



A REVIEW ARTICLE ON SIRAJAGRANTHI - VARICOSE VEINS

Meenakshi Thakur¹, Sanjeev Sood², Gayathri M. Prakash³

¹P.G. Scholar *Panchakarma*, Dayanand Ayurvedic College, Jalandhar, Punjab, India

² Prof. & Head of Department of *Panchakarma*, Dayanand Ayurvedic College, Jalandhar, Punjab, India

³ Assistant Professor, *Panchakarma*, Dayanand Ayurvedic College, Jalandhar, Punjab, India

Corresponding Author: drthakurmeenakshi@gmail.com

<https://doi.org/10.46607/iamj2410082022>

(Published Online: August 2022)

Open Access

© International Ayurvedic Medical Journal, India 2022

Article Received: 10/07/2022 - Peer Reviewed: 01/08/2022 - Accepted for Publication: 02/08/2022



ABSTRACT

Varicose veins are a commonly occurring health problem in our society. Varicose veins are not a severe medical condition in the early stages it's only a cosmetic concern but continued pain causes disturbance in daily routine life. Incompetency of the valves and weakness in the walls of the veins are the primary cause of this disease. It commonly develops in the legs and feet, particularly in the calves and also in the thighs. In Ayurveda, varicose veins resemble *Siraj Granthi*, *Siragata Vata*, and *vata rakta rogas*. In Ayurveda, there are many medicines and panchkarma therapies that are beneficial in managing varicose veins without side effects. *Raktamokshana* is the main line of treatment. *Sringa*, *Jalauka*, *Alabu*, *Siravedha*, *Pracchana*, *Ghati Yantra* are types¹ of *raktamokshana*. *Siravedha* is known as *Ardhachikitsa* in *Shalyatantra*.² *Raktamokshana* through *Jalaukavacharana* is the preferred option on account of its simplicity, ease, etc in *sirajgranthi*.³ *Basti* also play role in the management of varicose veins. *Snehana* and *Swedana* are also effective in the management of varicose veins. So, this review article emphasizes various aspects of varicose veins and their management explained in ancient ayurvedic texts.

Keywords: *Sirajagranthi*, Varicose veins, *Raktamokshana*, *Jalaukavacharana*,

INTRODUCTION

When a vein becomes dilated, elongated, and tortuous, the vein is said to be 'varicose'.⁴ Common sites of varicosity are a superficial venous system of the lower limbs- affecting either the long saphenous or the short saphenous vein or both.⁴ It affects mainly 10-20 % of the population in the world and India, it is 5%. *Sira sankocha* (contraction), *Sira Utsedha* (elevated veins), *Vishoshana* (dryness) are the clinical features⁵ of *Sirajagranthi* in ayurvedic literature affecting both men and women. Incompetent valves are responsible for Varicose veins. Prolonged standing, obesity, pregnancy, old age, and athlete are also responsible for Varicose veins. *Raktamokshana* is the main line of treatment for *Sirajagranthi*. *Raktamokshana* is classified into *Sringa*, *Jalauka*, *Alabu*, *Siravedha*, *Pracchana*, *Ghati Yantra* as mentioned in Ayurveda texts.¹ *Jalaukavacharana* is claimed to be the supreme therapy because of its high efficiency in curing blood-related disorders. *Jalauka* sucks the impure (*dushta*) blood from the mixture of *dushta* and *Shudh rakta*, like *hams* (swan) drinks milk from a mixture of milk and water. It is indicated even for the king, rich, old, fearful, weak, women, and the people of the tender nature.⁶

Materials And Method

As this article is a review article, different ayurvedic texts, published review articles, research papers, and from the internet have been reviewed for this article. All the materials from *brihatrayi*, *laghutrayi*, and their commentaries have been reviewed. Modern textbooks and various websites to collect information have been reviewed for this article.

Review of literature

Varicose veins

Varicose veins are a chronic disease that affects mainly the lower limbs particularly the persons in higher age groups who are involved in prolonged standing and sitting jobs. It is a commonly occurring health problem in our society but the treatment options for this disease are not satisfactory. Incompetency of the valves and weakness in the walls of the veins are the primary cause of this disease. Other factors such as obesity, and pregnancy can also lead to

varicose veins. If it is not managed and treated it can lead to other more serious conditions such as chronic ulcers and inflammation of the vein caused by a blood clot.

Sirajagranthi

In Ayurveda texts, varicose veins resemble *Sirajagranthi*, *siragatvata*, and *vatarakta rogas* of Ayurveda. According to *acharya Sushrut*, *Shira sankoch* (contractions), *Shira Utsedha* (elevation), and *Vishoshana* (dryness) are clinical characteristics of varicose veins (*Sirajagranthi*).

Nidan (causative factors)⁹

In ayurveda text, the causative factor given by *acharya Sushrut* is excessive exertion by a person who is weak and emaciated. In a weak person who undergoes excessive exercise, the vitiated *vata* vitiates the vascular bundles which in turn compresses (*sampeedya*), squeezes (*sankochya*), and dries it up (*vishoshya*) produces *Granthi* which is further raised in circular *Siraj Granthi*.

In *Ashtang hridya*, the person suddenly washes the lower limb in cold water after walking a long distance. Due to the sudden change of temperature in the leg, the *Sira* becomes engorged and thus may not be able to pump the blood properly. This result in tortuous veins, edema, discolouration, etc.

The etiological factors can be congenital or acquired, valvular or obstructive, or both.

Other factors:

- Occupation - prolonged standing or sitting jobs.
- Obesity
- Pregnancy
- Old age
- Athletes

Samprapthi (Pathology):

According to *Acharya Sushruta*, *vata* aggravating etiological factors play a role in vitiation of *Vata* and this vitiated *Vata* affects the *Sira Prathana* (cluster of veins) and exposed them to *Sampeedana* (compression), *Sankochana* (squeezes), *Vishoshana* (dryness) and produces *Granthi*. According to *Acharya Vagbhata*, the vitiated *Vata* exerts its influence on *Siras* and *Raktadhatu*, causing *Sampeedana*,

Sankochana, and *Vishoshana* of *Sira* to result in *granthi*.

Lakshanas (Symptoms)¹⁰

Acharya Sushruta describes two types of *Siragranthi*- one which is painful and movable and another which is painless, immovable, and greatly enlarged and can occur in *Marmasthan* also.

In *Siragranthi Lakshanas* like *sampeedyā*, *nispapuram*, and *nirujam* can be correlated to dull aching pain in varicose veins. Signs like *sankochya*, *Vrutta*, *Unnatha*, *Shopham* can be correlated to dilated, elongated, and tortuous veins.

Clinical Features:¹¹

- The commonest symptom is a tired and aching sensation in the affected lower limb particularly in the calf, at the end of the day.
- Sharp pains may have complained.
- Patients may present with no other symptom except dilated and tortuous veins of the leg.
- Ankle swelling towards evening.
- The skin over the varicosities may itch. It may be pigmented.
- Eczema of the affected skin.

Sadhya-Asadhyata (Prognosis)⁹

Sushruta Acharya describes the painful variety as *KrichraSadhya* (difficult to cure) and the painless variety, bigger in size and present at *Marmasthan* is *Asadhya* (incurable).

Chikitsa (Treatment) of Siragranthi

In *Charak samhita*, there is no direct reference to *Sirajagranthi* management. But in *Sushrut samhita*, *Ashtang hridayam*, *Madhav Nidan*, and *shadangdhar samhita* there is a good description of the etiology, clinical manifestation, and treatment of *Siragranthi*. *Raktamokshana* is the best line of treatment for *Siragranthi*. *Siravedh* is a type of *raktamokshana* which is used in the management of varicose veins. By *siravedha*, vitiated *doshas* are removed from *Sira*, congestion of *sira* is removed, it removes toxins, increases blood supply. *Raktamokshana* through *jalaaukaavcharna* is the preferred option on account of its simplicity, ease, etc.

The accumulation of *Rakta* and vitiated *vata* in *Sira* leads to¹² *Siraakunchan*, *vakrikarna* (tortuous) of

veins which causes local congestion of veins. Repeated bloodletting by *Jalauka* brings down the *Shotha* and *Shoola* by relieving local congestion. *Daha* (burning sensation) is also relieved by *Jalauka* as it is a sheet in nature. *Sahachara Thailam* is used in *Vata*-related disorders. *Basti* is indicated in *vata*-related disorders. As *Vata* is responsible for varicose veins so by treating *Vata* in the body one can manage varicose veins. Other treatment options are *Snehana* and *Swedana* which increase circulation in that region. In varicose veins, *Snehana* is done in *Pratiloma* (opposite direction). It can manage signs and symptoms and prevent the occurrence of *Siragranthi*. Other medicine *Sahachara Thailam*, *Sahachara Kashyam*, *kanchnar guggul* are mentioned in the *ayurvedic text* for *Siragranthi* (varicose veins). So, combining these ayurvedic treatments can manage varicose veins without side effects.

DISCUSSION

Siragranthi is a chronic condition that affects mainly the lower limbs particularly the persons in higher age groups. Incidence of varicose veins is more in people who are involved in prolonged standing and sitting jobs and also who are obese. Varicose veins are not a severe medical condition in the early stages but continued pain causes disturbance in daily routine life. In allopathy, available treatment provides symptomatic relief for pain, swelling, heaviness, and other surgical procedures which have complications after surgery. There are many medicines and panchkarma therapies in Ayurveda that are beneficial in managing varicose veins with no side effects. The easiest way to manage *Sirajagranthi* is avoidance of all etiological factors such as avoiding standing, sitting for a long time, maintaining⁷ an appropriate body weight along with external and internal treatment. In Ayurveda, there are many treatments procedure for varicose veins. *Siravedha* (bloodletting) is the main line of treatment for varicose veins as is mentioned in *ardha chikitsa* in *Sushrut Samhita*. By *Siravedha* vitiated *Doshas* are removed from *Sira*, which relieves pressure on *Srotas*, reduces toxins, increases the supply of blood. Next is *jalaaukaa-*

vcharna which is also known as leech therapy. Leeches are applied to the affected area and kept over some time. By sucking they remove the impure blood. *Jalaukaavcharna* is a safe and effective method in *raktamokshana* as *acharya Charka* mentioned *Jalauka* as the best amongst all *Anushastra*. Other treatment in Ayurveda is *basti* which is considered the main line of treatment in *vata*-related disorders. By eliminating *Vata Dosha* through *Basti* one can manage varicose veins as *vata* is the main aggravating factor that is responsible for varicose veins. *Basti* is given by medicated oil and decoction enema through the anal route. Other treatments *Snehana* and *Swedana karma* are effective in the management of varicose veins. As *Snehana* (abhyangam) relaxes muscle fibres of a particular region and provides nourishment to muscle fibers. *Swedana* (steam) *karma* increases blood circulation in a particular region. Other medicine such as *Kanchanaar guggul*, *sahachara kashyam* is also affective in the management of varicose veins which are mentioned in Ayurveda texts.

CONCLUSION

By proper understanding of etiological factors, is important to prevent the occurrence of *Sirajagranthi*. If it is treated in the early stages and by proper maintenance of signs and symptoms of varicose veins reduces complications such as ulcers, thrombosis and supports a better life. The combined effect of *Panchakarma* treatment and internal medication is said to be effective in the management of *Sirajagranthi* (varicose veins).

REFERENCES

1. *Acharya Vagbhata: Astangahrdayam* edited with the 'Vidyotini' Hindi Commentary by *Kaviraja Atrideva Gupta* Edited by *Vaidya Yadunandana Upadhyaya Sutra Sihan*, Ch-26/53, Pg. No. 201
2. *Maharsi Sushruta: Sushrutasamhita* Edited with Ayurveda -*Tattva-Sandipika* by *Kaviraj Ambikadutta Shastri* Foreword by Dr. *Pranjivana Manekchanda Mehta* part-1, *Sharir Sthana*, Ch-8/23, pg.no.91
3. *Maharsi Sushruta: Sushrutasamhita* Edited with Ayurveda -*Tattva-Sandipika* by *Kaviraj Ambikadutta Shastri* Foreword by Dr. *Pranjivana Manekchanda Mehta* part-1, *Sutra Sthana*, Ch-13/3 (vimarsha) pg.no.57
4. Dr. *Somen Das*. A concise textbook of Surgery, 7th Edition Kolkata 2012, pg.no. 256.
5. *Maharsi Sushruta: Sushrutasamhita* Edited with Ayurveda -*Tattva-Sandipika* by *Kaviraj Ambikadutta Shastri* Foreword by Dr. *Pranjivana Manekchanda Mehta* part-1, *Nidan Sthan*, Ch-11/8, pg.no.351
6. *Maharsi Sushruta: Sushrutasamhita* Edited with Ayurveda -*Tattva-Sandipika* by *Kaviraj Ambikadutta Shastri* Foreword by Dr. *Pranjivana Manekchanda Mehta* part-1, *Sutra Sthan* Ch-13/3, of.no.57
7. *Maharsi Sushruta: Sushrutasamhita* Edited with Ayurveda -*Tattva-Sandipika* by *Kaviraj Ambikadutta Shastri* Foreword by Dr. *Pranjivana Manekchanda Mehta* part-1, *Sutra Sthan* Ch-13/10, pg.no.58
8. *Agnivesa; Charaka Samhita*, Revised by *Charaka* and *Dridhabala* with an introduction by *Vaidya Samrata Sri Satya Narayana Sastri Padambhusan* with elaborated vidyotini Hindi commentary by Pt. *Kasinatha Sastri*, Dr. *Gorakha Natha Chaturvedi*, Part-2, *Chikitsa Sthana*, Ch-28/144-145, pg.no 802
9. *Maharsi Sushruta: Sushrutasamhita* Edited with Ayurveda -*Tattva-Sandipika* by *Kaviraj Ambikadutta Shastri* Foreword by Dr. *Pranjivana Manekchanda Mehta* part-1, *Nidan Sthan*, Ch-11/9, pg.no.351
10. *Maharsi Sushruta: Sushrutasamhita* Edited with Ayurveda -*Tattva-Sandipika* by *Kaviraj Ambikadutta Shastri* Foreword by Dr. *Pranjivana Manekchanda Mehta* part-1, *Nidan Sthan*, Ch-11/8, pg.no.351
11. Dr. *Somen Das*. A concise textbook of surgery, 7th edition Kolkata 2012, pg.no.261.
12. International ayurvedic medical journal (ISSN:23205091) A critical review on *Nidana*, *Samprapti*, and *Lakshana* of *Siraj Granthi*.

Source of Support: Nil

Conflict of Interest: None Declared

How to cite this URL: Meenakshi Thakur et al: A Review Article on Sirajagranthi - Varicose Veins. International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online} 2022 {cited August 2022} Available from: http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/2187_2190.pdf