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# UNDERSTANDING OF AVARANA W.S.R TO KAPHAVRUTA AND MEDHASAVRUTHA VATA IN THE PATHOGENESIS OF PAKSHAGATHA

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# **ABSTRACT**

Avarana is a unique concept in Ayurveda. Avarana is the path along which the pathogenesis of many diseases' proceeds. There are many conditions which mimic Avarana. It is either unnamed or least diagnosed due to lack of knowledge. Pakshagatha, one among the Vatajananatmaja vikara, is considered Vatavyadhi or Mahavatavyadhi. It can either be due to kevala vataja, dosha samsrusta/margavarana or datukshayajanya. As the treatment principle is different for different types of pakshagatha, it is essential to understand the various types of pakshagatha. Pakshagatha can be correlated to monoplegia, hemiplegia, paraplegia, and quadriplegia, which result after stroke or CVA. Many kinds of Avarana vata are mentioned in Ayurvedic treatises based on Avruta and Avaraka. The present article attempts to understand the role of kaphavruta and medasavruta vata in the pathogenesis of pakshagatha.

**Keywords:** Avarana, Kaphavruta vata, Medasavruta vata, Pakshagtha.

#### INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda admits that the vitiation of the *Srotas* (body channel) is essential to manifest every disease. In any disease, the nidana (aetiology) will lead to vitiation of dosha; vitiated dosha accumulated, particularly in *Srotas*, leads to the manifestation of disease<sup>2</sup>. In the context of Vatavyadhi, Charaka emphasises the necessity of knowing the status of dosha before coining appropriate treatment, where he describes four statuses of dosha, namely kshaya, vruddi, sama and avarana<sup>3</sup>. Various abnormal statuses of doshas can generate innumerable types of disease, and avarana is one among them. Avarana is one of the most complicated basic fundamental concepts of Ayurveda. Avarana is very beneficial in discussing the pathogenesis of numerous diseases. Pakshagatha is one such disease where one can notice the avarana in its pathogenesis. Pakshagatha is chesta nivrutti (loss of function) in either the right or left side of the body<sup>4</sup>. Acharya Charaka describes pakshaghata under vataja nanatmaja vikara<sup>5</sup> and vatavyadhi (diseases caused only by the vitiation of vata dosha). Acharya Sushruta mentions it is one among the mahavatavyadhi or vatavyadhi and mentioned it under asta Maha gadas (eight grave diseases). The condition of pakshagatha matches with monoplegia, hemiplegia, paraplegia or quadriplegia, which results after a stroke or CVA. From the Ayurveda point of view, pakshagatha occurs mainly due to the vitiation of vata dosha or in association with kapha or pitta<sup>7</sup>. In the present article, efforts are made to understand the kaphavruta and medasavruta avarana in pakshagatha.

# **AVARANA**

According to Shabdakalpa Druma, the word *avarana* is derived from *Aa* (*upasarga*) + *Vru* (*dhatu*) + *Lyut* (*pratyatmaka*), which means to be covered, encircled, concealed. There are different synonyms for *avarana*. They are *vega pratibhandanam*<sup>8</sup> (obstruction to movement), as per *Ayyurvedia shabdakosha*, *avarodha gati nirodha* (resistance to normal movement of *vata*), as stated in Shabdakalpa Druma, *achhadhanam* (encapsulation).

# **COMPONENTS OF AVARANA**

There are two factors involved in any *avarana*. They are *avaraka* (covering element) and *avarya*<sup>9</sup> (covered element). The factor being obstructed is avruta, while the one which obstructs *avruta* is *avaraka*. In most situations, *the avruta factor is vata, since vata dosha is gatyatmaka dravya because of its Chala guna*<sup>10</sup>. Hence, when its normal *gati* (movement) is ham-

pered, the *vata* becomes *avruta*. The *avaraka* factor may be *dosha*, *dhatu*, *mala* or *vata* types.

# AVARANA IN THE PATHOGENESIS OF DISEASE

Avyahata gati<sup>11</sup> (moves uninterruptedly) explains the normalcy of vata dosha. The svabhava (nature) of avarana is pratibhandana (counteraction) of the function of vayu; the movement of vayu is obstructed. The expression of symptoms is either vruddi (increased) or hani (decreased) depending on the avaraka and its relative nature to the element that gets covered<sup>12</sup>. In avarana, vata gets vitiated by the occlusion of other dosha, dhatu, and mala. Hence, the speed of movement gets demolished. The doshas traverse throughout the body channels, in which vayu takes the lead position due to its Sukshma (subtle) nature. The obstruction of vata in those channels by dosha, dhatu, and mala impedes the function of vayu in the affected area and, over time, diminishes the rasadi dhatus and leads to the formation of different diseases<sup>13</sup>. Hence, avarana is essential in discussing the pathogenesis of several diseases and thereby helps in designing the treatment protocol for the disease.

#### TYPES OF AVARANA

The avarana of Vayu has two types. One is anya avarana, also called Samanya avarana, where Vayu is encircled by other dosha, dhatu, or malas. This is one of 22 types. The other one is anyonya avarana, also called paraspara avarana, where another type covers one kind of Vayu. This is one of 20 types.

#### ANYA AVRANA

- Avarana by dosha 2 pittavruta vayu, kaphavruta vayu.
- Pittavruta pancha vayu- 5
- Kaphavruta pancha vayu- 5
- Dhatuavruta vayu- 6 raktavruta vayu, mamsavruta vayu, medavruta vayu, astiavruta, majjavruta vayu, shukravruta vayu.
- Malavruta avarana- 2- mootravruta vayu, pureeshavruta vayu.
- *Annavruta avarana-* 1
- Sarvadatvavruta vata- 1

#### ANNONYA AVARANA

Pranavruta udana	Udanavruta prana	Samanavruta prana	Vyanavruta prana	Apanavruta prana
Pranavruta samana	Udanavruta samana	Samanavruta udana	Vyanavruta udana	Apanavruta udana
Pranavruta vyana	Udanavruta vyana	Samanavruta vyana	Vyanavruta samana	Apanavruta samana
Pranavruta apana	Udanavruta apana	Samanavruta apana	Vyanavruta apana	Apanavruta vyana

In the context of the pathogenesis of *pakshagatha*, types of *avarana* that could be involved are *kaphavruta vata*, to be more specific, *kaphavruta vyana vata* and *medasavruta vata*. Also, one can observe the symptoms of *udanavruta vyana vata*, *samanavruta vyana vata*, *kaphavruta udana vata* in *pakshagata*.

# SYMPTOMS OF KAPHAVRUTA VATA

When vata is obstructed by kapha dosha, kapavruta vata arises. Symptoms include Shaityata (rigidity), gourava (heaviness), and shoola (pain). Katu rasa (pungent food article), ayasa (physical activities), rooksha (dry), and ushna (hot) measurements<sup>14</sup> relieve symptoms.

#### SYMPTOMS OF MEDASAVRUTA VATA

*Chala* (abnormal movements), *snigdha* (unctuousness), *mrudu* (softness/flaccidity), *sheeta* (rigid) in the body parts and *Aruchi* (loss of taste)<sup>15</sup>.

# SYMPTOMS OF KAPHAVRUTA VYANA VATA

Heaviness in the body, pain all over the joints, *gatisangha* (unable to move the body parts)<sup>16</sup>.

#### SYMPTOMS OF UDANAVRUTA VYANA VATA

Stiffness, loss of function of *agni* (digestive fire), reduced sweating, lack of effort and closure of the eyes<sup>17</sup>.

#### SYMPTOMS OF SAMANVRUTA VYANA VATA

*Moorcha* (loss of consciousness), *tandra* (drowsy), *pralapa* (incoherent speech), debility, diminished function of *agni*, diminished *ojas* and strength<sup>18</sup>.

#### SYMPTOMS OF KAPHAVRUTA UDANA VATA

Discoloration, *vakswara graha* (dysarthria), debility, heaviness in the body, loss of taste<sup>19</sup>.

#### **PAKSHAGATA**

Charaka mentions two variants of ardita manifestation: that expressed in the face and one-half of the body<sup>20</sup>. Sushruta has described pakshagata as afflictions of one-half of the body. So, pakshagata can be considered a variant of ardita in which there will be a

loss of function in one-half of the body <sup>21</sup>. Sarvangavata is a variant of pakshagata in which weakness can be observed in all four limbs <sup>22</sup>.

#### **NIRUKTI**

As mentioned in *Shabdakalpa Druma*, pakshagatha means *vinashana* (loss of function) in *deha ardha* (one part of the body). To understand it more, *shareera Ardha* is compared to *ardanaarishwaravath* or *Narasimha aakarena*<sup>23</sup>. *Ardanaarishwaravath* involves either the right or left side of the body. In this, *pakshagata* is presented in the vertical plane. *Narasimha aakarena* is when either the upper part or lower part of the body is involved. Here, pakshagata can be defined on a horizontal plane.

# PARYAYA(SYNONYMS)

Paksha vada (non-functioning of the limbs), paksha hata (loss of function of the limbs), ekanga vikara referred to as vayu affecting one part of the body<sup>24</sup>.

# *NIDANA*<sup>25</sup>(ETIOLOGY)

Food such as dry, cold in potency, light in nature or consumption of minimal quantities habitually, those who are afflicted by emotional instabilities such as depression, anger, fright, and misery. Wrongful activities include excessive fasting, swimming, walking, physical activities, faulty sitting and sleeping posture, habituated day sleep, suppressing natural urges, and riding speedily in vehicles. Iatrogenic causes such as improper administration of therapies like emesis, purgation and bloodletting. Nearly all of these are causative factors for kevala vataja pakshagatha. Injury to vital organs specific to kakshadara and lohitaksha marmabigatha<sup>26</sup> leads to excessive elimination of blood and thereby evolves in datukshayajanya pakshagatha. Ama is meda roopi ama, i.e., excess of vitiated medas (atherosclerosis) or kapha roopi ama, which denotes margavarana (obstructive cause) for pakshagata. Therefore, this margavarana cause can be considered santarpanokta (overnutrition). Santarpanokta causes such as physical inactivity and a diet

high in saturated or trans-fat, where many diseases like diabetes mellitus (madumeha), hypertension, dyslipidemia, thrombosis, and atherosclerosis will come into the picture. All these diseases are major risk factors for stroke.

#### SAMPRAPTI (PATHOGENESIS)

Pathogenesis of *pakshagata* depends on the cause of the disease. Commonly, *vata* is the main culprit. The aggravated *vata dosha* enters the *Urdhva* (upwards), *adha* (downwards), *tiryak* (lateral), and *Damani* (blood vessels). Damani can also be presumed as *sira* (blood vessel) and *Snayu* (tendon). Aggravated *vata* due to its *rooksha* (dry) and *khara* (rough) properties do the *vishoshana* (dries up) of the *sira* and *Snayu*, and it ends in *vimokshana* of *sandibandha* (slackens the joints and its bindings). The outcome is loss of function in the right or left side of the body. Thus, manifests *pakshagatha*<sup>27</sup>.

#### **LAKSHANA**

Chesta nivrutti (loss of activities, i.e., motor and sensory loss) in any parts of the body, especially in the right or left side of the body, vaak stamba (dysarthria), shoola (pain), toda shola (pricking type of pain) in pada (upper limbs) and hasta (lower limbs), hasta pada sankocha (decreased muscular tone or rigidity) in pada or hasta<sup>27</sup>. Pitta-associated vata in pakshagata has symptoms like daha (burning sensation), santapa and moorcha (fainting). Kapha-associated vata has symptoms like stiffness and heaviness in the body<sup>28</sup>.

# SADYA ASDYATA (PROGNOSIS)

The *pakshagata* caused by *kevala vataja* (*vata* alone) is challenging to cure and can be compared to cerebral atrophy caused due to stroke. *Dhatu kshaya janya pakshagatha* is *asadya* (incurable), where depletion of *dhatu* is due to *ati raka Srava* (hemorrhagic stroke) and *dosha samsrusta pakshagatha* (in association with *pitta*, *kapha* etc..) which can be co-related to ischemic stroke is curable<sup>29</sup>. The *pakshagatha* cannot be treated in pregnant women, postpartum period, children, very elderly persons, very emaciated persons, those caused by loss of blood and pakshagata, which are not associated with pain<sup>30</sup>.

# STROKE/CVA<sup>31</sup>

Stroke is the most common clinical manifestation of cerebrovascular disease and results in episodes of brain dysfunction due to focal ischemia or haemorrhage. The incidence rises steeply with age in many lower- and middle-income countries. It is increasing due to the rise in unhealthy lifestyles. Of the 180-300 patients per 1,00,000 population presenting with stroke annually, 85 % of the strokes are due to cerebral ischemia/infraction because of inadequate blood flow to part of the brain. And most of the remainder, 15%, is a result of intracerebral haemorrhage. Cerebral infarction is caused mainly by thromboembolic disease, secondary to atherosclerosis in the significant extracranial arteries, such as the carotid artery. About 20% of the patients die within a month of the event. However, half of those who survive are left with physical disability. The clinical presentation of stroke depends on which arterial territory is involved and the size of the lesion. Most common clinical presentations are hemiplegia (weakness in the right or left side of the body) or weakness in any part of the body; reflexes are initially reduced but then become increased with increased rigidity or spasticity, upper motor neuron weakness of the face (7<sup>th</sup> cranial nerve), speech disturbance such as dysphasia and dysarthria. Other uncommon symptoms are ataxia, headache, delirium, visual deficit, seizure and coma.

# **DISCUSSION**

Acharya Charaka mentions pakshagata as a vatajananatamaja vikara, explained under vata vyadhi,
where vata dosha alone is involved in the pathogenesis and upshots in weakness in the right or left side of
the body. Sushruta has given a much more detailed
description of pakshagatha, which has to be understood more precisely by understanding the sadya
asadyata of the disease. Though it deals with the curability or incurability of the disease using yukthi, it
shall be understood as the disease classification. As
per this, pakshagata has three types: suddha vatahata
pakshagata, anya dosha samsrusta pakshagatha and
dhatu kshaya janya pakshagata. Among these, dosha
samsrusta pakshagata can be compared to margavaranajanya pakshagatha. In margavaranajanya

pakshagatha, vata is associated with pitta, kapha or dhatu. Vata gets avarana (obstructed) by kapha dosha and meda dhatu. In this type of pakshagatha, kaphavruta or medavruta avarana takes place. In margavarana janya pakshagatha, obstruction in the dhamani (extracranial arteries) is due to ati vruddi of kapha or medas. This vitiated kapha and medals, due to its sneha (unctuous) property<sup>32</sup>, get accumulated in extracranial arteries, specifically in the carotid artery. Excessive sneha guna of kapha and medas results in obstruction to the flow of blood; here, blood flow is generally influenced by vata dosha, specifically vyanavata. Therefore, gatiprasarana (movements of the body) gets obstructed, affecting the body's motor and sensory functions. This results in loss of function in the right or left side of the body (vertical presentation of pakshagata), one part of the body (ekanga vata), upper or lower parts of the body (horizontal presentation of pakshagata) or all parts of the body (sarvanga vata).

Pakshagata is most likely to be co-related to hemiplegia, monoplegia, paraplegia, or quadriplegia, which CVA or Stroke causes. Various pathological processes commonly implicated in cerebrovascular diseases are thrombosis, embolism, atherosclerosis, rupture of blood vessels, arteritis, aneurysm, trauma and developmental malformation<sup>33</sup>. Among these, atherosclerosis causes the margavaranajanya pakshagatha, which results in ischemic brain damage and thereby causes the neurologic deficit. The term atherosclerosis is derived from 'athero' referring to soft lipid-rich material, and 'sclerosis' referring to scarring, i.e., plaques. Atherosclerosis is the thickening and hardening of large and medium-sized muscular arteries, primarily due to the involvement of the tunica intima layer and is characterised by fibrofatty plaques or atheromas. Though large and mediumsized arteries may be involved in atherosclerosis, the aorta, coronary arteries, and cerebral arterial system are most affected. Clinical effects of cerebral or extracranial artery atherosclerosis result from slow luminal narrowing, sudden luminal occlusion, or propagation of plaques by forming thrombi or emboli, which induces transient cerebral ischemia, cerebral

infarcts or strokes<sup>34</sup>. Ischemic brain damage is caused by considerable reduction or complete interruption of blood supply to neural tissue, which is insufficient to meet metabolic demands. Clinical presentation depends on the site, onset, and part of the brain affected by the loss of blood supply due to atherosclerosis. The most common presentation is hemiplegia.

Risk factors in atherosclerosis are dyslipidemia (high LDL cholesterol), hypertension, diabetes mellitus, obesity, and physical inactivity. These risk factors can also be considered risk factors for accumulating kapharoopi ama or meda roopi ama. Excessive unctuous properties of kapha and medas can be regarded as lipid-rich material of atherosclerosis, which acts as an avaraka. The flow of blood is influenced by vata and is obstructed by amaroopi kapa, medas, or atherosclerosis. In this condition, vata acts as an avarya due to the obstruction caused by amaroopi kapha, medas or atherosclerosis. Thus, atherosclerosis may be presumed to be kaphavruta or medasa avruta vayu involved in the pathogenesis of margavaranajanya pakshagatha. Lakshana of kaphavruta vata and medasavruta vata are almost conformable to kapha samsrusta pakashagata, which shows symptoms such as stiffness or rigidity and heaviness in the affected area. During the disease, in pakshagata, one can also observe the symptoms of kapavruta vyana vata, kapavruta udana vata, udanavrurta vyana vata and samanavruta vyana vata. Kaphavruta vyana vata symptoms include pain in the affected limb and inability to move the affected part where motor function is affected. Kaphavruta udana vata shows symptoms in pakshagata such as dysarthria, debility in a single or group of muscles, heaviness in the body, and loss of taste. Udanavruta vyana vata displays symptoms in pakshagata like stiffness, loss of function of agni (digestive fire), lack of effort and closure of the eyes. Samanavruta vvana vata shows symptoms such as loss of consciousness, drowsiness, debility, diminished function of agni, and diminished strength, which can also be seen in stroke. Treatment also varies depending on whether it is kevala vataja Pakshagtha or margavaranajanya pakshagatha. In margavaranajanya, pakshagata adhered amaroopi kapha, and medas are treated with amapachana (metabolisers of undigested toxins) and agni deepana (neutralises of the impaired metabolic fire). After treating the adhered kapha and medas, the vatahara line of treatment is adopted, such as snehana<sup>35</sup>, Basti.

# CONCLUSION

When avarana is involved in the disease manifestation, observation of symptoms of avaraka and avruta is mandatory for diagnosing the disease and its successful treatment. Pakshagata is one among the vataja nanatmaja vikara having avarana samparapti. Kaphavruta or medasa avruta vayu involved in the pathogenesis of margavaranajanya pakshagatha. Lakshana of kaphavruta vata and medasavruta vata are almost conformable to kapha samsrusta pakashagata. During the disease, pakshagata can also display the symptoms of kapavruta vyana vata, kapavruta udana vata, udanavrurta vyana vata and samanavruta vyana vata. In margavaranajanya pakshagatha, one has to treat the kapha and meda first. After removing the avarana, kevala vatahara chikitsa is to be adopted.

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