

## CONCEPT OF VAMANA IN GARAVISHA CHIKITSAA – A REVIEW

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### ABSTRACT

*Garavisha* as per classics can be considered as any part of the body tissue, waste products, *Bhasmas* (ashes) of *Viruddhaushadhi* (incompatible drugs), drug or poison having less potency, pulverized bodies of the insects, etc. It interferes with the digestion and produces deleterious effects over a period of accumulation and is considered to be fatal in time. *Vamanachikitsaa* (emesis therapy) is indicated in *Vishapeeta* (swallowed poisons), which expels vitiated *Kapha* and accumulated toxins. As *Garavisha* tends to accumulate in the body and symptoms are produced due to vitiated *Kapha*, *Vamanachikitsaa* (emesis therapy) is employed as detoxification therapy (*Shodhana*) in *Garavisha*.

**Keywords:** *Garavisha*, *Chikitsa*, *Vamana*

### INTRODUCTION

*Garavisha* is considered as one of the form of *Kritrimvisha* (artificially prepared poison) which is prepared by the combination of two or more poisonous or nonpoisonous substances and ultimately affects the whole body by vitiating all the *Dhaatus* (tissues) in the body. It can go to such extent that it alleviates

the *Dhaatus* drastically which in turn could prove fatal.

In olden days, when there was much incidence of such type of poisoning, first vomiting & purgation was induced to remove poison from the gastrointestinal tract. Then, to cleanse the heart, *SukshmaTaamraRaja* (fine powder of

Copper sulphate) was administered to the patient. After that, *Swarnabhasma* is administered for a longer period of time to destroy all kinds of poison within the body & for the protection of Heart.

In Ayurveda, therapeutic management of any disease includes three major steps viz.; *Samshodhana* (Purification), *Samshamana* (Pacification) and *Nidaana-parivarjana* (Avoiding causative factors). *Aachaarya Charaka* has defined *Vamanachikitsaa* (therapeutic emesis) as a *Samshodhanachikitsaaa* (purification or detoxification process) in which vitiated *Doshas* are eliminated through upper channels i.e. mouth. *Aachaarya Sushruta* also mentioned the symptoms originated due to excessive *Kapha* are subdued after the elimination of *Kapha* by *Vamanachikitsaa*.

By using the concept of toxicogenesis of *Garavisha*, the role of *Vamanachikitsaa* in the management of *Garavisha* has been evaluated, elaborated and discussed in this fundamental research article.

#### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES –**

To explore the role of *Vamanachikitsaa* in the management of *Garavisha*.

#### **MATERIAL AND METHOD –**

The whole article is based on literary review collected from classical Ayurvedic texts.

#### **CLASSICAL VIEW –**

##### **GARAVISHA –**

According to classics, *Aachaarya Charaka* says that *Garavisha* is prepared artificially by the mixture of various substances. It produces

diseases. Since it takes some time for this type of poison to get metabolized and to produce its toxic effects, it doesn't cause instantaneous death of a person<sup>1</sup>, while *Maharshi Sushruta* opines that the pulverized bodies of the insects possessing, as they do, the characteristic features of *Doosheevisha* (Denatured Poison) is turned into a *Garavisha* (Concocted poison), if administered internally with any medicine or externally with any *Lepa* (plaster)<sup>2</sup> and *Vagbhata's* view is, it is Artificial poison which is prepared from, Combination of parts of the body & excreta of different animals, incompatible drugs, ashes and poisonous substances of mild potency.<sup>3</sup> Some may kill the person quickly or after a long time depending on the combination of drugs or they may just produce swelling, anemia, enlargement of abdomen, insanity, hemorrhoids, etc.<sup>4</sup>

*Kaashyapastated* that *Garavisha* is prepared by the combination of various types of material, and it is of two types. When it is produced by the combination of two non-poisonous materials, then it is called *Gara*. However, when it is produced by the combination of two poisonous materials, then it is called *Kritrima* or artificial.

##### **CHIKITSAA –**

The patient of *Garavisha* should instantaneously be given *Vamana* (emetic therapy) by the physician. He should be given fine powder of copper along with honey for cleansing the heart (here it means stomach). Its main aim is to purify the blood and regulate the circulation all over the body, because blood is the main source for creation of the disease. After the

heart is cleansed, the patient should be given one *Shaana* of the *Swarna Bhasma* (fine powder of gold).<sup>5</sup> It may help to increase the appetite of the patient also.

When *GaraVishaktata* (Poisoning) is diagnosed in any person, it should be treated immediately.<sup>6,7</sup>

After subjecting the patient, who has taken poison, to *Vamana & Virechana*, he should be given fine copper powder mixed with honey after *Samsarjanakarma* (gradual dieting) so as to detoxify *Hridaya* (here it means the stomach).<sup>8</sup>

After the *Hridaya* is detoxified, the patient should be given a *Shaana* of powdered gold. These same treatment procedures are to be adopted in case of intake of *Garavisha* also.<sup>9</sup>

*Bhaavprakasha*, *Yogaratraakara* and *Kaashyapa* also mentioned that emesis should be induced immediately after a person is suspected that he has been poisoned. There is no other therapy equivalent to emesis, in elevating poison of plant and mineral origin.<sup>10,11,12</sup>

#### **Applicability of Vamana Chikitsaa in the treatment of poisoning –**

Emesis is regarded as the best one among all the therapeutic measures for the swallowed poison.<sup>13,14,15</sup> If the poison has reached the stomach, physician should employ emesis therapy as soon as possible.<sup>16</sup> Emesis helps in the instantaneous elimination of swallowed poison.<sup>17</sup> If drugs (Emetics) are administered through mouth, it works quickly on disease (Poison) located in stomach.<sup>18</sup> In case of pregnant women also emesis should be induced cautiously if she is poisoned.<sup>19</sup>

#### **Definition of Vamana –**

The process of expelling (causing to eject) the contents (morbid material) of the stomach through the upward tract (mouth) is called *Vamana* (Emesis).<sup>20</sup>

#### **Mode of Action of VaamakaDravya –**

Drugs used for emesis. which are *Ushna* (hot), *Tikshna* (sharp), *Sukshma* (subtle), *Vyavaayi* (those pervading the entire body before getting digested) and *Vikaasee* (those causing looseness of joints), by virtue of their own potency, reach the heart, and circulate through the vessels. Because of their *ushna* (hot) nature, they liquefy the compact (adhered) *Dosha* (morbid material), and their sharpness (*Tikshna* attribute) tends to separate the adhered *Dosha* located in the gross and subtle channels of the entire body. These liquefied and loose (separated) *doshas* gets propelled by *Udaanavaayu*. Because of the predominance of *Agni* and *Vaayumahaabhuta* as in these (emetic) drugs, and because of their *Prabhaava* (specific action which cannot be rationally explained - *AchintyaShakti*<sup>21</sup>) to move upwards, the morbid material gets expelled through the upward tract (mouth).<sup>22,23</sup>

The emetics eliminate the *Doshas* (from above) due to their specific effects themselves. Emetic on the other hand, is not digested, owing to (its lightness due to) its inherent extraordinary qualities (are those of the *Vaayu* and of the *Agni*) but it soon forces its way up with the *Doshas* (to be) removed.<sup>24</sup>

In the emetic recipes, however, honey taken along with hot water is thrown out before digestion along with vomited material. In addi-

tion, honey helps in the elimination of morbid material. So it is usefully added to the emetic recipes.

#### **VaamakaDravya (Emetic drugs) –**

Emetic drugs are of different types depending upon the Desha (habitat), Kaala (time of their availability), Sambhava (origin), Aasvaada (palatability), Rasa (taste), Virya (potency), Vipaka (the taste that emerges after digestion) and Prabhaava (specific action). Patients for whom these drugs are to be used are also of different types depending upon the nature of their Deha (physique), condition of the Dosh, Prakriti (constitution), Age, Strength, Agni (power of digestion and metabolism), Bhakti (liking for a particular type of recipe), Saatmya (wholesomeness) Rogaavastha (stage of the disease) etc. To cater to the requirement of all these factors, the recipes of drugs become innumerable.<sup>25</sup> On the basis of this description, the intelligent physician, well-versed in inference and propriety, can formulate many other recipes to suit the exact requirement of his patient.<sup>26</sup>

#### **Procedure of Vamanachikitsaa in the treatment of Garavis'ha -**

Decoction of Koshaataki (*Luffaacutangula*) mixing with honey and giving *prakshepa* of *Goghruta* or juice of root or leaves of the same plant should be used to induce emesis.<sup>27</sup>

Decoction of *Kutaja* (*Holarrhena Antidysenterica*) with milk, Both *Sahaa* (*Mudgaparni - Phaseolustrilobus* and *Maashaparni - Teramnuslabialis*), *Paathaa* (*Cissampelospareira*), *Guduchi* (*Tinosporacordifolia*)

& *Somvalka* (*Acaciacatechu*) should be used to induce emesis. Decoction of *Shirisha* (*Albizia-lebbeck*) and roots of *Paatali* (*Stereospermum-suaveolens*), *Tanduliyaka* (*Amaranthusspinosus*), *Sinduwaara* (*Vitexnegundo*) & *Sahachara* (*Strobilanthesheyneianus*) should be used to induce emesis.<sup>28</sup>

*Gomayarasa* (juice of cow dung) with honey should be used to induce emesis.<sup>29</sup>

#### **Indications of VamanaChikitsaa (Emetic Therapy) –**

Emetic therapy is indicated for the *Vishapeeta* (ailments caused by the intake of natural poisons),<sup>30</sup> *Garavisha*, *Visha-dashta* (poisonous bites), *Visha-digdha-viddha* (ailments caused by injury with weapons smeared with poisonous material).<sup>31,32</sup>

#### **Contra-indications of VamanaChikitsaa (Emetic Therapies) –**

There are certain conditions given in which Emesis should be avoided (e.g. *Kshina* (suffering from consumption), *Atisthula* (excessively obese), *Atikrisha* (excessively emaciated), *Baala* (Infant), *Vridhdha* (Old Aged) *Garbhini* (Pregnant), *Durbala* (Weak), *Shraanta* (Fatigued), *Pipaasita* (Thirsty), *Kshudhita* (Hungry), etc.)<sup>33,34</sup> otherwise it may cause complications (like intolerance of drug, aggravation of pain, excessive bleeding, etc.).<sup>35</sup> However, administration of emetic therapy is not prohibited even in the contraindicated ailments if the person is suffering from *Visha*, *Garavisha*, because these ailments produce their effects instantaneously. As the *Dashagunayukta* poison quickly spreads all over the body and reaches the vital organs like Heart and causes

*Ojakshaya*, thus causes death if not treated early.<sup>36,37</sup>

### **Proper Administration of Therapies –**

Purgation including emetic therapies work like poison if inappropriately administered, if properly administered these work like ambrosia. It is essential to administer these therapies at the time of need. Therefore, these therapies are to be administered carefully.<sup>38</sup>

In emergency (like poisoning) too, one should administer the therapy with great care after modifying the seasonal effects sufficiently by artificial means producing qualities contrary to the season and by making the measure appropriate in standard potency with variations in combination, processing and quantity.<sup>39</sup>

A physician should first of all diagnose the disease and then he should select proper medicine. Thereafter, he should administer the therapy applying the knowledge of the science of medicine (he had already gained).<sup>40</sup>

Therapeutic measures should be appropriately used keeping in view the following -

1. *Desha* (location)
2. *Kaala* (time)
3. *Pramana* (dose)
4. *Satmya* (wholesomeness) and
5. *Asatmya* (Unwholesomeness)

Otherwise, even a useful therapy (*Pathya*) may turn out to be harmful (*Apathya*).<sup>41</sup>

### **Signs of Appropriately Administered Vamana Chikitsaa (Emetic Therapy) –**

A person who expels *Kapha* (phlegm), *Pitta* (bile) and *Vaayu* (flatus and wind) in succession, who feels clarity in his heart, sides of the

chest, head and channels of sense organs, and who feels lightness of his body is to be considered as having undergone emetic therapy appropriately.<sup>42</sup>

### **Repeated Use of Therapy –**

If by the administration of the emetic recipe, the morbid material (*Dosha*) is not eliminated completely, then it should be administered again and again (to the patient) till there is appearance of bile with the vomited material.<sup>43,44</sup>

### **Pashchaata Karma of Therapy –**

After proper emesis, the patient should be given *Samsarjanakarma* (Rehabilitating diet).<sup>45</sup>

## **DISCUSSION**

*Charaka* has described *Garavisha* as artificially prepared mixture of various substances, while *Sushruta* defines *Garavisha* as pulverized bodies of the insects, administered internally with any medicine or externally with any *Lepa* (plaster), possessing, characteristic features of *Doosheevisha* (Denatured Poison) turns into *Garavisha*. While *Vaagbhata* said *Garavisha* as Artificial poison prepared from combination of parts of the body & excreta of different animals, incompatible drugs, ashes and poisonous substances of mild potency.

*Charaka* & *Vaagbhata* both said that *Garavisha* produces various diseases like swelling, anemia, etc.

While describing fatality of *Garavisha*, *Charaka* said that it doesn't cause instantaneous death of a person as it takes some time to get metabolized and to produce toxic effects. *Vaagbhata* said that some may kill the person

quickly, while others after a long time or may only produce diseases like swelling, anemia, etc. as it depends on combination of the drugs. About treatment of *Garavisha*, *Charaka* & *Sushruta* both said that the physician should immediately give *Vamana* (emetic therapy) to the patient of *Garavisha* & *Vaagbhata* said that the person who has taken poison should be given *Vamana* & *Virechana*. Then after *Vamanachikitsaa*, *Charaka* & *Vaagbhata* both said that, the patient should be given fine powder of copper along with honey for cleansing or detoxification of the heart & after the heart is cleansed the patient should be given one *Shaana* of powdered gold for the protection of heart.

As from above discussion it proves that *Vamana* is regarded as the best one among all the therapeutic measures for the poison taken orally.

## CONCLUSION

Form the above discussion we can conclude that -(1) *Garavisha* can be considered as one of the form of *Kritrimvisha* (artificially prepared poison) which gets formed by the combination of two or more poisonous or nonpoisonous substances and ultimately affects the whole body by vitiating all the *Dhaatus* (tissues) in the body. It can go to such extent that it alleviates the *Dhaatus* drastically which in turn could prove fatal. (2) When *GaraVishaaktataa* (Poisoning) is diagnosed in any person it should be treated immediately. (3) Though it doesn't cause instantaneous death of a person, but still being a poison it causes toxic effect which may lead to death after some-

time, if left untreated. (4) *Chikitsaa&Vamana* - In Ayurveda, *Chikitsaa* is described as *Samshodhana* (Purification), *Samshamana* (Pacification) and *Nidaana-parivarjana* (Avoiding causative factors). *Vamanachikitsaa* (therapeutic emesis) is prescribed under *Samshodhanachikitsaaa* (purification or detoxification process) for the vitiating *Doshas* which can be eliminated through upper channels i.e. mouth.

So from the above discussion we can conclude that in treatment of *Garavisha*, *Vamana* proves to be most useful *Shodhana* treatment to eliminate the poison from stomach.

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