



AYURVEDIC APPROACH WITH THE MANAGEMENT OF VARICOSE VEIN/SIRAGRANTHI

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ABSTRACT

In Ayurvedic literature it is mentioned that tract responsible for "SARANKARMA" is called "SIRA". Although in general term "SIRA" reflects the "BLOOD VESSELS" but it is specified as the veins in other references given by Acharyas. Sira transport Vata, Pitta, Kapha Dosh and Rasadi Dhatus etc. According to Ayurveda "SIRAGRANTHI" is one of the pathologies that occurs in veins. Similarly, varicosity of the veins is observed in modern science which leads to various problem concerned with anatomical-physiological changes. Varicose veins are enlarged, swollen and tortuous veins. It caused by weak or damaged vein walls and valves usually appear on legs or feet. Acharya Sushrut has mentioned the fact vitiated Vata directly affects the Sirapratana(cluster of veins) by Aakshepa and exposes them to Sampidya, Samkochya and Vishoshana and produces "GRANTHI" which protrudes out. In modern science due to causative factors, blood becomes stagnated in the superficial veins which is subjected to high leaks and subsequently become distended and tortuous and hence varicose vein occurs. In contemporary situation ligation, ligationwith stripping, sclera therapy, radial surgery is used for the treatment but after sometimethere is reoccurrence of disease. In Ayurveda "SIRAVEDHA" (Venesection), Raktamokshan (Bloodletting) and Jalaukavcharan (Leech therapy) are available which can help in reducing the symptoms more effectively as comparedto modern medicine.

KEYWORDS: Jalaukavcharan, Raktamokshan, Siragranthi, Varicose vein.

INTRODUCTION

"SIRAGRANTHI" is one of the most common clinical condition affecting the lower limbs. This is mainly a lifestyle disorder. Varicose veins have been described in Ayurvedic text. Varicose veins have been described in Ayurvedic text. It was first described by Acharya Sushruta in Sushruta Samhita.^[1] According to Acharya Sushruta and Vagbhata Siragata Vata get aggravated and causes Sira into Sankochya, Sankshipya, Vritta and Vakritrita that resembles the varicose veins.^[2,3] Varicose veins are common disease in present era. The basic cause of varicose veins is incompetency of perforating valves of lower limbs. The predisposing factor of varicose veins is prolong standing and increased abdominal pressure like pregnancy, abdominal tumors. This is mainly a life style disorder Ayurveda gives

several treatments for the management of Siragranthi (Varicose Veins) and several drugs which are very helpful in reducing the symptoms. FOXC2 gene is cause for hereditary varicosity.^[4] Deep vein of lower limb accompanied artery and their branches possess numerous valves are posterior tibial vein, peroneal vein, anterior tibial vein, popliteal veinand femoral vein. Superficial veins lie in subcutaneous fat between skin and deep fascia. During prolonged standing long column of blood along with gravity puts pressure on weekend valves of vein and giving raise to varicosity of long and short saphenous veins and also calf muscle cannot push blood upwards. Obesity leads to varicosity due to poor support of fatty tissue in subcutaneous veins. Multiparous woman is predisposing for varicose veins in pregnancy due to progesterone hormone causes dilation and

relaxation of lower limb and this may cause vein incompetence and also pregnant uterus causes pressure on inferior vena cava causing obstruction to venous flow.

NIDANA (ETIOLOGY)

- **Abalasya Vyayamajaate**^[5] -The disproportionate volume of effort by an individual who is poor and emaciated. Getting a vulnerable person who is being exposed to prolonged workout. The Vitiated Vata, the vascular bundles, which in turn, are vitiated Compresses, Squeezes (Sampeedya), and (Samkochya) it dries up (Vishoshya) in less time, it generates Siraja Granthi, which is elevated, circular in shape.
- **Padatte Sahasaambho Avagahana**^[6] - The who immersing or cleaning the lower limb suddenly in cold water after a long-distance walk. Because of the unexpected shift in the situation, the temperature of the leg as a result of the above the Sira becomes engorged, and may therefore not be able to pump the properly blood. It activates the local retention, thereby resulting in tortuous existence veins, edema, discoloration and so on.
- **Vyayaamat Pratantasya-** Excessive or over exercise leads to Siragranthi. The perpetuating factor of the primary varicose vein is excessive exertion of the lower limb. Inherent factor and some predisposing causes defective veins or valvular structure.
- **FACTORS AFFECTING VYANA VAYU-** Vyana vayu performs five kind of action Gati, Akshepana, Utkshepena, Nimesh and Unmesh. It helps in flow of blood and eliminates Sweda (sweat) from the body. It affects Sira because it circulates Rasa. In modern science the causative or etiological factors could be congenital or both or may be none of these present.^[7] Some of these factors are as follows-
 - Long standing occupation
 - Obesity
 - Bowel habits
 - Pregnancy
 - Old age
 - Hereditary

Pathogenesis according to Ayurveda^[8]

According to Acharya Sushruta that vitiated Vata affects the Siraprathana (clusters of veins) by Aakshepa and produces GRANTHI' which protrudes out. According to Acharya Charaka with Vata, Kapha, Rakta and Pitta also get vitiated which obstruct blood vessels and leads to edema of surrounding areas. In modern science under normal pathology blood from the superficial venous system passed to the deep veins and from deep veins the blood is pumped up to the heart by the muscle pump, valve and negative intra-thoracic pressure but if this mechanism disturbed by the valves of the deep veins or system it leads to stagnation of this veins become distended and tortuous.^[9] According to the Ayurvedic Samhitas e.g. Astanga Hridaya^[10] which says that „if the one who dip their feet in cold water immediately after

excessive exercise causes sudden decrease in temperature to the warm legs. As a result, Vata Dosa imbalance will occur (Prakop awastha of Vata), after which sudden constriction of veins occurs, which leads to formation of varicose veins.

Sign and symptoms^[11,12]

- Heaviness (Gaurava), burning sensation (Daha), aching pain (Toda), tiredness (Ayasa), discoloration of veins or skin (Krishna raktasira), numbness (Sada) or pain in legs which gets worse after prolonged standing or sitting.
- Appearance of the spider or tortuous veins (Grathithasira).
- Swelling in legs and ankle (Padasotha), Itching over the vein (Kandu).
- At later stage varicose ulcers are common at varicose vein and usually are not a sign of serious problem. but in many cases, varicose veins can be a sign of blockage in the deeper veins called DVT (deep vein thrombosis).

Sadhyata- Asadhyata (Prognosis)-Sushrut acharya describes the painful variety as Krichr asadhya (difficult to cure) and the painless variety that is bigger in size and presenting at Marmasthanas as totally incurable.^[13]

Ayurvedic approach for varicose veins

In the case of any illness, the factors that are responsible for the disease, called Nidana parivarjan, are prevented. The food that contributes to Vata and Pitta impairment in the body in the varicose vein should be avoided, such as salty and spicy food, dry and junk food should be avoided. It is important to prevent prolonged standing because it is a major cause of the disease. Dietary changes and lifestyle modification seem to work in Ayurveda herbs and herbal formulations by reinforcing the vein walls, other arteries, and encouraging good venous circulation in the body. They primarily relieve symptoms such as pain or heaviness. Pacifying aggravated Vata, Pitta dosha and Rakta dhatu is the main line of treatment. Ayurveda treatments include internal herbal health supplements and external treatments procedures. Herbs which can be used are Amala (*Embelica officinalis*), Bala (*Sida cordifolia* Linn.), Arjuna (*Terminalia arjuna*), Mandukparni (*Centella asiatica*), Daruharidra (*Berberis aristata*), Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*), Guggulu (*Commiphora wightii*), Neem (*Azadirachta indica*), Kanchanara (*Bauhinia variegata*), Nagakesar (*Mesua ferrea* Linn.), Shatavari (*Asparagus racemosus* Willd.), Vidari (*Pueraria tuberosa* DC).^[14]

Some common herbal preparations in varicose veins are Punarnavadi guggulu, Triphala guggulu, Chandraprabha vati, Manjishtadi vati, Arogyavardhini vati. These all preparations are Tridoshshama kaanti -inflammatory, diuretic, specially Vatashamaka, blood purifier, wound healing which ultimately helps in reducing discomfort of varicose veins.

Ayurvedic external treatments^[15]**Parasurgical procedures**

Siravedha: (Venesection) reduces local engorgement of the pressure and helps in better blood circulation, and preserves valve competency and elasticity of the vein walls.

Jaloukavacharana: (Leech therapy) is a blood-letting therapy with the help of leech application on the affected part. This procedure improves blood circulation. It decreases strain on the veins and the surrounding areas, so that elastic recoiling of veins is maintained and over dilatation also prevented. The leech's saliva has anticoagulant, anesthetic and antibacterial properties.^[16]

Management according to modern-In modern ligation, ligation with stripping and sclerotherapy are done for the treatment of varicose veins. Some preventive measures are taken i.e., avoid prolonged standing, use of crepe bandages, elastic stockings, limb elevation and daily exercise which can only subside varicose vein.

Drawbacks of modern treatment-Stripping causes numbness in legs by damaging the nerves. Saphenous vein bruises out due to stripping and it leads to injury in sensory nerve. All these factors cause reoccurrence of varicose veins.

DISCUSSION

Sirajagranti is a common clinical condition affecting the lower limbs and the incidence being prevalent in this era owing to the busy life schedule. Incidence of varicose vein is more in people belonging to the occupation that involved prolonged standing. Easiest way of treating a disease is avoidance of the etiological factors. The commonest causes are excessive physical activity that put pressure on the legs, standing for prolonged time, sedentary lifestyle, tight clothing, overweight, dietary deficiencies etc. By avoiding standing, sitting for a long time, maintaining appropriate body weight, Life style modifications, and dietary changes, along with Ayurvedic treatment helps to prevent Sirajagranti (varicose veins). According to Acharya Sushruta, the etiological factors play a role in the vitiation of Vata and this vitiated Vata directly affects the Sira Prathana (network of veins) by Akshepa and exposes them to Sampeedana (aching/squeezing type of pain), Samkochana (constriction) and Vishoshana (drying up) and produces Granthi which is elevated, quick developing and round.^[17] The description of prognosis itself demarcates a difference between the opinions of the two authors. Sushrut acharya describes the painful variety as Krichra Sadhya (difficult to cure) and the painless variety that is bigger in size and presenting at Marma sthanas as totally incurable. Vagbhata Acharya too is keen on the selection of cases. He, along with the narration of this condition has told the treatment indicated for cases which are Nava (fresh). So, in this context the understanding of what is meant by Nava becomes important. Vagbhata Acharya has not claimed the disease

as Sukha Sadhya (easily curable) or Krichra Sadhya (difficult to cure).

CONCLUSION

Once the valves get destructed it becomes difficult to get them in previous natural condition. In contemporary medicine surgical treatments such as ligation, stripping etc. are done but there is reoccurrence of veins and cure is not permanent. Ayurveda treatment not only reduces oedema, venous sufficiency but also helps in healing of varicosity of veins by controlling Vyanvata and Ranjakpitta. A correct interpretation of etiological factors is necessary to prevent the occurrence of Sirajagranti, manage it in early stage, or allows proper maintenance of signs and symptoms to reduce the complications and support a better quality of life. Thus, Ayurvedic treatment is more liable and give better results for Sirajagranti (varicose vein).

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