



A CLASSICAL APPROACH TOWARDS TREATMENT OF ARSHA ROGA - A REVIEW ARTICLE

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ABSTRACT

Life feels good and happy if we have great health. There are many diseases and health problems that people deal with every day. Out the bucket of health problems, one of the major problem today is Arsha. It is also known as piles or hemorrhoids. Ayurveda has great and healthy treatment to eradicate the problem. Ayurveda offers many remedies for lots of diseases. There are many ways Ayurveda approaches Arsha that includes diet, lifestyle, herbal supplements, medication, exercise and even kshar sutra ligation. It focuses on every aspect either it is constipation or pain during Arsha. The prevalence of hemorrhoids is equal between men and women but men are more likely to seek treatment. In this article, I have mainly focused on the classical description of Arsha in Ayurvedic texts, features according to types with the medicines commonly used with lifestyle modification.

KEYWORDS: Arsha, Hemorrhoids, Agni, Constipation, Herbal remedies.

INTRODUCTION

In modern day to day life, everybody is busy and neglecting proper diet and lifestyle habits. It results in reducing *agni* (digestive fire) or making it *manda* (abnormally low).

Mandagni means patient is not able to digest the food material he/she is having at proper speed and time. It results in accumulation or stagnation of aam (semi digested food material) in the form of stool inside or expelling it before time in watery or semisolid form which disturbs doshas at anorectal region. This results in *Arsha*. *Arsha* or haemorrhoids is excessive and unnatural growth of the *Maamsa Dhaatu*. These are caused in *Guda* (anal canal) in folds or sphincters (*Valee*).

//arivat pranana shrunati hinasti iti arshaha //

A disease which tortures patient's vital force (prana) as enemy is called as Arsha according to Ayurveda. To treat these diseases completely one need to know the root cause and try to eradicate it. Ayurveda correctly explains the physiology, pathology and treatment of these diseases. *Arsha* is difficult to cure. Patient suffers a lot as of this disease. In complications, other organs are also involved. The Arsha and Bhagandara are listed as maharoga (Astanga Hridaya Nidanasthana chapter 08, Astanga samgraha shareersthana chapter 11, Charak Indriyasthana chapter 09) & Mahagada (Sushruta sutrastahana chapter 33) category means great diseases, which are difficult to treat or incurable.

14th chapter of *Charaka Samhita Chikitsa Sthana* is *Arsha Chikitsa*, explains in detail about causes, types, signs and symptoms and treatment of hemorrhoids. In *Sushrut Samhita* there is elaborative description about surgery of *Arsha*.

Location of Arsha

All types of arsha are located in the space of 4 ½ Angulas (8-10 cm. approx) in the lower part of the colon. This area has 3 sphincters dividing the space into 3 parts- Guda valaya.

Pathogenesis of Arshas

The vitiated doshas (vata, pitta and kapha) contaminate the twak (skin), mamsa (muscle) and meda (fat) tissues and cause mamsa ankuras (fleshy masses) at the anal opening. These masses are called Arshas.^[1]

Types

Arsha are of 2 types

Sahaja Arshas – congenital or hereditary

Uttara Kalaja Arshas – acquired which are manifested after birth.^[2]

Arshas are again of 6 types^[3], they are

- Vataja Arshas (caused by vitiated vata)
- Pittaja Arshas (caused by vitiated pitta)
- Kaphaja Arshas (caused by vitiated kapha)
- Sannipataja Arshas (caused by simultaneous vitiation of all the 3 doshas)

- Raktaja Arshas (caused by vitiated rakta dhatu, bleeding piles)
- Sahaja Arshas (congenital haemorrhoids or hereditary).^[3]

1. Vataja Arshas

Causes of Vataja Arshas

- Kashaya – excessive consumption of astringent foods
- Katu – excessive consumption of pungent foods
- Tikta – excessive consumption of bitter foods
- Ruksha – excessive consumption of dry foods
- Sheeta – excessive consumption of cold foods
- Laghu – excessive consumption of light foods
- Pramita ahara – taking food in deficit quantities (against the quantity needed) or eating after the time for food has elapsed
- Alpa ahara – very less food
- Teekshna Madhya – excessive consumption of strong alcohol
- Maithuna – excessive indulgence in sex
- Langhana – fasting in excess
- Sheeta desha – cold places
- Sheeta kala – cold season
- Vyaayama – excessive indulgence in physical exercises
- Shoka – grief
- Vata – excessive exposure to breeze
- Atapa – excessive exposure to heat of the Sun.

Symptoms of Vataja Arshas

Nature of arshas or pile mass

- Shushka – dry
- Chimachimanvita – tingling sensation
- Mlaana – pale
- Shyava – blackish blue
- Aruna – yellowish red
- Stabdha – hard
- Parusha / khara – rough on touch
- Vakra – haphazard, crooked
- Mithovi sadrusha – split and broken
- Vishputita – cracks.

2. Pittaja Arshas

Causes of Pittaja Arshas

- Katu ahara – excessive consumption of pungent foods
- Amla ahara – excessive consumption of sour foods
- Lavana ahara – excessive consumption of salt or salty foods
- Ushna ahara – excessive consumption of hot foods
- Vyaayama – excessive exercise
- Agni – excessive exposure to fire
- Atapa – excessive exposure to heat of Sun
- Ushna desha – living in hot areas / places
- Krodha – anger
- Madhyam – excessive consumption of alcohol
- Asooyanam – jealousy

- Vidahia ahara, pana, bsheshaja – excessive consumption of corrosive foods, drinks and medicines
- Teekshna ahara, pana, bsheshaja – excessive consumption of irritating foods, drinks and medicines
- Ushna ahara, pana, bsheshaja – excessive consumption of hot foods, drinks and medicines.

Symptoms of Pittaja Arshas

Appearance of arsha (pile mass)

- Neela mukha – blue tipped
- Rakta – red coloured
- Peeta – yellow coloured
- Asita – black coloured
- Mrudu – soft on touch
- Snigdha – unctuous
- Tanu, visra, asru visraavini – dilute, foul smelling discharges
- Shuka jihwa – shape resembling the tongue of parrot
- Yakrut khanda – shape resembling the piece of Liver
- Jalauka vaktra – resembling the mouth of leech.

3. Kaphaja Arshas

Causes of Kaphaja Arshas

- Madhura ahara – excessive consumption of sweet foods
- Snigdha ahara – excessive consumption of unctuous or oily foods
- Sheeta ahara – excessive consumption of cold foods
- Lavana ahara – excessive consumption of salt or salty foods
- Amla ahara – excessive consumption of sour foods
- Guru ahara – excessive consumption of heavy to digest foods
- Avyayama – lack of exercise, sedentary life habits
- Diva swapna – sleeping in day time
- Shayya sukha – comfortable bedding
- Asana sukha – comfortable seating
- Prag vata – excessive exposure to wind blowing from east direction
- Sheeta desha – living in cold areas / places
- Sheeta kala – excessive exposure to cold climate
- Achintanam – lack of worries.

Symptoms of Kaphaja Arshas

Appearance of Arshas (pile mass)

- Mahamula – deep rooted mass
- Ghana – thick, heavy
- Manda ruja – mild pain
- Sitaa – white in colour
- Utsanna – swollen
- Snigdha – unctuous
- Stabdha – hard
- Vrutta – rounded
- Guru – heavy
- Sthira – stable
- Pichchila – slimy

- Stimita – feeling as if covered with wet cloth
- Shlakshana – smooth
- Kandu – itching
- Sparshana priya – feels comfort on touching
- Kareera samana – shape of Capparis deciduas
- Panasasthi samana – shape of seed of jack fruit
- Gostana samana – shape of udder of cow.

4. Tridoshaja Arshas

Causes – All the causes which aggravate the doshas individually taken together.

Symptoms – Mixture of symptoms mentioned in arshas caused by vitiation of individual doshas.

5. Raktaja Arshas

Causes – Vitiation of rakta or blood by doshas.

Charaka has included Raktaja Arshas in Pittaja Arshas and has not quoted it separately.

Symptoms of Raktaja Arshas

Appearance of Arshas (pile mass) – Similar to the appearance of pile mass in Pittaja Arshas.

- Vata praroha sannibha – Similar to the colour and structure of shoots of Vata tree (Banyan tree)
- Gunja sannibha – colour and appearance as that of Gunja seed or Abrus precatorius
- Vidruma / Pravala sannibha – colour and appearance as that of Pravala (coral).

6. Sahaja Arshas

Causes – This type of arshas or haemorrhoids is hereditary, acquired from one of the parents. These people will have a tendency to get piles right from their birth.

Symptoms of Sahaja Arshas

- Krisha, Vivarna, Kshama, Deena – thin (emaciated), discoloured, weak, helpless right from the birth
- Prachura vibaddhaha – severe constipation with obstruction of stools, flatus and urine
- Sharkara, ashmari – develops gravel and stones in urinary tract
- Aniyata malabaddhata – unpredictable bowel changes
- Sama mala – unformed stools occasionally which comes in different colours, white, pale, green, yellow, red, reddish yellow, loose, sticky, smell of dead body, foul smell
- Shula – cutting pain in the navel region, butts, groin and urinary bladder
- Shotha – swelling in hands, legs, face and around eye sockets
- Tikta amla udgaara – sour and bitter belching
- Durbala – weak
- Durbala agni – weak digestion
- Alpa shukra – less semen
- Krodhana – anger

- Suffers from – pravahika (dysentery), romancha (horripulation), prameha (urinary disorders), vishtambha (constant constipation), antra kujana (constant presence of gurgling sounds in the abdomen)etc.

Management

Treatment principles of Arshas^[4]

Arshas can be treated with 4 fold approach

- Shastra Karma – surgical methods
- Kshara Karma – Cauterization with alkalis or caustic cauterization
- Agni Karma – Fire cauterization
- Aushadha – internal and external medicines.

For the simplification of management, arshas are categorized in two types.^[5]

- Shushkarsha:** The arshas which generally do not bleed is known as shushkarsha. This type of arshas occur due to the dominance of Vāyu and Kapha.
- Sravi Arsha (Raktarsha):** Sravi Arsha is a condition which occur due to the dominance of Pitta and Rakta. In this condition patient passes suddenly streaks of bright red blood with the stool. Sometimes it may bleed profusely leading to the complications like anaemia.

(A) Shushkarsha Management

Common home remedies (Single Drugs)

1. Powdered root of Citraka (lead-wort-Plumbago geylenica) – 1 g., to be taken with 100 ml. Takra (butter milk) twice a day.
2. Fruit of Yavani-Ajawain (ptycotis) – 1 g. and Kala namak(Black salt) – 1 g. to be taken with Takra (butter milk) twice a day.
3. Fruit rind of Hareetaki-Hrad (chebulic myrobalan) kept overnight in Gomutra (cow's urine) is to be taken in the dose of 6 to 12 g. with Guda (jaggery), twice a day.

Simple Preparations

1. 16 g. powder of wood of Rakta Chandana (red sandal) is to be kept in 400 ml. of water and to be taken twice a day after filtering with thin cloth.
2. Powder of equal part of fruit pulp of Bilva (bel)-Eagle marmelous, shunthi-shonth (dried ginger), fruit of Yavani-ajwain (ptycotis) and root of Citraka (lead-wort), to be taken in 3 g. dose with Takra (butter milk) twice a day.
3. Prepare Surana Kanda-Jimi kanda (amorophallus-elephant's foot) by Puṭapāka method(Tuber of surana is wrapped in wet soil and placed in fire till the soil gets red .Remove from fire and allow to cool on its own, powder it after removing the wrapped soil) and it is to be taken 12 to 25 g.by mixing with 6 to 12 ml. of sarsapa-sarson Taila (mustard oil) and 1 g. of Lavana (common salt), twice a day.

Compound oral formulations

1. **Vijaya churna:** 3 to 6 g., to be taken with 50 ml. warm water twice a day.
2. **Pathyadi kwatha:** 14 to 28 ml., to be taken twice a day before meals.

External Applications

Lepa (Paste) prepared from the leaves of bhanga (cannabis) to be applied over the anus.

(B) Sravi Arsha Management**Common home Remedies (Single Drugs)**

1. Fresh juice obtained from the fruit of Dadima-Anar (pomegranate) – 14 ml., to be taken with 5 to 10 g. Sharkara (raw sugar) twice a day.
2. Powdered fruit rind of Haritaki (chebulic myrobalan) – 1 to 3 g., to be taken with 50 ml. warm water, twice a day.
3. Pericarp of Dadima-Anar (pomegranate) – 12 g., to be taken with equal part of sharkara (raw sugar) twice a day.
4. Kamal keshara (lotus stamen) – 5 g., to be taken with 5 g. butter in the morning.
5. Cream of curd – 50 g., churned in 250 ml. water is to be taken once a day.
6. Powdered fruit pulp of Bilva (bel) – 1 to 2 g. and Shunthi (dried ginger) – 1 g., to be taken with 50 ml. water twice a day.

Simple Preparations

1. Powder of Nagkeshara (flower stamen of iron wood tree) – 6 g., butter – 25 g. and Sharkara (raw sugar) – 10 g., to be taken once in the morning.
2. Grind the root of Apamarga (prickly chaff) – 25 g. in Tandulodaka (Water obtained after decantation of washed rice). Add 250 ml. of goat's milk and 1 g. powdered root of Shatavari (asparagus) in it. To be taken twice a day.

Compound Ethical Formulations

1. Samasharkara churna: 5 to 12 g., to be taken with 50 ml. water twice a day.
2. Duralabharishtam: 15-20 ml twice daily with equal amounts of water^[6]
3. Arshakuthar Rasa: 1 to 2 pills, to be taken with 50 ml. water twice a day.^[7]
4. Nityodita Rasa: 250 mg., to be taken with 5 to 10 g. ghee twice a day.^[8]
5. Candraprabhā Vaṭī (Arśadhikāra): 1 to 2 pills, to be taken with 50 ml. water twice a day.^[9]
6. Take fruit of small variety of Harītakī (chebulic myrobalan), whole plant of Dūrvā (doob grass), root of Pippalī (long pepper) and Nāgakeśara (stamen of Indian iron wood tree) in equal parts and make pills of 8 g. by adding Svarasa (fresh juice) or decoction prepared from fruit rind of Āmalakī (embelica myrobalan). Such 1 to 2 pills are to be taken with Takra (butter milk) twice a day.

External Applications

1. Kāsīsādi Taila: to be applied in the anus in the morning after defecation.
2. Give fomentation to the anus with a pottalika (bag) prepared from the powder of equal part of leaf of Bhanga (cannabis) and Haridrā (turmeric).
3. Lepa prepared from the powdered rhizome of Haldi (turmeric) and fruit of Katukarohini in Sarsapa-Sarso Taila (mustard oil) is to be applied on the anus.

Kshar karma

As per the available treatment modalities of *Arsha*, the *Kshara karma* modality is the best one, taking into the consideration its convenience, easy adoptability, cost-effectiveness and curative results. Under this parasurgical procedure, various forms of external *kshara* application are used in treating the *Arsha*.^[10]

Pathya^[11]

- Godhuma-Genhu (wheat)
- Shali variety of rice
- Seeds of Yava (barley)
- Kulattha-kulathi (dolichos bean)
- Aja dugdha (goat's milk)
- Navneeta (butter)
- Fruit of Kapittha (wood apple)
- Leaf and fruit of Patola (a variety of small cucumber)
- Root of Punarnava pigweed)
- Surana Kanda (tuber of amorophallus-elephant's foot)
- Leaf of Vastuka (a variety of chenopodium)
- Fruit rind of Āmalakī (embelica myrobalan).

Apathya

- Masha-urad (black phaseolus bean)
- Seed of Tila (sesame)
- Piṅyaka (oil cake)
- Pishamaya Dravya (dishes prepared through pashna (Grinding on stone)
- Fried, constipating and difficult to digest articles of food
- Excessive use of water, sun bath, heat and riding
- Suppression of natural urges of urination and defecation should be avoided.

DISCUSSION

Ano rectal disorders are currently prevailing in the society. Out of many of the causes, few important are sedentary lifestyle, irregular and inappropriate dietary habits, prolonged sitting or standing and certain psychological disturbances too. Mostly, the ano rectal disorders like arsha are coupled with psychological manifestations. The prime cause of ano rectal disorders is the derangement of Jatharagni, which further leads to constipation. A constipated bowel is the devils workshop and leads to so many disorders. Constipation increases the back pressure into the haemorrhoidal veins to

produce piles. The fast food and cola culture have again worsened the condition. This disorder is utterly embarrassing to the patient. Ayurveda offers many remedies for various disorders including cancer treatment. Ayurvedic treatment for arsha has shown promising results. There are many ways Ayurveda approaches arsha. This includes diet, lifestyle, herbal supplements, medication, exercise and even massage. Since constipation is one of the main causes of piles, most of the treatment is focused on ensuring good digestive health. However, if a patient already have painful piles, Ayurvedic treatment focuses on treating the symptoms and improving the quality of life. Since Ayurvedic medicine involves a lot of changes in the diet and lifestyle, some remedies to prevent and treat arsha are fairly simple and lifestyle related.^[12] Statistically, kshara sutra ligation for arsha was found to be highly significant and effective management. No adverse effects were noted during the follow-up period.^[13]

When we see the development of modern medical science, it has crossed all barriers and developed extraordinarily, and has also been accepted in the society as well as scientific community. Then why does Ayurveda not get that much importance in its own birth place — India? Why is this ancient wisdom lagging behind, despite having tremendous potential to treat diseases successfully? Has this science remained at a superficial level? Unfortunately the answer may be 'yes'. Many times it is stated that Ayurveda is 50 years behind the modern science. However, only we are responsible for this lack in progress. In the era of nanotechnology, very few Ayurvedic institutions with Ayurvedic teachers are interested in the use of technology, modern innovations, and their integration in support of Ayurveda. The strategy planning of Ayurveda should be more practically oriented, so that the ancient knowledge can be made applicable in the present day context. Being totally curable by Ayurvedic modalities, arsha roga treatment further needs to be advertised so that everybody can take the benefit of our traditional knowledge.

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