



A comprehensive study of understanding *Vatarakta* w. s. r. to Gouty Arthritis

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ABSTRACT

Vatarakta is more distressing and common metabolic disorder prevalent in present era. It is a *vatapradhantridoshaja vata vyadhi*, where *Rakta* is main *dushya*. *Vatarakta* is correlated with gout (gouty arthritis) in modern science. Gout is an abnormality of purine metabolism causes hyperuremia and deposition of Monosodium urate crystals in joints. The current lifestyle involves consumption of unhealthy junk food along with improper sleep pattern. Due to excruciating pain inflammation, joint deformity and restricted joints movement with the risk of various complication like urate nephropathy and urate nephrolithiasis it's necessary to have a complete overview on all aspects of disease for treatment. Ayurveda modalities viz *shodana* and *shamana chikitsa* it can be cured. The present review deals with glimpses of historical aspect of *vatarakta* (Gout)

extending from *vedic* era to the present century, etymology of *vatarakta* with its *Nidana*, *samprapti*, *purva-rupa*, *rupa*, *sadhyata-asadhyata*, *sapekshanidana*, *updrava*, *chikitsa* and *pathya apathya*.

Keywords: *Vatarakta*, Gout, *Ayurveda*, Gouty Arthritis, *Vata*

INTRODUCTION

Vatarakta is very important *vyadhi* which is described almost in all *Samhitas*. *Vatarakta* is a *santarpanjanya vyadhi* hence *Aam-Dosha* is dominant initially. This disorder produced by conjugation of vitiated *vata* and *Rakta* generate multiple health ailments and most important of them is *Vatarakta*¹.

Vatarakta is articular disease characterized by severe joint pain, tenderness, inflammation and burning sensation in the affected joints. In Gouty arthritis disorder of purine metabolism secondary hyperuricemia,

which is characterized pain and swelling of IMTP² (Intermetatarso phalangeal joint). It is characterized severe pain, tenderness, inflammation and burning sensation in the affected joints. It has two stages i.e. *Uthana* and *Gambhira Vatarakta* mainly affects *Asthidhatu* and causes *Ruja* which is spread as *Aakhovisha*³(Rat poison).

Vatarakta is named on the basis of the *vata dosha & rakta dhatu* which have their own independent derivations & are the main *samprapti ghataka* involved in the *Vatarakta*. *Rakta* which is vitiated by *vata* is derived as *Vatarakta*.⁴The disease which manifest as a result of *marga-avarodha* of *vata* by *rakta* is *vatashonitha*⁵ in which *vata* and *rakta* are involved⁶.The illness which is resulted due to vitiation of *vata dosha* and *rakta dhatu* leading to the specific *samprapti* is known as *Vatarakta*.⁷ *Vatarakta* is one of the diseases which undergoes progressive evolution through the ages. History reveals some of the references which are available regarding etiology, presentation, treatment & complications of *Vatarakta*. So, it can be divided into below four *Kaal*: -1.Vedic Kaal (Ancient Period)

- *Samhita Kaal* (Classical Period)
- *Sangraha Kaal* (Medieval Period)
- *Adhunika Kaal* (Modern Period)

1. VEDIC PERIOD (5000 B.C. - 800 B.C.):

There is no description of *Vatarakta* in any of the four *Vedas*.In *Atharvaveda*, only few scattered references of *Sakthi* (hip joint), *Shroni* (sacroiliac joint) and *Janu* (knee joint) are narrated.⁸In *Atharvaveda*, *Sandhi vikriti* term used for joint disorder, which is caused by *shleshma vikriti* and can be treated by prayers only, but there is no explanation

of any disease related to joints like *Vatarakta*.⁹

PURANIC PERIOD (4000 B.C.- 1000

B.C.)- With the exception of *Garuda* and *Agni Purana*, a lot of information is available in the literatures of *Purana kala*.

GARUDA PURANA- The description of *Vatarakta* as a *rakta-pradhana vyadhi* is worth mentioning in the chapter “*VATARAKTA NIDAN*”, Use of *Vardhamana Pippali* along with *pathya* like *Guda*, *Patola*, *Triphala* and *Katuki* have been prescribed to alleviate the burning sensation in *Vatarakta*.¹⁰

AGNI PURANA- A precise description of *Vatarakta* is quoted in *Agni Puran* and various food items like *Raktashali*, *Godhuma* (wheat), *Yava* (barley), *Mudga* (green gram) and *Madhu* (honey) have been advised as *pathya* for patients suffering from *Vatarakta*.¹¹

2. SAMHITA PERIOD (2000 B.C.-800

A.D.)-The main classical text of this era is *Brihatrayi*. Entire aspect of the illness *vatarakta* from etiology to treatment is described at full length in the books of *samhita kaal* as follows:

CHARAKA SAMHITA:(2000 B.C.)-

Vatarakta explained in 29th chapter of *Chikitsa sthana*“*Vatashonita chikitsam Vyakasyam*”. The information of the disease included *Nidana*, *Samprapti*, *Bheda*, *Upadrava*, *Sadhyaasadhyatva*, *Pathya-apathya*, *Chikitsa sutra* & *Chikitsa* as *Bahya*&*Abhyantara* like *Shodhana*, *Shamana* as well as *Rasayana*. The treatment of *Vatarakta* included *Shilajatu*,

Eranda, Sneha, Lepas, Ghrita, Kashaya, Guggulu, Tailas etc. Other than medicinal treatment, few surgical procedures like *Rakta-visravana* (blood-letting) by *Siravedh, Shring, Jalauka, Suchi* or *Alabu Yantra* are also mentioned.

SUSHRUTA SAMHITA: (1000-1500 B.C.)-*Sushrutasamhita's* understanding of *Vatarakta* is different regarding its types. It states that the *Uttana* and *Avagadha Vatarakta* are not the types of this illness rather they are its *avasthavishesh*. In *Sushruta Samhita*, the disease has been described in 2 chapters, under *Vatavyadhi Nidan sthana* 1st Chapter and *Mahavatavyadhi Chikitsa sthana* 5th chapter where all aspects of disease are described in detail.

BHELA SAMHITA (1000 B. C.)-In *Bhela Samhita Chikitsa sthan*, brief description of *vatarakta* is found in chapter 15 i.e. *Visarpa Vatashonita adhyaya* and in chapter 24 i.e. *vatavyadhichikitsitadhyaya*.

HARITA SAMHITA (1000 B.C.)- The disease is mentioned in *Harit Samhita, Tritiya sthana* chapter 23, after '*Gridhrsi chikitsa Adhyaya*', where the etiology and symptoms have been described briefly along with the use of internal as well as external medication.

ASHTANGA SAMGRAHA (400 A.D) / ASHTANGA HRIDAYA (500 A.D) - In AshtangaSamgraha

(*Vatashonitanidanaadyaya*" & *VatashonitaChikitsama*, 16th & 24th chapter) & *Ashtanga Hridaya* ("*VatashonitaNidanaAdhyaya*" &

"Vatashonita chikitsa Adyaya" 16th & 22nd chapter respectively) elaborate description about *Nidana, Samprapti, Bheda, Upadrava, Sadhya-asadhyatva, Pathya-Apathya, Chikitsa sutra* & *Chikitsa* is available in these texts. *Ashtanga Hridaya* has also added the management of *sama* and *nirama* stage of *Vatarakta*.

In *ayurvedadipika* few lines of *Kharanada Samhita* is quoted in relation to types of *Vatarakta*. In this context it is said that *kharanada Samhita* accepts 36 types of *Vatarakta*.

Nidana, Samprapti, Lakshana, Sadhya-asadhyata & *Chikitsa* of *Vatarakta* in full length in *Gadnigraha*.¹² In the similar manner, the whole description of *Vatarakta* is found in *Vatarakta adhikarain Vangsen Samhita*.¹³

3.SAMGRAHA PERIOD:

MADHAVANIDAN (800 A. D.)-*Madhava* explains *Vatarakta Nidana, Samprapti, Purvarupa, Upadrava* and *Asadhyalakshana* in chapter 23rd "*Vatarakta Nidana*". **CHAKRADATTA (1100A.D.)**-*Chakradatta* in 23rd chapter "*Vatarakta chikitsa*" has explained both *Bahya* & *Abhyantara Chikitsa* like *Kwatha, Churna, Ghrita, Taila* & *Guggulu Kalpa*. **SHARANGDHAR SAMHITA (1300A.D.)**-*Saptamadhyaya "Roga Ghanna"* of *Purvakhanda* explains about the *saptaprakara* of *Vatarakta* as *Vataja, Pittaja, Kaphaja, Raktaja, Samsargaja* & *Sannipataja*. While explaining *Niruha Basti*, *Vatarakta* is mentioned as one of the conditions for *Niruha Basti* in the 6th

chapter. **BHAVA PRAKASHA (1500 A.D)** - In *uttarardha 29th chapter "Vatarakta adikara"*, Acharya has explained all about *Nidana, Samprapti, Purvarupa, Rupa, Bheda&Chikitsa*. **YOGA RATNAKARA (1600 A.D)** -In *Yoga Ratnakara, Purvaardha,* under *Vatarakta Nidana*. Acharya has explained details of *Nidana, Samprapti, Purvarupa, Dosha-pradhana rupa, Upadrava&Asadhylakshana of Vatarakta*. While under *Vatarakta chikitsa*, Acharya has explained separate combinations like *Kwatha, Guggulu, Taila, Ghrita* and *Rasa*. **BHAISHJYA RATANAVALI (1600 A. D.)**- In "*Vatarakta chikitsa prakrana*" chapter 27th, description about *Samprapti, Bheda, Pathya-apathya,* and *Chikitsa* is available.

INCIDENCE

Incidence of Gouty Arthritis is 0.2-2.5 per 1000 overall. Gout is rare in children and premenopausal women in India. Out of the affected population males are more common while female of post-menopausal age are on more risk¹⁴. Management of *Vatarakta* is a challenge as it is a disease of severe morbidity, chronicity and incurable to certain extent with associated complications. Though a number of drug regimen have been advised like NSAID's, colchicine, corticosteroids, anti-hyperuricemia drug, uricosuric agents¹⁵.

The entire above are associated with adverse effects and certain limitation. *Panchkarma* procedures along with internal medications resulted in the improvement of overall symptoms.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To review the available literature in *ayurvedic* texts and its co-relation with modern literature on Gout.
- To review *Vatarakta* in context of Gout.

ETYMOLOGY

The disease which occurs due to derangement of *Vata & Rakta* is known as *Vatarakta*. The vitiated *raktdhatu* obstructs *vata* result in *Vatashonita*¹⁶. The disease which is resulted due to vitiation of *vatadosha* and *raktdhatu* leading to specific *samprapti* is known as *Vatarakta (Madhukosha Teeka)*¹⁷.

NIDAN

Aaharaj Nidan: Excessive intake of *Rasa* such as *Katu, Tikta, Kashya, Amla, Lavana, Kshara*. Excessive intake of *Ahara* diet which is *snigha, Ushna, Ruksha in guna* and *Kleena, shuskha, anupmasa, Kleena, shuka, Kulatha, Masha, Ikshu*. Due to faulty dietary patterns such as *Adhyoshana uriudhashana, Abhojana, Mithana, sukhbojan*¹⁸.

Viharaja Nidan: *Ativama, crodha, divaswapana, raatri jagran, achankramansheela, abhighata, plavan, veganigraha,* travelling on *Hasti, Ashva, Usthra*. These above *dosha* leads to *samprapti* of *Vatarakta*¹⁹.

Agantuja Nidan: Miscellaneous factors- Exogenous factor which vitiate the *dosha* and *dhatu*.

Samprapti Ghataka

- **Dosha-** *VatapradhanTridoshaJanya Vyadhi*
- **Dushya-** *Rakta, Twak, Mamsa*
- **Agni-** *Mandagni*

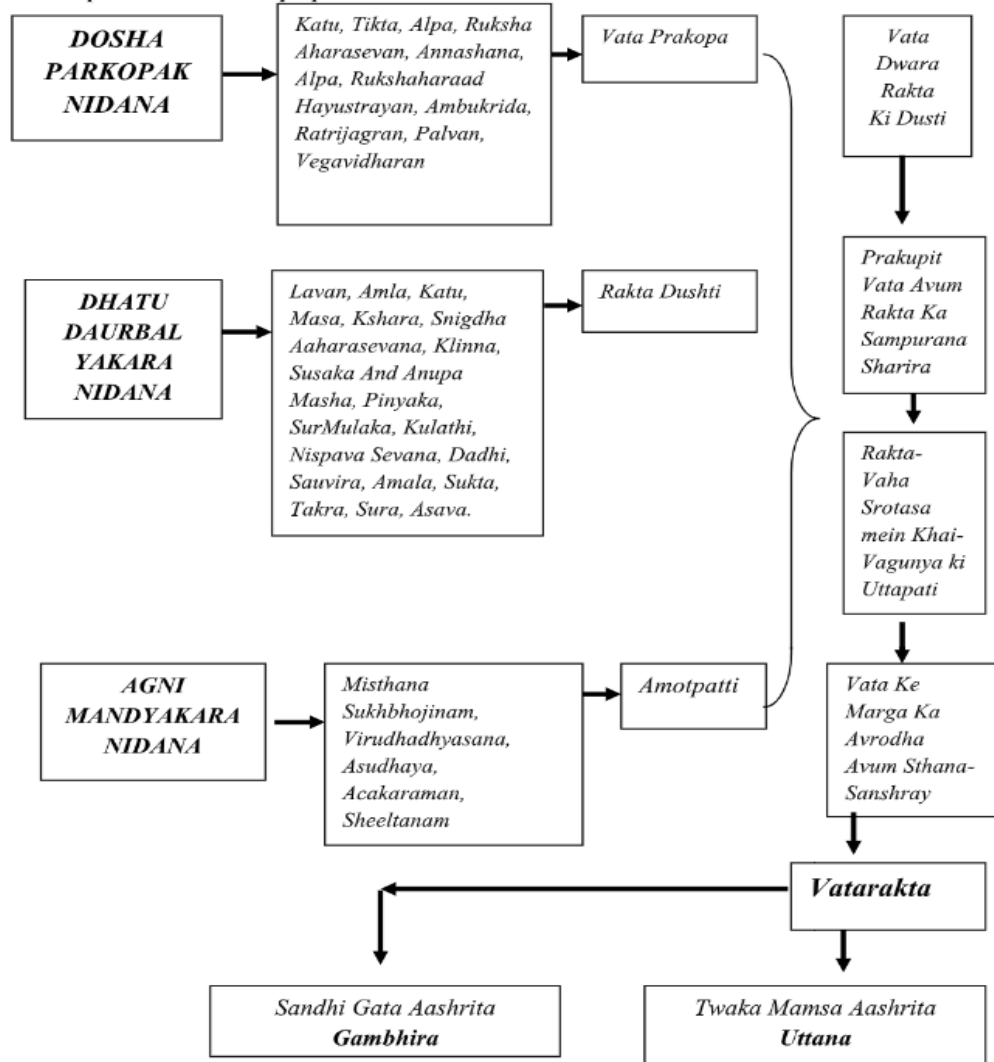
- **Udhhavasthana-** Pakvashya
- **Sancharasthana-** SarvaSharira
- **Vayaktasthana-** Sandhi Vishisita Kara, Padasandhi
- **Srotus-** RakatvahaAsthevaha, Majjavaha
- **Srotodushthi:**Prakar-Sanga, Vimargagaman
- **Rogamarga-**Madhyam

1. Swedoatyarthamanava
2. Karshnyam
3. SparshaAgyatavam
4. Kshati- Atiruk
5. Sandi- Shaithliya
6. Alasya (Lethargy)
7. Vaivarya
8. PidikaOdgaman
9. Nistoda, sphurana, Bhida
10. Supte and Kandu in Janu-Janga-Uru-kati-Hasta-Sandhi

POORVA-ROPA / Premonitory Symptoms²⁰

SAMPRAPATI OF VATARAKTA

Schematic Representation of Samprapti



ROOPA of Vatarakta

Uttana	Gambhira
<i>Twaka MamsaAshrita Kandu,</i>	<i>Deep seated, Sandhigata,</i>
<i>Daha, Ruja, Aayama, Toda,</i>	<i>Ashritaswayathu, stabdhata,</i>
<i>Sphurana, ShayamaTamra Toda,</i>	<i>Kathina, Antarasthi,</i>
<i>Varna skin</i>	<i>ShayamaTamraVarna</i>

MANAGEMENT OF VATARAKTA: -

UttanaVatarakta can be effectively handled with:

1. **Lepa-** External application of medicinal pastes
2. **Abhyang-** Herbal oil massage
3. **Parisheka-** Stream pouring or sprinkling or showering of medicinal liquids like decoctions, medicated oil over the areas
4. **Avagahana-** dipping the affected parts or joints in the medicinal liquids
5. **Upanaha-** Poultice.

TREATMENT OF GAMBHIRA VATARAKTA:-

Since the other deeper tissues like blood, bone, fat, bone marrow etc. and multiple organs will be involved in *gambhiraVatarakta* as the disease pathology has penetrated into deeper tissues, the simpler treatment which have been mentioned above shall not be very useful.

SAMANAYA CHIKITSA

- i. *Shodhana Chikitsa*
Antahparimarjana Chikitsa
- ii. *Shamana Chikitsa*

- iii. *Raktamokshana Karma*
- iv. *LepaChikitsa*
Bahiparimarjana Chikitsa

1. Shodhana Chikitsa

- *ShodhanaChikitsa* has been given due importance in the management of *Vatarakta*. Following line of management has been given in *Charaka Samhita* and successive classics- 1) *Snehana Karma* 2) *VirechanaKarma* 3) *Basti*

Snehana Karma-*Snehana* or oleation therapy is given to the patient of *Vatarakta* prior to *Shodhana* as well as *Shamana Chikitsa* in *Vatarakta*. *Snehana* is given to the patients of *Vatarakta* before using *Virechana*. *Snehana* is also used externally in the form of *Abhyanga*. **Virechana Karma-** Both *Snigdhaas* well as *RukshaVirechana* is indicated in *Vatarakta*. If patient is having *RukshaSharira* then *SnigdhaVirechana* is ideal. *RukshaMriduVirechanaDravya* should be advised to patients having *SnigadhaSharira*. As *TikshnaVirechana* leads to vitiation of *Vata Dosha*. So, *MriduVirechana* is always justified in patients suffering from *Vatarakta*. **Basti-** in *Charaka Samhita* it has been mentioned that *BastiKarma* is best treatment in patients suffering from *Vatarakta*. *Basti Karma* includes both *Asthapana* and *AnuvashanaBasti* in the form of *Karma, Kala* and *Yoga Basti*. *Basti Chikitsa* is advised after giving *Virechana* & considered as best for *Vata Shamana*.

2. Shamana Chikitsa

Shamana Chikitsa helps to bring about homeostasis, keeping *Tridosha* at

SamyaAvastha. CharakaSamhita &Sushruta Samhita has given number of formulations to keep *Samyaavastha* of *Tridosha* and to alleviate signs &symptoms of *Vatarakta*.

3. **Raktamokshana Karma**

Charaka, Sushruta, Vagbhatta and their successive *classics* have advocated *Raktamokshana* Therapy in *Vatarakta*.*RaktaMargavarana* is the predominant pathology of *Vatarakta* and this leads to the accumulation of morbid *Rakta*. Hence *Raktamokshanais* considered the main treatment of *Vatarakta*. *Raktamokshan* may be done by *Shringa, Jalouka, Suchi, Alabu, Prachhan* and *Siramokshan* method.

4. **Lepa Chikitsa(Bahiparimarjana Chikitsa)**

Bahiparimarjana Chikitsa is essential in patients suffering from *Uttana* or *Ubhayashrita Vatarakta*. *Charaka Samhita* has stressed to use local application in *Uttana Vatarakta*. Local applications should be used in the form of *Alepa, Parisheka, Upnaha* and *Abhyanga*.

Lepa- Lepa Chikitsa is planned according to the relative dominance of *Dosha* involved. Warm application of paste prepared by adding *Ghrta* or goats milk is preferred if the patient is suffering from the symptoms due to morbid *Vata Dosha*.**Parisheka-**Affected parts are given *Sheeta* or *UshanaParisheka* according to the *Doshic* involvement. **Abhyanga-**Abhyanga over the affected part is planned according to the dominance of involved *Dosha*. Warm oil processed with *Vatahara* drugs is used for *Abhyanga* if patient complaints of *Shooladue* to vitiated *Vata*. Cold application of *Ghrta* processed with *Pittahara* drugs is ideal if patient complaints of burning sensation due

to morbid *Pitta Dosha*. If *Kandu* is the main symptom due to dominant *Kapha Dosha*, oil processed with *Kaphahara* drugs is used in the form of *Abhyanga*.

Vishishta ChikitsaAfter careful diagnosis, disease should be classified on the basis of site as well as *Doshic* variation. Predominant *Dosha* is recognized and specific treatment is planned keeping the general principle of management in view.

Uttana Vatarakta -As per *Charaka Samhita*, in *Uttana Vatarakta, Bahiparimarjana Chikitsa* or external application of drugs is advised in the form of *Lepa, Abhyanga, Parishek* or *Upnaha*. This procedure should be advised after recognizing predominant *Dosha*. *Ushna Lepa* is contraindicated in *Rakta* and *Pitta Pradhana Vatarakta*. *Ushna Lepa* may result in *Daha, Kleda* and *desqamation* of the skin. Similarly, *Sheeta Lepa* is contraindicated in *Kapha* and *VataPradhanVatarakta* as *SheetaLepa* brings about *Stambhan* of *Dosha*.**Gambhira Vatarakta-** *Snehana, Virechana* and *Basti* are advised in *Gambhira Vatarakta*.**Vata Pradhan Vatarakta-***Erand Taila* with *ksheer* is advocated and after the use of the preparation, *Dughdapanais* advised. *Oleation, Snehapana* and *Abhyanga* with *Ghrta, Taila, Vasa* and *Majja* have been mentioned. Lukewarm fomentation should be used externally.

Rakta- Pitta Pradhan Vatarakta- *VIRECHANA* which is considered as the best way to pacify *Pitta Dosha* is advised in this. In addition to it, oral use of *Ghirt a, Milk, fomentation* and *Basti* treatment is advised. *Sheeta Lepa* of *Dravya* is also advised for reducing burning sensation.

Kapha Pradhan Vatarakta- *MriduVamana* should be advised in this. *Gomutra* mixed with lukewarm milk is indicated. Different *Ghrita* preparation and *Kwatha* are advised for oral use and different *Taila* preparation for *Basti Karma* is advocated to be used in *Kapha Pradhan Vatarakta*.

DISCUSSION:-

The main causative factors for *Vatarakta* are excessive use of alcohol, high purine diet, non- vegetarian diet, acidic and astringent foodstuffs, person leading sedentary life, excessive anger and emotional distress. Both *vata* and *Rakta* play a major role in the pathogenesis of *Vatarakta*. Vitiating *raktadhatu* obstructs the path of *Vridh vayu*, in which the *vayu* has to flow. *Vridh* and obstructed *vata* in turn vitiating the whole *rakta* and this *dosha-dushya sammurchhana* in joints manifests as *Vatarakta*.

The incidence of *Vatarakta* is increasing with alarming rate. It is creating a lot of concern all over the world as it is causing serious complications with disabilities to human.

Considering this fact, it was decided to do write an article on Ayurvedic perspective of disease *Vatarakta*. *Pathya* and *apathy* are very important factors in the management of gout like metabolic disorder. So, along with medicine disease can be better controlled by avoiding all such precipitating factors.

CONCLUSION:-

The prevalence of life style disorders is rising rapidly. The best thing which can be better controlled by avoiding all such precipitating factors and scenario is to

prevent it rather than cure. *Vatarakta* is also a lifestyle disorder of today world. Excessive purine diet and sedentary life style are the causative factor of the disease.

Disease can controlled by adopting certain life style changes like excessive water intake, reducing body weight and low purine diets. Though they can be considered as external therapies and complimentary treatments (along with main treatment) in *gambhiraVatarakta* also.

The conclusion can be drawn on the basis of available classical texts, *Vatarakta* is a disease caused by standard of living. The present research article entitled as “A comprehensive study of understanding vataraktaw.r.t. Gouty Arthritis” was made to compile & elaborate the topic.

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