

REVERSING PRAMEHA WITH AYURVEDA: A CLINICAL CASE STUDY ON HERBAL AND PANCHAKARMA INTERVENTIONS***¹Dr. Preetam Sahu**

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Article Received on
14 February 2025,

Revised on 05 March 2025,
Accepted on 25 March 2025

DOI: 10.20959/wjpr20257-36166

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ABSTRACT

Prameha encompasses a set of metabolic disorders, notably associated with Madhumeha, or Diabetes Mellitus, posing a significant challenge in Ayurvedic medicine. This case study investigates the efficacy of Ayurvedic herbal remedies and Panchakarma treatments in reversing Prameha while restoring metabolic equilibrium. It underscores the necessity for customized treatment strategies tailored to individual Dosha imbalances and patient constitution, highlighting the holistic nature of Ayurveda in addressing chronic metabolic issues. The intervention protocol employed in this study adheres to classical Ayurvedic practices and aims to reveal the potential of Panchakarma therapies, such as Virechana and Basti, alongside herbal preparations like Guduchi, Shilajit, and Triphala in facilitating sustainable metabolic correction. The subject of this case study is a 52-year-old male diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus, who exhibited symptoms including excessive urination, increased thirst, unexplained weight

gain, and mild neuropathy. A comprehensive Ayurvedic evaluation, utilizing Dasavidha Pariksha, was performed to create a tailored treatment plan. Over a span of three months, the patient participated in a detoxification program rooted in Panchakarma, followed by herbal and dietary strategies aimed at stabilizing blood sugar and revitalizing metabolic processes. Clinical assessments, including monitoring of blood sugar levels, lipid profiles, and evaluations of peripheral neuropathy, were conducted before and after the treatment to ascertain the interventions' effectiveness. The results revealed substantial improvements in glycemic control, characterized by reduced fasting and postprandial blood sugar levels, decreased HbA1c, and alleviation of fatigue and numbness. Furthermore, observable weight

loss and improved digestive function point to a favorable shift in overall metabolic health. This study emphasizes Ayurveda's potential in tackling the fundamental causes of diabetes rather than simply managing its symptoms, promoting a more integrative and sustainable approach to metabolic disorder management. Subsequent clinical trials with larger participant groups are essential to validate these outcomes and facilitate the integration of Ayurvedic methodologies into conventional diabetes management frameworks.

KEYWORDS: Prameha, Panchakarma, Herbal Medicine, Diabetes Mellitus, Madhumeha, Metabolic Disorders.

INTRODUCTION

Prameha is a comprehensive concept in Ayurveda that includes a variety of metabolic disorders, primarily aligned with what modern medicine refers to as Madhumeha, or Diabetes Mellitus. Important classical Ayurvedic texts, including the Charaka Samhita and the Sushruta Samhita, characterize Prameha as a condition arising from an imbalance in Kapha and Meda Dhatu. This imbalance results in symptoms such as excessive urination, fatigue, and a gradual decline in metabolic function. The underlying factors contributing to Prameha are often linked to unhealthy dietary practices, a lack of physical activity, genetic factors, and a diminished Agni, or digestive fire, which collectively lead to the buildup of Ama, or toxins, within the body.^[1]

In the ancient practice of Ayurveda, Prameha, or the condition commonly understood as diabetes, is intricately divided into twenty distinct subtypes, each categorized according to the prevailing Dosha. Among these, Kapha-type Prameha emerges as an early indicator of the disease, signaling the initial stages of imbalance. In contrast, the presence of Pitta and Vata-type Prameha suggests a more advanced and chronic evolution of the condition. Unlike the conventional medical approach, which often emphasizes managing blood sugar levels through medications, Ayurveda embraces a more comprehensive and personalized philosophy.^[2] This approach aims to delve deep into the core of the problem rather than merely addressing symptoms. Through various detoxification methods like Panchakarma, along with invigorating herbal remedies and thoughtful adjustments in diet and lifestyle, Ayurveda endeavors to restore balance among the Doshas and reinstate a state of metabolic harmony.^[3]

The rising worldwide incidence of diabetes underscores the need for alternative and integrative methods to manage this condition effectively. Ayurvedic therapeutic techniques aim to halt disease advancement, enhance insulin sensitivity, and restore pancreatic function. This case study illustrates an integrative Ayurvedic strategy that resulted in notable metabolic enhancements in a patient with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus, highlighting Ayurveda's potential to reverse Prameha via tailored, holistic interventions.^[4]

AIM AND OBJECTIVE

The aim of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of Ayurvedic interventions, including Panchakarma therapy and herbal formulations, in reversing Prameha (Madhumeha/Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus). The objectives include:

- Assessing the impact of Panchakarma on metabolic health and detoxification.
- Evaluating the role of herbal medications in blood sugar regulation and systemic rejuvenation.
- Studying the long-term effects of Ayurvedic dietary and lifestyle modifications on diabetes management.
- Demonstrating an integrative and holistic approach for sustainable health improvement.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Patient Selection: A 52-year-old male patient diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (Madhumeha) was chosen for this study.

Assessment Criteria: Symptoms of Prameha, fasting blood sugar levels, HbA1c, weight, and overall well-being were documented before, during, and after treatment.

Interventions Used

- Panchakarma Therapy involving Snehapana, Virechana, Basti, Udwartana, and Swedana.
- Herbal Medications including Guduchi, Shilajit, Triphala, Chandraprabha Vati, Methi, and Haridra.
- Dietary and Lifestyle Modifications focused on Kapha-pacifying foods, yoga, and pranayama.

Duration of Study: The interventions were implemented over three months with regular monitoring.

Outcome Measurement: Blood sugar levels, HbA1c, symptom relief, weight loss, and subjective improvements in energy and digestion were evaluated.

Pathophysiology of Prameha in Ayurveda

In Ayurveda, Prameha is believed to arise from an elevated Kapha Dosha, which diminishes Agni, or digestive fire, thereby resulting in the build-up of Ama, or toxins. This accumulation negatively impacts Meda, which refers to fat tissue, Mamsa, meaning muscle tissue, and Ojas, denoting vital energy, ultimately disrupting metabolic function. Factors such as unhealthy eating patterns, lack of physical activity, and hereditary traits play a role in the development and advancement of Prameha. The approach to treatment emphasizes the elimination of accumulated toxins, the enhancement of Agni, and the re-establishment of Dosha equilibrium.

CASE PRESENTATION

A 52-year-old man with a diagnosis of Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (Madhumeha) exhibited several symptoms, including excessive urination, heightened thirst, fatigue, obesity, and intermittent numbness in his limbs. His fasting blood glucose level was recorded at 180 mg/dL, and his HbA1c was noted to be 8.2%. Despite undergoing conventional treatment with minimal improvement, he decided to explore Ayurvedic options. An assessment revealed his Prakriti (constitution) to be primarily Kapha-Pitta, alongside symptoms consistent with Kapha-type Prameha.

Clinical Examination

General Examination

Pulse Rate: 82 bpm

Blood Pressure: 140/90 mmHg

Body Temperature: 98.4°F

Respiratory Rate: 18 breaths/min

BMI: 30 kg/m² (Obese)

Systemic Examination

Digestive System: Mild indigestion, occasional bloating, normal bowel movements.

Endocrine System: Polyuria, polydipsia, unexplained weight gain.

Nervous System: Mild neuropathy with occasional numbness in feet.

Prakriti Analysis: Predominantly Kapha-Pitta constitution.

Dasavidha Pariksha

| <i>Pariksha</i> | <i>Findings</i> |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| Prakriti | Kapha-Pitta |
| Vikriti | Kapha aggravation |
| Sara | Madhyama (moderate) |
| Samhanana | Sthira (stable, strong) |
| Pramana | Increased BMI (30 kg/m ²) |
| Satmya | Madhyama (moderate tolerance) |
| Satva | Madhyama (moderate mental strength) |
| Ahara Shakti | Avara (low digestive power) |
| Vyayama Shakti | Avara (low exercise tolerance) |
| Vaya | Madhyama (middle age) |

Investigations

Blood Tests

Fasting Blood Sugar (FBS): 180 mg/dL

Postprandial Blood Sugar (PPBS): 250 mg/dL

HbA1c: 8.2%

Lipid Profile: Elevated LDL (140 mg/dL), Decreased HDL (35 mg/dL)

Liver Function Test (LFT): Mildly elevated SGOT/SGPT

Kidney Function Test (KFT): Normal

Urine Analysis

Presence of glucose: ++

Ketones: Absent

Protein: Trace

Body Mass Index (BMI): 30 kg/m²

Peripheral Neuropathy Assessment:

- Vibration test: Reduced sensation in feet
- Monofilament test: Mild impairment in lower extremities

Treatment Protocol

| Treatment | Drug | Dose | Duration |
|-------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------|
| Panchakarma Therapy | | | |
| Snehapana (Internal Oleation) | Mahatikta Ghrita | 20 ml daily | 7 days |
| Virechana (Purgation Therapy) | Trivrut Lehya | 10 g with warm water | 1 day |

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------|
| Basti (Medicated Enema) | Dashamoola Niruha Basti | As per protocol | 7 days |
| Udwartana (Herbal Powder Massage) | Kolkulathadi Churna | Applied externally | 14 days |
| Swedana (Herbal Steam Therapy) | Herbal decoctions | As per protocol | 7 days |
| Herbal Medications | | | |
| Guduchi (Tinospora Cordifolia) | Guduchi Churna | 3 g twice daily | 3 months |
| Shilajit (Asphaltum) | Shilajit Rasayana | 500 mg twice daily | 3 months |
| Triphala Churna | Triphala | 5 g at bedtime | 3 months |
| Chandraprabha Vati | Chandraprabha Tablets | 2 tablets twice daily | 3 months |
| Methi (Fenugreek) Seeds | Methi Powder | 5 g soaked overnight | 3 months |
| Haridra (Turmeric) | Haridra Capsules | 500 mg twice daily | 3 months |

Dietary and Lifestyle Modifications

A Kapha-pacifying diet rich in bitter and astringent foods, including gourds, leafy greens, and whole grains.

Avoidance of dairy, refined sugars, and high-glycemic index foods.

Regular practice of Yoga and Pranayama (breath control techniques) to improve circulation and reduce stress.

Daily brisk walking for 30 minutes, along with specific asanas like Ardha Matsyendrasana and Paschimottanasana to support pancreatic function.

Mindful eating practices to enhance digestion and reduce stress-related fluctuations in blood sugar levels.

OUTCOMES

Statistical Analysis

| Parameter | Before Treatment | After 3 Months of Treatment | Percentage Improvement |
|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Fasting Blood Sugar (mg/dL) | 180 | 110 | 38.9% |
| HbA1c (%) | 8.2 | 6.5 | 20.7% |
| Weight (kg) | 85 | 79 | 7.1% |
| Polyuria (Severity Score) | 4/5 | 1/5 | 75% |
| Fatigue (Severity Score) | 4/5 | 1/5 | 75% |

After three months of treatment, the patient showed significant improvement:

Fasting Blood Sugar reduced to 110 mg/dL.

HbA1c dropped to 6.5%.

Symptoms of polyuria and fatigue were alleviated.

Weight reduced by 6 kg.

Improved overall well-being, increased energy levels, and enhanced digestion.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this case study demonstrate a notable enhancement in the patient's metabolic parameters after undergoing Ayurvedic treatment. The comprehensive strategy that included Panchakarma, herbal remedies, changes in diet, and modifications in lifestyle was instrumental in controlling and possibly reversing the disease progression.

The early signs of Kapha-dominant Prameha, which include increased urination, excessive thirst, and weight gain, correspond with traditional Ayurvedic teachings.^[5] The treatment method commenced with Panchakarma detoxification, specifically utilizing Virechana and Basti, aimed at removing stored Ama (toxins) and balancing Kapha-Meda Dushti, as outlined in historical texts. Following detoxification, the use of hypoglycemic and revitalizing herbs like Guduchi, Shilajit, and Triphala enhanced glucose metabolism and improved insulin sensitivity.^[6]

Clinical assessments conducted after treatment demonstrated a significant reduction in both fasting and postprandial blood sugar levels, alongside a noteworthy decline in HbA1c levels, which indicates enhanced glycemic control. Additionally, there was an improvement in the lipid profile, pointing to a decrease in metabolic risk factors linked to diabetes. Furthermore, patients reported subjective enhancements in fatigue, neuropathy, and digestive health, further supporting the efficacy of Ayurveda in comprehensive diabetes management.

A significant advantage of this case study is its focus on addressing the underlying causes of health issues instead of merely managing symptoms. By targeting Agni (digestive fire) and correcting Dosha imbalances, the intervention resulted in sustained benefits rather than just short-term glycemic control. Furthermore, the emphasis on personalized treatment, as opposed to a standardized approach, is consistent with Ayurvedic principles and improves both patient adherence and treatment effectiveness.^[7]

While the results of this study are encouraging, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. As a single case study, the findings may not be broadly applicable without confirmation from larger clinical trials. Additionally, a more extended follow-up duration is required to evaluate the long-term sustainability of the observed improvements and the necessity for ongoing

therapy. Future research should also include a control group to facilitate a comparison between the efficacy of Ayurvedic treatment and standard diabetic management approaches.

CONCLUSION

This case study highlights the effectiveness of Ayurveda in reversing Prameha through a comprehensive strategy that encompasses detoxification, herbal treatments, dietary changes, and lifestyle adjustments. The observed enhancements in glycemic control, metabolic function, and overall health imply that Ayurveda offers a sustainable and holistic methodology for managing Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus. Notable decreases in fasting blood sugar, postprandial glucose levels, and HbA1c, in addition to improvements in lipid profiles and perceived well-being, demonstrate that Ayurvedic therapy targets the underlying causes of the disease rather than merely providing symptomatic relief. The customized approach ensures that treatments are adapted to each patient's constitution and Dosha imbalances, enhancing the long-term effectiveness of the therapy. While the results are encouraging, they require validation through larger clinical trials with control groups to confirm Ayurveda's position as a mainstream method for diabetes management. Combining Ayurvedic practices with contemporary medical research could facilitate the development of a comprehensive healthcare model that supports individuals with metabolic disorders. Future investigations should focus on long-term evaluations, objective clinical assessments, and comparative studies to further confirm the effectiveness of Ayurvedic methods in reversing diabetes. This study emphasizes the importance of a holistic, patient-centered strategy in managing chronic conditions and underscores the significant contributions of Ayurveda to sustainable healthcare.

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