

MANAGEMENT OF SHIRO ROGA ACCORDING TO AYURVEDA**Anita B. Kulkarni***

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Article Received on
05 Nov. 2021,Revised on 25 Nov. 2021,
Accepted on 15 Dec. 2021

DOI: 10.20959/wjpr20221-22672

Corresponding Author*Dr. Anita B. Kulkarni**Associate Professor Dept. of
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The traditional science of Ayurveda considers headache to be caused because of two primary reasons – a sensitive nervous system and impaired digestion. Improper diet and lifestyle causes aggravation of Pitta (Ayurvedic humor representing Fire) in the body. In an aggravated state, Pitta impairs digestion, leading to production of digestive impurities (known as ama). This ama gets stored in the manovahi strotas (mind channels), thereby becoming the cause for headaches. A sensitive nervous system lowers the ojas (energy) in the body. Ojas is the essence of all body tissues and provides strength to the nervous system and body. If you have a strong nervous system, you are able to fight against problems and carry on with your work with a

healthy mind. Lowering of ojas causes migraine-like problems. Ayurvedic treatment of headache does not focus on simply alleviating the pain but aims at treating the root cause. Herbal preparations are administered to balance aggravated body energies and restore the digestive function. Shirashoola is one among the Jatrurdvagata Roga and elaborately described by all Acharya under Shiroroga.

KEYWORDS: Traditional, Ayurveda, Pitta, Manovahi strotas, Shirashoola, Jatrurdvagata.**INTRODUCTION**

Ayurveda is the medical system which gives the way of perfect living with nature.^[1] It gives equal importance to preventive as well as curative aspects of diseases.^[2] Ayurveda is the medical science which emphasized the importance of Mana (psyche) in the health of an individual. The brain is the centre for registering sensations, correlating them with each other, storing information, making decisions and taking actions. It is the centre for all vital activities

of the body such as respiration, vision, speech and locomotion. It also controls intellect emotions, behaviours and memory.

The different regions of the brain are specialised in varied functions. Different parts of the brain work together to accomplish specific shared purposes. It is therefore rightly called as 'Uttamanga' which means without which nothing is possible.

In this busy and competitive world, the brain is under tremendous stress. Man is neglecting the health of his vital organ, which is resulting in various diseases of the head.

A headache is the most simple yet complicated condition which almost all persons on this earth have experienced. The pain usually arises from the head and upper part of the neck. Headache can be a dull ache or sharp, throbbing, pricking, constant, intermittent mild pain or an intense, tight band-like sensation in the head.

Causes for headache acc. to ayurveda

- **Dhooma:** Excessive exposure to Smoke / Fumes
- **Aatapa:** Excessive exposure to heat of Sun
- **Tushara:** Excessive exposure to moist and cold air, fog, dew.
- **Ambukreeda:** Playing in water for longer periods or repeatedly, Working in water
- **Atisvapna:** Excessive sleep
- **Atiprajagara:** Excessive awakening during nights
- **Utsedha:** Swelling and inflammation
- **Atipurovata:** Exposure in excess to the breeze coming from East, walking, riding, sitting or working against the breeze
- **Baashpa nigraha:** Controlling tears, withholding emotions
- **Atirodana:** Constant grief, Always crying, Timid (stress)
- **Atyambupana:** Excessive intake of water / fluids
- **Atimadhyapana:** Excessive consumption of alcohol
- **Krimi:** Worm / Parasitic infestation
- **Vega dharana:** Controlling or suppression of natural impending reflexes or urges of the body, mainly those of defecation, sneeze, hunger, sleep, yawning (drowsiness), tears, sex.
- **Upadhana:** Pillows of varying heights
- **Abhyanga:** Getting too many and too frequent massages, manipulations over the body

- **Dvesha:** Frequent pangs of anger and enviousness (stress)
- **Pratatekshana:** Continued eye strain
- **Asatmyagandha:** Exposure to incompatible smells
- **Dushta anna:** Contaminated, incompatible and unwholesome foods
- **Ati bhasha:** Over-speaking

Types of headache acc to ayurveda

Due to the consumption (exposure to) one or more of the above said factors – Vata, Pitta and Kapha located in the head undergo contamination. These vitiated Doshas in turn cause Headaches of various types and intensities 11 types of Headaches (Shiroroga) are mentioned in Ayurveda. Any of these can get manifested due to the above said causes. They are: Vataja Shiroroga, Pittaja Shiroroga, Kaphaja Shiroroga, Sannipataja Shiroroga, Raktaja Shiroroga, Kshayaja Shiroroga, Krimija Shiroroga, Suryavarta, Anantavata, Shankaka, Ardhavabhedaka.

Types of headache acc to modern: Common some types of headache are seen which are explained below.

- **Tension headaches:** Tension headaches the most common type, feel like a constant ache or pressure around the head, especially at the temples or back of the head and neck. Not as severe as migraines, they don't usually cause nausea or vomiting, and they rarely halt daily activities. Over-the-counter treatments, such as aspirin, ibuprofen, or acetaminophen are usually sufficient to treat them. Experts believe these may be caused by the contraction of neck and scalp muscles (including in response to stress), and possibly changes in brain chemicals.
- **Rebound headaches:** Overuse of painkillers for headaches can, ironically, lead to rebound headaches. Culprits include over-the-counter medications like aspirin, acetaminophen (Tylenol), or ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil), as well as prescription drugs. One theory is that too much medication can cause the brain to shift into an excited state, triggering more headaches. Another is that rebound headaches are a symptom of withdrawal as the level of medicine drops in the bloodstream.
- **Cluster headaches:** Cluster headaches, which affect more men than women, are recurring headaches that occur in groups or cycles. They appear suddenly and are characterized by severe, debilitating pain on one side of the head, and are often accompanied by a watery eye and nasal congestion or a runny nose on the same side of the face. During an attack, people often feel restless and unable to get comfortable; they

are unlikely to lie down, as someone with a migraine might. The cause of cluster headaches is unknown, but there may be a genetic component. There is no cure, but medication can cut the frequency and duration

- **Sinus headaches:** When a sinus becomes inflamed, often due to an infection, it can cause pain. It usually comes with a fever and can be diagnosed by symptoms or the presence of pus. Headaches due to sinus infection can be treated with antibiotics, as well as antihistamines or decongestants. But they tend to reoccur. Immune-modulator drugs and avoidance of cause is the cure.
- **Migraine:** It is the third most common and sixth most debilitating disease in the world, according to WHO. In India, migraine is the most common type of headache.
- **Trigeminal neuralgia:** It is a neurological vascular and muscular problem. The pain is sharp and confined to the distribution of nerves.

Ayurvedic management of Shiro Roga Shiro Roga can be managed effectively by following these principles –

1. Nidana parivarjana – Avoidance of causative factors.

2. Procedural therapies

- **Anantavata** – Nasya (Nasal Errhines), Upanaha (Wrapping around with hotter objects), Shiravedha (Blood-letting) along with Vata & Pitta nashaka treatment.^[3-4]
- **Ardhavabhedhaka** – Milk with sugar, Coconut water with sugar, only cold Water orally or Nasya with cow's ghee can be administered to the patient. Use of purified Arsenic (in very small quantities) only in between the bouts of headache.
- **Suryavarta** - Nasya, Shirolepa, Ghee with jaggery. If no response with it then Blood-letting by Raktamokshana, followed by Nasya with Milk-ghee along with Virechaka (Purgative) medicine with Milk and ghee. Juice (Swarasa) of Bhringaraja (Eclipta alba) with goat's milk in equal quantities can be orally given.

3. Following medicines may be used judiciously in the management of shiro roga –

- **Rasa Yoga (Herbomineral Preparations):** Dose 125 mg to 250 mg, Anupana : Honey / Lukewarm water Shirashooladi Vajra Rasa, Shirovajra Rasa, Chandrakanta Rasa, Mahalaxmi Vilas Rasa
- **Kwatha (Decoctions):** Dose 20 ml, Anupana – Simple Water Pathyadi Kwatha, Dashmoola Kwatha

- Shirolepa (Pastes to be applied over head) – Kumkum ghrita Lepa, Sarvadi Lepa, Suryavartabeeja lepa, Satavaryadi lepa
- Shiroabhyanga (Massage over head) Dashmoola taila, Mahamayura Ghrita
- Nasya Karma Therapy (Nasal Insuffalations)

In the Nasya Karma Therapy the drug is administered through nostrils. Nasya is considered to be very effective remedy in Urdavajatrugata Vikaras (ENT Disorders). The drugs commonly used in Nasya therapy include – Taila (Oils) / Ghrita (Medicated Butter) Swarasa (Juices) / Kwatha (Decoctions) Shadabindu Taila, Shirishaya, Avapida, Anu Taila, Dashmoola Kwatha, Dashmoola Taila, Bhringaraja Juice, Gunja Taila, Goat Milk, Kumkuma Ghrita, Gau ghrita.

Dose – Oils / ghrita 6 to 8 drops in each nostril

Juice / Kwatha 2 to 5 ml. in each nostril

Ahara (Diet) – Vihara (Lifestyle)

Pathaya (Compatible) – Excessive use of Ghrita, Taila, Vasa, Majja, Jangala, Mansa Rasa, Milk with Sugar, Patola, Amalki, Coconut Water, Takra, Kanji, Ghevara, Sweet dishes like Jalebi and khira etc.

Yoga – Meditation, Pranayama, (Anuloma and Viloma) and light exercises.

Apathya (Incompatible) – Skipping meals (Upvasa), eating during indigestion, suppression of natural urges, excessive sexual acts, day time sleeping, direct exposure to bright sun and cold air, beverages like coffee, cold drinks, junk foods, chocolates, & pickles etc.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Headache is the most common reason for seeking medical help. Many dietetic factors, environmental, personal and climatic factors will influence the shirashoola. Nasya is a safe and effective remedy for the management of Shirashoola. Ayurvedic treatment modality as a safe and effective remedy for the management of Shirashoola.

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