

AYURVEDA TREATMENT FOR AMAVATA DISEASE

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ABSTRACT

Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) is a chronic progressive and disabling autoimmune disease that causes inflammation (link is external) (swelling) and pain in the joints, the tissue around the joints, joint deformity and other organs. The RA has been described as *Amavata* in Ayurveda in which the vitiated Vata and Ama afflicts the lining of the joints, causing Shula (pain) & Shotha (swelling). The treatment module for Amavata includes Shamana (conservative) and Shodhana (biological purification of the body) Chikitsa. Depending upon the stages (acute / chronic) and Doshas involved, many measures are advised such as Langhana (a method of depletion of body tissues),

Deepana (increase digestive fire), and Pachana (digestion of food) for accumulated Ama (digestion of undigested material); Snehapana (oleation), Swedana (fomentation), Virechana (purgation) and Basti (enema therapy) for elimination of Doshas from body. Further the drugs used in management of Amavata should possess Katu (pungent) and Tikta (bitter) Rasa (taste); Ushna (hot in potency), Laghu (easily digestible) and Tikshna (penetrating property through tissues) qualities which are Vata-Kapha Dosha Hara and Amapachaka.

KEYWORDS: Inflammation, Ayurveda, *Ama*, *Shotha*, *Deepana*, *Basti*, *Tikshna*.

INTRODUCTION

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA), an auto-immune inflammatory disease is one of the challenging conditions for the physicians to handle due to its chronicity, incurability, complications, morbidity, etc.^[1] It has worldwide distribution and involves all ethnic groups. Depending on the specific definition, the prevalence of RA is estimated to be between 0.3% and 1.5% in North America and its prevalence in India has been estimated to be similar to that in the West. It causes a great deal of pain and suffering and patients with this disease are unable to work within 5 years of its onset and patients with severe forms of the disease die 10–15 years

earlier than expected. Thus, RA represents a significant societal problem justifying large efforts to improve its treatment.

While allopathic treatment of RA is improving, remission remains rare, and treatment remains unsatisfactory. In spite of potent anti-inflammatory agents and powerful immunosuppressive agents, its prognosis is not good, as these drugs have certain limitations including dependency and other side effects restricting the quality of life. Considering these inconveniences, alternatives are being searched from traditional systems. Drugs such as *Simhanada guggulu*,^[2] *Rasnasaptaka kwatha*, *Vata gajankusha rasa*, *Bruhat vata chintamani*, and *Amavatari rasa* are said to be efficacious in this condition. Cakrapaniduta has described the principles and line of treatment for Amavata.^[3] Langhana (fasting), Swedana (sudation), use of drug of Tikta (bitter) and Katu (pungent) Rasa, Deepana drugs (stimulating hunger), Virechana (purgation therapy), Anuvāsana basti (enema) are beneficial in the management of Amavata. Despite the administration of best available modern drugs, the disease has a tendency to progress and cripple the patients. Conventional medicines - NSAID's (Non-steroidal antiinflammatory drugs) have adverse effects on GIT (gastrointestinal tract) and DMARD's (Disease modifying anti-rheumatoid drugs) cause hepatic, renal and bone marrow suppression. Thus, Ayurveda provides a safe, economic and effective treatment of RA.

Some important drugs for Amavata with ingredients

Drug	Formulation Composition
Agnitundi Vati	Kajjali (Black sulfide of mercury), Ajwain (<i>Trachyspermum ammi</i>), Sudh vatsanabha (<i>Aconitum ferox</i>), Harad (<i>Terminalia chebula</i>), Bahera (<i>Terminalia bellerica</i>), Amla (<i>Emblica officinalis</i>), Sajjikshar, Yavakshar, Chitrakmool (<i>Plumbago zeylanicum</i>), Saindhav lavan (Rock salt), Survarchal lavan (Black salt), Samudra lavan (Sea salt), Shavet jiraka (<i>Cuminum cyminum</i>), Vidanga (<i>Emblica ribes</i>), Shunthi (<i>Zingiber officinalis</i>), Pippali (<i>Piper longum</i>), Marich (<i>Piper nigrum</i>), Sudh kuchla (<i>Strychnos nuxvomica</i>)
Dashamoolarasnadi Kashayam	Dashamoola, Bilwa (<i>Aegle marmelos</i>), Agnimantha (<i>Premna obtusifolia</i>), Gambhari (<i>Gmelina arborea</i>), Shyonaka (<i>Oroxylum Indicum</i>) Pathala (<i>Stereospermum suaveolens</i>), Shalaparni (<i>Desmodium gangeticum</i>), Prushnaparni (<i>Uraria picta</i>), Bruhati (<i>Solanum Indicum</i>), Kantakari (<i>Solanum xanthocarpous</i>), Gokshura (<i>Tribulus Terrestris</i>), Amruta (<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>), Eranda (<i>Ricinus communis</i>), Rasna (<i>Pluchea lanceolata</i>), Nagara (<i>Zingiber officinalis</i>), Daru/Devadaru (<i>Cedrus deodara</i>)
Simhanad Guggul	Chitraka (<i>Plumbago zeylanica</i>), Pippalimoola (<i>Piperlongum</i>),

	Yavani (Trachyspermum ammi) Karavi (Piper chaba) Ajamoda (Trachyspermum roxburghianum) Jeeraka (Cumin seed) Suradaru (Cedrus deodara) Chavya (Piper cubeba) Ela (Cardamom) Saindhava Lavana (Rock salt) Kushta (Saussurea lappa) Rasna (Pluchea lanceolata) Gokshura (Tribulus terrestris) Dhanyaka (Coriander) Triphala – Haritaki (Terminalia chebula), Vibhitaki (Terminalia bellirica), Amalaki (Embllica officinalis) Musta (Cyperus rotundus) Trikatu (Pepper, long pepper and ginger) Twak (Cinnamon) Usheera (Vetiveria zizanioides) Yavagraja (Hordeum vulgare) Barley Taleesapatra (Abies webbiana) Patra (Cinnamomum zeylanicum) Guggulu (Purified Commiphora mukul) Sarpi (ghee).
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The snehas used for Snehapana Eranda taila is said to be the best because it is having both Amapachan and virechen. Other snehas indicated as pana are Sunti Ghritam, Kanjika Shatphala ghritam, Prasarinitailam, Saindavaditailam etc.

Among Swedakarmas mainly ruksha sweda like valuka sweda, potalisweda etc are indicated. Virechan yogas mentioned for Amavata (RA) like Trivritadi churnam, Hareetaki prayog, Aragvada palavaprayog, Eranda Kwatha pryog, Eranda taila prayog Etc. are used.

Vasti:- treatment of R.A. can be overcome by Anuvasana vastis with vatanasaka tailas like Nirgundi, Saindavadi tailas etc. Niruhavasti formulations with Dashmula Kwath, Maharasnadi Kwath, Rasna Erandamula kwath etc. are indicated.

Some of the important Amavata (R.A.) Nasak guggulu, vati, kwatha are as follows Simhanada guggulu drugs, Rasna panda, Vatari guggulu, Yogaraja guggulu, Rasnadi kwath, Vyadhi sardoola guggulu, Rasna saptaka kwatha, Siva guggulu etc.

External lepas, tailas for symptomatic relief; Himsradilepa, Satapushpadilepa, Vija yabhairava tailam, Sainda vadi tailam.

Rasa Aushadies used in Amavata (R.A.): - Amavatariras, Amavatarivatika, Amavateswararas. Vatagajendraras, Amapramathini Vatika, Amavatadrivajraras, Amrita manjariras etc. For Amapachan and maintenance of Agni in Amavata (RA)-patient even pathya & apathyas are mentioned in Ayurvedic classics.

Pathya: Pathya is referred to the Ahara and Vihara, which causes pacification of the disease. Apathya is referred to the Ahara and Vihara, which causes complications and aggravate the disease.

Ahara is the base and cause for the Strength, Complexion and Vitality of the living beings. It has the ability to promote health as well as to control the disease Pathology. The benefits of food like health, strength, longevity and energy are achieved only when the food is consumed by the person according to its Swabhava, Samyoga, Samskara, Matra, Desha, Kala, Upayokta and Upayoga Samstha. Otherwise it will end up in manifestation of diseases.^[4]

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Amavata is a complex of disease, pathogenesis of which lies in generation of Ama after Mandagni. This Ama along with vitiated Vata and Kapha dosha results in Dosha-dushya combination, thus generating the Nidus for symptoms of Amavata to occur. The aim of the treatment in Amavata is to reduce Ama by its metabolism (Amapachana) and to normalise the vitiated Vata and Kapha dosa only with Ayurveda treatment. The treatment protocol included combination of external localised and internal medication which worked in tandem to reduce the symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis.

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