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Grudhrasi (sciatica) management: an Ayurvedic review

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ABSTRACT

Today's people are predisposed to various diseases based on their way of living and occupational habits called life style diseases. Orthopedic disorders are one of the mostly exposed to such life style habits. One of the most common orthopedic health problems today is lower back pain accompanied most of the time by Sciatica. According to the global burden of disease 2010, is single leading cause of disability world wide. It is most common during 40s & 50s age group and men are more frequently affected than women. The symptoms of sciatica can be well correlated with *Grudhrasi* in Ayurveda. *Grudhrasi* is the most common *Vata-Vyadhi* observed in majority of people. *Grudhrasi* word itself

defines the disease i.e. "*Grudhra*" like walking. *Grudhrasi* is a *Ruja Pradhan* (pain) *Nanatmaja Vata-Vyadhi*, dominant with the functional capability of low back & lower limbs. Present paper aimed to highlight the detail review about *Grudhrasi* management mentioned in various classical texts.

Keywords: *Sciatica, Grudhrasi, Vata vyadhi, Ayurvedic management*

INTRODUCTION

Today in this modern era of globalization and sophisticated man transport system people to people contact from different countries and culture has become a regular phenomenon. These exchanges have resulted into people adopting cross culture lifestyle and food

habits, above all people live in a modern age of cut-throat competition where time is valued more than health. The rise in chronic diseases among the people of all categories irrespective of their age can be attributed to this poorly managed and unhealthy lifestyle of people. Today people who did not follow the basic principles of *Ayurveda* i.e. *Dinacharya* and *Rutucharya* are predisposed to various diseases based on their way of living and occupational habits called life style diseases. Orthopedic disorders are one of the mostly exposed to such life style habits. Exposure to continue vibration, physical inactivity, wrong body posture, occupational posture, long sitting jobs, stressful activity, post-operative causes, gym, athletes muscular spasm are main contributing factors to orthopedic disorders.

One of the most common orthopedic health problems today is lower back pain accompanied most of the time by Sciatica. Sciatica is a medical term characterized by pain begins in lumbar region and radiates along the postero - lateral aspect of thigh and leg. Hence, patient is unable to walk properly because movement of the affected leg is restricted. Normally symptoms are only at one side of body. Some causes may result in pain on both

sides, numbness or weakness may occur in various parts of affected leg and foot.

The symptoms of sciatica can be well correlated with *Grudhrasi* in *Ayurveda*. Most of the common *Vata-Vyadhi* observed in majority of people. *Grudhrasi* word itself describes the disease i.e. “*Grudhra*” like walking. *Grudhrasi* is a *Ruja Pradhan Nanatmaja Vata-Vyadhi*, dominant with the functional capability of low back & lower limbs. *Grudhrasi* cripple the life of patient by causing radiating pain (*Sphik-Kati-Prushtha-Uru-Janu-Jangha-Pad Kramgat Vedana*) in leg while walking or rest as well. The cardinal signs of this disease described in *Ayurved Samhita* are *Ruk*, *Stamabha*, *Toda*, *Pad-Suptata*, *Dehasya-Pravakrata* and *Muhur-Muhur Spandana*. The disease is caused by vitiation of *Vata*, sometimes even *Kapha* vitiation along with *Vata*.

AIM

To study the detail review about *Grudhrasi* and its management.

OBJECTIVES

1. To collect the data related to *Grudhrasi* as per ayurvedic classical texts.

2. To give detailed description about *Grudhrasi* management as per ayurvedic classical texts.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

All the information about the disease *Grudhrasi* and *Chikitsa*(treatment) was collected from *Ayurvedic Samhitas* and compiled text books.

DEFINATION OF GRUDHRASI

पार्श्वि प्रत्यङ्गुलीनां या कण्डरा मरुतादिता ।

सक्थ्युत्क्षेपं निगृह्णाति गृध्रसीं तां
प्रचक्षते ॥ (अ. ह. नि. १५/५४)

Grudhrasi is *Ayurveda* terminology in which aggravated *Vata Dosha* and invading *Kandaras* of **SAMPRAPTI GHATAK**

Parshni produces *Kshepa* (pain & inability to extend) in the lower limb, this *Vyadhi* known as *Grudhrasi*.

Sakthi means lower extremities. The word *Kshepana* refers to extension. Patient of *Grudhrasi* is not capable to extend his leg, by extending the leg worse the pain. *Acharya Sushruta* mentions this important symptom first time as like SLR test in now days. *Arundutta* very clearly explains this symptom as '*Pada Uddharane Ashakti*'. This appears very parallel to the restricted Straight Leg Raising test.

Acharya Vagbhata highlighted that it as the *Utkshepana* i.e., lifting of the leg is affected in *Grudhrasi*.

Table No. 01 : Showing Samprapti Ghataka Of Grudhrasi

Samprapti Ghatak	Details of Samprapti Ghatak
<i>Dosha</i>	Vata – Especially <i>Apana</i> and <i>Vyana</i> . Kapha – <i>Shleshmaka</i> .
<i>Dushya</i>	<i>Rakta, Ashthi, Majja, Sira, Kandara, Snayu</i> .
<i>Srotasa</i>	<i>Raktavaha, Asthivaha, Majjavaha, Pusishavaha</i> .
<i>Agni</i>	<i>Jatharagni and Dhatwagni</i> .
<i>Ama</i>	<i>Jatharagnijanya, Dhatwagnijanya</i> .
<i>Udbhavsthana</i>	<i>Pakwashaya</i> .
<i>Sanchar Sthana</i>	<i>Vatavaha Nadis</i> .
<i>Adhishthana</i>	<i>Kandara of Parshni and Pratyanguli and Sphika, Kati, Uru, Janu, Jangham, Pada</i> .
<i>Vyakata Rupa</i>	<i>Ruka, Toda, Stambha in Adhosakthi - Uru, Janu, Jangha and Pada, Arochaka, Tandra, Gaurava</i> .
<i>Rogamarga</i>	<i>Madhyama</i> .
<i>Bheda</i>	<i>Vataja and Vatakaphaja</i> .
<i>Swabhava</i>	<i>Chirakali</i> .

CHIKITSA (MANAGEMENT)

The first and basic principle of treatment is 'Nidana Parivarjana' i.e. to avoid the Causes of the disease.

Grudhrasi is counted under 80 types of *Nanatmaja Vata Vyadhi*, so the general treatment of *Vatavyadhi* is applicable to *Grudhrasi* also.

Upakrama include,

- *Ahara: Madhura-Amla-Lavana Rasatmak and Ushna Ahara, Ghrita.*
- *Vihara: Abhyanga, Parisheka, Mardana etc*
- *Panchakarma*
- *Snehana*
- *Swedana*
- *Mrudu Samshodhana*
- *Basti* *Upakram*
(*Anuvasan/Niruh*)

VISHISHTA CHIKITSA FOR GRUDHRASI:

Acharya Charaka described special line of treatment for *Grudhrasi* while explaining *Chikitsa Sutra*. *Siravedha*, *Bastikarma*, *Agnikarma* is principle line of treatment for *Grudhrasi*. Here special *Sthana* for *Siravedha* and *Agnikarma* also mentioned i.e *Antara-Kandara-Gulpha*.^[1]

Acharya Sushruta mentioned *Siravedhana* and *Vata-Vyadhi Chikitsa upakrama* in treatment of *Grudhrasi*. In *Sharirasthana* at *Siravyadhavidhi Sharira* he explained specific *Sthana* i.e. *Siravedhana* four *Angula* above and below the *Janu* after *Sankochana* of *Janusandhi*.^[2]

Acharya Vagbhat also advised *Siravedhana* four *Angula* above and below the *Janu* in *Siravyadhavidhi Adhyayam*. *Agnikarma* and *Anuvasana Basti* also mentioned for the treatment of *Grudhrasi*.^[3]

The *Sneha Virechana* clears obstruction in the *Srotas* and relieves *Vata* vitiation very quickly therefore in *Ashtanga Sangraha*, *Acharya* Stated that Oral management of '*Eranda Sneha*' along with milk is best for the *Virechana* purpose (A. S. Ch. 23). Thus *Sneha Virechana* of *Mrudu* nature benefits in monitoring *Shoola* in *Grudhrasi*.^[4]

Chakradutta gave detailed treatment of *Grudhrasi*. He advised *Basti Chikitsa* after proper *Pachan* and *Shodhan Chikitsa* when *Pradipta Jatharagni* is found. He said without *Urdhwashudhh,i Basti* is contraindicated in the treatment of *Grudhrasi*.

1. In treatment of *Grudhrasi* *Chakradatta* described a small

operation after *Snehana* and *Swedana* to remove *Granthi* and thereafter cauterize that *Sthana* with *Agnikarama*.

2. He also suggested *Siravedha* at four *Angula* below to *Indrabasti Marma*.
3. If not relieved by this *Chikitsa Upakram* then special *Agnikarma* procedure suggested at *Kanishthika Anguli*. He has given lot of formulations in the form of *Choorna, Kwatha, Tail, Ghruta, Vati & Payas*.^[5]

Vangasena described detailed treatment about *Grudhrasi*. He described proper line of treatment in *Grudhrasi* i.e. *Deepana - Pachana- Snehana–Swedana–Mardana-Upanaha-Vamana-Virechana-Basti*. He told that without *Urdhwashudhhi, Basti* is contraindicated. He described lots of formulation like

- *Dashamool baladi kwatha + Eranda Taila*.
- *Eranda Taila + Gomutra* for 1 month.
- *Eranda beeja Payasa*.
- *Meshastrungi + Vidanga + Gokshoor + Ashwagandha + Eranda moola + Bilwa +Bruhati + Kantakarika Kashaya with Eranda Taila* in Acute or Chronic stage of *Grudhrasi*.

- *Pippali choorna + Eranda Taila + Gomutra* in Chronic *Vata-Kaphaja* type of *Grudhrasi*.
- *Eranda Phal Mishrit Yavagu*.
- *Lashunadi Ghrut*.
- *Gokshooradi taila* are described with special procedures.

Special procedures

1. *Siravedha* at 2-3 sites with *Gunja kalka lepa*.
2. *Siravedha* four *Angula* Below the *Basti*.
3. Minor *Shastrakarma* at *Kanishthika Anguli* after *Snehana* and *Swedana* to remove *Granthi* and *Chandan lepa* at site after cauterize that *Sthana* with *Agnikarama*.^[6]

Bhavaprakasha also given the line of treatment for *Grudhrasi* in detailed. After proper *Vaman & Virechana* he Focus on *Sneha Basti* if *Diptagni* is found in *Grudhrasi Chikitsa*. He told that there is no use of *Sneha Basti* without *Urdhwashudhhi*. He advised some special formulas for *Vata-Kaphaja Grudhrasi* like,

1. *Gomutra + Castor oil + Pippali Choorna*. He also suggested *Kwatha* formula of *Simhasya + Danti + Krutamalak* along with *Eranda Taila* for patient who cannot walk.

2. For Chronic *Grudhrasi* he advised decoction formulation of *Erandamoola Choorna + Brihati + Kantakari* with black Salt.^[7]

Yogaratanakara is the only who advised special preparation first time i.e. *Vajigandhadi Niruha Basti* for *Grudhrasi*. He has also given different *Sthana* for *Siravedha* in area four *Angula* around *Basti* and *Mutrendriya*. If all above procedures gives fruitless result, then *Agnikarma* in the little finger is instructed.^[8]

Sharangadhara has recommended preparation like *Rasna Saptaka Kwatha*,

Maharasnadi Kwatha, *Dashamuladi Kwatha*, *Mahanimba* and *Rasna kalka*, in the management of *Grudhrasi*.^[9]

Harita has advised *Snehana-Swedana-Raktamokshana*. If there is no response, then with help of iron rod at four fingers above the *Gulpha Agnikarma* is advised in oblique fashion. *Mardana* with *Vatanashaka Taila*, *Rasnapanchak Kwatha*, *Shatavari + Baladwaya + Pushkar Moola Choorna* with *Eranda Taila*, *Ajmodadi Choorna* advised in *Grudhrasi*.^[10] *Bhaishjaya Ratnavali* has given *Chikitsa* similar to *Chakradatta*.

Table No. 02 : Showing Panchakarma & purvakarma for Grudhrasi from Ayurved Samhita.

Treatment	Charak Samhit a	Sushrut a Samhita	Ashtan g hrudaya	Vangse n	Bhav prakas h	Yog ratnakar	Harita Samhit a	Chak r dutta
<i>Snehana</i>	-	-	-	√	-	-	√	√
<i>Swedana</i>	-	-	-	√	-	-	√	√
<i>Vamana</i>	-	-	-	√	√	-	-	√
<i>Virechana</i>	-	-	-	√	√	-	-	√
<i>Niruha Basti</i>	√	-	-	√	-	-	-	-
<i>Anuvasana Basti</i>	√	-	√	√	√	√	-	√
<i>Siravedha</i>	√	√	√	√	-	√	-	√
<i>Raktamokshan a</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	√	-
<i>Agnikarma</i>	√	-	√	√	-	√	√	√
<i>Shastrakarma</i>	-	-	-	√	-	-	-	√

DISCUSSION

There are two types of *Vatavyadhi* have been described as *Samanyaja* and *Nanatmaja* in ayurvedic classical texts. Among them *Grudhrasi* has been stated under 80 types of *Vata-Nanatmaja Vikara*, but sometimes *Kapha* as *Anubandha-dosha* is also found as the causative factor along with *Vata-dosha*. In *Vata vyadhi*, *Pakvashaya* is the origin for each disease. In *Grudhrasi*, *Vata-dosha* first vitiated in *Pakvashaya* later due to aggravating factors it gets in *Prakopavastha* and then accumulate at the place of *Kha-vaigunya sthana* i. e. seat in *Sphik* and *Kati-pradesh*. Due to this *Gridhrasi-nadi*(sciatica nerve), *Snayu*, *Kandara* are vitiated, hence symptoms like *Ruk*, *Toda*, *Stambha* etc are produce. *Aam* formation due to *Agnimandya* causes *Margavarodha* of *Strotasa* and further leads to obstruction of *Vatagati*. Along with *Samanya chikitsa*, various therapies with herbal formulations was described by *Acharyas* in ayurvedic classical texts for the management of *Grudhrasi*. As per different classical texts *Shodhan* as well as *Shaman chikitsa* is useful in the management of *Grudhrasi*.

CONCLUSION

The disease sciatica may correlate with *Grudhrasi* in Ayurveda. A detailed description about *Grudhrasi* and its management were found in ayurvedic classical texts. Due to dominancy of *Vata*, *Grudhrasi* was described in *Nanatmaja vyadhi* by *Acharya Charaka*. *Nidanparivarjan*, *Shodhan chikitsa* and *Shaman chikitsa* are main line of treatment for the *Grudhrasi* management. *Shodhana* may be suggested for *Bahudosh*, but *Shaman* is also important for removing the remained *Dosh* after *Shodhan* process.

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