



Research Article

A CLINICAL INSIGHT INTO THE ROLE OF *PANCHAKARMA* IN *GRIDHRASI* WITH REFERENCE TO SCIATICA

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ABSTRACT

Gridhrasi is one among the eighty *Nanatmaja vatavyadhi* described in the Ayurvedic text. In today's era the changing lifestyle shifting duties, inappropriate posture, excessive two-wheeler travelling, irregular dietary habits, no exercise, these factors produce stress on spine and responsible for diseases like *Gridhrasi*. The cardinal signs and symptoms of *Gridhrasi* are *Ruk, Toda, Spandhana* in *Sphik, Kati, Uru, Janu, Jhanga*, and *Pada* in order *Sakthikshep Nigraha* which all these can be correlated to sciatica in the contemporary science. Sciatica is a painful condition that causes pain in the lower back radiating to lower limbs resulting from irritation of the sciatic nerve roots. The nerve extends from the lower back down each leg and when effected can cause severe discomfort varying from mild ache to sharp burning sensation even excruciating pain. It is more among the people of age between 30yrs and 50yrs. *Panchakarma* therapy is a unique potent approach of Ayurveda which attacks the very root cause of the disease cleanses the microcirculatory channels, removes the vitiated doshas and produces long lasting benefits. A female patient of age 53yrs approached our hospital with the history of pain in the lower back since 10 days radiating to bilateral lower limbs with the features of *Gridhrasi* that is sciatica, like pain, electric shock like sensation, stiffness, and burning sensation, difficulty in sitting, standing and walking for even for 5 minutes. Treatment plan included *Abyanga, Choorna Pinda Sweda, Panchatiktha Ksheera Basthi, Prustabasthi*, with *Vasa Bala Ashwagandha Taila*, along with *Shamana Chikithsa*. After 40 days of treatment patients' symptoms were assessed and outcome as good. The patient who was finding difficulty in standing for 5 minutes found remarkable improvement in the signs and symptoms and also in general quality of the life.

INTRODUCTION

Gridhrasi is one among the eighty *Nanatmaja Vatavyadhi* described in the ayurvedic text, which can be correlated to sciatica in the contemporary science. Sciatica is a painful condition that causes pain in the lower back radiating to lower limbs resulting from irritation of the Sciatic Nerve roots. The nerve extends from the lower back down each leg. The term Sciatica is used when the leg pain radiates posteriorly in the sciatic or L5/S1 distribution. It is caused by impingement of the L4, L5 or S1 nerve i.e., from herniated disc and manifests as unilateral

neuropathic pain extending from gluteal region down the posterior-lateral leg to the foot characterized by excruciating pain and paresthesia in sciatic nerve distribution and can severely impact the quality of life of those effected. It is more common among the age group of 30 yrs and 50 yrs usually caused by herniated disc, bone spur, spinal stenosis or interarticularis compressive fracture.^[2] Life time incidence is reported between 10% to 40% and annual incidence of 1% to 5% in India. As per library of science 90% of Sciatica are caused by Herniated disc with nerve root compression.

In Ayurveda *Gridhrasi* is of two types where in vitiated *Vata* inside the buttocks causes *Ruk, Toda, Sthambha, Spandana* in *Vataja* type of *Gridhrasi*. In *Vatakaphaja Gridhrasi*, one might see *Tandra* (drowsiness), *Gaurav* (heaviness), and *Aruchi* (anorexia).^[3]

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Panchakarma management of *Gridhrasi* includes *Shiravyadha*, *Agnikarma*, *Basthi*.^[4] In the present case, *Snehana*, *Swedana*, *Basthi Karma*, *Agnikarma*, *Prusta Basthi* were adopted along with *Shamana Oushadhi*.

Case report: A female patient aged 53 years n/k/c/o Diabetes mellitus; hypertension hypothyroidism was apparently normal 10 days back. One day she experienced sudden pain in the lower back of the body after she had sudden jerk while travelling in the back seat of bus. It was associated with stiffness, burning sensation, numbness and tingling sensation. The pain was constant, aggravated on physical activity and also on coughing and sneezing. She had approached the nearby hospital immediately and was treated for the same for one day and found no significant improvement. As the patient preferred Ayurveda line of treatment, he approached our hospital and was admitted for the better management of the pain.

Name	xyz
Age	53yrs
Gender	female
Religion	Hindu
Occupation	Homemaker
Address	Deepanjali Nagar, Bengaluru
OPD no	43893
IPD no	3074
DOA	09/09/2024
DOD	20/10/2024

Pradhana vedhana

C/O pain in the lower back radiating to B/L lower limb and paraspinal region since 10 days.

Anubandha Vedhana- Associated with stiffness and numbness. Difficulty in sitting and walking.

Purva Vyadhi Vrutanta- N/K/C/O DM, HTN, thyroid dysfunction.

Koutumbika vritanta - Nothing significant

Vayaktika vrutanta

Ahara	Mixed
Nidra	Sound
Mala	Irregular after incident
Mutra pravritti	3-4 times /day 2 times/ night

General examination

General appearance	Healthy
Height	157cm
Weight	65kgs
BMI	26.4kg/m
Pulse rate	78bpm
Blood pressure	120/84mm of Hg.

Pallor	Absent
Icterus	Absent
Edema	Absent
Clubbing	Absent
Lymphadenopathy	Absent
Cyanosis	Absent

Ashtasthana pareeksha

Nadi	Prakrutha
Mala	Aprakrutha since the incidence
Mutra	Prakrutha
Jihwa	Lipta
Shabda	Prakrutha
Sparsha	Prakrutha
Drik	Prakrutha
Akriti	Madhyama

Samprapthi ghataka

Prakruti	Vata kphaja
Pramana	Madhyama
Dosha	Vata Kaphaja
Dushya	Kandara, Snayu, Asthi, Mamsa
Satmya	Madhyama
Sara	Madhyama
Bala	Madhyama
Abhayavarana Shakthi	Madhyama
Jarana Shakthi	Madhyama
Samhanana	Madhyama
Vyayama Shakthi	Avara
Vaya	Madhyama

Systemic examination

Central Nervous system- HMF intact.pt is conscious with time, place and person.

Respiratory system- Normal vesicular breath sound heard, no added sounds.

Cardiovascular System - S1 S2 heard, no murmurs

Gastrointestinal system - P/A soft, non-tender

Per Abdomen-soft and non-tender.

Nidhan Panchaka

Nidana	Sudden jerk while travelling in the back seat of bus.
Poorvarupa	Pain in the lower back
Rupa	Pain in the lower back radiating to bilateral lower limbs. A/w with stiffness, numbness, burning

	sensation and electric shock like sensation.
<i>Upashaya</i>	Pain subsides on rest in sleeping position.
<i>Anupashaya</i>	Aggravates on sitting and walking.

Curvature of spine: Normal Flexion-painful and restricted

Tenderness: At L4-L5, L5-S1 and B/L paraspinal muscles Extension-painful

Doorbell sign: Positive at L4, L5, S1 Lateral- painful and restricted.

Coin pick test: Painful and restricted. Toe walk: pain full and restricted

Heel walk: Painful and restricted

Musculo-skeletal examination

Gait: Antalgic Range of Movement

Spine examination: Range of Movement:

Tests

	Right leg	Left leg
SLR	20°	30°
Bregards Sign	Positive	Positive
Bowstring Sign	Positive	Positive
VAS Score	9	9

Investigations

MRI of lumbo sacral spine: Partial compressive fracture of L1 vertebra. Hemangioma in L4 vertebra.

Grade 1 anterolisthesis of L5 over S1 with annular tear of bilateral interarticularis defect and pseudo disc bulge at L5-S1.

Treatment plan in first visit

Treatment	DURATION
<i>Sthanika abhyanga</i> with <i>Kanaka taila</i> followed by <i>Choorna pinda sweda</i>	3 days
<i>Panchatiktha kashaya basthi</i> followed by <i>Panchatiktha ksheera Basthi</i>	12 days
<i>Anuvasana basthi</i> with <i>Guggulu tiktha gritha</i>	16 days
<i>Agnikarma</i>	One sitting
<i>Matrabasthi</i> with <i>Ashwagandha bala lakshadhi taila</i>	8 days
<i>Rasnadhi upanaha</i> to lower back	7 days
<i>Prusta basthi</i> with <i>Vasa</i> and <i>Ashwagandha bala lakshadhi taila</i>	15 days
Dry cupping to lower back	8 days

Treatment plan for second visit

<i>Sthanika abhyanga</i> with <i>Kanaka taila</i> followed by <i>Patra pinda sweda</i>	7 days
<i>Prusta basthi</i> with <i>Vasa</i> and <i>Ashwagandha bala lakshadhi taila</i>	7 days
<i>Panchatiktha kashaya basthi</i> followed by <i>Panchatiktha ksheera Basthi</i>	6 days
<i>Anuvasana basthi</i> with <i>Trivruth Sneha</i> with <i>Guggulu tiktha Gritha+ Vasa+ Ashwagandha bala lakshadhi taila</i>	10 days
Dry cupping to lower back	7 days

Observations

Subjective parameters

Signs and symptoms	Before treatment	After 1 st visit	After 2 nd visit
Radiating pain	3+	2+	1+
Numbness	2+	1+	0
Burning sensation	3+	1+	0
Electric shock like sensation	3+	2+	0
Walking distance	Difficult to stand for 5 minutes.	Pt was able to stand for 30 minutes.	Patient was able to do morning walking for 1 hour.

Objective parameters

Tests and Signs	Before treatment		After 1 st visit		After 2 nd visit	
SLR	RL 20 °	LL 30°	RL 50°	LL 55°	RL >70°	LL >70°
Bregards Sign	+	+	+	+	-ve	-ve
Bowstring Sign	+	+	+	+	-ve	-ve
Walking distance	Difficult to stand even for 5minutes		Standing for 30 minutes		Able to do morning walking for 1 hr	
VAS Score	9		5		2	

The patient demonstrated remarkable clinical recovery with significant improvement in overall condition. There was a considerable reduction in lower back pain, burning sensation, and numbness. Gait pattern showed notable correction, progressing from an antalgic to a normal walking posture. The patient regained comfort and confidence in performing forward bending and lateral flexion movements. Post-treatment MRI findings revealed correction of Grade I anterolisthesis, indicating radiological normalization. Following this improvement, the patient successfully resumed normal daily activities, which were previously hindered by the condition

DISCUSSION

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Abhyanga

Abhyanga, being performed on the *Twak* (skin), effectively pacifies *Vata Dosha*.^[5] *Abhyanga* acts as a potent measure to delay the aging process. Thus, it effectively retards the degenerative changes occurring in various *Dhatus*. *Sneha* applied for approximately 900 *Matra Kala*, it can permeate up to the *Majja Dhatu*. This deep nourishment helps in maintaining the integrity and strength of deeper tissues.

Swedana: *Swedana* plays a pivotal role in pacifying *Vata Dosha*, which is primarily responsible for *Stambha* (rigidity) and *Sankocha* (contracture) due to its inherent *Ruksha* (dry) and *Sheeta* (cold) qualities.^[6] *Swedana* facilitates the normalization of neuromuscular and circulatory functions by liquefying the aggravated *Doshas* lodged within the *Srotas*.

Panchatiktha ksheera Basthi: Among therapeutic measures, *Basti* is considered the *Pradhana Karma* in the management of *Vata vyadhis*. *Basti* administered through the anal route enters into the *Pakvashaya* and removes the *Doshas* accumulated there. *Khshira* (milk) and *Ghrta* (ghee), being *Snigdha* and *Madhura* in nature, act as effective *Vata-shamana* substances. *Tikta Rasa*, constituted mainly of *Akasha* and *Vayu mahabhutas*, is characterized by its lightness and penetrating quality. They naturally tend to reach and nourish the *Asthi dhatu* after assimilation in the body.^[7]

Prusta Basthi: an Ayurvedic therapeutic procedure for the back, involving a reservoir of warm, medicated oil placed on the spine to provide relief from pain, stiffness, and inflammation. It is effective for chronic back pain, sciatica, and degenerative changes like disc disease, strengthening spinal muscles, and improving flexibility and circulation.

Agnikarma: *Agnikarma* treatment is an ancient Ayurvedic para-surgical procedure involving the controlled application of heat to a specific point on the body using a specialized heated metal instrument to relieve chronic in musculoskeletal disorders, and skin conditions like corns and warts. The goal is to provide quick relief by reducing pain and inflammation, stimulating healing, and improving circulation.

Dry Cupping: Cupping therapy is a therapeutic technique that utilizes a vacuum force created beneath a small vessel applied onto the skin's surface. This approach focuses on blood and autologous healing substances in a specific area, stimulating metabolic activity, improving immune function, and stabilizing blood biochemistry.^[8]

Guggulu tiktha gritha: '*Guggulutiktaka Ghrta*, which is *Vataghna* (*Vata* pacifier) in nature. In Ayurvedic literature the *Guggulu tiktaka ghrta* is being used for treatment of *Asthimajja kshaya* and also the combination explained in *Asthimajjagata Vata*. This drug is mentioned by *Ashtanga Hridaya* in the management of bones and associated disorders administration of *Guggulutiktaka Ghrta* is an effective medicine in reduction of pain, swelling, tenderness and restrictions to movements without any noxious effect which is very important.^[9]

Balashwagandhadhi taila: Balashwagandhadhi taila helps in mitigating Vata, Nadibalya and Puatikara.^[10]

CONCLUSION

Gridhrasi is most common Nanatmaja Vatavyadhi which is Vatakapha predominant where the vitiated Vata dosha manifests as low back pain which radiates to lower limb accompanied by stiffness and numbness Ayurvedic classics have described various treatment modalities in management of Gridhrasi since ancient times. It can be managed by various Panchkarma treatments like Abhyanga, Swedana, Basthi and Agnikarma as well with each therapy being tailor made to suit to the patient, the benefit is tremendous. Thus, it may be concluded that the Ayurvedic management of Gridhrasi is a gift to the society, in todays paced world.

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