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Role of *Kshoudra* in *Agnikarma*

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ABSTRACT

Sushruta known as father of surgery has described various procedures along with some parasurgical measures. *Agnikarma* is one amongst these parasurgical procedures. *Agnikarma* has been given special place in surgery by *Sushruta* and it is believed that disease treated by *Agnikarma* never reoccurs. Based on the specific heat retention and transmission capacity *Acharya* prescribed different materials like *Pippali* (*Piper longum*), *Ajasakruth* (goat's excreta), *Godantha* (cow's teeth), *Shara* (arrow), *Shalaka* (metal rods), *Kshoudra* (honey) etc. For *Agnikarma* on specific body parts. *Kshoudra* is one among them used to treat diseases situated in *Sira*, *Snayu*, *Sandhi*, *Asthi*.^[1] The mechanism of action of *Agnikarma* is still obscure. *Agnikarma* act on a multi-factorial level in the body. Mainly it is indicated in the diseases caused by *Vata* and *Kapha* because of its *Tikshna* (quick action), *Ushna* (hotness), *Sookshma* (subtle), *Vyavayi* (quick spreading), *Vikashi* (works without being metabolised) properties to remove *Srotorodha* (obstruction in channels of body). *Agnikarma* with *Kshoudra* was not widely practiced. This paper deals with details of *Agnikarma* with *Kshoudra* and its utility.

Key words: *Agnikarma*, *Kshoudra*, *Daha*, para-surgical measures

INTRODUCTION

Shalya Chikitsa or surgery is among eight branches of *Ayurveda*. This branch comes under *Dhanwantariya Sampradaya* and one of the two main schools of *Ayurveda*, was founded by *Divodasa Dhanwantari*. It was later developed by his student the great *Maharishi Sushruta*. *Sushruta* mentioned different methods of management of diseases, such as *Bheshaja Karma*, *Kshara Karma*, *Agnikarma*, *Shastra Karma* and *Raktamoshana*. *Agnikarma* means application of *Agni* directly or indirectly with the help of different materials to relieve the patient from disease.

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He has also explained that the diseases treated with *Agnikarma* modality don't reoccur. The approach of *Agnikarma* has been mentioned in the context of diseases like *Arshas Arbuda*, *Bhangandara*, *Sira*, *Snayu*, *Asthi*, *Sandhigata Vata Vikaras* and *Gridhrasi*.^[2] Based on the part where *Agnikarma* has to be done and the ability of a material to retain and transmit heat energy, different instruments (*Dahanopakarana*) are enumerated by the ancient physicians. Substances which can retain less heat energy and can transmit lesser amount of heat energy are indicated for skin (*Twak Dagdha*) like *Pippali*, *Ajasakrut*, *Godantha*, *Sara*, *Shalaka*. Substances which can retain more heat energy and can transmit it to further deep layers are used for burning the muscles, tendons and ligaments. For e.g. *Jambavoshtha* and metals are used for transmitting the heat energy to the level of muscles and *Kshoudra*, *Guda* and other viscous materials like oil, fat etc. are used to transmit the heat energy to ligaments, tendons or blood vessels.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the classic texts, various forms of *Dahanopakarana* have been described with greater clarity.

Dahanopakarana refers to accessories used for the *Agnikarma* process. Each of these accessories has its unique property and application in *Dahanopakarana*.

Sushruta Samhita

Acharya Sushruta has listed the materials according to the site of *Agnikarma*. For *Twakgatha Vyadhi - Pippali, Ajasakrut, Godanta, Shara, Shalaka*, for *Mamsagatha Vyadhi - Jambhavsta Shalaka* and other Metals and for *Sira, Snayu, Sandhi* and *Asthigatha Vyadhi - Madhu, Guda* and *Sneha* were mentioned. *Dalhana* in his commentary on *Sushruta Samhita* mentioned *Kshoudra* in diseases caused by the vitiation of *Vata* and *Kapha* in *Sira, Snayu, Sandhi* and *Asthi* sites. There only he mentioned other's opinion also. *Acharya Kasyapa* mentioned *Kshoudra* has to be use in cases of excessive bleeding occurred due to *Chedana* of *Sira, Snayu* etc., not in *Vyadhi's* in these sites. He also mentioned with *Mamsadaha* only diseases of *Sira, Snayu* etc. get cured. *Acharya Bhadrasonaka* has the opinion that with *Twakdaha* only, diseases on *Twak* and *Mamsa* subsides. By *Mamsadaha* only diseases on *Sira, Snayu, Sandhi* and *Asthi* subsides.^[3]

Ashtanga Hridaya

Acharya Vagbhata has listed the materials according to the site of *Agnikarma*. For *Twakdaha, Varti, Godantha, Suryakantha, Shara* etc. and for *Mamsadaha, Madhu, Sneha, Jambavoshta, Guda* etc. are mentioned. *Acharya* mentioned that for the *Dahana* of *Sira, Snayu, Sandhi, Asthi* we can use the same materials used for *Mamsadaha*. Hence according to *Acharya Vagbhata*, *Kshoudra* can be used for both *Mamsadaha* and *Siradi Daha*. *Mamsadaha* is indicated in diseases such as *Arshas, Bhagandhara, Granthi, Nadivrana, Dustavrana* etc.^[4]

Charaka Samhita

Acharya Charaka given detail description of *Agnikarma*. It comes under 36 *Upakarmas* of *Vrana* in the chapter of "*Dwivraniya Chikitsa*". He mentioned *Agnikarma* with *Kshoudra* in *Vrana*, which is *Kapha Dosh Pradhana* and is mild one. Advised to do in *Asukmara* patients.^[5]

Ashtanga Samgraha

In *Samgraha Acharya* mentioned materials for *Agnikarma* according to site and also, he mentioned diseases where we have to do *Agnikarma*. For *Twakdaha, Godantha, Suryakantha, Shara* etc. and for *Mamsadaha Jambavoshta, Suchi, Shalaka, Ghrita, Guda Madhu, Madhuchista, Taila, Vasa, Hema, Tamra, Rupyta* etc. are mentioned. For *Siradi Daha - Jambavoshta, Suchi, Shalaka, Madhu, Madhuchista, Guda* etc. are indicated.

Madhu mentioned in both *Mamsadaha* and *Sira Snayu Sandhi Asthi Daha*. *Mamsadaha* is mentioned in diseases such as *Granthi, Arbuda, Arshas, Bhagandara, Gandamala, Slipada, Antravidhi, Dustavrana, Puyalasaka*. *Siradi Daha* mentioned in *Sira-Snayu-Sandhi-Asthi Cheda Sonita Atipravarthi, Dantanadi, Slistavartma, Upapakshma, Lagana, Liganasa*.^[6]

Properties of Kshoudra

Kshoudra comes under *Madhuvarga*. It is *Madhuram Kashya Anurasam, Rooksha Seetam, Laghu*. It causes *Agnideepanam, Varnyam, Swaryam, Vajeekarana*. It has *Lekhana, Sandhana, Ropana, Chakusyaya, Prasadana Karma*. It can enter *Sookshmamarga*. It has *Prasammana* effect on diseases such as *Medo, Meha, Hikka Swasa, Kasa, Atisara, Chardi, Trishna, Krimi* and *Visha*. By the *Usna* quality of *Kshoudra* it pacifies both *Vata* and *Kapha*. By the *Laghu, Ruksha* and *Sukshma* properties it alleviates *Kapha*.^[7]

Physical analysis of Kshoudra

Kshoudra was experimented for its boiling point by academicians for their research work.^[8] A direct method was resorted for the purpose, which involved temperature measurement using a laboratory thermometer. The boiling point of the sample was determined to be 140°C. Because on further heating *Kshoudra* gets charred. Therefore, it may be considered that *Kshoudra* heated upto its boiling point is to be used for *Agnikarma*, as further heating causes charring and renders its unusable. On removing the heat source, a gradual dissipation of temperature was noted at a rate of 2°C per minute for a period of 3-4 minutes under atmospheric conditions. After this short

initial duration there was a gradual and almost constant dissipation of heat about 6° to 8°.

Procedure of Agnikarma

The procedure of *Agnikarma* consisted of 1. *Purva Karma*, 2. *Pradhana Karma*, 3. *Pascata Karma*

Purva Karma

The patient should be on *Snigdha* and *Pichila* diet before *Agnikarma*. *Agropaharaniya* should be done along with well-prepared minor OT. Sterile Sponge holding forceps, Cotton pieces, Drape, *Kshoudra*, Steel dish, Borosil pipette and *Madhu Ghruta* mixture should be kept ready. The patient should lie over the procedure table. The area of *Agnikarma* should be cleaned and the area of maximum tenderness should be palpated, then marked with skin marker.

Pradhana Karma

The heated *Kshoudra* should be taken in a container which can bear the high temperature, which has minimum heat absorption and can provide a steady and interrupted (as drops) flow of *Kshoudra*. We can use a Borosil glass pipette for the same. The *Tapta Kshoudra* should be sucked using Borosil glass pipette, poured on the pre-determined site and wiped off after a 1 minute. At least 1/2 inch gaping should be maintained between the *Dagdha Stana*.

Pascata Karma

A mixture of *Madhu* and *Ghruta* has to be applied immediately after *Agnikarma*. *Pathya* - *Apathya* according to *Susrutacharya* for *Vruna* has to be advised.^[9]

Importance of Agnikarma

Acharya Sushruta and *Acharya Vagbhata* have both given superior place to *Agnikarma* as compared to *Kshara karma* among *Dahana Kriyas* that are used for the treatment of various diseases. Because cases treated with *Agnikarma*, chances of recurrence are not present.^[10] It is supposed to have effect of sterilization. It causes coagulation and closure of bleeding vessels and thus helps haemostasis. *Agnikarma* eradicates disease from its root and so considered to be superior.

It shows *Shamaka* effects on both *Vata* and *Kapha Doshas*.

Effects of Agnikarma

It increases metabolism, blood circulation, decreases pain, stimulates nerves, relax muscles, decreases infection, joint stiffness and inflammation.

DISCUSSION

Mode of Action

Agnikarma is considered as the most preferred therapy to pacify vitiated *Vata Dosh* with or without *Anubandha* of *Kapha*, by virtue of the properties that *Agni* possess viz, *Usna*, *Tiksna*, *Suksma*, *Asukari Guna*. These *Guna* are opposite to the properties of *Vata* and *Kapha*. *Kshoudra* when employed for *Agnikarma*, *Kshoudra* owing to its higher Latent heat (heat retention capacity of sticky liquids are high) can effect a greater variation in the temperature of the tissue surface in contact with the molten honey and also that of the subsequent layers. Eventually the heat penetration will be always be higher when such liquids are used for *Agnikarma*.

Due to *Usna*, *Tiksna*, *Suksma*, *Asukari Guna* it removes the *Srotrodha* and pacify the vitiated *Vata* and *Kapha Dosh* and maintain equilibrium. It increases the blood circulation to the affected site. More blood circulation flushes away the pain producing substances and patient gets relief from symptoms. The therapeutic heat also increases the *Dhatvagni*, which cause *Amapacana*. Further it can be endorsed that the heat pacifies the *Sheeta Guna* of *Vata* and *Kapha Dosh*.

Agnikarma using *Kshoudra* like substances is considered to aid the penetration of heat through *Sukshma Sira*. By the *Usna* quality of *Kshoudra* it pacifies both *Vata* and *Kapha*. By the *Laghu*, *Ruksha* and *Sukshma* properties it alleviates *Kapha*.

CONCLUSION

Agnikarma is a para surgical modality indicated in the management of diseases having *Vata* and *Kapha* predominance and also in conditions of *Atyugra Ruj*. *Agnikarma* with *Kshoudra*, *Guda*, *Sneha* are indicated in diseases of *Sira*, *Snayu*, *Sandhi* and *Asthi*. *Agnikarma*

can be conducted at the O.P level with the patient requiring no hospital stay. It is a simple procedure, has very less and easily manageable complications and cost effective. *Kshoudra* heated upto its boiling point is to be used for *Agnikarma*, as further heating causes charring and renders its unusable. *Kshoudra* being a sticky liquid has a high latent heat and hence will induce better heat penetration. *Agnikarma* using *Kshoudra* like substances is considered to aid the penetration of heat through *Sukshma Sira*. By the *Ushna* quality of *Kshoudra* it pacifies both *Vata* and *Kapha*. By the *Laghu*, *Ruksha* and *Sukshma* properties it alleviates *Kapha*.

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