



ISSN (E): 2320-3862

ISSN (P): 2394-0530

www.plantsjournal.com

JMPS 2022; 10(1): 17-22

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Received: 21-10-2021

Accepted: 06-12-2021

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Clinical potency of abhyanga in Katigraha

Dr. Ram Kumar Agarwal, Dr. Rachna Jain and Dr. Smita Paul

Abstract

Katigraha is a Vata Nanatmaja Vyadhi described by Acharya Sharangadhara. In the Brahatraies, there have not explained the Katigraha as a separate Roga. We tracked down brief portrayal of Katigraha as a Roga with its Nidana, Lakshana and Chikitsa in Bhavaprakasha Ama Vatadhikara and Gadanigraha Vatavyadhi adhikara. Here it is clarified as a condition described by Shula (Pain) and Stambha (confined developments) of Kati (Low Back) brought about by Shuddha or Sama Vayu and Kapha-avarodha.

Analyzing the Samprapti reveals that the clinical manifestation of this Roga occurs due to the morbid Vata Dosha or the combination of Vata and Kapha. As we contemplated Katigraha of Vata Kapha origin and the Snehana procedure by virtue of its unctuous quality is likely to worsen the imbalance of Kapha dosha. Snehana or Abhyanga is a most important Bahirparimarjana Karma and a type of Bahya Snehana which helps to do Vasodilatation of Veins and Blood Vessels. Abhyanga has to be performed with Ghrita, Taila, Vasa and Majja or any other suitable Sneha. The easy availability of Sneha or Taila and good effects over Dosha Mardavata, Abhyanga with Taila is more preferred.

Keywords: Katigraha, vatavyadhi, samprapti, snehana, abhyanga, bahirparimarjana karma, bahya snehana, prakruti, satmya, Ritu, dosha, desha, roga, taila, ghrita, kukudmati, shroni, nitamba, kateerakam, aaroha, shroniphalakam, kalatram and rasanaapadam

Introduction

Katigraha being most common disease in the clinical practice is not explained in any Brihatrayis but explained as a lakshana in Ajeerna, Kshataksheena, Vatajwara and some other diseases. The term Katigraha is explained by Acharya Shodhala as a condition distinguished by the vitiated Vata either Shuddha or with Ama or Kapha, taking Ashraya in the Kati-pradesha causing Ruja or Shula and Graham or Stambha in the area. Acharya Sharangadhara has clarified it as 'katisthambhena vedana vishesha' a condition set apart by Pain and Stiffness in the Kati Pradesha. In Raja Nighantu numerous equivalent words of Kati are given. They are explained as Kati, Kukudmati, Shroni, Nitamba, Kateerakam, Aaroha, Shroniphalakam, Kalatram, Rasanaapadam etc. Among every one of the equivalents presented over, the word Shroni has been colossally utilized by different acharyas and reporters. In Katigraha the vitiated Vata get lodges with Kapha Dosha at Kati-pradesha.

Abyanga is one of the Bahya Sneha. It's utility comes as part of Dinacharya, Rutucharya, Poorva Karma for Shodhana, Pravicharana Sneha and Pradhana Karma in most of Vata Roga and Tvak Roga. Abhyanga is derived from "Ang" Dhatu and "Abhi" Upasarga; the literal meaning of which is to do movements^[4]. The description of Abhyanga is found in both Bruhatrayee and Laghutrayee except Madhava Nidana. Abhyanga is described as a part of Dinacharya. One must practice it daily as it prevents the ageing process, exertion and increase of Vata, bestows good vision, nourishment to the body, long and healthy life, good quality sleep and quality of skin^[5].

Aim and Objectives

1. To study in detail of Katigraha.
2. To study the therapeutic effect of Katigraha.

Review of literature

Katigraha

In Charaka Samhita, Maharogadhyaya, the 20th chapter in Sootrasthana, where he enlists Nanatmaja Vata vyadhi, though Katigraha has not been introduced, other symptoms of spinal disease like Prushtha-graha, Trikagraha, Supti etc. are found. The therapies represented in Bhagna Chikitsa also useful in Katigraha cases uniquely of Abhigataja origin. He represented traction, manipulation etc., concisely to restore the dislocations which suits to Katigraha also.

In Sushruta Samhita, Pakwashaya-gata Vata Acharya has included Trika Vedana as a symptom. In Bhela Samhita, has revealed Vata vyaadhi into two groups - Sarvanga and Ekanga Vata, all the pain dominating diseases of Kati and Prishtha being enlisted in Ekanga Vata Roga. Kati-shula is distinguished as a complication of many diseases like Vataja Kasa. Mandagni and fetter movement of Vata are the main cause of Kati-shula. While representing the Yapan Basti he has mentioned it will relieve the pain at Kati.

In Hareeta Samhita, Acharya Hareeta has described the etiological factors of Vata Prakopa very elaborately. He has illustrated the Vata disorders classifying according to five varieties of Vata with mentioning about 16 diseases for each type. He cited Prushtha-stambha and Uru-sthambha also as disorders of Vyana Vayu. He mentioned Kati-shoola as a symptom of Gridhrasi and Ama-Vata [6]. He mentioned some yogas together for Gridhrasi Ama-Vata and Kati-shoola.

In Kashyapa Samhita, Acharya Kashyapa has observed Asthi and Majja as sites of Vata which indicate the Prishtha as Vata Sthana the involvement of which may lead to Katigraha. According to him, Kati-shula is one of the impediments occurring due to dusha-prajata.

Vridha Vagbhata has given place for Vata Vyadhis in both Nidana Sthana and Chikitsa Sthana similar to Sushruta Samhita. In Nidana Sthana he detailed individual etiological factors for vitiation and their clinical features for all the five varieties of Vata in Vatarakta Nidana chapter. Even though it is not mentioned specifically, the impaired functions in Katigraha like Gati, Prasarana, Aakunchana, can be attributed to those by Vyana Vata as per the citations of Vridha Vagbhata. Apana Vayu also locomotes in Shroni and Uru as connoted by him. Both these texts have mentioned about Kati-shula in the Roga of vitiated Vata, seated in pakvasaya [7]. In Ashtanga Samgraha and Hridaya Katigraha is described as a lakshana in Vata Jwara and Madhyama [8] Margashrita Vyadhi [9]. Kati-toda and Kati-bheda are mentioned as a Poorva-roopa of Vata-rakta [10]. Sarvadhātu avrita Vata produces Pain in Prushtha and Shroni.

Acharya Madhavakara had described Vatavyadhis more elaborately incorporating all the symptoms described by Acharya Charaka, Acharya Sushruta and Acharya Vagbhata. He has given detailed description of Shula. Vayu is stated to be accountable for all types of Pain. Prushtha-shula and Trika-shula are introduced in the symptoms of Vataja shula. Prushtha shula has been mentioned as the disease of Vata Kaphaja preponderance.

Sharangdhara Samhita has mentioned Katigraha among the Nanatmaja Vata Vyadhis in its Pradhama khanda 7th chapter [11]. Acharya Adhamalla in his commentary says that it is a Vedana vishesha (specific type of pain) due to Sthambha (Stiffness). In addition, the author has mentioned various treatments for Katigraha and Katishula in detail. He has designates Rasna Spathakam Kashayam especially for Katigraha and Eranda Spathakam Kashayam for various ailments of Katipradesha. He has also recommended Ajamodadyam Choornam for Ruja in Kati-pradesha.

Acharya Bhava Mishra delineates Kati Graha as a separate disease in Ama-vata Chikitsa Adhikara and has specified few, treatments like Valuka Sweda, Agni Sweda and formulations like Trayodashanga Guggulu in this [12].

In Yogaratnakara various credentials of Katishula and Katigraha are available in the context of Vataja Arshas [13], Gudasthita Vata [14], Pakwashayagata Vata Lakshana [15]. The author has introduced various terms to denote backache like Katishula, Kati Vata and Katipeeda in the Asthi Vataroga

Chikitsa. In addition, he has recommended Eranda Taila prayoga, and preparations like Eranda Beeja Payasa, Modaka with Taila, Ghruta, Ardraka rasa etc. for such conditions.

Katigraha Vyutpathi

The word katigraha as it indicates is constituted by two words 'kati' and 'graha'.

Kati

The word 'kati' is derived from the dhatu "kat + in" and it is considered as a 'sharira avayava vishesha', a bodily part where the dress is tightened [16]. According to Amarakosha Shroniphalaka they are called as Kati [17]. Vaidyaka Shabda Sindhu also considers Shroni as Kati [18]. According to Monier Williams – Kati is the hollow space above the hip or the loins [19].

Graha

The term 'graha' is derived from the dhatus 'Adant-Churam-Atmam-Saka-Set'. The term is explained as 'Graha Grahanam', by Durga das, which means to collect or catch [20]. Nirukti of Graha is that which has Sanga as a prominent feature. According to Monier Williams's the meaning of Graha is to sieze, catch and catch hold [21]. So from these two references it can be derived that the term Katigraha collectively indicates a condition characterized by a catch or stiffness in Katipradesha.

Paribhasha

Katigraha being most common disease in the clinical practice is not explained in any Brihatrayis but explained as a lakshana in Ajeerna, Kshatakshena, Vatajwara and some other diseases. The term Katigraha is explained by Acharya Shodhala as a condition characterized by the vitiated Vayu either Shuddha or with Ama, taking Ashraya in the Katipradesha causing Ruja and graham in the area. Acharya Sharangadhara has explained it as 'katisthambhena vedana vishesha' a condition marked by pain and stiffness in the Kati Pradesha.

Paryaya

In Raja Nighantu many synonyms of Kati are mentioned. They are Kati, kukudmati, shroni, nitamba, kateerakam, aaroha, shroniphalakam, kalatram, rasanaapadam [22] etc. Among all the synonyms mentioned above, the word Shroni has been extensively used by various Acharyas and commentators.

Snehana

Snehana is one among the Shad-Upakrama mentioned in Ayurveda [23]. The dictionary meaning of Sneha is oil, moisture, love etc. Generally Sneha means Snigdha. The actions or procedures, which makes the body unctuous is called Sneha.

Snehana is derived from Snigdha Ghanj pratyaya which is a Pullinga Shabdha. In Nyaya Shastra, it comes under Dahanukula Guna Bheda. Actual Sneha which is accepted to be used for Tailadi Abhyangadi Kriya is derived from 'snih - nich lyut' Pratyaya. It is a Napumsaka Shabdha.

Definition of Snehana

The action which brings about Vishyandata, Mardavata and Kledata in the body is called Snehana [24]. Vishyandana is that which causes Vilayana and Srava of Dosha. Mardava is that which produces Komalata or softness of the body parts.

Kledana is that which produces Kledata or moistness in the body.

Benefits of Snehana

Snehana alleviates the aggravated Vata, softens the body and discharges (disintegrates) the adhered morbid material in the channels of circulation [25].

Sneha Yoni (Origin of Sneha)

There are two types of Sneha Yoni. Namely Sthavara [26] - vegetable origin and Jangama- animal origin [27].

Sthavara Yoni

Sources of fats of vegetable origin are as follows - Tila, Priyala, Abhishuka, Bibhhitaka, Chitra, Abhaya, Eranda, Madhuaka, Sarshapa, Kusumbha, Bilwa, Aruka, Mulaka, Atasi, Nikochaka, Akshodha, Karanja, Shigruka [28].

Jangama Yoni

Fish, four footed animals and birds constitute the sources of fat. Curd, ghee, meat, fat and bone marrow of these animals and birds constitute the administrable unctuous substances [29]. According to Sushruta, both Jangama and Sthavara are of four kinds. Out of Jangama- Go Ghrita is most important and out of Sthavara- Tila Taila is most important [30].

Man is essentially full of lubricating materials (Sneha). Even life activities have prominence of lubricating materials and man is amenable to fats [31].

Sneha is to be used in the form of Pana, Anuvasana, Mastishka, Shiro Basthi, Uttara Basthi, Nasya, Karna Purana, Gatra Abhyanga and Bhojana. In the all varieties, oil of Tila is the most efficacious for the purpose of strength and oleation [32]. Eranda Taila is Katu, Ushna, Vata Shleshma Hara and Guru. When mixed up with Swadu, Kashaya and Tikta, it even alleviates Pitta [33].

The word Taila is derived from the word Tila only. That's why among all varieties of Sthavara Taila, Tila Taila is considered as the best. Due to Nishpatti Samana (similar Utpatti) Karana, other oils are also called by the name Taila only. Among all varieties of Sneha, Sarpi, Taila, Vasa and Majja are considered the best varieties and among these four, Sarpi is considered to be the most superior one, because of its power to assimilate effectively the properties of other substances [34].

Properties of four types of Sneha

Ghrita

Ghrita alleviates Pitta and Vata, it is conducive to Rasa Dhatu, Shukra Dhatu and Ojus. It has cooling and softening effect upon the body. It adds to the clarity of voice and complexion. Also because of its Madhuryata (sweetness), Avidahitwa (cooling property) and its usage since birth [35].

It is one among the Shat-Upakrama mentioned in Ayurveda. It is categorized under Santarpana Chikitsa or Brihmana Chikitsa.

Taila

In general Taila mitigates excessive vitiated Vata and does not increase Kapha. It gives support to the body in the form of energy. It is ideal to skin. It is hot, stabilizer and it controls the morbidity of the female genital organ³⁶.

Vasa

The muscle fat is prescribed for the treatment of injury, fracture, trauma, prolapsed uterus, ear ache and head ache. It

helps in lubrication and is useful for those who indulge into physical exercise [36].

Majja

The bone marrow enhances the strength, Shukra (semen), Rasa Dhatu, Kapha and Medha and Majja Dhatu. It adds to the physical strength, especially of the bone and is useful for the lubrication purpose [37].

Though four types of Sneha are mentioned, most commonly, Ghrita and Taila are only used in various treatment modalities.

Modalities of Snehana

Basically there are two broad classification of Sneha.

1. Abhyantara Sneha
2. Bahya Sneha

Abhyantara Sneha

The utility of this kind of Sneha is mainly for the Shodhana, Shamana and Brihmana purpose. Abhyantara Sneha refers to Snehapana. It is mainly of three types.

1. Achchapeya Sneha
2. Vicharana Sneha
3. Sadhyo Sneha [38]

Among these Achchapeya and Sadhyo Sneha is used for Pana. Whereas Vicharana or Pravicharana includes administration of Sneha through different routes. They are totally twenty six in number [39].

Bahya Sneha

Application of Sneha externally is known as Bahya Snehana. It is practiced both in Swastha as well as Atura. In the context of Dina Charya and Ritu Charya, Shodhana as a part of Purva Karma it is indicated.

ABYANGA

Abyanga is one of the Bahya Sneha. It's utility comes as part of Dinacharya, Rutucharya, Poorva Karma for Shodhana, Pravicharana Sneha and Pradhana Karma in most of Vata Roga and Tvak Roga. Abyanga is derived from "Ang" Dhatu and "Abhi" Upasarga; the literal meaning of which is to do movements. The explanation of Abyanga is found in both Bruhatrayee and Laghutrayee except Madhava Nidana.

Benefits of Abyanga

Abyanga is explained as a part of Dinacharya. One must practice it daily as it prevents the ageing process, exertion and aggravation of Vata, bestows good vision, nourishment to the body, long and healthy life, good quality sleep and quality of skin [40]. It has to be practiced daily or even with a gap of one, two or three days [41].

As a pitcher, a dry skin and an axis of a cart become strong and resistant by applying oil, so also, after Abyanga, the human body becomes strong and smooth skinned, will not succumb to the diseases caused by Vata. The body becomes resistant to exhaustions and exertions [42].

One who practices oil massage regularly, the body even if subjected to injuries or strenuous work, is not much injured, his physique becomes smooth and firm, strong and charming, and the onset of ageing is slackened [43].

Abyanga makes the body soft, controls the aggravation of Vata and Kapha and bestows nourishment to the tissues, good complexion, colour and strength to the body [44]. Abyanga is stated to bestow Sukha which means a feel of being happy⁴⁵.

Abhyanga mitigates Vata, promotes strength, sleep, growth and firmness of the hairs, and is useful in burns, fractures, wounds, pain, tiredness, debility and old age^[46]. Also, there will be Deeptagni and Kostha Shuddhi^[47].

Importance of Taila and Other Factors

Abhyanga must be carried out after an individual has developed the desire for food and drinks. The oil used for Abhyanga should have the properties of mitigating Vata, having good smell, suitable to the season and pleasant to touch^[48]. The commentator opines that, oil should be cold in hot seasons and hot in cold seasons^[49].

Medicated oil has to be prepared out of Madhuka, Laghu Panchamula, Kshira Vidari, Sarala and Devadaru. After collecting them, it should be made into decoction and paste and cooked with Chakra Taila (fresh oil extracted in a mill). This oil is used for massage^[50]. One should duly consider the factors like, Prakruti, Satmya, Rutu, Desha, Dosha and Vikara and make use of either Taila or Ghrita for Abhyanga and Seka^[51].

The sweat produced during the practice of Yoga, has to be rubbed on the body. This act if practiced regularly makes the body stiff and light^[52].

By applying three kinds of Sneha i.e. Ghrita, Eranda Taila and Tila Taila, there will be alleviation of dryness and burning sensation in the body and the body becomes as valuable as gold. The complaints of distension of the abdomen, indigestion etc. are corrected, digestive power is increased. These are administered in certain proportion for each Dosha. For Vata Dosha, Ghrita-1 Part, Eranda Taila- 2 Parts and Tila Taila-3 Parts, For Pitta Dosha, Tila Taila 1Part, Eranda Taila-2 Parts and Ghrita- 3 parts. For Kapha Dosha, Ghrita 1 Part, Tila Taila 2 Parts and Eranda Taila 3 Parts. If the Sneha is mixed in this proportion and used, it cures respective disorders^[53].

Oil extracted from Sarshapa (musturd), Gandha Taila (fragrant oils) and also those extracted out of seeds which produces flowers (like Bilva) and those which are extracted from such related species never vitiate the Dosha^[54]. Commentator says that Gandha Taila is that, which is extracted from heating or processing the Sugandha Yukta Dravya like Aguru^[55].

The food stuffs like Madhura, Lavana, Amla, meat of fish, curds, milk, ghee, horse gram, Tila, Garlic, green gram, Basti, Snehana Anga Mardana and Svedana all these things pacify Vata^[56]. Also, Basti, Nasya, Virechana and Upanaha pacify Vata^[57].

Procedure of Abhyanga

In all the texts, there is mentioning of Shiro Abhyanga, Karna Abhyanga and Pada Abhyanga. Each of which have their own importance and connection with each other. Abhyanga always has to be started from Shiras. It is said that, Abhyanga has to be performed first on the Shiras followed by Shravana and Pada Abhyanga^[58].

Mode of Action of Abhyanga /Massage

In all the classics the therapeutic effects of Abhyanga is mentioned. But, commentator Dalhana on commenting on Acharya Sushrut's verse quoted the mode of action of Abhyanga. For the verse Dhatoonam Pusthi Janano, Acharya Dalhana mentions about the entry of oil into each Dhatu as follows^[59]:

If Abhyanga is done up to 300 Matrakalas, it will reach to Romakupa, by 400 Matrakalas, it will reach to Tvacha; by,

500 Matrakalas, it will reach to Rakta; by 600 Matrakalas, it will reach to Mamsa; by 700 Matrakalas, it will reach to Meda; by 800 Matrakalas, it will reach to Asthi; and by 900 Matrakalas, it will reach to Majja^[60].

Acharya Charaka has mentioned that, Vayu dominates the tactile sensory organ and this sensory organ is lodged in the skin. The massage is exceedingly beneficial to the skin. So one should practice oil massage regularly^[61].

Discussion

Abhyanga is one of the main Purva Karma or Pre-operative Procedure of Panchkarma. It is main treatment of Bahya Snehana. Abhyanga works on Muscle and Nerve Disorder which Circulated by Rasa & Rakta Dhatu with the help of Shira Marma. Abhyanga can be used from birth to whole life. Abhyanga works as Shamaka Purva Karma procedure, acts on Vishuddha Vatavastha & Kapha Vata Upasthambhita Avastha. Abhyanga works on Veins with Vasodilatation with Ushna Veerya which is helpful to cure degeneration over Kati Pradesha.

Conclusion

Abhyanga is very important procedure to cure Katigraha. Abhyanga enhances the activity of Painful Stiff organs and prevents the Rogas. Abhyanga prevents Strotorodha and ensures well blood circulation and alleviates diseases with Lakshanas of Shula and Stambha like Katigraha, Manyastambha, Shirah-shoola, Ekanga-vata, Avabhahuka etc.

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