

AGNIKARMA: A PARASURGICAL PROCEDURE IN PAIN MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Ayurved has become famous in the present time because of its efficacy and the ability to cure chronic diseases which are sometime termed as incurable by other system of medicine. There are many surgical and parasurgical procedures explained by Sushruta. These parasurgical procedures are simple and not sophisticated instruments, devices, anesthesia and analgesia is required. As explained in Ayurveda, Vata dosha is mainly responsible for pain and stiffness. Agnikarma is one of the parasurgical procedure explained by Sushruta in Sutrasthana adhyaya 12. Agnikarma mainly acts on Vata-Kapha dosha and hence acharya has given its use in pain related to various adhishtana as twaka, mansa, sira, snayu, sandhi, asthi. Ayurvedic parasurgical

procedures have great role to fight against various chronic disease, so this is the time to look in the traditional and time tested knowledge and specific procedures of Ayurveda.

KEYWORDS: Parasurgical Procedures, vata kapha, agnikarma.

INTRODUCTION

In present days there are many disorders which after treatment may reoccur or sometimes they does not respond to corresponding treatment. In Ayurveda sushruta have mentioned many parasurgical procedures in addition or substitute for surgical procedures. In Ayurveda all acharyas has told elimination of doshas after their prakopa. Acharya sushruta has also mentioned prevention of recurrence of various disorders by parasurgical procedures like Agnikarma. He has also mentioned different methods for management of various types of

diseases, such as Bheshajakarma, Shastrakarma, Ksharkarma, Agnikarma which can be used by their indications. Agnikarma means the application of Agni or heat directly or indirectly to the affected part with the help of different materials. Agnikarma holds important place in all parasurgical procedures as sushruta has mentioned that disease cured by it does not reoccur.^[1] Even modern science also taken Agnikarma in practice by advocating cauterization in almost every surgical procedures. Cauterization is the burning of part of body to remove or close off a part, which destroys some tissue in an attempt to remove an undesired growth or minimize other potential medical harmful possibilities such as infection. The word Agnikarma is made up of two words i.e., Agni and Karma. Agni, the masculine word derived from the root “agigatau agyati agnayamna prapyanti” i.e. it gives rebirth, is utilized to cure and prevent the diseases. Mere utilization of Agnikarma which is mentioned in anushastra, upayantra^[2] and shashti upakrama, provides shalyatantra the unique position among the eight faculties of Ayurveda. Agnikarma can be utilized as a curative measure and as a postoperative measure in pain management. Agnikarma is a thermal para-surgical procedure, in which “AGNI” is used for intentional burning as therapeutic purpose. It is indicated for various Vata- Kapha disorders.

IMPORTANCE OF AGNIKARMA

1. It is a highly potential procedure than the bheshaja, Shastra & ksharakarma.^[3]
2. It is very effective to terminate the chance of recurrence of the disease.
3. No secondary complications occurs if it is done properly.

INDICATIONS OF AGNIKARMA^[4]

1. Painful conditions of musculoskeletal disorders.
2. Hard, elevated and desensitized vranas/ulcer.
3. Granthi, Arshas, Bhagandara, Arbuda, Sleepada, Charmakeela and Antravidhi.
4. Severe bleeding condition.

Pain related to other sites told by sushruta

- Twaka : warts, charmakeela, corn, moles, callosity
- Mansa : granthi, arsha, bhagandara,
- Sira : severe bleeding can be cauterized
- Snayu : pain in tendons
- Sandhi : pain in joints , frozen shoulder etc.

- Asthi : pain due to osteoarthritis , calcaneal spur.

CONTRAINDICATIONS OF AGNIKARMA^[5]

1. Pitta Prakruti
2. Antah shonita (Internal bleeding)
3. Bhinna koshta (Ruptured viscera)
4. Nuddhrita shalya (in presence of foreign body)
5. Durbala (emaciated), Bala (children), Vriddha (old aged), Bheeru (coward), Aneka vrana peedita (with multiple wounds)

INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES REQUAIED FOR AGNIKARMA

- Manpower: A trained doctor and technician
- Space and requirements: 1 small sized room (10x 10) with proper light. It can be done in OPD level also.
- Chair or stool- 1, Examination table/ Droni- 1.

MATERIALS REQUIRED FOR AGNIKARMA

1. Shalaka
2. Permanent Marker
3. Gas stove, lighter
4. Surgical spirit, Gloves
5. Cotton gauze
6. Aloe vera pulp or Yashtimadhu churna (fine)

PREOPERATIVE

1. Educate the patient
2. Obtain informed and written consent
3. Ask the patient to satisfy natural urges
4. Check vitals

PROCEDURE

1. The patient should be allowed to be in a comfortable position, exposing the site of the disease.
2. Keep Shalaka on the gas stove for heating.
3. Wear surgical gloves.

4. Clean the site with the surgical spirit.
5. Mark the most tender points with a marker.
6. Ensure that Shalaka to be red hot.
7. Hold red hot Shalaka strongly in one hand and touch in the marked points till samyak dagdha lakshana seen.

POST OPERATIVE

- Apply Aloe vera pulp over the Agnikarma site immediately.

MODE OF ACTION

- Agnikarma (ushnaguna) >> Utkleshnam to dhathu >> Activates dhatwagni >> Digest Aama and achieve niramavastha >> Pacifies Vata & Kapha.
- Agnikarma produces a coagulative necrosis on the surface layers of skin which causes self-healing. There is no need of post-procedural medication locally or orally.

EFFECTS OF AGNIKARMA

- Exciting/stimulating nerves
- Relaxation to muscles
- Decreases joint stiffness and inflammation.
- Decreases pain
- Increases blood circulation
- Increases metabolism

APPLICATION & DURATION

- It depends up on site & disease
- Usually 2 to 5 seconds & more than 5 seconds in corn, callosity etc.

TIME / SEASON

All seasons except Greeshma & Sharad Ritu. In the case of emergency, it can be done in any season with special precaution.

PRECAUTIONS

1. Agnikarma should not be done empty stomach. It is better to take Pichchila anna before Agnikarma.^[6]
2. Should be aware of vital parts of the body, season, vyadhi dhosha avastha.

COMPLICATIONS

- No specific complication if done properly.
- If not done properly complications like plushta, durdagdha, atidagdha may occur.

CONCLUSION

- In the field of pain management and cosmetic therapy, Agnikarma procedure can be done very effectively and safely.
- This procedure is simple and require no medicines for internal and external use.
- To the patients, it is very convenient and economic.
- No need to hospitalize the patient as it can be done on OPD level.
- Agnikarma procedure needed to have more scientific studies and evaluation.
- Agnikarma will become one of the most promising branches of Ayurveda.

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