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A conceptual study on *Charakokta Nidana* of *Visarpa* with special reference to present day *Ahara* and *Vihara*

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ABSTRACT

The aim of *Ayurveda* is "Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshana" and "Aturasya Vikara Prashamana," it is achieved on the bases of various concepts of *Ayurveda*. *Nidana* is one of them. To cope with the fast developing field of medicine many *Ayurvedic* concepts are to be reviewed, also must be updated and presented so as to fulfill the lacunae in diagnosis and treatment of the disease. With this background, the study "A conceptual study on *Charakokta Nidana* of *Visarpa* with special Reference to present day *Aharaja* and *Viharaja*" was carried out. All the skin diseases including *Visarpa* can be prevented if effective care is taken in terms of avoidance of predisposing factors. Since it is not very sure about the exact causative factors of *Visarpa*, so this Observational study may help to identify the most commonly involved *Nidana*. *Nidana* in causation of *Visarpa* which in turn may help for initiating preventive measures. *Nidana* of *Visarpa* explained in *Charaka Samhita* still holds good in present day life style.

Key words: *Nidana*, *Visarpa*, *Ahara*, *Vihara*, *Diet and Lifestyle*, *Dietetics*, *Ayurveda*

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the ancient and well documented science which prior insist upon the prevention of diseases rather than adopting the curative measures. According to *Ayurveda*, the first line of treatment is *Nidan Parivarjan* means to avoid all the causative factors. So, in order to make people disease free and to make people aware, Study of concept of *Nidana* as a diagnostic tool will be presented in this Work. *Ayurveda* has explained the five tools for manifestation

of disease known as *Nidanpanchak*. They are *Nidana*, *Poorvaroopa*, *Roopa*, *Upshaya* and *Samprapti* which are the objective as well as subjective for understanding of disease.^[1] *Nidana* helps us to know about etiology, symptomatology and pathogenesis. For proper diagnosis of disease *Nidana* is one of the most important points for diagnosis of disease. The knowledge of *Nidana* is useful in five different ways,

- For maintaining the health of a healthy individual
- Diagnosis of the disease
- Differential diagnosis
- Prognosis of the disease
- For treatment of the disease.

So, *Nidana* is prerequisite for *Chikitsa*. Reference of *Nidana* have been scattered in *Ayurvedic* texts, so here an attempt has been made to systematically compile the literature of *Nidana* as mentioned in *Charaka Samhita*.

Nidana is defined as the eternal cause of the disease. Diagnosis is never complete without the elicitation of all the factors associated with the diseases.

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Visarpa is one of the commonest skin disorders which is widely explained in *Ayurveda* by all the *Acharyas* and is one of the most common skin ailments suffered by large population worldwide. The clinical features contemplate Herpes viridae, which is a large family of DNA viruses that cause infections and certain diseases in animals, including humans. The members of this family are also known as herpesviruses.^[2]

Around 20 - 30% population suffer from skin ailments. More than 90% of adults have been infected with at least one of these, and a latent form of the virus remains in almost all humans who have been infected and from lower socio-economic strata.^[3] These problems vary from age, locality and season.^[4] Among all type of dermatological condition herpes gains immediate notice of a doctor due to its severity in localized spread, pain and burning sensation.^[5] Herpes viral infection closely resemble to a condition called *Visarpa* which is described in *Ayurveda*.

Hence an attempt is made to study and explore the *Nidana* for *Visarpa* disease formation according to *Charaka*.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Conceptual study on *Charakokta Nidana* of *Visarpa* with special reference to present day *Ahara* and *Vihara*

Nidana

In *Ayurveda* the word *Nidana* is used in two different contexts i.e., as *Hetubhuta* (etiological factors of the diseases) and as a *Vyadhiutpatti Dhnapti* (diagnosis of diseases).

Etiological Factors (*Hetubhuta*)

Vyadhi Janakam factor which manifests diseases is called *Nidana*. Word *Nidana* relates to etiology

Nidana is the one which leads to the vitiation of *Vatadi Doshas*. It may be due to intake of *Ahitakara Ahara* and *Vihara*.

Diagnosis of diseases (*Vyadhiutpatti Dhnapti*)

1. *Nidana* is the one which gives complete knowledge about the *Vyadhi*.

2. *Nidana* means arriving at a conclusive diagnosis of a disease after considering and correlating several factors like etiology, symptamatology, pathology and investigations.
3. *Hetu*, *Lakshana*, and *Samprapti* of a disease are known by *Nidana*.

Nidana Bheda

Sannikrishta, *Viprkrushta*, *Vyabhichari* and *Pradhanika*

Dosha Hetu, *Vyadhi Hetu*, *Ubhaya Hetu*

Bahya and *Abhyantara*

Utapadaka and *Vyanjaka*

Sannikrista Hetu

Sannikrishta Hetu is the immediate cause of *Vyadhi* like *Vatadi*. The immediate causative factor for the vitiation of the *Doshas* and which in turn lead to the disease manifestation is called as *Sannikrishta Hetu*.

Viprkrushta Hetu

Viprkrushta Hetu is not the immediate cause of disease but it is the distant cause of the disease. Here *Sanchaya* of the disease is very essential. This *Hetu* does not cause immediate production if the disease but over a period of time disease manifest.

Vyabhichari Hetu

Vyabhichari Hetu means which deviates from normal. It does not manifest the disease as a *Hetu* it is weak and unable to produce disease but it acts as a carrier and when a favorable condition arises it leads to manifestation of the disease.

Pradhanik

It is a very strong *Hetu* like a poison, toxins. When such *Hetu* (etiological factors) come in contact with the body, they produce disease very quickly.

Dosha Hetu

Dosha Hetu is the factors responsible for vitiation of *Doshas*. Normally *Sanchaya*, *Prakopa* and *Prashamana* of *Doshas* take place in respective *Ritu* and after *Madhuradi Ahara Sevana* is called *Dosh Hetu*.

Vyadhi Hetu

Vyadhi Hetus are those which are responsible for the development of specific disease by specific *Hetu*, irrespective of *Dosha*.

Ubhaya Hetu

Ubhaya means combined factors. The one which causes vitiation of the particular *Dosha* which leads to manifestation of the *Vyadhi*.

Bahya: External factors like food, behavior, seasons, poisons etc. are called as *Bahya Hetus* or external factors.

Abhyantara: Vitiating *Doshas* are called as *Abhyantara Hetus*.

Charaka has described about *Visarpa* in *Chikitsa Sthana* 21st chapter. The chapter *Visarpa Chikitsa* follows that of *Chardi Chikitsa* because suppression of natural urge *Chardi* (vomiting) as well as *Chardi* disease are to be considered as causative factors for *Rakta Dusti* (vitiation of blood) leading to *Visarpa*. This indicates that *Rakta* vitiating factors and vitiation of *Rakta* is an important basic underlying phenomenon prior to the *Visarpa*.

Two types of Hetu

Bahya: External factors like food, behavior, seasons, poisons etc. are called as *Bahya Hetus* or external factors.

Abhyantara: Vitiating *Doshas* are called as *Abhyantara Hetus*.

Two types of Hetu

1. *Utpadaka*
2. *Vyanjaka Hetu*

Utpadaka

For the manifestation of *Vyadhi* vitiation of the *Dosha* is the fundamental cause. *Utpadaka Hetu* means the real causative factors for the accumulation of *Doshas*, because unless there is a *Chaya* - excessive accumulation of *Doshas*, the precipitating cause will not produce any effect.

For example: In *Hemanta Ritu* due to *Madhuradi Dravya Sevana Sanchaya* of *Kapha* occurs.

Vyanjaka

It acts as a triggering factor.

For example: *Sanchita Kapha* during *Hemant Ritu* manifests disorders of *Kapha* in *Vasant Ritu* due to the effect of the Sun.

Visarpa Nidana

Charaka has mentioned about *Visarpa* after the *Chardi Chikitsa* i.e., the *Visarpa Chikitsa* follows that of *Chardi Chikitsa* because suppression of the natural urge *Chardi* - vomiting as well as *Chardi* disease are to be considered as causative factors for the *Rakta Dusti* - Vitiation of the blood, leading to the formation of the *Visarpa* disease. This indicates that *Rakta* vitiating factors and vitiation of *Rakta* is an important basic underlying phenomenon prior to *Visarpa*.

General Nidana

Etiological factors of *Visarpa* are *Aharaja* - diet and *Viharaja* - life style related, injury, poisons, toxins, burns etc. some of these *Nidana* causes vitiations of the *Dosha* and *Khavaigunya* (disease prone condition) in *Dhatu* and some cause direct vitiation of *Dosha* and *Dhatu* leading to *Visarpa*. It shows that favorable condition for disease phenomenon or infection occurs first.

Nidanas

1. *Lavana Amla Katu Ushna Rasa Atisevana* - excessive indulgence in *Lavana* (salt), *Amla* (sour), *Katu* (pungent) and *Ushna* (hot potency ingredients).
2. *Dadhi Amla Mastu Shuktanam Sura Sauvira* - also intake of *Amla Dadhi* (sour curd), *Dadhi Mastu* (whey), *Shukta* (Vinegers), *Sura* (type of liquor) and *Sauviraka* (type of wine).
3. The use of *Vyapanna Madhya* (contaminated wine).
4. Excessive liquor or heat inducing *Raga* (condiments) and *Sadava* (pickles). The use of *Vidahi* (cause burning), *Shaka* (vegetables) and

Harita Shaka (lashed *Harita* group *Dravya*), *Kilata* (cheese), *Kurchika* (inspissated milk) and *Mandaka* (immature curd).

- The use of *Snandaki* (fermented wine), *Paistika* and oil processed by *Tila* (sesame), *Masha* (wet land), *Udaka Mamsa* (aquatic animal) and *Lashuna* (garlic).
- The use of *Praklinna* (putrified food), *Asatmya* (unwholesome), *Virudhha* (mutually contradictory ingredients) and *Atyashana* (over eating), *Divaswapna* (sleeping during day time), *Ajirashana* or *Ajirna Bhojana* (eating during indigestion), *Adhyashana* (eating food immediately after meal).
- Kshata* (traumatic injury), *Kshata* (wound), *Bandha* (ligature), *Prapatana* (trauma due to falling), *Adharma Karma Atisevana* (strainful work).
- Visha* (poisons), *Vata Dosha* and *Agni Dosha* etc.

Visarpa Bheda

Acharyas Charaka have classified *Visarpa* into different varieties based on *Dosha* and *Adhistana*.

On the basis of Dosha

Charaka has attributed three to each one of the *Dosha*, three each to combination of two *Doshas* and one from the combination of all the three *Dosha*.

- Vataja Visarpa*.
- Pittaja Visarpa*.
- Kaphaja Visarpa*.
- Vatapittaja Visarpa* also known as *Agneya Visarpa*.
- Kapha Pittaja* also called as *Kardama Visarpa*.
- Vata Kaphaja Visarpa* also called as *Granthi Visarpa*.
- Sannipataja Visarpa*.

Acharyas Charaka have classified *Visarpa* into different varieties based on *Dosha* and *Adhistana*.

On the basis of Adhistana

- Bahishrita Visarpa* or *Shakha Ashrita* - Externally situated in *Shaka*, *Rasa* and *Rakta Dhatu* and it is

Sadhya (curable). In this *Visarpa Vatadi Dosha* cause *Bahya Dhatu Dushti*.

- Antashrita Visarpa* or *Abhyantara Ashrita* - Internal organs and other *Dhatu*s are involved in the disease. The disease *Kashta Sadhya* (difficult to treat). In this *Visarpa Vatadi Dosha* cause *Abhyantara Dhatu Dushti*.
- Ubhayashrita Visarpa* - Affects in both external and internal part of the body, the disease is more serious and it is *Asadhya* (incurable). In this *Visarpa Vatadi Dosha* cause both *Bahya* and *Abhyantara Dhatu Dushti*

Sapta Dravya in Visarpa (Dosha Dushya in Visarpa)

Rakta (Blood), *Lasika* (lymph), *Twaka* (skin), *Mamsa* (flesh) and three *Dosha*, these seven elements are involved in the pathogenesis of all types *Visarpa*.

Raktadi Sapta Dravya are similar as like *Kushta Sapta Dravya*, but the *Visarpa* having *Prasarana Shila* (spreading in nature). In *Visarpa* the *Rakta Dhatu* and *Pitta* is primely involved along with *Tridosha*. By nature, the disease is spreading throughout.

Samprapti Ghataka

- Dosha - Pitta Pradhana Tridosha*
- Dushya - Rasa (Twak), Rakta, Mamsa and Lasika*
- Agni - Jatharagni, Dhatvagni*
- Agnidusti - Mandagni*
- Srotas - Rasavaha, Raktavaha, Mamsavaha Srotas*
- Srota Dushti - Sangha*
- Adhishthana - Abhyantara and Bahya Roga Marga*
- Udbhava Sthana - Amasayottha and Shaka-Twak*
- Sanchara Sthana - Twaka and other Dhatu*
- Svabhava - Ashukari, Chirakari*
- Prabhava - Eka Doshaja - curable, Agni Visarpa, Kardama Visarpa, Granthi Visarpa, Sannipataja Visarpa* are incurable
- Marga - Abhyantara, Bahya and Madhyama.*

DISCUSSION**Aharaja Nidana**

Dietary factors such as excessive intake of *Amla*, *Katu*, *Ushna* and *Lavana* food stuffs aggravates *Doshas*. Frequent and excessive consumption of *Shukta*, *Mandaka*, *Sura*, *Kilata*, *Kurchika*, *Asatmya* and *Viruddha Ahara* along with vitiated *Doshas* affect the element of the body which results *Vyadhi* like *Visarpa*.

Lavana Rasa

It is *Nati Guru*, *Ushna* and *Snigdha*. There are different opinions regarding basic element composition of salt taste. It is composed of, *Jala* and *Agni* as per *Charaka* and *Vagbhata*, *Pruthvi* and *Agni* as per *Sushruta* and *Agni* and *Jala* as per *Nagarjuna*. *Jala* and *Agni* composition theory is the widely accepted one. Because of *Jala Mahabhuta*, it is *Guru* and *Snigdha*. Because of *Agni Mahabhuta*, it increases *Pitta Dosh*. Because of its *Jala Mahabhuta*, it balances *Vata* and Increases *Kapha*.

Amla Rasa

Alma Rasa decreases *Vata*. It increases *Pitta* and *Kapha Dosh*. *Amla Rasa* is composed of *Pruthvi* and *Teja Mahabhuta*. Hence it has *Guru*, *Snigdha* and *Ushna* qualities. Because of its *Pruthvi Mahabhuta*, it has qualities like *Guru* which increases *Kapha Dosh*. As it has *Agni Mahabhuta*, it increases *Pitta Dosh*. Because it does not contain any *Vayu Mahabhuta* and as it is *Agneya* and *Guru* it pacifies *Vata Dosh*.

Excess of *Amla Rasa* causes increase of *Pitta* leading to following symptoms - *Dantaharsha*, *Trushna*, *Akshinimeelana*, *Romanchana*, *Kapha Dravikarana*, *Pitta Vriddhi*, *Rakta Dosh*, *Mamsa Vidaha*, *Shareera Shaithilya*, *Shotha*, *Paka*, *Kantha Daaha*, *Vaksha* and *Hrudaya Daha*.

The food articles with these *Rasa* have predominance of *Agni Mahabhuta* and possess qualities homologous to *Pitta* and *Rakta*, when consumed in excess leads to *Pitta* and *Rakta Dushti*.

Katu Rasa

It is composed of *Vayu* and *Agni Mahabhuta*. Because of these to *Mahabhutas* it is *Laghu*, *Ushna* and *Rooksha* in Nature. These three qualities are the qualities of the

food having *Katu Rasa*. Hence it increases *Pitta*. Because of its *Vayu Mahabhuta* it increases *Vata Dosh*. When *Vayu* is heated by *Agni*, its volume increases hence *Agni* also contributes to *Vata Dosh* increase. Because *Ushna* and *Laghu* are against the *Kapha* qualities i.e., *Sheeta* and *Guru*, *Katu Rasa* pacifies *Kapha Dosh*.

Ushna Virya

Lavana, *Amla* and *Katu Rasa* are *Ushna Viryatmaka* and the foods which has hot potency, it causes heat, burning sensation, digestion, unconsciousness, sweating, purgation, melting, giddiness, thirst, tiredness. It increases *Pitta* and decreases *Vata* and *Kapha*.

Dadhi

Dadhi is classified into three types *Madhura Dadhi*, *Amla Dadhi*, and *Atyamla Dadhi*. *Madhura Dadhi* is *Mahabhishtyandi* and *Kaphameda Vivardhanam*. *Amla Dadhi* is *Kaphapitta Kara* and *Atyamla Dadhi* is *Rakta Pradooshaka*. It is good in case of all the four types of *Peenasa* (by its *Prabhava*), *Atisara*, *Vishamajwara*, *Mootrakrichra*, *Kaarshya*, *Raktapitta (Madhura Dadhi)* etc. *Dadhi* can be consumed in *Sharad*, *Greeshma* and *Vasantha Ritu*. *Atyamla Dadhi* is *Rakta Dooshaka* and *Abhishtyandi* and *Atisevana* of it leads to *Pittakaphakara* and *Raktha Pradhushana* and leads to *Visarpa* disease.

Mastu

Amla Mastu is *Pittakara*, *Atisevana* results in *Rakta Dushti* and *Pitta Dushti* and results in *Visarpa Vyadhi*.

Tila

Rasa - *Madhura*, *Kashaya*, *Tikta*, *Katu*. *Vipak* - *Madhura*, *Virya* - *Ushna*. *Guna* - *Suksma*, *Guru*, *Dipan*, *Lekhana*, *Balya*. *Pancamahabhoutik* composition - prominently *Pruthvi* and *Apa*. Action on *Dosh* - Alleviates *Tridosha*

Madhyapana

Madya Guna - *Laghu*, *Ushna*, *Tikshna*, *Sukshma*, *Visha*, *Amla*, *Vyavayi*, *Aashu*, *Vikashi* and *Ruksha*. *Madya* is having *Guna* which are just opposite to that of *Oja*.

Therefore, when *Madya* reaches the *Hridaya*, it afflicts the ten *Gunas* of *Oja*, which is located in *Hridaya*. Because of these property of *Madhya* it causes *Tridosha Prakopa*.

Kulattha

It possesses *Ushna*, *Kashaya Rasa*, *Amla Vipaka*, *Kaphavatahara*, *Grahi*, *Shukrahara* and leads to *Ashmari*, *Peenasa Kasa-Hikka-Shwasa-Arshohara*. It belongs to *Shamidhanya Varga* and mainly classified as *Graamy* and *Vanya*. Other varieties of *Kulattha* are *Shukla*, *Krishna*, *Chitra* and *Lohita*. *Kulattha* is *Shonita Dushtikara* and *Raktapittakara*. *Atisevana* of *Kulattha* causes *Kledanasha* and *Rookshata* in the body. Due to *Amlavipaka*, it is *Pittakara*. Hence excessive *Sevana* of *Kulattha* may cause *Pittaja* and *Vataja* diseases.

Mamsa

It is *Vatahara* and *Pitta Kapha Kara* as it is *Guru*, *Snigdha Guna* and *Madura Vipaka*

Masha

It balances *Vata Dosha*, increases *Kapha* and *Pitta Dosha*. As per the *Nighatus Masha* is one among the 4 substances that increases *Kapha* and *Pitta*.

Lahsuna

Rasa - *Madhura*, *Lavana*, *Katu*, *Tikta*, *Kashaya*.

Guna - *Snigdha*, *Guru*, *Tikshna*.

Vipaka - *Katu*, *Ushna Virya*

It balances *Vata* and *Kapha*. Increases *Pitta Dosha*.

Viruddha Ahara

Viruddhahara causes many diseases. It is not possible to give treatment of each and every disease separately. *Charaka* has stated, by avoiding things - *Viruddhahara* that give rise to vitiation and practicing those - *Hita Ahara* that help in bringing *Samavastha* of *Dhatu*s, then vitiated elements do not persist and the vitiated element are continuously brought into existence - *Ch. Su.* 16/36. *Charaka* has given more weightage for the avoidance of causative factors - *Ch. Su.* 18/46. But, one cannot get health by only causative factors.

Ajeernebhajana

If one takes food in *Ajeerna* leads to further *Agni Dusti* and thereby *Pitta Dusti*.

Viharaja Nidana

Teekshna Atapa Sevana and *Agni Santapa* - In excess lead to *Pitta Prakopa* due to *Ushna* and *Teekshna* properties.

Ati Karma - leads to the vitiation of *Vata* decreases *Kapha* and *Pitta*.

CONCLUSION

Nidana or etiological factors are source to understand a disease and they also play a key role in treating patients. *Visarpa* is one of the major skin disease which is explained in detail apart from *Kusthavyadhi* by every *Acharya*. This imparts the severity and significance of disease. *Visarpa* is characterized by *Aashu* - *Anunnatashopha*, *Daha*, *Jwara*, *Vedana* and Nature of *Pidika* is described as *Agnidagtravat*. Prevention is better than cure, this should be followed by everyone so that some problems can be reduced, because of their different incompatible food and life style they are suffering from the diseases like *Visarpa*. If diet and life style is modified then it can be cured by prevention only. One of the dangerous diseases. As far as knowledge of *Nidana* of specially *Visarpa* among lay man is very poor, there is an immediate need to increase awareness about important contribution of *Ayurveda*, such as *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Ahara Vidhi* etc. for prevention of diseases. In the present changed circumstances and different life style as a result of globalization and modernization, the core idea of *Nidana* explained by our age old classics, still observed very much resolved.

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