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A Multimodal Ayurveda management of *Amavata* (Rheumatoid arthritis): A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

Amavata (Rheumatoid arthritis) is a painful, systemic disease involving multiple joints. The chief elements are *Ama* and *Vata* which concurrently affect the joints and causes stiffness of the joints. The clinical features of *Amavata* resembles closely with Rheumatoid arthritis. The condition is managed by DMARDs (Disease Modifying Anti-rheumatic drugs) and corticosteroids, but still remains a challenging problem to the medical field as it doesn't completely cure the disease. *Ayurveda* has a given a detailed description regarding the management of *Amavata* which includes *Langhana* (Fasting), *Swedana* (Sudation), *Deepana* (appetizing) with *Tikta* (bitter)– *Katu* (spicy) *Rasa*, *Virechana* (Therapeutic purgation) & *Vaitaran Basti* (enema).

A case of *Amavata* management by combined interventions included internal medications with *Sihnad Guggulu*, *Vishtinduk Vati*, *Rasnadi chrana* with *Sameerpannag rasa* & *Guduchi Ghanvati*. Externally with *Valuka Sweda*, *Nadi Sweda* and *Virechana* (Therapeutic purgation) with *Moorchita ErandaTaila* & *Vaitaran Basti*. Investigations showed CRP & ASO positive & RA- Positive. Ayurveda treatment was given to this patient for 21 days. After 21 days of treatment CRP, ASO& RA were negative and symptoms were reduced.

KEYWORDS

Amavata, *Rheumatoid Arthritis*, *Langhana*, *Swedana*, *Virechana Basti*.



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INTRODUCTION

Pain is an agonizing indication experienced by human beings including distress sometimes. The chief constituents are *Ama* and *Vata* which simultaneously affect the joints and causes stiffness of joint. Based on the clinical presentation, RA (Rheumatoid Arthritis) shows more resemblance with Amavata.

Acharya Madhavkara has given a detailed description regarding the *Nidana* (Cause), *Samprapti* (Pathogenesis) and clinical features of *Amavata*¹. Having *Viruddhaahar* in excessive quantity or daily basis with lack of exercises etc. causes vitiation of *Vata- Kapha dosha* eventually leads to *Mandagni* (Weak digestive fire) that hampers the digestion and metabolism in the body. As a result, transformation of *Rasa Dhatu* (Metabolic end product) becomes impaired in *Amashaya* (Gastrointestinal tract) where it is called *Ama* (Metabolic toxin). Vitiating *Vata* displaces *Ama* which has an inclination towards *Sandhi* (Joints) and produces symptoms like *Angamarda* (Malaise), *Aruchi* (Anorexia), *Trishna* (thirst), *Alasya* (Tiredness), *Gaurava* (Heaviness), *Apaka* (Indigestion), *Sandhishotha* (Swelling of joint), *SanadhiStambha* (Stiffness), *SandhiShoola* (Joint pain).

The clinical features of *Amavata* resembles closely with R.A which is believed to have a prevalence range of approximately 0.75 % in India with a female to male ratio of 3:1. Management of Rheumatoid Arthritis includes use of analgesics, steroids for the pain management which are having several adverse reactions and drug dependency.

The treatment principles of *Amavata* includes removing *Ama* through *Strotoshodhana* (purifying body channels) by procedures like *Langhana* (Fasting), *Swedana* (steam), *Agnivardhana* (improving digestive fire) by adopting *Deepan-Pachan* drugs which are *Tikta* (bitter) *Katu* (spicy) *Rasa* predominant and alleviating *Vata* by *Virechana* (purgation) and *Basti*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

CASE REPORT: A 28 year old female patient was admitted in Female KC ward. She was referred from orthopaedic department Dr.D.Y.Patil Medical College with history of Rheumatoid Arthritis since 8 years. She presented with the following complaints.

- Multiple joint pain and stiffness, generalised weakness, loss of appetite, constipation, cramps since 8 years.
- Gradual onset of bilateral pain and stiffness in MCP (Metacarpal-phalangeal



joint), wrist joint, elbow joints, ankle joints and knee joints since 8 years. Mild swelling in both wrist and ankle joints.

- H/O Hyper gonadotropic amenorrhea.
- On examination she displayed restriction of movement in her wrist joint and ankle joint due to pain. Her blood investigation showed ASO titre and CRP were positive & RA titre was positive.

PERSONAL HISTORY

- Diet: Mixed diet, prefers spicy
- Appetite: Irregular
- Bowel: Constipated often
- Bladder: Normal
- Sleep: Disturbed

ASHTAVIDHA PARIKSHA

(GENERAL EXAMINATION)

- *Nadi* (Pulse): *Vata, Pitta*, 78/min
- *Mootra* (Urine): Normal
- *Mala* (Stool): Constipated
- *Jihwa* (Tongue): Sama (Coated)
- *Shabda*: Normal
- *Sparsha* (Touch): Normal but warmth over wrist and ankle joint
- *Drik* (Eyes): Normal
- *Akriti* (Built): *Krushata* (Thin) 45kg
- Blood Pressure: 110/70 mm of hg
- Respiratory Rate: 16/min
- Cardiovascular system- S1 S2 normal
- P/A: Mild tender at umbilical region
- Pallor: Mild

INVESTIGATION (ON ADMISSION)

- *C Reactive protein*: Positive
- *ESR*: 40mm/hr
- *ASO titre*: Positive
- *R.A. Factor (Qualitative)*: Positive

DIAGNOSIS

- *Amavata* (Rheumatoid Arthritis)

MANAGEMENT

Principles of management

- *Laghvashan* (light diet)
- *Dipan* (digestion), *Pachan* (carminative) by *Tikta* (Bitter)+*Katu* (spicy)*Rasa*
- *Ruksha Swedan* (dry steam)
- *Virechan* (purgation) & *Basti* (enema)

Chikitsa

- *Vata – Kapha Shaman* (Palliative)

Chikitsa

➤ CHIKITSA SUTRA OF AMAVATA

लङ्घनंस्वेदनंतिक्तं दीपनानिकटूनिच।

विरेचनंस्नेहपानं बस्त्यश्चाममारुते ॥

सैन्धवाद्येनानुवास्यक्षारबस्तिः प्रशस्यते ॥

रुक्षःस्वेदोविघातव्यो बालुकापोटलैस्तथा।

उपनाहाश्चकर्तव्यास्तेऽपिस्नेहविवर्जिताः ॥

(*Yogratnakar*)²

As mentioned in above *chikitsa sutra*, *Langhanis* said to be the first line of management for *Aamvata*. This will help for *Agnidipan* and *Aampachana*. As in this patient, it is found that, the patient's *bala* was *hina*, hence we planned to give her *Laghvashana* first.



1) *Laghvashan* with *Mudga Yusha*

Dose: 200ml

Duration: 3 days (when she felt hungry)

Anupan: Koshna Jala (luke warm water)

After 3 days, when symptoms of successful *Laghvashan* (light diet) therapy were observed on patient, *Laghvashan* (light diet) was stopped. Following symptoms presented after *Laghvashan* (light diet).

- Proper excretion of flatus, urine and faeces.
- Lightness of the body.
- Feeling of purity in heart.
- Appreciation of taste for food, hunger, thirst and contentment.

ORAL AYURVEDA MEDICINE (SHAMAN CHIKITSA)

1) *Simhnada Guggulu*³

Dose: 250mg

Time: Morning 7am & Evening 7pm
(empty stomach)

Anupana: Lukewarm Water

2) *Vishtinduk Vati*⁴

Dose: 125mg

Time: Morning 7am & Evening 7pm
(empty stomach)

Anupana: Lukewarm Water

3) *RasnadiChurna*

Rasna

Haritaki

Devdar

Guduchi

} each 3 gm

Bala each 3gm

Erandamula

Yashtimadhu

Shatavari

+

Samirpannag Rasa – 75mg

Preparation of Decoction

Take each 25gm *Churna* + 3 cup water reduced by boiling to 1 cup = filter it.

Dose: 40 ml twice in a day

Time: Morning 7am & evening 7pm
(empty stomach)

4) *Guduchi Ghanvati*⁵

Dose: 250mg

Time: Morning 7am & Evening 7pm
(empty stomach)

Anupana: Lukewarm Water

PURIFICATION THERAPY (SHODHANA CHIKITSA)

1) *Sarvanga Sweda* (*Whole body fomentation*): *Baluka Sweda* for 21 days.

- Site- All multiple joints
- 2) *Mrudu Virechana* (*Mild Therapeutic purgation*): *Eranda taila* (Castor oil) for 3 days in *vardhman matra*⁶ was prescribed to patient. And as mentioned in table no.1, number of vegas had been observed.

Table 1 No. of daily *Virechanavega*

Days	Dose	No. of vegas
1 st day	10ml	1 vega
2 nd day	20ml	3 vega
3 rd day	30ml	3 vega
4 th day	40ml	4 vega

3) *BASTI KARMA: Vaitran Basti* was given for 16 days. Contents of *Vaitran Basti*



are *Guda* (jaggery), *Saindhav lavana* (rock salt), *TilaTaila* (sesame oil), *Amleeka* (tamarind) & *Gomutra* (cow's urine)⁷

4) **AGNI KARMA:** when pain was aggravated.

Site: Ankle joint, wrist joint & knee joint.

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

- **SUBJECTIVE CRITERIA**⁸

- 1) Joint pain & stiffness
- 2) Generalised weakness
- 3) Anorexia

Table 2 Assessment subjective criteria

Follow ups	1 st day (Before treatment)	21 st day(After treatment)
Multiple joints pain	Severe pain with more difficulty in moving the joints & requires strong analgesics.	Mild pain of bearable nature.
Stiffness	≥ 8 hours	30mins
Generalised weakness	Continuous feel weakness which obstructs routine work.	No weakness
Anorexia	Craving for food only after long intervals	Normal Craving for food
Constipation	Strain and hard stools	Normal
Tiredness without exertion	Never able to start the work and always like rest	No tiredness
Swelling	≥ 30% increased circumference of the affected joints	No swelling

As mentioned in table.2, the above mentioned symptoms relief were observed before taking the treatment and after treatment.

- 1) **OBJECTIVE CRITERIA:**

Table 3 Assessment objective criteria

Investigation	1 st day	21 st day
C reactive protein	Positive	Negative
ASO titre	Positive	Negative
ESR	40mm/hr	35mm/hr
RA factor	Positive	Negative

Table no.3 shows the changes in investigation like C reactive protein, ASO

- 4) Constipation
- 5) Cramps
- 6) Tiredness without exertion
- 7) Swelling

- **OBJECTIVE CRITERIA**⁹

- 1) CRP
- 2) ASO Titre
- 3) RA Factor

OBSERVATION AND RESULTS

- 1) **SUBJECTIVE CRITERIA**

titre, ESR and RA factor before and after taking the treatment.

DISCUSSION:

Ama & *Vata* are the main culprits in causing the disease *Amavata*. Hence, the main purpose of treatment is to reduce *Ama* by *Amapachan* followed by *Vatashaman* measures.

Mode of action of drugs:



Oral Ayurveda medicine (*Shaman chikitsa*):

- *Langhan* (fasting) means the food which gives lightness to the body. *Langhan* (fasting) is the first line of management explained for *Amavata* which leads to *Agnidipan* & digest *Ama*.
- Use of *Tikta* (bitter) & *Katu* (spicy) *Rasa Dravya* for *Deepan* (digestion) *Pachan* (carminative), *Guduchi Ghanvati*, which are very useful for *Ama Pachan* (carminative) & *Agni Deepan* (digestion).
- *Simhnada Guggulu* have *Katu* (spicy), *Tikta* (bitter) *Rasa*, *Laghu* (light), *Ruksha* (dry) *Guna*, *Ushnavirya* (hot potency), *Katu* (spicy) *Vipaka*, *Vedanasthapana* (painkiller) *Amapachak*, *Strotoshodhaka* (purifying body channels) properties which helps in the breaking the pathogenesis of *Amavata*.
- *Sameerpannag rasa* mainly works on *Vata-Kaphaj* conditions & it is *Uttam Bala Aushadha* (powerful medicine). So, in this patient as the strength of the disease was strong, we had prescribed her *Sameerpannag rasa* 75mg + *Rasnadi Churna* twice a day for 15 days.
- *Vishtinduk Vati* contains a single ingredient i.e., purified *Kuchala*. Being *Tikta* (bitter) -*Katu* (spicy) *Rasa*, having *Ushna Virya* (hot potency), *Katu* (spicy) *Vipaka* & *Laghu* (light), *Ruksha* (dry),

Tikshna (penetrating) *Guna* it reduces *Kapha* & pacifies *Vata* & does *Amapachan*. It also reduces stiffness of joints.

PURIFICATION THERAPY (*SHODHANA THERAPY*):

- After attaining *Niramavastha* in patient, *Virechan* (purgation) with *Eranda Taila* was given to the patient for 3 days in *Vardhaman Matra* (Ascending dose). *Eranda Taila* is *Kaphavata Shamak* and *Ushna* (hot) *Virya*. It acts as *Dipana* (digestion) & *Strotoshodhana* (purifying body channels). It is mentioned as best *Vatahara*.
- *Vaitrana Basti* was given to the patient for 16 days. *Chakradatta* has appreciated the role of *Vaitrana basti* in the treatment of *Amavata*.
The ingredients of *Vaitrana Basti* (enema) have *Deepan* (digestion), *Pachana* (carminative), *Usha* (hot) *Virya*, *Madhur* (sweet) – *Amla* (sour) – *Lavana* (salt) *Rasa*, *Teekshna* (penetrating) & *Lekhana Gunas*. These *Gunas* helps to alleviate *Ama* & *Vata* in the body.
- As *Rookshan* and *Langhan* have similar qualities, it was done in the form of *Valuka sweda*, it helped in the *Shoshan* (absorption) of *Ama* situated in the *Sleshmasthanas* (joints), thus pacifies symptoms like *stambha* (stiffness), & *shoola* (pain) suffered by patient.



CONCLUSION

The results obtained in the patient after the treatment was encouraging. The treatments employed were purely based on the principles of *Ayurveda* and was found to be very effective. The condition of the patient improved remarkably. Multimodal *Ayurveda* approach helped in restoring the quality of life of this patient. Thus *Panchkarma* procedures along with internal medicines showed encouraging result in this case of RA.



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