



A BIRD'S EYE VIEW ON RAKTAMOKSHANA IN LIGHT OF SAMHITA

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda delineates dosha dushya sammurchana as cause of vyadhi and samyata of dosha provides arogya. Panchakarma is a pentagonal cleansing process of Ayurveda where, it eliminates vitiated dosha. There are different types of shodhana therapies have been described in samhita like vamana, virechana, raktamokshana etc. out of which raktamokshana is considered as best therapy for pitta and rakta pradoshaja vyadhi. So raktamokshana by different modalities is much more effective in resolving pathogenesis in these diseases. The process of raktamokshana can be traced back to the vedic period. Acharya Susruta has mentioned regarding bloodletting in detail in his treatise. To expel out the vitiated blood, seven procedures are advocated; Sira Vedhana (Venesection) Sringa avacharana (Horn application), Alabu aavacharana (Gourd application), Jalouka avacharana (Leech application), Pracchana karma (Scraping), Ghati Yantra avacharana (Cupping glass application) and Suchi avacharana (Needle application). Raktamokshana can attenuate several conditions foremost related to rakta dushti vikaras. Here an attempt has been made to recollect details regarding raktamokshana prescribed in treatises.

KEY WORDS: Raktamokshana, Shastra-anushastra visravana, Jaloukavacharana

INTRODUCTION

Raktamokshana, the bloodletting procedure is a kind of para surgery used especially for the treatment of rakta dusti vikara (blood-borne disorders). The synonyms of Raktamokshana are asra visruti, sonita mokshana, rakta nirharana, rakta sravana, rakta harana. It is one among the five purification therapy described by acharya Susruta. Raktamokshana is the important and prime process of blood detoxification. It is derived from two words ie; 'rakta' which means blood & 'mokshana' which means leave^{1,2}. So the meaning of raktamokshana is to let the blood out. The blood is expelled out from the body to reduce the quantity of poisonous substances in the blood borne diseases. Antagonistic components present in rakta forwards with manifestation of blood related diseases. This impurities are to be cleansed out immediately. So raktamokshana enhances this process. Susruta

postulated that the person who regularly undergoes bloodletting will not get affected by shopha, twak dosha, visarpa, granthi etc disorders³.

DISCUSSION

Rakta dhatu is attributed to jeevana karma. So any vitiated variations implicated to rakta leads to rakta pradoshaja vikara. Hence, Rakta mokshana (bloodletting) is advocated as the supreme mode of treatment. Raktamokshana is considered as half or a complete therapy for numerous diseases, as most of the disease have blood as one of the main vitiating or pathogenic factor⁴. Raktamokshana Karma provides 'Ashu Vyadhya Shanti' also⁵. Here it is given the types of raktamokshana below as flow chart (Fig. 1).

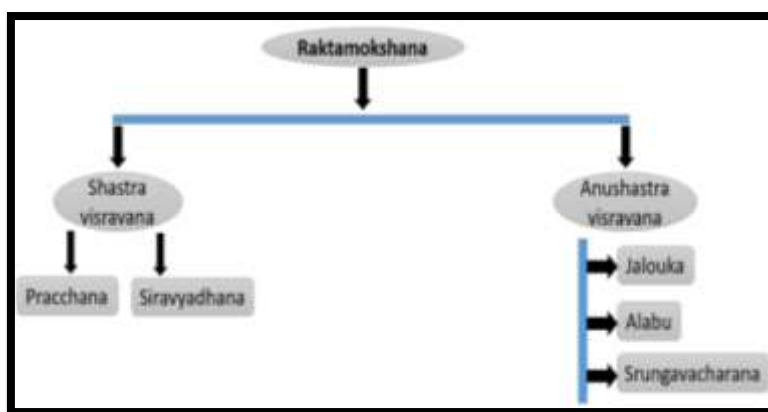


Figure 1: Types of Raktamokshana



Figure 2: Jaloukavacharana



Figure 3: Siravyadhana



Figure 4: Post session of Jaloukavacharana & Siravyadhana

Basic classifications of raktamokshana are shastra visravana (with sharp instruments) and anushastra visravana (without any sharp instruments). Shastra visravana is classified as two, pracchana and sira vyadhana. Vitiated rakta will be eliminated by pricking method, termed as pracchana and where it is done by venepuncture, as siravyadhana. Again, Anushastra visravana is classified as Jalouka (leech therapy) for the patients with pitta dosha disorders, children, ladies, physically and mentally weak

patients, next Alabu (creating vacuum and extracting blood through the vacuum using a vegetable bottle gourd) mainly done for Kapha disorders and Srungavacharana (using cow's horns) for vataja disorders⁶. Pictorial representations of performing both Jaloukavacharana and Siravyadhana has been given (Fig. 2 & 3). Raktamokshana, the specialized detoxification process comprises the following steps (Table 1).

Table 1: Purva/Pradhana/Paschat karma of Raktamokshana

Purva karma	Pradhana karma	Paschat karma
Materials should be collected in prior for purva karma phase. Requirements like cotton swab, gauze piece, instruments, gloves, lancet are set to keep for main procedure. Jalouka preparation: Smear the body of leech with paste of sarsapa and rajani and kept it in a pot of clean water for 1 muhurta for activation. Pick out one of it, as felt it is not fatigued.	Pradhana karma deals with as follows; PRACHHANA ⁷ - Pricking/scrapping is done in neither too superficial nor too deep manner in a straight line pattern over affected skin region. SIRAVYADHANA ⁸ - Proper position should be attained by patient before either in sitting or erect posture. After snehana and swedana, the liquid gruel is injected. The size should be that of 1 brihi or half barley pramana in muscular area. JALOUKAVACHARANA ⁹ - Patient should be either on sitting or lying down position. The portion where leech to be placed should rub with mud or cow dung powder. Jalouka should be placed over affected area of skin and made to catch over there. Body of leech is covered with wet cotton. If not bitten, put small drop of milk/blood or make a small incision on body of patient and make it to bite there. And after completion of suction, leech will detach out from bitten area. If not, sprinkle turmeric powder or saindhava powder over it. Apply Shatadowta ghrita over bitten surface of patient. ALABU ¹⁰ - A vacuum is created using bottle gourd like vegetable with keeping a burning lamp inside. SHRUNGAVACHARANA ¹¹ - First scratch over the area selected, and place the horn with thin layer of cloth. A vacuum area is made out within the horn enabling the suction of blood and getting collected into it.	After pradhana karma, paschat karma is performed via cleaning the area and dressing should be done. Cleaning of Jalouka: Sprinkle rice flour over the body of leech and pour oil added with salt on head portion. Make it vomit by kneading with fingers gently. After proper spewing, put in pot again.

Indication of each type of raktamokshana has been mentioned separately. Jalouka should be used in avagaada rakta, pracchana for pindita rakta, sira vyadhana to remove angavyapaka rakta and sringa & alabu should be used in tvacha sthita rakta¹². Meantime, it is also denoted with samyak lakshana and heena/mithya/atirava of rakta too¹³. It has been told that raktamokshana should be done when atmosphere should not be

too cold or too hot¹⁴. Raktamokshana can be influenced by this climatic changes. One prastha quantity of rakta is designated as uttama shodhana. Automatic stoppage of blood after certain time is an indication of samyak siravyadhana, associated with patient feels light and severity of illness is decreased. Jaloukavacharana has been performed on a dushta vrana case and the result of the same has been kept as images here (Fig. 5 & 6).



Figure 5: Jaloukavacharana performed in Dushta vrana at second day after chedana karma



Figure 6: After 20 days

CONCLUSION

Execution of shodhana therapies will aid attenuation of morbid situations of body. Rakta is the foremost important dhatu advocated with jeevana karma, thus if any dushti affects to it ends up on rakta dushti vikara. Other than rakta pradoshha vikara, rakta dhatu is involved in samprapti of different diseases. So it is indeed to manage rakta dushti with keen approach. Raktamokshana annihilates with these kind of rakta related disorders in a precise manner. Hence, practice of raktamokshana treatment should be more vividly considered in day to day clinical practice.

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