

**ROLE OF SIRAVEDHA IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PAIN – A REVIEW****<sup>1</sup>Dr Namrata Patel <sup>2</sup>Dr Rajesh Gupta <sup>3</sup>Dr V. D Sharma <sup>4</sup>Dr Sanjay Singh**

<sup>1</sup>PG Scholar, Shalya Tantra Dept, Dr Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan Rajasthan Ayurved University, Jodhpur, Rajasthan, Address: University College of Ayurved, Kadwad, Nagaur Road, Jodhpur-342037 Rajasthan. Contact: 07376263538, email id: namayur@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>HOD, PG Department, Shalya Tantra, , Dr Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan Rajasthan Ayurved University, Jodhpur, Rajasthan

<sup>3</sup> Assistant professor, PG Department, Shalya Tantra, Dr Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan Rajasthan Ayurved University, Jodhpur, Rajasthan

<sup>4</sup> Assistant professor, Ras Shastra Department, Mai Bhago Womens Medical College, Muktsar, Punjab

**ABSTRACT**

Acharaya Sushurut has considered Siravedha as half of all the therapeutic measures in Shalya-tantra like Basti Karma in Kaya-chikitsa. The surgical procedure of puncturing the vein for therapeutic purpose and thereby accomplishing the Raktamokshana is referred by the name Siravedha. It is a common procedure for the management of different diseases with vitiated Rakta dosa. Rakta Dhatu along with vitiated Dosha is let out from the veins in disorders where the Rakta dhatu is predominant. Acharaya has emphasized that Siravedha helps in the elimination of vitiated dosha. He further clarified that if all fivefold purification procedure cannot be performed due to lack of time then Raktmokshana will serve the purpose in emergency condition. Siravedha is special in surgical conditions with poor venous drainage. It leads immediate lowering of symptoms along with pain in diseases like vatarakta, and Gridhisi etc. It is the important method in all condition where Raktamokshana is indicated. My article is focused on effect of Siravedha in management of Pain in certain Disorders.

**Key Words:** *Raktamokshana, Rakta dhatu, pain, Siravedha.*

**INTRODUCTION**

The science of Ayurveda is well recognized system of medicine which is having unique specialty in Shalya Tantra. The concept of Ayurveda has evolved from more than 3000 years. There is a tradition of continuous updating in this Science in form of different Commentaries. Due to different turbulences in country and generation gap these concepts

appears to be misinterpreted or less understood further needs to be studied in a more elaborate way. Acharaya Sushurut has described Siravyadha (a type of Raktmokshana) as Ardha Chikitsa in Shalya Tantra.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore it is the treatment of choice advice for *sadhya raga ruja samana* (it relieves pain and redness immediately).<sup>2</sup> Pain is chief cause of visiting a doctor in most pa-

tients known as Ruja in Ayurveda which is one of the synonyms of disease. It disturbs physical and mental status of patients. Pain is cardinal symptoms in most of the vyadhi (disease). According to Ayurveda all kind of pain (dehika-vdedana) is vataja and can be corrected by correction of vatika derangement in the body, while describing line of treatment of many vata vyadhies siravedha is mentioned. Acharaya Sushrut mentioned when vata is found affecting the skin, muscles, blood and veins and arteries then therapies such as snehan (oleation), abhyana (oil bath), upanah (warm poultices), mardana (massages), alepa (applying paste on skin) and *Asrkmokshana* (bloodletting) should be adopted.<sup>3</sup>

### RAKTMOKSHANA IN VARIOUS THERAPIES

Raktamokshana is considered as bloodletting in which withdrawal of blood from a patient to cure or prevent disease. In modern medicine bloodletting is known as phlebotomy. Therapeutic phlebotomy used in a few circumstances such as polycythemia vera, porphyria cutanea trada etc. to reduce the number of red blood cell. Bloodletting is also an important part of Unani, Ayurveda, traditional Chinese and Hildegard medicine system. Unani is one of the few forms of alternative medicine in which bloodletting is used according to humoristic principles. Because of this, bloodletting and leeching are used quite often, owing to the fact that there are supposedly many diseases resulting from excess blood. So in Unani, bloodletting is considered a good way of detoxifying the blood. Traditional Chinese use of bloodletting is the least drastic; it is used in the context of acupuncture and only involves draining a few drops of blood. This is sup-

posed to be good for, among other things, sore throat, epistaxis etc. Hildegard medicine is an obscure humoristic system of medicine invented by St. Hildegard von Bilgen. It has only a few hundred practitioners, mostly in Germany. In this system, bloodletting is used to detoxify the blood and remove "bad" black bile<sup>4</sup>. In Ayurveda bloodletting is described by Acharaya Sushrut as Raktmokshana is one of five panchakarma procedures or the 5 basic techniques of detoxification. It is made of two words – Rakta i.e blood and Mokshana i.e to leave and combining both these words makes the word Raktamokshana which means 'to let out blood'. It is the only Shodhana procedure where the vitiated doshas are taken out from the shakhas by creating an artificial route, in which carefully controlled removal of considerable amount of blood.

Main Types of Raktamokshana :

1. *Shastra Visravana* : This procedure of bloodletting is performed by using metal instruments  
It is further of two types
  - *Pracchana* (Bloodletting through multiple incisions)
  - *Siravyadha* ( Venepuncture )
1. *Anushastra Visravana*: This raktamokshana is performed without the use of metal instruments. This is of three types –
  - *Jalaukavacharana* (Application of Leeches) – This is indicated for Pitta dosha diseases.
  - *Shrungavacharana* (Sucking through cow's horn ) – This is indicated for Vata dosha diseases.

- Alabu (Vacuum extraction by using vegetable called Alabu / Bottle Gourd ) This is indicated for Kapha dosha diseases.

Of all these types, Siravyadha or venepuncture is regarded as the best way of blood letting having greater therapeutic value.<sup>5</sup>

**SIRAVEDHA:** Siravedha is surgical procedure of puncturing the vein for therapeutic purpose and there by accomplishing the raktamokshana. It is indicated in all condition where raktmokshana is indicated. Even then, in certain disease Siravedhan has edge over other methods of raktmokshana. Raktamokshana by the method of siravedhan is preferred in physically strong as well as courageous people. Morbidity of rakta dhatu when generalized is best treated by the siravedhan.<sup>6</sup>

#### CLASSICAL REVIEW IN AYURVEDIC TEXT

##### IN SUSHURUT SAMHITA

*Acharya Sushruta* has mentioned, diseases those are not relieved so quickly by *Snehana*, *Lepanadi* therapeutic measures in these situation *Siravedha* is an emergency management to achieve better result.<sup>7</sup> *Siravyadha* is also accepted as half of the therapeutic measure in *shalya tantra* like *basti* in *kayachikitsa*.<sup>1</sup> In Panchakarma chikitsa, the vitiated doshas are purified whereas in *siravedhan* to let out *rakta* dhatu along with vitiated *doshas* where *rakta dhatu* is predominant. The susceptibility of rakta towards impurity is so versatile that the classics were compelled to agree upon *rakta* as fourth *dosha*. Therefore *dushita* (vitiating) *rakta* from the related *siras* (veins) should be let out to protect the health or to remove the disease.<sup>8</sup> The symptoms of *samyak siravedha* are *laghavam*(body and painful area) and *vedanashanti* (pain reduction),

*visravat rakta* stop itself, it means the pain arising from a disease condition get subsided followed by decrease in the symptoms of the disease so *siravedha* can be used in pain predominant diseases.<sup>9</sup>

##### IN ASHTANG SANGHRAH

While describing the importance of *siravedhan* (vene-puncture), beautiful comparison can be seen in text as follows:As water comes out and the plants die on cutting the borders of a field, vitiated blood comes out and automatically the disease will be cured on performing venepuncture.<sup>10</sup> If a disease does not subside even after treating it according to exact line of treatment, then it is to be thought as vitiated blood borne and should be treated by venesection.

##### IN ASHTANG HRIDYA

While describing line of treatment of disease by raktmokshana, it is the treatment of choice advice for *sadya raagraja samana* (it relieves pain and redness immediately)<sup>2</sup>.

##### PREVIOUS STUDY IN PAIN MANAGEMENT

1. Clinical Evaluation of Suchivedha (A Type of Vyadhan Karma) In Pain Management. In this study 33patients of pain including joint pain, muscle pain and nerve pain condition were treated with suchivedha karma on multiple tender points shown max relief in pain in single sitting.<sup>11</sup>
2. Clinical studies was undertaken to study the effect of siravedha in the management of pain in *Gridharasi*. 10 patients of Gridhrasi having acute pain were selected. After *siravedha* out of 10 patients, 3 patients got cured, 6 & 1 got marked and moderate improvement respectively. After follow up 1 patient got cured, 8 & 1 got marked and

moderate improvement respectively. Thus the data suggest that *siravedha* is effective in the management of pain in *gridharsi*<sup>12</sup>

## DISCUSSION

### PROBABLE MODE OF ACTION

In ayurveda use of particular therapy in a particular disease depends on its property like ras, guna etc. chikitsa (treatment) is nothing but correction of vitiated dosha to reinstate the tri- dosha equilibrium. Siravedha act on predominately in pitta, rakta and kaphaja vyadhi or when pitta or kapha is in anubandha to vata dosha. In such condition of vata prakopa due to kapha and pitta avarana siravedha can remove the avarana of kapha or pitta dosha giving way for anulomana indirectly cures the vatika symptoms along with pitta or kapha dosha and patient gets immediate relief in pain<sup>13</sup>.

From modern point of view, stimulation to large sensory fibers from peripheral tactile receptors depresses the transmission of pain signals either from the same area of the body or even from many segments. This results in local lateral inhibition.<sup>14</sup>

## CONCLUSION

- Siravedhan is a simple, cheap, safe, and effective in the management of symptoms of disease like pain etc.
- There is no need to be hospitalization of the patient in the procedure.
- It can cure the disease when other treatment does not have effect on disease or when other treatment fails and give immediate relief in symptoms.
- It is helpful to eliminate doshas from shakhas and in this therapy there is no need to bring the doshas in kostha.

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### **CORRESPONDING AUTHOR**

#### **Dr Namrata Patel**

PG Scholar, Shalya Tantra Dept, Dr  
Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan Rajasthan  
Ayurved University, Jodhpur, Rajasthan,  
Address: University College of Ayurved,  
Kadwad, Nagaur Road, Jodhpur-342037  
Rajasthan.  
Email id: namayur@gmail.com

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