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Management of *Amavata* (Rheumatoid Arthritis) with *Erandamool* (*Ricinus communis* Linn.) *Kwath* - A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

Musculoskeletal diseases are increasing due to stressful life and other causative factors representing manifestations like pain, swelling, stiffness, reduced mobility of the joint involved etc. Amongst them *Amavata* is very common which is correlated with Rheumatoid arthritis. *Ama* is the byproduct of improper digestion which obstructs body channels and accumulates in *Sandhi* (joints). Vitiated *Vata Dosh*a and *Ama* come together in *Amavata* causing symptoms like *Angamarda* (bodyache), *Aruchi* (anorexia), *Stabdhat*a (stiffness). Women are affected approximately three times more often than men with this chronic multisystem autoimmune disease, RA. *Ayurveda* focuses on the cure of root cause of the disease. *Erand*a (*Ricinus communis*) is mentioned as having specific *Amavatahara Prabhava* in *Ayurveda* classics. *Erand*a root as mentioned in *Ayurvedic* classics works on both vitiated *Vata* and the *Ama* by its *Rasa Gunadi* properties thus breaking the pathogenesis of *Amavata*. Since *Erand*a is easily available in India it can be a safe, effective and economic solution for *Amavata* / Rheumatoid Arthritis.

Key words: *Amavata*, *Rheumatoid arthritis*, *Erandamool*, *Ama*, *Case Report*, *Ayurveda*

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary world the stressful life and unhealthy food habits have pushed us into many diseases; musculoskeletal diseases are one of them manifested as pain, swelling, stiffness and reduced mobility of the joints involved etc. Amongst them *Amavata* is also very common which is generally correlated with the Rheumatoid Arthritis mentioned in the modern sciences. The word *Amavata* is made of two words *Ama* and *Vata*. *Ama* is the byproduct of improper digestion and metabolism; which leading to the obstruction of body channels, circulates in whole

body propelled by vitiated *Vata* that stations itself prominently in *Sandhi* (joints) manifesting as *Amavata*. *Virudha Ahara*, *Virudha Cheshtha*, *Mandagni*^[1], sedentary lifestyle, exercise upon *Snigdha Ahar* are common etiological pathological factors for its generation. B/L joints of *Hasta*, *Pada*, *Sira*, *Trik*, *Jannu Sandhi* are involved with *Angamards*, *Aruchi*, *Trishna*, *Alasya*, *Gaurava*, *Jwara* as symptoms. Rheumatoid arthritis is a chronic multisystem autoimmune disease in which body's immune system attacks its own cells and tissues. The characteristic feature of RA is persistent inflammatory synovitis, usually involving peripheral joints in a symmetrical pattern.^[2] Inflammation occurs in auto immune disorder triggered by *Ama* or antigen at cellular level. Antigen/*Ama* modulates signaling at cellular level leading to incompatible auto immune response that damages tissue. Symptoms of fatigue, loss of appetite, weakness, morning stiffness, fever, tenderness of RA coincides *Amavata*.

The prevalence of RA is more than 1% of the population as per Malaviya AN, Kapoor SK, Singh RR, Kumar A, Pande I. Prevalence of rheumatoid arthritis in the adult Indian population. *Rheumatology international*. 1993

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Nov 1; 13(4):131-4; women are affected approximately three times more often than men. Prevalence increases with age. RA is seen all over the world and affects all races.^[3] Genetic and environmental influences are crucial in susceptibility to RA.

Contemporary medical treatment includes painkillers, NSAIDs, steroids etc.^[4] which generally have side effects. *Amavata* (RA) being autoimmune disease demands positive effects on *Dhatu*s and immunity. For this the pathology of *Ama* formation has to be dealt with *Agnivridhi* and *Vata Shaman* with *Vata* alleviating properties. In the present case study the drug in focus *Erandamool Kwath* (decoction of roots of *Ricinus communis* Linn.) can be studied for both.

Description of plant

The plant *Eranda* (*Ricinus communis*) is found all over India. It is shrub like small tree 2-4 mts, with alternate leaves which are palmately lobed. It has semi woody stems and its root is light in weight almost straight with few rootlets, outer surface dull yellowish brown, nearly smooth but marked with longitudinal wrinkles, odourless and acrid in taste.^[5]

Ayurvedic properties

Eranda has *Madhur*, *Tikta*, *Kshaya Rasa* with *Guru*, *Snigdha*, *Sukshma Guna* in it. The *Vipaka* after digestion is *Madhur* with *Virya* as *Ushna*.^[6] As *rasa* and *Vipaka* is *Madhur* it has positive effect on *Dhatu*s also *Ushna Veerya* helps subside *Vata Dosha* and *Ama*. Its *Madhur*, *Snigdha*, *Guru* and *Tikshna* properties alleviate *Vata* while saving the *Dhatu*s. Also, *Ushna*, *Sukshma* properties help increase *Agni* (digestive power) thus *Amapachana* happens. The plant is supposed to have double effect on *Amavata* as alleviates both *Ama* and *Vata* individually. Its properties overall have specific potency (*prabhava*) to break the pathogenesis of *Amavata*.

CASE STUDY

A female patient aged 47, housewife, came in *Kayachikitsa* OPD of Government Ayurvedic College and Hospital with the complaint of painful swollen joints, morning stiffness persistent up to midday. Appetite was reduced and digestion was also delayed.

On local examination temperature of joints was found to be raised. She had feeling of fever once a day which used to subside with rest.

History of present illness

She had been suffering from this condition for the last 10 years. Earlier pain and swelling were irregular in nature but with time it became persistent. She was taking painkiller once daily.

History of past illness

She was diagnosed with Hypothyroidism three years back.

Family history

She had positive family history of RA as patient's mother is also suffering from *Amavata*.

Personal history

Patient used to take curd on daily basis, had indigestion, lack of exercise with easy going lifestyle.

General examination

- BP : 120/80 mm/Hg
- Respiration : 14 / min
- *Nadi* : 70/min
- *Mala* : Coated / *Sama*
- *Mutra* : Normal / *Prakrita*
- *Jivha* : Coated / *Sama*
- *Shabda* : Clear / *Spashta*
- *Sparsha* : Hotter / *Ushna*
- *Akriti* : Normal / *Samanya*
- *Ahar/diet* : Vegetarian
- *Agni* : Dyspeptic / *Manda*
- Sleep : Disturbed
- Addiction : Tea
- Gait : Limping
- Joints involved : B/L Wrists, Shoulder, Knees

Local examination

On local examination the temperature of joints was raised, swelling was prominent; crepitus was felt in the joints involved. The movement was restricted of the shoulder and wrist joints.

Assessment criteria**Subjective criteria**

Assessment was done for the 10 subjective criteria i.e., *Sandhi Shool* (pain in joints), *Shotha* (swelling in joints), *Sandhi Stabdhta* (stiffness in joints), *Sandhi Sparshasahatva* (tenderness in joints), *Angamarda* (body aches), *Anga Vaikalya* (deformity in joints), *Anga Gaurava* (heaviness in body), *Aruchi* (anorexia), *Apaka* (indigestion), *Jwara* (fever). These were assessed on the scale of 0, 1, 2, 3 and final score was added which came out to be 23 out of 30.

Score evaluation categories were mild 1-10, moderate 11-20 and severe 21-30. The present patient's score was 23 which fell under severe category of evaluation.

Objective criteria

Blood tests were done before treatment.

Criteria	Tests	Values
Objective Criteria	RA Factor	73.2 IU/ml
	CRP	38.3 mg/L

Therapeutic intervention

Patient was given the *Kwath* of *Erandamool*, (decoction of roots of *Ricinus communis* Linn.) 50 ml twice daily orally, empty stomach for 30 days following clinical diagnosis and lab tests. She was assessed for the subjective criteria on day 15 and day 30 and objective criteria on day 30. She was advised to follow *Pathya-Apathya* throughout the therapy.

Follow up and outcomes

The total score on day 15 came down to 16 from earlier 23, with major changes in *Sandhi Stabdhta* (stiffness) and *Angamarda* (heaviness). On day 30 score were 9 which fell in mild category and patient felt relief in majority of symptoms.

Follow up was also done on 15th day after stopping the medicine. Positive changes were observed in symptoms like pain, swelling, tenderness, heaviness in body. Digestion also improved.

Score evaluation

RA factor and CRP was repeated after treatment on day 30 and results are as follow:

Criteria	Tests	Values
Objective Criteria	RA Factor	41.8IU/ml
	CRP	29 mg/L

RESULT

Symptoms were assessed and favorable changes were seen in them.

DISCUSSION

Amavata occurs due to the conjugation of both *Ama* and *Vata* in the body. The *Madhura Rasa* and *Madhur Vipaka* of *Erandamool* helps to pacify vitiated *Vata* while improving the immunity also. Also, *Ushna Virya* (hot potency) subsides *Vata* and *Kapha* both. *Ushna Virya* also helps in digestion of *ama* and pacification of *Vata*. *Sookshma* and *Tikshna Guna* of *Erandamool* further helped to open the blocked channels. Thus, *Erandamool* works well on vitiated *Vata* and the *Ama* individually breaking the pathogenesis of *Amavata* and improving the objective parameters by working on immunity by *Prabhava*. *Erandamool* is mentioned as having *Amavatahara prabhava* i.e., power of subduing *Amavata* which it shows even being used as a single drug.^[7]

CONCLUSION

Erandamool is mentioned by *Acharya Charak* as *Vrishya* and *Vatahara Parama*^[8] (best for alleviating *Vata Dosha*). It can be used in diseases in which *Vata* is an important component of pathophysiology like *Amavata*. Use of *Erandamool* for single drug therapy can open up new channels of research with focus on safe and effective drug for long term use.

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