

Analgesic effect of Local *Abhyanga* (External Oleation) and *swedana*(Steam) in *sandhigata vata* (Osteo-arthritis) : A case Report

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Abstract-

Ayurved is not only medicinal system but also complete science of life. Along with the healthy life style, Ayurveda explains about the etiological factors, Symptoms, prodromal symptoms, Pathogenesis, complication and treatment of diseases. Vata vyadhi comprises major part of diseases. Sandhigata vata is explained in vatavyadhi chapter in ayurvedic classics. Any type of pain cannot be present without presence of vatadosha. Here a case of 62 years old male who presented with complaints of pain, swelling, sandhigraha at knee joint, based on clinical sign and symptoms he was diagnosed as a case of Sandhigata vata. Treatment planned was Sthanik abhyanga of Balataila followed by sthanik nadisweda of dashmoola kwath for 14 days. Rukshata (Dryness), laghu (lightness), sheet(coldness) are the prime qualities of vata. And sneha

is Snigdha (Ununctuous), guru (heavy to digest) and ushna (Hot in quality) is best treatment modality for vata shaman. There can be several drugs as well as ways of administration to achieve the snehana. Bala and Dugdha helps to reduce vitiated vata especially because of dhatukshaya And hence when sidhha taila prepared with bala and dugdha, the vataghna property of taila is enhanced with bala and dugdha. 14 days treatment of Bala taila Abhyanga and swedana by dashamoola kwatha showed significant reduction in symptoms. Hence it can be the best adjuvant therapy to relieve pain in the patients of dhatu paka janya sandhigata vata.

Keywords- Vatadosha, Sandhigata vata, Abhyanga

1. Introduction-

Ayurveda being a science of life, it elaborates about maintaining the health first and then about the treatment of diseases.[1] The principles of Ayurveda such as Concept of five basic elements (*Pancha-Mahabhoota siddhanta*), Concept of *tridosha*, Concept of similarity and dis-similarity (*Samanya-vishesh siddhant*) etc, based upon which maintenance of health and management of diseases is achieved. Amongst all the *doshas*; *vatadosha* is given prime importance as it is responsible for all the movements (*cheshta*) in the body.[2] It includes voluntary movements and involuntary movement too. Old age is a state of degeneration of all the *dhatu*s in the body,[3] thus leading to *vataprakopa*, and making individual prone to *vatavyadhis*. Working with computers in A.C. travelling habits, working late nights, consumption of fast foods, spicy foods, irregular timings of lunch and dinner, improper food habits, people are becoming quite fitness freaks. Gym and dieting are latest trends for being fit. Avoiding unctuous food like pure ghee etc is on top of list. All these unwholesome diets, over exercise, inappropriate exercise, & such working life styles lead to vitiation of *vata*. Due to all these reasons, every class is prone for several life styles disorders, in which *Sandhigata-vata* is one of them.

Number of patients suffering from *sandhigata vata* is quite high because of today's life style. Also most of the times the treatment cost goes quite high, patients from lower socioeconomic class cannot afford these kinds of expenses. Ayurveda proves to be better option in all these fronts. There are multiple therapies in ayurveda which are affordable as well as incredibly effective.

Sandhigata vata is one of the most important *Vatavyadhi*. Acharya Charaka has mentioned common treatment of *vatavyadhi* i.e. repeated use of *snehan*, *swedana*, *basti* and *mridu virechana*. [4] Acharya Susruta has mentioned the treatment of *sandhigata vata* clearly, i.e. *snehana*, *upanaha*, *agnikarma*, *bandhan* and *unmardana*. While treating *sandhigata vata* considering samprapti of vitiated *vata dosha* play important role.

Vata dosha itself causes pain when vitiated in fact if there is a pain anywhere in the body; it must be because of vitiated *vata dosha*. [5] Patient of *sandhigata vata* suffers most because of the pain that is present in *sandhigata vata*. Publication of this case is an attempt to elaborate the analgesic or pain relieving effect of external oleation (or *Abhyanga*) and Steaming (or *Swedana*) in *sandhigata vata*.

1.1 Patients information

A 62 years male patient, businessman by profession visited with the complaints of severe pain in both the knee joints, swelling over bilateral knee joint, stiffness in both the knee joints since last six months. Pain aggravates while walking and in winter and rainy season. Patient underwent the treatment from a general practitioner. He consumed various analgesics for many times which offered only limited pain relief for a very short period. Hence patient came to ayurvedic OPD. This patient was not a known case of any major illness like diabetes, Hypertension or other metabolic disorders.

2. Findings

2.1 General Examinations

Patient was afebrile with Pulse 80/min. Blood pressure 116/80 mmhg, RR 18/ min. P/A soft and non tender. Urine and bowel were normal. In ayurvedic view, *Nadi* found to be *Vata Pradhan Pittanubandhi*

2.2 Local Examination

Both the knee joints of the patient examined thoroughly. Swelling was present over both the knee joint right knee joint was having slight more swelling than left. Redness was visible medially and also tenderness was present on medial side of both the knee joints. Crepitus was

feeling on movement of knee joints. Also notable warmth was present on touch. Patient was unable to fold both the knee joints more than 30 degree due to stiffness.

2.3 Systemic examination

In systemic examination, respiratory, cardiovascular system examination was within normal limits. Patient was conscious and well oriented. He was somewhat restless, because of severe pain at knee joints; his pupillary reflexes were within normal limits. Deep tendon reflexes & superficial reflexes were also normal.

Ashtavidha Parikshan (8 fold Examination)

Nadi (pulse) was *Vatpittaj*,

Mutra(Urine): *Peet* (Yellow)

Jivha (tongue) was *Nirama* (clean/ non coated),

Aakriti was *Madhyam* (medium built),

Mala (Bowel habit) was regular and normal.

Druk (vision) was normal with correction.

Dashvidh Pariksha showed *Pitta Pradhan Vatanubandhi Prakruti, Madhyam Sarata, Alpa Satva, Madhyam Satmya Avara Vyayam Shakti, Vriddha Vaya, Vikruti VaatPitta Pradhan Pittanubandhi, Abhyavaharan* and *Jaran Shaki* was *Madhyam*.

2.3. Investigations

Patient was not a known case of any major illness and as the primary diagnosis was *sandhigata vata*; only X-ray (AP and Lateral view) of B/L Knee joint was advised but patient was not willing to do so. No laboratory investigations were advised.

2.4. Clinical findings

Patient has complaints of severe pain in both the knee joints, swelling over bilateral knee joint, and stiffness in both the knee joints since last six months. Pain aggravates while walking and in winter and rainy season

2.5 Diagnostic Assessment

Diagnosis was made on the basis of signs and symptoms of the patient. The three cardinal signs of *sandhigata vata* i.e. Feeling like air filled pocket (*vata purna driti vat sparsha*), Swelling (*shotha*) and Restricted and painful joint movements (*Prasarana Akunchanayo savedana*) were present. The pain was quantified with the help of VAS and the score before treatment was 9 out of 10.

2.6 Therapeutic intervention

Treatment plan was carried out considering *Dhatu kshaya Janya Janu Sandhigata vata*. Presence of *Aam* was not there hence *Pachana* is not given as to avoid excessive *dhatupaka*. Hence following interventions were advised for 14 days continuously.

Table 01: Therapeutic intervention

Sr. No.	Intervention (Procedure)	Intervention (Medicine)	Description
01	Local oleation (Local massage or <i>Abhyanga</i>)	<i>Bala siddha</i> Oil	Sesame oil prepared with decoction of <i>Bala</i> (<i>Sida cordifolia</i>)
02	Local steam (<i>Sthanik sweda/Nadi sweda</i>)	<i>Dashamoola Kwatha</i>	Decoction of 10 herbs

As the patient was restless because of pain; the aim of the treatment offered; was to relieve the pain first and then break the pathogenesis. Hence this patient was advised the local massage of both knee joints by luke warm *bala siddha* oil. The massage was continued for 15 minits each knee. The standard method for massage on joints was followed.

Massage was followed by steaming of knee joint which is called as *Nadi sweda*. The decoction of 10 herbs i.e. *dashamoola* was heated again and the steam of decoction were used for steaming the knee joints.

Only external application of oils and steaming cannot break the pathogenesis of such a chronic disease but aiming towards analgesia or pain relieving effect; the patient showed significant reduction in pain, stiffness, ease of walking and swelling too.

3. Observation and Result:

Table 02: Follow up and Observations

Sr. No	Symptoms	Day 0	Day 7	Day 14
1	Pain (<i>Janusandhi shool</i>)	++++	++	+
2	Pain during walking (<i>Chankrman kalin Janusandhishool</i>)	++++	++	+
3	Swelling (<i>Janusandhi shoth</i>)	++	+	Nil
4	Jointr stiffness (<i>Janusandhigraha</i>)	++	+	+

Patient reported good relief in all Symptoms after 14 days after Treatment of Local *Snehan* of *janusandhi* followed by *Sthanik Nadi sweda* of *Dashmoola kwath*.

4. Discussion:

4.1 Pathogenesis of *sandhigata vata* :

Sandhigata Vata is type of *vatvyadhi*, [6] commonly found in old age patient i.e after 60 years of age. In old age there is excessive *Dhatukshaya* and excessive vitiation of *Vata*. So this vitiated *vatadosha* gets located at joints, thus this abnormal combination of *vata* and *asthi-sandhi* (*Dosha dushya samoorchhana*) leads to *sandhigata vata*. [7]

4.2 Mode of action of prodedure:

Abhyanga and *swedana* both the procedures are strongly advocated in *vata vyadhis*. [8] Both these procedures are also performed as primary steps before *panchakarma* (either *vamana* or *virechana*). [9] Because of *abhyanga* and *swedana*, *shakhagata dosha* flows in the direction of *koshtha* from where they are easy to expel out through body. [10]

Here in the present case of *sandhigata vata*, vitiated *vata* which is located at knee joints is responsible for pain, and crepitus. Stiffness is also due to the excessive dryness (*Rukshata*) of *vata dosha*. Hence *Abhyanga* and *swedana* are responsible not only to restrict the vitiation of *vata dosha* but relieves vitiated *vata dosha* from joints.[11]

4.3 Mode of action of Drugs:

Bala and *dashamoola* both are very popular medicines of *vata dosha*. [12] [13] *Bala* (*Sida coedifolia* Linn.) is a choice of drug in *nirama vata*. Hence in this particular case of *Nirama sandhigata vata*, Oil is processed with whole plant (*Panchanga*) of *bala* and *bala tail* is prepared and it is used for *abhyanga*.

Dashamoola is a combination of ten herbs. *Charaka* stated *dashamoola* in *Shothahara Mahakashaya*. [14] That means all these drugs are useful in reducing swelling also *dashamoola* is *tridoshaghna* [15] but the prime action is upon *vata dosha*; hence in this case *dashamoola kwatha* is used for *nadi sweda*.

4.4 Discussion on Results :

Of course only *abhyanga* and *swedana* can not break the pathogenesis of *sandhigata vata* in 14 days. Internal medication plays important role in treatment of any disease but in this case primary aim was to relieve the patient from the pain and discomfort due to stiffness.

There are certain modalities which can effectively be used as an analgesic to relieve pain; such as *abhyanga*, *swedana*, *agnikarma*, *viddha karma*, *lepa chikitsa* etc. But here we have used local *abhyanga* and *swedana* for pain relieving.

5. Patients Perspective:

In the period of 14 days, patient reported marked relief in pain, swelling and stiffness also. VAS score after 14 days was reduced to 2 from 9. That confirms the notable reduction in pain. Patient was able to flex his knee joints up to 60 degree easily. This also reflects reduced stiffness of both knee joints.

6. Conclusion:

Bala tail abhyanga and *dashamoola kwatha nadi swedana* are found very effective in *nirama sandhigata vata*. It not only reduces the pain but also reduces swelling and stiffness of joints. Ofcourse there is a need of some internal medication for breaking the pathogenesis of *sandhigata vata*.

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