

A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF VATRAKTA W.S.R- "GOUTY ARTHRITIS"

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ABSTRACT

Vatarakta is a disease which is encountered in the population leading to a sedentary lifestyle. The change in lifestyle is the main cause of many diseases, *Vatarakta* being one of these. *Vatarakta* is the major example of *Vata Vyadhi*, caused due to *Avarana* pathology. *Vata Dosha* is considered the most important and its vitiation is considered the most dreadful. *Rakta* is an important constituent of our body. It represents blood and associated metabolic products. *Sushruta* has considered *Rakta* as a fourth *Dosha*. *Rakta Dhatu* originates from the *Rasa Dhatu* and it nourishes all of the later *Dhatus* like *Mams*, *Medas* etc. The pathology of *Utthana Vatarakta* takes place owing to the

Margavarana pathology; the occurrence of *Vatarakta* is only possible when the customary *Gati* of the *Vata* is hindered by the morbid *Rakta Dhatu*. Based on the causes, signs and symptoms, *Vatarakta* may be correlated to gouty arthritis in modern medicine. Gout is an abnormality of purine metabolism that causes hyperuricemia and deposition of monosodium urate crystal. Its prevalence has increased across the globe. 2.1 million people are affected with gout worldwide. In India, it has been reported that the prevalence of gout is 2-6 per 1000. It is a potential signal for unrecognized co- morbidities like obesity, diabetes mellitus, hypertension and renal diseases. Management of *vatarakta* is a challenge as it is a disease of severe morbidity, chronicity and incurable to certain extent with associated complications.

With certain life style modifications like low protein diet etc. and certain *ayurveda* modalities viz. *Shodhana* and *Shamana chikitsa* it can be cure and prevented.

KEYWORDS: *Vatarakta*, *Avarana*, *utthana vatarakta*, gouty arthritis.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda, the “science of life” or longevity is the holistic alternative science since era. The whole philosophy of *Ayurveda* is based on achieving, maintaining and promoting positive health. The equilibrium of various structural and functional units of the body namely *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Mala*, *Agni* and *Mana* results in a healthy body. The life-style of modern society is proving to be a curse in promoting non-communicable diseases/chronic diseases. These disorders are the result of a miss-matched relationship of people with their environment along with their lifestyle. *Vatarakta* also known as *Adhyavaat*^[1] emerges from an inappropriate relationship of people with their diet, occupation and environment. The name of the disease itself represents that it is likely more prevalent among rich people.

Vatarakta is the major example of *Vata Vyadhi*, caused by the vitiation of *Vata* and *Rakta*.^[2] *Rakta* is an important constituent of our body. It represents blood and associated metabolic products. *Sushruta* has considered *Rakta* as a fourth.

Dosha.^[3] Aggravated *Vata* blocked by vitiated *Rakta*, in turn leads to further aggravation of *Vata*. Thus, aggravated *Vata* vitiates the *Rakta* leading to the condition known as *Vatarakta*.^[4] It has two stages i.e., *Uthana* and *Gambhira*. *Gambhira Vatrakta* mainly affects *Asthidhatu* and causes *Ruja* -which spread as *Aakhorvisha* [- rat poison].^[5]

Gout is a metabolic disorder and inflammatory response to the deposition of mono-sodium-urate crystals in joints secondary to hyperuricemia.^[6] In 21st century, gout is the most common inflammatory arthritis in men above 40 years of age and post-menopausal women.^[7] The incidence of gout has been on the rise globally, potentially attributable to change in dietary habits, lifestyle, and greater use of medications causing hyperuricaemia. The annual incidence of gout is 2.68 per 1000 persons, with an overall prevalence of 2-26 per 1000.

Due to the remittent and relapsing nature of gout, there is no permanent cure for the disease, which is a challenge in the present era. Moreover, it is a potential signal for unrecognized co-morbidities like Metabolic Syndrome, Diabetes Mellitus, Coronary Artery Disease and Hypertension.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- i. To study the literature on *Vatarakta* and Gout in different *Ayurvedic Samhitas* and the modern era.
- ii. To review the *Vatarakta* in context of gout.
- iii. To review the role of diet and life style in the prevention of *Vatarakta*.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Conceptual Review

There is no dearth of references in *Ayurvedic* literature of *Vatarakta*. *Vata* and *Rakta* are the *Dosha* and *Dushya* respectively which are invariably involved in the pathology of the illness *Vatarakta*. The description of *Vatarakta* is found in *Brihatrayi* and other classical texts. *Charaka Samhita* and *Sushruta Samhita* explain its complete etiology, epidemiology, types, clinical features, prognosis and management. *Acharya Charaka* has included *vatarakta* in *Raktaja Roga* in *Charaka Samhita Vidhishonita Adhyaya* and has described one full chapter in *Charak chikitsa*. It has been described as a separate disease entity in *Charaka Samhita*. The reason being both *Vata* and *Rakta* play an equal important role in pathology of the disease. In *Shushruta Samhita* it is described in *Vata Vyadhi Adhyaya*.

NIRUKTI/ETYMOLOGY

Nomenclature of a disease is important for its understanding and identification in *Ayurvedic* texts. The diseases are named on the basis of specific criteria such as site involved, chief complaint, *Doshas* involved etc. *Vatarakta* is named on the basis of its *Samprapti Ghatak*.

The *Nirukti* of *Vatarakta* is compiled as under.

- *Shabda-Kalpa Druma* says that the disease which is manifested due to the derangement of *Vata* and *Rakta* is called as *Vata-Rakta*.
- According to *Chakrapani Teeka* the disease caused due to *Vata Dosha* and *Rakta Dhatu* is called as *Vatarakta*.
- *Madhukosha Teeka* says that the illness which is an outcome of vitiation of *Vata Dosha* and *Rakta Dhatu* leading to the specific *Samprapti* is known as *Vatarakta*.
- *Ashtanga Hridaya* defines *Vatarakta* as the result of the obstruction of *Vata Dosha* due to vitiated *Rakta Dhatu*.

SYNONYMS OF VATARAKTA^[8]

There are divergent nomenclatures used in *Charaka Samhita* for the disease *Vatarakta* and they are: *Vatarakta*, *Khudda Vata*, *Vata Balasa* and *Aadhya Vata*. *Astanga Hridaya* has also given various synonyms for this disease.

➤ *Aadhya Vata*

The word “*Aadhya*” means the rich class of people and those who are delicate. Since, the disease is mostly seen in affluent class of people, hence it is named as *Aadhya vata*. This may be due to the fact that rich people used to have sedentary life style.

➤ *Khudda Vata*

Word “*Khudda*” has two meanings, joint and small. Hence the disease affecting the smaller joints of the body is called as *Khudda vata*.

➤ *Vata Balasa*

The passage of aggravated *Vata* is obstructed by vitiated *Rakta*, so it affects the entire *Rakta Dhatu*. The severity of illness depends upon the morbidity of *Rakta Dhatu*, which is worsened by the obstructed *Vayu*. So it is named as *Vatabalasa*. The aggravated *Vata* and *Rakta* propagates all over the body but due to *sandhivakrata* the movement of *vata* and *rakta* get hampered and they finally vitiate the joints and show their characteristic features.

➤ *Vatashonita*

This disease is the outcome of vitiated *Vata* and *Rakta*, hence called *Vatashonita*.

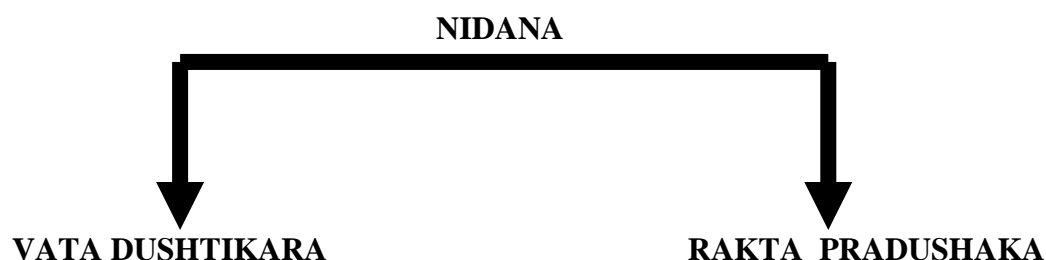
Nidana^[9]

Sushruta has emphasized that the simple baseline of treatment is to exclude the *Nidana* factor. Rightly it is said, "Prevention is better than cure". Hence, the knowledge about etiological factors is useful to provide proper guidance for the therapy, as well as in the prevention of the disease. The factor which invariably involves in the pathogenesis or which initiate the disease is nothing but cause or *Nidana* of the disease.

By considering *Nidana* by different views, in *Vatarakta* we are having long list of etiological factors, but for simple understanding, the whole *Nidana* can be divided into *Vata kara nidana* and *Rakta Pradushakanidana* (*Pittakaranidana*).

As we know *Rakta Dhatu* is the *dushya* of *Pitta dosha* and according to *Doshadushyaashrayashrayibhava*, aggravation of *Pitta dosha* also leads to *Rakta dhatu* pradushna (vitiation). So the etiological factors which are *Pittavardhaka* ultimately causes *Rakta dhatu* vitiation and predispose the person for the further disease process.

Acharya Charaka in *Vatarakta Chikitsa* explains two separate etiological factors for *Vatadushti* as well as *Raktadushti* and is useful for the treatment i.e. *Samprapti Vighatana* as well as *Nidana Parivarjana*.



Rakta Pradushaka Nidana

- Excessive intake of foods that are *Lavana*, *Amla*, *Katu* and *Kshaara* leads to *Rakta dushti*.
- Excessive intake of *Snigdha*, *Ushna ahara* vitiates *Rakta*.
- *Klinna Mamsa*, *Shushka Mamsa*, *Anupa Mamsa* leads to *vidagdhata (dushana)* of *Rakta*.
- Excessive intake of *Pinyaka (tila kalka)*, *Moolaka*, *Kulatha* (Horse Gram), *Masha* (Black Gram), *Nishpava* (Flat Bean) leads to *Pitta* and *Rakta Prakopa*.
- Excessive intake of Fermented foods like *Dadhi* (curd), *Aranala*, *Souvira*, *Shukta*, *Takra*, *Sura*, *Asava* etc. causes *Rakta dushti*.
- *Virudhahaara sevana*, *Adyashana*, *Krodha*, *Divaswapna* and *Prajagaran* leads to *Tridosha Kopa* and also *Rakta dushti*.
- *Abhighata* (trauma) also causes *Rakta dushti*.
- If one not undergoing *Shodhana* for cleansing the body, it can lead to vitiation of *Rakta*.
- According to *Ashtanga Hridaya*, *Vidahi Ahara*, *Guru Ahara* etc. are also causes for *Rakta dushti*.

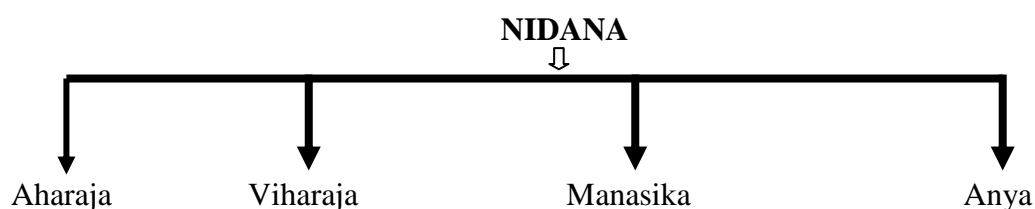
Vata dushtikara Nidana

- Excessive intake of *Kashaya*, *Katu* and *Tikta Rasa* leads to *Vata prakopa*.
- Taking *Alpa Ahara* and *Rooksha Ahara* or indulging in fasting aggravates *Vata dosha*.

- Riding on horse, camel, donkey etc. are also causes of *Vata dushti*.
- Swimming and other water sports, jumping, walking long distances in the hot sun leads to aggravation of *Vata dosha*.
- Indulging in excessive sexual activities, withholding the *Vega*, the *Vata* gets aggravated.

According to *Ashtanga Hridaya*, *Sheetala Ahara* and *Vihara*, *Vidhiheena Maithuna*, *Vidhiheena swapna*, *Prajagaran* also leads to *Vata kopa*. In this way simultaneous vitiation of *Vata* as well as *Rakta* by their etiological factors lead to the *Vatarakta*.

Again all the causative factors described in *Ayurvedic* classics can be classified into four groups.



For better understanding these causes are being tabulated as follows.

Table - Causes of Vatarakta

Aharaja	Guna Pradhana	Snigdha, Ushna, Vidahi- Rakta dushti Sheeta, Rooksha
	Rasa Pradhana	Lavana, Amla, and Katu , Kshaara- Rakta dushti Kashaya, Katu, Tikta –Vata dushti
	Dravya Pradhana	Klinna Mamsa, Shushka Mamsa, Anupa Mamsa, Pinyaka, Moolaka, Kulattha, Masha, Nishpava, Dadhi, Aranala, Souvira, Shukta, Takra, Sura, Asava etc causes Rakta Dushti.
	Ahara karma	Ajeerna Bhojana, Alpa ahaara and Rooksha ahaara, Langhana, Viruddahaara sevana, Adyashana, Sheetala ahara, Vidahi ahara, Guru ahara.
Viharaja	Riding on Horse, Camel, Donkey, Swimming, Jumping, Walking long distances in the hot sun Sheetala Vihara.	
Manasika	Krodha	

Aharaja Nidana

The dietetic factors that cause the vitiation of *Vata dosha* as well as *Rakta dhatu* form the etiology of *Vatarakta*. Excessive intake of foods which are *Lavana*, *Amla*, *Kashaya*, *Tikta* and *Katu* in taste, *Snigdha*, *Ushna*, *Sheeta*, *Ruksha*, *Vidahi* and *Kshara* in quality tend to cause

Vatarakta. Further *Ajeerna Bhojana*, *Viruddhasana*, *Alpa Ahaara* and *Rooksha Ahara*, *Langhana*, *Adyashana*, *Sheetala ahara*, *Guru Ahara* etc. causes the illness. To be more specific, intake of *Klinna Mamsa*, *Ambuja Mamsa*, *Anupa Mamsa*, *Kulattha*, *Masha*, *Nishpava*, *Sura*, *Asava*, *Dadhi*, *Takra* etc. are considered as *Vatarakta Nidana*.

Role of Rasa in the genesis of Vatarakta

While the individual *Rasa* in normal proportions are supporting for the normal physiology of the body, the excess intake of any particular *Rasa* can lead to a disorder of a particular kind. In *Vatarakta* also the role of *Rasa* is important as for the setting up the pathology.

Lavana rasaati sevana:- *Charaka* opines that excessive intake of *Lavana Rasa* leads to aggravation of *Pitta* and *Rakta* and causes *Trishna*, *Moorcha*, *Taapa*, *Mamsa Kotha* etc. and may leads to manifestation of disorders like *Raktapitta*, *Amlapitta*, *Visarpa*, *Vatarakta*, *Vicharchika*, *Indralupta* and other *Twak* and *Rakta Vikaras*. According to modern view excessive salty food does not allow water to excrete out of the body and prohibits flushing of uric acid from the body.

Amla rasa ati sevana

Charaka opines that excessive intake of *Amla Rasa* leads to aggravation of *Pitta*, dissolution of *Kapha*, vitiation of *Rakta*, production of *Daha* in *Mamsa*, *Peshi Shithilata* in the *Shareera*. It produces *Shotha* in *Ksheena*, *Kshatha*, *Krishna*, *Durbala*. So excess intake may be the *Nidana* of *Vatarakta*.

Kashaya rasa ati sevana

Excessive intake of *Kashaya Rasa* produces *Sarotoavrodha* and blocks the movements of *Vata*, *Mutra*, *Pureesha* and *Shukra*. Because of *Khara*, *Vishada*, *Rooksha Guna* it aggravates *Vata Dosha* and along with vitiated *Rakta Dhtu* it can contribute to disease pathology of *Vatarakta*.

Katu rasa ati sevana

Charaka opines that excessive intake of *Katu Rasa* leads to *Moorcha*, *Ksheenata*, *Sada*, *Krishata*, *Bhrama*, *Daha*, *Tapa* in the body. It also decreases *Bala*. Due to predominance of *Vayu* and *Agni Mahabhuta* it can aggravates both *Vata* and *Pitta Dosha* along with *Rakta* as *Dushya* which ultimately can lead to causation of *vatarakta*.

Tikta rasa ati sevana

Because of the *Rooksha*, *Khara* and *Vishada Gunas*, it does the *Shoshana* of *Rasa*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa*, *Meda*, *Asthi*, *Majja* and *Shukra*. It produces *Rookshata* in the *Srotas*, destroys *Bala*, and brings about *Krishata*, *Glaani*, *Moorcha*, *Bhrama*, *Mukha Shosha* and other disorders of *Vata*.

Likewise, the excessive intake of the above mentioned *Rasa* leads to the aggravation of *Dosha* particularly *Vata* and *Pitta*. *Rakta* is one of the *Dhatus* that is vitiated through the excessive intake of these *Rasa*. Along with *Rasa*, the type of food articles used also play an important role regarding the vitiation of *Dosha*. The food articles mentioned in the *Nidana* of *Vatarakta* can be divided into *Dhanyavarga*, *Mamsavarga* and *Madyavarga*.

Dhanyavarga**Kulattha: (Horse Gram)**

Because of the *Kashaya-Rasa*, *Katu –Vipaka*, *Laghu- Vidahi Guna*, *Kulattha* can cause *pitta* and *Rakta Vikara*.

Masha: (Black Gram)

Masha (*Madhura -Rasa* and *Vipaka*, *Ushna veerya*) along with *Dadhi*, *Matsya* etc. can causes the *Pitta* and *Rakta vikara*.

Nishpava: (Flat Bean)

Nishpava (*Madhura*, *Kashaya-Rasa*; *Amla –Vipaka*, *Rooksha*, *Guru*, *Ushna* and *Vidahi –Guna*) aggravates *Pitta* and *Rakta*.

Pinyaka: *Pinyaka* is the residue of sesamum, groundnut and other oil seeds. It produces *Rookshata* and *Vishtambhata*, so vitiates *Vata Dosha*.

Moolaka

Moolaka (*Katu- Rasa*, *Ushna- Veerya*, *Katu- Vipaka*, *Guru*, and *Abhishyandi- Guna*) on excess use causes the aggravation of all the *Tridoshas*.

Gorasa varga**Dadhi**

Due to its *Amla*, *Kashaya –Rasa*, *Ushna –Veerya*, *Amla -Vipaka*, *Grahi- Guna* produces disorders of *Rakta* and *Pitta*, increases *Meda* and *Kapha*. It produces *Shotha*.

Takra

Though *Takra* (*Kashaya, Amla-Rasa, Ushna- Veerya, Amla –Vipaka, Laghu, Ruksha, Vikashi, Teekshna – Guna*) is used as *Vata Kapha Nashaka*, but in excessive intake due to *Amla Rasa* and *Amla Vipaka* it may aggravate *Pitta* and *Rakta*. Hence, the usage of *Takra* in the conditions of *Pitta* and *Rakta vikara* can aggravate the condition.

Ikshuvarga

Because of *Madhura- Rasa, Sheeta- Veerya, Guru, Snigdha -Guna, Ikshu* leads to increase in *Vata* and *Kapha*. Their excessive use can lead to *Vata Prakopa*.

Madyavarga

There are different types of *Madya* such as, *Arishta, Sura, Seedu, Aasava* etc.

All types of *Madya* are *Ushna, Pitta karaka, Vatanashaka, Malabhedaka, Sheeghrapaki, Rooksha, Kapha nashaka, Amla rasayukta, Teekshna, Sookshma, Vishada, Vyavayi* and *Vikasi* in character. The excessive use of *Madhya* cause vitiation of *Rakta*.

Aranala and Souveera

Both are *Ushna, Teekshna* and Aggravate *Pitta*. Hence, if taken in excess, they can cause the disorders of *Pitta* and *Rakta*.

Shukta

Shukta is *Kapha nashaka, Rakta Pitta Karaka*. It increases the *Kledata* of *Pitta, Rakta* and *Kapha*. It is *Teekshna, Ushna, Laghu, Rooksha* in character and it may be the *Nidana* of *Vatarakta*.

Alpa Bhojana, Abhojana

Leads to *Vata Prakopa* and may be a supportive cause for manifestation of *Vatarakta* as it leads to *Dhatu Kshaya*.

Ajeernashana, Adyashana

As mentioned in classics, *Ajeernashana, Adyashana* leads to *Ama* formation so *Tridosha Kopa* takes place, may be supportive cause for manifestation of *Vatarakta*.

Mamsavarga

The general character of *Mamsa* is *Madhura* in *Rasa*, *Madhura* in *Vipaka*, *Brimhana* i.e., *Rasa* and *Raktadi Vardhaka*. But excess of intake of *Mamsa*, (*Klinna*, *shuska*, *ambuja*, *anupa mamsa*) leads to *Rakta Dushti* and may be the *Nidana* of *Vatarakta*.

Rooksha/Shushka Ahara

This kind of food will not be digested properly. *Shuska*, *Viruddha* and *Vistambhi* types of food lead to *Agnimandya*.

Vishamashana

Intake of food in large quantities or variation in the quantity of food intake leads to *Agnidushti*. It causes *Tridosha Prakopa*.

Teekshna and Vidahi ahara

They aggravate *Vata* and *Pitta* respectively because of their character similar to *Vata* and *Pitta*.

Hence, the deviation from the normal food regimen has a direct effect on the *Agni*. The *Agni* affected may be '*Manda*' or '*Vishama*' or '*Teekshna*'. Whatever the condition of *Agni*, the food that ingested will not be properly digested and hence cannot be utilized for the nourishment of the components of the body, leads to the *Ama* that will cause the beginning of the disease pathology.

Viharaaja nidana

Prajagaran, *Hasti-ashva-ustrayana*, *Abhighata*, *Vidhi heena Swapna*, *Vidhi heena Maithuna*, *Mithya Vihara*, *Plavana*, *Langhana*, *Ati Adhva*, *Vyayama Vaishamya*, *Vega Nigraha*, are all causative factors for aggravation of *Vata*.

Divaswapna after taking *Drava*, *Snigdha*, *Guru Ahara* leads to vitiation of *Rakta*.

Achankramanasheelata is a type of *Vihara* that leads to accumulation of *Kapha*. *Sthoola*, *Sukumara* are predominant of *Kapha* and *Meda* may be one among *Vatarakta Kara Nidana*.

Manasika nidana**Krodha**

Krodha is one of the *Manasika* factors along with *Chinta*, *Shoka*, *Bhaya*, *Santapa* and *Udvega* that cause aggravation of *Vata*.

Krodha aggravates *Rakta* also.

Any (other) nidana

Suppression of natural urges of flatus, urine, faeces, semen, vomiting etc. aggravates *Vata* and is considered as one among *Nidana* of *Vatarakta*. Along with the above factors, there are other factors also which cause the direct vitiation of *Rakta*, such as *Panchakarma Apachara* and *Abhighata*.

SAMPRAPTI / PATHOGENESIS

Acharya Charaka, while describing *Samprapti* of *Vatarakta*, has also mentioned *Samanya* as well as *Vishishta Samprapti*.

***Samanya Samprapti*^[10]**

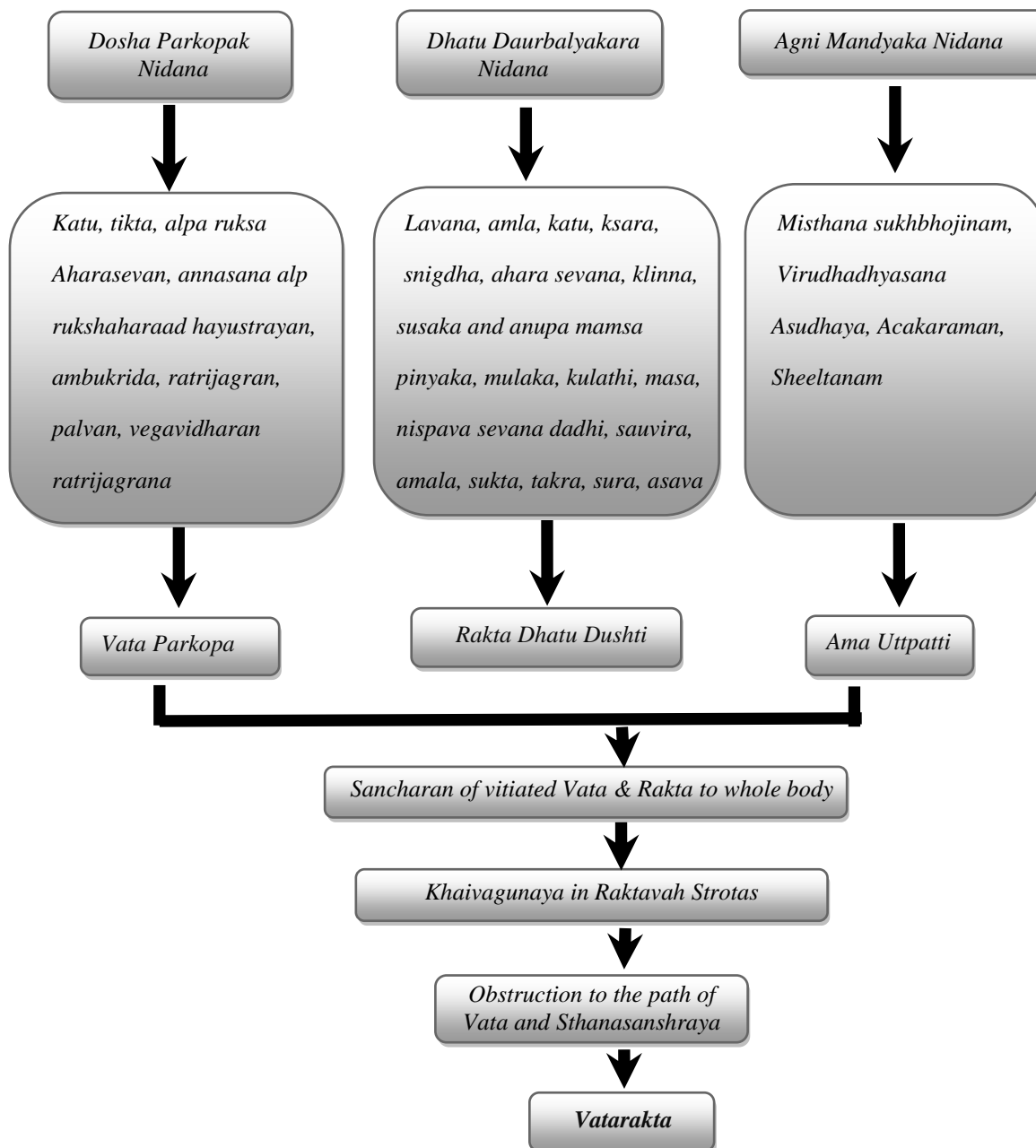
In *Charak Samhita*, it has been mentioned that due to trauma or when a person does not opt for purification methods like *Vamana* and *Virechana*, their *Rakta Dhatu* gets vitiated. The same person, whose *Rakta Dhatu* is already vitiated, when starts taking *Kashaya* (astringent), *Katu* (pungent), *Tikta* (bitter) *Rasa*, consumes *Alpa Ahara* (less quantity of food) or *Ruksha Ahara* becomes prone to *Vata-Vridhhi*.

Other factors responsible for the vitiation of *Vata* are life style disorders such as long jerky driving, long journey, playing water games, swimming, jumping, and walking long distance in summer season, excessive indulgence in sexual activities and suppression of natural urges. These all vitiate *Vata Dosha*. Already vitiated *Rakta Dhatu* obstructs the movements of *Vridhh Vayu* in the *Srotas*, in which the *Vayu* has to flow. *Vridhh* and obstructed *Vata* in turn vitiates the whole *Rakta* and manifests as *Vatarakta*.

***Vishista Samprapti*^[11]**

To explain *Vishishtha Samprapti*, *Acharya Charaka* has put forth the theory that *Vayu* is *Sukshma* i.e. subtle in nature and has the capacity to move in all of the joints and channels (*Srotasa*) of the body whereas *Rakta* is a *Drava* (liquid) in nature and has the quality to flow in all *Srotasa* of the body. That's why vitiated *Vata* and *Rakta* travels with speed throughout *Siramarga* (circulatory channels) in the whole body. While passing through the joints both of them get obstructed because of the complex anatomical structure of the joint. Hence vitiated *Vata* and *Rakta* are lodged in the joints causing different types of pain sensations because of its association with either *pitta* or *Kapha Dosha*.

Schematic Representation of Samprapti

**Samprapti Ghatak^[12]**

❖ Dosha	-	Vata Pradhana (Tridosha)
❖ Dushya	-	Rakta
❖ Agni	-	Jatharagni and Dhatavagni Dushti
❖ Srotasa	-	Rasavaha, Raktavaha
❖ Srotodushti	-	Sanga (stasis of dosha), Atipravritti
❖ Adhithana	-	Tvaka, Mamsa, Sandhi
❖ Vyadhi	-	Pakwashayotha and Chirkari

PURVARUPA/ PREMONITORY SYMPTOMS^[13]

- *Svedoatyarthama na va* - Excess or absence of perspiration
- *Karshnya* - Black discoloration of the skin
- *Sparsa agyatva* - Numbness or Paraesthesia
- *Kshate atiruka* - Excessive pain on injury or trauma
- *Sandhi shaithilya* - Laxity in joints
- *Alasya* - Lassitude
- *Sadanam* - Malaise
- *Pidikoudgama* - Appearance of boils/Nodules
- *Sandhi nistoda* - Pricking pain in joints
- *Sphurana* - Flickering
- *Bheda* - Cutting pain
- *Gurutvama* - Heaviness
- *Shunyata* - Numbness
- *Kandu* - Pruritis/Itching
- *Sandhishu Rug Bhutva* - Unstable pain in joints
- *Mandaloutpatti* - Round eruptions

RUPA OF VATARAKTA/CARDINAL SIGN**SAMANYA LAKSHANA**

This disease starts from the smaller joints of the body. Disease starts with intense pain which is more marked in the night. Patient is sleepless in night. Fever and thirst may be found along with redness and swelling of the affected joint.

VISHISTA LAKSHANA

- ❖ According to the site of origin
- ❖ According to the predominance of *Dosha*
- **According to the site of origin.**

In *Charaka Samhita*, *Vatarakta* has been classified on the basis of *dhatu* affected in two forms.

- *Uttana Vatarakta* (Superficial i.e. *Twak Mans Aashrit*)
- *Gambhira Vatarakta* (Deep seated)

Acharya Sushruta has different explanation in this regard, these are not the types but different stages similar to *Kushtha*. Initially, it affects the superficial structures like *Tvaka* and *Mamsa* and later on, it becomes *gambhira* i.e. deep seated and affects the deep structures.

❖ *Uttana Vatarakta*

- *Kandu* - Itching
- *Daha* - Burning sensation
- *Ruja* - Pain
- *Sira Ayama* - Dilatation of the vessels
- *Toda* - Pricking pain
- *Sphuranam* - Throbbing sensation
- *Kunchana (Sira Akunchana)* - Contraction
- *Shyava Twaka* - Cyanosis of the skin
- *Rakta Twaka Skin* - Reddish coloration of the
- *Bheda* - Splitting type of pain
- *Gourava* - Heaviness
- *Suptata* - Numbness

❖ *Gambhira Vatarakta*

When vitiated doshas are deeply seated in *Rakta*, *Mamsa*, *Medas* and other *dhatu*s then it is called as *Gambhira Vatarakta*. Following symptoms are found in this type of *Vatarakta*.

- *Svayathu stabdta* - Swelling, which is fixed in consistency
- *Svayathu kathinya* - Swelling, with induration
- *Arti* - Deep pain
- *Shyavata* - Black discoloration
- *Tamra Twaka* - Copper discolor skin
- *Daha* - Burning sensation
- *Toda* - Pricking sensation
- *Sphurana* - Throbbing sensation
- *Paka* - Suppuration

❖ *Ubhayashrita Vatarakta*:

When there is presence of symptoms of both *Uttana* as well as *Gambhira Vatarakta*, it is called as *Ubhayashrita Vatarakta*.

- Ruja* - Pain

- *Vidaha* - Burning sensation
- *Sandhi-Asthi-Majja Chinndni* - Cutting like pain in *Sandhi- Asthi-Majja*
- *Angasya Vakrikarana* - Disfigurement of the Joints
- *Khanjatwa* - Lameness
- *Pangutwa* - Paraplegia
- *Vatasya sarva shareera Charana* - Vitiated vata moves all over the body.

➤ According to the Predominance of Dosha

On the basis of *Doshic* variations, *Vatarakta* can be classified as follows

- ❖ *Vataja Vatarakta*
- ❖ *Pittaja Vatarakta*
- ❖ *Kaphaja Vatarakta*
- ❖ *Raktaja Vatarakta*
- ❖ *Dwandaj Vatarakta*
- ❖ *Sannipataja Vatarakta*

SITES

According to *Acharya Charak*, vitiated *vata* and *rakta* affects the joints of hands, feet, fingers and all other joints slowly. Hands and feet are the sites of first attack and gradually whole body comes under the grip of the disease.

According to *Acharya Sushrut*, disease usually starts from feet and sometimes starts from hands and spreads to other parts of the body in a similar way the rat poison spreads i.e. “*Akhora Vishamiva*”.^[5]

SADHYA – ASADHYATA / PROGNOSIS^[14]

According to *Acharya Charak*, *Vatarakta* is said to be *Sadhya* when there is only single *Dosha* involvement, without any complications and when it is of recent origin. *Vatarakta* is *Yapya* in condition where there is involvement of two *Doshas* and accompanied with few complications. When all the three *Doshas* are combined to cause the disease, presenting with various complications, the disease is said to be *Asadhya* Physician should not treat the disease with the *Upadravas* like oozing, foul smell from the wound, excessive pain, discoloration with stiffness and contracture because it is an *Asadhya* category of *Vatarakta*.

UPADRAVA^[15]

This can be classified into systemic and local complications as under.

Systemic complications	Local complications
<i>Aswapna</i> (insomnia)	<i>Mamsakotha</i> (tissue-necrosis)
<i>Arochaka</i> (anorexia)	<i>Pangulya</i> (limping)
<i>Shwasa</i> (dyspnoea)	<i>Visarpa</i> (cellulitis)
<i>Trishna</i> (thirst)	<i>Paka</i> (suppuration)
<i>Shirograha</i> (heaviness in head)	<i>Toda</i> (pricking pain)
<i>Jvara</i> (fever)	<i>Angulivakrata</i> (disfigurement of digits)
<i>Moha</i> (confusion)	<i>Sphota</i> (eruptions)
<i>Mamsakshaya</i> (muscle wasting)	<i>Daha</i> (burning sensation)
<i>Pravepaka</i> (tremors)	<i>Samprasavi</i> (discharge)
<i>Hikka</i> (hiccough)	<i>Vivarnata</i> (discolouration)
<i>Bhrama</i> (delirium)	<i>Sankocha</i> (contractures)
<i>Klama</i> (mental fatigue)	<i>Arbuda</i> (tumours)
<i>Marmagraha</i> (affliction of vital parts)	
<i>Pranakshaya</i> (diminution of Prana)	

CHIKITSA

In Ayurvedic texts, two types of treatment of *vatarakta* is described- *Samanya Chikitsa* (General management) and *Vishishtha Chikitsa* (Specific treatment according to the classification).

SAMANYA CHIKITSA

- ❖ *Rakta-mokshana karma*
- ❖ *Shodhana Chikitsa*
- ❖ *Shamana Chikitsa*
- ❖ *Lepa Chikitsa*

→ ***Antahparimarjana Chikitsa***

→ ***Bahiparimarjana Chikitsa***

➤ *Raktamokshana Karma*

Key point in the aetiopathogenesis of *Vatarakta* is *Rakta Margavarana* and this leads to the accumulation of morbid *rakta*. Hence *Raktamokshana* is considered the main treatment modality of *Vatarakta*. *Acharya Charaka*, *Sushruta*, *Vagbhatta* and the successive classics have also advocated the same treatment of *vatarakta*.

Rakta Mokshana can be performed in the form of *Shringa*, *Jalouka*, *Suchi*, *Alabu*, *Prachhana* and *Siramokshana* method. *Rakta Mokshana* by *Jaloukavacharana* method is the better choice in case affected site exhibits symptoms like *Ruk*, *Daha*, *Toda* and *Shoola*.

Shringavacharana is preferred in patients of *Vatarakta* with symptoms like *Supti*, *Kandu* and *Chimchimayana*. Where illness spreads progressively, then *RaktaMokshana* by *Prachhana* method is the better option.^[35]

Acharya Charaka has emphasized on certain indications like frequent bloodletting in small amount. As excessive bleeding may vitiate *Vata Dosha* which may further aggravate the condition of *vatarakta*. Before starting the *Rakta Mokshana Karma*, oleation (*Snehana*) should be given to the patient. The procedure should also be avoided in severe *Vata* predominant condition due to its complications.^[36]

➤ *Shodhana Chikitsa*

In *Shodhana Chikitsa*, following points of management have been described in *Charak Samhita*.

- *Snehana Karma*
- *Virechana Karma*
- *Basti*

❖ *Snehana Karma*

Administration of *Snehana* prior to the *Shodhana* as well as *shamana* is indicated in *vatarakta*. In the preparation of patient prior to *Vamana* or *Virechana*, the patient is given *Shodhana sneha*. In *Vata Pradhana Vatarakta*, following the *Shodhana* procedure, *Snehapana* with *Purana Ghrita* is ideal. *Snehana* is also used externally in the form of *Abhyanga*.

❖ *Virechana Karma*

Two types of *Virchana Karma* are indicated, according to the condition of body. If patient's skin is *snigdha* (oily), *Ruksha Mridu Virechana* is advised and vice versa. As *Tikshna Virechana* tends to worsen the morbidity of *Vata Dosha* and can result in the aggravation of *Pitta*, *Mridu Virechana* is always justified in patients suffering from *Vatarakta*.^[37]

❖ *Basti*

According to *Acharya Charaka* *basti* is best treatment in *vatarakta*. *Basti karma* is regarded as the *Ardha-Chikitsa* which includes both *Asthapana* and *Anuvasana* in the form of *Karma*, *Kala* and *Yoga Basti*. *Vatanuga Vatarakta* is best treated by *Basti Chikitsa*. Administration of

Ksheerbasti is emphasized in all types of *vatarakta*. In classics, various types of oils like *Sukumarakata Taila*, *Amritadi Taila* have been mentioned for *Basti karma*.

➤ ***Shamana Chikitsa*** - Most commonly used drugs mentioned by *Acharya Charaka* which helps in reducing symptoms of *Vatarakta*, are *Gokshura*, *Guduchi*, *Madhuka*, *Punarnava* etc. Various *Guggulu* preparations and *Rasayoga* have also been mentioned in other texts in relation to *Vatarakta*. (*Chakradutta*, *Bhava prakash* etc.).

➤ ***Bahiparimarjana Chikitsa***

Patients suffering from *Uttana* or *Ubhayashrita Vatarakta* are managed with *Bahiparimarjana Chikitsa* or *Lepa Chikitsa*. The drugs capable of relieving *Daha* (burning sensation) should be used. In addition to *Lepa*; *Parisheka* and *Abhyanga* has also been described in *Charaka Samhita*.

❖ ***Lepa***

It is planned according to the relative dominance of *Dosha* involved. Warm application of paste or paste prepared by adding *Ghrita* or goat's milk is preferred in the morbid *Vata Dosha*.

❖ ***Parisheka***

When the patient complains of severe pain in the affected part, then *Ushna Parisheka* should be applied and in case of *Daha*, *Sheeta Parisheka* is the ideal choice to relieve the discomfort.

❖ ***Abhyanga***

Warm oil processed with *Vatahara* drugs is used for *Abhyanga* if the patient complains of *Shoola* due to the vitiated *vata*. Cold application of *Ghrita* processed with *Pittahara* drugs is ideal if the patient complains of burning sensation due to the morbid *Pitta Dosha* or *Rakta Dhatu*. If *Kandu* is the main symptom due to the dominant *Kapha Dosha*, oil processed with *Kapha hara* drugs is used in the form of *Abhyanga*.

VISHISHTA CHIKITSA

➤ ***Uttana Vatarakta***

In Accordance with *Acharya Charaka*, *Tvaka* and *Mamsa Dhatus* are involved in *Uttana Vatarakta* so *Bahiparimarjana Chikitsa* or external application of drugs is advised in patients of *Uttana Vatarakta* in the form of *Lepa*, *Abhyanga* (massage), *Parisheka* (sprinkling), *Upnaha* (fomentation). These procedures should be advised after recognizing predominant

Dosha. *Sheetalepa* is contraindicated in *Kapha* & *Vatapradhana Vatarakta* as *Sheetalepa* brings about *Stambhan* of *Doshas*. Similarly, *Ushnalepa* may result in *Daha*, *kleda* and desquamation of the skin, so contraindicated in *Rakta* and *Pittapradhan Vatarakta*.

➤ ***Gambhira Vatarakta***

In *Gambhira Vatarakta*, *Snehana*, *Virechana* and *Basti* are advised.

➤ ***Vata Pradhan Vatarakta***

Oleation, *Snehpana* and *Abhyanga* (massage) with *Ghrita*, *Tail*, *Vasa* and *Majja* has been mentioned. Luke warm *Upanaha* should be used externally.

➤ ***Rakta-Pitta Pradhan Vatarakta***

In this, *Virechana* is given. In addition to it, oral use of *Ghrita*, milk, fomentation and *Basti* treatment is advised. *Sheeta Lepa* or local application of *Dravya* capable of reducing burning sensation is given to the patient.

➤ ***Kapha Pradhan Vatarakta***

Go-mutra with *Dharoshna Dugdha* is indicated. *Mridu Vamana* should be advised. Different *Ghrita* preparations, *Parisheka*, *langhan* and warm *Lepa* are used in *Kapha Pradhana Vatarakta*.

➤ ***Avasthika Chikitsa***

Brihana Chikitsa is contraindicated in *Sthula* (obese) patients as it is not beneficial at this stage. This type of *Chikitsa* is likely to increase *Meda* and *Kapha Dosha*.

Hence *Charak* has advocated exercise, *Shodhan Chikitsa* and use of *Arishta*, *Go-mutra*, *Takra*, *Haritaki* etc.

DISCUSSION

The main causative factors for *Vatarakta* are excessive use of alcohol, high purine diet, non-vegetarian diet, acidic and astringent foodstuffs, person leading sedentary life, excessive anger and emotional distress. Both *Vata* and *Rakta* play a major role in the pathogenesis of *Vatarakta*. Vitiating *Rakta dhatu* obstructs the path of *Vridhh vayu*, in which the *Vayu* has to flow. *Vridhh* and obstructed *Vata* in turn vitiates the whole *Rakta* and this *Dosha-dushya sammurchhana* in joints manifests as *Vatarakta*. *Pathya* and *Apathya* are very important

factors in the management of gout like metabolic disorder. So along with medicine disease can be better controlled by avoiding all such precipitating factors.

CONCLUSION

The prevalence of life style disorders is rising rapidly. The best thing which can be done in current scenario is to prevent it rather than cure. *Vatarakta* is also a life style disorder of today world. Excessive purine diet and sedentary life style are the causative factor of the disease. Disease can be controlled by adopting certain life style changes like excessive water intake, reducing body weight and low purine diets. In advance cases there may be need of some herbal drugs which can remove excess uric acid present in the body and alleviate symptoms of the disease.

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