



Review Article

www.ijrap.net

(ISSN Online:2229-3566, ISSN Print:2277-4343)



PREVENTION OF VATARAKTA IN THE MODERN ERA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO UNHEALTHY LIFESTYLES AS NIDAN: A REVIEW

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Received on: 24/7/24 Accepted on: 02/9/24

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DOI: 10.7897/2277-4343.155179

ABSTRACT

Health is the physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being of an individual, which depends upon diet and lifestyle. Ayurved is the science with the prime goal of promoting health and preventing disease. In today's era due to altered lifestyles and food habits, humans are more vulnerable to many diseases and Vatarakta is one of them. Vatarakta is Vatapradhan tridoshaja vaydhi caused by vitiation of vata dosha and rakta dhatu. The main presenting symptom of Vatarakta is pain, tenderness, swelling, and burning sensation in small joints, which affects patients' daily routine. The first line of treatment for this disease is "Nidan parimarjnam, for that it is necessary to understand nidan of Vatarakta and correlate it with modern lifestyle and food habits. Vatarakta is special in the literature, due to its high prevalence (0.2 to 3.5 per 1000, with an overall prevalence of 2 to 26 per 1000) in the society. This disease is creating a lot of concern in the world as it is causing serious complications with disabilities in humans. Therefore, it's high time to prevent the disease by exploring the hetu of Vatarakta in today's era, which can also help the common public understand their faulty food habits and lifestyle that is becoming a causative factor of diseases like Vatarakta.

Keywords: Vatarakta, Nidan, Prevention, Unhealthy lifestyle.

INTRODUCTION

In the present era due to a frantic lifestyle, Vatarakta is one of the most common diseases in day-to-day clinical practice. Vatarakta is named based on the Vata dosha and Rakta dhatu which have their independent derivations and are the main samprapti ghatok involved in Vatarakta. It is Vata pradhan tridoshaja vyadhi where Rakta is the main dushya. It is caused by vitiation of Vata and Rakta. Aggravated Vata blocked by vitiated Rakta in turn leading to further aggravation of Vata. Thus, aggravated Vata vitiates the Rakta leading to the condition called Vatarakta. The main affecting area of Vatarakta is the big toe or thumb but it can occur in any joint and presenting symptoms are pain, inflammation, swelling, and tenderness at joints. Acharya Charak and Vagbhata have mentioned two types of Vatarakta as uttana (superficial form) and gambhira (joints involved), while Acharya Sushrut has described eight types of Vatarakta according to dosha and said that uttana and gambhira are stages of Vatarakta, not the types.

Acharya Charak and Vagbhata have described a separate adhyaya for Vatarakta chikitsa, after Vatavyadhi. Acharya Charak has also included Vatarakta in Raktaja roga in Charak samhita "Vidhishonit adhaya", whereas Acharya Sushrut has described it in "Mahavatavyadhi adhaya." Acharya Charak has stated that wholesome food is one of the causes of growth and well-being of humans while unwholesome food is the root of all diseases.¹ Sushrut has further supported the fact by stating that food is the cause of vitality, strength, complexion, and oja.²

Therefore, diseases like Vatarakta can be prevented by preventing the nidan and adopting patya of disease.

Detail study of nidan of Vatarakta according to modern lifestyles

Vata dosha and Rakta dhatu are main component of nidan of Vatarakta and there are many causative factors of vatarakta.³ Hence nidan of Vatarakta can be classified into the following groups:

1. Aaharaja Nidan
2. Viharaja Nidan
3. Manas Nidan
4. Aagantuja Nidan
5. Prakruti based Nidan

Aaharaja Nidan (Dietary habits)

Excessive intake of lavan, amla, katu ras, ushna, kshara and snigdha aahara: It is mentioned that this rasa and guna leads to aggravation of Rakta and vitiation of Pitta dosha, which ultimately leads to Vatarakta.⁴

Pitta and Rakta both have snigdha(unctuous) guna, so excessive intake of this type of dravya causes aggravation of Pitta and Rakta, e.g., chinees, soda, apple vinegar, wafers, packed food, papad, pickles, sauces etc.

Ajeernashana and Adhyashana: These cause Agni mandya which in turn leads to shukratva and vidagdhatva of aahar, this vidagdhaahar causes Pitta, Rakta dusti and helps in the prognosis of Vatarakta.⁵

Kleena Aachar: It causes Agni mandya and also Rakta dusti.⁶ Eg., Mayonnaise, Cheese, clarified butter, curd, etc.

Ambuja, Aanoop Mansa (seafood): These mamsa are heavy, hot in potency, Snigdha (unctuous), and sweet, aggravating Kapha and Pitta dosha.⁷ This aggravation of Pitta leads to Vatarakta.

Pinyaka, Mulakam, Kulathika, Masha, Nishpava

Pinyaka- Product of Sesamum til (*Sesamum indicum*) pastes

Mulakam - Reddish

Kulathika- *Dolichos biflorus*

Masha- *Phaseolus radiatus*

Nishpav- a type of shimbi

This dravyas causes rakta dusti as vipak of this dravya are katu (pungent) and veerya are ushna,⁶ so becoming a causative factor of Vatarakta.

Dadhi (curd): Dadhi has ushna (hot), Snigdha (unctuous), and guru (heavy) properties, so sour dadhi aggravates Kapha and Pitta whereas very sour dadhi causes Rakta dusti.⁸

Sura, Sauveer, Arnal: These are the types of madhya having teekshna and ushna (hot) guna and amla vipak which makes Rakta dusti.⁹ E.g., beer, wine, ginger ale, tabasco sauce, soya sauce, spirits, kombucha, kvass, etc.

Katu, Tikta, Kashya: This ras produces roughness, lightness, and hollowness in the body by vitiation of Rakta causing Vatarakta.⁴ E.g., betel nuts, oregano, soya sauce, chilly sauce, pepper, spices, etc.

Ruksha Achara: Ruksha aahara aggravates the Vata dosha, which gets filled in vacant channels of the body or in a part leading to Vatarakta.¹⁰ E.g., bread, biscuits, etc., bakery products, chickpeas, farsan, wafer, pizza, burgers, etc.

Viruddha Aahara: Viruddha aahar aggravates dosha but does not expel them from the body. This aggravated doshas produces visha (toxins) in our body, which is difficult to digest, causing vidagdhatva of aahar rasa and dusti of Pitta dosha.¹¹ There are 18 different types of viruddha aahar.

Categorization of junk food according to various types of Viruddha ahara

Viruddha Ahara	Junk Food
Desh Viruddha	Alcohol in hot and dry climates, milkshakes in humid climate, spicy food in a hot city
Kaala Viruddha	Ice cream in winter, spicy food in summer
Agni Viruddha	Guru (heavy) and aadhik aahar (overconsumption of food) in manda agni
Matra Viruddha	Honey and ghee in equal amount
Satmya Viruddha	Chinese in India
Dosha Viruddha	Vata prakruti person eating light food and doing excessive exercise
Sanskar Viruddha	Honey with hot water, marinated chicken
Veerya Viruddha	Ushna (hot) veerya fish consumed with sheet (cold) virya milk, ice cream with hot fudge
Karma Viruddha	Sweet after meal
Kostha Viruddha	Baked food consumed by krura kostha person
Awastha Viruddha	Alcohol, dry and light food consumed by laborers
Parihar Viruddha	Cold water after hot tea
Paak Viruddha	Burnt food, half-baked food
Upchara Viruddha	Drinking cold water after having ghrutpan
Sayoga Viruddha	Fruit salad milkshakes, sizzling brownie ice cream
Hrut Viruddha	Eating food not liked by a person
Sampat Viruddha	Ripened fruits

Viharaja Nidan

Divaswapan: Daytime sleeping, specifically after a meal leads to a delayed metabolic process causing impaired aahara parinaman and Kapha and Pitta dusti.¹²

Ratrijagran: Ratrijagran impaired physiological and mental function leading to improper poshan of dhatu resulting in Vata prakop.¹³

Veganigrahana: Holding urges disturbs the gati of Vata dosha and this prakupit Vata causes Vatarakta.

Ativyayaam: Excessive physical exercise leads to vitiation of Vata. In the present world, the gym has become the workout place for many youngsters, air conditioning in the gym subsidies sweda pravriti causing shrotavrodha which in turn leads to Pitta and Rakta dusti.

Ativyavaya: It will cause shukrashaya, which reflects the pratiloma shaya of dhatu resulting in Vata prakop.¹⁴

Hastyoaustra yaan: Journey on elephants, horses, and camels mainly aggregates Vata dosha with avrodha of Rakta along the leg region. E.g., bus drives, delivery boys, taxi drivers, etc.

Ambukridan: Excessive swimming vitiates Vata dosha. E.g., scuba diving, diving instructors, underwater models, swimmers, etc.

Manas Nidan (Psychological factors)

Krodha (rage), shoka (grief), chinta (worry) are causative factors that vitiate the Sadhaka Pitta leading to Vataprakopa, and also the secretion of Pachak Pitta is hampered which further accelerates the condition of Vatarakta.¹⁵

Aagantuja Nidan (Exogenous factors)

In this disease, an exogenous factor is aaghata which is trauma or an accident. Excessive bleeding due to an accident is exclusively a trigger for vata prakopa.

Prakruti Based Nidan

Sukumar individuals having overindulgence of sour, saline, and pungent substances results in vitiation of Rakta, whereas the same individuals having pungent, bitter, and astringent substances are prone to vitiation of Vata. The combined action of these two conditions finally leads to Vatarakta. Individuals who are obese and consume an unwholesome diet are also affected. Overweight people who surrender exercise have chances of Kapha and meda dushti which further adds up to the etiology of this disease. E.g., shopkeeper, desk job, businessman, etc.¹⁶

Overview of nidan of Vatarakta as modern perspective

Nidan	Vataja Nidan	Raktaja Nidan
Aaharaja	Bread, biscuits, etc. bakery products, betel nuts, wafers, pizza, burgers, farsan, chickpeas, baked food, etc.	Chinese, soda, apple vinegar, wafers, packed food, papad, pickles, sauces, fishes, black gram, horse gram, reddish, sesame, curd, alcohol, ginger ale, cold drinks, milkshakes, fruit salad, spicy food, marinated chicken, burnt food, half-baked food, ripened fruits, black pepper, etc.
Viharaja	Excessive workout, over-riding of vehicles, swimming, trauma, accident, fasting, excessive sex, holding urges, tracking, having meals while watching television and mobile, divaswapna, ratrijagran, etc.	Divaswapna, ratrijagran, trauma, accident, etc.
Manas	Krodha (rage), shoka (grief), chinta (worry)	Krodha (rage)
Prakruti Based	A lean person having pungent, bitter, and astringent food.	A lean person having sour, saline, and pungent food.

DISCUSSION

Vatarakta is one of the most upsetting and painful diseases that is commonly found in the modern era. Intense pain is a major symptom of Vatarakta that affects the daily activity of patients. The etiological factor leads to the vitiation of Vata dosha and Rakta dhatu. To be more specific, the obstructing Rakta vaha strotas is the leading pathology. As said above various aaharaj, viharaj, and manas hetu play an important role in causing Vatarakta. In today's era, there is a tremendous increase in faulty diet habits like consumption of alcohol, cigarettes, incompatible food, irregular eating, overeating, excessive workout, overstress, etc. which is becoming the main cause of Vatarakta and this lifestyle is the only reason for increasing the cases of Vatarakta. Avoiding this hetu mentioned by our acharyas plays an important role in the prevention of lifestyle disorders like Vatarakta. A healthy lifestyle, pathya, and apathya must be adopted to control the disease with proper diet, physical activity, and mental activity. Prevention is better than cure is the best treatment in Vatarakta. The incidence of Vatarakta is increasing due to lifestyle change which is creating a lot of concern all over the world as it is causing serious complications. Considering this fact, it was decided to write an article on the prevention of Vatarakta in the modern era.

CONCLUSION

Vatarakta is one of the major lifestyle disorders of today's world. Due to modernization, bad food habits, Consumption of fast food, alcohol, non-veg, Irregular eating, sedentary lifestyle, and mental and emotional stress lead to Vatarakta. The prevention of this lifestyle disorder can be done by avoiding the causative factors of Vatarakta mentioned by our Acharyas, adapting pathya, and cutting down the apathya mentioned in our Samhita. By avoiding causative factors of Vatarakta and if pathya-apathya is followed properly there is no need for medicine which will help to live long and will also be useful for society in the prevention of Vatarakta and its complications.

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Cite this article as:

Divyani Barbate and Priya Naik. Prevention of Vatarakta in the modern era with special reference to unhealthy lifestyles as nidan: A Review. Int. J. Res. Ayurveda Pharm. 2024;15(5):171-173 DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7897/2277-4343.155179>