A CRITICAL REVIEW ON NIDANA, SAMPRAPTI AND LAKSHANAS OF SIRAJA GRANTHI

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ABSTRACT

The priceless value of the leg is not appreciated until the organ becomes affected with diseases or loss of function threatens the day to day activities of man. In the present era, life style and the working pattern of the person is showering varieties of diseases. Among which Varicose Veins are troubling the person a lot. Varicose vein is a very common condition in surgical practice. It occurs in people who are habituated for standing for a long time. Abnormal dilated, elongated and tortuous alteration in the saphenous veins and their tributaries is called as varicose veins. Varicose vein can be co-related to Sirajagranti as described in Ayurvedic texts. Immense attention is to be given in the primary stage itself to prevent further complications. So this article is intended to analyze the Nidana’s, Samprapti and Lakshanas of Siraja Granthi critically for prevention and cure of Siraja Granthi.

Keywords: Varicose vein, Siraja Granthi, Nidana, Samprapti, Lakshanas, Ayurveda

INTRODUCTION

Varicose vein² of the lower limbs is one of such clinical condition that hampers the beauty of the legs because of the spider veins and skin discolouration along with aching pain and ankle swelling during evening time. It is a very common condition, affecting up to three in 10 adults⁴. Varicose vein affect up to 25% of women and 15% of men. By the age of 50, nearly 40% of women and 20% of men have significant vascular problems⁵. The life style changes, obesity, occupational pattern of prolonged standing¹ and pregnancy are considered to be significantly contributing to this situation⁶. Siraja Granthi³ (varicose veins) have several treatments, but the best treatment is always prevention. Ayurveda gives a comprehensive description of the management of Siraja Granthi (varicose veins) and several
formulations and therapies which are also found to be very effective in the treatment and prevention of Siraja Granthi (varicose veins).

**Nidana (Etiology):**

- **Abalasya Vyayamajaate**⁷ - excessive exertion by a person who is weak and emaciated. A weak person who undergoes excessive exercise, the vitiated Vata vitiates the vascular bundles, which in turn compresses (sampeedya), squeezes (samkochya) and dries it up (vishoshya) produces Granthi within less time which is raised, circular Siraja Granthi.

- **Padatte sahasaambho avagahana**⁸ - who suddenly immerses or wash the lower limb in cold water after walking a long distance. Due to the sudden change of the temperature in the leg due to the above said Nidana, the Sira becomes engorged and thus may not be able to pump the blood properly. This causes the local retention, thus resulting in tortuous nature of the veins, edema, discoloration etc.

- **Vyayaamat pratantasya** - one who does excessive exercise. The precipitating factor of the primary varicose vein is excessive exertion of the lower limb followed by a predisposing or inherent factors of defective venous or valvular structure.

- **Factors affecting the Vyana Vayu** will affect the Sira because Vyana Vayu circulates Rasa, eliminates Sweda and helps flow of blood, performs the five kind of action Gati, Akshepana, Utkshepana, Nimesha and Unmesha.

- The etiological factors can be congenital or acquired, valvular or obstructive or both or none of these.⁹

- Some of the other factors that may predispose to the development of varicose veins are:
  - Occupation - Prolonged standing
  - Obesity
  - Bowel habits
  - Heredity
  - Pregnancy
  - Old age
  - Athlets & Rikshaw pullers
  - Clothes.

**Samprapthi (Pathology):**

According to Acharya Sushruta, the etiological factors play a role in the vitiation of Vata and this vitiated Vata directly affects the Sira Prathana (cluster of veins) by Aakshepa and exposes them to Sampeedana, Samkochana and Vishoshana and produces Granthi which is protruding out. Acharya Vagbhata further adds that the vitiated Vata playing major role, will exert its influence on Siras and Rakthadhatu, causing Sampeedana, Samkochana, Vakreekarana (tortuosity) and Vishoshana of the Sira resulting in formation of Granthi which is non-pulsating and painless.¹⁰ The explanation given by Charakaacharya has got a little difference that, because of the Nidana not only Vata but Kapha, Rakta and Pitta also get vitiated which then enter the external blood vessels, get lodged there and produce obstruction and spreads to the nearby areas causing edema.¹¹ The pathology of varicose veins are, under normal conditions the blood from the
superficial venous system is passed to the deep veins through the competent perforators and from deep veins the blood is pumped up to the heart by the muscle pump, competent valve and negative intrathoracic pressure. But if this mechanism breaks down, either due to destruction of valves of the deep veins, or of the superficial venous system, the blood becomes stagnated in the superficial veins which become the pray of high pressure leaks and thus becomes distended and tortuous and become varicose veins.12

**Lakshanas (Symptomatology)**13

The clinical picture given by Acharya Sushruta is far from adequate. He describes two types of Sirajagranthi - one which is painful and movable and another which is painless, immovable and greatly enlarged. He says that Sirajagranthi can occur in Marmasthanas also. According to him, Sirajagranthi presents as Vrutha and Unnatha. Acharya Vagbhata modifies the physical signs. His addition of Vakreekarana (tortuosity) makes the focus of the clinical picture clear. He also narrates that Sirajagranthi will be Nishphura (non-pulsatile) and Neeruja (painless). He did not say as Sushruta have told that it will be Vrutha (circular). In Siraja Granthi Lakshanas like Sampeedya, Nispuram, Nirujam can be correlated to dull aching pain in varicose veins and signs like Samkochya, Vrutta, Unnatha, Vakrikriya, Shopham can be correlated to Dilated, elongated, and tortuous veins.

**Clinical Features**14

- Aching, heavy legs (often worse at night and after exercise).
- Appearance of spider veins (Telangiectasia) in the affected leg.
- Ankle swelling, especially in evening.
- A brownish-yellow shiny skin discoloration near the affected veins.
- Redness, dryness, and itchiness of areas of skin, termed stasis dermatitis or venous eczema, because of waste products building up in the leg.
- Cramps may develop especially when making a sudden move as standing up.
- Minor injuries to the area may bleed more than normal or take a long time to heal.
- In some people the skin above the ankle may shrink (lipodermatosclerosis) because the fat underneath the skin becomes hard.
- Whitened, irregular scar-like patches can appear at the ankles.
- Patients concerned with the unsightly appearance of their varicose veins often complain of discomfort but the severity of this discomfort is difficult to assess and does not seem to be related to the size of the varices.

**Sadhya-Asadhyatha (Prognosis):**

The description of prognosis itself demarcates a difference between the opinions of the two authors. Sushrutaacharya describes the painful variety as Krichrasadhya (difficult to cure) and the painless variety that is bigger in size and presenting at Marmasthanas as totally incurable15. Vagbhataacharya too is keen on the selection of cases. He, along with the
narration of this condition has told the treatment is indicated for cases which are ‘Nava’ (fresh). So in this context the understanding of what is meant by Nava becomes important. Vagbhataacharya has not claimed the disease as Sukhasadhya (easily curable) or Krichrasadhya (difficult to cure)\(^16\)

**DISCUSSION**

Sirajagranti is a common clinical condition affecting the lower limbs and the incidence being prevalent in this era owing to the busy life schedule. Incidence of varicose vein is more in people belonging to the occupation that involved prolonged standing. Easiest way of treating a disease is avoidance of the etiological factors. The commonest causes are excessive physical activity that put pressure on the legs, standing for prolonged time, sedentary lifestyle, tight clothing, overweight, dietary deficiencies etc. By avoiding standing, sitting for a long time, maintaining appropriate body weight, Life style modifications, and dietary changes, along with Ayurvedic treatment helps to prevent Sirajagranti (varicose veins). According to Acharya Sushruta, the etiological factors play a role in the vitiation of Vata and this vitiated Vata directly affects the Sira Prathana (network of veins) by Akshepa and exposes them to Sampeedana (aching/squeezing type of pain), Samkochana (constriction) and Vishoshana (drying up) and produces Granthi which is elevated, quick developing and round. The description of prognosis itself demarcates a difference between the opinions of the two authors. Sushrutacharya describes the painful variety as Krichrasadhya (difficult to cure) and the painless variety that is bigger in size and presenting at Marmasthanas as totally incurable. Vagbhata Acharya too is keen on the selection of cases. He, along with the narration of this condition has told the treatment indicated for cases which are ‘Nava’ (fresh). So in this context the understanding of what is meant by Nava becomes important. Vagbhata Acharya has not claimed the disease as Sukha Sadhya (easily curable) or Krichra Sadhya (difficult to cure).

**CONCLUSION**

A proper understanding of etiological factors is important to prevent the occurrence of Sirajagranti, treat it at an early stage or allows proper maintenance of signs and symptoms reduces the complications and support a better quality of life.

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