

AYURVEDIC APPROACH TOWARDS POST-OPERATIVE PAIN MANAGEMENT WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CHARAKOKTA VEDANASTHAPAKA MAHAKASHAYA

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ABSTRACT

Vedana (pain) is the most common post-operative manifestation after any surgical procedure, no matter how good operation is performed, due to which patients are afraid to undergo surgery. Excessive *vedana* (pain) will be unbearable and will lead to other effects like sinking sensation, apprehension, sweating, nausea, palpitation and increase or decrease of blood pressure (pain shock). Whereas adequate pain control leads to decreased manipulation of the surgical site and thus, reduces swelling, hematoma formation, and infection. Lack of use of effective analgesics in *Ayurvedic* medicines is the great disadvantage. This is one amongst the various causes of down fall of *Ayurvedic* surgery. Hence there is constant quest for an ideal *Ayurvedic* analgesic therapy (*vedanasthapanauupaya*). *Vatadosha* is considered as the prime factor in manifestation of *vedana*. So any drug or procedure which pacifies *Vata* acts as a potent *vedanasthapanauupaya*. Though established allopathic drugs form an integral part of management of pain, one has to look at various other methodologies to relieve post-operative pain. A holistic approach toward herbal drugs can cut down costs and reduce the complications associated with the opioid and non-opioid drug usage and dosage. Thus, in this article, an effort has been taken to throw light on the conceptual part of *Vedanasthapaka Mahakashaya* and its use in post-operative pain management.

Keywords: *Ayurved*, Pain, *Charaka Samhita*, *Vedanasthapaka Mahakashaya*

INTRODUCTION

The most common reason for which a person approaches to the doctor is Pain. The international association for the study of pains gives the definition of pain as it is an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage, or described in terms of such damage¹. Pain

can also be described as any physical suffering or discomfort caused by illness or injury. No matter however mild the pain is anywhere in the body, it lands you in a state of discomfort and affects your activities. One of the kinds of pains to be considered in detail is the post-operative pain. Post-operative pain is unavoidable

thing after any surgery. Excessive pain will be unbearable and will lead to other effects like sinking sensation, apprehension, sweating, nausea, palpitation and increase or decrease of blood pressure (pain shock)². Adequate pain control leads to decreased manipulation of the surgical site and thus, reduces swelling, hematoma formation, and infection. So, it is necessary to control post-operative pain. Various types of analgesics are available in modern science. But many of them can result in adverse effects in some patients or there are many contraindications or limitations for their use. Analgesia is component of anaesthesia. Ayurvedic drug which relieve pain could be used to supplement anaesthesia as well as get rid of adverse effect of modern drug. So, it is necessary to study efficacy of Ayurvedic principles, procedure and drugs in case of pain management.

Ayurved explains the origin of pain is due to vitiated Vata Dosha. Thus, main line of treatment for pain management targets at controlling vitiated Vata. Acharya Charaka has explained in Sutrasthana 4th chapter regarding fifty groups of drugs containing ten drugs individually. They are termed as Mahakashaya. One of those is Vedanasthapaka Mahakashaya i.e. group of drugs which help in pain management³. In this article, an effort is taken to highlight the importance of Vedanasthapaka Mahakashaya in the view of post-operative pain management.

MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

Materials:

Available literature regarding reference of pain and its management, Charaka Samhita Sutrasthana 4th Chapter with commentaries and books on Dravyaguna.

Methodology:

Study type:- Literature study⁴

Literature study:- Collection of information regarding post-operative pain and its management was done. Vedanasthapaka group of drugs was studied in detail from Charaka Samhita Sutrasthana 4th chapter⁵, its commentaries and various books of Dravyaguna^{6,7,8,9}. The exact action of the group in controlling pain was critically studied by understanding the Ayurvedic aspect of pain and its management.

OBSERVATIONS

Post-operative pain is unavoidable thing after any surgery. Adequate pain control leads to decreased manipulation of the surgical site and thus, reduces swelling, hematoma formation, and infection.

Various types of analgesics are available in modern science. But many of them can result in adverse effects in some patients or there are many contraindications for their use.

Ayurved explains origin of pain as vitiated Vata Dosha.

As the name suggests, Vedanasthapaka Mahakashaya contains 10 Dravyas that are possessing similar property of Vedana Sthapana (control over pain).

The 10 Dravyas are having properties that help in Vata shamana and thereby subside Vedana.

This group is of importance as the drugs are easily available in market and as have herbal origin can be administered safely in patients. Various formulations regarding individual drug are mentioned in texts.

DISCUSSION

As stated earlier, post-operative pain is the common phenomenon that individual operated patient experiences. This pain results in discomfort in activities of body as well as mind. Continuous feeling of pain makes the patient anxious and thereby

the chances of manipulations at the surgical site by the patient in terms of applying pressure or scratching etc increase. Pain control is thus necessary to keep the patient stable and the surgical site healthy. If pain is controlled then the chances of manipulations of surgical site also decrease thereby controlling the chances of infection or hematoma formation. In routine post-operative cases, patients are prescribed with analgesics, anti-inflammatory and anxiolytic drugs along with short course of antibiotic. There are more or less contra-indications, limitations or adverse effects related to each analgesic drug.

Lack of use of effective analgesics in Ayurvedic medicines is the great disadvantage. This is one amongst the various causes of down fall of Ayurvedic surgery. Hence there is constant quest for an ideal Ayurvedic analgesic therapy (*vedanasthapanaupaya*). It is believed that the pain originates because of vitiation of *Vata Dosha*. Ayurved has mentioned various types of *Vedana* and thereby has given the prophylaxis and treatment for the same in various texts. The main core of treatment for this *Vedana* is controlling the vitiated *Vata Dosha*. Thus, use of certain drugs that control the *Vata* can act for pain management. In *Charaka Samhita Sutrasthana* 4th chapter, various groups of drugs are explained. Each of the drugs in a single group possesses some similar properties. One of the examples is *Vedanasthapaka Mahakashaya*. This group contains 10 drugs that act on pain and thereby help in subsiding it. The ten drugs are *Shala*, *Katphala*, *Kadamba*, *Padmaka*, *Tumba*, *Mocharasa*, *Shireesh*, *Vanjula*, *Elavaluka* and *Ashoka*.

Although the *Rasapanchaka* of individual drug differs by one or the other properties,

the basic property of *Vatashamana* and *Vedanasthapana* is same for every drug. All these drugs are of herbal origin, easily available and lot of information about them is given in Ayurvedic texts. Various formulations are also mentioned for the same. Thus, we can prefer the type of formulation based on the vitals of patient. But, prior to actual administration, clinical trials are necessary to prove the safety and dose calculation of the same.

CONCLUSION

As per the findings from the Ayurvedic texts, *Vedanasthapaka Mahakashaya* of *Charaka Samhita* can be used in the post-operative pain management as it acts directly on *Vata Dosha* and is easily available and can be administered in palatable formulations to the patient. But, prior to actual administration the clinical trials for the same are necessary.

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