

A REVIEW ON THE *VATARAKTA* WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TREATMENT APPROACH OF *VATARAKTA*

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda consider *vata dosa* as responsible for all movements, pressure forces and impulses. *Vatarakta* possesses a special place in the literature, due to its high prevalence in the society, increased incidence as age advances.

The morbid *rakta dhatu* in turn obstructs the passage of vitiated *vata dosa*. Obstruction to the passage of *vata dosa* cause worsening of the morbidity of *vata dosa*. Continuing the pathology, the severely vitiated *vata dosa* also further disturbs the morbid *rakta dhatu*. This illness is known as *vatarakta*. *Vatarakta* is a progressive disorder and hence initially the illness may be limited to either superficial *dhathu* or deeper *dhathu* alone, but in the later stages the *uttana vatarakta* progresses to deeper *dhathus*. In that stage patient should be allotted with *bahiparimarjana chikitsa*. Similarly, the *gambhira vataraklta* may involve the superficial *dhatu* in the later stages. Hence in the later stages the *vata rakta* develops as a *ubhayashritta vatarakta*. In such condition there is an importance of *shodhana chikitsa*.

Keywords: *Vatarakta, Uttana, Gambhira, Chikitsa*

INTRODUCTION

Vatarakta is one of the unique disorders among the *vatavyadhi* compared to other *vatavyadhi*. *Raktadhatu* represents blood and associated metabolism. It signifies that association of *vata* disorder along with vitiated *pitta dosa* and *rakta dhatu*¹. The word *vatarakta* is made up of two words *vata* and *rakta*.² *Vata* is the chief without which any disease may take place, the *rakta* is also a very important *dhatu* which give nutrition to each and every body tissue and maintains them normal by eliminating toxins-mala through natural orifices of body³. In *vatarakta vata dosa* and the *dushya rakta* are vitiated simultane-

ously, which renders the condition highly difficult to treat and makes for its fast growth. This property is due to the nature of *rakta* and *vata* which is similar to that of fire and wind, i.e. they mutually synergise each other's properties. The pathway of *vata* is obstructed by the vitiated *rakta* and the vitiated *vata* in turn vitiates *rakta* resulting in the condition called *vatarakta*⁴. *Susrutha* describes this condition under the topic of *vatavyadhi*⁵, while *Caraka* and *Vagbhata* assign a separate chapter to this disease. Though *vata* and *sonita* are simultaneously vitiated in this condition, yet it is described as *vatavyadhi*

because *vata* is more important vitiating factor than *rakta*. But other authors designate a separate chapter for these diseases because of the specificity of the cause that generate *vatarakta*, the peculiarity in the manifestation of the disease, and the specificity of its manifestation in the regions of the joints. This condition may also seem to be stimulate *raktagatavata*, which also exhibits the symptoms of *daha*, *raga* etc. But in the former condition *rakta* is vitiating along with *vata*, whereas in *raktagatavata* the *rakta* is not vitiating but forms the substratum of *vata*.

Definition⁶ and Synonyms⁷

Morbid *vata dosa* when obstructed by vitiating *rakta dhatu*, further becomes virulent and once again adds to the abnormality of *rakta dhatu*, this illness is called as *vatarakta*⁶.

Adhyavata- The word *adhya* refers to rich person. As the disease is common in rich, it is called as *adhyavata*.

Khudha - As the disease *vatarakta* involves the joints it is called as *khudhavata* where the *khudha* refers to the joint.

Vatabalasa- Virulence of the illness is dependant up on morbidity of *rakta dhatu* worsened by the obstructed *vayu* and hence is known as *vatabalasa*.

Nidana:⁸ Table 1

Aharaja nidana	Viharaja nidana	Acc to prakruti
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Amla, katu, lavana snigdha, ushna</i> • <i>Pinyaka, moolaka, kulatha, masha, nishpava</i> • <i>Curd, aaranala, sauveera, sukta, buttermilk, sura</i> • <i>Virudhahara</i> • <i>Anupa mamsa</i> • <i>Adhysana</i> • Food which are soaked in water for long time • Irregular diet habits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Abhighata</i> • <i>Asuddhi</i> • <i>Divasvapna</i> • <i>Ratrijagarana</i> • <i>Ambukreeda</i> • <i>Plavana</i> • <i>Langhana</i> • <i>Vyavaya</i> • <i>Vega nigraha</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sukumara</i> • <i>Sthoulya</i> • <i>Avyayama</i> persons

Method of Progression

- According to *Caraka*⁹ the signs and symptoms are first manifested in small joints of fingers of both hands and feet.
- But *Susrutha* gives two different opinions in two different places. In *nidanasthana*, he states that the first manifestation is at the *padamoola* or root of the foot, sometimes affecting the hand also. In *chikitsasthana*, his opinion is same as that of *Caraka*.
- Even though *Vagbhata* is known to follow *Caraka* in majority of his opinion and methods of treatment, here he agrees with the statement of *Susrutha* stating that the disease first manifest itself in *padamoola*, anyhow it is clear that the small joints of both hands and feet are the primary target organs.

Purvarupa¹⁰:

Sveda bahulya or *svedabhava*, *Karshnyat*, *Sparsagnata*, *Kshathe athiruk Sandhi saithilyam*, *Alasyam*, *Sadhanam angam*, *Pidakodgamam*, *Vaivarnya* and *mandalotpathi* in skin, *Nisthoda*, *spurana*, *bheda*, *gurutwa*, *supthi* in *janu*, *jankha*, *uru*, *kati*, *amsa*, *hasta*, *padaanga* and *sandhi*.

Table 2 *Rupa*^{11,12}

VATADHIKA	PITTADHIKA	KAPHADHIKA	RAKTADHIKA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sirayama</i> • <i>Sula</i> • <i>Spurana</i> • <i>Toda</i> • <i>Shothasya karshnyam roukshyam</i> • <i>Shyavata vrididi hani</i> • <i>Dhamani anguli sandi sankocha</i> • <i>Angagraha</i> • <i>Atiruk</i> • <i>Stambana</i> • <i>Sheeta pradhvesha</i> • <i>Sparshodwigna Bheda</i> • <i>Prashosha</i> • <i>Swapa</i> • <i>Sheetanupashaya</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Vidaha</i> • <i>Vedhana</i> • <i>Murcha</i> • <i>Sweda</i> • <i>Thrishna</i> • <i>Mada Brama</i> • <i>Paka</i> • <i>Raga</i> • <i>Bheda</i> • <i>Sosha</i> • <i>Ugra daha</i> • <i>Ati ushnatwam</i> • <i>Sophasya mridutwam Sammoha</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Staimitya</i> • <i>Gourava</i> • <i>Snehatwa</i> • <i>Supthi</i> • <i>Manda ruja</i> • <i>Kandu</i> • <i>Swetata</i> • <i>Seetata</i> • <i>Sopha</i> • <i>Stabdatwa</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sotha</i> • <i>Ati ruk</i> • <i>Toda</i> • <i>Tamra varna</i> • <i>Chimichimayana</i> • <i>Snigdha rukshahishamam</i> • <i>Kandu</i> • <i>Kleda</i>

Table 3

Uthana vatarakta	Gambhira vatarakta
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Kandu</i> • <i>Daha</i> • <i>Ruja</i> • <i>Ayama</i> • <i>Toda Spurana</i> • <i>Kunchana</i> • <i>Syava twak</i> • <i>Rakta twak</i> • <i>Bheda</i> • <i>Gourava</i> • <i>Suptata</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>svayatu stabdhata</i> • <i>Svayatu kathinya</i> • <i>Bhrisharathi</i> • <i>Shyavatha</i> • <i>Tamra twak</i> • <i>Daha</i> • <i>Toda</i> • <i>Sphurana</i> • <i>Paka and Ruja</i> • <i>Vidaha</i> • <i>Vatasyasandyasthi majjasuchindanniva</i> • <i>Kanjatwa, pangutwa and adhika purvaruk</i>

SAMPRAPTHI GHATAKAS¹³

- *Dosa –*
Vata pradhana tridosaja
Vata - Vyana
Pitta - Pacaka
Kapha - slesaka
- *Dushya - Dhatu – Uthana vatarakta – rakta, rasa, mamsa*

Gambhira vata rakta – Rakta, rasa, mamsa, medas, asthi and majja

Upadhatu – Sira, kandara, sandhi, snayu, tvaca

Saririka mala – Mutra, Purisha

Dhatu mala – Kapha, sveda and pitta

- *Agni - Jatharagnijanya, Dhatvagnijanya*
- *Agni dushti - Mandagni*
- *Srotas - Rasavaha, raktavaha initially later all dhatuvaha srotas*

- Sroto dushtiprakara – sanga*
- *Udbhavasthana – pakvasayotha, amasayotha*
 - *Vyaktasthana- Janu, jangha, uru, kati, amsa, hastapadanga sandhi*
 - *Sancharasthana - Sarvasarira*
 - *Adhistana– Janu, jangha, uru, kati, amsa, hastapadanga sandhi*
 - *Vyadhi marga – bahya and madhyama roga- marga*

SADHYASADHYATWA¹⁴

Sadhya - following factors determine the curability of *vatarakta*

- Presence of one *dosa* in the pathogenesis of *vatarakta*.
- Absence of *upadrava*
- *Vatarakta* of recent onset

Specific Treatment –

<i>Uihana vatarakta</i>	<i>Gambhira vata rakta</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pralepa</i> • <i>abhyanga</i> • <i>parisheka</i> • <i>Avagaha</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Vireka</i> • <i>Asthapana</i> • <i>Sneha pana</i>

Treatment according to the *dosa* predominance

• ***Vatadhika vatarakta;***

Puranaghruta pana is recommended by both *Vagbhata* and *Susrutha*. According to *Caraka pana*, *abhyanga*, *vasthi* with the combination of *chatur sneha* and *usnopanaha* should be given. If the disease affects the joints of the legs only, it is considered due to the *vata* predominance and the treatment is *asthapana vasthi* followed by *anuvasana vasti*.

• ***Pittadhika vatarakta;***

Virechana, pana of *ghrita* and milk, *parisheka, vasthi*, and cold application. The same treatment also advocated for the *raktadhika* variety. According to *Vagbhata ksirabasthi* added with *ghrita* is best. There is nothing equal to *basthi* in the treatment of

Yapya - Following factors determine the *yapyata* of the *vatarakta*

- Involvement of two *dosas* in the pathogenesis
 - Absence of *upadrava*
 - *Vatarakta* of one year duration
- Asadhya* - following factors determine its incurability
- Involvement of *tridosas* in the pathogenesis
 - Presence of *upadrava*
 - presence of specific symptoms indicative of incurability like *ajanushutita*

CHIKITSA¹⁵

GENERAL LINE OF TREATMENT

*Virecyah snehayitvaadau snehayuktairvirecanaih
Ruksairva mrudubhih sastamasakrdvastikarmaca
Sekabhyanga pradehanna snehah prayoavidhahinah
Vatarakte prasasyanta.....*

vatarakta especially for those who have pain in the rectum, flanks, thighs, joints, bones and abdomen.

• ***Kaphadhika vatarakta;***

Mridu vamana, sneha and *svedha*, which is not excessive in quantity, *langhana* and luke warm ointment should be applied over his body. If the disease affects the hands only, it is considered as *kapha-pittanubhandha* variety and the treatment is *vamana, virechana* and *purana ghruta pana*.

Snehana Karma

This consists of both *shodhanga sneha* and as well as *samanga sneha* is indicated in *vatarakta*. As preparation of the patient prior to *vamana* or *virechana* patient is subjected to *shodhanga sneha*. Further in *vathothara vatarakta* following *shodhana* procedure *snehapana* with *purana ghruta* is ideal. *Snehapana* is not ideal if the patient of *vatarakta*

exhibits excessive *snehana* in his body. Also in case of *margavarana* due to accumulation of *kapha* and *medas snehapana* is contraindicated.

Swedana Karma

After *snehakarma* is completed, the patient may be given a day's rest before the *swedana* karma is started. The *swedana* karma may be dispensed within *pittadhika* and *raktadhika* varieties or the *niragni* varieties of *swedana* karma may be prescribed. This treatment relieves the pain and burning sensation of the joints. It may be in the form of warmth application like *pralepa*, *parisheka* and *upanaha/avagaha sweda*. The external application of *sneha* and *sweda* kriya can be combined by applying the warm *sneha* to the body. As long as the joints are in inflamed condition, the massage to the joint should be avoided. If the patient is suffering from pain in the thighs and calves, massage should be directed to the affected region only.

Vamana

Vamana kriya is recommended in *kaphadhika* varieties of *vatarakta*. In a patient of *vatarakta* if the lesions are located in the upper extremities, it is suggestive of association of morbid *kapha* and *pitta* dosha. In *snigdha* persons, *vamana* is carried out with minimal or no prior *snehapana*. In patients with *rukshatha* in the body, employment of *vamana* karma with prior *snehapana* is ideal. *Mridu vamana* is justified as *tikshna vamana* tends to increase the morbidity of *vata* dosa.

Virechana

Both *snigdha virechana* as well as *ruksha virechana* is indicated in *vatarakta*. If the patient's body exhibits *snigdhatata*, *ruksha virechana* is ideal. Contrary to this, if the patient's body exhibits *rukshata* in the body, it is better to plan *snigdha virechana* as *tikshna virechana* tends to worsen the morbidity of *vata* dosa, *mridu virechana* is always justified in patients suffering from *vatarakta*. *Pittanuka* and *raktanuka* types of *vatarakta* are better treated by *virechana* karma. Further if the involvement of upper limb is present in a patient of *vatarakta*, which indi-

cates association of *pitta* and *kapha* dosa in the pathogenesis of *vatarakta virechana* is preferred as *sodhana* treatment. *Ruksha virechana* is also ideal in patient suffering from *margavarana* due to morbidity of *kapha* and *medas*.

Basti Karma

Basti karma is regarded as the best treatment in patient suffering from *vatarakta*. It includes both *asthapana basti* as well as *anuvāsana basti*. This disease when affect the legs, indicative of predominant *vata* vitiation is the best option *vatanuga vatarakta* is better treated by *vasti chikitsa*. The symptoms like *bastisula*, *vankshna sula*, *parsvasula* and *udarasula* when present *basti* is the treatment of choice. Administration of *ksheera vasti* is emphasised in all varieties of *vatarakta*.

Raktamoksana

Raktamargavarana is the predominant pathology of *vatarakta* and this leads to the accumulation of morbid *rakta*. Hence *raktamoksana* is considered as the first line of treatment of *vatarakta* of both varieties. *Jalaukavacharanam* when there is pain, redness, pricking pain and burning sensation. *Sringa* and *alabu*, when there is tingling sensation, itching, pain and burning sensation. *Prachana* and *siravyadha* when the lesion is found spreading from place to place. It's contraindicated when there is debility of the body, dryness and predominance of *vata*.

Rasayana

Administration of *rasayana chikitsa* is very important as the diseases is progressive and runs a chronic course. *Vardhamana pippali rasayana* or *ksheera-bala taila* is advised in patients suffering from *vatarakta*. Further if the *margavarana* is due to accumulation of *kapha* and *medas*, administration of *silajatu guggulu* and *makshika dhatu* in the form of *rasayana chikitsa* is beneficial.

Bahiparimarjana Cikitsa¹⁶

Antarparimarjana chikitsa is the option in patients suffering from *gambhira vatarakta*. It's essential in

patients suffering from *uttana* or *ubhayastrita vatarakta*.

Pariseka: Dominance of *vata dosa* when present characterized by severe pain in the affected part, then *usna parisheka* should be prescribed. Contrary to this if *daha* is the symptom due to the predominance of *pitta dosa* and *rakta dhatu*, *sita parisheka* is ideal to relieve the discomfort.

Abhyanga: Warm oil processed with *vatahara* drugs used for *abhyanga* if the patient complaints of severe pain due to vitiation of *vata dosa*. Cold application of the *ghrita* processed with *pittahara* drugs is ideal if the patient complaints of burning sensation due to morbid *pitta dosa* and *rakta dhatu*. If *kandu* is the *lakshana* due to *kapha dosa* oil processed with *kaphahara* drugs is used in the form of *abhyanga*.

Pradeha: *Lepa* prepared by adding *ghrita* applied cool on the affected part if the patient has burning sensation due to *pitta*. *Lepa* with drug having *usna* quality is preferred in relative dominance in *kapha dosa* or *vata dosa* is identified.

Upanaha: Specific herbal powder made in to paste by the addition of *kanji* or such other liquids is applied when warm as *upanaha*, it is very useful in relieving pain due to *vata dosa*.

Samana Chikitsa

After the completion of *sodhana chikitsa*, the *shaman chikitsa* is essential to subjugate the *dosha* which may still be in a vitiated condition. The following treatment is advocated for this purpose.

TABLE 4

<i>Kashaya</i>	<i>Chooranas</i>	<i>Arista and Asavas</i>	<i>Taila</i>	<i>Ghrta yogas</i>
<i>Manjishtadi</i>	<i>Saddharana choorna</i>	<i>Punarnavasam</i>	<i>Pinda taila</i>	<i>Sravanyadi ghrita</i>
<i>Rasnerandadi</i> <i>Rasnasaptakam</i>	<i>Ashta choornam</i>	<i>Amritaristam</i>	<i>Dhanwantaram taila</i>	<i>Bala ghrita</i>
<i>Kokilaksham</i> <i>Rasna panchakam</i>	<i>Hinguvachadi choornam</i>	<i>Balaristam</i>	<i>Amrtadya taila</i>	<i>Parusaka ghrita</i>
<i>Amruthotharam</i> <i>Vasaguduchyadi</i>			<i>Satapaka bala taila</i>	<i>Jivaniya ghrita</i>

TABLE 5

<i>Lepas</i>	<i>Guggulu yogas</i>	<i>Rasa yogas</i>	<i>Rasayana yogas</i>
• <i>Jadamayadi lepa</i>	• <i>Kaisora guggulu</i>	• <i>Vatavidhwamsini rasa</i>	• <i>Amalaki dasamoola rasayana</i>
• <i>Kottamchukkadi lepa</i>	• <i>Mahayogaraja guggulu</i>	• <i>Yogendra rasa</i>	• <i>Kushmanda rasayana</i>
• <i>Manjishtadi lepa</i>	• <i>Amritadi guggulu</i>		• <i>Amritaprasavaleha</i>

TABLE 6

Treatment for the relief of pain	Treatment for the relief of burning sensation	Single drugs ¹⁷
• <i>Pinda taila</i>	• <i>Jeevaniya gritam</i>	• <i>Guduci</i>
• <i>Dasamoola ksheera pana</i>	• <i>Yavachoorana, madhuka, milk, ghee</i>	• <i>Saribha</i> • <i>Sunti</i>
• <i>Usna Pariseka</i>	• <i>Lepa: madhuka, aswatha, twak, jadamamsi, satavari, udumbara</i>	• <i>Guggulu Ballathaka</i>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm ghee, oil mixed with milk of cow, sheep or goat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Patola Shilajathu</i>
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TABLE 7¹⁸

PATHYAS		APATHYAS	
AHARA	VIHARA	AHARA	VIHARA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Canaka</i> • <i>Greengram</i> • <i>Old barley</i> • <i>Wheat</i> • <i>Sali</i> • <i>Sahstika rice</i> • <i>Cow milk</i> • <i>Buffalo milk</i> • <i>Goat milk</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Abhyanga</i> • <i>Seka</i> • <i>Upanaha</i> • <i>Virechana</i> • <i>raktamoksana</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Masha</i> • <i>Kullatha</i> • <i>Kalaya</i> • <i>Kshara</i> • <i>Dadhi</i> • <i>Ikshu</i> • <i>Madya</i> • <i>Mulaka</i> • <i>Amla kanjika</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Divaswapna</i> • <i>Agnisantapa</i> • <i>Vyayama</i> • <i>Maidhuna</i>

DISCUSSION

The etiological factors lead to the predominant morbidity of *vata dosa* and *rakta dhatu*. To be more specific, the obstruction of *rakthamarga*, or the *rakthavaha srothas* is the leading pathology. The umbrella of *vatarakta* parlance with conventional medicine includes many conditions related to extremities and to mention a few are connective tissue disorder and well as peripheral vascular diseases.

Dietary habits and life style modalities plays a major role in cause of *vatarakta*. Also the morbidity of *kapha* and *medas* can cause different other serious diseases in different systems. The pathology of *margavarana* leads to the establishment of clinical signs and symptoms in *vatarakta*. Further to add *shodhana*, *shamana*, *bahirparmarjana* and *rasayana chikitsa* all are aimed at the rectification of *margaavarana* in this disease.

CONCLUSION

A precise conclusion of the medicines prescribed in all the cases mentioned are highly effective in case of *vatarakta* caused by *vata* and *rakta* involvement and therefore helpful in improving the joint movement and relieving pain and stiffness. The treatment modalities applied are very effective in patients suffering from *vatarakta*.

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Source of Support: Nil

Conflict Of Interest: None Declared

How to cite this URL: Pravini Valsalan & Siddayya Aradya Math: A Review On The Vatarakta With Special Reference To Treatment Approach Of Vatarakta. International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online} 2018 {cited July, 2018} Available from:
http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/1449_1456.pdf