

A CRITICAL REVIEW ON VRISHCHIKA VISHA: AN AYURVEDIC CONCEPT

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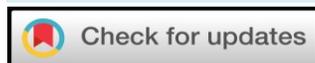
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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is the Oldest, Traditional, Indian System of Health Science. It gives the knowledge of longevity and healthy life. Thus 'Ayurveda' totally means 'Science of life' having the eight main branches. *Agadatantra* is one among the main branch which deals with the study of poisons (Toxicology), their signs and symptoms, fatal dose, antidotes and management. Acharya Sushruta has described in detail about all the *keeta visha* in *Kalpa Sthana* of Sushruta Samhita, Vriddha Vagbhata in *Uttaratantra* of *Ashtanga Sangraha*, *Laghu Vagbhata* in *Uttaratantra* of *Ashtanga Hridaya* and in other Ayurvedic classics and textbook. *Vrishchika* (Scorpion) is one among *keeta visha*. It is mainly neurotoxic in nature especially belonging to the *buthidae* family are more dangerous to the human. It causes severe pain, burning sensation, swelling and redness at the site of bite. According to its severity, Acharya's have described all the type of *vrishchikas*, their signs and symptoms, complications and treatment.

Keywords: Ayurveda, *Visha*, *Vrishchika visha*, Scorpion poison

INTRODUCTION

Vrishchika (Scorpion) is very dangerous to the living body. It is having almost 3-7 inch long. The body of the scorpion is divided into two parts. They have eight legs and six segments on the tail. The last segment is

known as telson and venom apparatus is present in the last segment. According to Ayurveda they are originated from *goshakrit*, *kashtheshtiha* and *sarpa*. Acharya Sushruta, has classified *visha* into two types

i.e. *Sthavara visha* (plant poison) and *Jangama visha* (animal poison)^[1]. Here *Vrishchika* has been mentioned under the *jangama visha* in *keeta prakaran*. Acharya Sushruta, has mentioned 16 *adhithanas* (sites) of *jangama visha*. *Vrishchika* is a *keeta* and its *adhithana* is *shooka* (sting)^[2].

Synonyms:- Acc. to Raj Nighantu, Synonyms of *Vrishchika* are^[3] -

1. *Shooka keeta*
2. *Alidrona*

Aim and Objectives

- To evaluate and discuss about *Vrishchika visha* their sign, symptoms, effect on body and treatment.
- To study about all the types of *Vrishchika* described in our Samhita Granthas and Ayurvedic texts.

Material and Methods:

The detail study on *Vrishchika visha* and their effect on human body is done with the help of our Samhitas especially in Sushruta Samhita and Ayurvedic textbooks.

Historical Review^[4]

1) **Vedic Kala:-** ‘*Veda*’ is the first source of literature and knowledge that narrates medical science very cogently. Detail explanations about several *keetas* have been mentioned in *yajurveda*.

2) **Samhita Kala:-** Samhita kala is considered as golden age of Ayurvedic history.

Charaka Samhita:- Charaka Samhita is considered as one of the best Samhita, which explains the *chikitsa* (treatment) of several diseases. The context of *vrishchika* has been explained under 23rd chapter of *chikitsa sthana*.

Sushruta Samhita:- Sushruta Samhita has rendered one whole *sthana* i.e. *kalpa sthana* for *visha chikitsa*. Acharya sushruta has been explained in detail about *vrishchika* under 8th chapter, *keeta kalpa adhyaya* of *kalpa sthana*.

Harita Samhita:- In Harita Samhita, 55th chapter of 3rd *sthana*, *mantra chikitsa* has been mentioned for the management of *Vrishchika damsha*.

3) **Sangraha Kala:-**

Ashtanga Sangraha:- Acharya Vriddha Vagbhat has been elaborated the details of *Vrishchika* in *sarpa visha pratishedha adhyaya* (42nd chapter), *Keeta Visha Pratishedha Adhyaya* (43rd chapter) and *Visha Opayogiya Adhyaya* (48th chapter) of *Uttaratantra*.

Ashtanga Hridaya:- Acharya Vagbhat has also mentioned the context of *Vrishchika* in 36th and 37th chapter of *Uttaratantra*.

Utpatti (Origin) Of *Vrishchika*^[5]

Acc. to Acharya Sushruta the origin of *Vrishchikas* are said to be 3 types i.e. *manda*, *madhyama* and *mahavisha*. The one which are originated from *Goshakrit* (putrefied cowdung) called *manda visha*, those from *Kashtha* (wood) and *eshtikas* (bricks) are called *madhyama visha* and those are originated from *Sarpa* (cadaver of snakes) are called *mahavisha*.

Types^[6]

Acc. to their origin as well as its toxicity, *Vrishchikas* are classified into 3 types:-

1. *Manda Visha*
2. *Madhyama Visha*
3. *Maha Visha*

Number of *Vrishchikas*

Acc. to Acharya Sushruta, there are total 30 in number^[7] :-

- (1) *Manda Visha* - 12, (2) *Madhyama Visha* - 3, (3) *Maha/ Teekshna Visha* - 15

Acc. to Acharya Charaka^[8] :-

There are two in number :-

- (1) *Dooshi visha*
- (2) *Pranahara* or *Asadhya visha*.

In Prayoga Samuchaya^[9] :-

There are mainly four in numbers :-

- (1) *Vaataja* (2) *Pittaja* (3) *Kaphaja* (4) *Sannipataja*.

Acc. to Kriya Kaumudi :-

- (1) *Vaayavya* -1, (2) *Aagneya* -2, (3) *Soumya* -13, (4) *Sankirna* -12

Acc. to Gayadas^[10] :-

- (1) *Manda* -10, (2) *Madhyama* -3, (3) *Pranahara* -13

Table 1: According to Acharya Sushruta, the three types of *Vrishchika* are as follows^[11]

<i>Maha Visha</i>	<i>Madhya Visha</i>	<i>Manda Visha</i>
<i>Shweta</i>	<i>Rakta</i>	<i>Krishna</i>
<i>Chitra</i>	<i>Peeta</i>	<i>Shyaava</i>
<i>Lohitabha</i>	<i>Kapila</i>	<i>Karbura</i>
<i>Raktasweta</i>	-	<i>Pandu varna</i>
<i>Raktodara</i>	-	<i>Gomootrabh</i>
<i>Neelodara</i>	-	<i>Karkasha</i>
<i>Peeta rakta</i>	-	<i>Mechaka</i>
<i>Neela rakta</i>	-	<i>Peeta</i>
<i>Neela sweta</i>	-	<i>Dhoomra varna</i>
<i>Rakta vabhru</i>	-	<i>Romasha</i>
<i>Eka parva</i>	-	<i>Shadvalabh</i>
<i>Dwiparva</i>	-	<i>Rakta</i>
<i>Aparva</i>	-	-
<i>Shyamala</i>	-	-
<i>Neela peeta</i>	-	-

General Symptoms Of Bite Of *Vrishchika Visha*^[12]

Most of the scorpions are neurotoxic in nature and causes locally severe pain (*vedana*), burning sensation (*daha*), swelling (*shotha*) and redness at the site of bite. The patient suffers from above symptoms and pain moves in upward direction from the site of bite. According to Acharya Vriddha Vagbhata, the bite of poisonous scorpion is similar to fire, suddenly pain moves in upward direction and later on it fixed at the site of bite. The bitten site becomes blackish in colour and unbearable pain and burning sensation is present at the site.

Acharya Charaka has been explained the symptoms of *dooshi visha* and *pranahara*. The bite of *dooshi visha* scorpion is similar to fire and there will be burning sensation and *bhednavat pida* (piercing pain) at the site of bite and pain moves in upward direction. When bitten by *pranahara vrishchika*, there will be loss of sensation of eyes, nose, tongue and flesh cut and fall from the site of bite and excessive pain also present at the site of bite. Because of all these symptoms, human souls perish. *Pranahara visha* is also known as *asadhya*^[13].

Types of *Vrishchika Visha*

Table 2: Based on *Swaroopa* (Physical Appearance and *Varna* (Colour) ^[14]

S.No.	<i>Vrishchika Bheda</i>	<i>Varna</i>	<i>Swaroopa</i>	<i>Samanya Lakshana</i>
1	<i>Manda Visha Vrishchika</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Krishna</i> • <i>Shyava</i> • <i>Karbura</i> • <i>Pandu</i> • <i>Gomootra</i> • <i>Karkasha</i> • <i>Mechaka</i> • <i>Peeta</i> • <i>Dhooma Varna</i> • <i>Romayukta</i> • <i>Shadvala</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possess In Tail <i>Bahu Parva</i> (Many Joints) • They Have <i>Shweta Udara</i> (White Abdomen) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Vedana</i> • <i>Kampa</i> • <i>Gaatra Stambha</i> • <i>Krishna Rakta</i> • <i>Daha</i> • <i>Shotha</i> • <i>Jwara</i> • <i>Sweda</i>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rakta Varna 		
2	Madhyama Visha Vrishchika	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rakta • Peeta 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possess In Tail Tri Parva (Three Joints) • Udara Having Kapila Or Krishna Varna 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jihva Shotha • Difficulty In Swallowing Of Food • Moorchha
3	Maha Vish Vrishchika	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shweta • Chitra • Shyamala • Lohita • Rakta Shweta • Rakta Neela • Peeta Rakta • Neela Peeta • Neela Shukla • Rakta Vabru 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eka Parva Or Dwi Parva Or Aparva • Nana-Aakruti Or Nana- Varna 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarpa Visha Vega • Sphota • Daha • Jwara • Manovibhram

Acc. To Kriya Kaumudi^[15]

Table 3: Dosha wise Varna Lakshna of Vrishchika Visha

No.	Type	Varna Lakshna
1	Vaayavya	Severe pain, Pricking pain
2	Aagneya	Burning sensation, redness, slight oedema, <i>kharjura varna</i>
3	Soumya	Continuous thick blood discharge, <i>alpa vedana, udumbara varna</i>
4	Sankirna	All type of symptoms are seen

Acc. To Prayoga Samuchchaya And Kriya Kaumudi^[16]

Table 4: Dhatugata Lakshna of Vrishchika Visha

No.	Dhatu	Prayoga Samuchchaya	Kriya Kaumudi
1	Twak	Severe pain	Pricking pain, vomiting, delirium, convulsion
2	Rakta	Severe burning sensation	All above + fatigue, burning sensation, <i>jwara, atisaara</i>
3	Mamsa	Hidhma, Oedema	<i>Granthi</i> all over body
4	Meda	Greevabhanga	<i>Hidma, Galashosha</i>
5	Asthi	Jwara	<i>Jwara</i>
6	Majja	Manastaapa, Dukha	<i>Vyasana manastaapa</i>
7	Shukra	Rakta netra, Death	<i>Rakta netra</i> Death

Acc. To Acharya Vagbhata^[17]

Table 5: Based on doshapradhana Vrishchika Visha Lakshna

S. No.	DOSHA	LAKSHNAS
1	Vataja	<i>Hrupida, Stambha, Urdhwasa, Asthi and Parva vedana etc.</i>
2	Pittaja	<i>Sanyanasa, Hridaya daha, Shotha, Rakta-Pitta Roga etc.</i>
3	Kaphaja	<i>Vamana, Arochaka, Lalashrava, Sweda, Sheetala, Peenasa, Mukhamadhurya.</i>

Asadhya (Incurable) Lakshnas of Vrishchika Visha^[18, 19]

Acc. to Acharya Charaka, he has described the symptoms of scorpion bite which are clinically incurable i.e. Loss of function of heart, nose and tongue

Loss of muscle tissues

Excruciating pain.

Treatment of Vrishchika Visha^[20, 21]

Acharya Charaka has explained the general treatment of Vrishchika visha is Swedana (sudation), Abhyanga with Ghrita and Sandhava, Parisheka (irrigation), food along with ghrita.

According to Acharya Sushruta the treatment of Ugra and Madhyama types of Vrishchika should be done similarly to Sarpadashta (Snake bite). Site of the sting should be cleaned properly and then Swedana should be done. Pratisarana should be done by Haridra, Saindhava Lavana, Trikatu and Churna of Shirisha phala and pushpa.

Upadravas (Complications) of Vrishchika Visha^[22]

Ayurvedic texts like Prayoga Samuchchaya and Kriya Kaumudi has explained about the upadrava of vrishchika visha, which may appear due to the bite of ugravisha vrishchika. These complications are:-

Asahyavedana (severe pain)

Shotha (swelling)

Shwasa (breathlessness)

Trishna (thirst)

Moha and Pralapa (delirium)

Upadrava Chikitsa

1. **Lepa** - Churna of Vibhitaki, Haridra, Pippali, Manjistha, Maricha and Visha should be grinded in the swarasa of Brihati and it should be applied in the form of lepa.
2. **Pana** – Dadhi and Ghrita should be taken in the form of pana.
3. **Anjana** – Karanja, Tintidika, Saindhava and Karaskarapatra swarasa should be taken in the form of anjana.



Figure 1: Vrishchika (Scorpion poison)

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Scorpions are venomous in nature especially which are belonging to buthidae family. Majority of species do not represent serious life threat to the human, only about 25 species have venom capable of killing a human. Acharyas have described in detail about its physical appearance, classification, numbers, sign and symptoms, mode of action of venom, complications and management. In literature and textbooks, the various types of Vrishchika visha are described by our Acharyas. They are dangerous to the human beings. So, the treatment is very important. According to Dosh, Acharyas have mentioned several Dravyas and

Yogas in the form of Pana, Lepa, Dhupana, Mantra Chikitsa etc. for the treatment of Vrishchika Damsha. The observation by the Acharyas can help us to manage the treatment of Vrishchika visha. Though in this article efforts have been made to compile the various types of Vrishchika, their classification, features to identify the various Vrishchikas, their clinical manifestation and treatment.

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