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Ayurveda for Cancer therapy - A Review

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ABSTRACT

Malignant cells multiply and divide uncontrollably in a variety of disorders known as cancer. These cells form tumors which are cancerous growths. There are various treatment available for cancer, still Ayurveda plays significant role. *Ayurveda* may be beneficial in the prevention, palliation, treatment, and support of cancer in a variety of ways. *Ayurvedic* medicine helps to raise living standards. It can be used in conjunction with chemotherapy or radiation therapy as an adjuvant or co-therapy. *Ayurvedic* treatment minimizes toxicities of chemotherapy and radiotherapy. In case of recurrence *Ayurveda* maintenance therapy will be helpful.

Key words: *Arbuda, Cancer, Dosha, Granthi, Panchkarma, Rasayana, Satwavajay Chikitsa*

INTRODUCTION

Cancer is one of the most devastating illnesses. Present significant health risks in both developed and developing countries. It is second leading cause of Death behind heart disease. Cancer starts almost anywhere in the human body. Cancer is a category of diseases and each of its various neoplasm's has a unique set of identifying traits and a unique course of development. In all human tissues cancer has not yet been linked to a single cause or mechanism. Additionally, it's possible that changes in lifestyle over the time have caused a change in the etiological causes and mechanisms of carcinogenesis.^[1]

A neoplasm or tumors is a mass of tissue formed as a

result of abnormal, excessive, uncoordinated, autonomous and purposeless proliferation of cells even after removal of stimulus for growth which caused it. Neoplasm's may be 'benign' when they are slow-growing and localized without causing much difficulty to the host, or 'malignant' when they proliferate rapidly, spread throughout the body and may eventually cause death of the host. All tumors' have 2 basic components: parenchyma comprised by proliferating tumors cells, and supportive stoma composed of fibrous connective tissue and blood vessels. The tumor's are named with suffix '-oma' to denote benign tumors'.

Malignant tumors of epithelial origin are called carcinomas, while malignant mesenchymal tumors' are named sarcomas' few examples of combination of tumors are mixed tumors', teratoma, blastoma, hamartoma, and choristoma.^[2]

AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE

According *Charka* and *Sushruta* cancer is inflammatory or non-inflammatory swelling it resembles with *Arbuda* and *granthi*. In *Ayurveda*, cancer is not seen as a separate illness or group of illness. Instead, all illness are the result of severe, systemic *Dosha* imbalances. Specific diseases like cancer, are caused by interactions between aberrant *Doshas* and weak *Dhatus*. Although cancer is not specifically mentioned in *Ayurvedic*

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literature, symptoms associated with the *Granthi* (glandular cyst). *Arbuda* (tumor or cancer) group of disorders are closely comparable to different forms of cancer or symptoms associated with cancer.^[3]

Ayurveda which bases its healing methods on organic compounds. The names *Apachi*, *Gulma*, *Granthi*, and *Arbuda* are examples of clinical symptoms that are similar to cancer and are mentioned in ancient *Ayurvedic* texts.^[4]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials have been compiled from classical text books of Ayurveda, modern science text books, published articles, research journals and Internet.

Pathogenesis

It is primarily based on *Dosic* theory, specifically *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*, according to *Dosic* theory cancer develops when there is an imbalance between *Dosha's*.

Vata is the active *Dosha* it plays a role in the metastatic process. *Pitta's* being *Tejas* increased metabolic activity of the cancerous cells, while *Kapha*, which is *Guru* and bulky, is responsible for the aberrant multiplication of the cells. *Vata* and other *Doshas* associated with *Kapha*, getting aggravated and cause vitiation of the muscle tissue as inducing muscular swelling almost anywhere in the body that is round, static (immovable) with mild pain, large in size, deeply rooted, expanding slowly, and not ripening (generating pus).^[5]

Types of Arbuda according Doshas

1. *Vata*
2. *Pitta*
3. *Khapha*
4. *Tridoshja*

Types according to Dhatus

1. *Rakta* (Blood)
2. *Mamsa* (muscles)
3. *Medas* (fat)

The creation of *Arbuda* may be triggered or precipitated by irritability and trauma. The muscle that was struck by the fist or other object becomes vitiated

and causes an immovable, stone like swelling at the site of the injury that is painless, unctuous and the same color as the surrounding skin. This condition is known as *Mamsarbuda* and it is incurable. Even among those that can be cured, the following types should be avoided: those that exude heavily, those that are located in critical organs or routes and those that are immovable. Those who have knowledge of *Arbudas* (tumors) refer to that which develops (grows) over an earlier one as *Adhyarbuda*, and that which is formed either at the same time or after some time is referred to as *Dvirarbuda*. All of these are incurable. Due to the prevalence of *Kapha* and *Medas* (fat), the stability of the *Dosas*, and these creating the lump (hard mass), all *Arbudas* (malignant tumors) by nature do not create pus.^[6]

Types according to Prognosis

1. *Sadhya* (curable)
2. *Asadhya* (Incurable)

The normal history and physical examination include important information in every component. How chronic the sickness is may be determined by how long the symptoms last. The patient's past medical history may reveal underlying illnesses to the doctor, which may affect the selection of medication or the side effects of treatment. The social history may reveal occupational exposure to carcinogens or practices, such as drinking or smoking that may have an effect on how the illness develops and is treated. Due to the family history's potential hint of an underlying familial cancer predisposition, the patient's siblings who are unaffected may need to begin getting surveillance or other preventative therapy.^[7]

Management

Surgery, Radiotherapy and Chemotherapy remain the most effective method of treatment for cancer which is second biggest cause of death globally.

Chemotherapy, radiation, and medications made of chemicals are some of the current treatments. Patients may experience significant stress and further health harm as a result of treatments like chemotherapy. The use of alternative therapies and treatments for cancer is therefore prioritized.

Shaman Chikitsa

Traditional medical methods have played a crucial part in addressing the world's health care requirements. Ashes or *Bhasma* of Gold, copper, mercury, lead, zinc, iron, Diamond and other minerals and metals are used in the formulation of *Ayurvedic* medicines and treatments. They acts as catalysts and target specific. *Ayurvedic* remedies can help halt the progression of cancer, where chemotherapy, radiotherapy or surgery are contraindicated for various reasons and patients have no other options.

Some Anti-cancer Herbs^[8]

1. *Curcuma longa*
2. *Ocimum sanctum*
3. *Tinospora cordifolia*
4. *Withania somnifera*
5. *Emblica officinalis Gaertn*
6. *Zingiber officinale*
7. *Moringa oleifera*
8. *Alstonia scholaris*
9. *Myristica fragrans*
10. *Bauhinia variegata*

Panchakarma and Rasayana (rejuvenation)

Detoxification of body act on cellular level, it helpful for eliminating aggravated doshas. Purifying therapies used in *Panchakarma* to enhance metabolic processes. it can completely break down malignant tumor. The tumor is slowly absorbed by the body without the use of a surgical procedure and expelled out by the lymphatic system. We can dissolve tumor with the help of Ayurveda but if it is badly necrotic or present on body's exterior then surgical intervention required. Ayurvedic treatment is used to cure tumour, If the tumour is internal, Ayurveda is recommended for conservative management for several months and then go for surgical procedure.^[9] Oil massages with therapeutic herbs and essential oils are beneficial for body and mind.

Rasayana (rejuvenation)

Rasayana therapy increase the production of new cells and tissues in the body. Help in repair and building of muscle tissue. It enhances *Ojas* to increase immunity,

nourishes cells in the body as well as prevent and treat issues linked to cancer. Exposure to ionizing radiation throws the body's natural equilibrium off, alters *Tridosha* that manifest as radiation sickness, *Rasayana* therapy is very helpful in such a conditions. The herbs used in *Rasayana* treatment prevent damage caused by free radicals. they are Antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, radioprotective, chemoprotective, helps in prevention of DNA damage, immunomodulatory.

Rasayana

1. *Chyavanprasha*,
2. *Brahma Rasayana*,
3. *Ashwagandha Rasayana*
4. *Amritaprasham*
5. *Triphala Churna*^[10]

Satwavjay Chikitsa

Cancer also has significant effects on one's mental and emotional well-being. After a diagnosis and throughout therapy, it's natural to experience feelings of anxiety, depression, dread or worry. In this situation *Satwavjay Chikitsa* plays an important role in improving wellbeing, harmonize the body, mind and soul. It can increase vitality, reduce stress, blood pressure, and anxiety also maintains general health.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda supports internal healing, boosts immunity, promotes general health balance and speeds up recovery. The key to curing cancer is early detection and improved screening. Classical approach of *Panchkarma*, *Rasayana*, *Satwavjay Chikitsa* helps in relieving signs and symptoms as well as side effects of chemotherapy and Radiotherapy. It helps to increases the life span of individual and improves quality of life.

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