

## AYURVEDIC MANAGEMENT OF MUSCULOSKELETAL MANIFESTATIONS OF RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

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### ABSTRACT

Rheumatoid arthritis is a chronic multi system disease with predominant musculoskeletal manifestations. It affects the lining of the joints, causing painful swelling that eventually results in bone erosion and joint deformities. Such musculoskeletal manifestations of rheumatoid arthritis can be managed through classical ayurved up to a great extent.

**KEYWORDS:** Rheumatoid arthritis, musculoskeletal, ayurved.

### INTRODUCTION

Rheumatoid arthritis is a chronic Inflammatory, destructive and deforming symmetrical polyarthritis associated with systemic

involvement.<sup>[1]</sup>

### Criteria for diagnosis

Rheumatoid arthritis is diagnosed when four or more of the following criteria are present:

- i. Morning stiffness (more than one hour for more than six weeks)
- ii. Arthritis involving three or more joints
- iii. Arthritis of hand joints
- iv. Symmetrical arthritis
- v. Rheumatoid nodules
- vi. Rheumatoid factor
- vii. Radiographic changes

**Clinical features**

- 1- Myalgia
- 2- Arthralgia
- 3- Joint stiffness
- 4- Low grade fever
- 5- Fatigue
- 6- Weakness
- 7- Weight loss
- 8- Excessive sweating
- 9- Lymphadenopathy etc.

**Investigations**

- 1- Acute phase reactants- ESR and C-reactive protein
- 2- Rheumatoid factor
- 3- Antibodies to CCP (Cyclic Citrullinated Peptide)
- 4- Arthroscopy
- 5- Radiographic changes

**RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS**

Understanding through ayurved, rheumatoid arthritis is basically a multifocal joint disease with deep dhatugata pathologies. The lesions start from twak and gradually spreads up to asthi and majja dhatus leading to permanent irreversible deformities. Autoimmune nature of rheumatoid arthritis is due to raktadushti and dhatupaka. Presence of ama is seen in most of the cases.

Raktadushti will manifest as inflammation while vataprakopa will affect the normal chalaguna of vata. Ama will be manifested as swelling and stiffness to joints. All these factors will be affected in different proportions in different stages of rheumatoid arthritis. So vikalpa samprapti will vary in different progressive stages of rheumatoid arthritis.<sup>[2]</sup>

Rheumatoid Arthritis can be compared to amavata due to the presence of ama and vataprakopa. But in Kerala school of thought, rheumatoid arthritis is compared to vatarakta due to involved raktadushti and vataprokopa.

**Disease profile**

Dosha – Vata  
Kapha as anubandha  
Dushya –Twak and mamsa (initially)  
Asthi and deep dhatus (in later stage)  
Srotas –Rasavaha  
Adhithan –Sandhi  
Rogamarg –Madhyam  
Agni –Jathragni mandya  
Dhatwagni mandya  
Ama involved (in early stage)

**Treatment principle**

The judicious combination of vatarakta and amavata chikitsa gives encouraging results. Initially, ama pachana drugs are administered to remove the ama. After amapachana, drugs which control the inflammation are selected from vatarakta domain.

Once the inflammation is reduced, the next line of treatment is vatahara. Rasayans are also given in the last part of treatment to enhance the immune system.

**Panchakarma chikitsa****Virechana**

Virechana is the main sodhana in the initial phase of rheumatoid arthritis. Eranda based preparations are generally used as vata in the main dosha involved in it.

Example – Eranda tail -20 ml with Nirgundi swaras -20ml

**Basti**

As deep dhatugata stages are involved in Rheumatoid Arthritis with strong vatakopa, basti is also an important procedure in the treatment of Rheumatoid Arthritis.

**Kshira basti**

Maksika	100ml
Sneha	
Ghrta (Mahatikta ghrta)	100ml
Taila (Bala taila)	100ml

Brihatyadi kshira kasaya	200ml
Total	500ml

### External application

External applications are done in the acute phase of rheumatoid arthritis. Ruksha kalpanas like lepana etc are applied first followed by snigdha kalpanas (after subsiding sopha etc).

#### A. Lepanas

- 1-Kottamchukkadi lepa with chinchha swaras
- 2-Kolakulathadi grehadhumadi lepa
- 3-Jadamyadi lepa with kanchika
- 4-Nagaradi lepa
- 5-Ellumnisadi lepa

#### B. Taila

- 1- Dhanwantar taila
- 2- Bala taila
- 3- Narayana taila
- 4- Madhuyastyadi taila
- 5- Karpasasthyadi taila

#### C. Parishekas

- 1- Dhanyamladhara
- 2- Dhara with dashamoolaristha ksheera

#### D. Upanahas

- 1- Upanaha with nagaradi lepa choorna, saindhava, dhanyamla and dhanwantar taila for seven days.

#### 1- Kashayam/Kwath

- 1- Amrtotara kashaya
- 2- Guduchyadi kashaya
- 3- Rasnapanchaka kwath
- 4- Rasnaerandadi kwath

**2- Choorna**

Shaddharana choorna

**3- Guggulu**

- 1- Kaisore Guggulu
- 2- Simhananda Guggulu
- 3- Yogaraj Guggulu
- 4- Mahayogaraj Guggulu
- 5- Amrtadi Guggulu

**4- Rasa Ausadhi**

- 1- Anand Bhairav Ras
- 2- Brihatvata Chintamani Ras

**5- Rasayana**

- 1- Vardhamana Pippali
- 2- Bhallataka kshira paka

**CONCLUSION**

Musculoskeletal manifestations of rheumatoid arthritis can be managed through ayurveda up to a great extent. Bahiparimarjana chikitsa minimizes swelling and enhances the mobility. Amapachana drugs do the amapachana while vataghna drugs reduce the pain etc. Last but not the least, classical ayurved so helps in the prevention of complications like irreversible deformities etc.

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