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AYURVEDIC UNDERSTANDING OF KATIGRAHA: A REVIEW ARTICLE

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ABSTRACT

In the present era, lower backache is most common problem of all age groups. About 80% of the industrial population and 60% of the general population experience low back pain at some point of their life time due to wrong postural habits and psychological factors. In Ayurveda, this ailment is compared to Katigraha, one of the Vataja Nanatmaja Vyadhi. Katigraha is the condition which is characterised by Stabhdhata(Stiffness) and Shoola(Pain) due to Vitiation of Vata in the Katipradesh. In this condition Shuddha vata or Samavata gets lodged at Katipradesh and produces symptoms. Katigraha which is correlated with Lumbar spondylosis, it is a degenerative condition that effects the disc, vertebral bodies and joints associated with lumbar spine. Modern medical treatments for low back pain weren't effective over the long term. The Ayurvedic chikitsa Sutra of Katigraha includes a description of Snehana, Swedana, Shamana, and Conventional Rasayana in addition to a healthy food and way of life. In our ancient texts Katishoola and Katistabhdhata have been described in various clinical conditions. This article mainly emphasis on describing the Ayurvedic aspect of Katigraha condition more widely.

KEYWORDS: Katigraha, Katishoola, Shuddha Vata, Sama Vata, Low back pain.

INTRODUCTION

Due to heavy industrialization and development advanced software technology the mankind running behind fast and furious life. Due to that every person indulging in improper sitting postures, Continuous long journeys, overexertion, jerky movements during travelling and sports, weight lifting, sitting for a prolonged time and other strainful activities etc, create an undue pressure to the spinal column and play an important role in producing low backache even in early decades of life. About 60-80 % of world population experience low back pain at some time in their lives. The highest prevalence is among people aged 35- 60 years.[1] Even though this disease is not life threatening but it hampers the daily activity.

The word *Katigraha* is formed by two words *Kati* and *Graha*. *Katigraha* is the condition of lower back region associated with pain and stiffness. *Kati* itself is one of the seats of *Vatadosha* and the root cause of disease is aggravated by *Vata*.[2] *Shuddha Vata* dosha or *Sama vata dosha* (*Ama* associated with *Vata dosha*) afflicts *Kati pradesha* and produces symptoms such as pain and stiffness. Ageing is one of the well known risk factor of *Katigraha* as degenerative changes in the spine and disc are one of the major causes of *Katigraha.* In *Nanatamaja vatavyadhi Katigraha, Prista Graham* and *Sroni bheda* are mentioned as separate diseases depending on the region where pain is felt. *Acharya Charaka*[3] and *Sharangdhar*[4] considered it as *Nanatmaja vatavyadhi*. It is described as the separate disease in the classical texts of *Gadanigraha*[5] and by *Shodal acharya*. As correctly said by Sushruta Acharya without vitiation of Vata, Shoola (pain) cannot be produced. So prime Importance should be given to Vatadosha while considering the management of the disease.

According to modern science this disease is correlated to lumbar spondylosis. In this disease back pain is usually felt in the lumbosacral area and back of the thighs. The common site of pain in the spine is intervertebral disc. Patient always complains of spinal stiffness, paraspinal muscle spasm, radiating pain to the lower extremities, difficulty in daily activities such as sitting, walking, standing, climbing etc. In modern science, if the diseases is in early stage it is managed by medications such as analgesics, anti-inflammatory, muscle relaxants, corticosteroids, epidural steroid injections etc. As these drugs have many side effects and cannot be used for long duration. When the symptoms are more, surgical treatment is advised in modern science[6] but this also may not guarantee the complete cure of disease and regaining the previous level of activity. Ayurveda can provide a suitable treatment through

appropriate *Panchakarma* modalities useful in such diseases. As the disease is associated with pain and stiffness of lumbar Spine, *Sthanik Snehan*, *Swedana* and *Katibasti* are very effective in reducing the symptoms and also increases the blood circulation. *Basti* is said to be the best treatment for all *Vataja* disorders, it is considered as *Ardha Chikitsa* by Acharya Charaka.[7]

Nirukti (Etymology)

The Sanskrit word Kati Graha is made out of 2 words, i.e. Kati and Graha.

Kati: The word "kati" is derived from the dhatu "kat in" and it is considered as a 'shariraavayavavishesha, a bodily part[8] where the dress is tightened. According to Amarakosha Shroniphalaka are called as Kati, Vaidyaka Shabda Sindhu also considers Shroni as Kati. According to Monier Williams Kati is the hollow space above the hip or the loins.[9]

Graha: The term is explained as 'Graho Grahanam', by Durgadas, which means to collect or catch.[10] "Graha" means holding. It is originated from dhatu "Graha Upadane" one which gives support.

Paribhasha (Definition)

Katigraha is the condition where pain and stiffness in the lumbar spine are due to Kevala Vata or Sama Vata.[11]

Sharangadhara has explained it as "Katisthambhena Vedanavishesha", condition said as pain and stiffness in Katipradesha.[12]

Katigraha is a Vata vikara. As mentioned earlier it is not separately mentioned in Bruhatrayees and mentioning is as a Vataja nanatmaja vikara. So its Nidana, Poorva roopa, Roopa, Sadhyasadhyatva, Samprapti tally's with Vata vikaras. As in this study Kevala vataja is taken into consideration.

Nidana (Etiology)

In Ayurveda samanya vatavyadhi nidana for Katigraha[13] are as follows

1. **Aahar:** The food which is Vataprakopaka like kashaya, katu, tikta, rooksha, laghu, sheeta ahara, upvas, viruddhahara etc will vitiate the Vata Dosha
2. **Vihar:** Ativyayama (excess physical works, running, jogging. walking), Abhighata, Mithya Yoga (wrong/abnormal) actions i.e. Ratri Jagarana, Vega Sandharana, Bhara

Harana (carrying heavyweight) or excessive actions i.e. Atichankramana (excessive traveling), Ati Adhyayana (excessive studying), Kriya Atiyoga(prolonged working), Abhighata(Trauma) etc will lead to severe Vata Prakopa and Vriddhi at its own Ashraya (lodging place) respectively.

3. **Manasik:** Krodha, Shoka, Chinta also leads to vataprakopa

Poorvaroopa

Acharya Charaka has mentioned that Avyakta Lakshana is the Poorvaroopa of the Vatavyadhi.[14]

Roopa (Symptoms)

The symptoms of Katigraha are Shoola (pain) which may be dull, burning or sharp. Stambha (stiffness) also occurs due to muscle spasm produced by sama and nirama vayu movement in Kati (Lumbar region). This condition hampering the day-to-day activities.

Samprapti (Pathogenesis)

Though separate Samprapti is not been described for Katigraha, the pathophysiology of Katigraha is mostly influenced by Vata and Kapha. It clearly projects Vata Dosha as the major factor behind the whole pathogenesis involved in Katigraha.

Kati Pradesha is an area where various sandhi, snaayu and peshi unite. These structures help in stability of the joint. Shleshka Kapha found in joints provides lubrication; nutrients and keep joint firmly unite. Vata Dosha is responsible for producing all types of pain in our body. Acharaya Charak gave the concept of gata vata by which aggravated Vata gets lodged in other structures like dhatu, updhatu, ashraya and avayava. After getting lodged at those parts it impairs the functions of particular structure and produces disease.

According to Acharaya charaka there are two types of samprapti by which Vata can be vitiated one is dhatukshaya and other is margavarodhjanya.[15] In dhatukshaya and margavarodhjanya Katigraha there will be qualitative change in the joint which gradually leads to disease manifestation.

Dhatukshayajanya Katigraha

Continuous ingestions of food materials which are Rukshu (dry), sheeta (cold), laghu (light), in nature, ratrijagarana (waking at night), vegavidharana (holding urges) all such causes lead to dhatu kshaya and Vata prakopa in body. Rukshaguna of vata decrease the snehansh of kapha dhatu which further leads to reduction of Kapha in Sandhis makes Sandhi Bandhana Shithilata. Sthanasamshraya of Prakupita Vata takes place in the Khavaigunyayukta Sandhi in Katipradesha. These all leads to stiffness and pain in the katipradesha ultimately resulting in the disease Katigraha.

Margavarodhajanya Katigraha

One should take food in proper quantity, because it depends on Agnibala. A person should eat food only when the previous meal is digested if one eats during indigestion then eaten food mix with the product of earlier meal and vitiates all the food. Excessive consumption of Guru, Shita, Vishtambhi, Shushka, Vidahi, Ruksha, Pichhil Guna Ahar and sedentary lifestyle causes formation of Ama in body this leads to Dosha Prakopa, Disturbance in Agni and no metabolism of Rasa Dhatu. Both Jatharagni and Dhatwagni are deranged giving which cause Srotavarodha in the Adhishtana. Due to such srotavarodha Vata gets vitiated and produces symptoms like, ruk (pain) and stambha (stiffness) in khavaigunyayukta Sandhi i.e. Kati Pradesh.

Samprapti ghataka

Dosha	Vata- Vyana, Apana Kapha- Shleshmaka
Dushya	Dhatu- Rasa, Mansa, Asthi, Majja Updhatu- Snayu, Kandara
Agni	Jatharagni, Dhatwagni
Srotas	Rasavaha, Asthivaha, Purishvaha
Srotodushti	Sanga
Udhbhavasthan	Pakwashaya
Vyaktasthan	Kati
Rogamarga	Madhyama

Sadhyaasadhyata(Prognosis)

The prognosis (Sadhyata-asadhyata) of a disease depends on many factors such as the Bala or Nidana or Hetu, the strength of Dosha Prakopa, the Sthana of the disease, severity of signs and symptoms, duration of the disease etc. It also depends upon the age, sex, Rogmarga, Dhatudushti etc. These common rules are applicable in the case of Katigraha. In addition, Katigraha is a Vatavyadhi and the Svabhava or natural trend of Vayu is also an important factor. Acharya Sushruta has explained Vatavyadhi as Mahavyadhi which is cured with

difficulty where the disease is of Madhyama Roga Marga thus even at the initial stage it is Kriccha Sadhya and at later stage it may be Yapya or Asadhya.

Chikitsa(Management)

1) Nidana Parivarjana: Removal of factors responsible for Vata prakopa and Kati region strain.

2) Shodhana: As Katigraha is dominant of Vata Dosha and also included under Vata Vyadhi, Mridu shodhana is ideal one as per Vatasyopakrama.

- **Snehana:** In sama Katigraha, associate with Ama, Ajeerna, Aruchi, Kapha, Shehapana should not be started directly. Langhana and Pachana are the first line of treatment before Snehapana to facilitate the Niraamaavastha in cases with accompanied Ama or Kapha Dosha. After achieving Niraamaavastha, Ghrita Paana and Taila Paana can both be successfully adopted based on the circumstances. Snehadhara, Abhyanga, Avagaha, Parisheka, Kati Basti, etc. are all examples of Bahya Snehana.Mahanarayan Taila, Dhanwantaram Taila, Sahacharadi Taila and other vatashamak taila used according to Yukti

- **Swedana:** Swedana helps to reduce Sheeta ad Rukshya qualities of Vata so the stiffeness decreased and movemement occurs. Avagaha Sweda, Valuka Sweda, Nadi Sweda, Patra Pinda Sweda, Pinda Sweda, and Upanaha Sweda are some of the different Sweda methods that can be successfully carried out in Katigraha.

- **Virechana:** Virechana plays a crucial part in Katigraha. According to Vriddha Vagbhata, Virechana must be used to treat Vata ailments that are not relieved by Snehana and Swedana. For Nitya Virechana, Eranda Taila is advised.

- **Basti:** In Pakwashayagata Vyadhi, Basti chikitsa is mentioned. *Basti chikitsa* is mainly useful in disorders related to *Vata Doshas*. Here, Basti is useful in reducing Vata, hence it is referred to as "Ardha Chikitsa" in Chikitsa. Niruha Basti such as Erandamooladi Niruha and Dashamooladi Niruha Basti, Anuvasana Basti, Matra Basti, Yoga Basti are used in Katigraha.

3) Shamana - The Vatahara Shaman Aushadhi can be used in the treatment of Katigraha. If Sama Avastha of Katigraha is present, Deepan, Pachan, Rookshana Chikitsa will be helpful. Various Yogas have been described.

▪ Churna - Rasnadi Churna, Ajamodadi Churna, Vaishwanara Churna.

▪ Guggulu - Trayodashanga Guggulu, Yogaraj Guggulu, Mahayogaraj Guggulu

▪ Kashaya and Arishta - Rasnasaptakakashaya, Erandadikashaya, Dashamolakashaya, Sahacharadi Kashaya, Balarishta, Dashamularishta.

▪ Ghrita and Taila - Eranda Taila, Vishagarba Taila, Prasarini Taila, Mashabaladi Taila, Narayana Taila, Vishnutaila etc.

▪ Lepa - Mahanimbakalka, Rasonakalka

Rasayan- Ashwagandha, Bala, Shatavari, Guduchi, Amalaki

Pathya-Apathya

Pathya - Godhuma, Raktashali, Shighru, Lashuna, Ghrita, Patola.

Apathya - Katu, Tikta, Kashaya Rasa Dravya, Jambu, Sheeta Ahara ,Bhaya, Shrama.

DISCUSSION

In Ayurvedic classics *Vatavyadhi* caused by the vitiation of *Vata dosha*. Most of the joint pain related conditions have been explained under the heading of *Vatavyadhi*. In *Katigraha*, there will be Stiffness throughout the lower back region, pain and restricted movement. *Katigraha* is not mentioned as a separate disease in *Bruhatrayee's. Katigraha* is the condition in which vitiated *vata dosha* gets lodged in *Katipradesha* producing *Shoola* and *Stambha*. As Acharya Sushruta says without vitiation of *Vata*, *Shoola* cannot arise.[16] *Gada Nigraha* clearly states that *Shoola* takes place due to *Stambha* which arises by *Niram* and *Sama vayu* movement into the *Kati*. Vata and Kapha are the two main factors involved in the pathogenesis of Katigraha. Here the pain and stiffness at low back are the two symptoms present in this disease. Due to Vata aggravating factors in an individual vata gets vitiated and aggravated at its main lodging place i.e. Pakvashaya due to Apana Vaigunya which is created by relative vitiation of Samana and Prana Vayu due to Nidana Sevana. This dosha vitiation may be of two forms one is dhatukshayajanya and other margavrodhajanya. This vitiated Vayu spreads to its other lodging places like Kati, Sakthi etc.

There are various Sandhi, Snaayu and Peshi which are collected in katipradesha. All these structures help to provide stability to the joint. Snayu also considered as ligament helps to bind the joint together which causes desirable movement of joints and therefore prevent the

excessive and undesirable motion in a specific direction. Alignment of the joint is done by the help of muscles. When vata is imbalanced it causes pathologies of these structures in the Kati Pradesha leading to their hampered functioning. Ruksha and kharaguna of vitiated vata reduces dravansha of Rasa, Rakta. Shleshkakapha presents in sandhi also decreases due to rukshaguna of vata. It leads to loss of Sthiratva and sandhi bandhana in sandhis. This all cause appearance of vata vitiated symptoms like katishoola. If ama involvement also there it causes stabhdhata at Kati Pradesha.

When it comes to the Chikitsa, first determine whether Kapha or Ama is involved. Langhana, Pachana, Swedana, Rukshana and Vatanashaka measures are the first line of treatment if Ama is implicated in the pathophysiology. Snehana, Swedana, Brumhana, Mruduvirechana and Basti are beneficial in Kevala Vataja type of Katigraha.

Sarvanga Abhyanga is the type of *Bahya Snehana*. Acharya Dalhana explains that the oil used in *Abhyanga* gets absorbed by the skin reaching the particular *Dhatu* when applied over body for sufficient time. It prevents and corrects disorder caused by vitiation of *Vata*.

Bashpa Sweda is *Saagni sweda*, Acharya Chakrapani has stated that *Sthambha* also means obstruction or block. Therefore *Swedana* not only relieves stiffness, but also clears blockage of passages. *Snigdha sweda* pacifies *Vata dosha* and relieves stiffness.

Katibasti was selected in this treatment procedure as *Kati* is the most probable region afflicted in this condition. *Katibasti* is *Snigdha* and *Saagni* type of *Swedana* which by its local effect helps in relieving *Stambha, Shaityata* and helps in relieving intensity of pain and stiffness. It may help in immediate relief of symptoms causing an analgesic effect. *Katibasti* is the type of *Swedana* so it induces hyperthermia which improves local blood and lymphatic circulation and hence improves local tissue metabolism. *Katibasti* also reduces inflammation by modifying secretions of various inflammatory medications, relaxes local musculature by physical effect of heat, increases the rate of transdermal drug delivery and hence reduces pain.

Basti Chikitsa is considered as an *Ardha chikitsa* and *Shrestha chikitsa* for pacifying aggravated *Vata*, so it is highly recommended and useful treatment in vitiated *Vata* disorders. Acharya Sushruta explains the mode of action of *Basti* saying that *Basti* given through rectal route gets absorbed and shows its effects all over body.

Considering overall effect of *Samanya chikitsa* of *Vatavyadhi* including *Sarvanga Abhyanga, Bashpasweda, Katibasti* and *Basti* was highly effective in treating this patient with lumbar spondylosis.

CONCLUSION

Due to the increased prevalence of Katigraha in the present era, it is very important to have a critical knowledge regarding this topic. Kati shoola and stabhdhata both the symptoms are present in katigraha but they may be present in other diseases also. When doing a clinical examination, it is important to keep in mind that Katigraha can happen on its own or as a side effect of various disorders One should know the differential diagnosis and treat the patient accordingly. Thus it can be concluded that Ayurvedic approach is better, safe, and effective treatment as compared to contemporary approach in treating painful spinal conditions.

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