

## EFFECTIVENESS OF VARMA THADAVAL IN THE MANAGEMENT OF ACUTE TRAPEZITIS – A CASE REPORT

Dr. D. Krishnapriya<sup>1\*</sup>, Dr. M. V. Mahadevan<sup>2</sup> and Dr. N. J. Muthukumar<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>PG Scholar, Department of Varma Maruthuvam, National Institute of Siddha.

<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor and Guide, HOD, Department of Pura Maruthuvam, National Institute of Siddha.

<sup>3</sup>Professor, HOD, Department of Varma Maruthuvam, National Institute of Siddha, Chennai-47.

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### \*Corresponding Author

Dr. D. Krishnapriya

PG Scholar, Department of  
Varma Maruthuvam,  
National Institute of Siddha.

### ABSTRACT

Trapezius muscle undergoes inflammation that causes trapezitis with severe neck pain. Trapezitis pain occurs when a person does neck extension, it is occurred due to faulty posture. *Varmam* is a vital energy flow circulating inside the body. The places where the *vaasi* energy resides and activates both body and life-energy are *Varmam* points. *Varma thadaval* is a massage technique manipulated by interconnecting the *Varmam* points which regulate the *saram* and retrieve the affected *saram* in our body. It can be done with or without oil. A 27 years young male from the Chennai who was working in the export company-hard worker reported to the National Institute of

Siddha, Chennai with the chief complaints of pain in the neck region with radiating pain over the right upper limb, mild swelling, stiffness, tenderness over the right supra clavicular region, restriction of cervical movements, difficulty to raise and hold the heavy objects in right upper limb for past 3 days. The *Varma thadaval* procedure was done by the stimulation of *Varma* points for 7 days. After *Varma thadaval* treatment, he felt mild pain in the neck region and other symptoms were reduced. He was able to hold the objects and fully raised the right upper limb. This study shows that *Varma thadaval* therapy is very effective in the management of acute trapezitis. Hence, it is more effective in acute conditions. In acute trapezitis, the Pain was considerably reduced, with no tenderness, no stiffness and no swelling by the *Varma thadaval* technique.

**KEYWORD:** Trapezitis, *Varmam*, *Varma thadaval*, *Vaasi*.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Trapezius muscle undergoes inflammation that causes trapezitis with severe neck pain. Trapezitis pain occurs when a person does neck extension, it is occurred due to faulty posture during working, watching TV, or prolonged use of a phone. The trapezius muscle lies in the neck and back area. This muscle helps in shrugging off the shoulder and during neck movements.<sup>[1]</sup>

Trapezitis condition is subdivided as acute, sub-acute and chronic based on the period it occurs acute occurs for less than one month, the sub-acute condition lasts for 1-3 months and chronic is present for 3 or more than 3 months.<sup>[1]</sup>

The prevalence of this syndrome has increased dramatically in recent years and is foremost among the causes of musculoskeletal pain. The prevalence varies from 21% of patients seen in a general orthopaedic clinic to 30% of general medical clinic patients with regional pain to as high as 85% to 90% of patients presenting to specialty pain management centers. Women and men are affected equally.<sup>[2]</sup>

The Siddha system is one of the traditional systems that originated in South India. It was practiced and established by the great sages called Siddhars. Siddha system rests on the conceptual framework formed by 96 *thathuvams* (philosophies) which include *Muthodam*, *Vayus*, *Panchabhootham*, *Gunam*, *Ragam*, *Kanmendhiriyam*, *Gnanendhir-iyam*. They connect the physical and inert energies of the human body facilitating its existence at subtle and gross levels.<sup>[3]</sup>

The system is based on the writings of Siddhas, who are eminent philosophical, spiritual, and medicinal scientists given their contributions to medicine formulations, *Rasavadham* (alchemy), *Kayakarpam* (rejuvenation), *Yogam*, *Varmam*, medical astrology, *Panjapatchi sastram*, *Saram*, etc.<sup>[4]</sup>

*Varmam* is a vital energy flow circulating inside the body. The places where the *vaasi* energy resides and activates both body and life-energy are *Varmam* points. These points are located at the junctions of nerves, *naadis*, muscle and bones. They are energetic sites that aid physiological functions of the body.<sup>[4]</sup>

The stimulation of Varmam points is called '*Kaibaham*', '*seibhagam*'. This is executed in 12 different ways like *anukkal*, *asaithal*, *thattal*, *thadaval*, *yenthal*, *oondral*, *pidithal*, *nazhukkal*, *amarthal*, *pathukkal*, *karakkal*, *pinnal*.<sup>[4]</sup>

*Varma thadaval* is a massage technique manipulated by interconnecting the *Varma* points which regulate the *saram* and retrieve the affected *saram* in our body. It can be done with or without oil. There are various types of *thadaval* available in *Varmam* literature. The method used and duration of the procedure varies according to the disease condition. So, an attempt was done to evaluate the effectiveness of *Varma thadaval* in the management of Acute Trapezitis.

## 2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

### CASE REPORT

A 27 years young male from the Chennai who was working in the export company-hard worker reported to the Ayothidoss Pandithar Hospital, National Institute of Siddha, Chennai with the chief complaints of pain in the neck region with radiating pain over the right upper limb, mild swelling, stiffness, tenderness over the right supra clavicular region, restriction of cervical movements, difficulty to raise and hold the heavy objects in right upper limb for past 3 days. The pain had worsened at the time of doing work, holding the object and lifting the right upper limbs. His sleep was disturbed due to the pain, but the bowel and bladder were normal.

### PERSONAL HISTORY

DIET: Mixed diet. He was a non-smoker and non-alcoholic.

### CO-MORBID CONDITIONS

He was not a known case of diabetes mellitus, hypertension, thyroid, seizure and bronchial asthma. There was no history of trauma or any other serious illness.

### GENERAL EXAMINATION

Pulse rate: 76/min

Heart rate: 74/min

Respiratory rate: 18/min

Blood pressure: 120/70 mmHg

Pallor: Nil

Jaundice: Nil

Cyanosis: Nil

Lymphadenopathy: Nil

Pedal edema: Nil

Clubbing: Nil

Jugular venous pulsation: Not visible

## TREATMENT

### VARMA THADAVAL

**No of sittings:** 7 days daily

**Duration:** 20 – 25 mins

**Used oil:** *Kunthiriga thylam* (OPD Medicine)

### VARMA THADAVAL PROCEDURE

*Varma* points stimulated by the *thadaval* procedures are.

**Table no: 1.**

S.NO	VARMAM POINTS	LOCATION
1.	<i>Valai-mudintha varmam</i> <sup>[5]</sup>	Located at the C7 prominence
2.	<i>Kakkattai kalam</i> <sup>[5,6]</sup>	Located at the supraclavicular fossa
3.	<i>Paka nadukku varmam</i> <sup>[5]</sup>	Located mid-lateral aspect of the neck region
4.	<i>Chippi varmam</i> <sup>[5]</sup>	Located at the medial border of the scapula
5.	<i>Kaikuzhi varmam/ Pirathaarai varmam</i> <sup>[5,6]</sup>	Located at the posterior aspect of the armpit
6.	<i>Chippi asaivu varmam</i> <sup>[5]</sup>	Located 9 finger breath above the <i>chippi varmam</i>
7.	<i>Kai puja poruthu varmam/Puya varmam</i> <sup>[5,6]</sup>	Located at the gleno-humeral joint.
8.	<i>Sevikutri varmam</i> <sup>[7]</sup>	Located at the fossa in front of tragus of ear
9.	<i>Puya nadukku varmam</i> <sup>[5]</sup>	Located at the mid circumference of the arm
10.	<i>Muzhakai nadukku varmam</i> <sup>[5]</sup>	Located at the mid circumference of the forearm
11.	<i>Muzhakai muttu mozhi poruthu varmam</i> <sup>[5]</sup>	Located at the anterior aspect of the elbow joint
12.	<i>Muzhakai muttu kai mandai varmam</i> <sup>[5]</sup>	Located at the posterior aspect of the elbow joint
13.	<i>Kozhikazhuthu varmam</i> <sup>[5]</sup>	It is located at the circumduction of the wrist joint
14.	<i>Kai-vellai varmam</i> <sup>[6]</sup>	Located at the base of the palm, junction of the thenar and hypothenar muscles.
15.	<i>Kai-kavuli varmam</i> <sup>[5]</sup>	It is located in the web space between the thumb and index finger (dorsal aspect)

## PROCEDURE METHOD

**Patient's posture:** Sitting posture

**Pressure:** ¼- ½ *mathirai*

Step 1: Gently apply the oil in the affected areas (right supra clavicular region, right scapular region and right upper limb) with the right hand.

Step 2: Place the middle three fingers (right hand) over the *valai-mudantha varmam*, give clockwise and anti-clockwise rotation 3 times and move downwards along the spine up to the coccyx.

Step 3: Place the middle three fingers over the *Kakkattai kalam* simultaneously. Apply for inward pressure release 3 times and gently rub over the region for muscle relaxation.

Step 4: Place the middle finger over the *pakka nadukku varmam* simultaneously. Apply for pressure and release.

Step 5: Simultaneously, Place the palm over the suprascapular region and gently massage the scapular border in a circular method. Repeat this 7 times.

Step 6: Place the central part of the middle fingers on the *sevikutri varmam*, and apply gentle upward pressure to the point (simultaneously). And move downwards up to the *puja varmam*. Repeat this 3 times.

Step 7: By using the right hand, give a stroke from *Manibandham* towards *Puyam* through the medial border of the hand then gave a stroke from *Puyam* to *Manibandham* through the lateral border of the hand. This procedure is done on the other side too. Repeat this 7 times.<sup>[8]</sup>

Step 8: Hold the wrist joint with the left hand and gently rotate it 3 times with the right hand. Repeat this on other hand also.

Step 9: Hold the wrist joint of the patient with the left hand and pulling (*iluthal*) each finger with the right hand

Step 10: Place the thumb finger (right hand) over the *kai-vellai varmam*. Apply constant pressure and release for 3 times

Step 11: Place the thumb finger (right hand) over the *kai kavuli varmam*. Apply pressure in pumping motion.

Step 12: Finally, place the left hand over the *utchipathappu varma* and mild tap with the right hand.

## INFORMED CONSENT

Written consent was obtained from the patients before starting the treatment.

### 3. RESULTS

#### BEFORE AND AFTER TREATMENT

##### CLINICAL EXAMINATION

Table no: 2.

CLINICAL EXAMINATION	BEFORE TREATMENT	AFTER TREATMENT
INSPECTION	Mild swelling is present in the right supra clavicular region	No swelling
PALPATION	Tenderness is present in the right supra clavicular region and right scapular region. Local heat present in the affected areas. Stiffness present	No tenderness and stiffness. Mild Local heat is present in the affected areas
MOVEMENTS	Flexion-affected Extension-affected Lateral flexion-affected Rotation-affected	Flexion-Normal Extension- Normal Lateral flexion- Normal Rotation- Normal

##### HEALTH ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Table no: 3.

	BEFORE TREATMENT	AFTER TREATMENT
Pain	Pain in the neck region radiating to the right upper limb	Mild pain in the neck region, no radiating pain
Early morning stiffness	Present	Absent
Nature of pain	Severe	Mild
Aggravating factor - Movements	Yes	Occasionally
Relieving factor – Rest	Yes	Yes
Tenderness	Present	Absent
Restriction of movements	Partial	No

##### OUTCOME MEASURES

The outcome was assessed by using the visual analogue scale and neck disability index.

Table no:4.

OUTCOME	BEFORE TREATMENT	AFTER TREATMENT
VISUAL ANALOGUE SCALE (Score)	8 (Severe- Grade III)	2(Mild- Grade I)
NECK DISABILITY INDEX (Score)	28 (Severe disability)	4 (No disability)

### 4. SUMMARY

Trapezititis is the inflammation of the trapezius muscle occurred due to improper posture and heavy/hard work. It is divided into 3 types. They are acute, sub-acute and chronic types. Acute trapezititis occurs for less than one month. As per the *varmam* concept: In acute

condition, localized *varmam* may be disturbed or damaged. For that, nearest *varmam* points stimulation is needed. The above *varmam thadaval* points were chosen based on this concept. This *varma thadaval* technique provide very simple, cheap, non-invasive and cost-effective.

After *varma thadaval* treatment, he felt mild pain in the neck region and other symptoms were reduced (no tenderness, no stiffness, no swelling). He was able to hold the objects and fully raised the right upper limb. During this period of treatment, the patient was advised to follow the specific dietary regimens and take rest.

This study demonstrates that the improvement is seen in both visual analogue scale and neck disability index.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This study shows that *varma thadaval* therapy is very effective in the management of acute trapezitis. Hence, it is more effective in acute conditions. In acute trapezitis, the Pain was considerably reduced, with no tenderness, no stiffness and no swelling by the *varma thadaval* technique. However further work with a large number of samples should be carried out towards finding the ideal response.

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