



Review Article

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A REVIEW ON CLINICAL APPLICATION OF TWENTY-FOUR TREATMENT PROTOCOL IN VISHA CHIKITSA

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ABSTRACT

Treating and managing Visha (poison) conditions is entirely different than that of treating other disease conditions. Hence Agada Tantra (Toxicology) given prime importance and is kept as a separate branch among the eight branches of Ayurveda. Acharya Charaka said 24 treatment protocols (Chaturvimshati Upakrama) and by these protocols can able to counteract all the conditions produced by any type of poison. Acharya Charaka also told, every Visha condition is different and patient may come to our clinics in different stages of poisoning. Hence by using the Intelligence, have to choose the treatment protocol according to the condition of the patient from these 24-treatment protocol.

Keywords: Agada Tantra, Chaturvimshati Upakrama, Visha, Poison, Yukti

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is a science of life said to be native medical science of India. Ayurveda not only deals with disease condition; it also deals with maintaining health of healthy person. Agada Tantra is one among the branches said in Ayurveda, mainly deals with poison, its identification, diagnosis and management of poison. Chaturvimshati Upakrama mainly focuses on the management of any poisonous conditions and it is said that it is up to the doctor skill to choose the appropriate treatment from 24 treatment protocol according to the condition of the patient.

The 24 treatment protocols said in Charaka Samhita Visha Chikitsa Adhyaya are – Mantra (Incantation), Arishta bandhana (Tourniquet application), Utkartana (Incision), Nishpeedana (Squeezing), Chushana (Sucking), Agni (Cauterization), Parisheka (Pouring medicated decoction), Avagaha (Immersion), Raktamokshana (Bloodletting), Vamana (Emesis), Virechana (Purgation), Upadhana (Medication on incised scalp), Hrudayavarana (Protection of heart), Anjana (Collyrium), Nasya (Nasal Medication), Dhoopa (Fumigation), Leha (Linctus), Aushadha (Oral medicine), Prashamana (Conservative treatment), Pratisarana (Rubbing powder), Prativisha (Antidote), Samjnasamstapanam (Regaining consciousness), Lepa (Application Medicated Paste), Murtasanjivani (Revival therapy)¹.

Mantra chikitsa

Mantra is the nature of Truth and Austerity told by Devarshi and Brahmarshi.² Mantra Chikitsa is said to be best and 1st line of treatment in the treatment of poison.³ It is said that it can remove even the terrible poison from the body and said to be acting more fast compare to the Aushadha Chikitsa (Internal Medication).⁴ Chanting Mantra creates positive energy and acting as a psychological treatment by creating confidence in the person and helpful in reducing the anxiety.

Arishta bandhana

Spreading of the poison can be stopped or slow down by tying tourniquet above the bite area. It is said to be emergency line of treatment in all cases of snake bite and tied 4 Angula above the bite area⁵. Materials are to be used for tying should be soft or can use cloth, skin of animals, soft rope and inner part of bark. Tourniquet not to be tied too tightly or loosely may lead to complications. If tied tightly, there will be severe pain, infection, swelling, pus formation overbite area. If tied loosely then poison will spread to circulation very easily and quickly.⁶ WHO said Tourniquet application should not be done in any cases of poisonous bite because of lack of knowledge to tie Tourniquet, leading to complications overbite area.

Utkartana karma

Procedure of removing the poisonous bite area is from the body. Poison will remain only 100 Matra Kala (blinking of the eye is considered as one Matra Kala) in the bite site then it spreads into circulation. One should go for Utkartana Karma within this time period said to be useful in prevention of spreading of poison.⁷ This procedure only to be done by experienced physician otherwise there may chance of injury to vessels, nerves, tendons etc leads to other complications.

Nishpeedana karma

Removing the poison from the body by squeezing the poisonous bite area from all the side is Nishpeedana Karma. This procedure can be done where Utkartana is not possible. It is contra indicated in vital parts and in joints. If it is done over vital parts it will cause death, in joints it will cause deformity.⁸ This procedure is very much useful in removal of sting than in bite cases.

Chushana karma

Chushana refers to sucking of poison from the bite area. It is mainly done on the fleshy part because that area can be easily sucked. Acharyas said before sucking should take precautions by filling the mouth with cloth⁹ Yava Churna (*Hordeum vulgare*), mud, ash, cow dung, or with anti-poisonous drugs. It is contraindicated if the physician is suffering from Mukha Vrana (mouth ulcer) as the poison will enter to the circulation through Vrana and shows similar poisonous effect.¹⁰

Agni karma

Cauterization usually followed after removing the poisonous area by incision. This procedure useful in poison resides in skin and muscles.¹¹ This procedure is highly contra indicated in viper bites (Mandali Sarpa) as Pitta Doshha will be aggravated. Dahana Karma further aggravates Pitta Doshha and aid for the quick spread of poison and worsening the condition.¹²

Parisheka Vidhi

Sprinkling medicated decoction over the site of bite or to the whole body. Decoction prepared by Chandana (*Santalum album*) and Usheera (*Vetiveria zizanioides*) is generally used for parisheka in poisonous cases¹³. Cold decoction counteracts the Ushna and Tikshna qualities and will have Stambhana action on the body and prevents the spreading of poison to some extent. In Viper bite, the commonly practiced Dhara are Panchavalkala kwatha dhara and in Cobra bite Ghrita Saindhava dhara.¹⁴ Using Anti poisonous decoction over the bite area may prevent further tissue damage as well as nullify the poisonous and prevents the spreading of the poison to the body.

Avagaha

Avagaha is immersion or dipping the affected part in the medicated decoction. It has similar action as in Parisheka Vidhi. It helps in proper circulation and elimination of poison from body.

Raktamokshana

Bloodletting therapy becomes main line of treatment when poison entered into the circulation. Blood is the major media which blows up the poison just like air blows up the fire, so bloodletting to be done as soon as possible to eliminate the poison quickly.¹⁵ If blood is with foul smell and given chata sound when put into fire then it is confirmed that poison has entered into the circulation. Bloodletting to be done by puncturing vein in the upper, lower limbs and in forehead region, by this poison will be eliminated from the body along with blood and saves the life of the person.¹⁶ Depending upon the Doshika predominance appropriate bloodletting procedure to be chosen. If Vata, Pitta, Kapha doshas aggravated due to poison, then bloodletting to be done with Shruna, Jalauka, Alabu respectively. Bloodletting also indicated if poisoned area seen discolored, hard, swollen and with pain. After the bloodletting procedure if blood is not stopped or the person shows symptoms like discomfort over chest area, unconsciousness then one should go for Shitala Lepa (cold application) or such Stambhana treatment into prevent blood loss and prevent the death.¹⁷

Vamana karma

Emesis said to be done immediately when poison taken through oral route. Sadhyo Vamana (emesis done immediately) should be followed to remove the poison immediately.¹⁸ Emesis can also be done in the patient with aggravated Kapha, poisonous bite during

cold season, suffering from excessive salivation, loss of control over senses, unconscious, here Tikshna Vamana will be beneficial.¹⁹ Emesis done with anti-poisonous drugs till vomiting comes easily without effort.

Virechana karma

Pitta Prakruti person bitten by Pitta predominance poison, bitten below the umbilical area and poison entered Pittashaya; Purgation therapy becomes the main line of treatment. It is also indicated in poisonous patient suffering from pain and burning over Koshta, anuria, pain during urination, constipation, obstruction in the Vayu direction.²⁰ Purgation is induced by giving Neelini (*Indigofera tinctoria*) powder with milk, Trivrit (*Operculina turpethum*) powder along with Triphala kwatha. Due to frequent movement of person during purgation Vata will be aggravated leads to fast spreading of poison and hence unique method is administered in poisonous condition. Facilities are made to purgated near to the bed and there by prevented the aggravation of Vata.²¹

Upadhana karma

Upadhana is a special procedure to remove the poison from the body by applying anti poisonous medicines over incised scalp. This procedure is very useful if the patient coming with unconscious state or in the last stage of poisoning. During this stage incision should be made on scalp of patient resembling crow's leg and there paste of meat of goat, cow, buffalo or cock with blood to be applied in one Bilva Pramana. After this, nasal medication with fine powders of the following mixture like Katabhi (*Cardiospermum halicacabum*), Katuka (*Picrorhiza kurroa*) and Katphala (*Myrica esculenta*) is to be done.²²

Hrudayavarana

Hrudayavarana is the method of protection of heart by using certain medicines. Poison after entering into the heart will do Karshana of heart because of its Tikshna quality. Poison also destroys the Hridaya along with Satva, Atma, Manas, Para Ojus, Rasavaha Srotas, Pranavaha Srotas, Buddhi, Kapha and Indriya, for which Hridaya is the seat and finally destroys the person. Hence Acharya Charaka told Hrudayavarana Chikitsa is the essential line of treatment in any poisonous case. Hrudayavarana drug mentioned in our classics are honey, ghee, milk, bone marrow, hematite, cow dung with water, sugarcane, crow meat soup, blood of goat, medicated ashes, soil with water, ghee with anti-poisonous drugs, Panchagavya, curd, kovidara (*Bauhinia variegata*), arka (*Calotropis gigantea*), shireesha (*Albizia lebeck*), Aparajita (*Clitoria ternatea*)²³. These drugs increase the Ojus, give strength to both physically and mentally and have the quality to counteract with poison.

Anjana Vidhi

It is medicated anti poisonous paste applied over the eyelids. Anjana is helpful when patient coming with unconscious state or disorders of eyes due to poisoning. It is indicated in swelling, discoloration over eye, vision loss, near to unconscious state due to poisoning. Here one Masha (black gram) pramana of medicine prepared with Devdaru (*Cedrus deodara*), Shunthi (*Zingiber officinale*), Maricha (*Piper nigrum*), Pippali (*Piper longum*), Haridra (*Curcuma longa*), Karaveera (*Nerium indicum*) Karanja (*Pongamia pinnata*), Nimba flowers (*Azadirachta indica*) and Tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*) are made into Pishti using goat's urine will be applied.²⁴ In general practice Bilvadi gulika with Tulsi Patra Swarasa will be used in all types of poisonous condition.²⁵

Nasya karma

If poison enters the head, Nasya is said to be the main line of treatment. Nasya is indicated if there is obstruction in nose, eyes, ear, tongue, and throat. Pradhamana Nasya (Strong powder Instillation to nose) is used when the patient in unconscious or last stage of poisoning. For Nasya, Bharangi mula (*Clerodendrum serratum*), Tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*) can be used.²⁶ After Kakapada chikitsa, Nasya is given using powder of Katabhi (*Cardiospermum halicacabum*), Katuka (*Picrorhiza kurroa*) and Katphala (*Myrica esculenta*) will be very useful.²⁷

Dhoopana Vidhi

It is the procedure involving the administration of medicated smoke which helps to nullify the effect of poison. Medicated fumes entering into the body clears all the blockages in the channels and stabilizing the respiratory process. Certain other herbs are used for the purpose of fumigation at the site of bite to promote antiseptic activity at the site.²⁸ Fumigation also clears the toxic materials in the environment. Acharya Sushruta describes Laksha Haridradi Yoga for toxic air.

Leha

Leha is semi solid form usually consumed by licking. It is the most palatable form of all medicaments because of this reason usually prescribed for children. Lehas are very much useful in the conditions like drying of throat and palate due to poisoning. Leha usually prescribed after giving Prativisha, here Leha of bark of Arjuna (*Terminalia arjuna*) mixed with honey and ghee.²⁹ Sugar with honey mixed with powder of gold and copper given as Leha to cure all types of artificial poisoning.³⁰

AUSHADHA

Depending upon the nature of the poison as well as the condition of patient specific oral medication will help to arrest the complications and to revive the patient. In poisoning condition, medicines should be given which is having opposite qualities to that of Dosha Lakshanas produced due to poisoning.³¹ Examples for oral medicines are Bilvadi Agada, Ksharagada, Mahagada, Dashanga Agada, Dooshivishari Agada, Murvadi Agada, Kalyanaka Ghrita, Amruta Ghrita, Koshatakyadi Yavagu etc. These medicines are extremely used in practice for various types of poisoning.

Prashamana chikitsa

In poisoning condition conservative treatment usually indicated after body purification therapy to remove small amount of poison remained after purification. Small amount of poison remained in the body will quickly spread all over the body resulting in death. For preventing this, Shamana Chikitsa to be done by using oral medicine, anointment, pouring medicated water etc.

Pratisarana

Pratisarana also known as Pragharsana means, applying and rubbing with medicated powders. It is indicated in Raktamokshana when blood fails to come out. Drugs used are Trikatu (*Zingiber officinale*, *Piper longum*, *Piper nigrum*) Grihadhooma (soot), Haridra (*Curcuma longa*) and five varieties of salts.³²

Prativisha

This treatment method includes internal administration of poisonous drugs in case of poisonous bite. Plant poison has similar qualities of Kapha, moves in upward direction and animal poison has similar qualities of Pitta, moves in downward direction. Due to the opposite qualities, plant and animal poisons will counteract each other and nullifies the effect of poison³³. As Poison is given in poisonous conditions, precautions to be taken before administration, otherwise the patient may land in complications. Before undergoing Prativisha, patient should undergo body purification therapy and then ghee should be taken internally. It is contraindicated in rainy season, suffering from diseases, king, Pitta person, summer, pregnant, children, aged person and if poison in vital areas³⁴. Quantity of Prativisha mentioned in snake poisoning is 4 Yava Pramana as low dose, 6 Yava Pramana as medium dose and 8 Yava Pramana as high dose. Insects poison 2 Yava Pramana and in scorpion poison 1 Tila Pramana can be given.³⁵ This concept only to be followed by intellect physician and in any cases of doubtful poison this treatment protocol should not be used.

Sangyasamsthapana Vidhi

Patient is coming with unconscious state due to poisoning and then regaining the conscious becomes the main line of treatment. This treatment protocol mainly indicated after 6th stage of poisoning because person loses his conscious mainly in this stage. Gopitta along with Haridra (*Curcuma longa*), Manjistha, (*Rubia cordifolia*), Maricha (*Piper nigrum*), Pippali churna (*Piper longum*) given with water to gain conscious.³⁶ Tikshna Anjana and Nasal drop or powder Nasal administration treatment and Upadhana chikitsa also adopted to regain the conscious.

Lepa

It is the method of applying medicated paste at the site of bite or to whole body. To stop the spreading of poison especially in Pitta vitiated condition, cold quality medicine to be applied over body. By cold medicated paste we can also prevent thirst, burning, altered senses, unconscious produced by poison.³⁷ Lepa can also applied over the bite area with anti-poisonous drugs to remove the poison from bite area. Examples like Pipalyadi Lepa in scorpion poisoning, Agaradhoomadi lepa in rat poisoning, Harenvadi Lepa in Gara Visha (Artificial Poisoning).

Mrutasanjivani chikitsa

Just as amrita gives life even to the dead person, Mrutasanjivani can be used in all cases of poisoning. Prativisha taken along with Sindhuvara (*Vitex negundo*) and Tagara (*Valeriana wallichii*) is called mrutasanjeevani³⁸. Charaka explains a formulation named as Mrutasanjivani agada this cures complications caused by all types of poison. This medicine can be given in any form, any route and any disease and even in all the poisonous cases.³⁹

DISCUSSION

Twenty-four treatment protocol explained by Acharya Charaka are unique in the management of poisons. It is not that we have to follow treatment protocol in order, rather than it is up to the intelligence of the physician to choose treatment depending on the condition of the patient. Mantra Chikitsa said to be Shreshtha Chikitsa because here treatment can be possible without medicine. Arista bandhana, Utkartana, Nishpeedana, Chushana, Agni Karma useful as a first aid management in poisonous bite and may be beneficial within 100 Matra kala. Once the poison is reached to circulation then Raktamokshana said to be main and

first line of treatment. Shodhana (Body purification) to be done remove poison from the body and depending upon the symptoms produced, we have chosen whether to go for Vamana or Virechana. Poison after entering to circulation, reaches the heart and destroys the body, to protect heart and to give strength to mind and body Hrudayavarana Chikitsa will be useful. Parisheka, Avagaha, Dhooma, Leha, Lepa, Aushadha chikitsa acting as a Shamana Therapy. If the patient in unconscious state, then Samjnasamstapanam treatment becomes the main line of treatment and regaining of conscious can also be done through Tikshna Anjana, Nasya and Upadhana Chikitsa. In the last stage Mrutasanjivani Chikitsa may be acting as a revival therapy.

CONCLUSION

Every poison case is unique and have to treat all the cases by assessing type of poison, body constitution, season, place, stage of poisoning, strength of person. The twenty-four-treatment protocol is given by Acharya Charaka has great importance in emergency treatment of poison. This will definitely help to prove the Ayurveda in emergency services also.

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