

ROLE OF LAXATIVES IN PREVENTING COMPLICATION OF CONSTIPATION

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ABSTRACT

Constipation is one of the major problems facing today in day to day life. As our Acharyas has already quoted that every disease occurs due to stimulation of urge and suppression of urge. It may be also one of the life style disorders. The life style of the persons varies from waking of bed itself and also in irregular diet habits. Due to usage of *ruksha padarthas* and not using sufficient *snigdha padarthas* or more than that leads to manifestation of diseases. The bowel habit of the person varies according to the *koshtha* and *agni* of that individual. The treatment of the constipation is also depends on the *prakriti*, *koshtha*, and *agni* of the individual. According to *ayurveda* every individual is treating in specific way by basing *prakriti*, *vikriti*, *sara*, *samhanana*, *satva* etc. Our Acharya has also quoted *purusham purusham veeksha*. This highly supports that every individual varies Charaka in treatment according to ones suitability. The interpretation of drugs action to the action like *anulomana*, *samsrana*, *bhedhana*, *rechana* etc should depend on the *koshtha* and *prakriti* of the person.

Key words: *Anulomana, Samsrana, Bhedhana, Rechana, Agni, Koshta, Ruksha.*

INTRODUCTION

The exploration of disease or drug or treatment aspect in the field of Ayurveda is highly appreciable. *Vibandha* (Constipation) is a condition which can be seen as an independent *lakshana* or as one of the *lakshana* of the disease manifestation or even as an *upadrava*. Hence the treatment is to be planned accordingly by considering not only by the *lakshana* but also by different factors like *desam*, *balam*, *kalam* so on so forth. In addition it is very clearly stated that '*rogamaadoupareekshetatoantaramaushadham*'.

Anything used to fill up interstices in a wall is *purisha* (Monnier Williams). The three types of excreta are *mutra* (Urine), *Sakrt* (Faeces) and *Sveda* (Sweat). The main function

of *purisha* is *Avastambha* (Bearing of the body). The synonyms of *Purisha* are *Vit*, *Sakrt*, *Varco*.

If *Purisha* is decreased in quantity, *Vata* or air moves in the intestines causing spasm and sounds. While moving in the entire abdomen it moves in the upward direction causing pain (Muscular Spasm) in thoracic cavity and flanks¹.

In case of diseases due to a decrease of *purisha*, meat collected from central parts of goat and sheep along with *kulmasa* (Pulses soaked and half cooked) of barley and black gram may be given for consumption².

Varcovaha srotamsi get vitiated by the suppression of the urge for defecation, intake

of food in large quantity, intake of food before the digestion of the previous meal especially in those who are emaciated and having weak power of digestion³.

The sites of origin of the channels carrying faeces are the colon and the rectum. The characteristic manifestations of their vitiation are voiding of small quantity of faeces with difficulty, voiding of large quantity of very watery and very scybalous stool associated with sound and pain are the *lakshanas* manifested in case of *sroto dushti* of *purisha*⁴.

Purisha vaha sroto dushti is treated similar to that of *atisara*.

In *ayurveda* there is a notion that all the diseases are due to control Suppression of 13 types of natural urges (A.S.S). In that one of them is controlling urge for defecation. If one suppresses the urge for passing flatus, distension of abdomen, pain, exhaustion and other abdominal diseases result from vitiation of *vata*⁵.

Vibandha here is obstruction, constipation. (Monnier Williams).

Treatment of *malavarodha* includes oleation, fomentation, suppositories, intake of foods and drinks having carminative action and enema are prescribed⁶.

Proper assessment of individual is very important in diagnosing or treating a disease one who knows the principles governing their correct application in consonance with the place, time and individual variation should be regarded as the best physician.

While treating a patient one has to mainly asses the *pakriti*, *Koshta* and *Vyadhi* of the individual.

Prakriti:

Vata prakriti person posses *krura koshta*, In *Pitta Prakriti Koshta* is *Mridu* and *kapha Prakriti Manda koshta*⁷. *Vatala, Pittala* and *slesmala* types of individuals are more susceptible to *Vatika, Paittika* and *Slaismika* diseases.

Koshta:

Krura Koshta assessment based on if a person is adopted for *Madhyama shodhana*, if *hinayoga* occurs it is considered as *krura*, If leads to *atiyoga* is *Mridu koshta*, If leads to *samyak yoga* is *madhya koshta*⁸.

Sugar candy, sugarcane juice, *mastu*, milk, cream from the curd, curd, *payasa*, gruel from *tila*, rice and masa, ghee, juice of *kasmarya*, *haritaki, amlaki, bhibhitaka, draksha* and *pilu* even hot water or fresh wine intake of any of these serves as a purgative for those with laxated bowel⁹. But these cannot produce purgative for those with costive bowel because their *grahani* is too much dominated by *vata*. Purgation is easy for those with laxated bowel, because their *grahani* is dominated by *pitta* and is least affected by *kapha* and *vata*.

Vyadhi:

Mainly in constipation *apana vayu vaigunya* takes place. According to *prakriti* one has to treat the disease. If *vibandha* occurs in *Vataja prakriti* persons it is difficult to cure. If we consider the *sadhyasadhyata* of a disease if *dosa* in the *vyadhi* is similar to that of *prakriti* of individual then it is difficult to cure.

Based on this according to *prakriti* of individual and predominant *dosha* one has to select the medicine.

Dosha in Constipation	Prakriti of individual	Karma	Examples along with properties
Vata	Vatala	Anulomana	Eranda because of its <i>snigdha guna, Vatahara</i> property.
Pitta	Paittika	Samsrana	Aragwadha because of its <i>Anapayitvat, mridu rechana</i> property.

			<i>Kshira and draksha etc.</i>
<i>Kapha</i>	<i>Slesmala</i>	<i>Rechana</i>	<i>Trivrt.</i> The drug should possess <i>lekhana</i> and <i>tiksha</i> property to remove <i>avarana</i> .

Sadatura:

Srotriyas, Raja sevakas, Vesyas and Panya jivins are considered as *sadatura*. They always suppress the manifested natural urges, they never take food in time, they always void stool, urine etc. untimely and they resort to different regimens¹⁰.

Constipation can be as much more than just slow bowel movements. As per *Ayurveda*, constipation is a signal of *vata* imbalance and blockage of channels. A patient with depression or rheumatoid arthritis usually has constipation as associated symptom. A patient with migraine can also have constipation. Relieving constipation can contribute to relief in migraine and depression as well, in some cases. Even though it is a simple discomfort, if it not treated in time or if neglected, it may lead to major problems. So, there is immediate need to look into this health discomfort seriously.

The real problem with constipation is not because stuck waste, but due to lack of bowel movements for a long period of time sends wrong signals to liver, brain, immune system etc, leading to migraine and other complications.

Complications of chronic constipation include:

Swollen veins in anus (Hemorrhoids), torn skin in anus (Anal fissure), stool that cannot be expelled (Fecal impaction), intestine that protrudes from anus (Rectal prolapsed), gaseous distention of abdomen, bloating, fecolith-hard, stone like feces, headache, liver disorders and various metabolic as well as intestinal diseases may be originated and in few of the individuals backache, reverse peristalsis etc are found.

Pharmacotherapy of constipation:

Ayurvedic aspect:

The general word used for expulsion of *malas* is *rechana*. Basing on mode of expulsion of *malas* different types of *virechana* have been described.

Anulomana, Samsrana, Rechana, Bhedhana are the different forms of **motilising** the faecal matter used in treating *malavarodha*.

Modern aspect:

Classification drugs are according to the intensity of action as mild, moderate or drastic. Laxatives are having mild action it make defecation easier. Purgatives are having moderate action it cause bowels to evacuate everything from them. Cathartics are having drastic action it make urgency to defecate sooner¹¹.

In *ayurveda* it may be correlated *mrdu, madhya, tikshna rechana*. *Trivrit* having *mrdu rechana* property may be correlated with laxatives. *Danti, Sunti* and *Jaipala* having *tikshna rechana* property may be correlated with Cathartics.

Laxative effect suggests elimination of soft, formed stool without griping and without much loss of water. In large doses, many laxatives promote catharsis which means purgation and passage of more fluid stools.

Laxatives are substances that loosen stool and increase bowel movement.

Classification of laxatives:

Mainly classified into oral and rectal laxative

Oral laxative:

Stimulant/irritative laxative also known as contact laxatives, act on the intestinal wall. They increase the muscle contractions that move along the stool mass. Anthraquinone group include eg: *cascara sagrada* and *senna*. Irritant oils includes castor oil (*Eranda*

tailam). Miscellaneous includes phenolphthalein, bisacodyl (Dulcolax).

Osmotic laxatives increase the amount of fluid in bowel. This helps to stimulate body to pass stools and also softens stool. Commonly prescribed osmotic laxatives include lactulose and macrogols.

Bulk forming laxatives/roughage absorbs liquid in the intestines. This creates a bulky, more liquid stool that is softer and easier to pass. Common methyl cellulose and plantago seeds (Aswagola).

Emollient (Stool softeners) are anionic surfactants that enable additional water and fats to be incorporated in the stool, making it easier for them to move through gastrointestinal tract. Commonly used is liquid paraffin.

Rectal suppository:

Rectal laxatives are used as enemas or suppositories to produce bowel movements in a short time. Different type of rectal laxatives include carbon dioxide – releasing. These suppositories encourage bowel movements by forming carbon dioxide a gas. This gas pushes against the intestinal wall, causing contractions that move along the stool mass.

Hyperosmotic laxatives draw water into the bowel from surrounding body tissues. This provides a soft stool mass and increased bowel action. It includes glycerin and sodium phosphates.

In *ayurveda* suppositories are mentioned as *varti*. In *annaja udavarta nikumbhadi varti* is explained, in *udara roga anaha varti kriya madanadi varti* is explained.

Anulomana:

The drug which does *malapaka* and removes the *bandha* (Sphincter relaxation) to expel them downwards is known as *anulomana*. Eg: *Haritaki*. *Prithvi* and *jala mahabhutas* are predominant. According to *susruta anulomana* is the property of *sara guna*. According to *tarkasangraha* substances having *guru gu-*

na are claimed to possess *adhogamitwa* or *rechana* activity.

Utility of anulomana in various conditions:

In *Atisara Sangrahi* drug shall not be given in *amaatisara*. Initially, *anulomana* to be administered for *mala pachana* and *ama nirhana*¹².

In *Arsas anulomana yoga* is described it includes *yavani*, *nagara*, *pata*, *dadima*, *guda*, *takra* and *lavana* for proper elimination of *faeces* and *vata*.

In *sushka arsas* the *anupana* having *anulomana* property is indicated¹³.

Dantyarishtha is having the property of *anulomana*.

In *hikka* and *swasa* condition if patient developed *adhmana* and *udavartha*, and then he should be given *ahara* having *anulomana* property.

According to *charaka*, *susruta* and *vagbhata* in difficult elimination of impurity, *Haritaki* should be given to expel it.

Samsrana:

The *malas* which remain attached to *koshta* will be expelled without *paka* by the action of *samsrana* drugs. Eg: *Aragwadha*, *Eranda taila*. *Akasa mahabhuta* is predominant.

Bhedhana:

The action by which solid or liquid *purusha* and *malas* i.e, *baddha malas* or *abaddha malas* etc will be expelled downwards after subjected to *bhedhana* (through *gudamarga*) is called as *bhedhana*. Eg: *Katuki*.

Lavana rasa is having the property of *bhedhana*.

Badara and *Amlavetasa* have the property of *bhedhana*.

While explaining *koshta viruddha* administration of a mild purgative (*bhedhana*) in a small dose for a person of costive bowel and administration of strong doses for a person having laxated bowel.

Bhedhana as *sastra karma* in *gulma, pakvasopha, asmari*.

Bhedhaniya Mahakashaya:

Suvaha(syama-trivrt), Arka, Urubaka(Eranda), Agnimukhi(Lan-ga-li), Chitra, Chitraka, Chirabilwa, Shankhini, Sha khuladini(Katukarohini), Swarna kshiri¹⁴.

Rechana:

The drug which will excrete the pakwa or apakwa malas or doshas downwards in the liquid form is known as rechana. Eg: Trivrit. The virechana dravyas are usually prithvi and jala bhuta predominant.

For mainly in pitta prakopa condition virechana is indicated.

The mode of action of virechana dravya:

The drugs which have ushna, teekshna, sukshma, vyavayi, vikasi gunas will reach the heart through vessels by means their virya initially. Due to sukshma and vyavayi properties they reach macro and micro channels. After spreading all over the body, they break and liquefy the complexes of doshas by means of agni and tikshna gunas. Hence, the drava rupa mala will reach the koshta due to prithvi and jala mahabhuta dominance.

Utility of rechana in various diseases:

In Pakshaghata, Pandu and kamala, Tamaka swasa virechana is indicated¹⁵.

Virechana Yogas:

Trivrt has ruksha guna and it does vata prakopa.

Syama trivrt is administered after performing Sneha, Sveda and after giving them peya one has to perform virechana on 2nd day morning¹⁶.

Chaturangula is for Sukha virechana¹⁷, whereas Snuhi kshira is Tikshna virechana¹⁸, Mridu Virechana is Trivrt. Chaturangala along with draksha rasa is to be administered for virechana.

Lodhra churnam and Kampillaka kvatha bhavana for 10 times is used for Virechana.

Brhat Panchamula Kvatha along with Snuhi kshira kept on agni after it become concen-

trated make it into a tablet of Kola matra pramana¹⁹.

Saptala Shankhini, Danti and Dravanti are also one of the virechana yoga²⁰.

Danti and Dravanti are contraindicated in vata vyadhi²¹. In Pakshaghata icchabhedhi ras is recommended one of the components in it are danti and dravanti. As it is contraindicated it should be administered after performing snehana and svedana.

Sudha is best among all the virechana yogas. Aragwadha is anapayitvat i.e, it may be administered for all age groups.

Vyoshadhi gutika is having vishahara property.

Total 245 number of Virechana yogas is described by charaka.

Purishajanana:

Kulamasha, masha, kushkunda, ajamadya, yava, shakha, Dhanyamla²².

Virechanopaga dasemani:

Draksha, kashmarya, parushaka, abhaya, amlaka, vibhitaki, kakuba, bala, badara, karkandhu, pilu²³.

Virechana contraindicated people:

Purgation therapy is to be given to the patient suffering from visarpa, pidaka, sophia, kamala, pandu, injury and poisoning only the patient is not excessively oleted.

Conditions responsible for appropriate effect:

The patient should have taken oleation and fomentation therapy. The purgation therapy should be given only after the previous meal is digested. The purgation therapy should be given in appropriate dose. The patient should take the therapy with concentration of mind.

Dosage of virechana:

It should be small quantity, but in quick action. It should be able to eliminate morbid doshas in large quantity but easily. It should not be light for digestion, palatable, pleasing and curative of the concerned disease.

It should not cause serious complications, it should not cause depression in excess and it should possess agreeable smell, color and taste²⁴.

Purifactory recipe given in a small dose to a person having excessively aggravated *doshas* causes excitation of the morbid matter and eliminates them frequently in small quantities.

Virechana vyapat:

*Adhmana, parikartika, srava, hrdgraha, ga-tragraha, jividana, vibramsa, sthambha, upa-drava and klama*²⁵.

Koshta:

Unctous recipe for purgation should not be given to a patient whose body is excessively oleated. If the unctuous element in the body of the patient is excited, then he should be given a purgation therapy recipe of which is ununctous in nature.

Because of ununctousness of the body, aggravation of *vayu*, *krurakoshta*, habitual exercise and strong power of digestion a recipe may get digested without causing purgation.

Specific therapies are explained for constipation in Ayurveda

Vasthi and Virechana.

Home Medication:

Salt water.

Dietary treatments for Constipation:

Water kept in copper vessel for overnight, fresh fruits, Green leafy vegetables, Sugar-cane.

Avoid beans, legumes, grams, Cabbages, Mushrooms and such foods which are difficult to digest.

Compound Preparations:

Triphala churnam

Agastya rasayana

Panchasakara churnam

Avipattikara churnam

Abhayadi Modakam

Madhu yastyadhi churnam

Kalyana gudam

Trivrt Lehyam

Icchabhedhi ras

Kayam churnam

Manibhadra gudam

Hingu vachadi churnam

Yogasanas in Constipation:

Viparitamarni:

Vata excess disrupts *apana vayu*, the downward energy that supports elimination and stability. When *vata* is out of balance, *apana* flows upwards instead of downwards. Inverted postures such as *viparitamarni* reverse the flow of *prana* in the body for better integration and less flightiness. Physically, these poses wake up the lower belly and settle the organs in the pelvis that may have been out of place or stuck.

Action of Drugs:

Dugdhika-Srsta mutra malapaha

Karira-Bhedhana

Satyanasi-Rechani

Ardraka –Bhedhini

Rasona-Purusha tyajedetan nirantaram

Vaca-Sakrin mutra vishodhini

Eranda-Vit bhedhi

Devadaru –Vibandha

Nimba-Bhedhana

Karanja-Bhedhana

Vibhitaki-Bhedhana

Katuki-Bhedanini

Dronapusphi-Bhedhini

Patola-Virechana karam sukhat

Sweta trivrt –Rechaniti

Upodhika –Bhedhana

Kushmanda-Srsta mutra purisham cha sarva-dosha nibharhanam

Langalaki-Adho marga pravartanam

Sauviraka, Tusodaka-Bhedhi

Amla kanjika-Vibandhagna

Peya –Vata varcho anulomani

Sauvarchala-Vibandhaghna

Sarkara-Srsta mutra sakrn vata.

Yava-Purisha jananam

Vargas:

*Sukha dhanya varga-Badda alpa varchasaha
Vrihi dhanya varga-Bahu mutra purishoshma*

Uses of laxatives:

In food or drug poisoning to flush intestinal tract saline laxatives are generally preferred. Pre-operatively in abdominal surgery or prior to radiological examination of abdomen, castor oil is used but other mild stimulant cathartics may also be employed. In patients with anal fissure, piles, typhoid, and cardiac disease and in pregnant woman in order to avoid excessive straining during defecation, in these conditions lubricant laxative like liquid paraffin and vegetable oils are recommended.

CONCLUSION

Constipation or *vibandha* is one of the disease occur due to *apana vayu vaigunya*. According to *ayurveda* if *hetu* is corrected then the disease automatically subsides. The causes of *vaigunya* that is *ahara* and *vihara* are corrected and also the treatment in *Ayurveda* is mainly depends upon the *prakriti*, *koshta*, *vikriti*, *agni* etc. Here it is concluded that the administration of *anulomana*, *bhedhana* etc must depend on the *dasha-vidha parikshas*. Then the treatment is full fledged.

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