

AN INTEGRATIVE REVIEW ON ARSHA: AYURVEDIC APPROACH AS WELL AS CONTEMPORARY UNDERSTANDING

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Article Received on 07 July 2026,
Article Revised on 28 July 2026,
Article Published on 01 August 2026,
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.21772374>

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How to cite this Article: Dr. Harimohan Kushwaha¹, Dr. Ramnarayan Morya², Dr. Anita singh³, Dr. Ankit Gupta⁴ (2026). An Integrative Review on Arsha: Ayurvedic Approach As Well As Contemporary Understanding. World Journal of Pharmaceutical Research, 15(15), 1800–1809. This work is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license.

ABSTRACT

Arsha, often known as hemorrhoids, is a widespread anorectal condition defined through the enlargement and irritation of the anal blood vessels. *Arsha* is one of the most common anorectal disease described in *Ayurvedic* literature and is included among the *Ashta Mahagada* by *Acharya Sushruta* due to its chronicity, difficulty in management, and tendency to recur. The disease originates primarily from *Mandagni* leading to improper digestion, formation of *Ama*, and vitiation of *Tridosha*, especially *Apana Vata*. Factors such as excessive intake of *Guru*, *Abhishyandi*, *Vidahi Ahara*, irregular food habits, prolonged sitting, suppression of natural urges, constipation, lack of exercise, and psychological stress contribute significantly to the pathogenesis of *Arsha*. The vitiated *Doshas* localize in the *Gudavali* and vitiate *Twak*, *Mamsa*, *Meda*, and *Rakta Dhatu*, producing fleshy projections

in the anal region known as *Arsha*. *Ayurveda* classifies *Arsha* into various types based on *Dosha* predominance, bleeding tendency, congenital origin, and prognosis. Clinically,

patients present with symptoms such as *Gudashoola* (pain), *Raktasrava* (bleeding per rectum), *Kandu* (itching), *Guda Shotha* (swelling), prolapse, constipation, and discomfort during defecation. Modern science correlates *Arsha* with hemorrhoids resulting from engorgement of hemorrhoidal venous plexus. Ayurvedic management emphasizes *Nidana Parivarjana*, correction of *Agni*, purification of vitiated *Doshas*, and strengthening of anorectal tissues. Treatment modalities include *Bhaishajya Chikitsa*, *Kshara Karma*, *Agnikarma*, *Kshara Sutra*, and *Shastra Karma* depending upon the stage and severity of disease. Classical formulations such as *Triphala*, *Arshoghni Vati*, *Abhayarishta*, and *Kutajadi preparations* are widely used along with dietary regulation and lifestyle modifications. Among para-surgical procedures, *Kshara Karma* described by *Sushruta* has gained importance due to its minimal invasiveness, reduced recurrence, and cost-effectiveness. This review highlights the *Ayurvedic* concept, etiopathogenesis, classification, clinical manifestations, and holistic management of *Arsha* with special emphasis on classical *Ayurvedic* principles and their contemporary relevance in anorectal disorders.

KEYWORDS: Anorectal, *Arsha*, *Sushruta*, Haemorrhoids, *Ayurveda*, Modern science.

INTRODUCTION

People are more vulnerable to anorectal disorders like fissure-in-ano in today's stressful society because to improper eating habits and lifestyle choices. *fistulas-in-ano* and hemorrhoids. *Arsha* is described as *Mahagada* in *Ayurveda*. *Shalya Tantra* has a plethora of knowledge about contemporary surgical theories. The father of surgery (*Acharya Sushruta*) in his treatise, he discussed the *Arsharoga*, which was believed to be one of the *Mahagada* and was permanently cured. *Arsha* is a problematic illness that might impact anyone, anywhere, at any moment. Nowadays, hemorrhoids are a prevalent problem that nearly everyone has encountered at some point in their lives. *Arsha* is defined as a fleshy growth that blocks the anal canal and eradicates the presence of an enemy.^[1] Binge eating and a sedentary lifestyle, which reduces the activity of digestive enzymes and results in constipation, are the main causes of *Arshas*. discomfort, burning, and itching close to the *Guda*, which eventually causes bleeding.^[2] The estimated global incidence is between 2.9% and 27.9%, with over 4% exhibiting symptoms.^[3,4] The age distribution has a Gaussian distribution, peaking between 45 and 65 years of age and then declining after 65.^[5,6] Different *Ayurvedic* therapeutic approaches have been proposed for *Arshas*. Early on, there are less symptoms. *Arsha* can be cured with *Bheshaja* (internal medicine), *Ksharakarma* (local herbal caustic paste), or

Agnikarma (thermal heat burn). *Shastrakarma* (surgery) should be used for all of the aforementioned treatments.^[7] These therapies are listed in a specific order that indicates which should come first. This article will examine several *Ayurvedic* and contemporary methods for treating *Arshas*.

NIDANA OF ARSHAS^[8,9]

The causes have been thoroughly explained by *Nidana* of *Arsha Charaka*:

- According to *Ayurveda*, the major cause of *Arsha* is thought to be an imbalance between the three *doshas* (*Pitta*, *Kapha*, and *Vata*).
- Toxins (*ama*) can build up in the rectal area due to *vata dosha*, which is responsible for motility and dryness.
- This results in the development of hemorrhoids, which are generally classified as either internal or external in *Ayurvedic* scriptures.

Stress, irregular eating patterns, excessive consumption of heavy or spicy meals, and a sedentary lifestyle can all exacerbate *Vata* and lead to the development of *Arsha*.

- Other factors include long car rides, harsh chairs or incorrect seated on hard surfaces for extended periods of time, and female pregnancy. *Mandagni-Arshas* asserts that *Atisara* and *Grahani* are mutually causative.
- Based on excessive *Snehana* therapy, improper administration of *Bastikarma*, and other therapeutic excesses.

Samprapti of Arshas

According to *Ayurveda*, *Arshas*'s *samprapti* is defined as a localized symptom of a systemic illness. According to *Samprapti* (Pathogenesis) of *Arsha Sushruta*, the pathogenesis of *Arshas* is caused by the *Nidanas*, which lead to the vitiation of *Doshas* in one, two, or more combinations together with *Rakta*, *Dosha* migrate downward through the *Mahadhamani* reaches *Guda*, it affects the *Gudavalitraya*, causing *Arshas* to be produced for those who suffer from *Mandagni* and other local causes.^[9] According to *Charaka*, *Arsha roga* is caused by the vitiation of all the *Doshas*, which affects the *Gudavalitraya* and comes after *Bahya* and *Abhyantararogamarga*.^[10] According to *Vagbhata*, vitiation of *Doshas* causes *Mandagni*, vitiation of *Apanavayu* causes *Mala* to stagnate in *Gudavali*, and prolonged contact of *Mala* causes *Arshas*.^[11]

- *Dosha- Tridoshaja*, dominantly *Vata*.

- *Dooshya- Rakta, Mamsa, Medas and Twak.*
- *Shrotas- Raktavaha, Mamsavaha, Purishvaha.*
- *Srotodushti- Sanga, Siragranthi.*
- *Udbhavasthana- Ama-pakvasayotbhava.*
- *Avayava Vikriti – Gudavalitraya.*
- *Rogamaarga- Bhahya and Abhyantara.*
- *Agni- Jataragnimandh*

CLASSIFICATION OF ARSHA

1. **On the basis of the origin**^[12] - Basically *Arsha* is of two types.

- I. *Sahaja Arsha* (Hereditary - Congenital)
- II. *Kalaja* i.e. acquired one after birth.

2. **On the basis of the character of bleeding**^[13]

- I. *Ardra* (*Sravi*)-Bleeding piles due to vitiation of *Rakta* and *Pitta Dosha*.
- II. *Shushka*- Non bleeding piles due to vitiation of *Vata* and *Kapha Dosha*.

3. **On the basis of site**^[14]

- I. *Bahya* (*Samvarani*)
- II. *Abhyantara* (*Visarjini, Pravahani*).

4. **On the basis of prognosis**^[15]

- I. ***Sadhya* (Curable)** -single *Doshika* involvement and not very chronic.
- II. ***Yapya* (Palliative)** - two *Doshas* and the location of *Arsha* in the second *Vali*, the chronicity of the disease is not more than one year.
- III. ***Asadhya* (Incurable)**- three *Doshas* and if the *Arsha* is situated in the *Pravahini Vali*.

5. **According to contemporary medicine based on the position**

- I. Internal
- II. External

6. **On the basis of symptoms**

- Grade I: No Prolapses. Just prominent blood vessels.
- Grade II: Prolapses upon bearing down but spontaneously reduce.
- Grade III: Prolapses upon bearing down and require manual reduction.

- Grade IV: Prolapsed and cannot be manually reduced.

Loss of appetite, anal pain, difficulty passing feces, edema of the body, anxiety, headache, vomiting and lethargy, bleeding per rectum, backache, and emaciation are among the prevalent clinical signs of *Arsha*.^[16]

CHIKITSA

Eliminating the disease's underlying cause and preventing its contributing etiological causes are the cornerstones of *Ayurvedic* medicine. Four therapeutic modalities, *Acharya Sushruta* has described for *Arsha*,^[17] and the usage of these remedies is contingent upon the level of *dosha* participation in *Arshas*.

1. *Bheshaja Karma* (medical treatment)
2. *Shastra Karma* (surgical management)
3. *Kshara Karma* (chemical cauterization)
4. *Agni Karma* (cauterization)

BHESHAJA CHIKITSA

As *Arsha*'s initial course of care. For the first to second degree of *Ushna* disease prognosis, it is statistically effective.^[18] The components that include *Veerya*, *Katu*; various preparations are mentioned for the treatment of *Arsha* based on the ability of *Vipaka*, *Deepana*, *Pachana*, *Vatanulomaka*, *Srotosodhana*, and *Sronitsanghata Bhinnakara Guna* to *Samprapti Vighatana* and cure the condition^[19]. *Bheshaja* can be used to treat newly arising *Arshas* with *Alpa Doshas Linga* and *Upadrava*.

Local measures: A variety of preparations can be implemented locally. The painful manifestation of *Arshas* can be eliminated with the use of these preparations.

SHAstra KARMA

Arsha is treated surgically utilizing a range of techniques when conservative approaches don't work. Patients with prolapsed hemorrhoids, internal hemorrhoids, and severe degrees of disease presentation are usually recommended to have a hemorrhoidectomy. Sometimes complications including bleeding, infection, incontinence, anal strictures, and urine retention are associated with *Shastra Karmas*.

Hemorrhoidectomy complications are more common than those associated with other

anorectal procedures. *Tanumoola*, *Uchritani*, and *Kledavanta* are *Arshas* who should be treated with *Shastra*.

KSHARA KARMA

Kshara is made from the ashes of medicinal herbs and is an alkaline, caustic substance. It's less invasive than *Shastra Karma* and *Agni Karma*. It is referred to as one of the *Upayantras* or *Anu Shastras*. It performs the *Tridosahara* property along with *Chedana*, *Bhedana*, and *Lekhana*, making it the best of sharp and secondary instruments. *Kshara Karma* is adaptable since it can be used to treat locations that are challenging to access with conventional methods. In addition, *Kshara Karma* is more efficient than alternative therapies since it can be applied both internally and externally. *Kshara Karmas* are a good alternative to surgical equipment since they can be used on individuals who are terrified of surgery. *Kshara* should be used and cauterization should be utilized to treat piles brought on by *Vata* and *Kapha*. *Mrudu Kshara* should be utilized to treat those brought on by *Pitta* and *Rakta*. *Kshara* is used to cure the *Arshas Mriudu*, *Prasrutha*, *Avagadha*, and *Uchritha*.

AGNI KARMA

An essential para surgical process is *Agni karma*.

Incurable ailments can be treated with *Agni Karma*. Even when *Kshara*, Medications, and medical equipment are used. Because illnesses do not return, it is superior to *Kshara Karma*. It is frequently altered for use in surgical procedures such as electric heat cautery and freezing. *Agni Karma* is used to treat those *Arshas*, including *Karkasha*, *Sthira*, *Pruthu*, and *Kathina*.

MANAGEMENT OF HAEMORRHOIDS

Treatment options for hemorrhoids include surgery, lifestyle changes, and therapeutic therapy based on the severity and extent of the illness.

Non-Surgical Therapy

1. Ligation of rubber bands

Rubber band ligation is a quick, easy, and efficient treatment for first and second degree hemorrhoids. It can also partially heal a few cases of third degree prolapse. Fixation of the connective tissue to the rectal wall results from ischemic necrosis and scarring caused by the ligation of hemorrhoidal tissue with the use of a rubber band.

2. Sclerotherapy

For first- and second-degree hemorrhoids, this is currently advised as a course of treatment. The purpose of injecting chemical agents is to cause fibrosis, which fixes the mucosa to the underlying muscle. Urea hydrochloride or hypertonic salt solution, vegetable oil, quinine, and 5% phenol in oil are the solutions utilized.

3. Coagulation by infrared

Water in the cell is evaporated and tissue is coagulated by the infrared radiation produced by the infrared coagulator causing the hemorrhoid bulk to decrease.

4. The use of cryotherapy

A freezing cryoprobe is used throughout cryotherapy to ablate the hemorrhoidal tissue. Because sensitive nerve endings are lost at very low temperatures, it has been said to cause less discomfort.

5. Ablation using a laser

Laser ablation is a minimally invasive procedure that is also referred to as laser hemorrhoidectomy or laser hemorrhoidoplasty. Hemorrhoids are treated surgically. In this process, the hemorrhoidal tissue is carefully targeted and shrunk using a specialized laser. When the hemorrhoid receives laser energy, it shrinks and eventually scars. As a result, the hemorrhoid gradually resolves because there is less blood supply to it. Operative treatment is recommended when all non-operative methods of treating hemorrhoids have failed, as well as when the hemorrhoids are of the third or fourth degree and surgery is the only remaining choice.

HEMORRHOIDECTOMY

The best treatment for hemorrhoids is excisional hemorrhoidectomy, which has the lowest rate of recurrence in contrast to alternative modalities. It can be done with scissors, diathermy, or a vascular sealing tool such a harmonic scalpel or ligature. As an ambulatory procedure, excisional hemorrhoidectomy can be carried out safely under perianal anesthetic infusion. Failure of non-operative treatment, acute complex hemorrhoids such strangulation or thrombosis, patient choice, and concurrent anorectal diseases like anal fissure or fistula-in-ano that necessitate surgery are also indications for hemorrhoidectomy. The primary indication for hemorrhoidectomy in clinical practice is third- or fourth-degree internal hemorrhoids.^[20] Postoperative discomfort is a significant disadvantage of hemorrhoidectomy. There is proof that a ligasure hemorrhoidectomy causes less Compared to scissors or

diathermy hemorrhoidectomy, there is less postoperative pain, a shorter hospital stay, quicker wound healing, and convalescence.

APATHYA IN ARSHAS

Fried food, foods high in Maida, non-vegetarian foods, chilies, foods that cause constipation, perfect sitting with minimal physical strain on the body, excessive pressure when defecating, food that are deep-fried. *Arshas* can be brought on by certain foods.

PATHYA IN ARSHAS

Cow milk, buttermilk, pure ghee, wheat, rice, green grams, meals high in fiber, cooked vegetables, enough sleep, proper exercise, healthy eating habits, and *Vega Dharana* should all be avoided, especially the need to pass stools.

DISCUSSION

This article offers a thorough examination of therapies from both *Ayurvedic* and contemporary medical viewpoints. In treating the common condition of hemorrhoids, or *Arshas* in *Ayurveda*, it seeks to close the gap between conventional knowledge and modern scientific methods.

CONCLUSION

Arsha is a condition linked to age, occupation, lifestyle, and diet. Classics of *Ayurveda* depict an ideal lifestyle that one can adhere to in order to live a long and healthy life. Eating low-fiber foods, poor eating habits, incorrect body posture, difficult deliveries, frequent abortions, psychological imbalances, and physical damage to the anal area are some important variables described in *Ayurvedic* texts for the emergence of *Arsha* (piles). An essential part of preventing *Arshas* is *Nidana Parivarjana*. Consequently, *Ayurveda* has a great deal of potential to manage every stage of *Arsha* in a successful and trouble-free manner.

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