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Role of *Chitraka Kshara* in *Abhyantara Arshas* - A Literary Review

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ABSTRACT

The present sedentary lifestyle, irregular food intake, prolonged sitting or standing and psychological problems has affected quality of life. Hemorrhoids are one such disease which is co-related to *Arshas*. The change in lifestyle has caused increase in the prevalence of this disease. It may occur at any age but mostly seen in the age between 30-65 years. Incidence is equal in both the sexes. Prevention of this is done by healthy diet and lifestyle modifications. *Arshas* is an abnormal fleshy overgrowth in *Guda* which is caused due to *Virudhaahara Sevana*, *Adhyashana*, *Uttkatukasana*, *Vegadharana*, *Sahajaani* etc. leading to derangement of *Tridosha*. Treatment of *Arshas* is of 4 types and *Kshara Karma* is one among them. *Kshara Karma* is indicated where *Arshas Ankura* is *Mridu*, *Prasruta*, *Avagada* and *Uchritha*. *Kshara* is considered superior among *Shastra* and *Anushastra* due to its property of *Chedana*, *Bhedana*, *Lekhana* and *Tridoshagna*. *Chitraka* being mentioned in preparation of *Kshara* and has *Arshohara*, *Lekhana*, *Krimighna* property. Considering all these factors an effort is made to substantiate the role of *Chitraka Kshara* and its probable mode of action in *Arshas*.

Key words: *Chitraka Kshara*, *Kshara Karma*, *Abhyantara Arshas*, *Hemorrhoids*.

INTRODUCTION

Hemorrhoids are dilated veins within anal canal in the subepithelial region formed by radicles of the superior, middle and inferior rectal veins. The prevalence rate of piles is 4.4% in the world, in about 10 million people. It may occur at any age but mostly seen in the age between 30-65 years. Incidence is equal in both the sexes. Hemorrhoids are of 2 types based on location - external and internal hemorrhoids. External hemorrhoid

is situated below the dentate line and is covered by skin. Internal hemorrhoid is situated above the dentate line and is covered by mucous membrane. The primary hemorrhoids occur at 3, 7, 11 'o' clock position. Secondary hemorrhoids occur between the primary hemorrhoid. The main symptom is bleeding

Which is bright red, painless and occurs during defecation associated with constipation, prolapse, mucous discharge.^[1] Based on prolapse, Hemorrhoids are divided into 4 degrees: 1st degree- bleed only, no prolapse. 2nd degree- prolapse but reduce spontaneously. 3rd degree- prolapsed and have to be manually reduced. 4th degree- permanently prolapsed.^[2] Management of piles range from simple dietetic regimen to surgical excision. Conservative management like bowel regulation, use of laxative, more fiber diet, sitz bath, local topical applications. Interventional management like injection sclerotherapy, Rubber band ligation, Cryosurgery, Lord's Anal dilatation, Hemorrhoidectomy has been explained.^[3]

Acharya Charaka explains that *Arshas* is an abnormal fleshy growth in *Guda*, whereas the word *Arshas* has

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also been used for fleshy growth in other sites like *Nasa*, *Karna* etc.^[4] *Arshas* is considered as one among *Ashtamahagada*. *Acharya Vagbhata* defines *Arshas* as *Mamsa Ankura* which occurs at *Gudamarga*, obstructs the pathway and troubles like an enemy.^[5] *Acharya Charaka* mentioned *Meda*, *Mamsa* and *Twak* as the *Adhithana* of *Arshas*. *Arshas* is divided as *Sahaja* and *Jatasya-Uttarakalaja Arshas*. *Sahaja Arshas* occurs due to *Gudavali-Bija Upaghata* and *Jatasya-Uttarakalaja Arshas* occurs after birth due to unhealthy dietary habits and lifestyle.^[6] While describing the *Chikitsa* of *Arsha*, *Acharya Charaka* has listed its two types as *Ardra* and *Shushka*. *Acharya Sushruta* has explained 6 varieties of *Arshas* - *Vataja*, *Pittaja*, *Kaphaja*, *Raktaja*, *Sannipataja* and *Sahaja*. It is caused due to *Sahajaani*, *Virudhaahara Sevana*, *Adhyashana*, *Uttkatukasana*, *Vegadharana* etc. which lead to the derangement of *Tridosha*. These aggravated *Doshas* vitiates *Shonita* and spreads through *Pradhana Dhamani* reaches down and lodges in *Guda Pradesha* and vitiates *Gudavali*, giving rise to *Arshas*.^[7]

Sushruta has mentioned *Chaturvidha Sadhanopaya* in treatment of *Arshas*. They are *Bheshaja*, *Kshara*, *Agni* and *Shastrakarma*. *Kshara Karma* is one among them and indicated when *Arshas Ankura* is *Mridu*, *Prasruta*, *Avagada* and *Uchritha* ^[8] and it has property of *Chedana*, *Bhedana*, *Lekhana* and *Tridoshagna*.^[9] *Chitraka Kshara* is mentioned by *Sushruta* in preparation of *Kshara* and has *Arshohara*, *Lekhana*, *Krimighna* property.^[10] An effort is made to substantiate the role of *Chitraka Kshara* and its probable mode of action in *Abhyantara Arshas* by critical review of literature.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVE

To evaluate the role of *Chitraka Kshara* in *Abhyantara Arshas*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

All the available references regarding *Chitraka Kshara* and *Arshas* are studied comprehensively.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review on *Kshara*

Kshara is an alkaline herbomineral extract that is applied on the pile mass to induce thrombosis. *Kshara*

is considered superior among *Shastra* and *Anushastra*, due to its property of *Chedana*, *Bhedana*, *Lekhana* and *Tridoshagna*. *Kshara* is classified on the basis of their mode of application as *Pratisaraneeya* (external use) and *Paneeya* (internal use) *Kshara*.^[11] The *Pratisaraneeya Kshara* is further divided into three types, *Mridu* (mild in action), *Madhyama* (moderate in action) and *Teekshna* (strong in action). Various medicinal drugs for preparation of *Kshara* are mentioned like *Apamarga*, *Snuhi*, *Chitraka*, *Palasha*, *Vibhitaka*, *Arka*, *Kadali*, *Aragwada* etc.^[12]

- Properties - *Katu Rasa*; *Usna Veerya*;
- *Guna* - *Teekshna*, *Agneya*.
- *Doshagna* - *Tridoshagna*.
- *Karma* - *Dahana*, *Pachana*, *Darana*, *Vilayana*, *Shodhana*, *Ropana*, *Shoshana*, *Lekhana*.^[13]

Review of *Chitraka*

Chitraka has *Katu Rasa*; *Ruksha*, *Ushna Guna*; *Katu Vipaka*; *Vata Sleshmahara*, *Kapha Pittahara* property.

- Botanical name - *Plumbago zeylanica* Linn.
- Family - *Plumbaginaceae*.
- Chemical Composition - *Plumbagin*.
- Synonyms - *Analanama*, *Paati*, *Vyalah*, *Ooshana*, *Daaruna*, *Agnika*, *Deepaka*, *Paatinah*.
- Therapeutic uses - *Arshohara*, *Lekhana*, *Krimighna*, *Graahi*, *Pachaka*, *Agnidipana*, *Kushtagna*, *Shothagna*, *Rasayana*.^[10]

Method of preparation of *Kshara*

The *Panchanga* (whole plant) of *Chitraka* (*Plumbago zeylanica*) should be collected, dried up and burnt. The whole ash should be added with 6parts of water/*Gomutra* and filtered 21 times. The filtrate should be clean and clear like *Gomutra Varna* and it is kept on mild fire and liquid evaporates to 1/3rd of its original quantity. This is known as *Mridu Kshara*. Then add 1/10th of red-hot *Shukti* (Limestone) to the filtrate solution and continuously stirred well until it evaporates to 1/3rd of its original quantity. This is known as *Madhyama Kshara*. This should be further heated up by adding 1/10th of *Chitraka Kalka*

(*Plumbago zeylanica*). It attains consistency of not too liquid or too solid. This is known as *Teekshana Kshara*.^[14] It is collected and stored in air tight container.

DISCUSSION

Action of Pratisaraneeya Kshara in Arshas

Pratisaraneeya Kshara acts on Hemorrhoids in two ways – It coagulates the pile mass directly because of its *Ksharana Guna*. It coagulates protein in Hemorrhoidal plexus. The coagulation of protein leads to disintegration of Hemoglobin into heme and globin. Synergy of these actions results in decreasing the size of the pile mass. Further, necrosis of the tissue with obliteration of Hemorrhoidal radicles and vein will occur. This necrosed tissue slough out as blackish brown discharge for 3 to 7 days. The heme present in the slough gives the discharge its color. The tissue becomes fibrosed and scar formation is seen. Complete wound healing with no recurrence of hemorrhoids is seen.^[15]

CONCLUSION

Kshara Karma is a minimally invasive procedure. It destroys the unhealthy tissues and promotes healing process. The *Kshara* preparations have therapeutic and pharmaceutical uses and even proved to be effective in treating many disorders. Application of these preparations has replaced surgical procedure. Many researches also reveal that *Kshara* therapy not only minimizes complication but also reduces recurrence of diseases with minimal side effects. Healthy diet and lifestyle modifications can prevent the recurrence of disease.

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