Role of Pichha Vasti in the Management of Ulcerative Colitis

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Abstract

Ulcerative colitis is one of the common Gastrointestinal (GIT) disorders encountered by clinicians in day-to-day life. It is a type of Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) that usually involves the mucosa of rectum and extends proximally to involve all or part of the colon. A westernized environment and lifestyle is linked to the appearance of ulcerative colitis which is associated with smoking, unhealthy diet, medication use, stress etc. In Allopathic system of medicine drugs like 5–Aminosalicylates, Glucocorticoids, anti-TNF therapy etc. are used for its treatment but they have many side effects like headache, nausea, vomiting, hypersensitivity reactions due to Sulfasalazaine, osteoporosis due to use of Glucocorticoids etc. On the other hand Ayurveda is the Science of life in which Humoral balance is emphasized. Use of Deepana, Pachana drugs and Pichha Vasti is quite effective in this. Role of Pichha Vasti in Ulcerative colitis is discussed in detailed in the article.

Keywords

Ulcerative colitis, Pichha Vasti, Rectum
INTRODUCTION

Ulcerative colitis (UC) is a form of inflammatory bowel disease that causes non-granulomatous inflammation and ulcers in the rectum and colon. Its incidence is rising especially in Northern India, due to erroneous dietary habits and faulty lifestyle. This is substantiated by the fact that urban areas have a higher incidence of Ulcerative colitis than rural areas, and high socio-economic classes have a higher prevalence than lower socio-economic classes.\(^1\) The peak age of onset of UC is between 15 and 30 yrs. A second peak occurs between the ages of 60 and 80 yrs. The male to female ratio for UC is -1:1.\(^2\) The etiological factors of UC are Genetic Susceptibility, Defective Immune regulation, Exogenous factors and Environmental factors. The major symptoms of UC are diarrhoea, rectal bleeding, tenesmus, passage of mucus, crampy abdominal pain often related to defecation, anorexia and weight loss. Thus, the disease is quite cumbersome for the patient. It disturbs the daily routine of the patient, reduces personal productivity. Moreover, it poses a challenge for Medical health professionals due to its high morbidity and mortality. The highest mortality is during the first years of disease and in long duration disease due to risk of colon cancer.\(^3\) Ayurvedic system of medicine is very beneficial in the treatment of Ulcerative colitis. The various conditions described in Ayurveda like Raktaatisara, Kshataj Grahani and Sangrahani resemble to Ulcerative colitis due to similarity in symptoms. Acharya Sushruta has described Raktatisaar as advanced stage of Paitik Atisaar. Its symptoms like Shulam, Vidaaham, Gudpaaka & Raktapravritti can be compared with rectal pain, inflammation, rectal ulceration and bleeding of ulcerative colitis.\(^4\) Kshataj Grahani described by Acharya Gananathasen is characterized by frequency of liquid stools and passing of mucous and blood mixed stool due to Kshat (ulcers) in Grahani (intestine). Similarly, Sangrahni described by Acharya Madhav also has symptoms similar to Ulcerative colitis. Vitiation of Agni (Agnimandya) is the main cause of all these conditions. Thus, Deepana-Pachana Chikitsa forms the mainstay of the treatment. Along with this Pichha Vasti is considered best among all of the Vastis by Acharya Charak for the treatment of Sangrahni, Raktaatisara etc.
UNDERSTANDING

ULCERATIVE COLITIS FROM
AYURVEDIC POINT OF VIEW

From Ayurvedic point of view Ulcerative colitis can be considered as a Pitta Pradhan Tridoshaj disease of Purishavaha Srotasa. Nidana Sevana leads to vitiation of Pitta along with Vridh of Kapha and Vata. Vridhha Kapha and Vata cause the vitiation of Agni leading to Agnimandya. Excessive consumption of Pittaj - Ahara (Pitta aggravating foods) and Pitta aggravating regimen leads to vitiation of Pitta Dosha which further cause the vitiation of Rakta Dhatu. Dosha Sanchaya takes place in Grahani and Pakwashaya (Rectum and Colon) which results in Shula (abdominal pain), Shotha (inflammation of intestine), Atisara (Diarrhoea), Vrana (Ulcers) and Raktasraava (bleeding per rectum) etc. Vitiated Kapha blocks the channels causing further inflammation, mucous accumulation and oedema.

Pathogenesis of Ulcerative Colitis

Nidana (Viruddha Ahara/Vihara, Vidahi bhojan, Adhyashan etc.)

Kapha Vridh

Pitta Dushti

Vata Vridh

Raktadushti

Chinta (Stress) & other Manasa Vikara

Agnimandya

Dosha Sanchaya in Grahani & Pakwashaya

Shotha, Shula, Vrana, Raktasraava

Ulcerative Colitis

PICHHA VASTI

Piccha Vasti is named so because of its Picchil property which means it is sticky or lubricant. Because of this property it has ulcer healing effect. Moreover, it is Agnideepak and Sangrahi due to its contents.
**Pichha Vasti- Indications**

Acharya Charaka has described Piccha Vasti for the treatment of Pravahika (~Dysentry), Gudabhransha (~Rectal prolapse), Raktastraava (~Bleeding per rectum) Jwara (~Fever), Pitta-Atisaar, Shotha (Inflammation), Gulma, Jeerna-Atisaar (~Chronic diarrhoea) and Grahani Dosha. Acharya Sushruta has also given the similar indications of Pichha Vasti.

1. पिच्छाबस्तिरयं सिद्धः सघृिक्षौद्रशर्करः ।
   प्रवहिर्ागुदभ्रन्शरक्िस्रावज्वराििः । (च.चि.14/228)

2. पित्िातििारज्वरशोथगुल्मजीर्ाकतििारग्रिर्ीप्र
   दोषान् । जयत्ययं शीघ्रमतिप्रवृद्धान्
   पवरेचनातथािनयोश्च वस्तिः । (च.चि.19/67-68)

3. अल्िाल्िं बिुशो रक्तं सह्यं उपवेशयते ।
   यदा वयुविबद्धश्र पिच्छाबस्तिस्तदा हितः । (सू.उ.40/111)

**Contents Of Pichha Vasti**

1. Mocharasa - 50 gm
2. Dugdha (Milk) - 2 litres
3. Ghrita - 80 ml
4. Til Taila - 20 ml
5. Mulethi Kalka - 40 gm

**PROCEDURE OF ADMINISTRATION OF PICHHA Vasti**

- The procedure involves the Poorva Karma, Pradhana Karma and Paschat Karma.
- Pichha Vasti can be given for 30,16 or 8 days in Karma, Kaal and Yoga Vasti pattern i.e. Pichha Vasti is given in Vyatyasa Krama (alternately) with Anuvasan Vasti.
- Duration of Vasti cycle for 30, 16 or 8 days depend on the severity of disease and Bala of the patient.
- Patient is explained about the Pathya- Apathya Ahara- Vihara (Do’s & Don’ts) before the Vasti treatment.

**Poorva Karma**

It involves Snehana of abdomen, back, thigh and legs followed by Nadi Sveda.

**Pradhana Karma**

i. Patient is asked to lie down in the left lateral position.
ii. Sukhoshna Sneha is applied in the anal region and on the Vasti Netra.
iii. Vasti Netra is introduced gradually & patient is asked to breath in.
iv. Vasti Dravya is pushed into the rectum till a little quantity is remained in the Putaka (to prevent Vayu to enter into the Pakvashaya)

v. Withdraw the Netra gradually.

**Paschat Karma**

i. Patient is asked to keep lying for 3-4 mins for better absorption of drug from anal region.

ii. Patient is advised to take light diet.

iii. After completion of complete cycle patient is advised to follow the Sansarjan Karma.

**Probable Mode of Action of Purva Karma**

- Snehana and Svedana prior to Vasti do Anulomana of Apaan Vayu and thus, Vasti becomes more efficacious.
- Abhyanga also cause vasodilatation in skin and muscle by stimulating receptors of sympathetic nervous system. Vasodilatation increases blood flow and helps to remove toxins.

**PROBABLE MODE OF ACTION OF PICHHA VASTI**

**Possible actions of Piccha Vasti are —**

a) Shothahara & Vrana-Ropaka (Anti-inflammatory & Ulcer-healing)

b) Raktastamkhaka (Haemostatic agent)

c) Sangrah / Stambhan (Anti-diarrhoeal)

d) Pitta Shamaka

e) Agnideepaka

These actions are due to contents present in it.

Following are the properties of its contents:

1. **Mocharasa (Resin of Salmalia malbarica)**

   ➢ Due to its Kashaya Rasa and Sheeta Virya, it has Vranropaka (Ulcer-healing) property.

   ➢ Achyarya Charaka has kept it in Shonitsthapana Gana, thus, it checks bleeding (haemostatic agent).

   ➢ Latest researches also prove its anti-diarrhoeal effect. The polyphenols and tannins present in Salmalia Malbarica provide strength to intestinal mucosa, decrease intestinal secretion, intestinal transit and promotes balance in water transport across the mucosal cells.

   ➢ It is Picchil (sticky or lubricant) in nature thus, forms protective film over Intestine and avoid friction over mucosa.

   ➢ Shalmali resin (Mocharasa) exudates contain Gallic and Tannic acids. From various researches done recently throughout the world it has been shown that both Gallic acid and Tannic acids have Anti-oxidant and Anti-inflammatory actions. Gallic acid
inhibits Histamine release and Pro-inflammatory Cytokine production in Mast cells.\(^{11}\)

2. **Ghrita**

- Ghrita helps in stimulating Agni and it also has a Balya and Vrana Ropana\(^{12}\) (healing effect).
- In Ayurveda classics it is mentioned that Ghrita is best Pitta Shamak Dravya.\(^{13}\) Pitta is responsible for inflammation and ulceration process.
- Sneha forms an impervious coating over entire colon. There will be no loss of electrolytes and prevent direct attack of inflammatory mediators on mucosa and hence thereby reduce inflammatory process and facilitate healing.

3. **Sesame Oil (Taila)**

- Its Sukshma property also helps the drug to reach into the microcellular level.
- Oil helps in protecting intestinal mucosa from the irritating substances.
- Ghrita and oil also help in forming homogenous mixture.
- Moreover, Sesame oil contains high level of natural antioxidants namely sesamol, sesamolin, sesamin and asarinin. They play an important role in health-promoting effects.\(^{14}\)

- Sesamin is a lignin with potent anti-inflammatory and antinoceceptive properties.\(^{15}\)

4. **Milk (Dudha)**

- It makes the Vasti Mridu and alleviates Pittadosha.

5. **Mulethi (Glycyrrhiza glabra)**

- Mulethi is Vata-Pitta Shamak and has Shothahar property.\(^{16}\)
- Liquorice (Mulethi) has anti-inflammatory, analgesic, anti-oxidant and ulcer healing properties.\(^{17}\)
- It also has Rasayana property; it helps in increasing the potency of other drugs and general condition of patient.

**DISCUSSION**

Ulcerative colitis is a chronic disease with recurrent symptoms and significant morbidity. The precise etiology of ulcerative colitis is not well understood but as told above the current hypothesis suggests its causes as Genetic Susceptibility, Defective Immune regulation, Exogenous factors (Infections by Salmonella, Shigella, Campylobacter etc.) and Environmental factors (Smoking, indiscreet use of antibiotics etc.). These factors cause T-cell activation in mucosa of rectum and colon
followed by release of inflammatory cytokines such as IL-1, IL-6 & TNF. With mild inflammation mucosa is erythematous and has a fine granular surface that resembles sandpaper. In more severe disease, the mucosa is haemorrhagic, oedematous and ulcerated. According to Ayurveda vitiated Pitta and Rakta are responsible for inflammation and ulceration. Based on the probable mode of action of Piccha Vasti described above the role of Piccha Vasti can be summarised as below:

**Raktastambhaka Theory:**
- Ingredients of Piccha Basti owing to their Kashaya Rasa and Sheeta Veerya act as Raktastambhaka (Haemostatic agent).
- Pitta is the dominating Dosha responsible for bleeding per anum. Because of Madhura, Tikta and Kashaya Rasa of the ingredients of Piccha Basti it is Pittashamaka. So it pacifies vitiated Pitta Dosha and as well Rakta.

**Vranaropaka Shothahara action**
- In ulcerative colitis intestine gets inflamed and sensitized, when food passes through intestine and makes contact with its mucosa.
- Vasti drugs reach up to the Rectum and Colon and form protective film over it, avoid friction over mucosa, inflammation subsides and mucosa becomes normal
- Due to its different contents it has Shothahara and Vranaropak property.

**Agnideepaka action**
- From Ayurvedic point of view Agnimapatha is the root cause of Ulcerative Colitis so Agni Deepak property of Piccha Vasti helps in breaking the pathogenesis of the disease.

**Sangrahi action**
- Simultaneously Piccha Vasti also has Sangrahi property which reduces the bowel frequency and there will also be no loss of electrolytes and protein losing enteropathy.

**CONCLUSION**
Ulcerative colitis is a challenging medical problem. Its incidence is increasing due to unhealthy dietary habits. In modern medical science, though many remedies are available, like the use of Sulphasalazine and the other 5-ASA agents, Glucocorticoids, Anti-TNF Therapy, but they have many side-effects. Due to the nature of disease it results in degradation of health and disturbs the daily routine life of the patient thus, making him emotionally stressed. Based on
the discussion, it can be said *Pichha Vasti* is quite effective in treating Ulcerative colitis.
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