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## Research Article

### MANAGEMENT OF VISHWACHI (CERVICAL SPONDYLOSIS) THROUGH AYURVEDA: A CASE REPORT

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#### ABSTRACT

Cervical spondylosis is the osteoarthritis of cervical spine which produces neck pain that radiates to the back of the head, shoulders or arms. The roots most commonly affected are C<sub>7</sub> and C<sub>6</sub>. Here, the patient presented with complaints of pain at the nape of neck and left shoulder. The pain radiates to left arm, forearm and till the phalanges. Considering the signs and symptoms of cervical spondylosis it can be correlated with Vishwachi. Vishwachi is a disease caused mainly due to vitiation of Vata Dosha and is one of the eighty Vata Nanatmaja Vyadhis. It can be caused due to multiple reasons including malnourishment, sedentary lifestyle, excessive consumption of Vata Vardhak Ahar Vihar and due to degenerative changes. Here an attempt has been made to manage the initial stage of Vishwachi (cervical Spondylosis) by internal medications and Panchakarma therapies (Sarvanga Abhyanga, Sarvanga Patra Pottali Swedana, Lepam, Matra Vasti, Greeva Vasti). It was seen that there was significant improvement in pain at cervical region and numbness and left index finger. According to the patient there was about 85% reduction in severity of symptoms.

**Keywords:** Vishwachi, Cervical Spondylosis, Abhyanga, Patra Pinda Swedana, Matra Vasti, Greeva Vasti, Dhanwantaram tailam

#### INTRODUCTION

Its symptoms include neck pain, inability to move hand freely in shoulder joint, emaciation of muscles of the affected hand and loss of strength in the hand. The word Vishwachi is derived from two words Visvat + Anc. Visvat means entire or whole and Anc means directed towards or to move. Thus, Vishwachi literally means to spread throughout. The Pratyatmika Lakshana of Vishwachi is radiating pain from Bahu, Prishtha to the Hastalambha and Pratyanguli. Parallely, Cervical Spondylosis also shows signs and symptoms such as neck pain radiating to upper limbs and restricted neck movements.<sup>1-3</sup> Prevalence of cervical spondylosis in the world ranges from 16.7% to 75.1%.<sup>4</sup> Ruka, Stambha, Toda, Karmakshaya and Cheshta Apaharana of Bahu are signs and symptoms that afflict the neck and upper extremities, according to several Acharyas. According to Dalhana, the ailment is similar to Gridhrasi, a condition that affects the lower limb and is classified into two types: Vataja and Vatakaphaja. By the X-ray of the cervical spine, degenerative changes like decreased joint space and sclerotic changes in the joint surfaces can be seen. The prevalence of Vishwachi is increasing drastically. Sedentary lifestyle, food habits, spending more time on laptops or phones are the main causes responsible for Cervical Spondylosis. The revealed yearly rate of Cervical Radiculopathy is 83.2/100,000 people<sup>5</sup> and the detailed pervasiveness is 3.5/1000 people.<sup>6</sup>

The main Symptom of Vishwachi is presence of Shoola which only occurs by vitiation of Vata Dosha. Vasti Karma has been described in the Chikitsa sutra of Vata Vyadhi. Matra Vasti which is a type of Anuvasana Vasti helps in pacification of Vata. Hence, Matra Vasti has been taken to manage this case of Vishwachi.

#### CASE REPORT

A 49-year-old gentleman reported to the Panchakarma OPD, Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Ayurveda college and Hospital with the complaints of pain at the nape of neck for 15 days. Patient was apparently all right 15 days back, later he started getting mild pain at the nape of neck. He didn't consult any physician. Later, his pain started radiating to left shoulder and upper limb. He experienced weakness in his left hand with pain and left arm, forearm and interphalangeal joints. Gradually, the intensity of pain increased and affected his daily routine. He also had numbness at left index finger and experience giddiness after waking up from sleep. Patient presented with agonising pain.

The study is carried out as per the Indian council of Medical Research, National ethical guidelines for Biomedical and Health Research involving human participants.

Patient was an engineer and was working for IT company. He had long working hours on screen for last 25 years. After lockdown in 2020 he has been working from home. He would sit on bed in an uncomfortable position for long hours. He would not do regular physical exercise. He was also an alcoholic, used to take alcohol occasionally. Patient had constipation and irregular appetite. Very often he used to have outside food. Patient was well built and had Vata-Pitta Parakriti, krura koshttha and manda agni. Patient was diagnosed as a case of cervical spondylosis, Vishwachi due to findings of X ray and diagnosis criteria.

Considering the history and examination patient was planned to post for Panchakarma therapy. Patient was administered with Vishtinduka Vati 2 tablets, internally. For external treatment,

Sarvanga Abhyangam with Dhanwantaram tailam and Bestilin liniment and patra pottali swedana for 8 days, lepam with kottamchukkadi churnam and dhanyamlam at cervical region and then matra vasti with 70 ml dhanwantaram tailam and greeva vasti with dhanwantaram tailam and bestilin liniment was administered for 4 days. After the treatment was over all the tests were rechecked and there was huge difference in them. Overall, symptomatically patient felt 85% better.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Many conditions may be correlated to Vishwachi, cervical spondylosis is one of them. Vata Vyadhi are commonly correlated with neurological and musculoskeletal disorders. Vishwachi is a neuromuscular disorder. Shoola is the prime Lakshana in this disease which is eventually responsible for Karmakshaya and Karmahani of Bahu, due to which there is difficulty in performing Utkshepana and Apakshepana of Bahu. It can also be said as Gridharasi of upper limb.

In the present case study, initially Snehana and Swedana Karma was done which was later done along with Lepam at cervical region. Snehana Karma happens to be the prime treatment for Vataja Vikara. It produces viscosity, softness, solubility and Kleda in the body.<sup>6</sup> Swedana Karma helps in relieving Stambha, Gaurava, Sheetata and induces Sweda. Both Snehana and Swedana Karma corrects imbalance of Vata Dosha and they are

more effective when performed in conjunction with each other. It was followed by Matra Vasti and Greeva Vasti. Matra Vasti is a type of Snehana Vasti or Anuvasana Vasti which promotes strength, causes easy elimination of faeces and urine and cures Vata disorders.

Vishwachi is a pain predominant disease. Pain in Vishwachi is caused by partial damage of nerve membranes which become sensitive to mechanical and chemical stimuli. Such afferentation pain may either be burning superficial (dysaesthetic) type or of stabbing character. So, administering a potent Vedanahara Yoga and nerve nourishing drugs are very effective in the management of Vishwachi.

All ayurvedic classics included Abhyanga, Swedana, Nasya and Niruha Vasti, Matra Vasti in the management of Vata Vyadhis. Bahu having its Moolam in Greeva gets affected in Vishwachi. Ayurveda has a better role in the management of this disease. It can be managed through Vyadhi Pratyani Aushadhi Prayoga, Vatahara Ahara-Vihara and Pathya-Apathya Prayoga. This case has revealed that Snehana, Swedana and Matra Vasti are effective in the management of Vishwachi as they are primarily responsible for pacification of Vata Dosha. Patient recovered 85% after the completion of whole treatment plan and was able to do his daily routine activities. Hence, Panchakarma along with postural correction and exercises can be used for treating such patients.

**Table 1: Medicines**

| Medicines        | No. of tablets | Aushadha Sewan Kala |
|------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Vishtinduka Vati | 1-0-1          | A/F                 |
| Triphala churna  | 0-0-6gm        | Bed time            |

**Table 2: Panchakarma procedures**

| Procedure                            | from       | To         | Number of days |
|--------------------------------------|------------|------------|----------------|
| Sarvanga Abhyanga                    | 15/05/2023 | 22/05/2023 | 8 Days         |
| Sarvanga Patra Pottali Swedana       | 15/05/2023 | 22/05/2023 | 8 Days         |
| Lepam (Neck to left scapular region) | 15/05/2023 | 21/05/2023 | 7 Days         |
| Matra Vasti                          | 18/05/2023 | 20/05/2023 | 4 Days         |
| Greeva Vasti                         | 18/05/2023 | 21/05/2023 | 4 Days         |

### Medicines for Panchakarma Procedures

- Abhyangam- Dhanwantaram Tailam and Bestilin Liniment
- Lepam- Kottamchukkadi Churnam and Dhanyamlam
- Greeva Vasti- Dhanwantaram Tailam and Bestilin Liniment
- Matra Vasti- Dhanwantaram Tailam (70 ml)

**Table 3: Motor Examination**

| MOTOR SYSTEM | RIGHT UPPER LIMB | LEFT UPPER LIMB |
|--------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Tone         | Normotonic       | Normotonic      |
| Power        | 5/5              | 5/5             |
| Bulk         | B/L equal        | B/L equal       |
| Reflex       |                  |                 |
| Triceps      | ++               | ++              |
| Biceps       | ++               | +               |

**Table 4: Musculoskeletal Examination**

| Examination        | Right upper limb                             | Left upper limb |
|--------------------|--|-----------------|
| Range of Movements | Normal                                       | Painful         |
| Radiating Pain     | Absent                                       | Present         |
| Cervical Joints    |  |                 |
| Swelling           | Mild at C <sub>5</sub> -C <sub>6</sub> level |                 |
| Redness            | Absent                                       |                 |
| Temperature        | Warmth                                       |                 |
| Range of movements | Painful and restricted                       |                 |

**Table 5: Tests Done for Assessment**

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| Spurling test                           | Positive |
| Cervical distraction test               | Positive |
| Shoulder Abduction test (Bakody's test) | Positive |
| L'hermitte's test                       | Positive |

## INVESTIGATIONS

MRI Cervical spine (19/04/23)

- Cervical spondylosis.
- Disc osteophyte complexes at C4-C7 levels.
- Indentation on thecal sac, mild compression on bilateral nerve roots.

Laboratory (17/05/23)

CBC, Blood Glucose, Blood Urea, Serum Creatinine levels were normal.

It was observed that after the course of treatment, pain reduced in left upper limb. There was also significant reduction in the numbness in left upper limb. Spurling's test and L'hermitte's test was found to be negative.

## CONCLUSION

Cervical spondylosis is a joint disease which shows osteoarthritic changes in cervical spine with clinical symptoms as neck pain radiating to upper limbs and restricted neck movements. If it is left untreated it becomes chronic in nature. For the ayurvedic management vatahara and vedanasthapana medicines are used along with panchakarma procedures like matra vasti, greeva vasti, abhyangam, nadi swedana, sarvanga patra pinda sweda etc. It can be completely cured with the help of ayurvedic treatment.

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