CONCEPT OF PRATIVISH AND ITS ROLE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF POISONING

Binayakiya Payal Dilipkumar¹, Deo Sunila Hemant², Upadhyay Rajesh S³
¹P.G. Scholar, ²Associate Professor, ³Professor & HOD
Department of Agad Tantra Evum Vidhi Vaidyaka, C.S.M.S.S. Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, Aurangabad, Maharashtra, India

ABSTRACT
Prativish Chikitsa means the use of toxic substance as an antitoxic agent in the management of poisoning. When all treatment measures for poisoning become unsuccessful, at that time Prativish Chikitsa is very useful. Sthavara Visha (inanimate poisons) can be successfully treated with Jangama Visha (animate poisons) and vice versa. In various Ayurvedic texts, the use of Visha Dravya (poisonous substance) is stated in effective treatment of poisoning. Visha (poison) possesses the properties like Laghu (lightness), Sukshma (fineness), Aashu (quick acting), Vyavayi, etc., hence it can spread all over the body and can reach into entire system and organs very quickly. These properties of poisons are used while using poisonous substance as Prativish. So, Visha Dravyas (poisonous substances) having opposite action to that of poison consumed can cure the signs and symptoms produced by that poison and save the life of the patient. This is the basic consideration in Prativish Chikitsa. This concept of Prativish which is existed since ancient times needs to be supplemented, explained, refurbished and narrated for proper understanding. So, this article aims to collect the references of Prativish and to discuss the role of Sthavara (inanimate) and Jangama Visha (animate poisons) as Prativish.

Keywords: Prativish, poison, Visha, management of poisoning, Sthavara Visha, Jangama Visha.

INTRODUCTION
Agad tantra (toxicology) is one of the important branches of Ashtanga Ayurveda which deals with knowledge and treatment of poisons. The poisons are mainly of two types¹, Sthavara Visha (inanimate poisons) and Jangama Visha (animate poisons). In Ayurveda, the 24 modalities of treatment explained by Charakacharya are the guidelines and backbone in the management of these poisons. Prativish Chikitsa is one of these 24 treatment modalities and it is explained in detail in Ashtanga Hridaya Uttarsthana 48th Adhyaya.

Prativish means the use of poisons in the management of other poisons. Prativish Chikitsa is the last resort in the treatment of poisons and used in extreme cases when all other treatment measures for poisoning became unsuccessful². Though the poisons are harmful to the body, they can become an excellent medicine if used with skill and in appropriate doses³.

Inanimate poisons possess the properties similar to that of Kapha and animate poisons possess properties similar to that of Pitta. Also inanimate poisons act
upwards and animate poisons act in downward direction. These opposite natures of actions of above said poisons are effectively made use of in Prativish Chikitsa. Since these poisons possess opposite qualities, when they are used together, they can destroy each other. Hence inanimate poisons are quoted in treatment of animate poisons and vice versa.

Many references are found in various Ayurvedic texts like Samhitas, Nighantu, Rasa Granthas, etc., where poisonous drugs are used as an effective measure in the management of other poisons. For example in Alarka Visha (rabies), Dhatura is suggested to be used; also Aacharyas have mentioned the use of Jayapala in snake bite poisoning & Tamraparni (tobacco) in Kuchala (nux vomica) poisoning. Prativish for Dhatura is said to be Karpasa Beeja, etc.

This is a subject of study that how these Prativisha Dravyas can be used in the treatment of poisoning and how they can act against these particular poisons.

**PRATIVISH CHIKITSA:**

Prativish Chikitsa is included under 24 modalities of treatment of poisons in Charaka Samhita. And it is well elaborated with its dose, indications, contraindications, etc. in Ashtanga Sangraha Uttarsthana 48 - Vishaprayogiya Adhyaya.

Victims of venomous bites should be treated with inanimate root poisons and the persons who have consumed inanimate root poisons should be subjected to the bite of venomous snakes. This is the basic consideration in Prativish Chikitsa. Nothing is as effective as Visha (poison) to neutralise the poison or to nullify the effects of other kind of poisons.

**INDICATIONS FOR USE OF PRATIVISH:**

1. When the effects of poison are not subsided by Mantra-Tantra procedures and drug administration.
2. When Visha-pidita (patient) has crossed 5th Visha Vega, but has yet not completed 7th Vega i.e. either in 6th or 7th Visha Vega.
3. When all treatment measures for animate and inanimate poisons have failed.
4. In many other diseases, in extreme and emergency condition or when all methods of treatment fail, the poison should be administered.

**DOSE:**

1. For patients of snake bite – the vegetable poisons should use in the doses-
   - Heena Matra (minimum dose) – 4 Yava (1 Ratti = 125mg)
   - Madhyama Matra (moderate dose) – 6 Yava (187.5 mg)
   - Uttama Matra (maximum dose) – 8 Yava (250 mg)
2. For the patients of Keeta Dansha (insect bite) – 2 Yava Matra. (62.5 mg)
3. For scorpion bite – 1 Tila Matra.
4. In case of spider bite – Sthavara Visha (inanimate poison) should not be consumed orally; it should be applied to skin after Pracchana Karma.

**CONTRAINDICATIONS FOR THE USE OF PRATIVISH:**

1. In cases of doubt whether a person have consumed poison or not and a bite is of poisonous animal or not, Prativish should not be used. Agada Kalpa (antidotes) are used at that time.
2. When any kind of poison is localised in blood, Prativish should not be administered.
3. After the lapse of suitable stage of drug administration (Kriyakala), it should not be used.
4. In a person who consumes Ruksha Aahara (dry food), use of Prativish pro...
duces disorders of vision, pain in ear and other Vatavyadhi\textsuperscript{11}.

5. In a person suffering from Ajirna (indigestion), use of Prativish may cause death itself\textsuperscript{11}.

**PRECAUTION TO BE TAKEN WHILE USING PRATIVISH\textsuperscript{12}:**

The physicians should understand the presence of poison by all out efforts, because Prativish acts like nectar when applied to wound or administered to a person who have poison in them, whereas it acts as a poison itself, when administered in non-poisonous cases.

**TO WHOM PRATIVISH SHOULD BE GIVEN & WHOM NOT TO BE GIVEN\textsuperscript{13}:**

Prativisha should be used in a patient who is subjected to function with Ghrita, purged and vomited with drugs; having Satvika Prakruti and in Sheeta Kala (winter), Vasant Ritu (spring) and after sunrise, but in case of emergency, it can be given at any time, even in Grishma Ritu (summer).

Prativish should not be used in rainy season and in Durdina (cloudy days). The individuals who can be angered easily (Krodhi), Ruksha & Pitta Prakruti, king, Brahmana, impotent & those who suffers from hunger, thirst, over exertion, exposure to sun & one who has walked long distance are unfit for receiving Prativish. Those who suffer from diseases of vital organs, pregnant women, children & old age patients shall also be excluded.

The patients who have received Prativish should avoid spicy, Ruksha (dry) & salty foods, sleep during daytime, exposure to sun & wind, fear & chances of indigestion should be strictly avoided.

**SOME REFERENCES OF USE OF PRATIVISH:**

**Table No. 1: USE OF STHAVARA VISHA IN JANGAMA VISHA CHIKITSA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Name of animate poison</th>
<th>Inanimate poison to be used for treatment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Alarka (Rabies)</td>
<td>Arka Ksheer – for Virechana (purgation)\textsuperscript{14,15}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dhatura\textsuperscript{16}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dhatura with Punarnava\textsuperscript{15}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dhatura with Kakodumbara\textsuperscript{15}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dhatura with Aparajita &amp; Punarnava\textsuperscript{14}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dhatura + rice + Sharapunkha\textsuperscript{14} (stuffed in Dhatura Patra)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Snake bite</td>
<td>Gunja with Nakuli – Lepa (local application)\textsuperscript{17}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teekshna Visha Lepa\textsuperscript{17}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Karavira, Arka, Langali with Pippali, Patha – Lepa\textsuperscript{18}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jayapala Seed – Anjana\textsuperscript{19}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Langali Kanda – Nasya\textsuperscript{20}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Scorpion bite</td>
<td>Vatsanabha Lepa\textsuperscript{21}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jayapala – Lepa\textsuperscript{16}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Arka Ksheera with Palashbeeja – Lepa\textsuperscript{22}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Rat bite  
5. Manduka Dansha (frog bite)  

**USE OF JANGAMA VISHA IN STHAVARA VISHA CHIKITSA**

A hooded snake is made to bite many times on a piece of meat fastened to the tip of stick. Then Choorna (powder) of this meat is to be administered to a patient who has consumed a poison & is not responding to any other Agada (antidote) preparation. But it should be given after carefully deciding the strength of a poison.

**Table No. 2: USE OF STHAVARA VISHA IN STHAVARA VISHA CHIKITSA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Name of poison</th>
<th>Poison to be used for treatment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Jayapala</td>
<td>Ahiphena with Madhu &amp; Kesara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Kuchala</td>
<td>Tambakhu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Ahiphena</td>
<td>Karpasa Beeja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Dhatura</td>
<td>Erandamoola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Karaveera</td>
<td>Arkatwak</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table No. 3: OTHER REFERENCES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Name of poison</th>
<th>Poison to be used for treatment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Dushivisha</td>
<td>Snuhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Ahiphena</td>
<td>Tamra + Tankana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Scorpion bite</td>
<td>Haratala + Navasagara – Lepa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table No. 4: ROLE OF DHATURA IN ALARKA VISHA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Alarka (Rabies)</th>
<th>Dhatura</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Kapha-vata Prakopaka</td>
<td>Kapha-vata Shamaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Increases the secretions of glands – salivation, lacrimation, etc.</td>
<td>Anticholinergic action – reduces the secretions of glands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Causes perspiration</td>
<td>Swedavarodhaka (decreases sweating)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Causes muscle spasm</td>
<td>Causes paralysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Excitation &amp; stimulation of all parts of CNS</td>
<td>First stimulates &amp; subsequently causes depression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Pain at bite site</td>
<td>Uttama Shoolahara (best painkiller)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table No. 5: ROLE OF VATSANABHA IN SCORPION BITE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Scorpion bite</th>
<th>Vatsanabha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Teevra Sthanika Vedana (severe pain)</td>
<td>Vedanasthapaka (analgesic)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Sthanika Shopha (local oedema) | Shothahara (reduces oedema)
3. Causes cardiac arrhythmia | Hridaya Balya, brings heart rate to normal
4. Causes cardiac failure | Hrudaya Uttejaka (stimulator)
5. Causes respiratory depression | Stimulator to respiration.

### Table No. 6: ROLE OF TAMRAPARNI IN KUCHALA POISONING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Kuchala</th>
<th>Tamraparni (Tobacco)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Causes extreme painful convulsions</td>
<td>Reduces pain by the increase in acetylcholine and beta-endorphin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Exaggeration of convulsions on small external stimulus</td>
<td>Depresses the passage of nerve impulses &amp; produces sedative effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Produces anxiety &amp; restlessness</td>
<td>Reduces anxiety by increase in beta-endorphin.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### DISCUSSION

Prativish Chikitsa is important treatment measure in emergency & severe condition of poisoning. It is described in Charaka Samhita & Ashtanga Sangraha. Though the word Prativish is not used in Sushruta & Ashtamga Hrudaya, they have mentioned some references about the use of poison in treatment of another poison. Prativish can be used in 6th & 7th Visha Vega with great care & taking proper precaution & after careful examination of patient, type of poison, its dose, etc. Nothing is as effective as Visha (poison) to neutralise another poison, as it possesses Sukshma, Vyavayi, Vikashi, Aashu, Laghu, etc. properties which enables it to penetrate to Sukshmatisukshma Strotasa and act very quickly.

The mode of action of Prativish can be better understood by their individual properties, mode of action, Guna & Karma. E.g. Alarka (rabies) & Datura both acts on nervous system & brain. Alarka causes increase in the secretions of glands while Datura is anticholinergic, reduces all secretions. Alarka causes anxiety, excitation & stimulation; while Dhatura has Madaka Prabhava, causes depression.

Vatsanabha is Vedanasthapaka & Shothahara. If it is rubbed over skin with oil, nerve endings get stimulated first & subsequently are depressed causing numbness, loss of sensation. It may act like local anaesthetic to subside severe pain in scorpion bite. It gets absorbed through mucous membrane. So, local application can also cause systemic effects. Most of scorpion venom acts on heart causing cardiac arrhythmia & cardiac failure. Vatsanabha also acts on heart giving it stimulation & Bala (strength).

Kuchala & Tobacco both acts on nervous system. Kuchala produces severe painful convulsions while Tobacco causes depression of nerve impulses, sedative effect & also reduces the pain.

### CONCLUSION

From all above information, we can say that Granthakaras have suggested the use of equally potent Dravya (substance) in case of toxicity of certain poisons, with symptoms of specific system. These Dravyas should have affinity for that very specific system or organ in the body and also it will act vigorously like...
that of poison so as to nullify it and save the life of a patient. To conclude, we can say that Aacharyas have put forth a concept of ‘Prativish’, which is a Dravya that should be –
1. Equally potent to Visha (poison).
2. Possess Vyavayi Guna, so that acts vigorously on Vshapidita (patient).
3. Should have affinity for the same system on which poison has affected.
4. Should have action opposite to that poison.

REFERENCES

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR
Dr. Binayakiya Payal Dilipkumar
C.S.M.S.S. Ayurved Mahavidyalaya,
Kanchanwadi, Paithan Road,
Aurangabad, Maharashtra, India
Email: vd.payal@gmail.com

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