



Review Article

PRINCIPLES OF TREATMENT IN *BALAROGA*-AN AYURVEDA PURVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda has emphasized on the quality of life along with its longevity. The *Acharyas* have categorized the stages of life into various forms. *Balyaavastha* (childhood) is one such phase of life that differs in the *Ahara* (diet), *Vihara* (lifestyle) and *Aushadhi* (medicines) than the other phases. The treatment modalities also differ in this phase. The synonyms of *Bheshaja* (medicine) have been defined by *Acharya Charaka* as *Chikitsitam* (treatment), *Vyadhiharam* (disease removal), *Pathyam* (wholesome agents) *Sadhanam* (modes of treatment), *Aushadham* (drugs), *Prayashchitam* (corrective measures), *Prashamanam* (alleviation), *Prakritisthapanam* (restoration) and *Hitam* (beneficial). Each term has its own that defines every aspect of treatment. The underlying theme of treatment in *Balaroga* can be understood by the proper understanding of the implications of the term *Bheshaja*. The variations of treatment according to the various stages of the diseases can be understood by these terms. This paper aims at discussing the principles of treatment in *Balaroga* from Ayurveda perspective. The treatment of various diseases of children deal with the same underlying basic principle as adults but the only difference is a slight shift of thought in it. The paper aims at highlighting the treatment principles in *Balaroga*. For this purpose, the literature was reviewed from the internet, and the Ayurveda classics along with their commentaries. The complexities of treatment in *Balaroga* are highlighted on the basis of this definition of the term *Bheshaja*.

KEYWORDS: *Balyaavastha*, *Chikitsa*, *Prakritisthapanam*, *Hitam*.

INTRODUCTION

The science of Ayurveda has a wide range of health benefits to offer to the mankind. Prevention and treatment of the different diseases is the main motive of the science. Coherence in understanding the principles of Ayurveda is very essential to understand and apply them into practice. The Ayurveda classics are an epitome of an organized and methodical way of writing. The eightfold classification of the different branches of Ayurveda are an exemplary form of the systematic way of explaining the underlying principles. *Balaroga* is one such branch that details with the growth, development, nutrition and the treatment of the diseases in Ayurveda. *Acharya Charaka* has defined *Chikitsa* as the maintenance of equilibrium in the body by the combined efforts and synchronization between the *Chikitsa Chatushpada* viz. *Bhishaka* (physician), *Dravya* (medicines), *Upasthata* (nurse) and *Rogi* (patient) [1]. The *Chikitsasthana* embarks with the synonyms of the word *Bheshaja* (medicine). Even though they have been mentioned as the synonyms of *Bheshaja*, each one of them has its own importance in depicting the different aspects of medicine. *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned these synonyms as.

1. *Chikitsitam* (treatment)
2. *Vyadhiharam* (disease removal)
3. *Pathyam* (wholesome agents)
4. *Sadhanam* (modes of treatment)
5. *Aushadham* (drugs)
6. *Prayashchitam* (corrective measures)
7. *Prashamanam* (alleviation)
8. *Prakritisthapanam* (restoration)

9. *Hitam* (beneficial).[2]

Acharya Chakrapani has explained the meanings of each of these terms in a definitive manner. The essence of the principles of Ayurveda lies in the fact that the applicability of every principle goes over a wide range of topics. It is important to understand and apply those principles wisely.

MATERIALS

This paper aims at describing the various treatment modalities in *Balaroga* on the lines of these synonyms of *Bheshaja*. For this purpose, the Ayurveda classics of *Brihatrayee* and *Laghutrayee* were reviewed. The modern textbooks of pediatrics were also referred for this purpose.

REVIEW WITH DISCUSSION

1. *Chikitsitam*

This point deals with the treatment of the various diseases in *Balaroga*. *Acharya Charaka* has advised that immediate initiation of the treatment in children should be quick as soon as the features of the diseases are manifested. It is essential to observe the *Panchanidana* of the disease.[3] It has been advocated that the examination of an ill child is of utmost importance to diagnose and treat a disease.

The observation of the activities of the child holds importance and should be done daily. According to the modern science, the treatment principles depend on the rationale thinking about the precise diagnosis, understanding of the normal and abnormal metabolic and emotional processes, socio-economic factors and the

therapeutic means.^[4] Acharya Vagbhata has categorized the phases of childhood into three types viz.- *Kshirada*, *Kshirannada* and *Annada*^[5]. The *Kshirada* phase of the child stays till the first six months during which the child consumes only breast milk and nothing else. The *Kshirannada* phase comes after the *Kshirada* phase during which the child consumes milk and some other food articles as prescribed in the *Annaprashana Sanskara*. The *Annada* phase starts after this during which the child consumes only food articles. The treatment principles change according to the different stages of the child. Acharya Charaka has advocated that there are some points that should be taken into consideration like nature of the child and disease, etiological factors, prodromal signs and symptoms of disease, signs and symptoms of disease and *Upashaya* of disease.^[6]

2. Vyadhiharam

This aspect deals with the specific treatments followed and indicated for certain diseases. In case of *Guda Paka* which is an inflammatory condition of the rectum including anal region, Acharya Sushruta has prescribed the *Rasanjana Swarasa* orally and also its ointment to be applied locally.^[7] Acharya Charaka has advised that the measures like *Vamana*, *Virechana*, *Asthapana* and *Anuvasana Basti* should be prescribed for *Dhatri* according to the predominance of *Dosha*.^[8]

Acharya Kashyapa has advised the use of *Phakka ratha* (Tricycle) to facilitate the movements in case of *Phakka* disease in children.^[9] The disease specific treatments can be considered under these headings. The anemia of thalassemia major is controlled only by the transfusion of blood which is given to maintain the haemoglobin level above 6 gm per 100 ml.^[10] The disease specific treatment of various diseases can be categorized under this heading.

3. Pathyam

This aspect involves the usage of wholesome agents. Acharya Charaka has advised the *Ahara* (diet) and *Vihara* (daily regimen) opposite to the *Desha* (place), *Kala* (time) and the nature of the child. Use of the wholesome substances provide health and strength to the child.^[9] He has also advocated that the children should be given milk with *Madhura Dravyas*. It should be diluted before offering to the child. The articles which are *Snigdha* (unctuous), *Ruksha* (dry), *Ushna* (hot) and *Amla* (sour) in properties, of *Katu Vipaka* and other *Guru* (heavy) food, drinks and drugs should be avoided.^[11] Acharya Charaka has advised a diet for *Dhatri* like *Shali*, *Yava* and wheat in the category of cereals, *Munga Masura* and *Kulatha* in pulses, *Amalaka*, *Brinjal*, *Nimba*, Snake gourd, pea, onion in vegetables, ginger, *Pippali*, *Saindhava*, garlic in spices.^[12]

Breast milk is the ideal and natural food for the full term infants during the first few months of life. The provision of the carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins and minerals according to the different age groups is also necessary for the body. The breast milk is a complete food for the infant as the lactatory apparatus of the mother is both efficient and specific for the growth and development of the baby.^[11]

4. Sadhanam

This deals with the mode of treatment. The mode of therapy depends upon the nature and type of disease. Acharya Charaka has described three types of treatments viz. *Daivavyapashraya* (Divine therapy), *Yukti Vyapashraya* (Medicinal therapy) and *Satvavajaya* (psychological therapy).^[14] The *Daivavyapashraya chikitsa* is done by the use of divine *Mantras* (chanting), *Aushadha* (herbs), *Manidharana* (precious gems), *Mangala Karma* (Propitiatory rites) including *-Bali* (sacrifice), *Homa* (offerings), *Niyama* (vows), *Prayashchita* (ceremonial penitence), *Upavasa* (fasts) etc. The *Yuktivyapashraya Chikitsa* includes the usage of various medicinal preparations along with modifications in the diet and lifestyle. *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* implies the measures to achieve the mental balance and treat the *Mansika Doshas*.^[15]

The *Shamana* and *Shodhana* therapy are also the other modes of treatment prescribed according to the age group and nature of the disease. This have to be prescribed according to the condition of the *Doshas* and the severity of the diseases.

5. Aushadham

This includes the various drugs that are prescribed for different diseases. The drug dosages are decided according to the stages of the child viz. *Kshirada*, *Kshirannada* and *Annada*. This is the most important aspect of treatment in the children which deals with the proper selection and calculation of doses.

The *Panchakarma* therapy as well as the *Dhupana* therapy are advised according to their indications and contraindications. According to the modern science the administration of drugs is done through the oral, rectal, parenteral routes, intrathecal therapy, topical therapy, inhalational therapies etc. The dose of the drugs are calculated by different formulae.

Acharya Sushruta has prescribed the dosage of drug to both *Dhatri* and child in *Kshirada* Condition as the amount that can be held on the terminal phalanx of index finger. likewise for *Kshirannada* condition the dose is prescribed as *Kolasthi* (equal to stone of plum fruit) for both and child and *Dhatri*. Further for *Annada* condition the dose is prescribed only for child as *Kola* (Equal to plum fruit).^[16]

6. Prayashchitam

The corrective measures taken in order to treat a disease can be considered under this heading. Acharya Kashyapa has mentioned the importance of the worship of Lord Maruti in case of the diseases of dentition.^[17]

The various religious measures like *Japa* (chanting of mantras), *Bali* (offerings), *Homa* (offerings to the sacred fire) adopted in the treatment of the *Balagraha* are also an example of this type of treatment. Under the context of *Prayashchitam* different measures like *Japa*, *Bali*, *Home* as prescribed in treatment of *Balagraha* has its own importance as described by Acharya Vagbhata.^[18]

This treatment modality has its own importance and it is assigned as an integral part of the treatment. It is a representation and a belief in the superlative power that

exists in the nature and is beyond the realms of the human mind.

7. Prashamanam

This includes the treatment to alleviate the *Doshas*. In case of the milk disorders, treatment is prescribed according to the predominance of *Doshas*. The *Dhatri* whose milk is vitiated with *Vata* is prescribed a decoction of *Devadaru*, *Sarala*, *Katurohini*, *Vaca*, *Kushtha*, *Patha*, *Bharangi*, *Magadhika* etc.

The treatment of milk vitiated with *Pitta Dosh* is done by the decoction of *Amrita*, leaves of *Patola*, *Sariva*, *Shatavari*, *Nimba* and cow dung. The treatment of milk vitiated with *Kapha Dosh* is done by *Ghrta* mixed with *Saindhava* and *Pippali*.^[19]

8. Prakritisthapanam

After performing *Panchakarma* therapy in the *Dhatri*, she is advised the *Samsarjana Karma* to restore the *Agni* and equilibrium of the *Doshas* in the body. The *Stanya Shodhaka* drugs are also advised for the purification and restoration of the vitiated breast milk.

9. Hitam

All the beneficial dietary practices and daily regimen are included in this part. The healthy regimen prescribed in the texts for the growth and development of children is prescribed under this context. The different types of *Samskara* should be performed in the children for the promotion of their psychological and spiritual well being. It also provides strength and longevity of life.

CONCLUSION

The complexities and the intricacies regarding the treatment of diseases in *Balaroga* can be understood and interpreted well by the various aspects of treatment mentioned in the *Ayurveda* classics. It is important to apply the learned principles and avail oneself with the benefits of health. The principles of treatment of *Balaroga* and their application can be understood thoroughly with the help of this principle. These principles of treatment defined in one context can be helpful to all kinds of conditions which can be understood by *Hetwartha Tantrayukti*. Thus the synonyms of the term *Bheshaja* simplify the understanding and interpretation of the treatment modalities in *Balroga*.

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