EFFECT OF RAKTAMOKSHANA BY CUPPING THERAPY IN THE MANAGEMENT OF KATIGRAHA - A CASE REPORT

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ABSTRACT
Low back pain has become a common problem in all generations of people. Low back pain can be correlated with Katigraha concept in Ayurveda. Katigraha is a Vedanapradhana vyadhi. Patient feels pain and stiffness in the lumbar region, which hampers normal activities of person. The main culprit for this is our lifestyle, stress and faulty food habits. A 27 years old male, who is a driver presented with complaints of low backache, stiffness, tenderness, restriction in movements of Kati i.e., forward bending and backward bending since 6 months. He had taken Allopathy medications, but result was unsatisfactory. This case was diagnosed as Katigraha and was treated with Rakta-mokshana by cupping therapy. 3 sittings of cupping therapy were conducted at the interval of 7 days. The result of the treatment was encouraging; Hence, study concluded that Katigraha can be managed with Cupping therapy.

Keywords: Katigraha, Raktamokshana, Cupping.

INTRODUCTION
In Ayurveda context, the Sthanas of Vata Dosha are Pakwashaya, Kati, Sakthi, Shrotrasthi, Sparshanendriya¹. In Katigraha, there are Shoola and restricted movements, present in whole Kati Pradesha i.e. in between Urah and Nitamba². According to Gad-anigraha, Vata is affected by Ama and gets located in Kati Pradesha³. Katigraha as a Swatantra Vyadh is not much elaborated in Bruhatrayee, it is explained as
symptom in *Vataja jwara*⁴, *Vidradhi* in *Vrukha*⁵ and *Pakwashayagata Vata Kopa Lakshan*⁶.

For the 1st time in Ayurveda literature, *Acharya Sho-dhala* has described *Katigraha* as a *Swatantra Vyadhi* in *Vatavyadhi Chikitsitam adhyaya*. In *Gadanigraha*, *Samprapti* given by him is as follows- *Shuddha* or *Saama Vayu* enters in *Katipradesha* and causes stiffness of muscles of *Katipradesha*. *Acharya Trivedi R.* has stated *Sthana* of *Kati* in *Parishaadhyayam Shabdarth Shareeram* as follows- in between *Uraha* and *Nltamba*. Further he added symptoms of *Katigraha* as- pain and restricted movement in *Katipradesha*. In Ayurveda, several treatment options are available for the management of *Katigraha*. There are mainly 5 types of *Shodhana karma* i.e., *Panchakarma* procedures⁷-*Vamana*, *Virechana*, *Basti*, *Nasya* and *Raktamokshana*. These procedures are described as major therapeutic modalities in Ayurveda. It maintains state of health and manage diseased condition which is the main aim of Ayurveda. It promotes detoxification and rejuvenation. Among these procedures *Raktamokshana* is one of the fascinating procedures and satisfactory answer for *Katigraha*. *Raktamokshana* is accepted as half of the therapeutic measure in *Shalyatantra* like *Basti* in *Kayachikitsa*. *Raktamokshana* is classified mainly as *Shastra Visravana* and *Anushastra Visravana*. *Pracchan* and *Siravedha* comes under *Shastra Visravana* whereas *Shringa*, *Jalaauka*, *Alabu*, *Ghati*, *Vigharshan* are included in *Anushastra*. Out of these methods, *Cupping therapy* can be correlated with *Shringa*. The suction through specific cupped instrument was used since prehistoric time for the treatment of disease.

*Cupping therapy* is an ancient method that has been used in the treatment of broad range of conditions. There are many types of cupping therapy; however, Dry and Wet cupping are the two main types. Dry cupping pulls the skin into the cup without scarification while in wet cupping the skin is lacerated so that blood is drawn into the cups. There are three main possible hypothesis and theories might explain mechanism of pain reduction-

1) Pain Gate Theory
2) Reflex Zone Theory
3) Diffuse Noxious Inhibitory Controls

**Case Report**

This is a case report of a 27yrs old male patient, who had complained of low backache, stiffness (*Graha*), Tenderness, Restriction in movements of *Kati* i.e., forward bending and backward bending, since 6 months. The patient had consulted Allopathic physician but could not get complete relief, therefore the patient approached for Ayurvedic treatment. He neither had history of DM, HTN, Asthma, trauma, any other illness nor any surgical history. This male patient worked as driver since 5 yrs. He had to drive for 8 hours daily and had a shift duty. Investigations such as X-ray of L. S. Spine (AP view and lateral view) with opinion of Radiologist were carried out by patient. Report was-Loss of normal lordosis and some degenerative changes in L. S. Spine and paraspinal muscle spasm. The patient was treated with *Raktamokshana* by Cupping therapy.

**Procedure of Wet Cupping**

**A) Poorvakarma**

1) Written informed consent of the patient was taken having the information regarding the procedure to the patient and relatives.
2) The required materials: Cupping set, disposable surgical blade no. 15, betadine, spirit swab, kidney tray, guaze piece.
3) Blood pressure, Pulse rate, Respiratory rate, Temperature, Random BSL, BT, CT, was noted prior to procedure.
4) *Mudga Yusha* was advised to patient one hour before procedure.
B) *Pradhan Karma-*

1) Patient was given prone position. Then the affected area of back (lumbar region) was painted with betadine solution. Cups of suitable size for affected area were selected. Here, 4 cups of medium size were selected.

2) First, cups were applied to the sites and air was sucked inside the cups by cupping gun. These cups were applied to the skin and left for the period of 3-5 minutes till the skin colour became dark pinkish purple and then removed.

3) After cleaning the affected area (dark pinkish purple coloured skin) with spirit swab, superficial incisions (Scratches) were taken with the help of surgical blade no.15.

4) The cups were placed back on the skin using similar procedure described above. The observation was done for proper oozing of blood in the cups. Collection of blood in cups was started spontaneously. It took 3-5 minutes and then started to form clots.

5) Cups were removed and impure blood collected in cups was wiped off in kidney tray with sterile guaze piece.

C) *Pashchat Karma-*

1) The site was cleaned and disinfected with the help of betadine.

2) Dressing was not done at this place.

3) Patient was advised to avoid water contact to this area for 24 hrs.
Table 1: Do’s and Don’ts after Cupping

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do’s</th>
<th>Don’ts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AHARA</strong></td>
<td><strong>AHARA</strong> -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light diet</td>
<td>Spicy and oily foods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liquid diet <em>(Mudga Yusha)</em></td>
<td>Sour eatables e.g. Lemon, curd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet eatables</td>
<td>Fermented eatables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk and milk products</td>
<td>Junk food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VIHARA</strong></td>
<td><strong>VIHARA</strong> -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light work</td>
<td><strong>Divasvap</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain proper posture of</td>
<td><strong>Jagarana</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spine while sitting</td>
<td>Heavy Exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Excessive Sitting, walking, swimming</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment Criteria-
A) Subjective Assessment-
1) Pain during lumbar flexion and extension measured by VAS scale-Before and after treatment.

![VAS scale](image)

**Fig 3:** VAS scale- Before and After treatment

2) *Katigraha* & its Grades-

Table 2 - *Katigraha* and its grades-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>Katigraha</em> (Stiffness)</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No stiffness or stiffness lasting for 5min</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stiffness for 5 min to 2 hrs</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stiffness for 2 hrs to 8 hrs</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stiffness for more than 8 hrs</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B) Objective Assessment-
1) LEM (Lumbar Extension Measurement) by Goniometer
2) LFM (Lumbar Flexion Measurement) by Goniometer

**Result**

Table 3: Assessment Score-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Before Treatment</th>
<th>After Treatment (After 3 settings of cupping)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Pain intensity (VAS Scale)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td><em>Katigraha</em> (Stiffness)</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>LEM</td>
<td>50°</td>
<td>30°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>LFM</td>
<td>80°</td>
<td>60°</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DISCUSSION
Due to heavy industrialization and development, advanced software technology, the mankind is running behind fast and furious life. Due to that every person indulges in improper sitting postures, continuous long journeys, overexertion, jerky movements during travelling and sports, weight lifting, sitting for a prolonged time and other strainful activities, etc. create an undue pressure to the spinal column and play an important role in producing low backache even in early decades of life. In the above case, the patient was suffering from Katigraha due to excessive travelling and lack of exercise. According to Acharya Shodhala, Shuddha or Saama vayu enters in Katipradesha and causes stiffness of muscles of Katipradesha. Raktamokshana is considered as half of therapeutic measures in Shalyatantra. Raktamokshana means the procedure of blood letting for the therapeutic purpose for removing morbid Doshas with blood. Acharya Sushruta declared Rakta as a 4th Dosha and its importance in our body. Also, Acharya Charaka and Acharya Vagbhata stated that diseases, which are not relieved by Sheeta, Ushna, Snigdha, Rooksha, etc., Upakrama can be considered as there is an involvement of Rakta and these diseases can be treated with Raktamokshana. Raktamokshana by Shringa Avcharana is indicated in Vaat Dushti Rakta Vyadhis in Sushrut Samhita. Ushna, Madhura and Snigdha Gunas of Shringa antagonizes the Sheeta, Katu and Ruksha Gunas of Vata Dosha and relieves pain. Hence, Shringa Avcharana was beneficial in this case. Cupping therapy can be equated with the Shringa. Thus, Raktamokshana by cupping therapy was chose for treating patient diagnosed as Katigraha.

Cupping works on the principle of vacuum extraction. Cupping targets soft tissue by applying local pressure to pain points and areas of swelling. It helps to extract blood from the body which may be harmful and in turn, overcome the potential adverse effects, leading to physiological well-being. Loss of blood along with vasodilation tends to increase the parasympathetic activity and relax body muscles. Thus, paraspinal muscle spasm experienced by the patient due to driving for the long hours resulting in stress is relieved thus relieving the pain. Also, cupping mainly involves improving microcirculation, promoting capillary endothelial cell repair, accelerating granulation and angiogenesis in the regional tissues. This helps in normalizing the patient’s functional state and progressive muscle relaxation. Cupping is the best deep tissue massage.

Samyaka Lakshane- Samyaka lakshanas like laghavam, vedanashanti and decrease in diseased condition were experienced by patient.
CONCLUSION
Katigraha/Low backache is commonly seen in society as a prominent problem due to modern lifestyle. Cupping- a type of Raktamokshana is one of the parasurgical treatment choices in Katigraha due to paraspinal muscle spasm. In this study 3 sittings of cupping at the interval of 7 days played a significant role in the management of Katigraha. Further studies are needed in more patients for its scientific validation.

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