



A review article on *Jalaukavacharan* in the management of *Dushta Vrana*

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ABSTRACT

Method of removing blood from the body using jalauka (leech) is considered as the most easy and convenient method. Blood vitiated by vata, pitta and kapha should be removed from the body, by using sringa, jalauka and alabu respectively. Jalauka is ideal to remove blood vitiated by pitta. The medicinal leech, *Hirudo medicinalis*, is one of the few examples of the use of invertebrates in the treatment of human disease. Leech therapy also known as Hirudotherapy (mentioned as Jalaukavacharan in Ayurveda) played an important role because it was used for medicinal "blood-letting" and "purification".

"The destruction / break / rupture / discontinuity of body tissue / part of body, is called Vrana." The healing of wound or an ulcer is the natural response of the body. Naturally wound will heal in one week if no doshic invasion or infection takes place. The vrana more than a week called dushta vrana which fail to heal for a long period and result into chronic wound (dheergha kalanubandhi dushta vrana), such vrana needs shodhana (Abhyantara) and ropana (Bahya) chikitsa. Virechana and Jatyadi ghruta application as well as jalaukavacharan (leech therapy) are the best line of management for vata-pitta pradushtaja dushta vrana.

KEYWORDS: Dushta Vrana, Bloodletting, Jalaukavacharan.

INTRODUCTION

Shalya Tantra is one of the important branches of Ayurveda in which surgical and para surgical techniques have been described for management of various surgical diseases. Dushta Vrana is one of them which have been managed by human being from starting of civilization. The first thing which the men came across was the injury from different sources which caused him the Vrana (wound).

The concept of Vrana is as old as human life. 'Vrana' from the starting of life is described as a common and major problem faced by human. Thus, description of Vrana is found in most of literature related with human health. The earliest reference of Vrana is found in Vedic literature in context of injuries. Basic concept of wound cleansing, closure and splitting has been described in various medical systems. Vrana is the most important and widely described chapter of Shalya Tantra by Sushruta¹.

Sushruta is known for excellence in surgical procedures. He has described Vrana very precisely and in scientific manner with reference to Satkriyakala, types², sub types², Shashti Upakrama³ (60) procedures for Vrana management), Vrana upadrava (Complications), Sadhaya⁵ Asadhatya (Prognosis), Vranavastu etc. He has clearly mentioned that the Vranavastu

(scars) of a Vrana (wound) never disappear after complete healing and its imprint persists lifelong, that lesion is called Vrana¹⁰. Every aspect about Vrana is described very beautifully and coherently.

Ayurvedic treatises have classified the Vrana as Nija Vrana and Aagantuja Vrana^{4 5 6}. It is further classified into 16 sub-types (15 Doshaja Prakara + 1 Shuddha Vrana)³.

“The term wound is break in the continuity of soft parts of body structures caused by violence of trauma of tissue”.⁸

Ulcer is defined as “A local defect or excavation of the surface, of an organ of tissue produced by sloughing of necrotic tissue.”⁹

“Ulcer word is derived from Latin word “ulcer”. It means an open sore or lesion of the skin or mucous membrane accompanied by sloughing or inflamed necrosed tissue.”¹⁰

The management of Dushta Vrana has been described in various Ayurvedic texts. Many formulations are in use for centuries. Among these Jalaukavacharan (leech therapy) described in Sushruta samhita¹¹. It is most widely used in various types of Dushta Vrana.

DUSHTA VRANA LAKSHANA⁷

- Durgandhita
- Pooyayukta
- Atipooyasrava
- Utsangi
- Chirkali Dooshita,
- Atigandha
- Varna-Srava,
- Vedanayukta,
- Suddha lakshanaviparita.

MANAGEMENT OF DUSHTA VRANA

Jalaukavacharan (Method of leech applying on the body)⁵

Poorva karma (Before procedure):

1. Proper snehana (oleation) and swedana (sudation) of the patient.
2. The patient should be made either to sit or lie down.
3. Part preparation: Cleaning of place by turmeric water. Patient’s skin is cleaned thoroughly with soap and water.
4. Purification of leech by pouring the leech in haridra powder (turmeric powder) and water.

Pradhan karma (Main procedure):

1. After knowing that leech is free from fatigue, picked up and made to catch (bite) the place of the disease.
2. Smooth, white moist cotton wool or piece of cotton cloth should be put on it and its mouth moistened with a drop of water after, if it does not bite, a drop of milk or blood should be put at its mouth or even a small incision may made on the patient body.
3. When it makes its mouth in the shape of a horse’s hoop, and lifts its neck then it is to be understood as biting.
4. When it sucks blood, cover the leech with wet cotton.
5. With the appearance of pricking pain and itching at the site of bite, it to be understood that it is sucking pure blood. When it begins to suck pure blood it should be removed. If it does not leave off easily, then powder of saindhava should be sprinkled on over its mouth.

Paschat karma (After procedure):

1. After it falls off, its body should be sprinkled with rice flour, its mouth bathed with oil added with salt, held (lifted up) at its tail end by the thumb and fingers of the left hand

and its body kneaded slowly in the downward direction with the thumb and fingers of the right hand and make it vomit all the blood it has consumed, till signs of complete vomiting appear.

2. Signs of complete vomiting is that it moves fastly to and fro in search of food when put into the vessel of water. Those which is not vomited completely, develops an incurable disease known as Indramada.
3. After it became completely vomited it should be put into the pot.
4. The patients are where the leeches have been put should be examined for local infection.
5. The minor wounds can be cleaned and washed.

INDICATIONS

Eczema, Psoriasis, Osteoarthritis, Rheumatoid arthritis, Cellulitis, Sciatica, Varicose veins, Diabetic wound, Boils and abscesses, Alopecia, Herpes zoster etc.

DISCUSSION

A wound is a break in the integrity of the skin or tissues often, which may be associated with disruption of the structure and function. There are two types of wound tidy and untidy.

Types of wound Healing

1. Primary Healing (First intention): - It occurs in a clean incised wound or surgical wounds edges are approximated with sutures. There is more epithelial regeneration than fibrosis. Wound heals rapidly with complete closure. Scar will be linear smooth and supple.
2. Secondary Healing (Second Intention): - It occurs in a wound with extensive soft tissue loss like in major trauma, burns and wound with sepsis. It heals slowly with fibrosis. It leads into a wide scar, often

hypertrophied and contracted Stages of Wound Healing

- (1) Stage of Inflammation
- (2) Stage of granulation tissue formation and organization.
- (3) Stage of Epithelialization
- (4) Stage of scar formation and resorption
- (5) Stage of maturation

CONCLUSION

Non-Healing to Healing.

Leech is the best parasurgical sharp live instrument. Leech saliva contains so many chemicals which are useful to human being. Blood-letting is second one important line of treatment of Vrana-Shotha. Leech saliva contains anticoagulant chemical which is useful for sandhan. Only Leech is useful for shodhan and ropan also because of its – saliva contains a chemical which has powerful antibacterial action and it is proved today. Leech treatment is the best devine solution for such ulcer like diabetic and tubercular ulcer. If we do leech therapy locally in diabetic patients at the begining stage then we must can save the patient from amputatia. Leech can be the best remedy because Leech saliva contains a powerful chemical which destroys foreign-body or bacteria. Leech is safe, live antibiotic.

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