satisfactory. In this article we are discussing regarding the various strategies of treatment of Arsha.

Keywords: Arsha, Dushti ,defecation etc.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda has immense potential to solve many challenging and unresolved problem of the medical world. Shalya Chikitsais one of the most important branches of ayurveda, which has its own originality with authenticity, contributing to the modern surgical technology to today, Sushruta Samhita is the only available text in surgical practice, and it has been opined that there are many diseases that are difficult to manage by conservative treatment alone. Among them arshais one such grave disease, for which it has been included in Ashtamahagada bysushruta, showing the gravity of this disease (3). The present westernized lifestyle is adding to the prevalent rate of this disease. The incidence of this disease is showing augmentation with advancing age. At least 50% of the people over the age 50 years have some degree of symptom related to arsha. In Sushruta Samhita, the whole treatment is covered under four categories of treatment i.e. Bheshaja chikitsa (palliative treatment), Ksharkarma (potential cauterization agent therapy), Agnikarma (direct cauterization agent therapy), Shastrakarma (operation). As far as modern modalities are concerned, the conservative treatment of piles consists of use of laxative and high residual diet. Arsha is being described by all the classics of Ayurveda. Acharya Sushruta even placed this disorder in the "Ashta Mahagada" 4 (Eight grave diseases). Arsha occurs in Guda region, which is undoubtedly a Marma, and it is well known for its chronicity and difficult management. This shows the gravity of the disease. Even WHO has declared 20th November of each year as "World Piles Day", which clearly indicates the infiltration of this disease all over the world

and tremendous physical and mental sufferings of the mankind as result of this disease. Etymology and definition of Arsha (piles) Etymology: Arsha pertains to a

disease occurring in Guda and it is torturing to the patients. It may create obstruction of the anorectal passage.⁵ Piles: - This word is derived from the latin word 'pila' which means a 'ball'. Thus a growth in the anus which similar in ball likes shape is designated as piles.

Sushruta Samhita is the only available text in surgical practice, and it has been opined that there are many diseases that are difficult to manage by conservative treatment alone. Among them, *arsha* (hemorrhoids) is one such grave disease, for which it has been included in *ashta mahagada*[1] by *Sushruta*, showing the gravity of this disease. The present westernized lifestyle is adding to the prevalent rate of this disease. The incidence of this disease is showing augmentation with advancing age. At least 50% of the people over the age of 50 years have some degree of symptoms related to hemorrhoids.

Hemorrhoids are dealt rationally under the concept of *arsha*. However, it includes some other fleshy masses like polyp, warts, etc. In *Sushruta Samhita*, the whole treatment is covered under four categories of treatment, i.e. *Bheshaj Chikitsa* (palliative treatment), *Kshara Karma* (potential cauterization agent therapy), *Agnikarma* (direct cauterization agent therapy) and *Shastra Karma* (operation by sharp instrument).

As far as the modern modalities are concerned, the conservative treatment of piles consists of use of laxative and high-residual diet. But, not more than 80% of the hemorrhoidal symptoms can usually be controlled by non-excision techniques. Other methods of treatments like sclerotherapy, rubber band ligation,

infrared photocoagulation, laser therapy, Lord's dilatation, cryosurgery, hemorrhoidectomy, [4] hemorrhoidal artery ligation under Doppler/ultrasonography and stapled hemorrhoidectomy, etc. are in practice. Despite a range of treatment modalities, the options are limited in concern with their effectiveness. There still exist controversies and lack of agreement on the treatment strategies.

Keeping in view authenticity, *shalya chikitsa*, i.e. parasurgery, has been selected. Under the heading of parasurgery, the *kshara karma* procedure, interpreted as "Potential Cauterization Application Therapy," is the specific field taken in the present research work. Under *kshara karma*, the *kshara sutra* treatment is found to be suitable and acceptable as compared with the prevalent methods in modern medical science.

Hence, in the present research work, the efficacy of the *kshara sutra* ligation (K.S.L.) method and hemorrhoidectomy procedure in *arsha* were studied clinically and results were presented statistically.

Kshar is a caustic chemical, alkaline in nature obtained from the ashes of medicinal plants. It is a milder procedure compared to Shastrakarma and Agnikarma. It is described as one among the Aanu Shastras or Upayantras. It is the superior most among the sharp and subsidiary instruments because of performing Chedana, Bhedana and Lekhana Karma along with Tridoshahara property. It is versatile, because even such places which are difficult in approach by ordinary measures can be treated by Kshar karma. Ksharkarma is more effective than the other modalities of treatment, because they can be administered both internally and externally. Kshar karma is useful as the

substitutes of surgical instruments, because they can be used safely on the patients who are afraid of surgery. The Arsha which are soft, extensive, deeply situated, projectile are treated by Kshar. Pittaja and Raktaja varieties should be treated by Mrudu Kshar. Kshar Sutra Ligation It is a Parasurgical measure which excises the pile mass gradually by the virtue of mechanical action and chemical cauterization. Acharya Sushrutahas advocated Kshar Sutra in the management of Nadivrana and Bhagandara. But regarding the method of preparation of Kshar Sutra, Acharya Chakrapani in his treatise Chakradutta, gave a brief description for management of Arsha, using the latex of Snuhi and Haridra powder. 3. Agni Karma It is an important Para surgical method and is still used extensively in surgical practice in modified form by way of electric heat cautery and freezing. Direct treatment of any lesion by Agnikarma is regarded superior than other surgical and parasurgical measure because of its capacity to destroy the diseased tissues completely and its wide applicability even of lesions incurable by other measure. Agnikarma is indicated in rough, fixed, broad and hard types of masses and mainly in Vataj and Kaphaj Arsha. Those patients suffering from prolapsed and third degree piles can be treated with Agni. Agni karma is contraindicated in Raktaj and Pittaj type of Arsha. 4. Shashtra karma Shastrakarma is indicated in pedunculated, big, and discharging Arshas. The preoperative measures should be well taken. The Chedana Karma of Arsha should be done with the help of sharp instruments like Mandalagra, Karapatra, Nakhashtra,

Mudrika, Utpalapatra and Ardhadhara in shape of semilunar incision. After Chedana Karma, if needed, Agnikarma should be immediately applied in case of any remnant or to arrest the active bleeding or secondary oozing of the blood vessels. The procedure of Kavalika placement followed by the Gophana Bandha should be performed. This whole procedure seems like conventional open haemorrhoidectomy or to say the ligation and excision procedure performed in recent times.

Arsha is a problem related to life style, age, occupation and dietary factors. It is a very terrible condition, patient is afraid of defecation because of pain with bleeding per rectum. Moreover, patient becomes very anxious after observing pan full of blood. Thus, Ayurveda definitely has immense potential to manage all stages of Arsha successfully without any complications.

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