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COMPREHENSIVE AYURVEDA LITERARY STUDIES IN TREATMENT OF CORNEAL DISORDERS

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ABSTRACT

Acharya Sushruta described 4 types of diseases of cornea while Vagbhatta has enumerated 5 types. A conscious endeavor is made to correlate the Ayurvedic and modern corneal disorders in a complimentary manner. The integrated disease approach, treatment application and predicting prognosis will suffice the resultant outcome of the disease in a more favorable perspective which will herald a better approach in managing preventable corneal blindness. In present article we are discussing regarding the Ayurveda Literary studies in treatment of Corneal Disorders.

Keywords : Ayurveda, Corneal Disorders.

INTRODUCTION

Eye is the most intricate structure in the body. Two eyes provides about half the total sensory inputs from the entire body into the brain (1). In the Ayurvedic system of Medicine there are eight branches or specialty among these Shalakya Tantradeals with diseases of Supraclavicular region (2) i.e. Eye (Ophthalmology), ENT (Otorhinolaryngology), Oro-Dental diseases (Oro-Dentistry), etc. When we go through literature of Ayurveda Ophthalmology follows a sequential systematic and elaborative description of disease pertaining to various disorders of eye components(3). First nineteen chapters of Uttaratantira of Sushruta Samhita are exclusively dedicated to Ophthalmological disorders which conspicuously reflect that the classical ophthalmological literature well versed with subtle details even at that time. This didactic segment of ophthalmology is contributed by Vidhadhipati(4) (King of Videha -Raj rishi Nimi) in classical texts. Another established ophthalmological section is compiled by Acharya Vagbhatta which has detailed 10 chapter viz. 11-20 chapters of Astanga Sangrah Uttara sthana. According to him eye has been privileged as the main sense organ because its loss of function leads to serious disability of a man by keeping him in the darkness. Life without eyesight is miserable and valueless. Hence it is very important to protect vision at any cost(5). Sushruta precisely described about

Anatomy of Eye in first chapter i.e. Aupdravik Adhyaya. There are total seventy six(6) ocular diseases described in Sushruta Samhita and 94 diseases in Astanga Sangrah & Astanga Hridya(7) as an essence of our current Ayurvedic ophthalmological concepts. Sharangadhara(8) followed the traces of Vagbhatta while Yogratanakar(9) followed Sushrutain classification of Netra roga and their numbers. Bhavprakasha(10) described 78 diseases of Netra. The classification given in the Ayurvedic text is sequential and systematic as it encompasses the modern system of disease classification with its relevance guided on various structure of the eyeball.

Diseases of Cornea in Ayurveda Classifications of corneal diseases in classical Ayurvedic texts are sequential and progressive in nature viz. one condition progress to the next corresponding stage. Acharya Sushruta described 4 types (22) of diseases of cornea while Vagbhatta has enumerated 5 types (23) which are tabulated below: Table No.1 Enlisting of disease of Cornea Corneal diseases in modern literature are divided into four basic categories: Ulcerative diseases (34) Non -Ulcerative diseases(35) Disorders of Corneal Degenerations(36) Disorders of Corneal dystrophy (37) The Ayurvedic corneal diseases which can be imbibed under the modern classification of corneal disorders is depicted as underneath Savrana Shukra, Akshi

Pakatyayavis a vis Ulcerative Keratitis Ajakajata and Siraja Shukra vis a vis complication of Ulcerative Keratitis (38). Avrana Shukra vis a vis Non-Ulcerative condition. 1. Savrana Shukra (Ulcerative Keratitis) (24) If Krishna mandala (cornea) looks like that it is immersed in water (loses transparency or become edematous), pierced by needle (Corneal ulcer), copious warm discharge from the eye associated with severe pain then it is called Savrana Shukra. By this description it can be interpreted that basically there are four main symptoms described in Ayurveda for Savrana Shukra. e. There is corneal edema/ Loss of transparency which ultimately leads to decreased visual acuity. Ulceration of the cornea. Copious discharge which is warm in nature indicating acute inflammation of cornea. Severe pain/unbearable pain which are mostly found in deeper infection of eye mainly associated with ciliary congestion due to rich sensory supply of cornea. According to Acharya Videha (39). In corneal ulcer there is neovascularization which is having appearance like coral and characteristics as described by Acharya Sushruta. Acharya Vagbhatta has coined the Kshatta Shukra (25) (Ulcerative Keratitis caused by trauma), for this disease which itself indicate Traumatic origin. In addition to Sushruta few more symptoms were described by Acharya Vagbhatta in this disease, these are: S No. Sushruta Vagbhatta 1. Savrana Shukla (Corneal Ulcer) (24) Kshatta Shukla (25)

(Corneal ulcer due to trauma) 2. Avrana Shukla (Corneal Opacity) (26) Shudha Shukla (27) (Corneal Opacity) 3. Ajakajata (28) (Prolapse of Iris) Ajaka (29) (Prolapse of Iris) 4. Akshi Pakatyaya (30) (Panophthalmitis) Pakatyaya Shukra (31) & Akshipatayaya (32) (Described in Sarvakshiroga roga (Panophthalmitis) 5.----- Siraja Shukra (33) (Neovascularization of corneal ulcer)

This stays well concurrent with complicated corneal ulcer in which eye become pus filled cavity emanating whitish hue from the cornea as in case of Hypopyon Corneal ulcer. So when corneal ulcer is secondarily infected, showing less propensity for healing, becomes excavated leading to severe inflammatory intraocular response. Hypopyon ulcer may complicate into the stage of Endophthalmitis or Panophthalmitis which after commencement becomes incurable. The reason which can be offered for this catastrophe is that the blood aqueous barrier which plays a major role in drug distribution is disrupted and hence no drug availability is possible in infected eye. Vagbhatta has suffixed the word Shukra along with Pakatyaya as it indicates that it is complication of Savrana Shukra. Two additional features are described by Vagbhatta are: • Complete corneal opacity • Classical presentation of half cotyledon of Indian broad beans appearance which is highly suggestive of

Hypopyon corneal ulcer(49). Acharya Vagbhata has also described another disease in Pan ocular disorder as Akshipatayaya. The characteristic features of this disease are ocular edema, congested eye ball, thick discharge, Leukomatous corneal opacity, burning sensation, diminution of vision and intermittent pain. Some of the differentiating factors between Acharya Sushruta and Vagbhata regarding Akshipatayaya are tabulated as underneath: Table No.2 Showing differentiating features of Akshipatayaya

5-Siraja Shukra (Neo vascularization of the Cornea)(33) This condition arises due to complication of corneal ulcer and described by Vagbhata only. This is commonly found in chronic corneal ulcer as seen in some of the forms of keratoconjunctivitis. The disease is featured with corneal vascularization, pricking pain, burning sensation and copper colored cornea attributed to vitiated Rakta dosha. There is serosanguinous discharge of varied temperature of thick consistence without any cause. The disease at this particular stage shows little signs of recovery. The disease symptoms at this particular stage stays compatible with certain features of classical disorder termed as Savrana Shukra S No. Sushruta Vagbhata 1. Akshi Pakatyaya Pakatyaya Shukla 2. Involvement of Tridosha Involvement of Tridosha with Rakta 3. Involvement of cornea Involvement of cornea and lens 4. Symptoms described are pain and

loss of vision Symptoms are pain, loss of vision, congestion, burning sensation, edema, inflammation of Sushruta. The précised compatible features are vascularization of cornea, pricking pain, burning sensation, ciliary congestion and varied temperature of lacrimation without non identifiable cause. Conclusion Classifications of corneal diseases in classical Ayurvedic texts are sequential and progressive in nature viz. one condition progress to the next corresponding stage. Acharya Sushruta described 4 types of diseases of cornea while Vagbhata has enumerated 5 types. This congruent behavior of corneal disorders of Ayurveda and modern is justified by the clinical symptomology, progression of the disease, prognostic reasons and relevant intervention. In modern system diseases of cornea are classified into four types: Ulcerative Keratitis, Non Ulcerative Keratitis, Corneal Dystrophies and Corneal degeneration. The last two condition albeit have lacking significant congruent pathology in Ayurvedic literature but there are plethora of references which caters the first two identity viz. Ulcerative Keratitis, Non Ulcerative Keratitis. The integrated disease approach, treatment application and predicting prognosis will suffice the resultant outcome of the disease in a more favorable perspective which will herald a better approach in managing preventable corneal blindness.

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