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A review article on *Katigraha* vis-à-vis Mechanical low back pain and its management through Ayurveda

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ABSTRACT

In the present society, all age group people experience back pain, which is brought on by an unhealthy food and way of life. In Ayurveda, this ailment is compared to *Katigraha*, one of the *Vataja Nanatmaja Vyadhi*. It is a condition where pain and stiffness are brought on by *Shuddha Vata* or *Sama Vata*, which are concentrated in *Kati Pradesha*. Modern science says that actions like lifting heavy objects, bending, having poor posture, being sedentary, etc. cause Mechanical low back pain. It is usually limited to the lumbosacral region, buttock, or thigh and doesn't go past the knees. Modern medical treatments for low back pain have their own disadvantages and weren't effective over the long term. The Ayurvedic Chikitsa Sutra of *Katigraha* includes a description of *Snehana*, *Swedana*, *Shamana*, and Conventional *Rasayana* in addition to a healthy food and way of life. The breadth of Ayurvedic treatment for *Katigraha* shall be the main topic of the current paper.

Key words: *Katigraha*, *Shuddha Vata*, *Sama Vata*, *Mechanical low back pain*

INTRODUCTION

Due to heavy industrialization and development advanced software technology the mankind running behind fast and furious life. Due to that every person indulging in improper sitting postures, Continuous long journeys, overexertion, jerky movements during travelling and sports, weight lifting, sitting for a prolonged time and other strainful activities etc, create an undue pressure to the spinal column and play an important role in producing low backache even in early decades of life. About 70%-90% of the population above 40 yrs of age suffers from this disease.^[1] In

Ayurvedic Samhitas *Katigraha* has been mentioned as a very common problem, characterized by pain and restricted movements of *Kati Pradesha* (Lumbar region).

Nirukti

The term *Katigraha* is combination of 2 terms i.e., *Kati* and *Graha*. The etymology, definition & specific interpretation of these terms are given below.

Kati

The word '*Kati*' is derived from the dhatu "*kat + in*" and *Streelinga Pratyaya*. It is considered as a '*Shariraavayavavishesha*', a bodily part.^[2]

According to Amarakosha, the word meaning of *Kati* is "*Katau Vastra Varanau*", the part of the body which is covered with clothes^[3] and *Shroni*, *Kakundati* are considered as synonyms of *Kati*. According to Monier Williams, *Kati* is the hollow space above the hip or the joints.^[4]

Graha

The term '*Graha*' is derived from the *dhatu* '*Adant-Churam-Atmam-Saka-Set*'. The term is explained as '*Graha Grahnam*', by *Durgadas*, which means to collect or catch.^[5]

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“Graha” means holding. It is originated from *Dhatu* “Graha Upadane” - one which gives support.

Paribhasha

Katigraha is the condition where pain and stiffness in lumbar spine due to *Kevala Vata* or *Sama Vata*.^[6] Sharangadhara has explained it as “*Katisthambhena Vedanavishesha*”, condition said as pain and stiffness in *Katipradesha*.^[7]

Nidana

Mechanical low back pain can occur suddenly or gradually over time as a result of repetitive actions. The main causes of low back pain in today's lifestyle include stress, poor food, lack of exercise, and extended periods of sitting. For *Katigraha*, according to Ayurveda, *Samanya Vatavyadhi Nidana* includes eating dry, cold, inadequate, and light food; having too much sex and not getting enough sleep; receiving improper treatment; and engaging in excessive fasting, swimming, walking, exercising, and physical activity. It also includes worrying, grieving, and debilitating diseases; using uncomfortable beds or seats; getting angry; suppressing natural urges; experiencing trauma; not eating; indigestion and so on.

Poorvaroopa

Acharya Charaka has mentioned that *Avyakta Lakshana* is the *Poorvaroopa* of the *Vatavyadhi*.^[8] Chakrapanidatta commenting on the word *Avyakta* mentions that few mild symptoms are to be considered as the *Poorvaroopa*.

Roopa

Katigraha being one among the *Vatavyadhi* mainly characterized by *Shula* and *Stambha* at *Katipradesha*, which is self-explanatory by its term *Katigraha*. This condition is such that it ceases the lumbar spine movements like flexion, extension, rotation and bi-lateral movements thus hampering the day-to-day activities.

Samprapti

Though separate *Samprapti* is not been described for *Katigraha*, the pathophysiology of *Katigraha* is mostly influenced by *Vata* and *Kapha*. *Dhaatukshaya* and *Margavarodhajanya* are the two types of *Samprapti* that, in the opinion of Acharya Charaka, might vitiate

Vata. There will be a qualitative change in the joint in both types of *Katigraha*, which over time causes the disease to appear.

▪ **Dhatukshayajanya Katigraha**

Continuously consuming foods that are *Ruksha* (dry), *Sheet* (cold), *Laghu* (light) in nature, *Ratrijagarana* (waking at night), and *Vegadharana* (holding urges) are all causes that result in the body developing *Dhatu Kshaya* and *Vata Prakopa*. *Sandhi Bandhana Shithilata* is caused by the diminution of *Kapha* in *Sandhis* caused by *Rukshaguna* of *Vata*, which also reduces the *Snehansh* of *Kapha Dosha*. The *Kahavaigunyayukta Sandhi* in *Katipradesha* is the location of the *Prakopita Vata Stanasamshraya*. All of them cause stiffness and pain in the *Katipradesha*, which in turn causes the illness *Katigraha*.

▪ **Margavarodhajanya Katigraha**

Depends on *Agnibala*, one should consume food in the appropriate quantity. A person should only eat when the previous meal has been completely digested. If one eats while experiencing indigestion, the newly consumed food will contaminate all subsequent meals. Consuming too much *Guru*, *Shita*, *Vishtambhi*, *Shushka*, *Vidahi*, *Ruksha*, *Pichhilha Guna Ahara*, and leading a sedentary lifestyle contribute to the body's creation of *Ama*, which results in *Dosha Prakopa*, *Agni* disturbance, and a lack of *Rasa Dhatu* metabolism. There is *Srotavarodha* in the *Adhishtana* because *Jatharagni* and *Dhatwagni* are both deranged. Due to such *Srotavarodha*, *Vata* gets vitiated and produces symptoms like, *Ruk* (pain) and *Stambha* (stiffness) in *Khavaigunyayukta Sandhi* i.e., *Kati Pradesha*.

Samprapti Ghataka

Table 1: Showing Samprapti Ghataka of Katigraha

Dosha	<i>Vata</i>	<i>Vyana, Samana, Apana</i>
	<i>Kapha</i>	<i>Sheshaka</i>
Dhatu	<i>Dhatu</i>	<i>Mamsa, Meda, Asthi</i>
	<i>Upadhatu</i>	<i>Khandara, Snayu</i>
Agni	<i>Jatharagni, Dhatvagni</i>	
Ama	<i>Jataragni, Dhatvagnijanya</i>	

Srotas	<i>Asthivaha Mamsavaha</i>
Srotodushti	<i>Sanga</i>
Udbhavasthana	<i>Pakwashaya</i>
Vyaktasthana	<i>Kati</i>
Rogamarga	<i>Madhyama</i>

Sadyasadyata

Katigraha is a *Vatavyadhi*, when associated with *Kapha* becomes little more easier to cure than in *KevalaVataja* condition but when patient comes earlier for treatment and if given proper treatment in appropriate manner then patient may likely to be cured and less likely to be suffer from further complications. *Katigraha* is *Vata Nanatmaja Vyadhi* affecting the *Ashrayasthana* of *Vata*, where the disease is of *Madhyama Roga Marga* thus even at the initial stage it is *Kricchra Sadhya* and at later stage it may be *Yapya* or *Asadhya*

Upashaya - Anupashaya

Upashaya

Upashaya is much important; especially during the treatment usually all drugs, diet and regimen which give long lasting relief in *Katigraha* may be taken as *Upashaya*, having *Snigdha* & *Ushna Gunas* are prescribed to pacify the *Vata Kopa*. For example, *Abhyanga*, *Swedana*, *Ushnaahara*, *Ushnaritu* etc. This should be adopted in the *Niramaavastha* of *Vatavyadhi* (*Katigraha*) only. When the same drugs are prescribed in the *Saamaavastha* of *Vatavyadhi* the disease aggravates.

Anupashaya

All the drugs, diet and regimen which exaggerate the disease are taken for *Anupashaya* for *Katigraha*. *Vatavyadhi Nidanas* can also be taken as *Anupashaya*. During *Samaavastha*, even *Upashaya* method applied can also be included under *Anupashaya*. The diet having *Laghu*, *Ruksha*, *Sheetagunas*, *Anashana*, *Alpashana*, *Sheetarithu* can be considered as *Anupashaya*.

Chikitsa

1. Nidana Parivarjana

2. Samshodhana

3. Shamana.

1) Nidana Parivarjana

The first foremost treatment in all disease is *Nidana Parivarjana*.

2) **Samshodhana** - As *Katigraha* is dominant of *Vata Dosha* and also included under *Vata Vyadhi*, *Mridu Samshodhana* is ideal one as per *Vatasyopakrama*.

Snehana:

Except for the criteria of *Ama*, *Avrita Vata*, *Ajeerna*, *Aruchi*, etc., *Snehapana* might be adopted in *Katigraha*. *Langhana* and *Pachana* are the first line of treatment before *Snehapana* to facilitate the *Niraamaavasta* in cases with accompanied *Ama* or *Kapha Dosha*. After achieving *Niraamaavasta*, *Ghrita Paana* and *Taila Paana* can both be successfully adopted based on the circumstances. *Snehadhara*, *Abhyanga*, *Avagaha*, *Parisheka*, *Kati Basti*, etc. are all examples of ways to practise *Bahya Snehana*.

Swedana:

A *Sweda Sadhya Vyadhi*, *Katigraha*. *Avagaha Sweda*, *Valuka Sweda*, *Nadi Sweda*, *Patra Pinda Sweda*, *Pinda Sweda*, and *Upanaha Sweda* are some of the different *Sweda* methods that can be successfully carried out in *Katigraha*. *Swedana* is also helpful for easing pain and restricting movement in *Kati Pradesha*. It can be done in entire body or in affected part of the body alone.

Virechana:

Virechana plays a crucial part in *Katigraha*. *Virechana*'s effects are not confined to a single spot; they extend throughout the entire body. Most authors in *Vatavyadhi* referred to *Mridu Virechana*. According to *Vridhdha Vagbhata*, *Virechana* must be used to treat *Vata* ailments that are not relieved by *Snehana* and *Swedana*. For *Nitya Virechana*, *Eranda Taila* is advised.

Basti:

In *Pakwashayagata Vyadhi*, *Basti* is mentioned. Here, *Basti* is useful in reducing *Vata*, hence it is referred to as "*Ardha Chikitsa*" in *Chikitsa*. Taking all of these factors into account, *Basti* is a crucial step for *Kati Graha*, one of the *Vata Vyadhis*. It is possible to employ *Vatakaphaja Vyadhi Niruha Basti* such as

Erandamooladi Niruha and Dashamooladi Niruha Basti.

3) Shamana

The Vatahara Shaman Aushadhi can be used in the treatment of Katigraha. If Sama Avastha of Katigraha is present, Deepan, Pachan, Rookshana Chikitsa will be helpful. Various Yogas have been described.

- Churna - Rasnadi Churna, Ajamodadi Churna, Vaishwanara Churna.
- Kalka/Lepa - Mahanimbakalka, Rasonakalka, Lepa -Vaataharapradesha.
- Kashaya and Arishta - Rasnasaptakakashaya, Erandadikashaya, Dashamolakashaya, Sahacharadi Kashaya, Balarishta, Dashamularishta.
- Grita and Taila - Eranda Taila, Vishagarba Taila, Prasarini Taila, Mashabaladi Taila, Narayana Taila, Vishnutaila etc.
- Guggulu - Trayodashanga Guggulu, Yogaraj Guggulu, Mahayogaraj Guggulu

Pathya-Apathya

Pathya - Godhuma, Raktashali, Shighru, Lashuna, Ghrita, Amla Dravya, Patola.

Apathya - Katu, Tikta, Kashaya Rasa Dravya, Jambu, Bhaya, Shrama, Yana, Sheeta Ahara etc.

DISCUSSION

Katigraha is not mentioned in Brihatrayi, although Katigraha is one of the biggest health concerns these days, affecting around 60-85% of individuals at some time in their lives and interfering with their daily routine. The classics make it abundantly obvious that pain is caused by stiffness brought on by Sama or Niramavayu movement in the Kati (low back) area. Symptoms like Vedana and Cheshtastambha were aroused in Kati Pradesha (the lumbo-sacral region) as a result of Vata and Kapha Prakopa in Katigraha. It falls under the category of Vata Nanatmaja Vikara, however depending on the symptoms, it can also be categorised as Vataja and Vatakaphaja Katigraha

Sheetaguna of Vata and Kapha, as well as Stambaguna of Kapha, cause Lakshana like Shula and Sthambha. Ruja and Sthambha are the basic Lakshana in Katigraha that are manifested by the Gunatah and Karmatah Vaishamyas of Vata and Kaphadosha. When it comes to the Chikitsa, first determine whether Kapha or Ama is involved. Langhana, Pachana, Swedana, Rukshana and Vatanashaka measures are the first line of treatment if Ama is implicated in the pathophysiology. Snehana, Swedana, Brumhana, Mruduvirechana and Basti are beneficial in Kevala Vataja type of Katigraha.

CONCLUSION

When doing a clinical examination, it is important to keep in mind that Katigraha can happen on its own or as a side effect of various disorders. According to the stage, such as Svatantra or Paratantra, Naveena or Purana, Saama or Niraama, the management differs. Katigraha can be successfully treated by using Panchakarma, Shamana, and adhering to a healthy diet and lifestyle.

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