

AYURVEDA MANAGEMENT OF PAKSHAGHAT (HEMIPLEGIA) A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Pakshaghata is a Vata Nanatmaja Vyadhi and is considered a Mahavatavyadhi in Ayurveda, caused by vitiation of Vata Dosha leading to dryness of Sira and Snayu. Clinically, it presents with loss of movement, pain, and speech impairment, and is correlated with hemiplegia in modern science, commonly resulting from cerebrovascular accidents affecting one side of the body. Shashtika Shali Pinda Sweda, a type of Sagni Sweda, utilizes Snigdha Dravyas like milk and Shashtika Shali rice, possessing Snigdha, Guru, Sthira, Tridoshaghna, and Brimhana properties. The localized thermal effect of this therapy promotes sweating, vasodilation, and increased capillary permeability, facilitating toxin removal and improving blood circulation. It also helps in reducing inflammation, enhancing nerve conduction, and improving motor and sensory functions.

Additionally, it may aid in regulating neurotransmitters such as dopamine and serotonin, thereby supporting both physical and emotional recovery.

KEYWORDS: pakshaghata, vat vyadhi, shastik shali pind swed.

INTRODUCTION

Pakshaghata is a neurological disorder caused by the Vata Dosha. Pakshaghata refers to

paralysis affecting one half of the body (Paksha = half, Aghata = loss of function). It involves impairment of Karmendriyas (motor organs), Gyanendriyas (sensory organs), and Manas (mental functions).

According to Acharya Charaka, aggravated (Prakupita) Vata localizes in one half of the body (Adhishthana), leading to loss of function along with stiffness of joints, pain (Toda), and muscle contraction (Sankocha). The vitiated Vata also disturbs Sira, Snayu, and Kandara. Acharya Sushruta explains that Vata travels through Urdhva, Adhoga, and Tiryaka Dhamanis, causing Sandhi Bandhana Moksha (loosening of joints), ultimately resulting in hemiplegia. loss of sensation and bedridden condition may lead to fatal outcomes.

The prognosis depends on Dosha and Dhatu involvement: it is Sadhya when associated with other Doshas, Krichra Sadhya when caused purely by Vata, and Asadhya when associated with Dhatu Kshaya. Management includes Snehana, Swedana, and Mridu Samshodhana, followed by Vasti, along with therapies like Nasya, Shirovasti, and Abhyanga using medicated oils. Treatment is generally continued for 3–4 months.

In modern medicine, Pakshaghata closely correlates with hemiplegia, commonly caused by stroke. Stroke is defined as a sudden onset of neurological deficit due to vascular causes, lasting more than 24 hours or leading to death. It is mainly classified into ischemic (~80%) and hemorrhagic types. Hemorrhagic stroke includes intracerebral and subarachnoid hemorrhage, both associated with high mortality.

Lacunar strokes, involving small vessels, account for about 25% of ischemic strokes and may lead to cumulative neurological deficits. Hemiplegia results from damage to the opposite cerebral hemisphere and presents with muscle weakness, sensory loss, impaired coordination, and speech difficulty.

Diagnosis is primarily clinical, supported by imaging, and management requires a multidisciplinary approach including physiotherapy, medications, and surgical care when needed.

CASE PRESENTATION

A 62-year-old male patient was brought in a conscious and oriented state with complaints of difficulty in walking, left lower limb weakness, left lower limb heaviness and

generalized weakness. He also presented with pitting edema in the left leg and complaints of acidity.

History

The patient has a history of a paralytic attack in the past. There is no history of diabetes mellitus or hypertension. **On Examination (O/E):**

Temperature: Afebrile

Blood Pressure: 110/70 mmHg Pulse Rate: 82/min Respiratory rate: 16/min Clubbing: absent

Treatment Plan

S. No.	Medicine	Dose/Frequency	Anupana
1	Vatvidhwansak Ras	125 mg Twice daily (BD)	Honey / Warm water
2	Sameerpannag Ras	125 mg Twice daily (BD)	Honey / Warm water
3	Ashwagandha Churn	2 gm Twice daily (BD)	Milk
4	Tab. Mahayograj Guggul	2 tablets Twice daily (BD)	Warm water
5	Saraswatarishta	2 tsp (\approx 10 ml) Twice daily (BD)	Equal water after meals
6	Shastika Shali Pinda Sweda	Local therapy	Once daily

Treatment and procedure done for 1 month.

Motor System

Table 1: Muscle power (Before treatment)

S. No.		Right	Left
1	Upper Limb	5/5	5/5
2	Lower Limb	5/5	0/5

Table 2: Reflexes.

S.No.		Right	Left
1	Bicep	N	N
2	Tricep	N	N
3	Brachioradial	N	N
4	Knee	N	Exaggerated
5	Achilis tendon	N	N
6	Planter	N	N

Table 3: Muscle power (after treatment).

S. No.		Right	Left
1	Upper Limb	5/5	5/5
2	Lower Limb	5/5	4/5

Shastik shali pind swed

Swedana is a therapy that relieves stiffness (Stambha), heaviness (Guruta), and coldness (Sheeta) in the body. Shashtika Sha\] Pinda Sweda is a type of Sagni Sweda using nourishing (Snigdha) substances like milk and Shashtika rice.

It has Snigdha, Guru, Sthira, Sheeta, Tridoshaghna, and Brimhana (nourishing) properties. It is especially beneficial in conditions like post-stroke hemiplegia, where it helps improve muscle strength, reduces stiffness, enhances blood circulation, and improves metabolism.

Swedana therapy exhibits four primary therapeutic actions

1. Stambhaghna (Relieves Stiffness)

Swedana alleviates stiffness (Stambha) caused by

1. Samana Vayu (dominant in Ruksha Guna leading to dryness and contraction)
2. Shleshaka Kapha (whose depletion results in rigidity)
3. By reducing dryness and improving lubrication, it relieves muscular stiffness and contraction.

2. Gauravaghna (Reduces Heaviness)

Due to its Ushna (hot) nature, Swedana causes:

1. Liquefaction of Kapha (Kapha Vilayana)
2. Reduction of body heaviness (Gaurava)
3. Sheetaghna (Alleviates Coldness)

The Ushna Guna of Swedana counteracts

1. Coldness (Sheeta) in the body
2. Improves circulation and warmth
4. Swedakaraka (Induces Perspiration) Swedana promotes sweating, which:
 1. Helps eliminate toxins and waste products
 2. Clears blocked channels (Srotoshodhana)
 3. Improves metabolic activity.

PROCEDURE**MATERIALS**

1. Balamoola – 750 gm
2. Milk – 3 L

3. Shashtika Shali – 500 gm
4. Medicated oil – 100 ml
5. Cotton cloth, threads, vessels Preparation:
 1. Prepare Balamoola Kwatha by boiling in water and reducing.
 2. Cook Shashtika rice with Kwatha and milk to form a semi-solid paste.
 3. Prepare Pottali (bolus) by tying the cooked rice in cloth.

Procedure Steps

1. Poorva Karma (Pre-procedure):
 1. Abhyanga (oil massage)
 2. Talam application on head
 3. Preparation of Pottali and heating¹
2. Pradhana Karma (Main procedure):
 1. Heated Pottalis applied over body
 2. Temperature maintained around 40–45°C
 3. Performed in circular and linear movements
 4. Duration: 45–90 minutes
3. Paschat Karma (Post-procedure):
 1. Rice paste application (Anna lepana)
 2. Cleaning and warm bath

Benefits

- Improves blood circulation (vasodilation)
 - Reduces muscle stiffness and pain
 - Enhances nerve conduction and metabolism
 - Nourishes tissues (Dhatu poshana)
 - Pacifies Vata Dosha
 - Improves muscle strength
 - Reduces spasticity and joint stiffness
 - Prevents muscle wasting
 - Enhances mobility and quality of life
- Duration:

Usually performed for 7–21 days depending on patient condition.

DISCUSSION

Ayurveda is a science that treats not only the symptoms but also the root cause of disease, leading to Samprapti Vighatana and complete cure. In Pakshaghata, Vata Dosha is the primary causative factor and should be managed first. Vata Prakopa occurs due to various factors, among which Dhatu Kshaya plays an important role.

Shashtika Shali Pinda Sweda, a Snigdha Swedana therapy, is beneficial in managing Pakshaghata due to its Ushna and Snigdha properties. It helps reduce stiffness, improves circulation, and enhances muscle strength.

This therapy provides combined Snehana and Swedana effects, improving neuromuscular function, reducing spasticity, and increasing joint mobility. It also removes Srotorodha and promotes tissue regeneration.

Thus, Shashtika Shali Pinda Sweda acts as an effective supportive therapy in Pakshaghata, especially when combined with other Panchakarma procedures.

CONCLUSION

Swedana is an important therapeutic procedure used both independently and as a preparatory treatment. Shashtika Shali Pinda Sweda, a type of Sankara Sweda, effectively pacifies Vata and nourishes tissues due to its Ushna, Snigdha, Sara, and Sukshma properties. It improves circulation, reduces stiffness, alleviates spasticity, and promotes muscle strength, making it highly beneficial in Dhatukshaya Janya Pakshaghata.

Pakshaghata, a Vata Pradhana Vyadhi comparable to hemiplegia, requires Vata Shamana as the primary line of treatment. Therapies like shastik shali sweda along with Abhyanga and Swedana, provide significant symptomatic and functional improvement.

Thus, Panchakarma like Shashtika Shali Pinda Sweda, play a vital role in the effective management and rehabilitation of Pakshaghata and similar neurological conditions.

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