

**AYURVEDIC MANAGEMENT OF SCIATICA W.S.R. GRIDHRASI: A
COMPREHENSIVE CASE STUDY**

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Article Received on
22 June 2024,

Revised on 11 July 2024,
Accepted on 01 August 2024

DOI: 10.20959/wjpr202415-33465



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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Sciatica is a prevalent condition involving pain that radiates along the sciatic nerve, running from the lower back through the hips and buttocks and extending down the legs. This condition often arises from nerve irritation or compression due to issues such as herniated discs, spinal stenosis, or degenerative disc disease. Traditional allopathic treatments generally involve the use of medications like NSAIDs and muscle relaxants, physical therapy, and, in some cases, surgical procedures if other methods are ineffective. Conversely, *Ayurveda*, an ancient system of medicine from India, offers a holistic approach to sciatica. It considers the condition as a result of imbalances in the body's *doshas*, or vital energies. *Ayurvedic* treatment focuses on restoring balance through herbal remedies, detoxification practices (Panchakarma), dietary changes, and lifestyle adjustments. This approach aims to address the underlying imbalances contributing to sciatica, with the goal of alleviating symptoms and

enhancing overall health. **Objective:** *Ayurvedic* Management for Sciatica w.s.r. *Gridhrasi*: A Comprehensive Case Study. **Materials and Methods:** A 60-year-old male pt. visited our hospital with complaint of pain in Lower back region, which is radiating up to feet. For that *Erandamooladi niruha Basti karma* was planned along with *Sarvang snehana swedana and Kati basti*. The patient received total 31days treatment where *Erandmooladi Niruha Basti* for 16 days along with oral medication as part of their treatment regimen. **Result:** Better relief

was found in symptoms of sciatica and significant betterment in daily life. **Conclusion:** It was found that *Erandamooladi niruha basti* along with *shamanausadh* is effective in the treatment of sciatica (*Gridhrasi*).

KEYWORDS: Sciatica, *Gridhrasi*, *Erandamooladi Niruha Basti*, *Ayurveda*.

INTRODUCTION

Sciatica is a prevalent condition involving pain that radiates along the sciatic nerve, running from the lower back through the hips and buttocks and extending down the legs. This condition often arises from nerve irritation or compression due to issues such as herniated discs, spinal stenosis, or degenerative disc disease. In *Ayurveda*, *Gridhrasi*, which corresponds to sciatica, is classified as a significant *Vata Vyadhi*, or neurological disorder. This condition is marked by symptoms such as stiffness, pain, and a pricking sensation that typically begins in the hip and progressively radiates to the waist, back, thigh, knee, and calf areas, often accompanied by pulsation in these regions. *Gridhrasi* is categorized into two types: *Vataja* and *Vatajakaphja*, both of which primarily involve an imbalance of the *Vata dosha*. *Acharya Charak* describes *Gridhrasi* as characterized by symptoms such as stiffness, pain, needle-like pricking sensations, and fluttering in the affected area. The causes of *Gridhrasi* align with those of general *Vata* disorders. In *Gridhrasi*, the *Vyana Vata* is obstructed by an accumulation of *Kapha*, leading to various symptoms due to the hindered movement of *Vata*.^[1,2,3]

Traditional allopathic treatments generally involve the use of medications like NSAIDs and muscle relaxants, physical therapy, and in some cases, surgical procedures if other methods are ineffective. Conversely, *Ayurveda*, an ancient system of medicine from India, offers a holistic approach to sciatica. It considers the condition as a result of imbalances in the body's *vata doshas*, or vital energies. *Ayurvedic* treatment focuses on restoring balance through *shamana Aushadha*, detoxification practices (*Panchakarma*), dietary changes, and lifestyle adjustments. *Erandamooladi Niruha Basti* is an *Ayurvedic* panchakarma procedure used to manage sciatica, also known as *Gridhrasi*. This treatment involves administering a medicated decoction, primarily made from Castor root (*Erandamoola*) along with other herbs, into the rectum. The herbs in the decoction are chosen for their anti-inflammatory and pain-relieving effects, which help to address the *Vata dosha* imbalance central to sciatica. By targeting the lower digestive tract, this therapy aims to relieve pain, reduce stiffness, and enhance mobility in the affected areas. *Erandamooladi Niruha Basti* is typically part of a broader treatment

plan that includes *pathya-apathya* and additional *Ayurvedic* therapies for comprehensive management of sciatica symptoms.

Disease Review

Gridhrasi

रिक्त्वपूर्वा कटिपृष्ठोरुजानुजंघापादं क्रमात् गृध्रसि स्तम्भरूकोदैर्गृह्णाति स्पन्दते मुहुः॥

वाताद्वातकफातन्द्रागौरवारोचकान्विता॥

च. चि.-28/56

पाणिं प्रत्यंगुलीनान्तु कण्डरा यानिलादिता॥

सवश्नः क्षेपं निगृहीत्याद् गृध्रसीति हि सा स्मृता॥

सु.नि.-1

Gridhrasi is a *Vaata nanatmaja* disease^[4] in which the pain starts from the *sphika* region and extends to the lower back, thighs, calf and legs respectively, the main symptoms of which are *ruja*, *stambha* and *toda*, whereas in *Gridhrasi* arising from *Vaata Kapha*, there are also symptoms of heaviness, *aruchi* and *tandra*.^[5] According to *Sushruta*, the *Vaata prakop* in *kandara* situated near *Parshni* is called *Gridhrasi*.^[6]

Treatment

अन्तराकण्डरागुल्फं सिरा बस्तग्निकर्म वा गृध्रसीषु प्रयुजीतं खल्ल्यां तृष्णोपनाहनमा॥

च.चि.-28/101

गृध्रस्यानं नरं सम्यग्रेकेण वमनेव वा ज्ञात्वा निरामं दीप्ताग्निं वास्तिभिः समुपचारेत्॥

नादौ बस्तिविधिं कुर्याद्वा दुध्वं न शुध्यति। स्नेहो निरर्थकः स स्याद् मन्मन्येव हुतः यथा॥

भा.प्र.मध्यम खण्ड-24/133-134

According to *Acharya Charaka Siravedha* and *Agnikarma* between the *gulpha* and *kandara*, and *Basti Karma* are the treatments for *gridhrasi*. According to *Acharya Bhavamishra*, first *vamana* and *virechana* should be done, then the *agni* should be considered as *deepta* after *Basti Karma* should be used.^[7,8] According to *Acharya Sushruta*, 4 *angula* above and below the knee should be done *Raktamokshan Karma*. According to various *ayurveda* texts, *Snehana*, *Swedan*, *mridusodhana* like *mriduvirechana* and *Basti* are used in all *vata vyadhis*. However, in *Gridhrasi*, since *kandara* and *rakta* are also involved, it is used for the treatment of *Agnikarma* and *rakta mokshana* also.

SCIATICA

Sciatica is a debilitating condition marked by pain or numbness along the distribution of the sciatic nerve or an associated lumbosacral nerve root. A common misconception is to classify all lower back pain or leg pain as sciatica, whereas sciatica specifically refers to pain caused by issues with the sciatic nerve or its roots. This pain is often worsened by movements involving lumbar spine flexion, twisting, bending, or coughing. Typically, sciatica is caused by inflammation that irritates the sciatic nerve, while direct nerve compression tends to lead to more significant motor impairments.^[9,10,11]

CAUSES

1. True sciatic neuritis – Nerve injury due to injection or trauma, post herpetic neuralgia etc.
2. Mechanical pressure on nerve or roots or referred pain
3. In the spinal cord- Tumour of cauda equina, rarely thrombosis, haemorrhage or infection irritating meninges of the cord.
4. In the cord space- protruded intervertebral disc, extra medullary tumours.
5. In the vertebral column –Arthritis, tuberculosis, spondylolisthesis, ankylosing spondylitis, primary bone tumours, secondary carcinoma.
6. In the lower back- compression where the nerve leave the pelvis in those who lie immobile on a hard surface for long time.
7. In the thigh and buttock- hip joint or sacro-iliac joint disease, haemorrhage within or adjacent to nerve sheath, misplaced therapeutic injection.
8. In the pelvis- sacroiliac arthritis or strain, Hip disease, infection of prostate or female genital tract.

SYMPTOMS

1. Cramping sensation in the thigh.
2. Pain radiating from the buttock down the back of the leg.
3. Tingling sensations in the legs.
4. Numbness in the legs.
5. Burning sensations in the legs or thigh area.
6. Severe cases may involve muscle weakness.
7. Symptoms are typically observed on one side.
8. When symptoms occur on both sides, it often indicates a more severe disc bulge.

MANAGEMENT

Treatment options for sciatica may include a short course of oral nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), opioid and non-opioid analgesics, and muscle relaxants. For neurogenic pain, anticonvulsants may be prescribed. If NSAIDs alone are inadequate, oral corticosteroids can be considered. Additional treatments include localized corticosteroid injections, spinal manipulation, and deep tissue massage. A consultation with a physical therapist can also be beneficial. In cases where structural issues such as disc herniation, epidural hematoma, epidural abscess, or tumours are identified, surgical evaluation and intervention may be necessary. Acupuncture is another potential treatment option.^[12,13,14]

CASE REPORT

A 60 yr. old patient came on OPD. According to the Patient he was healthy before 2 months after that he was Suffering from gradually increasing pain which radiate from hip to toe with difficulty in sitting and walking and pain got aggravated day by day, the Patient was not able to sit properly, so he came to PTKLS govt *ayurveda* hospital Bhopal MP for treatment.

Patient Information

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| opd no. | 20232965 |
| age | 60 |
| sex | male |
| religion | hindu |
| education | 5 class |
| occupation | labor |
| economic status | lower classes |
| mental status | Conscious and co operative |

Chief Complaints

- backache radiate to right leg - in the last 2 months
- difficulty in sitting
- Difficulty in walking

MEDICINAL HISTORY: - According to the patient when he felt gradually increasing pain in lumber region, which radiate from hip to toe, he takes some pain killers from medical store.

PERSONAL HISTORY

| | |
|-------------|---------------------------------|
| bowel | Not proper |
| appetite | normal |
| micturition | normal |
| sleep | improper (decrease due to pain) |
| addiction | Tea |

Ashtavidha Pariksha

| | |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| <i>nadi</i> | <i>samanya</i> |
| <i>mutra</i> | <i>peetabha</i> |
| <i>mala</i> | <i>prakrita</i> |
| <i>zivha</i> | <i>anavritha</i> |
| <i>shabda</i> | <i>spashta</i> |
| <i>sparsha</i> | <i>samasheetoshna</i> |
| <i>drika</i> | <i>samanya</i> |
| <i>akriti</i> | <i>madhyama</i> |

General Examination

- blood pressure - 130/80 mm of hg
- pulse - 75 /min.
- temperature - normal
- straight leg raising test: - on right leg - +ve in 55-60°
- lasague test - +ve in right leg

Physical Examination

- general appearance – normal
- gait - Antalgic gait

Local Examination

- inflammation - absent
- tenderness - present
- Provisional Diagnosis – sciatica (ON THE BASIS OF CLINICAL EXAMINATION)
- Diagnosis – sciatica

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Contents of *Niruha Basti*^[15]

- *Makshika*- 40ml.
- *Saindhava lavana*- 12g.
- *Sneha (Bala Taila)*- 50ml.

- *Kalka* (*Shatapushpa, Hribera, Priyangu, Pippali, Yashtimadhu, Bala, Rasanjana, Indrayava, Musta*) – 60g.
- *Kashaya* (*Eranda, Palasha, Rasna, Ashwagandha, Atibala, Guduchi, Punarnava, Aaragwadha, Devadaru,*
- *Madanaphala, Laghu Panchamoola*) – 220ml.
- *Aavapa- Gomutra- 50ml.*

Total-360ml

Treatment Plan

| |
|---|
| • For local application |
| 1. <i>Abhyanga - vatashamakaTail</i> |
| 2. <i>Swedana – dashmoola kwath</i> |
| 3. <i>Kati basti – Vatashamaka Taila</i> |
| 4. <i>Erandamooladi Niruha Basti – Kala basti</i> <i>Niruha Basti – Erandamooladi Kwath 360 ml</i> <i>Anuvasana – Sahacharadi tail 60 ml</i> |
| • <i>Shamanoushadha</i> |
| 1. <i>Trayodashanga Guggul 2 BD</i> |
| 2. <i>Maha Rasnadi Kwath 20ml (BD)</i> |
| 3. <i>Powder</i> |
| <i>Svarna Bhasma 2BD</i> <i>Yograj guggul</i> <i>Bang bhasma</i> <i>Nag bhasma</i> <i>Lauha bhasma</i> <i>Mandura bhasma</i> <i>Makshik bhasma</i> <i>Abhraka bhasma</i> <i>Rasa sindur</i> |
| 4. <i>Triphala churna 5gm sos</i> |
| 5. <i>Eranda Tail (internal 15 ml with milk at night and for external local application)</i> |

Treatment Execution

| | |
|---------------|--|
| 08/09 – 14/09 | <i>Sarwang Snehana, Swedana and Kati Basti</i> have done every day along with all <i>shamana aushadh</i> , SLR +ve at 55° to 60°, No marked relief, pain aggravated at night and sitting position |
| 15/09-21/09 | <i>Matra basti 60ml of Sahacharadi taila</i> started regularly, At afternoon Time <i>dashanga lepa</i> applied which is helpful for pain from Third day of use, after 6days SLR test +ve at 55°- 60 but some relief in pain, pain during sitting position remain persisted, <i>shamana aushadha</i> continue |
| 22/09-07/10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned for <i>Kala basti</i> (<i>2anuvasana+6Niruha(Erandamooladi kwatha)+6anuvasana+2anuvasana</i>), successfully done, • During the <i>Kala basti</i> patient got relief in all symptoms like |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>pain and weakness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date 07/10 IN SLR test +Ve at 80° - 85° • No marked pain during sitting or night time • Patient feel good and discharged by 08/10 from ipd, |
|--|--|

Assessment of Results on the basis of

1. Subjective parameters
2. Objective parameters

Subjective Parameters

1. *Ruka*
2. *Toda*
3. *Stambha*
4. *Spandan*

Table 1: Grading of Symptoms^[16]

Assessment

| Symptoms | Severity | Score |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| Ruka | No pain | 0 |
| | Occasional pain | 1 |
| | Mild pain | 2 |
| | Moderate pain | 3 |
| | Severe pain | 4 |
| Toda (pricking sensation) | None | 0 |
| | Occasional | 1 |
| | Mild | 2 |
| | Moderate | 3 |
| | Severe | 4 |
| Stambha (stiffness) | No stiffness | 0 |
| | Sometimes (5-10 minute) | 1 |
| | Daily (10-30 minute) | 2 |
| | Daily (30-60 Minute) | 3 |
| | Daily more than 1 hr | 4 |
| Spandana (Twitching) | None | 0 |
| | Sometimes (5-10 minute) | 1 |
| | Daily (10-30 minute) | 2 |
| | Daily (30-60 Minute) | 3 |
| | Daily more than 1 hr | 4 |

Evaluation After Treatment

| Variable | Before Treatment | After Treatment |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Ruka</i> | 3 | 1 |
| <i>Toda</i> | 2 | 0 |
| <i>Stambha</i> | 3 | 1 |
| <i>Spandana</i> | 3 | 1 |

Objective Parameters

| Reflex | BT | AT |
|---------------------------|----------|----------|
| Knee Jerk | + | + |
| Ankle Jerk | + | + |
| Straight Leg Raising Test | 55-60° | 80-85° |
| Lasegue Test | Positive | Positive |

DISCUSSION

Erandamoola is highly regarded for its effectiveness in balancing the *Vata dosha*. *Erandamuladi Niruha Basti* is particularly recommended for *Trika* (lumbago) and *Prishta Shoola* (dorsal pain), due to its ability to regulate *Vata* (*Maruta Nigraha*). *Ricinus communis* (*Eranda*), a key ingredient in *Erandamooladi Niruha Basti*, offers various therapeutic benefits, including anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, central analgesic, antinociceptive, and bone-regenerative effects. This medicinal preparation consists of 34 ingredients, primarily characterized by *Ushna Veerya* (heat potency) and *Vatakaphahara* properties. The botanical components also possess *Ushna* (heat), *Teekshna* (sharpness), and *Sukshma* (subtlety) qualities, which help clear bodily channels (*Srotas*) and promote the development of healthy tissues (*Prakrita Dhatu*). *Erandamooladi Niruha Basti* is particularly beneficial for *Kaphavrita* conditions, playing a crucial role in reducing *Kapha dosha* and alleviating symptoms such as stiffness (*Stambha*) and heaviness (*Gaurava*).^[17,18,19]

Kati Basti is effective in relieving lower back and lower limb pain, decreasing stiffness, swelling, and inflammation in both the bones and soft tissues of the lower back. It fosters a sensation of lightness and overall wellness in the lower body, enhances mobility in the back and lower limbs, and supports more effortless movement and activity. Additionally, *Kati Basti* fortifies the lower back—encompassing bones, muscles, and soft tissues—calms the nerves in the lower back and legs, and improves blood circulation in this region.^[20]

Trayodashang Guggul is designed to address the disintegration of *Samprapti* in *gridhrasi* by possessing key properties such as *Vata Shamaka*, *Vata Dushtihara*, *Agnivardhaka*, *Dhatvagnivardhaka*, joint strengthening, *Dhatuwardhan*, along with *Vedanashamak* and *Snehana* actions. This formulation, which includes 13 herbs and Guggulu processed in *ghee*, features rejuvenating ingredients like *Shatavari*, *Ashwagandha*, and *Guduchi* to support *Dhatu*s. Additionally, *Shunthi* and *Ajamoda* boost *Jatharagni*, while *Babbul* specifically targets *asthi dhatwagni*.^[23]

Maharasnadi Kashayam is an *Ayurvedic* herbal decoction used to manage inflammatory and painful conditions, especially those affecting joints and muscles. It has strong anti-inflammatory properties that help reduce inflammation, making it effective for conditions like arthritis. It also relieves joint pain, stiffness, and muscle discomfort. The formulation is particularly useful for rheumatic conditions marked by joint inflammation and pain, improving joint mobility and flexibility. Additionally, it supports detoxification by removing *ama* (toxins) from joints and tissues.

The primary action of *Maharasnadi Kashayam* is to balance the *Vata dosha*, which regulates movement and can cause joint pain and stiffness when imbalanced. The herbal components contain bioactive compounds that reduce inflammation by inhibiting pro-inflammatory molecules and blocking pain signals. This relief is accompanied by enhanced blood circulation to affected areas, which aids in healing and reduces swelling. Furthermore, *Maharasnadi Kashayam* promotes the repair and strengthening of joint and muscle tissues.^[21]

Ayurvedic Erand Tail, or Castor Oil, alleviates pain through various mechanisms. It contains ricinoleic acid, which has strong anti-inflammatory properties that reduce inflammation in tissues, joints, and muscles, helping to ease pain from conditions like arthritis and muscle strains. When applied topically or used in massages, *Erand Tail* acts as a natural pain reliever by blocking pain signals locally. It also helps relax muscles, improves blood circulation, and reduces muscle tension and spasms, further alleviating pain. Enhanced circulation aids in removing metabolic waste from tissues, supporting healing and reducing discomfort. Additionally, *Erand Tail's* detoxifying effects assist in removing toxins from joints and muscles, contributing to reduced pain and inflammation.^[22]

CONCLUSION

- Total number of days treatment given – 31 days.
- On giving 31 days treatment to patient there was 80% relief to the patient by T/t given with the Positive changes in symptoms.
- The changes in SLR test from 55° to 85° total 30° changes of relief was found as per the T/t given to the patient.
- In conclusion, *Ayurveda* offers effective treatments for relieving sciatica by addressing the root causes and alleviating symptoms. Through a combination of therapies such as *shamanaushadh*, *Kati basti*, *Erandamooladi Niruha Basti* procedures, and lifestyle

adjustments, *Ayurveda* focuses on balancing the Vata dosha and reducing inflammation. Treatments like *Kati Basti*, specific herbal formulations, and targeted therapies work to soothe nerve irritation, improve circulation, and enhance tissue repair. By integrating these approaches, Ayurveda not only provides symptomatic relief but also promotes long-term wellness and prevents recurrence. Embracing these holistic methods can lead to significant improvements in managing sciatica and enhancing overall quality of life.

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