



ISSN 2456-3110

Vol 8 · Issue 5

May 2023

Journal of
**Ayurveda and Integrated
Medical Sciences**

www.jaims.in

JAIMS

An International Journal for Researches in Ayurveda and Allied Sciences



Maharshi Charaka
Ayurveda

Indexed

Chaturvinshati Upkrama and its role in management of poisoning

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ABSTRACT

Agadtantra is the branch of Astanga Ayurved having system of knowledge for conquering poisons. Acharya Charaka has explained twenty-four modalities of treatment which are to be employed while treating poison. Chaturvinshati Upkramas are unique in the management of poisons. It can be seen that most of them are based on same principle of modern medicine. Chaturvinshati Upkramas is common for all types of Visha i.e., Sthaavara, Jangama, Gara, Dooshi Visha etc. In most of the cases Upkramas should be selected by the physician on the basis of the type of Visha Prakruti (constitution), Saatmya (compatibility), Ritu (season), Desha (place), Vega (impulse) and Balaabala (strength and weakness of both the patient and poison).

Key words: Chaturvinshati Upkram, Visha, Chikitsa, Poison

INTRODUCTION

Agadtantra is branch of Astang Ayurveda science, not from today since long time Visha Vaidyas are successfully treating cases of animate (Jangam) and inanimate (Sthawar) poisoning. Vishatantra or Agadtantra is science of use of medicines to treat poisoning. Charaka Acharya has explained general treatment of poisoning as twenty four modes of treatment applicable to animate and inanimate poison for envenomation. These 24 modes of general treatment of poisoning are similar with principles of modern treatment. Some changes have done but

principles are similar. 1. Removal of unabsorbed poison by Vamana, Virechana. 2. Use of antidotes (Prativisha). 3. Elimination of absorbed poison by Raktmokshana, 4. Symptomatic treatment – Anjana, Nasya Awgahana, Sadnyasthapana, etc. 5. General care of patient. In modern toxicology there are five above principles of treatment of poisoning. After seeing carefully these 5 principles are nothing than our Chaturvinshati Upkrama.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

There are two major types of treatment of poisoning

1. General
2. Specific

In this article we are going to discuss about general treatment of poisoning.

Mantra

This is said to be most effective and sure treatment in almost all envenomation procedures, especially in toxic bites. Mantras may be monosyllable, bisyllable or multisyllable. They are combination of words but the stress on syllables, ascent, tone and style of pronunciation differs. Effectiveness depends upon

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Submission Date: 09/03/2023 Accepted Date: 18/04/2023

Access this article online

Quick Response Code



Website: www.jaims.in

DOI: 10.21760/jaims.8.5.23

Siddhi of *Mantra* of practitioner. Effect of these *Mantras* are beyond comprehension. There are so many *Vishavaidyas* who practice *Mantras* in rural area of India. Mastery achieving is a very difficult task in today's era hence our *Acharya* recommended other modalities.^[1] Mode of action of *Mantra* is unknown but according to some experts it works like as counselling which may prevent deaths from non toxic bite and *Shankavisha*.

Aristha Bandhana

The spread of poison is to be arrested by *Aristha Bandhana*. *Aristha* may be made of silk thread, bamboo, cloth, etc. *Charak Acharya* used *Venika* word for *Arishta Bandhana* (it made up from hair). Physically applying ligature, blocks spread of the poison. It should be done 4 *Angula* (4 inches) above the bite site.^[2] It is applied quickly after toxic bite and release slowly after 2 minutes gap for 2sec. To prevent gangrene of that part. Modern toxicology does not permit ligature at bite point for prevention of gangrene. But in emergency conditions we can apply it to prevent life. In case of Asian cobra and pitted viper we must take precaution for gangrene.

Utkartan and Nishpidana

Excision of bitten part is termed as *Utkartana*. This can be done when bitten part is the tip of finger or toe. *Nishpidana* is done by using fingers or roller like object, the venom is brought to the site of bite. Incision is done for permitting bleed can remove venom from bite site. This treatment has to be done before spread of venom over body. *Utkartana* and *Nishpidana* only can done when that part is not *Marma Sthana*.^[3] Incision at bite point and permitting bleed is another method of removing of unabsorbed poison.

Chooshana

This procedure is done to absorb unabsorbed poison. In ancient time it is said to suck poison with mouth by keeping dried cow dung, sand or soil in mouth however this procedure is outdated.^[4] While using this principle we can suck poison with the help of suction bulb, dry sponge, capillary etc. This was a very effective method in ancient times, if someone practice for this method

now a days he/she must be trained otherwise it may harm to live of *Vaidya*. Suction should be done within 5 minutes after bite.

Agni

When bite is on a part of the body that cannot be subjected to *Arishta Bandhana* such as the trunk or face suction, excision and burning indicated. The bite spot should be burned with red hot gold, iron or ember. Master principle behind it is "fire is capable to burn everything then why not poison".^[5]

Parishek

Parishek means washing of affected area with plain or medicated water, cold, warm, lukewarm water can be used depending upon condition of the patient. *Santalum album* and *Vetiveria zizanoides* can be used as medicines for *Parishek*.^[6]

Avagaaha

Avagaaha is done in the presence of severe pain or pain caused by retention of urine. A metal vessel large enough to the level of neck is filled with warm water and patient is directed to sit in it in such way that is body remains immersed in water. When the water loses warmth additional warm water is supplemented after removing an equal quantity of cold.

Raktamokshan

Bloodletting is the last and most potent treatment when the poison has spread to entire body. When poison has spread, bloodletting is to be done because when toxic blood is removed the toxic manifestations fail to sustain and vanishes altogether.^[7] It is contra indicated in children, old age and in pregnant women's.^[8]

Vamana

In cold season in presence of cold saliva, predominant *Kapha* and when patient is of *Shleshma* constitution. Induction of *Vaman* or emesis to be done by emetics.^[9] It is also done in latent poisoning (*Dushi Visha*) and concocted poisoning (*Gara*). It is done in animate and inanimate both types of poisoning. In case of *Jangam Visha*, *Vamana* is to be done as follow Cobra - 2nd, 4th,

5th and 6th Vegas viper - 3rd Vega, krait - 2nd, 4th, 5th Vegas

Gastric Lavage /Stomach Pumping/Gastric Irrigation

This treatment is useful any time within three hours after ingestion of poison. It is done with stomach wash tube (ewads or boas) tube or ordinary soft non collapsible rubber tube of 1cm diameter and 1.5m. Length. It is contra indicated in corrosive poisoning and hydrocarbons. Epicac, zinc sulphate, apomorphine is used to emesis and water, kmno₄ (1:5000), 5% Nahco₃, 4% tannic acid and 1% sodium or potassium iodide is used for stomach wash.

Virechana

When the patient suffers from burning sensation and pain the gut (*Koshtha*), flatulence and block or difficulty in passing urine purgatives are indicated.^[10] It is done in first stage of *Dushivisha* and second stage of *Sthawar Visha*.^[11] In rabies, purgation is to be done with medicines that are with milky latex of *Arka*.^[12]

Upadhan/ Vishasankramana/ Kakpada

It is a treatment in which vertex is incised in cross shape or crows leg shape and fresh flesh is kept at site. This is done in seventh phase of poisoning after *Nasya* and collyrium.^[13]

Hradayawarana

In general ghee and poison have diametrically opposing properties. Poison derange *Tridosha* including their reservoirs and then occupy the heart and spreads all over body. Administration of ghee immediate after poisoning slow downs spread of poison and this is the principle. Emesis is done with emetics and later *Hradayawarana* is done with following drugs.^[14] Honey, Ghee, milk, Gairik, juice of cow dung, Ikshu, blood of goat, Soil mixed with water, ash mixed with water.

Anjana

This is done to awake patient of snake bite victim from loss of consciousness. It is very useful in cobra bite when patients eyes are oedematous and when he is sleepy.^[15] *Anjana* is used in third phase of cobra bite,

Agadas are used as *Anjana* in 7th phase of cobra bite and 6th phase of krait bite.

Nasya

It is usually given when patient is unconscious, pungent drugs are used. Strong *Nasya* is indicated in 7th phase of cobra bite, *Pradhaman Nasya* is indicated in 6th phase of krait bite.

Dhoom

Fumes or smoke of medicines are given. *Basic principle of Dhoom* is same as like *Anjana* and *Nasya*.^[17]

Leha

Lehan of various *Agada* ex. *Dashang Agada*, *Dooshivishari Agada* etc.^[18]

Prashamana

Prashaman is done in case of bleeding after bloodletting.

Pratisaran

Sprinkling of medicated powder. It absorbs excess moisture reduces itching, irritation, cools the skin and also dries the oozing.^[19]

Prativisha

Vridha Vagbhata described in A.S.U. 48 about use of *Prativisha*. This treatment is useful when spread of poison is uncontrolled, after 5th phase but before 7th phase. This is last most hopeful treatment hence should be used carefully.^[20]

Sadnyasthapana

Charaka stated that this measure is done in sixth phase of *Visha*. Following drugs mixed with cow bile shall be consumed.^[21] *Rajani* (*Curcuma longa*), *Manjistha* (*Rubia cordiafolia*), *Maricha* (*Piper nigrum*), *Pippali* (*Piper longum*). In commentary of *Ayurveda Dipeeka* it is stated that above drugs can used for *Sadnyasthapana*.

Mritsanjeevanam

These drugs are used in conditions when patient is apparently dead but life energy is still hidden in body.

Surasadi Yoga, Kakandkadi Yoga, Vartakadi Yoga these are some *Yogas* for *Mritsanjeevan* can be used.^[22]

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Chaturvimshati Upkramas explained by *Acharya Charaka* are unique in the management of poisons. It have all the measures needed in the management of poisons. *Chaturvimshati Upkramas* is common for all types of *Visha* i.e., *Sthaavara, Jangama, Gara, Dooshi Visha* etc. In most of the cases *Upkramas* should be selected by the physician on the basis of the type of *Visha, Prakruti, Saatmya, Rtu, Sthaana, Vega* and *Balaabala*. In *Chaturvimshati Upkramas*, the pacifying measures are *Anjana, Lepa, Dhupana, Leha, Upadhana, Prashamana, Prathisarana*. The counteracting medications are *Mantra, Aushadhe, Prativisha*. The elimination therapy are *Raktamokshana, Vamana, Virechana, Nasya*. Supportive symptomatic treatment are *Hrdhayavarana, Sanjasthapana, Mrthasanjivani*. The measure that restrict entry of poison into systemic circulation are *Arishta, Uthkarthana, Nishpidana, Chushana, Agni, Parisheka, Avagaha*.

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How to cite this article: Pranali Abaji Dudhe, Jaiprakash
Surajalal Ukey. Chaturvinshati Upkrama and its role in
management of poisoning. J Ayurveda Integr Med Sci
2023;05:145-149.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.21760/jaims.8.5.23>

Source of Support: Nil, **Conflict of Interest:** None
declared.
