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RESEARCH ARTICLE

ROLE OF PANCHAKARMA IN MANAGEMENT OF RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

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Abstract

Rheumatoid arthritis is a systemic autoimmune disease that causes chronic inflammation of the joints. It causes inflammation of the tissue around the joints. As the disease advancement, the inflamed synovium occupies and damages the cartilage and bone of the joint. An autoimmune disease is a condition characterized by an abnormal immune response to a normal body part. Because it can affect various organs of the body, rheumatoid arthritis is referred to as a systemic disease and ultimately called rheumatoid disease. In Ayurveda amavata is correlated with rheumatoid arthritis. Vitiated vata and ama plays major role in the manifestation of amavata. Improper digestion of Rasaadidhatu leads to the formation of ama. Vitiated ama leads swelling, pain, stiffness, in many joints along with loss of function. Modern science does not offer any cure of RA, the management aims are limited. This article reviews the line of treatment for the management of amavata described by Acharyachakradatta. It was concluded that rheumatoid arthritis can be completely cured or treated with Ayurveda medication and Panchakarma therapies without any side effects.

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Introduction:-

Rheumatoid arthritis is an autoimmune chronic inflammatory disorder. The characteristic features of rheumatoid arthritis is persistent inflammatory disease of joints, usually involving peripheral joints in a symmetric distribution. The synovium becomes inflamed causing warmth, redness, swelling and pain. With the advance stage of diseases, the inflamed synovium occupies and damages the cartilage and bone of the joint.ⁱ

Normally the immune system shows self-tolerance and does not attack the body's own constituents. In autoimmune diseases this self-tolerance fails. The immune system fails to identify self antigens and mounts a misguided attack against them.ⁱⁱ

In *Ayurvedaamavata* is disease of *Rasavahastrotasa*. It is generally correlated with RA. *Amavata* is the outcome of *Agnidusti* (abnormal digestive fire), *Amotpatti* (toxin accumulation) and *sandhiVikriti* (joint deformity). *Amavata* develops due to *dusti* or *prakopa* of *Ama* as well as *vataadosha*. The *Panchakarmatherapy* which normalize *agni* (digestive fire), metabolizers *Ama* (toxins), and regulates *vata* and maintain healthy *sandhi* and *sandhishashelshma* (synovial fluid) will be the supreme treatment for this disease.ⁱⁱⁱ

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Aetiopathogenesis Of Amavata

Due to etiological factors like, *Aharaj nidan* (food habits) like *Virudha ahar* (Antagonist food), *Snigdha ahar*, *Guru ahar* (heavy diet) *Viharaj nidan* (life style related) like *Diwa Swapna*(day dream), *Ratri-jagran* (Night awakening) and *Mansika nidan* (Mental diagnosis) like *Chinta* (anxiety), *Shoka*(mourning), *Bhaya*(fear), *Krodh* (anger). The function of *agni* is disturbed in the body and *ama* is produced. This this produced *ama* is mucky in nature, such *ama* get together with *prakupitvata* and circulates all over the body through *shira* and *dhamni* and gets lodged in *kaphaSthana*.i.e., *sandhi* because *sandhi* is the *Sthana*of *shleshakkapha* and develops *amavata*.^{iv}

Samprapti Ghataka

1. **Dosh-** *Vata Pradhan Tridosha*
2. **Dushya-** *Rasadi Dhatu, Snayu, Sandhi*
3. **Agni-** *Jatharagni And Rasadhatwaagni*
4. **Srotas-** *Rasavaha, Asthivaha*
5. **Adhishtan-** *Asthisandhi*
6. **Rogamarga-** *Madhyama*

Lakshana of amavata

(i) Samanya lakshana of amavata

Angmarda(Body ache), *Aruchi*(Anorexia), *Trishna*(Thirsty), *Gaurava*(Heaviness in the body), *Aalasya* (lethargy), *Angashunata* (swelling in the body), *Jwara* (Pyrexia), *Apaki* (Indigestion).

(ii) Pratyatma lakshana of amavata

Sandhi Shotha (Swelling in joints), *Sandhi Shool*(pain in the joints), *GatraStabdhatata*(Stiffnessin the body).

Criteria to diagnose R.A

As per American rheumatism association (1988) the following criteria has been laid down:-

1. Morning stiffness
2. Pain in three or more joints area
3. Arthritis of hand joint
4. Symmetrical arthritis
5. Rheumatoid nodules
6. Rheumatoid factors
7. Radiological changes
8. Above starting 1-4 criteria should be present for 6 weeks or more.
9. Diagnosis of RA is made with 4 or more criteria.

Role ofPanchakarmainAmavata

Acharya *Chakrapani*has described the principle and line of treatment of *Amavata*.In*Chakradatta*he has mentioned following measures. Later *Bhavprakash*aand *Yogratnakar* added *Ruksha Sweda*and*Upnaha*. The line of management described for the disease as “*LanghanamSwedanamTikthamDeepnaniKatuni...*” can be summarized under following heading^v:-

Line of management in Amavata(Rheumatoid arthritis):-

Aptarpan:- *Langhan, Langhan-pachan, Dosabasechan*

Swedan:-*Rukshyasweda, Snigdha sweda, Upanahasweda.*

Rasayan chikitsa(*naimittik Rasayana*)

Pathya aahar vihara.

Langhana

Any measure which brings in *laghuta* in the body, is known as *langhana*, ten types of *langhana* have been said in *charaka samhita*. Acharya *vagbhatta* in *ashtang hridaya* has considered *langhana* similar to *aptarpana* and has described under the heading *shodhana* and *shaman*. The excessive vitiation of *kapha*, *pitta*, blood and waste products, are afflicted with obstructed *vata* and cause bulky and strong body is treated using *langhana* procedures. *Upvasa* (no consumption of food material) is the main type of *langhana* useful in case of *amavata*.*Amavata* is *amasayothayadhi* and also *rasaja vikara*,*langhana* is the first line of treatment in such conditions. The pathology originates in *amashya* due to poor digestion in presence of *mandagni*, ultimately resulting in formation of *ama*. So the *langhana* will further stop the production of *ama*, and helps in digestion of *ama*.^{vi}

Swedana

Therapy is the best treatment for vitiated *Vata* and *Kapha* dominant disease. It liquefy the vitiated *Doshas* which are spread throughout the body, Relives stiffness, heaviness and coldness of the body and produces sweating. All the 13 types of *Agni* are stimulate by *swedanakarma* because it helps in digestion of *Ama* due to its *Ushna* and *Tikshna* properties. The main *Swedana* are use in *Amavata* is *Ruksha Swed*, *Snigdha Swed*, *Baluka Swed*, *Upnaah*. *Ruksha Swed* is use in early stage of *Amavata* due to presence of excessive *Ama* in that condition. *Snigdha Swed* is use in chronicity of the disease due increasing of *Ruksha Gunain* the body. *Ruksh Swed* with *Eranda Beeja*, *Ajwain* and *Saindhav* salt having *Ushna*, *Tikshna*, *Shrotosodhana* and *Amapachaka* properties and helps the remaining of pain, stiffness, inflammation and soften the body.^{vii}

Basti

Basti is the chief therapy for the *Vitiated Vata*. The given *basti* enters the *Pakvasaya*, which is the mainsite (*Sthana*) of *Vata Dosha* and destroy vitiated *Vata Dosha*. After subsiding of the *Vata Dosha*, the disease located in the other parts of the body also become pacified. In *Amavata Anuvasana* as well as *Asthapana Basti* is given. *Anuvasana basti* reduces *rukshata* of the body by its *snehanaguna*. It nourishes the body as well as maintain the function of *Agni*. *Asthapana basti* eliminates *kosthagatadosha* and specially remove *Anaha* (distension of abdomen) and *Vibhanadha* (constipation). *Acharya Chakrapani* has recommended *Saindhavadi Taila* for *Anuvasna basti* and *Ksharabasti*, *Vaitaranabasti* for *Asthapana basti*.^{viii}

Katu Tikta Dravya And Deepan:-

Tikta dravyas are *Ama* and *pittapachaka* and *srotomukh* *vishodhana*, *katurasa* is *chedaka* and *kapha shamak*. Both *rasa* have *Laghu*, *Ushna* and *Tikshna* properties, which are useful for *Ama pachana*. *Katu* and *Tikta Rasa* reduced *Ama* and increases the digestive fire, and helps to remove excessive *kledak kapha*. *Pippali*, *Pippalimula*, *Chavya*, *Chitrak*, *Shunthi*, *Maricha* in small quantity with warm water helps in digestion and disintegration of *Ama*.

Chemical composition of dravyas (Drugs) used in deepan:-**Pippali and Pippalimoola:-**

Piperlongumine, Piperlonguminine (stem & root); n-hexadecane, n-heptadecane, n-octadecane, n-nonadecane, n-eicosane, n-heneicosane, α -thujene, terpinolene, zingiberene, p-cymene, p-methoxy acetophenone, Phenylethyl alcohol and some Essential oil (dried fruit);

Piperine, Piplartine, an identified steroids and methyl-3,4,5-trimethoxycinnamate (roots); major alkaloid piperine and sesamine (stem & fruits).

Chavya:-

Aromatic oils that are about 0.7%, piperine 4-5% and an alkaloid and pipalotine, the roots contains piperine 6.55-0.18% pippalotin (0.13-0.20%), piper ceaguminin, sterole and glycoside.

Chitrak:-

Plumbagin, 3-chloroplumbagin, plumbagic acid, isozeylinone, glucose, fructose, Aspartic acid, hydroxyproline.

Marich:-

stem:- piperine, hentriacontan-16-one, β -sitosterol. Fruit:- piperonal. Plant:- serine, threonine, ascorbic acid, carotene.

Shunthi:-

It contains an Aromatic volatile oil 1-5%, which contains Camphene, Phellandrene, Zingiberine, Cineol, Borneol, Gingerol, Gingerin. Essential oil (rhizomes); Dihydrogingerdione, Gingerdione and gingerol (root); Aspartic acid, Threonine, Senine, Glycine, Cysteine, Valine, leucine and isoleucine (aerial parts and tuber).

Virechana:-

Virechana is the *shodhana* therapy it eliminated the *dosha* by *Adhomarga*. After the use of *Langhan*, *Swedan*, *Tikta*, *Katurasa Sewana* and *deepna*, *dosha* come *shakha* to *koshta* and in *Niramaawastha*.

Virechana used in that *dosha* which are *Leena* in *Srotasa*.

Ama is produce in *pitta Sthana* and have involment of *kledaka kapha*. *Virechana* helps to remove *kledak kapha* from *pitta Sthana*.

Virechana does *Anulomana* of *vata* and reduce the symptoms of *Amavata* like: -*Anaha* (distension of abdomen), *Vibandha* (constipation), *Antrakujana* (intestinal gurgling) and *Katishool* (back pain).

The common drug used in *Virechana* is *Erandatail*, It remove *Avaran* (cover) of *Vata* by *kapha* and control *Vatadosha* by its *Shnigdha* properties.

Snehna:-

Snehapana is therapeutic measures used in chronic stage of *Amavata*.

Excessive of *Vatadosha* leads to *dhaturokshata* it will be controlled by *Snehan* therapy. A medicated *Sneha* processed in *Ushna*, *Katu*, and *Tiktarasa* drug is very effective in the *Ama* and *Vatadosha*^{ix}.

Clinical Evidences:-

1. A study was conducted in 13 years old male child. Patient with administered 2gm *Swadishta Virechanachurna* and 250mg *Kaishora Guggulu* for 30 days in first regimen, 250 mg *Chitrakadi Vati*, 250mg *Kaishora Guggulu*, 10ml *Rasanasaptak Kwatha* twice a day in second regimen. *Sarvanga Snehana* (oleation) with *Vishagarbha Taila*, *Sarvanga Swedana* (sudation), *Vaitarana Basti* (Medicated Anema) for 10 days in third regimen. After treatment significant symptomatic relief was observed without any side effects during and after treatment.^x
2. A study was conducted on 86 patients of RA. All patients were administered with 5g of *Ashwagandha* powder for three weeks and *Sidh Makardhwaj* (100 mg) daily for the next four weeks. The follow up of patients was achieved every two weeks. The outcomes of this study recommend that *Ayurvedic* treatment (*Ashwagandha* powder and *Sidh Makardhwaj*) has a potential to be used for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis without any side effects.^{xi}
3. A study was conducted on Forty-three RA patients. The following treatment were divided in three groups: MTX plus *Ayurvedic* placebo, *Ayurveda* plus MTX placebo, or *Ayurveda* plus MTX. All measures were attained every 12 weeks for 36 weeks. All 3 treatments were approximately equivalent in efficacy, within the limits of a pilot study. In *Ayurveda* –only group has less adverse event.^{xii}
4. A study was conducted on female RA patient. *Virechanakarma* was done after *Snehna*, *swedana* and *deepanpachana* by the administration of 100gm *Trivrita Avaleha* and 20ml castor oil for 3 months. After *Virechanakarma* and avoiding specific *nidanans*, significant symptomatic relief was observed and no need of any medication.^{xiii}
5. A study was conducted on 32 years old female RA patient with administered 250 mg *Amavatari Rasathrice* a day for 8 weeks. After treatment CRP and ESR was decreased and significant symptomatic relief was observed. No any adverse effect was found.^{xiv}

Discussion:-

From above description it is clear that vitiated *vata* and *Ama* plays major role in the manifestation of *Amavata*. Incomplete digestion of *Rasaadi Dhatu* leads to the formation of *Ama*. Vitiated *Ama* cause swelling, pain, stiffness, in many joints along with loss of function. Arthritis is also found in children below 16 years of age and it is termed as JIA (JUVENILE IDIOPATHIC ARTHRITIS) which is an umbrella term for group of chronic childhood arthritis present with inflammation of joints and stiffness of unknown cause in children. It persists for at least 6 weeks. The symptoms in JIA resembles *Amavata Vyadhi* which is mentioned in *Ayurveda* text. Though it is not mentioned for pediatric field but due to its similar clinical appearance same reference require for *Ayurvedic* treatment. *Ayurveda* medicines and *Panchakarma* therapies can be cured RA completely or manage without any side effects.

Conclusion:-

Health issues like inappropriate digestion or food habits, sleep disturbance, chronic fatigue or tiredness result into serious disease like rheumatoid arthritis in patients having hereditary predilection. These can be managed as per line of treatment of vitiated *vata* and *Ama*. e. *Snehna* (oleation therapy), *Swedana* (sudation therapy), *Basti* (enema therapy) and *Virechana* (purgation therapy). *Langhan* helps in digestion of *ama*. *Swedan* relieves the symptoms like pain, stiffness, inflammation and softens the body. *Basti* eliminates vitiated *vata* from its *sthana* and *virechana* helps to remove *kledak kapha* from *pittasthana* and reduce symptoms like *Anaha* (distension of abdomen), *Vibandha* (constipation), *Antrakujana* (intestinal gurgling) and *Katishoola* (back pain). *Panchakarma* therapies detoxifies the body and give strength to the immune system. It proves that *Panchakarma* therapy is very beneficial and effective in rheumatoid arthritis.^{xv}

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