



Review Article

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AN APPRAISAL OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF AGADTANTROKTA CHATURVIMSHATIVISHA CHIKITSA UPAKRAMA IN KAUMARBHRITYA

Gohiya Ashwini Shivprasad ^{1*}, Anjankar Meghsham Pramodrao ², Nikam Ashwin Vithalrao ³, Pawade Uday Venkatrao ⁴

¹ PG Scholar, Department of Agadtantra, Shri Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, Nagpur, Maharashtra, India

² Assistant Professor, Department of Agadtantra, Shri Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, Nagpur, Maharashtra, India

³ Professor and HOD, Department of Agadtantra, Shri Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, Nagpur, Maharashtra, India

⁴ Associate Professor, Department of Agadtantra, Shri Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, Nagpur, Maharashtra, India

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*Corresponding author

E-mail: gohiyaashwini67@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Visha chikitsa is the main aspect of Agadtantra, one of the branches of Ashtanga Ayurveda. Though Agadtantra deals with poisons, their properties, and their toxic effects, it primarily focuses on its treatment part. For this purpose, various classical texts describe different treatment modalities of the poisoning. Charaka explained the basic principle of poisoning treatment as Chaturvimshati Visha Chikitsa Upakrama. This is a unique contribution by Acharya Charaka in the management of poisoning. Poisoning is one of the leading causes of childhood mortality and morbidity worldwide. The indication of twenty-four Visha Chikitsa Upakrama in the pediatric age group is unclear. Hence, there is a dilemma in the Ayurved physician's mind regarding its use in Kaumarbhritya (Pediatric). The classical texts, precisely Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Ashtanga Samgraha, Ashtanga Hridaya, Kashyapa Samhita, Harita Samhita and Bhavaprakasa Samhita, were searched and scrutinised for references of use of these 24 treatment modalities in pediatric age group. Various related research articles from the internet were also studied. The present study provides compiled knowledge about indications and contraindications of these Chaturvimshati Visha Chikitsa Upakrama, which will be helpful while treating poisoning cases in the paediatric age group. Hence, this is an attempt to evaluate the significance of Agadtantrokt Chaturvimshati Visha Chikitsa Upakrama in Kaumarbhritya.

Keywords: Agadtantra, Visha, Twenty-four treatment Modalities, Chaturvimshati Visha Chikitsa Upakrama, Pediatric, Kaumarbhritya.

INTRODUCTION

Agadtantra has contributed some unique concepts to the ocean of Ayurvedic treasure. Agadtantra mainly deals with poison, its identification, diagnosis, and management ¹. Charaka has explained Chaturvimshati Visha Chikitsa Upakrama as one of the basic principles for treating poisoning. It is also used in different Visha Vega (poisoning impulses) as a general line of treatment². Therefore, these Chaturvimshati Visha Chikitsa Upakramas can be used as unique eternal principles of Ayurveda. Various acharya have also cited and described these treatment modalities in their Samhitas ^{3,4}.

Poisoning is one of the leading causes of childhood mortality and morbidity worldwide⁵. Indications of 24 treatment modalities in Kaumarbhritya are not mentioned clearly. Various references to these treatment modalities are scattered in the different Ayurveda classics like Sushruta Samhita, Ashtanga Samgraha, Ashtanga Hridaya, Kashyapa Samhita, Harita Samhita and Bhavaprakasa Samhita were collected. Specific use of these modalities in pediatric poisoning or non-poisoning conditions was also searched. These references were scrutinised and compiled in the present study. Various related research articles from the internet

were also reviewed.

The present study provides compiled knowledge about indications and contraindications of these Chaturvimshati Visha Chikitsa Upakrama, which is helpful for physicians while treating poisoning cases in Pediatrics. Hence, this is an attempt to examine the significance of Agadtantrokt Chaturvimshati Visha Chikitsa Upakrama in Kaumarbhritya.

The Chaturvimshati Visha Chikitsa Upakrama are Mantra, Arishta bandhana, Utkartana, Nishpeedana, Chushana, Agni, Parisheka, Avagaha, Raktamoshana, Vamana, Virechana, Upadhana, Hrudayavarana, Anjana, Nasya, Dhoopa, Lehya, Aushadh, Prashamana, Pratisarana, Prativisha, Sangnya-Sansthapana, Lepa and Mrutasanjivana ⁶.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This review study extracts classical literature from Bruhatrayi, Laghutrayi, Kashyapa Samhita and Harita Samhita. The Significance of Agadtantrokt Chaturvimshati Visha Chikitsa Upakrama in Kaumarbhritya is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Chaturvimshati Upakrama and their significance in Paediatric conditions

Visha Chikitsa Upakrama	Description	Used in Pediatric Conditions
Mantra (Chanting of Hymns)	Mantra can be described as systematic chanting, full of divine power, collectively affecting the mind and acting as a natural body healer ⁷ . It stimulates the sympathetic nervous system, strengthens the peripheral blood vessels, and helps enhance their functions. In Jangama Visha and Sarpa Dashta Visha - by chanting the specific Mantras ⁸ . In Alarka Visha - bathed with chanting the Mantras ⁹ .	After cleaning the vernix caseosa mantra, the Newborn will be chanted in the right ear. Powder of Ananta is mixed with honey and cow's ghee thrice daily by chanting mantras ¹⁰ . In Balagraha (Idiopathic diseases narrated in Kaumarbhritya) - Kshauma sutra (thread made of cotton or linseed) is tied around the baby's neck by chanting the Mantras ¹¹ . In Mukhamandika (Balagraha), a child is bathed with water treated by Gayatri Mantra. Children are protected from psychiatric conditions ¹² .
Arishta Bandhana (Ligature application)	Tying a thin rope tightly above the bite site prevents the spread of the poison. Arishtabandhana with rope applied on bite site predominantly located at Rasraktadi dhatu. Arishtabandhana with Mantra prayog is helpful in any type of poison.	A systematic review states that tourniquet application in the pediatric population is useful ¹³ .
Utkartana (Incision)	Taking incision at the bite site to remove local unabsorbed poison sparing vital parts and joints. This uproots the Visha from the body, preventing poisoning ¹⁴ . It should be done immediately or within 100 matrakaala by using vriddhipatra (scalpel).	Skilled physicians should take great precautions while doing Utkartana ¹⁵ .
Nishpeedana (Squeezing)	Elimination of the unabsorbed poison reduces the progression and severity of the poison. It expels the poison from the bite site without the occurrence of Visha Vega (the impulse of Visha) ¹⁶ . Sting bite – Visha is taken out by Nishpeedana ¹⁷ .	No Reference was found for the use of Nishpeedana in pediatric conditions.
Chushana (Sucking)	It removes venomous blood from the bite site to avoid its spread in the body. It is indicated in the conditions where a tourniquet cannot be applied or in Visha with a predominance of Pitta ¹⁸ . It is recommended that before sucking mouth should be filled with clothes, mud, ash or powdered Yava ¹⁹ .	Unable to find any relevant reference to using Chushana in pediatric conditions.
Agnikarma (Cauterisation)	It accelerates the toxin's velocity when it comes into contact with the skin. It neutralises the action of poison from the bite site ²⁰ . Indications - Visha sited at Twak (skin) and Mansa dhatu. In Alarka Visha - hot ghee was applied at the bite site ²¹ . For removal of the poisonous weapon ²² .	Arikilika vyadhi - Agnikarma by hot oleaginous substances or jaggery. In children, injured by wood, brick, weapon, or any other object ²³ . Utfullika vyadhi - Agnikarma by hot iron rod ²⁴ .
Parisheka (Sprinkling)	Appropriate irrigation decreases the infection rate and prevents further spread of poison. In Viper bite – Fall (dhara) of decoction of Panchavalkala (inner part of the stem of 5 plants, namely – Nyagrodha, Udumabara, Ashwatha, Plaksha, Parisha) ²⁵ .	Ahiputna (disease of the child) - Parisheka by Triphaladi decoction ²⁶ . Acute conjunctivitis - The child's eyes should be rinsed by medicated decoction ²⁷ .
Avagaha (Immersionbath)	It helps for proper blood circulation and elimination of toxins from the body. Also, it counteracts the action of poison immediately.	Avagaha sweda is practically applicable ²⁸ .
Raktamokshana (Bloodletting)	It is an excellent method to eliminate poisonous blood from the body ²⁹ . It should be done - Visha at the site of Kapha, Twak and Mansa (dhatu) ³⁰ .	Raktamokshan (bloodletting) is indicated in conjunctivitis, Ahipootana, Ajagallika and skin diseases. Jalaukavacharana (leech therapy) – In Pittaja and Raktaja disorder. Jalgardhabha, Gudakutta, Utfulika disease ³¹⁻³³ .
Vamana (Emesis)	During the initial phase of oral poisoning. It eliminates the unabsorbed poison from the stomach and reduces the severity of the poison ³⁴ . Indication - Kaphaja bites are associated with excessive salivation. If the snake bite is above the umbilical region.	For the elimination of Garbhodaka (amniotic fluid) - Mridu sadyo Vamana by rock salt with ghee ³⁵ . Shwas - Vamana by Ikshuras and Yashtimadhu phanta (hot water infusion) with salt water ³⁶ .

Virechana (Purgation)	It cleanses the body toxins from the Pitta zone by expelling ingested poison from the intestines through the bodily channels and then eliminating them downwards through the anal route. If the snake bite is below the umbilical region.	Phakkaroga - Virechana by Trivrit Ksheera ³⁷ . Pittaja Apasmara - Mridu Virechana by Draksha, Nishottar and Aaraghwad. ³⁸
Upadhana (Medicinal application overscalp incision)	In the Kakapad incision, poisonous blood is eliminated, which prevents the body, especially the brain, from the toxic manifestations. In Vishajanya Shwasavrodha - a paste of Bilva and Saptla should be applied over the Kakapad ³⁹ .	Skilled physicians should take great precautions while doing Upadhana ⁴⁰ .
Hrudayavarana (Protection of heart)	First-line treatment in all kinds of poisoning cases. The ten qualities of Oja are similar to ghrita and kshira and opposite to madya and Visha. Visha travels through the body, resides in the Hridaya and leads to death ⁴¹ .	Madhu, goghrot, Supakva Ikshu rasa, Shireesha, bhasma, Suwarnamakshik bhasma, Suwarna Bhasma. These protect the heart and detoxify the absorbed poison ⁴² .
Anjana (Medicated collyrium)	It drains out the poison through lacrimation of the eyes, which helps decontaminate the eye and nullifies the effect of local poison. Akshigata Visha - Pipallyadi Anjana, Mansyadi yoga Anjana ⁴³ .	Anjana - Vishamjwara, Apasmara, Kukunak, Andhaputna Grahabadha, choleric diarrhoea and Unmada ⁴⁴ .
Nasya (Medicated nasal insufflations)	Elimination of poison from head and neck region. It also stimulates the centres of the brain, which are afflicted by Visha and helps restore the patient's consciousness. Visha obliterates in natural orifices - Avapida of Vartaku, Beejapura, Jyotishmati kalka ⁴⁵ .	In Shleshma disorder - Katu taila, ghrita along with saindhav paste ⁴⁶ .
Dhooma (Medicated smoke)	It neutralises the poison, consequently decreasing its severity. Also, it reduces dosha prakopa by the dissolution of Kapha dosha ⁴⁷ . Laksha Haridradi yog use in toxic air ⁴⁸ .	Sheetputna graha badha, ⁴⁹ Bhutparishedh - Dhoom by hingwadi varga churna ⁵⁰ . Psychiatric conditions Putyadi dhoom and sarsapadi dhoom are indicated.
Lehya (Medicine in linctus form)	To prevent Visha Upadrava like drying of the throat and palate difficulty in swallowing. Sugar with honey mixed with powder of gold and copper given as lehya to cure all types of artificial poisoning ⁵¹ .	All types of poison - Lehya of Suwarnamakshik bhasma and Suwarna bhasma along with madhu ⁵² . Kanthgata Visha and Aamashayagata Visha ⁵³ .
Aushadha (Detoxifying Medications)	The medication that counters the vitiated dosha is known as dosha viparit ⁵⁴ . While which counteracts the disease are known as Vyadhi viparit aushadhi.	Worm infection - Krumikuthar rasa. Pratishtay - Nagguti.
Prashamana (Pacifying measures)	Prashamana therapy is used after elimination therapy to regulate the remnant and deranged doshas.	Jwara, Chardi, Atisara.
Pratisarana (Local Applications)	Rubbing of medicinal powders over the affected area is Pratisarana or Pragharsana. It accelerates bodily fluid and helps in regulating the circulation. Vishadigdha vrana - Pratisarana of Shirisha twak churna ⁵⁵ .	Talukantak roga - Pratisarana by Pimpali, Suntha along with saindhav ⁵⁶ .
Prativisha (Specific Antidotes)	The Sthavara Visha and Jangama Visha have opposite gati. One nullifies the effect of the other by its opposite bodily movement ⁵⁷ .	
Sangnya- Sansthapanan (Administration of medicine for restoration of consciousness)	Sangya-Sansthapanan chikitsa is indicated in 6th visha vega ⁵⁸ . Teekshna Anjana-nasya-dhooma and Kakapad were used to regain consciousness ⁵⁹ .	To retrieve consciousness - Rubbing small stones behind his ears, sprinkling hot or cold water over his face, tapping on the sole, patting, and rubbing over the back or giving a painful stimulus. Fanned with a Krushnakapalika shurpa (A winnowing fan made up of bamboo) ⁶⁰ .
Lepa (Administration of medicine in the form of paste)	It performs the Vishaghana role on vitiated doshas derived from Twacha and Rakta. It is efficient for treating both local and systemic symptoms of Visha.	Ahiputana roga - Kashishadi lepa is applied locally over the affected wound ⁶¹ .

Mrutasanjeevana (Measures for the revival of a dead person)	It cures all types of Visha by nullifying the toxic effect of almost all poisons ⁶² .	Mrutasanjeevana is an aatyayik chikitsa. It can be helpful in the pediatric age group in its extreme necessity with caution.
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DISCUSSION

Charaka mentioned twenty-four treatment modalities which are unique in the management of poison. These treatment modalities start with Mantra chikitsa, which indicates its importance in management of poisoning. Mantra can be useful in avamarjan, dhamani bandh and aatma raksha. avamarjan (detoxification) can be done with mantra by pratiloma vidhi (opposite direction)⁶³. Poison should be removed by bringing it back into the bite site. Dhamni bandha (vessel obliteration) can be done with the help of mantra, which helps to prevent the spread of poison. Aatma raksha (Self-defense) is achieved by prohibiting the entry of bhuta (bacteria or virus) at the bite site using Mantra.

Mantra chikitsa can be used in any type of poison at any stage without using any medication; hence, it is termed as Shreshtha chikitsa in Chaturvimshati Visha Chikitsa Upakrama. As there is no medical or surgical intervention, Mantra Upakrama can be easily used in paediatric age group poisoning. Arishta bandhana, Utkartana, Nishpeedana, Chushana, and Agni Karma are effective as first-aid measures in poisoning treatment. Out of these, Arishta bandhana is easily administered in all pediatric age groups. Utkartana and Agni Karma are contraindicated in neonates and infants⁶⁴ and cautiously indicated in younger children and adolescents during emergency poisoning conditions. During our thorough literature review, we could not find any relevant references for using Nishpeedana and Chushana in pediatric conditions. Raktamokshana is the significant and first line of treatment once the poison has entered the bloodstream. Raktamokshana by Jaloukaavcharana can be safely done in pediatric conditions, while Siravyadhana is contraindicated until the age of 16 years⁶⁵. Vamana, Virechana and Nasya are used as a shodhana therapy. Sadyo Vamana and Mridu Virechana can be applied in pediatric poisoning conditions. After the first-aid measures, the initial treatment modality of Chaturvimshati Upakrama is Hrudayavarana. It will be effective as a safeguard of the heart⁶⁶. Hrudayavarana is done by goghrita, madhu, etc., which is Aajanna satmya in the pediatric age group.

Hence, Hrudayavarana can be safely utilised in pediatric poisoning conditions. Parisheka, Avagaha, Leha, Aushadha, Prashamana, Pratisarana and Lepa chikitsa are used as a shamana therapy. After the literature review, we found no contraindications for these Upakramas in pediatric conditions. Hence, we can safely use these Upakramas in pediatric poisoning conditions. Anjana, Dhooma and Upadhana chikitsa are used as a pacifying measure. As Anjana is indicated in healthy as well as in diseased conditions of the pediatric age group, it can be used in pediatric poisoning conditions. External administration of Dhooma is indicated, while its internal administration is contraindicated in poisoning conditions in all age groups⁶⁷.

Similarly, external Dhooma chikitsa can be utilised in pediatric poisoning conditions. As Upadhana requires scalp incision, it can be cautiously used in extreme necessity in pediatric poisoning. Sangnyasansthanapanan therapy is important for restoring consciousness in unconscious patients; hence, it can be utilised in the pediatric age group of poisoning. Prativisha and Mrutasanjivani chikitsa can be utilised as a revival treatment in the terminal stage of life. Out of these, Mrutasanjivani chikitsa can be used in the pediatric age group, while no indications were

found for the use of prativisha chikitsa in Samhita in the pediatric age group. Hence, it is better to avoid prativisha chikitsa in pediatric poisoning conditions.

CONCLUSION

From this review article we concluded that Mantra, Arishtabandhana, Parisheka, Avgaha, Vamana, Virechana, Hrudayavarana, Anjana, Nasya, Dhoom, lehya, Aushad, Prashamana, Pratisarana, Sangyasantsthanapanana, Lepa and Mrutasanjeevana can be utilised in pediatric age group. Utkartana, Agnikarma, Upadhana and Raktamokshana can be done cautiously in the pediatric age group, while Prativisha, Nishpidana and Chushana chikitsa are contraindicated in the pediatric age group.

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