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# A conceptual understanding on the *Sannikrushta Nidana* of *Ardhavabhedaka* with special reference to Migraine

Deeksha R<sup>1</sup>, Abhijith H N<sup>2</sup>, Anuja K Simon<sup>3</sup>, S. Vidyasagar Badisa<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,3,4</sup>Final year PG Scholar, Department of Shalaky Tantra, SDM College of Ayurveda and Hospital, Hassan, Karnataka, India.

<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor, Department of Shalaky Tantra, SDM College of Ayurveda and Hospital, Hassan, Karnataka, India.

## ABSTRACT

*Ardhavabhedaka* is one of the *Shirorogas* characterized by severe pain in one half of the head. It is periodic in occurrence. If poorly treated or when not treated properly it can damage eyes and ears. As the etiology and symptoms of both *Ardhavabhedaka* and Migraine are similar, *Ardhavabhedaka* can be correlated to Migraine. Migraine makes an individual socially handicapped. It is a common medical condition of the adult population having a significant loss in job productivity and causes significant socio-economic impact. There is a need to prevent this condition at the earliest. It is important to understand the etiological factors, triggers and course of *Doshas* in *Ardhavabhedaka*. *Nidana Parivarjana* (getting rid of the causative factors) is the first line of treatment in all diseases. Hence this article is an attempt to thoroughly understand the *Sannikrushta Nidanas* of *Ardhavabhedaka* with special reference to Migraine.

**Key words:** *Ardhavabhedaka*, *migraine*, *Nidana*

## INTRODUCTION

*Ardhavabhedaka* is one among the 11 types of *Shiroroga*.<sup>[1]</sup> The word *Ardhavabhedaka* is a combination of three words. *Ardha* meaning half, *Ava* (*Antarbhage*) from within and *Bhedaka* meaning cutting type of pain. All Acharyas have explained its cardinal symptom as *Ardha Mastaka Vedana* i.e., pain in one half of the head. Pain is seen specifically in nape of neck, eyebrows, temples, ears and eyes. It will be like that of head being cut by a sharp weapon, or of churning<sup>[2]</sup> or pricking type.<sup>[3]</sup>

*Ardhavabhedaka* can be correlated to Migraine.

### Address for correspondence:

Dr. Deeksha R

Final year PG Scholar, Department of Shalaky Tantra, SDM College of Ayurveda and Hospital, Hassan, Karnataka, India.

E-mail: pg19165@sdmcahassan.org

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According to data from the World Health Organization, Migraine is the third most prevalent medical condition in the world, affecting 14.7% of the population annually.<sup>[4]</sup> It is the second most common cause of headache, it afflicts approximately 15% of women and 6% of men worldwide.<sup>[5]</sup> Its prevalence is the highest during young and middle adulthood and peaks between the age of 30 and 39, in this period 28.1 % of women and 9.0 % of men will suffer from migraine.<sup>[6]</sup>

Etiological factors include faulty practices like intake of *Rukshahara* (dry foods), *Adhyasana* (intake of food before proper digestion of previous meal), long term exposure to strong winds and mist, *Atimathuna* (excessive copulation), *Vegasandharana* (suppression of natural urges) and *Athivayama* (excessive exercise).<sup>[4]</sup> This disease when left untreated or when not treated properly will lead to damage of eyes and ears.<sup>[1]</sup> Hence it is important to treat it in the right way. This is based on proper understanding of *Sannikrushta Nidanas* of the disease.

### *Viprkrushta Nidana in Ardhavabhedaka*

- *Ruksha Ahara* (Consuming foods that are dry)
- *Adhyashana* (Consuming food even before previous meal is digested)

- *Atyashana* (Intake of food beyond one's capacity)
- *Ayasa* (excessive exertion)
- *Pragvata* (strong winds blowing from opposite direction)
- *Avashyaya* (exposure to mist)
- *Atimaitihuna* (indulgence in excessive sexual activity)
- *Vega Sandhara* (suppression of natural urges)

### Sannikrushta Nidana in Ardhavabhedaka

Different authors opine differently regarding the *Dosha* involved in the *Samprapti* of *Ardhavabhedaka*. All opinions have been clinically found in different cases of *Ardhavabhedaka*. Understanding the course of *Doshas* and the reason as to why it has triggered a headache is quite a challenging attempt.

The main *Dosha* involved in *Ardhavabhedaka* according to different authors

- According to *Charaka* - *Vata* or *Vata + Kapha*.
- According to *Sushruta* - *Tridoshaja*
- According to *Vagbhata* - *Vataja*
- According to *Dalhana* - *Vata + Pitta*
- According to *Vidya* - *Vata + Kapha*
- According to *Satyaki* - *Vataja*

1. **Kevala Vataja Ardhavabhedaka** - *Ardhavabhedaka* with the involvement of only *Vata Dosha* would probably be caused by *Ati Vriddhi* of *Vata Dosha* in the *Shiras*.

For instance,

**Aharaja Nidana - Ruksha Ahara** i.e., Excessive intake of pulses, millets, biscuits and inadequate intake of ghee, butter in food will lead to *Vata Prakopa* in the *Koshta*. This *Vata* can interfere with the process of *Ahara Rasa* formation. The *Rasa* and *Rakta Dhatu* which are getting formed might get vitiated by *Vata Dosha*. Such *Rasa* and *Rakta* when it reaches the *Shiras* might trigger pain resulting in *Ardhavabhedaka*.

One of the theories of pathophysiology of migraine i.e., vascular theory opines that the vasoconstriction

followed by a vasodilatation will trigger an adjacent nerve root resulting in pain. The *Rasa* and *Rakta* flowing together in a blood vessel which would have been vitiated by *Vata Dosha* would result in such pathology wherein there could be a sudden vasoconstriction by *Vata Dosha*. Hence triggering a *Kevala Vataja Ardhavabhedaka*.

**Viharaja Nidana - Pragvata** being one of the *Viharaja Nidana* of *Ardhavabhedaka* refers to the strong wind those precedes thunderstorms. Such winds have *Ruksha* property. On continuous exposure to such strong winds, it can result in *Vata Prakopa* in the *Shiras*. *Prakupita Vata* gives rise to pain. According to the American Migraine foundation, cold and dry air in the winter may result in dehydration and lead to migraine attacks. Also, a high barometric pressure of the wind might cause vasoconstriction and consecutive vasodilatation when the pressure drops down. This could trigger a migraine headache.

**Lack of sleep is one of the triggers of migraine.** Melatonin hormone helps in falling asleep. Low levels of melatonin have been linked to migraine. *Ratri Jagarana* according to Ayurveda results in *Vata Prakopa*. This *Vata* triggers a headache.

2. **Sakapha Vataja Ardhavabhedaka** - Here, the involvement of both *Kapha* and *Vata* is present. *Vidya* explains this *Samprapti* in detail. He says that *Vata* which is vitiated by its particular *Nidana* would be obstructed by *Kapha* and thus resulting in *Ardhavabhedaka* with symptoms such as *Sphutana* (bursting type of pain), *Dalana* (Splitting type of pain) and *Avadaarana* (Cracking type of pain).

For instance

**Atyashana** - Eating in excess quantity will lead to *Agnimandya* and *Ama Dosha*. *Kapha* gets vitiated because *Ama* and *Kapha* have similar properties. Similarity is a cause for increase. This vitiated *Kapha* blocks the minute *Srotas* in the *Shiras*, resulting in *Sthanika Vata Prakopa* and *Shirashoola*.

3. **Sapitta Vataja Ardhavabhedaka** - *Sapitta Vataja* line of *Samprapti* which *Dalhana* says is probably

an *Avaranajanya Samprapti* i.e., *Avarana* of *Vata Dosh* by *Pitta*. The *Lakshanas* told in the context of *Pittavruta Vata* like *Bhrama* (Dizziness), *Tama* (Blacking out), *Daha* (Burning sensation) and *Shoola* (Pain) can also be seen in cases of *Sapitta Vataja Ardhavabhedaka*. Due to the *Marga Aavarana* of *Vata Dosh* by *Pitta*, the *Rasaadi Dhatu Poshana* and its movement would be hampered and it might cause further *Vata Vruddhi* resulting in severe pain.

For instance

- **Adhyashana** - According to principles of Ayurveda, one should consume food only after the previous meal is completely digested. *Adhyashana* is an incorrect pattern of eating and will lead to formation of *Ama*(partially digested food). *Ama* reduces the strength of *Agni*, thus resulting in further formation and accumulation of *Ama*. This will lead to vitiation of all three *Doshas*. *Pitta* gets vitiated as the undigested food which stays in the *Amashaya* for a long time attains *Shukratva*(fermentation). *Shukta Ahara Rasa* will attain *Amlatva* and increase the *Drava Pitta* in the *Koshta*. This again leads to *Agnimandya* and further formation of *Vidagdha Pitta*. Later vitiated *Pitta* along with *Vata* lodges in the *Shiras*, resulting in *Shirashoola*.
- **Kshut Vegadharana** - *Kshut Vegadharana* (suppression of hunger) will result in *Prakopa* of *Vata* and *Pitta* which in due course might end up in *Ardhavabhedaka* when these attain *Sthanasamshraya* in *Shiras*.
- 4. **Tridoshaja Ardhavabhedaka** - *Tridoshaja Ardhavabhedaka* is probably because of combined vitiation of all three *Doshas*.

For instance

Exposure to *Avashyaya* will increase *Sthanika Kapha Dosh*. If a person who is doing *Adhyashana* and consuming *Ruksha Ahara* might have an increase of *Vata* and *Pitta Dosh* in the *Koshta*. Now these two

*Doshas* might attain *Sthanasamshraya* in the *Shiras* by attaining *Urdhwagati* if that person does prolonged *Vega Dharana* of any of the *Apana Vegas*.

## CONCLUSION

In today's changing lifestyle and eating habits, *Ardhavabhedaka* has become quite a common disease which affects the life of a person to a major extent. Hence it is important to understand the causative factors and reduce suffering among the patients. Medication is only a part of the management. Major portion of management includes avoidance of cause and triggering factors. For *Samprapti Vighatana* of *Ardhavabhedaka*, it is important to understand the causative factors.

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