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Madhu Agnikarma in the pain management of Tennis Elbow - A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

Lateral epicondylitis, also known as 'tennis elbow', is a very common condition that presents with pain and tenderness on the lateral side of the elbow due to the repetitive stress, results in inflammation of the common extensor tendon of the lateral epicondyle of the humerus. According to *Ayurveda*, *Snayugata Vikara* can be correlated with the condition of tennis elbow. *Agnikarma* being superior among all surgical and parasurgical procedure by its action seems to be more effective in providing instant pain relief. The therapeutic effects of *Agnikarma* with *Kshoudra* include relief of pain and muscle spasm, acceleration of healing, promotion of resolution of inflammation and increase in the range of movement of joint.

Key words: Madhu Agnikarma, tennis elbow, Anusastra

INTRODUCTION

Lateral epicondylitis, also known as 'tennis elbow', is a very common condition that presents with pain and tenderness on the lateral side of the elbow due to the repetitive stress, results in inflammation of the common extensor tendon of the lateral epicondyle of the humerus. This malady hampers a person's ability to perform day to day activities, as forearm movements are restricted due to pain.^[1,2]

The overall prevalence rate of the disease is 1-3% of population, generally affecting the middle aged

without gender predisposition. A wide range of symptomatic treatments used in contemporary medicine are use of anti-inflammatory drugs, analgesics, physiotherapy, and local corticosteroid injections in the affected site. In less than 10% of cases, Surgery is indicated.^[3]

Long term uses of anti-inflammatory drugs, analgesics and steroid injections have their own limitations and adverse effects. Hence treatment modality which is easier to administer with lesser complications and better rate of success should be the criteria in choosing the management of this disease.^[3]

According to *Ayurveda*, *Snayugata Vikara* can be correlated with the condition of tennis elbow. Due to *Balavadvighraha* and *Ativyayama* etc the vitiated *Vata*, get localised in the *Kurpara Sandhi* leading to pain, stiffness and restricted movements.^[4] The *Chikitsa Sutra* of *Snayugata Vata* comprises of *Snehana*, *Upanaha*, *Agnikarma* and *Bandana*.^[5] *Agnikarma* being superior among all surgical and parasurgical procedure by its action seems to be more effective in providing instant pain relief.

Acharya Susruta in his treatise recommended *Kshoudra*, *Guda* or *Sneha* as *Dahanopakarana* in

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Snayuvikara. The therapeutic effects of *Agnikarma* with *Kshoudra* include relief of pain and muscle spasm, acceleration of healing, promotion of resolution of inflammation and increase in the range of movement of joint.^[6]

This study is an attempt to revalidate the effectiveness of *Kshoudra* for *Agnikarma* in tennis elbow, considering its deeper heat penetration property, availability, and better cosmetic outcome, which would add up it to the domain of practically and easily accessible *Dahanopakarana*.

AIM AND OBJECTIVE

To evaluate the efficacy of *Kshoudra* as *Dahanopakarana* for the pain management in *Snayuvikara* with special reference to Tennis Elbow.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

- *Kshoudra*
- Borosil glass pipette
- Stove
- Sterile Ladle
- Mixture of *Madhu-Sarpi* (Equal quantity)
- Sterile cotton balls
- Measuring scale

Figure 1: Materials required.



Properties of *Kshoudra*

Table 1: Properties of *Kshoudra*^[8]

Prop erties	Carak a Samh ita	Susr utha Sam hita	Ashta nga Sangr aha	Ashta nga Hrida ya	Mada npal Nigha ntu	Kaiya deva Nigha ntu	Bhav a Praka sha Nigha ntu
Rasa	Madh ura, Kash aya	Mad hura	Madh ura, Kash aya	Madh ura, Kash aya	-	Madh ura	Madh ura
Anur asa	-	Kash aya	-	-	-	Kash aya	Kash aya
Guna	Guru, Ruksh a	Lagh u, Ruks ha, Picch ila	Guru, Ruksh a	Ruksh a	Laghu , Ruksh a, Visha da	Laghu , Ruksh a, Visha da, Suksh ma	Laghu , Ruksh a, Visha da, Suksh ma
Virya	Sheet a	Shee ta	Sheet a	-	Sheet a	Sheet a	Sheet a
Vipak a	-	-	Katu	-	-	-	-
Dosh agna	Kaph apitta Hara	Trido sha Hara	Kaph apitta Hara	Kaph apitta Hara	Kaph apitta Hara	Kaph apitta Hara	Kaph apitta Hara

- Boiling point of Honey: 130– 150 degree Celsius.
- On removing from the heat source, immediate heat dissipation is zero degree Celsius and gradual heat dissipation at a rate of 2 to 3 degree Celsius per minute, under normal atmospheric conditions.
- Specific heat for *Taptha Kshoudra* is in the 0.54-0.60cal/g/degree Celsius range.^[7]

Intervention

Preparation of *Kshoudra* for *Agnikarma*^[7]

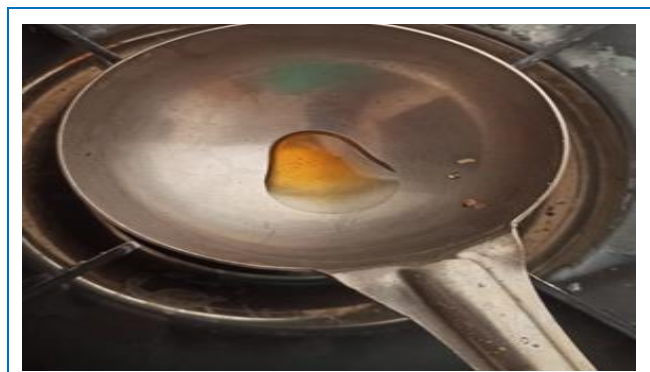
- *Kshoudra* was boiled in a Sterile Ladle

Agnikarma Procedure^[7]

- Patient was allowed to sit comfortably and instructed to bend the elbow at 90 degree with pronated forearm.

- Most tender points was marked using a pen or marker.
- *Kshoudra* was heated in sterile laddle and using a Borosil Pipette *Kshoudra* was sucked and dropped over the marked points from a height of 1 cm.
- It was wiped off immediately using sterile cotton balls anointed with *Madhu-Sarpi* mixture.

Figure 2: The method of Heating *Kshoudra* and procedure of *Agnikarma*



Heating *Kshoudra*



Tender points marked



Kshoudra dropped over points



Wiped off using *Madhu-Sarpi* mixture

Table 2: Subjective symptoms assessed before and after the *Madhu Agnikarma* was as mentioned in the table.

Pain Assessment VAS Scale ^[9]	0 - No Pain	1-3 - Mild pain	4-6 - Moderate pain	7-10 - Severe pain
(Before treatment)	-	-	+	-
After 4 th sitting of <i>Agnikarma</i>	+	-	-	-

Table 3: Objective symptoms assessed before and after the *Madhu Agnikarma*.

Tenderness ^[10]	Grade 0 No Tenderness	Grade 1 Tenderness to palpation without grimace or flinch	Grade 2 Tenderness with grimace and or flinch to palpation	Grade 3 Tenderness with withdrawal	Grade 4 Withdrawal to non-noxious stimuli
Before treatment	-	-	+	-	-
After treatment	-	+	-	-	-

Swelling ^[11]	Grade 0 - No swelling	Grade 1 - Swelling present
Before treatment	-	+
After treatment	+	-

Cozen's test ^[12]	0 - Negative	1 - Positive
Before treatment	-	+
After treatment	+	-

Mill's Manoeuvre ^[12]	0 - Negative	1 - Positive
Before treatment	-	+
After treatment	+	-

RESULTS

Complete reduction of Symptoms was achieved within 4 sittings of *Madhu Agnikarma*.

DISCUSSION

Lateral epicondylitis or tennis elbow is a common condition that presents with pain and tenderness around the common extensor origin of the elbow. The *Chikitsa Sutra* of *Snayugata Vata* comprises of *Snehana*, *Upanaha*, *Agnikarma* and *Bandana*.^[5] Among all these *Agnikarma* seems to be more effective in providing instant pain relief. In this study, four sittings of *Madhu Agnikarma* were done and by the end of fourth sitting complete remission of pain were observed. During the process of *Madhu Agnikarma*, due to *Ushna*, *Tikshna*, *Sukshma* and *Aasukari Guna* of *Agni* and *Ruksha*, *Vishada*, *Sukshma* properties of *Madhu* helps in the deeper penetration of heat so that

it reaches *Snayu* and causes *Vata Samana*, reduces chronic inflammation and thus reducing pain and tenderness. The therapeutic heat helps to remove *Srotavarodha* and increases the *Dhatvagni*, which causes local *Ama Pachana*. From the above explanations, Heat energy (*Ushna Guna*) thus might have increased the tissue temperature, blood flow, metabolism and the extensibility of the connective tissue.^[12] The therapeutic effects of *Agnikarma* with *Kshoudra* include relief of pain and muscle spasm, acceleration of healing, promotion of resolution of inflammation and increase in the range of movement of joint.^[6]

CONCLUSION

Significant relief on symptoms of tennis elbow including pain, swelling etc was being observed in the course of treatment. *Agnikarma* using *Madhu* was patient-friendly because the instrument used for the procedure was welcoming to the patient.^[12] *Agnikarma* with *Madhu* has deeper heat penetration property, better cosmetic outcome and easy availability. *Agnikarma* being superior among all surgical and parasurgical procedure by its action seems to be more effective in providing instant pain relief.

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