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## An Integrated Approach towards the Management of Shirahshoola w.s.r to Primary Headache: A Review Study

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### ABSTRACT

*Shiras (head)* is known as *utthamanga* for existing vital organs like *prana*, *indriya*, *pranvahastrotas*, *sadya pranahara marma* and it is the seat for *gyanavahan* (sensory & motor reflexes). The diseases in which headache (*Shirahshoola*) is the prime symptom, those are named as *Shiroroga*. *Sushruta* described 11 types of *shirahshoola* while *Vagbhata* explained 9 diseases in *kapalgataroga* and 10 types of *shirashoola*. *Charak* described 5 types of diseases. To protect *Shiras* and for prevention of *shirorogas*, there are some treatments that are given in different *Samhitas* like *shiroabhyanga*, *Nasyakarma*, *Lela*, *dhoomapana*, *vaman*, *virechan*, *basti*, *gandoosha*, *kavalgrah*, *rakthamokshan* etc., which can cure and prevent different types of *shirorogas*.

### KEYWORDS

*Shiras*, *Shirashoola*, *Nasyakarma*, *Kriyakalpas*, *Headache*



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## INTRODUCTION

The diseases in which “*Shirahshoola*” is the prime symptom, are named as *Shirorogas*. It is the seat of *prana* and all *indrias*. *Shirah* is a main control system of all bodily ailments. Alteration in the activity of the *Shirah* influences all body tissues. *Shirahshula* means, pain in the head region. The International Association for the study of pain (IASP) has defined pain as “An unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage or described in terms of such damage<sup>1</sup>. *Shirahshula* is described in *Ayurveda* , not only as the symptom of many diseases but it is also an independent disease entity as *Shiroroga*. *Charaka* has mentioned *Shiroruk (Shula)* as a separate disease among eight types of *Vata-vyadhis* while *sushruta* described *shirahshoola* as symptoms in many diseases.

WHO includes headache among the most common disorders of the nervous system and in women, headache is among the top 5.5 with an impact similar to arthritis and diabetes and worse than Asthma<sup>2</sup>.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To review the detail management of *shirahshoola* as per *Ayurvedic* aspect.

- To study the importance of *shiras* and its diseases as per *Ayurveda*.

- To study the comparison between the management of headache as per *Ayurvedic* aspect as well as *Modern* aspect,

- To spread awareness in common people about *ayurvedic* treatment for prevention of headache.

## METHODOLOGY

To explore and elaborate the role of *Ayurveda* in headache w.s.r. to *shirahshoola (shirorogas)* with the help of various authentic books, *samhitas*, web searches, other research articles.

## REVIEW OF LITERATUR

It is explained under the following headings-

1. Concept of headaches associated disorders & *shirorogas*..
2. Co-relations between headache and *shirahshoola* i.e. *shirorogas* and its management as per *ayurvedic* and *modern* aspects.
3. Description of management as per *modern* aspect as well as *Ayurvedic* aspects.
4. Advantages and disadvantages of the treatments used in headache i.e. *shirashoola*.



• International classification of Headache disorders (ICHD), published by the International Headache Society<sup>6</sup>, describes as below:

➤ Part 1 –The Primary Headache

**Table 1** Types of Shirorogas as per Ayurvedic Aspects<sup>3-4-5</sup>

<i>Acc. to Charak SHIROROGAS (5)</i>	<i>Acc. To Sushruta SHIROROGAS(11)</i>	<i>Acc. To Vagbhata SHIROGATA(10)</i>	<i>Acc. To Vagbhata KAPALGATA(9)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vataj</li> <li>• Pittaj</li> <li>• Kaphaj</li> <li>• Tridoshaja</li> <li>• Krimija</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vataj</li> <li>• Pittaj</li> <li>• Kaphaj</li> <li>• Sannipataj</li> <li>• Raktaj</li> <li>• Krimija</li> <li>• Kshayaj</li> <li>• Suryavarta</li> <li>• Anantvata</li> <li>• Ardhabhedak</li> <li>• Shankhak</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vataj</li> <li>• Pittaj</li> <li>• Kaphaj</li> <li>• Sannipataj</li> <li>• Krimija</li> <li>• Kshayaj</li> <li>• Suryavarta</li> <li>• Ardhabhedak</li> <li>• Shankhak</li> <li>• Shirokampa</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upashirshak</li> <li>• Daruaka</li> <li>• Aroomshika</li> <li>• Indralupta</li> <li>• Khalitya</li> <li>• Palitya</li> <li>• Shirograndhi</li> <li>• Shiroarbuda</li> <li>• Shirovidradi</li> </ul>

• **The different types of headaches includes (Table 1):**

1. Tension type headaches that are episodic
2. Tension type headaches that are chronic
3. Primary muscle contraction headaches
4. Migraine headaches with aura
5. Migraine headaches without aura
6. Cluster headache
7. Primary paroxysmal hemicrania (a type of cluster headache)
8. Primary cough headache
9. Primary stabbing headache
10. Primary thunderclap headache
11. Hypnic headache (headaches that awaken a person from sleep)

➤ Part 2 – The Secondary Headache

➤ Part 3 – Cranial Neuralgia, Central Neuralgia, Central & Primary Facial Pain and other Headaches.

12. Hemicrania continua (headaches that are persistently on one side only, right or left [unilateral])
13. New daily-persistent headache (NDPH) (a type of chronic headache)
14. Headache from exertion
15. Trigeminal neuralgia
16. Secondary headache occurs mainly due to following reasons:
  - a. Trauma
  - b. Disorders
  - c. Infection
  - d. Related with the deformities of the face, teeth, eyes, ears, nose, sinuses or other structures
  - e. Drug abuse or withdrawal.



## ***INTEGRATED APPROACH TOWARDS THE MANAGEMENT OF HEADACHE (SHIROSHOOLA):***

**Modern Approach:** Depending upon the severity of the headache– 2 types of treatments are advised.

- **Acute Treatment**- refers to the medication that is taken for subsiding the pain instantly. Acute management done by pain killer such as Aspirin, acetaminophen, Triptans etc.

- **Preventive Treatment**- Medications are taken in regular basis to prevent to future attacks of headache for all types of headaches. Antidepressants, varampils etc. physical therapies e.gAccupunture, meditations etc., a healthy lifestyle can also help.

- As per National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines, Acute migraine management (Common for all types of headache) includes<sup>7</sup>.

- Combination therapy: triptan+non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) or paracetamol+antiemetic

- Alternatively (per patient request):

- A single agent (triptan, NSAID or paracetamol) with or without antiemetic NSAIDs can be used in tension headache<sup>8</sup>

- Aspirin 600–900 mg (ideally effervescent)

- Ibuprofen 600–800 mg

- Naproxen 500–1000 mg
- Diclofenac 50–75 mg (or 100 mg suppository)

- Tolfenamic acid 200 mg

Antiemetics

For nausea -

- Domperidone 10 mg up to three times a day (or 60 mg suppository)

- Metoclopramide 10 mg

- Prochlorperazine 3–6 mg as buccal preparation

Triptan sensations such as burning or tingling in the chest or limbs are relatively common (7%)

- ***Ayurvedic approach towards the management of Shirashoola are as follows:***

**Preventive measures should be taken for the management of Shiroroga (primary headaches).**

- ❖ The first line of treatment for *shirashoola* is *nidana-parivarjana* (abstinence from etiological factors). The objective is to reduce the frequency of attacks and to improve the health. The frequency of headache episodes can be reduced by following *Dinacharya* (daily regimen) and *Rutucharya* (seasonal regimen). The dietary causes, such as overeating of spicy food aggravate Pitta, leading to the formation of *ama* and further can trigger headache. Therefore, it is advised to avoid Pitta



aggravating food, hot climate, exposure to sunlight, hot wind, improper bowel, improper sleep and excessive exercise should be avoided as they increase *pitta* and therefore increase the tendency of *shola*.

❖ *Sharangadhara Samhita Parishistam* (S.P) provides a comprehensive recommendation of diet (*Pathya-Apathya*), to treat the headache *laghuahaar* e.g.. Red rice, barley, meat soup, grapes, any seasonal fruits, pomegranates, dates, drinking milk at night is indicated in the management of all types of headache including migraine (*Ardhavbhedaka*). Excessive exercise should always be avoided in the management of headache<sup>9</sup>.

❖ Stress explained as *manasikanidana*, requires *satvavajayachikitsa* for its management. Another unique concept in the management is *Sadvritta* (personal conduct). *Suryanamaskar*, *Yoga-Pranayam* etc. are very much effective to relax the mind and body. Therefore, influencing the control and brings good health.

❖ Ayurveda provides a line of treatment for *Ardhavabhedaka* (mainly migraine), which includes *snehana*, *shodhana* (detoxification), *shamana* (pacificatory therapy), *vamana* (therapeutic vomiting), *virechana* (therapeutic purgation), *basti* (enema) and *nasya* (nasal

*errhines*)

as *antahparimarjanachikitsa* (internal cleansing therapies), *shirodhara*, *Shirolepan* (*medicated paste application*), *upanahan* (*poultice*), *swedana* (fomentation), and *shirobasti* (oil retention on the head), *Shiropichu*, *siravyadha*, *agnikarma* etc., are indicated for the management of *shirashoola*.

❖ *Yoga Ratnakara* has also described the following measures for *Shirorog*: *Snehana*, *Upanaha*, *Swedana*, *Dhumapana*, *Lepa*, *Langhana*, *Parisheka*, *Agnikarma*, *Raktamokshana*, *Shirobasti*. These measures should be applied after considering the predominance of *Dosha* and other general considerations of the patients<sup>10</sup>.

❖ Psychological and psychodynamic methods are also a curative treatment in those conditions, such as – 1) Assurance 2) Exchange or replacement of emotions viz. replacement of *Kama*, *Krodha*, *Bhaya*, *Harsha*, *Irshya* etc. with appropriate emotions. 3) Psychoshock theory.

❖ Treatments for *Shirahshula* has been described which is *Swedana*, *Nasya*, *Dhumapana*, *Virechana*, *Lepa*, *Vamana*, *Langhana*, *Shirobasti*, *Raktamokshana*, *Agnikarma*, *Upanaha*, *PuranaGhrita* and *Shashtika Shali*<sup>11</sup>.

❖ Some effective *Yogasanas* includes, *Uttanasana*, *Janushirsasana*,



*Paschimottanasana, Matsyendrasana, Sarvangasana, Pranyayam, Suryanamskar* etc.

Following are some formulations can be taken for internal and external use :

**Table 2** External Application (LEPAM)

- |                               |                              |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • <i>Gunjadilepam</i>         | • <i>Pathadilepam</i>        |
| • <i>Marichadilepam</i>       | • <i>Navsagar with water</i> |
| • <i>Muchkundapushpakalka</i> |                              |

Some common yoga that can be used for Nasya Karma are shown in Table 3.

COMMAN NASYA YOGA

**Table 3** Formulations can be used for *Nasya Karma*

<i>Pradhamannasya</i>	<i>Snehanasya/ abhyanga</i>	<i>Snehanasya/ abhyanga</i>
• <i>yashtinadhu + vatsanabh</i>	• <i>Shadbindutaila</i>	• <i>Kumara taila</i>
• <i>Navsagar + sudhachurna+ water</i>	• <i>Dashmoolataila</i>	• <i>Kanaktaila</i>
• <i>Guda+shunthi</i>	• <i>Dhathurataila for abhyanga</i>	• <i>Rudrataila</i>
• <i>Shaticchurna + karpooora</i>	• <i>Gunjataila for abhyanga and nasya</i>	• <i>Bhrungrajtaila</i>
	• <i>Himmanshutaila</i>	• <i>Mayuradyataila</i>
		• <i>Mahamayuradya Ghrita</i>

Some common kalpas can be used as Internal or oral medications are shown in Table 4.

INTERNAL MEDICATIONS

**Table 4** Formulations can be used as Internal Medications:

• <i>Ashwagandadhichurna</i>	• <i>Trikatuchurna</i>	• <i>Mahalakshmvilasras</i>
• <i>Shatavaryadichurna</i>	• <i>Shunthichurna</i>	• <i>Laghusutshekharras</i>
• <i>Talisadichurna</i>	• <i>Haridrakanda</i>	• <i>Chandanivati</i>
• <i>Sitopaladichurna</i>	• <i>Nimabadichurna</i>	• <i>Sidhamrutaras</i>
• <i>Chopchinyadichurna</i>	• <i>Vyahwanarchurna</i>	• <i>Swarnasutshekharras</i>
• <i>Yashtimadhuchurna</i>	• <i>PathyaShadangaKwath</i>	• <i>Triphalaguggula</i>
• <i>Triphalachurna</i>	• <i>Shirashooladivajraras</i>	• <i>Kanchanarguggul</i>

CONCLUSION

The compilation includes information on headache-related disorders (*shiroroga*), and its ayurvedic management .On the basis of available data from different authentic books, articles, *samhitas* , web searches etc.The texts reviewed included *Charaka samhita, Sushruta samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya, Bhava Prakasha, Madhava nidana, Sharangadhara samhita, and Yoga Ratnakara* , we can say that the *Ayurvedic* treatments are very much effective , easily available, less or without side effects and can cure headache completely.

Whereas in modern science, the medicines are only used to supress the pain temporarily, very costly surgical treatments and can cause further complications too.



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