

VIRECHANA (THERAPEUTIC PURGATION): AN UNPARALLEL TREATMENT FOR PITTA VIKARAS

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ABSTRACT

Virechana treatment is targeted to expel increased *Pitta Dosha* out of the body. When *Pitta Dosha* gets increased, it causes certain types of diseases – such as abscess, liver disorders, gastritis etc. If the extent of *Pitta* increase is less, then oral medicines can be given to suppress it. But if it has increased to a large extent and if it has moved from its natural place to other places, then it needs to be expelled out of the body. By expelling it out, the disease gets cured, often completely. Since *Pitta* is situated at the level of intestines, expelling it from the anal route is very easy. Hence, *Virechana* treatment is designed. To expel it out, first the *Pitta Dosha* needs to be forcefully brought from the extremities and different organs into the intestines, and then purgation is induced, to expel it out completely.

Keywords: *Virechana, Pitta, Dosha, Virechanopaga, Panchkarma*

INTRODUCTION

Virechana is the procedure by which the vitiated *Doshas* (toxins) are eliminated through the anal route. It is the treatment of choice for *Pitta* predominant conditions.¹ This process cleans the channels by the removal of accumulated waste products, undigested material and the toxins mainly from the gut (Gastrointestinal tract)². It enhances the appetite, power of digestion and absorption of food.

Virechana Karma is main *Shodhan Karma* among the *Panchkarma* procedures. It has therapeutic effects in *Pitta Pradhan* conditions and has purification action in healthy individuals to maintain general health. The main aim is to understand the process of *Virechana Karma* along with its practical utility in day to day life in present era.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

INDICATION AND CONTRA INDICATION OF VIRECHANA KARMA

INDICATIONS:

Vibandh (Constipation), *Krimi* (Worm infestation), *Kamala* (Jaundice)

Kushtha (skin disorder), Allergic dermatitis etc. *Pakshaghat* (Hemiplegia), *Jeerna Jwara* (Chronic fever), *Madhumeha* (Diabetes), *Arbuda* (Tumour), *Tamak Shwasa* (Bronchial Asthma), *Galganda* (Goitre), etc.³

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Navajwara, *Krishna*, *Rajyakshma*, *Garbhini*, *Hridroga*.⁴

VIRECHANOPAGA

The *Virechanopaga Gana* (group) described has been considered as helping in inducing *Virechana*. The drugs which help the *Virechana* drugs in their *Virechana* action may be known as *Virecanopaga*. The drugs described are *Draksa*, *Kasmarya*, *Parusaka*, *Abhaya*, *Amalaka*, *Vibhitaka*, *Kubala* *Badara*, *Karkandhu*, and *Pilu*.⁵

Virechana Karma procedure

Virechana karma is conducting in three steps

1. *Poorva karma* which includes: *Deepana*, *pachana*, *snehana*, *Svedana*
2. *Pradhan karma*: *Virechana* drug administration
3. *Paschat karma* it includes *Samsarjana Karma* as per *Suddhi*

Dipana - Pachana: which enhances the *Agni* (digestive fire) and does the digestion of *Ama*. In the patients with *Agnimandya*, administration of *Dipana Pachana* drugs is useful for *Amapachana* and to increase the *Agni* of the patient. Thereafter *Snehapana* is given.

SNEHAPANA:

Prior to purification therapy external and internal oilation is required. For internal oilation *Sneha* (fatty product) is to be administered in

morning when the food is well digested of the previous evening. The *Sneha* should be administered with hot water and patient is advised to walk slowly. The duration of *Sneha Pana* should be 3, 5 or maximum 7 days.⁶

The dose of *Sneha* should be according to *Agnibala* and *Kostha*, in such a quantity, that the desired symptoms of *Snehapana* are obtained within 7 days. During these days *Drava* (liquid), *Usna* (warm), *Pramanayukta* (in suitable quantity), diet should be given. Generally the dose of *Snehapana* is started from *Hrsiyasi Matra*⁷ (testing dose) and gradually may be increased upto *Uttama Matra* (which is digested in 24 hours).

After proper *Snehana*, *Abhyanga* (whole body massage) and *Svedana* (sudation) are done at least once daily.

ABHYANGA:

Application of medicated oil which is prescribed by the physician on the whole body is known as *Abhyanga*. For *Virechana Karam Abhyanga* should be conducted for 3 days during gap days (*Vishraam kala*)

SVEDANA:

After *Abhyanga*, *Baspa sveda* (dry fomatation) is generally employed among all types of *Svedana*. Before *Virechana* diet which does not increase 'Kapha' is preferred. The Pitta also should not be increased otherwise it may cause 'Ayoga' as the increased *Agni* may digest *Virechana* drugs.

PRADHANA KARMA:

This includes administration of *Virechana Yoga*, observations specially for *Ausadha Jirnata* (digestion of medicine), observations of *Suddhi Laksanas* and management of *Vyapada* (complications) if occurs. Just after administration of *Virechana Yoga*, cold water is sprinkled on the face to avoid vomiting. The patient is asked to

gargle with hot water and asked to have fragrance of flowers. He should be protected from direct cold wind and should take rest in bed. He is advised not to retain *Vegas* (bouts) as well as do not make *Pravahana* (forceful elimination). Hot water should be given frequently to the patient to prevent *Vibandha* (obstruction) and due to its *Vatanulomana* and *Yogavahi* actions, *Virechana* occurs quickly. If *Virechana* does not occur then hot water should be given and *Svedana* should be done on the abdomen by the heat produced with friction of both palms. During all the time *Vaidya* (physician) should concentrate on the symptoms of *Jirna Laksanas*, *Suddhi Laksanas*, *Vyapada* etc.

OBSERVATION DURING VIRECHANA-

The *Virechana* is considered as *Kaphanta* when *Vit* (waste material), *Pitta* (bile) and *Kapha* come out one by one in sequence⁸. *Gatra Daurbalya* (weakness) and *Laghuta* (feeling of lightness) are the associated symptoms.

SAMYAK VIRECHANA LAKSHANA –

Dourbalya (Tiredness), slimness, *Laghavta* (lightness of the body), tiredness of sense organs, regression of diseases, feeling of clarity in heart, feeling of clarity in skin, restoration of normal skin complexion, timely hunger and thirst, Timely initiation of natural urges – like defecation, urination etc. clarity in intellect, sense faculties and mind, movement of *Vata* in proper direction in the body⁹, proper digestion and metabolic activities. At the end of proper purgation *Kapha* – thick frothy materials will be expelled out. This indicates that the *Virechana* treatment has been successfully completed.

VIRECHANA HEENA YOGA LAKSHANA –

Person starts to spit frequently, chest discomfort, lack of clarity, nausea, feeling of increase (overflowing) of *Kapha* and *Pitta*, bloating,

feeling of distention, anorexia, lack of taste, vomiting, weakness, lack of lightness, stiffness of hip and thighs, sense organ tiredness, stiffness, itching, rhinitis, obstruction of *Vata*¹⁰ discomfort in the region of the heart and abdomen, anorexia, too much of *Kapha* and *Pitta* increase in the intestines (because they are not properly thrown out of the body) or expulsion of *Doshas* coming out through the mouth, burning sensation, skin eruptions, blocking of flatus and constipation.

VIRECHANA ATIYOGA LAKSHANA –

In *Virechana Atiyoga* condition excessive excretion of *Mala*, *Pitta*, *Kapha* and *Vata*, and liquid through anus which resembles as mixture of water from blood, fat and muscle tissue. The patient will be afflicted with thirst and he may faint due to vitiated *Vata*. After the elimination of *Mala*, *Pitta*, *Kapha* and *Vata* in Succeeding order, there will be elimination of watery material which does not contain *Kapha* or *Pitta*, which is white, black or slightly red in color, resembling the water in which meat has been washed or resembling a piece of fat, prolapse of the rectum, thirst, giddiness, sunken eyes.

POST-OPERATIVE PROCEDURE OR PASCATA KARMA:

Samsarjana Krama: After *Samsodhana* (bio purification), *Agnimandya* (reduced digestive fire) occurs because the *Dosas* (toxins) come to *Amasaya* (stomach), so *peyadi Krama* is recommended to increase the *Agni* (digestive fire) gradually up to the normal level, and make *Tivra* (great) to digest *Guru Anna* (heavy diet)¹¹. In the *Peyadi Krama* *Peya*, *Vilepi*, *Akrtyusa*, *Krtayusa*, *Akrtmamsarasa*, *Krtmamsarasa* should be given for 3, 2 and 1. *Annakala* (diet schedule) for *Pradhana*, *Madhyama* and *Avara Suddhi* patients respectively.¹²

Types of Virechana i.e Anuloman, Sraamsana, Bhedana and Rechana:

*Anulomana:*¹³

The drugs which move the *Malas* downwards after digesting them and breaking their *Bandhas* (bonding) are known as *Anulomana*. e.g. *Haritaki* (*Terminalia chebula*). These drugs cause *Anulomana* (in the same direction) of the *pratiloma* (opposite) movement of *Dosas* or *Malas*.

*Sraamsana:*¹⁴

The drug which brings the semi-digested and sticky *Malas* (toxins) without causing their digestion is known as *Sraamsana* e.g. *Aragvadha* (*Cassia fistula linn.*).

*Bhedana:*¹⁵

The drug which disintegrates the "*Abaddha*" (unformed), or "*Baddha*" (formed) or '*Pindita*' (dried faecal mass) forms of *Malas* (toxins) by facilitating penetration in to it and then evacuating through the lower gut, is known as *Bhedana* e.g. *Katuki* (*Picrorrhiza kurroa*).

*Rechana:*¹⁶

The drug which eliminates digested (*Pakvam*) and Undigested (*Apakvam*) *Malas* or *Dosas* by making them watery through the lower gut is known as "*Recana*". e.g. *Trivruta* (*Operculina terpethum*). The drug which eliminates undigested or digested *Dosas* and *Malas* by making them liquid (*Dravabhavam*) is known as *Rechana*. The drug not only liquifies the Mala, but also eliminates it quickly (*recayati*).

DISCUSSION

Prachi dalvi conducted a study at jamnagar, in 2002 and concluded that *Virechana* removes the *Kapha* along with *Pitta*. As it is also the most suited therapy for the *Sthanika Dosa Pitta*. Thus, it could have responsible for the *Agnivardhana* and reduced *Ama* upto some ex-

tent¹⁷. *Virechana* is less stressful procedure than *Vamana*, has less possibility of complications and could be done easily, so it is widely used as *Sodhana* therapy in routine. It is more acceptable to all classes of patients. In addition to the acceptability and popularity, the *Virechana Karma*, is considered the best treatment for morbid and increased *Pitta Dosha*. *Pitta* is closely related with *Agni*, which is responsible for the digestive and metabolic processes in the body. It is worth mentioning that *Virechana Karma*, unlike the modern purgatives, is not merely an act to open the bowel, but is a complete therapeutic measure which has systemic as well as local effects. The *Virechana* drugs first get absorbed and then reach to heart, *Dhamani*, macro and micro channels of the body and reach where *Doshas* are accumulated. They soften the compactness (*Sanghata*) of the *Dosas* and break the bigger molecules to smaller ones, so that they may be excreted secreted out in to intestine. The process occurs in a disciplined way by separation (*Viyojana*) and combination (*Samparcana*). The action of *Virechana* up to this stage is known as its systemic effect and it's obviously governed by *Viyojana* and *Samparcana* components of *Virechana*. When the *Doshas* or *Malas* are excreted in to intestine, they are evacuated through the lower portion of the gut by purgation. This may be called as local action of *Virechana*.

CONCLUSION

Virechana Karma is considered the best treatment for morbid and increased *Pitta Dosha*. Mainly *Vamana* and *Virechana* drugs are quite irritant to the stomach and the intestinal mucosa respectively, to cause inflammation. Due to this, the permeability of the membrane changes and those substances come out due to the changed

permeability which cannot come out in normal condition.

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