Effect of Shirodhara in Ardhavbhedak w.s.r. to Migraine during Pregnancy: A Review Study

Yashi Joshi¹, Sucheta Ray², Ekta Singh Parihar³, Priyanka Hajare⁴

¹First Year Post Graduate Scholar, PG Department of Prasuti Tantra Evum Stri Roga, Mansarover Ayurvedic Medical College Hospital and Research Centre, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India.
²HOD & Professor, PG Department of Prasuti Tantra Evum Stri Roga, Mansarover Ayurvedic Medical College Hospital and Research Centre, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India.
³⁴Assistant Professor, PG Department of Prasuti Tantra Evum Stri Roga, Mansarover Ayurvedic Medical College Hospital and Research Centre, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India.

ABSTRACT

The demands of today's stressful lifestyles can pose challenges during pregnancy. Elevated stress levels may lead to issues such as preterm birth, low birth weight, or developmental concerns for the baby. It's crucial for pregnant individuals to prioritize self-care, manage stress through relaxation techniques, and seek support to promote a healthier pregnancy despite the demands of contemporary life. Migraine attacks may be triggered by stress and anxiety depression Changes in sleep patterns, such as not getting enough sleep. The reported prevalence of headache in pregnancy is as high as 35%. Ayurveda, an ancient system of medicine, emphasizes the balance of mind, body, and spirit. Through holistic approaches, Ayurveda promotes calmness by incorporating practices like Shirodhara. Shirodhara is a classical and a well-established ayurvedic procedure of slowly and steadily dripping medicated oil or other liquids on the forehead. It's believed to have a soothing effect, promoting relaxation and relieving stress by calming the nervous system. Shirodhara is a simple yet profound technique specifically designed to balance and stabilize the nervous system and the activities of the mind. Shirodhara is widely acclaimed for its many health benefits which better the mind and body, the most popular being its deeply relaxing properties and its ability to promote better sleep and enhance sleep quality. In this review, a conceptual study is being elaborated regarding the Shirodhara.

Key words: Shirodhara, pregnancy, anxiety, hormones.

INTRODUCTION

Pregnancy is one of the most important periods in a woman's life, as it brings along numerous changes, not only in the physical aspects, but also socially and psychologically. There are plenty of researches done around the world about anxiety during pregnancy.

Address for correspondence:
Dr. Yashi Joshi
First Year Post Graduate Scholar, PG Department of Prasuti Tantra Evum Stri Roga, Mansarover Ayurvedic Medical College Hospital and Research Centre, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India.
E-mail: yashijoshi03@gmail.com
Submission Date: 09/12/2023 Accepted Date: 17/01/2024

Several factors can trigger anxiety during pregnancy, including: Hormonal Changes, Fears and Uncertainties, Previous Pregnancy Experiences, Personal and Work-related Stress etc. It's important for pregnant individuals to communicate openly with healthcare providers, seek emotional support, and consider stress-reducing strategies to manage anxiety effectively.

Ayurveda offers various practices and remedies that serve as effective stress busters. These may include: Herbal Remedies, Yoga and Meditation, Balanced Diet, Shirodhara etc. Ayurveda emphasizes a balanced and mindful lifestyle, including proper sleep, regular exercise, and stress management practices, to maintain overall harmony. Incorporating these Ayurvedic principles into daily life can help manage stress and support a healthier, more balanced existence.
The Ayurveda explains the episodic nature of Ardhavabhedaka (Migraine). Pain is the major symptom in the Ardhavabhedaka which affects the person’s activities. While describing Shiroroga, many Acharya counted Ardhavabhedaka in Shiroroga. Acharya Charak has stated that Vata either alone or in combination with Kapha, there will be severe pain in half side of the head, affecting particularly Manya, Bhru, Shankha, Karma, Aksh and Lalaat. The pain is like Shastra Arani Nibham.[1]

According to Acharya Sushrut there will be severe tearing and pricking pain in one half of the head associated with giddiness. These features appear every fortnightly or ten days or any time, Ardhavabhedaka caused by all the three Doshas.[2]

A definition of migraine is a recurring syndrome of headache, nausea, vomiting and/or other symptoms of neurologic dysfunction in varying admixtures. Migraine Attacks typically include: headache, which is of moderate or severe intensity, one-sided, pulsating in quality, aggravated by routine physical activity, with duration of hours to 2-3 days, nausea, attack frequency is anywhere between once a year and once a week.[3]

Hormone changes during pregnancy are not the only thing that can trigger migraine headaches. Most women have a combination of triggers. For instance, stress, skipped meals, and lack of sleep may all trigger a migraine. And something that triggers a migraine one day may not bother you at all the next. Headaches can be caused by a pregnancy complication called pre-eclampsia.[4]

A union of two words: Shiro and Dhara; ‘Shiro’ meaning head and ‘Dhara’ meaning to flow, pour or stream, this is called Shirodhara. There are various form of Shirodhara such as Tailadhara, Takradhara, Ksheeradhara, Jaladhara and Kwatadhara. Classically this procedure is not described under the Panchakarma, but it incorporated under Snehana Karma. Murdhatailam has been described in the Ayurveda which is of four type’s viz. Shiroabhyanga, Shiroshuka, Shiripuchi, Shirobasti. These are superior in their succeeding order.[5] It is one of Bahya Snehana procedure in which Snehan is applied in head or it is a procedure which involves gently pouring liquids over of the forehead and has been indicated for psychosomatic disorders and neurological disorders etc. These disorders are not only the diseased condition but also affect the quality of life and cause anxiety, depression and work ability is decreased. The Shirodhara with Tila Taila mentioned in ancient Ayurvedic books include Madhura Rasa, Kasaya Anurasas, Ushna Virya, and Madhura Vipaka, as well as Usna, Vyavayi, Visada, Sujasma, Tiksha, Guru, Vikasi, Lekhana, and Sara.

**METHODOLOGY**

**Materials**

The materials required are Droni, Shirodhara Patra, Shirodhara stand, Shirodhara table, Gauze, cotton earplug, Vessels, Soft towels, Suitable oil/milk/any liquid.

**Droni** - Droni Pramana length- 4 hasta, breadth- 1 hasta, Height-1/4th hasta.

**Dharapatra** - Mrittika, Swarna or Loha Patra. The size of Shiropatra Nalika should be equal to the size of the Kanista Anguli of the patient.

Preparation of medicine - The Dravya should be lukewarm of temperature 38°-40°c.

Preparation of Dharapatra - Filling of Patra with Sukhoshna Dravya.

**Method**

Shirodhara is classified into three Karma i.e., Purva Karma, Pradhan Karma, Paschat Karma.

**Purva Karma**

Preparation of the patient - The patient is thoroughly examined whether he is fit with for procedure. Patient should be advised to pass stool and urine. Then pulse, temperature and blood pressure of the patients should be recorded. Patient is advised to lie down in supine position and Dhara Patra should be fixed 4 Angula above the forehead. The eye and ear should be covered with cotton to prevent the entry of liquid into eyes and ears.
Pradhana Karma

Shirodhara room should be cleaned well, ventilated and very quiet. Shirodhara is done in the morning time on empty stomach after massage. Any type of liquid (Taila, Milk, Kvatha, water) should be kept in Dharapatra. Dhara should be poured continuously initially in the centre of the forehead neither very fast nor very slow. The liquid of Shirodhara should not be too hot or too cold. The stream of Dhara liquid should not be too thick or thin. When the liquid starts pouring then the vessel is moved in the pendulum manner. The continuous flow and the temperature should be maintained.

The liquid is collected in another vessel kept and is used to refill the Dharapatra before it becomes empty.

Shirodhara process is done for at least ½ an hour in the morning up to 7/14/21 days.

Paschat Karma

After the Shirodhara process is completed, and then cotton pads were removed over the eyes and ears. The head of the patient should be wiped out and dried. This is followed by a short duration of rest and massage of the body including head with oil and then a lukewarm bath. The patient is advised to have a Pathya Ahara (light diet). Patient should avoid exposure to cold, dust, wind.

Method of Administration of drug

Drug - Tila Taila

Dose - 500ml/day/patient

Duration - 30 mins for 7 days for 3 consecutive cycles

Probable mode of action

Ardhavbhedaka can be scientifically correlated with Migraine due to its cardinal feature unilateral headache and paroxysmal nature. The various types of pain and paroxysmal nature of Ardhavbhedaka suggest the Vishama nature of Vata Dosha. So, we can say that prominent Dosa in Ardhavbhedaka is Vata.

Effect of Tila and Taila

Action of Tila Taila mentioned in different text of Ayurveda - Brihana, Vrishya, Prinana, Medhakara, Sthairya, Varnakara, Tvakprasadana, Balya, Chakshusya, Laghutakarak. According to Acharya Charak, Guna of Taila is Vata Shamak.[6]

Effect of Shirodhara - The continuous pouring of Tila Taila in a relaxed and comfortable position has an effect. This acts as a sedative and soothing effect to the brain and induces sleep. This eventually stabilizes Vata Dosh. As Shirodhara is considered under Snehan.[7]

Effect of Temperature - The continuous flow of warm liquid on the forehead for such a long period will cause mild vasodilatation. Shirodhara improves the circulation in these areas and help in regularization the blood supply of the brain.[8]

Effect on Marma

Marma is defined as an Anatomical site where muscles, veins, ligaments, bones, and joints meet together. They are also the sites where not only Tridosh are present but their subtle forms like Prana, Ojas, and Teja are also present with Sattva, Raja and Tama.[9]

Some Marma (Vital spot) are located in forehead and head region as mentioned in Ayurveda classics. Mainly Sthapani, Utshepa, Avarta, Shankha and Apanga Marma are situated in this region.[10]

The site of pituitary and pineal gland is at the same level of Sthapani Marma. It regulates the endocrine system of human body. Shirodhara on the Sthapani Marma reliving the mental stress by regulating the function of this gland.

DISCUSSION

As Taila molecules are Sukshma (extremely tiny), they are able to penetrate the skin through hair follicles, pores, and sweat glands. From there they reach lymph nodes and blood capillaries, which then transport them throughout the body by the circulatory system.[11] As Shirodhara is considered under Snehan and Snehan is Yogya for Garbhini. The procedural effect of Shirodhara itself seems to produce a relaxation response. As Shirodhara is Vata Shamak. In Shirodhara, patients feel relaxation both physically as well as mentally. It is a purifying and rejuvenating therapy which eliminates toxins and mental exhaustion as well as relieves stress and any ill effects on the central nervous system.
As seen in various researches, Shirodhara is advice during first and second trimester of pregnancy and Shirodhara with the Tila Taila is indeed recommended during the first and second trimesters of pregnancy to help alleviate stress and anxiety. Although no direct indication of Shirodhara is mentioned in Ayurvedic classics but can be considered under Snehan. However, caution is advised in the third trimester due to concerns about potential muscle relaxation, which could have implications for the fetus. Safety is paramount during pregnancy.

**CONCLUSION**

Shirodhara where in continuous pouring of Tila Taila in relaxed and comfortable position has sedative and soothing effect to the brain. Also, the Taila enters into the circulation does the Vata Shamana. Thus, Shirodhara pacify Vata, Pitta. This procedure has been successfully practiced to treat stress induced various disorders like anxiety, depression, tension headache, etc during pregnancy.

**REFERENCES**

1. Shastri Kashinath, Gorakhanath Vidyotini Commentary on Charak Samhita Varanasi, Chaukhambha Bharti Academy, 2009;2: Siddhi Sthan 26
3. https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/headache-disorders
7. Acharya Charaka, Charaka Samhita, Viman sthana 6th Chapter, Shloka No-16, Charaka Chandrika Hindi commentary of Agnivesha, edited by Dr. Bramhananda Tripathi, Chaukhamba Prakashana, Varanasi, Reprint, 2002; Page No-641


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

Copyright © 2024 The Author(s); Published by Maharshi Charaka Ayurveda Organization, Vijayapur (Regd). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and perform the work and make derivative works based on it only for non-commercial purposes, provided the original work is properly cited.