ROLE OF RASAYANA THERAPY IN THE MANAGEMENT OF SANDHIGATA VATA

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ABSTRACT

Sandhigata Vata is the disease mentioned in Ayurvedic classics under Vatavyadhi prakarana. As per Ayurveda shula pradhan vedana is the cardinal feature of the disease along with sandhi shotha & vata purṇa druti sparsha, it comes under madhyam rogamargaja vatak disordor in which vitiated vata doshas gets lodged in sandhi. On the basis of symptomatology it has resemblance with Osteoarthritis in modern medical science.

Osteoarthritis is a form of arthritis that features the breakdown and eventual loss of the cartilage of one or more joints. Cartilage is a protein substance that serves as a "cushion" between the bones of the joints. It is estimated to be the 4th leading cause of disability worldwide. Its prevalence is more in females and among old age people. The most common symptoms of OA are pain and stiffness, other symptoms may include joint pain, tenderness, stiffness, a grating or grinding sensation (crepitus), locking and sometimes an effusion. It mainly affects weight bearing joints of the body especially hip & knee joint and is mainly associated with ageing, physical occupational activity & Obesity. Regarding the management of this painful disease there are conservative or surgical treatment in allopathic system of medicine, which have its own limitations and troublesome side effects whereas such type of conditions can be better treatable by the management and procedure mentioned in Ayurvedic classics. Hence to treat Sandhigata vata drugs acting on both vata and asthi should be selected, Rasayana chikitsa which has been given separate place in Ayurvedic Samhitas due to its importance in rejuvenating all the cells of the body, holds to serve positive results in the management of this degenerative joint disease(Sandhivata).

Keywords: Sandhigata vata, Osteoarthritis, Rasayana

INTRODUCTION

Sandhigata vata is described under Vatavyadhi in Ayurvedic classics, features of which can be correlated with Osteoarthritis in modern science. Osteoarthritis is also known as degenerative arthritis, that results from breakdown of joint cartilages and underlying bone. It is the most common articular disorder begins asymptptomatically in the 2nd and 3rd decades and is extremely common by age 70. Almost all persons by age 40 have some pathologic change in weight bearing joint. 25% females and 16% males have symptomatic OA. Arthritis is among most common causes of work disability worldwide. It limits everyday activities such as walking, dressing, bathing etc., thus making individual handicapped. It mainly affects weight bearing joints of the body especially hip & knee joint and is mainly associated with ageing, physical occupational activity & Obesity. Osteoarthritis is believed to be caused by mechanical stress on the joint and low grade inflammatory processes. The most common symptoms are joint pain and stiffness; other symptoms may include joint swelling decreased range of motion. No treatment is available which can prevent or reverses or blocks the disease process. In Modern science, mainly analgesics, anti inflammatory drugs or surgery are the options for the treatment of Osteoarthritis. These don’t give satisfactory relief and also causes great adverse effect.

AYURVEDIC ASPECT OF SANDHIGATA VATA

In Ayurveda, Acharya Charaka has described the disease first separately by the name of ‘Sandhigata Anila’ under the chapter of Vata-Vyadhi. No separate etiological factors are mentioned about Sandhigata vata. Two main causes of Vata prakopa are Dhatushaya and Margavarodha. Here in case of Sandhigata vata, kshaya is the main cause, Acharya Charaka defined it as, a disease which occurs due to intake of vata prakopa aharavihara with the symptoms of Sotha, which is palpable as air filled bag (Vata Purna Driti Sparsha) and Pain on flexion and extension of the joints (Akunchana Prasaranane Vedana).

Acharya Sushruta has described Pain (Shula), Swelling (Shotha) and Diminution of the movements at the joints involved (Hanti Sandhigatuh) as symptoms of Sandhigata vata Acharya Vagbhatta and other Acharya have mentioned the disease Sandhigata vata as per description of Charaka and Sushruta. Acharya Madhavakara has
mentioned the symptoms Hanti Sandhigatah and Shula, same as mentioned by Acharya Sushruta. The disease Sandhigata vata is Kastasadhya because it involves the Marma, it is situated in Madhyama Rogamarga, involvement of Vatadosha, mainly occurs in Vriddhavastha i.e. Dhatutshya Janya Kala so it furthers adds kashtrasadhyatva to the prognosis of the disease. Acharya Charaka has mentioned common treatment for Vatavyadhhi i.e. Repeated use of Snehana and Swedana, Basti and Mruduvirechana. Acharya Sushruta has mentioned the treatment for Sandhigatatava clearly i.e. Snehana, Upanaha, Bandhana and Unmardana. Along with these therapeutic choices Rasayanavata therapy may prove to be very effective in managing the degenerative joint disorder like Sandhigata Vata because it slows down the process of destruction (ageing) in the body and helps in rejuvenation of Nava Dhatu.

RASAYANA THERAPY:
Rasayana, is a Sanskrit word made of two words “Rasa” and “Ayana”, with literal meaning: Path (Ayana) of essence (Rasa) which refers to nutrition & its transportation in body. Rasayana therapy essentially refers to the process of tissue nourishment and rejuvenation. The Rasayana remedies encompass a range of drugs, diets and life style interventions which promotes nutritional status of the body.

Labhpayo Hi Sastanam Rasadinam Rasayanam.
“yajjaravyaadhi nashanam tad rasayanam” thus Rasayana karma has comprehensive scope to positive nutrition, immune-enhancing, longevity and sustenance of mental and sensorial competence, besides promotion of mental & physical health and rejuvenation potential, rasayana karma affords a preventive role against all range of diseases through improved immunity and biostrength. Rasayana drugs acts as Antioxidants. An antioxidant is a molecule that inhibits the oxidation of other molecules. Oxidation is a chemical reaction involving the loss of electrons or an increase in oxidation state. Oxidation reactions can produce free radicals. Thus Rasayana Therapy has got significant role to play while managing Sandhigata vata.

MECHANISM OF ACTION OF RASAYANA

RASAYANA

Action at the level of Rasa (plasma) Action at the level of Agni Action at the level of Srotas
by adding directly to its nutrient value

Improved Nourishment of Tissues
(Labhpayo Hi Sastanam Rasadinam Rasayanam)

Retard Ageing & Immunity against Improved vitality Improved longevity & complexion Mental Faculties Disease (Infection, stress)

TYPES OF RASAYANA

Rasayana Therapy can be categorized in the following manner:

(A.) As per method of use-
1. Vatatapika Rasayana or outdoor practice
2. Kutipraveshika Rasayana or intensive indoor regimen(inclusive of panchkarma) using a specially designed trigarbha rasayana kuti or therapy chamber.
(B.) As per scope of application

1. **Kamya Rasayana**--For promotion of health of the healthy, further sub categorised as: a. *Sri kamya* b.*Prana kamya* c. *Medha kamya*

2. **Naimittika Rasayana**--To impart biostrength in a diseased person to fight better with his existing diseases.

3. **Adjunct Rasayana**- non-recipe rejuvenative regimen to be prepared alone or as an adjunct for all forms of rasayana therapy, remedies and recipes viz.

   (i) **Achara Rasayana**-healthy rejuvenative life style and conduct
   (ii) **Ajasrika Rasayana**-daily dietary rasayana approach consuming *satvika*, nourishing elements of diet viz. ghee, milk, milk products, fruits and vegetables etc.

**SOME FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED WHILE SELECTING RASAYANA THERAPY TO A PARTICULAR PERSON:**

- Prakriti
- Agni Bala
- Dhatu Status
- Srotas Status
- Vaya
- Ritu Satmya
- Desa Satmya

**BENEFITS OF RASAYANA:**

- Prevents wasting of muscle.
- Delays the ageing process (Anti-ageing).
- Keeps bones & tendons strong.
- Prevents Osteoporosis & improves whole body circulation.
- Prevents graying of hairs.
- Provides good sleep and appetite.
- Resistance to disease. Apart from these properties *Masha, Bala* and *Rasona* are also rejuvenators (*Rasayana*) and help in recovery process and also avoid recurrences.
- *Masha* and *Bala* promote strength and bulk to the weakened muscles and soft tissues and helps in recovery (*Brimhana, Balya*).
- *Prasaranani, Bala, Masha, Rasna and Rasona* are the best nerve soothers. They have an integrated approach towards relaxing and releasing the upper limb, shoulder and arm from pain.

**Selection of Rasayana Aushadha According to Age**

Now a days experts in the field of Ayurveda recommend to consume different drugs containing *Rasayana* property according to their age.

Age specific rasayana as per acharya Sharandhar:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Decades of life span</th>
<th>Natural biolosses</th>
<th>Suggested Rasayana for restoration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0 – 10</td>
<td>Balya--corpulence</td>
<td>Gambhari,ksheer,ghrita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>11 – 20</td>
<td>Vridhhi--growth</td>
<td>Bala,amalaki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>21 – 30</td>
<td>Chavi--lusture</td>
<td>Amalaki,haridra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>31 – 40</td>
<td>Medha--intellect</td>
<td>Brahma,shankhpushpi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>41 – 50</td>
<td>Tvak--skin quality</td>
<td>Bhringaraja,haridra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>51 – 60</td>
<td>Drishti--vision</td>
<td>Triphala,jyotishmati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>61 – 70</td>
<td>Shukra--virility</td>
<td>Ashwagandha,kapikacchu,satavari,pippali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>71 – 80</td>
<td>Vikrampa--physical strength</td>
<td>Amalaki,bala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>81 – 90</td>
<td>Buddhi--thinking</td>
<td>Brahma,shankhpushpi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>91 – 100</td>
<td>Karmendriya--locomotion</td>
<td>Bala,sahachara</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
IMPORTANCE OF SAMSHODHAN

For getting better response of Rasayana drugs it is very essential for a person to undergo samshodhan as a preparatory process. The person is strictly advised to undergo Shehnana, Swedana and Panchkarma Procedures as per need i.e Yamana, Virechana, Basti, Nasya. It is believed that the diseases cured by Samshodhan therapy never relapse while the diseases cured by Samsamana treatment may recur. Panchkarma not only eliminate the disease causing toxins but also revitalizes the tissues. It is not only good for alleviating the disease but is also an useful modality of treatment in preserving and promoting the perfect health.

Rasayana Drugs for Sandhigata vata (Osteoarthritis):
Rasona (Allium sativum); Guggulu (Comiphora mukul); Ashwagandha (Withania sonnifera); Shunthi (Gingerbe officinale); Guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia); Amalaki (Emblica officinalis); Bala (Sida cordifolia); Masha (Phaseolus trilobus); Rasna (Pluchea lanceolata) and cow’s milk, Takra (butter milk).

Classical formulations for Sandhigata vata

Brahma rasayana, Agastya rasayana, Amalaki rasayana, Ashwagandha churna, Chyawanprasha, Amrita bhallataka, Bhallataka keheerapaka, Haridrakhand, Bala rasayana, Amrita rasayana, Punarnava rasayana, Lauhari rasayana, Aydra rasayana, Triphala rasayana, Shilajatu rasayana, Ritu haritaki kalpa, Pippali vardhamana kalpa, Bhallataka kalpa, Panchamrita parpati kalpa.

DISCUSSION

Sandhigata vata is a disease which occurs due to excess intake of vata prakopaka akara-vihara having symptoms of Sotha, which is palpable as air filled bag Vata Purna Driti Sparsha and Pain on flexion and extension of the joints Akunchana Prasarane Vedana.

It is a very common degenerative joint disorder, features of which are found in preponderance with Osteoarthritis (degenerative joint disease). When a joint develops osteoarthritis, some of the cartilage covering the ends of the bones gradually roughens and becomes thin and the bone underneath thickens. All the tissues within the joint become more active than normal as if your body is trying to repair the damage. OA is caused by a breakdown in the cartilage that covers the joints. The protective tissue is damaged by age and repeated motion. This increases the friction as the bones of the joint rub against each other. It can also cause damage to the bone. OA can occur in any joint. However, the most commonly affected joints are in the hands, knees, hips and spine.

Rasayana therapy has been given a separate place in Ayurvedic classics, which truly aims at rejuvenation of body. On the basis of method of use and scope of application Rasayana therapy can be adopted for the better management of degenerative joint disease Sandhigata vata. Rasayana drugs act by their following properties like anti-oxidants, anti-ageing, anti-inflammatory & immunomodulator action. But before administering rasayana therapy our Acharay has emphatically emphasized that bio-purification of the body is essential pre-requisite for administration of Rasayana therapy because if the body channels are not clean the effect of rasayana will not be achieved in the same way as due colors do not take up during dying of a cloth which has not be cleaned.

CONCLUSION

Sandhigata vata is a degenerative joint disorder which calls for an early management, progression of the disease could be stopped at the right time before it may bring permanent physical impairment. So, Rasayana therapy must be employed for the patients of Sandhigata vata so that the progressive nature of the disease could be stopped at the right time and benefits could be obtained in the form of positive nutritional status, healthier tissue formation, stronger immune status, improved mental power and long healthy life.

References: