A Review on Conceptual and Applied Aspect of Pramathi
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Abstract
Narration of Deepan Pachan paribhasha is the unique identity of Sharangdhara Samhita and Pramathi is one of them. Pramathi means by virtue of specific cleansing properties/ potency some drugs expel out the accumulated doshas from the strotasa. It is the need of time to explore these paribhasha (pharmacological actions) theoretically as well as clinically. Pramathi drugs are having teja and vayu mahabhoota dominance in them so their action is carried out with the help of laghu, rooksha, sookshma, teekshna, vishada guna , katu rasa, katu vipaka and ushna veerya. In the treatment of pureeshavegadaran Charaka has mentioned pramathi annapana also, in kshayaja kasa chikitsa, soup of meat of jangala animals which is having pramathi properties is indicated. The references of indications of maricha and vacha as in mookhdooshikahara lepa and pradhaman nasya can be interpreted and correlated with the concept of pramathi. Clinically in such conditions where doshas or aama have created the obstruction in strotasa the pramathi drugs are the choice of drug for the treatment.

Keywords
Pramathi, maricha, vacha

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INTRODUCTION

The pharmacology of Ayurved is mainly based on its fundamental principles. The action of drugs like deepan, pachan, lekhan, bruhan, are expressed in terms of their specific function in specific clinical conditions. Sharangdhara was the first who explained these terms with examples under the heading of ‘paribhshsa’ (pharmacological definitions). The aim of defining these terms was to explain specific karmas (functions) in specific pathological conditions and also to differentiate closely similar karma like stransan (laxative), rechan (cathartics), bhedan (purgatives) and anuloman (aperients)\(^1\). Pramathi karma is one of them. Pramathi means the drugs which removes the accumulated doshas from the strotas (system) by their own specific action; for example maricha and vacha\(^2\).

In clinical practice we need to use specific actions of particular drugs to relieve the samprapti (pathogenesis) of a disease. For this we must know such pharmacological actions comprehensively. Among the 23 paribhashas described by sharangdhara ‘pramathi’ is one of them having clinical importance. The concept of pramathi is mainly recognized by the examples given in definition i.e., maricha and vacha. Very few references are available regarding pramathi concept in samhita and other granthas. Also very few physicians apply the drugs like maricha (Piper nigrum) and vacha (Acorus calamus) according to their pramathi action or they are unknown about the specific conditions of using pramathi drugs.

The main aim of this article is to explore the concept of pramathi; search for scattered references of prmathi in samhita and other granthas. To form and correlate these links with each other. To clinically analyze their theoretical and clinical aspect and to highlight the specific clinical conditions of application of pramathi drugs on the basis of clinical evidences.

Basis of Panchamahabhautik dominance

According to the etymological derivation in Vachaspatyam the drugs predominantly and forcefully expelled the doshas by after churning them are pramathi\(^3\). Vaidyaka shabda sindhu kosha has more elaborated the definition. The pamathi drugs act by virtue of their sookshma (subtle) and teekshna (sharp/quick) properties; also expels the sticky doshas in strotasa by churning them and expands the lumen also\(^4\). Vacha and maricha are the examples given
of pramathi narrated by Sharangdhara. We can interpret the mechanism of action of pramathi on the basis of panchabhautik siddhant. Critically analyzing the etymology and definition of pramathi and rasapanchaka of maricha and vacha we can make the inference that pramathi karma is having teja and vayu mahabhoota dominance. Tejasa dravyas are ushna (hot), teeksha (sharp), sookshma (minute), laghu (light), rooksha (rough), vishada (non-slimy) properties while vayu mahabhoota having laghu, sheeta (cold), vishada, rooksha, khara (coarse), sookshma properties. We can interpret the action of pramathi on the basis of above gunas as in Table no 1. The pramathi action is carried out by the combined effect of teja and vayu mahabhoota gunas. Sushrutas quotation in (Su.Su. 46/515) supports above mention karma that various actions of dravyas are inferred by the different qualities in them. Basis of rasapanchaka siddhant

The drugs maricha and vacha both having katu rasa, katu vipaka and ushna verya. We can also interpret the action of pramathi on the basis of this rasapanchaka as in Table no. 2. Aama (indigested food product) creates strotorodha (obstruction in channels) also the abhishyandi drugs (obstructants) by their picchil (unctuous), guru (heavy) properties block the strotas. The pramathi drugs relieve the strotorodha means they must have aamapachana (digesting power) and abhishyandahara (obstruction reliving) properties. Thus by panchabhautik dominance and rasapanchak of vacha and maricha the action of pramathi is correlated.

Clinical application

Reviewing the Ayurvedic literature we found very few and scattered references regarding pramathi. In the treatment principle of pureeshvegadharan (holding the urge for defecation) Charaka has mentioned pramathi annapan. By virtue of their cleansing nature it clears the passage of their obstruction; here the pramathi aahar which is having teja and vayu mahabhoota dominance relives the obstruction in pureeshavaha strotas. The pramathi annapan can be advised in pakwashaya shoola (lower abdomen pain), shirashoola (headache), malavashtambha (constipation), aadhman (flatulence) when these pathological conditions are formed due to pureeshavgadharan. In the treatment of kshayaja kasa (cough due to wasting) Acharya Charaka has advised pramathi aahara.
Table 1: Action of Pramathi on the Basis of Mahabhoota Dominance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mahabhoota</th>
<th>Guna</th>
<th>Action (karma)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teja + Vayu</td>
<td>Laghu</td>
<td>Reduces upalepa (coating) in strotasa (channels), also reduces parthiva ansha (heaviness) in strotasa which have created strotorodha (obstruction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rooksha</td>
<td>Reduces excessive oiliness and abhishyanda (exudation) from strotasa and make them free.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teekshna</td>
<td>Expels the waste forcibly from strotasa by their sharp or quick acting property.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ushna</td>
<td>By its heating property it liquefies the doshas making favorable condition to expel out the waste.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sookshma</td>
<td>By its penetrating property it move inside minute channels (sookshma strotasa) and help to make the channels free from doshas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vishada</td>
<td>It purifies or clean the strotasa by its sucking property also reduces moistness in the strotasa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>khara</td>
<td>It reduces extra thickness or coating in the strotasa and make strotasa in normal state.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Action of Pramathi on the Basis of Rasapanchaka

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pramathi drugs</th>
<th>Rasapanchak</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maricha and Vacha</td>
<td>Katu rasa</td>
<td>Kledaman upahanti – help in the elimination of the waste products which are sticky in nature and produces the oleation, Bandhan chinattae – break the obstruction in strotasa, Margan vivrunoti – clarify or expand the passage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ushna veerya</td>
<td>Swedan and vilayan</td>
<td>The hot potency liquefies the doshas in strotas and make favorable condition for expultion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here Charaka quotes that after the administration of anuvasan type of enema (oil enema), the patient should be given the soup of meat of animals and birds which are jangals (those living in thin forest), vartaka etc, those which are bileshaya (those living in burrows) and meat eating prasahas (those eating by snatching their food) seriatim. Because of their hot potency and pramathi attribute, these ingredients cause exudation of kapha accumulated in the channels of circulation. After the body is cleansed of this aggravated kapha, these meat soups while flowing appropriately in the channels of circulation cause nourishment of tissue.

The specialty of this treatment is that the opposite clinical condition is present here, i.e. the patient of kshayaja kasa having strotorodha by kapha. If we apply bruhan (nourishing) therapy for kshayapradhany samprapti (pathogenesis due to wasting) the kapha will vitiate leading to more strotorodha and agnimandya (anorexia). On the other hand if we apply kaphaghna
chikitsa for reliving strotorodha by kapha it will lead to dhatukshaya (wasting of dhatus). Considering both these facts Charaka has mentioned pramathi aahar which fulfills both the conditions as mentioned in the concept of shuddha (pure/appropriate) treatment that the treatment which alleviates or cures one disease or dosha and gives rise to another disease or dosha is not shuddha; a pure one is that which cures one and does not give rise to another\textsuperscript{13}. The clinical application of above pramathi aahara reference is that in such condition where kshayapradhan samprapti and strotorodha by kapha or aama is present we can apply in that particular disease also.

The other reference of pramath can be considered as indirect reference. As Acharya Sharangdhara has mentioned maricha and vacha as examples of pramath ; the references where both these drugs are therapeutically used and the expected action is like pramath can be interpreted as pramath action.

**Mukhadooshika chikitsa (Acne treatment):** Acharya Sharangdhara has mentioned maricha and vacha as ingredients of mukhalepa (face paste) for the treatment of acne\textsuperscript{14}. By applying fundamental principles of Ayurveda the reason behind inclusion of vacha and maricha in mookhadooshikahara lepa (paste for acne) can be interpreted as – The adhishtana i.e. seat of mookhadooshika is twacha (skin) means rasavaha, raktawaha and masavaha strotasa. The samprapti (pathogenesis) of mookadooshika narrated by Sushruta is aggravated kapha, vata and rakta create pidika (eruption) resembling thorns of shalmali tree appear on the face of youths\textsuperscript{15}. Aggravated kapha, rakta and vata are accumulated in pidika which also creates strotorodha. To expel out these doshas the lepa of maricha and vacha with lodhra (Symlocos racemosa) and dhanyaka (Coriandrum sativum) is applied over the pidika. The lepa dravyas by their potency penetrate and enter in the strotasa by their sookshma guna. By ushna, teekshna, vishada and rooksha guna they churn and irritate the local accumulated doshas in turn they are expelled out in the form of exudate by cracking the outer layer of skin. This way the strotasa is cleaned which in turn help for ropana kriya (healing process) and afterwards skin becomes normal.

**Pradhamana nasya (nasal insufflation) –** Acharya Sushruta has mentioned both maricha and vacha in shirovirechanopaga...
gana (group of purgatives to the head). They are mainly used in the form of pradhamana nasya. The action of pradhamana nasya is different from other types. This type of nasya is used in the condition where excessive doshas are accumulated in shira (head) or pranavaha strotasa (respiratory tract). The fine powder of vacha or maricha is blowed/inhaled into the nose with the help of nadi yantra (tubular instrument). It enters into small channels of pranavaha strotasa by their sookshma guna; then by the ushna, teekshna, rooksha and vishad guna the accumulated doshas are expelled from the nostrils in the form of ksavathu (sneezing reflex). The same mechanism of action happens here by maricha and vacha which is described in the definition of pramathi. In other diseases like pravahika, peenasa, udavarta etc. where maricha or vacha is indicated in the same pathogenesis of accumulation of doshas the pramathi action can be interpreted.

CONCLUSION

For the treatment of any disease it is important to know the exact vyadhi avastha (condition of disease), mode of pathogenesis, which help us to choose the perfect drug or formulation. Pramathi is such an action where the accumulated doshas are expelled out by virtue of their cleansing nature. Very few or scattered references are available in ayurvedic literature and electronic resources regarding pramathi action. In pureeshavegadharana and kshyaja kasa treatment pramathi annapana is indicated which helps to relieve the obstruction in that particular strotasa. Also from indirect references of therapeutic indications of maricha and vacha which are regarded as pramathi drugs by Sharangadhara; the mechanism of action of vacha and maricha in mookhadooshikahara lepa and pradhamana nasya can be correlated or linked with action of pramathi. This will help the researchers and physicians of Ayurveda as broad spectrum of application of concept of pramthi.
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