



ISSN 2456-3110

Vol 2 · Issue 2

Mar-Apr 2017

Journal of
**Ayurveda and Integrated
Medical Sciences**

www.jaims.in

JAIMS



Charaka
Publications

Indexed

Repetitive Strain Injuries (RSI) - An Ayurvedic Approach

Ashok Naiker

Associate Professor, P.G. Dept.of Shalyatantra, N.K. Jabshetty Ayurvedic Medical College and P.G. Center, Bidar, Karnataka, India.

ABSTRACT

Repetitive strain injury, a new term of the last years, is used for a broad class of injury to the musculoskeletal and nervous system, which affects people's ability to work and live normally without pain. This occupational disease is not well known because it takes the form of disorders named after the part of body affected such as arms, hands, neck and shoulder attributed to perform a repetitive task such as typing, clicking a mouse, writing/computer in the work place that require long periods if repetitive motions in a fixed posture. Neck (Cervical spondylitis), arm, hands (tennis elbow, carpal tunnel syndrome, back strain, bursitis etc). The common factor is that RSI may cause by overuse or strain of certain tissues of the muscles and tendon. Number of treatment principle mentioned and practiced in allied sciences like self care system consisting of personal food therapy, herbal remedies, *Panchakarma* and medication techniques, medicated oils and psychological guidance from *Ayurvedic* system of medicines.

Key words: RSI, Neuromuscular, Computer related disorders, Marma Chikitsa.

INTRODUCTION

RSI New Phenomenon and similar old disorder

RSI is a potentially debilitating condition resulting from over using the hands to perform a repetitive task such as upper limbs including the shoulders, neck and the back. It can also affect the lower limbs, such as the legs and feet. This occupational diseases is not well known because it takes the form of disorders named after the part of the body affected such as tennis elbow, gulf war syndrome, carpal tunnel syndrome, cumulative trauma syndrome, spondylitis,

tendinitis, chronic back strain, bursitis etc. the common factor is that RSI may cause by over use or strain of certain tissues of the muscles and tendon mostly due to short cyclic movements repetitive and continuously. One can multiple areas of diffuse pain in the neuromusculature and other soft tissues with multiple areas of diffuse pain in the neuromusculature and other soft tissues with multiple occurrences at the same time.^[1]

Factors influencing the RSI

By starting the year 2015 there is a large number of RSI victims in the modern societies, who are chronically afflicted with the RSI syndrome because of the computer keyboard and mouse in there job situation. According to Indian bureau of labour RSI is now responsible for 75%, what has caused this epidemic disorder in the last decades. Ironically the computer is increasingly sophisticated tool we have developed the last decades to help us in our daily job. It seems that the technological revolution the last part of the past century has outpaced human evolution.^[2] Muscles were made to work efficiently: they not meant to be overstrained or made to work

Address for correspondence:

Dr. Ashok Naiker

Associate Professor, P.G. Dept.of Shalyatantra,
N.K. Jabshetty Ayurvedic Medical College and P.G. Center, Bidar.
E-mail: dranaikar@rediffmail.com

Submission Date : 05/03/2017 Accepted Date: 25/04/2017

Access this article online

Quick Response Code



Website: www.jaims.in

DOI: 10.21760/jaims.v2i2.7722

repetitively without appropriate rest. Biologically the computer users are not equipped to perform thousands of repetitive motions in short time with the fingers, pulse and elbow. There are two general reasons keeps RSI complaints first one is the extra tension and the second is the excessive use in repetitive movements for long period of the muscles in the parts of the upper limbs. Factors increasing the risk of RSI are stable and improper posture of working, environment, stress, and heavy workload, type of personality, nerves damages and avility for chronic diseases. Improper food emotional misbalance and unsuitable life style influence the symptoms rapidly. Every computer applicator is defect to be prolonged and to get this ailment on job.

Symptoms and Progress

The indications of the RSI is numbness, trembling and burning in the thumb, finger below followed by symptoms in the shoulders, neck, back, leg and feet. The repetitive strain injuries are category of injuries involving damage to muscles, tendons, tissues and nerves. The RSI develop slowly over time and can grow into a permanent disability. Mostly the complaints start at thumb and forefinger, hand, pulse, arm or elbow from when they often expands rapidly. Once the injuries have occurred, they tend to get worse easily if not treated in time.

The RSI complaints are divided into 3 phases.

In the first phase - Fatigue, stiffness, numbness, tingling, weakness, nerve-irritation, sometime in combination with light or sharp pains that disappear, overnight but returns easily when similar works done.

In the second phase - the problems do not disappear overnight. Continuous light pain, also after a period of rest stays. After a longer period of rest the pain goes away but returns easily when similar work is done.

In the third phase - the pain is continuous after combined with reduced strength and less accurate control. At work the pain intensified, when rested, the pain remains in serious cases. Patients wake up at night or cannot sleep because of the pain. Other symptoms in this phase are tenderness, burning and cold sensation, fever, weakness, spasm, bump,

swelling and red skin and some psychological and emotional disabilities can appear. Then a life without pain is not possible and one can become cripples and life time handicapped, if the medical care was not been properly taken.^[3]

Due to a multitude of potential risk factors for getting RSI, yet the current research has not provided a clear explanation or a consensus on the etiology of the RSI. Still today, there is no effective solution for this ailment in the modern health care. Yet, researchers still do emphasize the importance of preventative strategy and early diagnosis, because they have no effective remedies for RSI in last phase today.

Acharya Sushruta's approach

Comprehending the etiology of the RSI – we found an answer in *sushruta samhita* – approach of the vital energy points of the body (*Marmas*). In *Shareera Sthana* we find that – the discourse on the *Sira* which specially treats of the *Marmas*. There are one hundred and seven *Marmas* in the human body which may be divided into 5 classes such as *Mamsa*, *Sira*, *Snayu*, *Asthi* and *Sandhi Marmas*. There different number are 11- *Mamsa*, 41 *Siras*, 27 *Snayu*, 8 *Asthi Marmas* and 20 *Sandhi Marmas*. He named all the *Marmas* located on the body arts and mentioned the remarkable point,^[4] a piercing of the *Kshipra Marma* (vital point of feet and hand) ends in an instantaneous death or death may follow at a later time. The *Marmas* are the vital points of the body form the seats of life called as '*Prana*' and hence a hurt to any one of the *Marmas* invariably produces such symptoms. The most important view for our RSI treatment is the *Vayu* aggravated by an injury to a *Marma*, blocks up in their entire course throughout the body and gives rise to great pain which extends all over the body. We have the idea now that the RSI fundamentally is caused by the aggravated *Vayu* in the channels(*Srotus*) and *Marmas* beyond the affected part of the body. The aggravation causes obstruction that impede the circulation of the vital energies. Under these circumstances the '*Ama*' increases in the body cells and that caused the RSI complaints rapidly. Draining (*Shodhana*) of the *Srotus*

which restores the circulation system of the body and affected *Marmas* including the body parts. So we are able to reap the ancient knowledge settled up by *Acharya Sushruta* who was the founder of the current surgery.^[5]

Pilot Study

Looking forward to have a proper treatment for the RSI complaints the *Ayurvedic* treatment finds a solution in the ancient *Ayurveda*. Especially the *Marma* concept of *Sushruta* allows improving a proper solution for this phenomenon. In the last year the Sri Siddharudha Charitable hospital – A unit of NKJ Ayurvedic Medical college and P.G.Centre Bidar, Karnataka, India set up a pilot study within a program of self care method was included for RSI patients in the III-phase. A self care system consisting of personal food therapy, herbal medicines, *Panchakarma* and medication techniques medicated oil and psychological guidance from SSC Hospital. The first period of six weeks the patient needed three consultations of 90 minutes to get instructions and training for carry out the therapy by him or herself. In the last six months almost two hundreds RSI patients in the third phase have been successfully treated. Within this *Ayurvedic* self care system, with in the 6 weeks the patient could start the former job for 50-60% again, while they were for 100% unemployment because of the RSI ailment.

The mean scope of this self care therapy includes the drain of 'Ama' (waste product and toxins) from the body cells and 'Srotus' (channels). The Srotus then become cleaner and could have a better circulation to restore the vital energies (*Tridosha*) in the cells (*Dhatu*) yet remarkable point is that the affected *Marmas* cure within the first period of six weeks; when pressing the affected *Marmas*, no pain was there. But in case the patient was suffering from emotional disabilities the curing process takes more time and supplementary remedies for *Vata* and *Pitta* elevation. This pilot study has shown that *Ayurveda* offers effective solutions for computer related disorders such as the RSI, if applied in a modern way of setting of self health care system.

DISCUSSION

In our hospital we have seen that the RSI complaints rapidly increase in persons when the tension, stress, workload and emotional disturbance occur. Under these circumstances the *Marmas* of the leg, arm, elbow, neck, shoulder and upper back become very hampered. The *Marmas* connected to the neuromusculature and tendon situated in the aeries where strain was applied, time to restore the *Marmas* is much longer and the process of curing is mostly diluted in the case of pulse diagnosis shows a vitiated *Vata Dosha*, even the patient has *Kapha Prakruti*.

The *Marma* in the affected region are getting less painful after oil message (*Abhyanga*) with acupressure in combination with *pranayama* exercise and steam therapy (*Swedana*). By treating the affected *Marmas* with medicated oils and steam techniques the blocked vital channels get open, so that the function of the *Marmas* restored totally. After six weeks a large part of the vital points feels pain by pressing with the fingers. By continuing the therapy during the next weeks the patient is relived from the painful injuries.

Additional treatment with food therapy and medicine (oral) is necessary for those person who are affected with disturbance in digestive systems (*Mandagni*). Patients with emotional imbalance a long period of stress suffers from *vata vridhhi* cure slowly. The *Marma* therapy in combination with the food therapy and herbal remedies and some yoga techniques seem to be very effective against RSI epidemic.

Through *Ayurveda* we are able to greatly restore the vital points and increase the possibilities of the patient.

CONCLUSION

The *Ayurvedic* self care system gives them the knowledge in support to adjust their diet, life style and the underlying emotional and mental conditions. The therapy generate more life energy, restore the effected *Marmas* and the function of the organs and limbs. It increases the possibilities of a person to maintain health against RSI so that the mankind can reap the jewels of the *Ayurveda* in the new millennium. Lastly co-operation is recommended for

study and research on this subject to provide sufficient material and method against the battle against RSI.

REFERENCES

1. Mayo Clinic [Internet]. Mayoclinic.org. 2017 [cited 25 February 2017]. Available from: <http://www.mayoclinic.org>
2. Labour Bureau Main Page [Internet]. Labourbureau.gov.in. 2017 [cited 25 February 2017]. Available from: <http://www.labourbureau.gov.inwww.betterhealth.vic.gov.au>
3. [Internet]. 2017 [cited 25 February 2017]. Available from: <http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au>

4. Kaviraj Dr.Ambika datta shastri, Susrutha Samhita, Shareera sthana, 6,3 Varanashi; Choukhamba Publications: edition 2014, page no.67.
5. Prof.J.N.Mishra, Marma and its management chapter 2, Choukhamba orientalia, Varanasi, edition 2013;p.27.

How to cite this article: Ashok Naiker. Repetitive Strain Injuries (RSI) - An Ayurvedic Approach. J Ayurveda Integr Med Sci 2017;2:170-173.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.21760/jaims.v2i2.7722>

Source of Support: Nil, **Conflict of Interest:** None declared.
