

REVIEW OF AYURVEDIC FORMULATIONS TO CURE HEADACHE

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ABSTRACT

Headache is pain anywhere in the region of the head or neck. The most common type of primary headache is the tension headache. *Ayurvedic* texts describes not only *Sirahsula* as a symptom of various diseases but also as an independent disease entity as *Siroroga*. *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned *Siro-ruk* as a separate disease among eighty types of *Vata-Vyadhis*. The word *Sirahsula* denotes the painful condition of the head. It is termed in different ways by different *Acharyas* as *Charaka* describes it, as *Siroroga*, *Sushruta* and *Bhavamishra* as *Sirobhitapa* and *Vagbhata* as *Sirastapa*. The *Vata* when aggravated due to *Vata* vitiating factors moves upwards, downwards and sideways causes several diseases. *Sirahsula* is also mentioned to be due to suppression of sneezing reflex and other natural urges. In *Ayurvedic* view *Vata Sirahsulam* can be correlated with tension headache, *Pitta Sirahsulam* can be correlated with migraine headache and *Kaphaja Sirahsulam* can be correlated with sinus headache. In *Ayurvedic* texts a detailed formulations to cure headache has been mentioned and this article is specially designed to elaborate all available references to cure headache and help the human beings through *Ayurveda*.

Keywords: Headache, *Ayurveda*, *Sirahsula*, *Charak Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtanga Hridayam*

INTRODUCTION

Siroroga or the diseases of head and neck are classified into eleven types grossly. They are *Vataja*, *Pittaja*, *Kaphaja*, *Sannipataja*, *Raktaja*, *Ksayaja*, *Krimija*, *Suryavarta*, *Anantavata*, *Sankhaka* and *Ardhavabhedaka*. If the headache is due to no apparent reason, increased at night and is relieved by fomentations and tight bandaging, it can be due to *Vata*. In *Pitta* type, severe burning sensation as if some hot coke is covered is felt in the entire cranium along with eyes and nose. It is diminished on application of cold substances and at night. In *Kaphaja* type, the head is clammy, gummy, rigid, heavy and cold. Eyes, nose and oral cavity are edematous. In case of *Raktaja* type, the features mimic that of

Pittaja type and tenderness is associated. In *Ksayaja* type due to diminished *Kapha*, *Vasa*(fat) and *Rakta* (due to haemorrhage or injury), headache generates which is very severe and difficult to cure. The pain is enhanced by fomentations, emesis, fumigation, nasal applications and bloodletting, which are usual therapeutic procedures. There may be vertigo, pricking pain, blurred or fixed vision and muscular fatigue. The features of *Krimija* type are, severe pricking pain, throbbing and pulsation inside the head as if some worms are eating away the inside tissues, and emission of blood and pus through the nose. The headache which is prominent in the ocular area commences at sun rise and reaches its peak at noon.

Then it slowly regresses and subsides with sunset. This type is called *Suryavarta*. It subsides sometimes with cold fomentations and sometimes with hot fomentations. It is very difficult to cure and is due to involvement of all the *Dosas*. In *Anantavata*, three *Dosas* are vitiated. They exert pressure upon the *Manya* i.e. neck muscles and gradually cause pain and burning sensation in the eyebrows and temporal areas. Pain is severe in the maxillary areas. The other features are tremor, rigidity of the mandibular joint and ophthalmic disorders. In *Sankhaka* type, severe pain, burning sensation, redness and edema (sign of inflammation) are generated. Then the disease spreads to other areas of head and neck and kills the afflicted person, within three days. In *Ardhavabhedaka* type, very severe nature of cutting and striking pain is perceived in the areas of *Manya* (neck), eyebrows, temporal areas, forehead and eye. It is present only in either half of the area. Our classical *Ayurvedic* texts are full of various *Sutras* to cure *Sirahasula* right from *Charak Samhita* in a scientific manner. Therefore to cure headache through *Ayurveda*, a classical review of *Ayurvedic* texts is needed.

Aim and Objective- To cure headache through *Ayurvedic* medicines available in classical *Ayurvedic* texts.

Materials and methods-

All references of Headache *Chikitsa* is collected from Original text of available *Ayurvedic* texts. References of Headache *Chikitsa* is arranged according to *Samhita Granthas* one by one.

CHARAK SAMHITA

1. Use of *Mahamayura Ghrita* for *Nasya*, *Pana*, *Abhyanga* and *Basti* cure *Shiroroga*.¹
2. Medicated oil of *Tvaga*, *Danti*, *Sirisa* etc. are used for snuffing.²
3. Oil cooked with *Rasna*, *Kakoli*, *Ksirakakoli* and *Sarkara* along with milk should be taken as snuff. It relieves *Urdhwajatrugata Roga* of *Vata-Pitta* nature.³

4. Medicated oil of *Bala*, *Madhuka*, *Vidari* and *Chandana* etc. are used in *Urdhwajatrugata Roga* of *Vata-Pitta* nature.⁴
5. In *Paittika* disease of head, paste of *Tvak*, *Patra* and *Sarkara* pounded with rice water should be used as pressed snuff followed by snuffing of *Ghee*.⁵
6. In head disease caused by *Pitta -Sarkara*, *Draksha* and *Madhuka* should be used as snuff.⁶
7. *Apamarga* seeds, *Pippali*, *Maricha*, *Vidanga*, *Sigru* seeds, *Sarsapa*, *Tumburu*, *Jyotismati* and *Sunthi* should be used as errhine for head evacuation particularly in heaviness and pain of head, chronic coryza, hemicrania, maggots, epilepsy, loss of smell and fainting.⁷
8. *Aguru*, *Eraka*, *Padmaka* and *Choraka* – all together are powdered and mixed with *Ghee*. This balm applied to the forehead relieves headache.⁸

SUSHRUT SAMHITA

1. One suffering from head disease should take only *Mudga*, *Kulattha* and *Masha* mixed with pungents and *Ghee* and heated followed by intake of hot milk.⁹
2. In *Kaphaja* type of headache, after unction (*Snehana*), head should be evacuated with *Madhukasara* or bark of *Ingudi* or *Mesashringa*.¹⁰
3. Paste of *Trivrit*, *Kustha*, *Sarengesta*, *Devadaru* and *Rohisha* pounded with *Yavaksara* and salt and slightly heated should be applied on head.¹¹
4. In *Suryavartta* and hemicrania, pressed snuff of *Vacha* and *Pippali* is useful.¹²
5. In *Suryavartta* and hemicranias pressed snuff of the seeds of *Shirisha* and *Mulaka* is efficacious.¹³
6. *Madhuka* (*Mulethi*) mixed with honey should be used as pressed snuff.¹⁴
7. In head disease caused by *Kapha*, *Katphala* powder should be taken as snuff or gargles alleviating *Kapha*.¹⁵

ASHTANGA HRIDAYAM

1. Juice of *Shalaparni* should be applied locally.¹⁶

2. In head disease caused by *Vata*, one should take *Masha*, *Mudga*, or *Kulattha* mixed with *Ghee* or oil or paste of *Sesamum* with milk.¹⁷
3. Juic of *Shalaparni* and *Chakarmarda* pounded with sours should be as paste.¹⁸
4. Headache caused by *Pitta* and *Rakta* is alleviated by taking snuff of *Ghee* cooked with *Sarkara* and *Kumkuma*.¹⁹

SHARANGADHAR SAMHITA

1. Flowers of *Muchakunda* relieves headache immediately.²⁰
2. Intake before meals, of *Mundi* juice added with *Maricha* powder and slightly heat alleviates *Suryavarita* and hemicranias within a week.²¹
3. Application of the paste of *Kushtha* and *Eranda* root pounded with sour gruel removes headache and so do the flowers of *Muchakunda*.²²

BHAVAPRAKASHA

1. *Yastimadhu* 1gm and aconite 250gm are pounded finely and mixed with *mustard* powder. Put it in the nostrils it removes all types of headache.²³
2. *Bhringaraja* juice mixed with equal quantity of goat's milk and heated in the sun is used as snuff. It is an excellent remedy of *Suryavarita*.²⁴
3. *Kumari-Taila*.²⁵
4. Snuffing with paste of *Sunthi* mixed with jaggery removes headache.²⁶

CHAKRADATTA

Snuffing with milk mixed with paste of *Sunthi* alleviates severe headache.²⁷

BHAISAJYARATNAWALI

1. *Sirahsuladi Vajra Rasa*.²⁸
2. *Apamarga Taila Nasya*.²⁹
3. *Shadbindu Taila Nasya*.³⁰
4. *Mahalakshmi Vilas Ras Vati*.³¹

RASATARANGINI

1. *Panchamrita Rasa*.³²
2. *Godanti Bhasma*.³³

DISCUSSION

Ayurvedic line of treatment of *Sirahsula* or headache should be with *Vatahara Dravyas*, balancing *Pitta* and *Kapha* and applying *Jvara Chikitsa* concept. In case of *Vata* type of headache, oil massage, hot fomentations, food that pacify *Vata Dosa* and *Upanaha* are advised. Use of *Sirovasti* specially pacifies *Vata* type of headache. In case of *Pitta* type of headache, cool sandal water may be sprinkled along with fanning the head with water flowers like lotus or lilly. *Satadhouta Ghee* may be applied on the scalp. *Vataja* headache can be due to neurological or psychological causes. *Pittaja* type of headache is observed in indigestion and other gastro-intestinal diseases. *Kaphaja* headache may be some referred pain from ear, tooth or sinuses. Here, the patient feels as his head is internally filled with some heavy material. *Raktaja* type is usually encountered in vascular causes like hypertension. *Ksayaja* condition is usually observed in cerebral ischaemia or head injury. In *Krimija* type, Actually, there will not be any type of grossly visible worms which cause this type of headache. It may be due to infective sinusitis. *Suryavarta* features are commonly observed in chronic maxillary sinusitis. *Anantvata* is mostly due to the involvement of the fifth cranial nerve i.e. trigeminal nerve with all its branches. The pain is felt, where ever the supply goes. *Sankhaka* may be headache originating from an inflammatory process such as meningitis and cerebral abscess.

CONCLUSION

It is clear from above discussion and various references that single and compound *Ayurvedic* formulations is very much available and may give better results when used in a proper way. By analyzing various references, available in *Ayurvedic* texts, it is clear that our classics are full of significant formulations to cure headache.

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