

‘RAKTAMOKSHANA’ OR BLOOD-LETTING THERAPY**Dr. Geeta D. Parulkar* and Dr. Abhishek Taksale**

M.D. (Chikitsa) (Mum), PhD (Chikitsa) (Mum) Professor (Chikitsa), R.A. Podar (Govt.)

Medical College, Worli, Mumbai-18, Maharashtra.

M.D. (Chikitsa) (Sch)(MUHS), R.A. Podar (Govt.) Medical College, Worli, Mumbai-18,
Maharashtra.Article Received on
04 Dec. 2016,Revised on 25 Dec. 2016,
Accepted on 16 January 2017

DOI: 10.20959/wjpr20172-7741

Corresponding Author*Prof. Dr. Geeta Parulkar**M.D. (Chikitsa) (Mum),
R.A. Podar (Govt.) Medical
College, Worli, Mumbai-18,
Maharashtra.**INTRODUCTION**

Panchakarma, according to the Charaka school of thought consists of Emesis therapy, Purgation therapy, Oil Enema therapy, Decoction Enema therapy and Nasal insufflation. Sushruta, the father of Plastic surgery has opined that there are more diseases occurring due to the vitiation of rakta (blood) than the vitiation of vata, pitta and kapha. Hence, he has clubbed the Oily Enema therapy and Decoction Enema therapy and has stated Vamana (Emesis therapy), Virechana (Purgation therapy), Basti (Enema therapy), Nasya (Errhine therapy) and Raktamokshana (Blood-letting therapy) as ‘Panchakarma’.

Impure blood is let out by the blood-letting method in ‘Raktamokshana’ and It is necessary to know the formation of blood in the body first. The food that we take is panchabhautik i.e. composed of Prithvi, Jala, Teja, Vayu and Aakash. The nutrient rasa is the result of Pachana (Digestion) which colored by ranjak pitta and then called ‘blood’. The blood production is related to Amashaya, Yakruta, Pleeha and the Majja. The pure blood has the following properties^[1] Vistrata (having specific smell)^[2] and Dravata (fluidity which gives moistening effect to skin, muscle and ligament). This is mainly due to the watery portion of the body. The blood is red hence it is called “Raga”. Syandana is property of Vata. It helps the blood to circulate. Laghuta (lightness) present in the body is the property of Aakash. Blood immediately clots when it is exposed. This is the inherent property to avoid bleeding. The normal amount of total blood present in body is about 5 liters. The vitiation of blood is caused by sleeping after meals, sleeping in day time, after taking liquid food, excessive anger, excessive exposure to sun and fire, suppression of natural urges like vomiting, thirst, external injury, and also excessive exercise and exertion. In Autumn

(Visargakala), the vitiation of blood takes place naturally. It also takes place due to unwholesome acute and spicy pungent food, alkaline and acidic foods in excess quantity and horse gram, black gram, potatoes, Til oil, radish, meat of animals, vinegar, sour, rotten articles of food having antagonistic property.

Signs and symptoms of impure blood: The blood is vitiated by improper regimen and diet with vata, the blood becomes raddish, nonslimy, foamy and thin.

When the blood is yellow, blackish and takes longer time to coagulate due to excessive heat present in it, then it is called vitiated by pitta.

When the blood is slightly pale in color, slimy, thready and thick, then it is vitiated by kapha.

Diseases of blood: Diseases of blood mentioned in Ayurveda are Menorrhagia, red circular eruptions, eye diseases, burning sensation during intake of food, acid irritation, excessive sleep, myalgia, benign tumors, piles, anorexia, excessive weakness, dyspepsia, giddiness, skin diseases, ringworm, stomatitis, moles, splenomegaly, thirst, bloody skin, hematuria, conjunctivitis, hoarseness of voice and pyorrhea etc.

Contra-indications for Blood-letting: Generalized swelling all over the body, weakness due to diseases, hemorrhoids, anaemia, ascites, pregnancy, indulgence and in excessive acidic drugs and diet.

Best time for Blood-letting: A pleasant and auspicious day is indicated in Raktamokshana, which is neither too hot nor too cold or cloudy. Blood-letting should not be done in rainy season when the sky is not clear and in summer, as well as when it is cloudy and in early winter in mid day.

TYPES OF RAKTAMOKSHANA (BLOOD-LETTING)

A) With instruments

B) Without instruments

A) Blood-letting with instruments: “Siravedha” (Venesection) means drawing blood from a vein with help of shastra i.e. instrument which is one of the types of Raktamokshana with Shashtra. Also, it is indicated for eradication of some diseases as well as for maintainance of Swasthya (immunity).



Siravedha (Venesection) for maintaining Swasthya (immunity)

Indications: Some type of skin diseases, Gout, Sciatica, Osteoarthritis of knee joint, Calcaneal spur, Rhagades, Chronic Headache, Earache etc.

Contraindications: It is contraindicated after Emesis and Purgation therapy, Impotence, Pregnancy, Asthma, Tuberculosis, Paralysis, Epilepsy and High fever etc.

Time for venesection: It is usually contraindicated in Ushna rutu (too hot season) or Sheeta rutu (too cold season), but in emergency it can be done any time.

B) Blood-letting without instruments

There is another type of Raktamokshana, in which with the help of “Anushastra” (for e.g. Jalluka, Leech) diseases can be cured in thin persons, young children, the aged and pregnant women.



Jallukavacharana in Shirrashoola (Chronic headache)

Jallukavacharana (Application of Leeches)

When patient is suffering from vata disorders, the blood is sucked by applying Jalluka in one

or two places of body, especially hands and feet and head occasionally.

The leeches used for removing the impure blood from the diseased part are of twelve types, out of which six are poisonous, and the remaining six are non-poisonous. Poisonous species are Krishna, Karbura, Alagarda, Indrayudha, Samudrika and Gochandana.



Jallukavacharana in Janusandhigatavata (Osteoarthritis in knee joints)

Non-Poisonous Leeches

They are six in number viz. 1. Kapila, 2. Pingala, 3. Shankhamukhi 4. Mooshika 5. Pundarikamukhi 6. Savarika.

Method of Application of Leech

The poisonous leeches have origin in the decomposed poisonous creatures, fishes, urine, faeces, stagnant and turbid water.

The non-poisonous leeches originate in pure water containing different types of lotus. These leeches are available in Madras, Madhyapradesh ,Karnataka, Kerala and other places where pure water is available.

The non-poisonous leeches are usually kept in glass jars with pure water. It is necessary to clean the local part and make it dry before the leeches are applied. The leeches are first kept in turmeric water for about 5-10 minutes and then they are removed and kept in pure water. At a time 3-6 leeches can be applied to a patient. One leech may suck about 30-40 cc of blood.

When the impure blood is sucked by the leech the patient does not feel any pain. When the leeches are bloated with blood, they should be made to fall by putting turmeric water drops at the site of bite. After purification of Jalluka by turmeric water it can be used again after seven days. When it starts sucking the blood, the blood will not clot. The secret behind it is 'Hirudin' which is a coagulant factor in the secretion by leech.

After the leech is removed the wound is smeared with Padmakadi oil or Jatyadi oil and proper bandage is done.

Total 140 patients were screened for diseases within 2 years among which 100 had undergone Siravedha and 40 for Jallukavacharana Raktamokshana procedure among Panchakarmas. Following is the data showing significant results.

OBSERVATIONS AND RESULT

A) Siravedha Data

Age wise distribution of Patients

Age group	20 – 39 years	40 – 59 years	60 – 80 years
Number of Patients	34	46	20

Sex wise distribution of Patients

Sex	Number of Patients	Percentage
Male	54	54%
Female	46	46%

Disease wise distribution of Patients with relief

Disease	Number of Patients with percentage	Number of symptomatically relieved Patients with percentage
Osteoarthritis (Sandhigataavata)	59 (59%)	40 (67.7%)
Rheumatoid Arthritis (Amavata)	9 (9%)	4 (44.4%)
Gout (Vatarakta)	1 (1 %)	-
Skin disorders (Twacharoga)	13 (13%)	8 (61.5%)
Varicose veins (Sirakoutilya)	2 (2 %)	1 (50%)
Hemiplegia (Pakshaghata)	4 (4 %)	1 (25%)
Other (e.g. Bronchial Asthma etc)	12 (12%)	6 (50%)

Raktamoshana Kala (Blood-letting Period) wise distribution of Patients –

Kala	Number of Patients	Percentage
Adanakala	46	46%
Visargakala	54	54%

Adanakala- Shishira- Vasanta-Grishma rutu (according to Ashtangasangraha) and January to June according to calendar.

Visargakala - Varsha-Sharada-Hemanta rutu (according to Ashtangasangraha) and July to December according to calendar.

B) Jallukavacharana Data

Age wise distribution of Patients

Age group	20 – 39 years	40 – 59 years	60 – 80 years
Number of Patients	3	27	10

Sex wise distribution of Patients

Sex	Number of Patients	Percentage
Male	21	52.5%
Female	19	47.5%

Disease wise distribution of Patients with relief

Disease	Number of Patients with percentage	Number of symptomatically relieved Patients with percentage
Osteoarthritis (Sandhigataavata)	23(57.5%)	13 (56.52%)
Rheumatoid Arthritis (Amavata)	03 (7.5%)	1 (33.33%)
Skin disorders (Twacharoga)	06 (15.0%)	4 (66.66%)
Varicose veins (Sirakoutilya)	01 (2.5%)	-
Hemiplegia(Pakshaghata)	02 (5.0%)	1 (50.00%)
Other (e.g. Bronchial Asthma etc)	05 (12.5%)	3 (60.00%)

Raktamokshanakala wise distribution of patients

Kala	Number of Patients	Percentage
Adanakala	23	57.5%
Visargakala	17	42.5%

CONCLUSION

seems that 'Raktamokshanakala' is a 'Panchakarma procedure', which can give relief in patients of different diseases with usually no side effect. Also it was observed that percentage of relief is much in Visarga kala than Adana kala.

REFERENCES

1. Ayurveda for Healthy Living ,by Dr. T.L. Devraj
2. Ashtangasangraha, Sutrasthana, Adhyay 4th