

Conceptual Study of Arsha (Hemorrhoids)

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Abstract: This is a step-by-step study of the Hemorrhoids with the help of Ayurveda. Ayurveda has excellent therapies and treatments available. Here, we discuss the prevention with the etiology of the disease.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Tridoshik, Hemorrhoids

1. Introduction

Ayurveda the science of life discussed this disease in all its aspects. A wide spectrum of descriptions is available including its definite etiopathogenesis and several treatment methods.

अर्शसां प्रशमे यन्नमाशु कुर्वित बुद्धिमान्
तान्याशु हि गुदं बध्वा कुर्यबुध्दुगुदोरम

अ.ह.नि ७/५९

According to Ayurveda, the disease comes under the heading of Maharogas as it is Dirghakalanubandhi, Dushchikitsya in nature, and Tridoshik and involves the Marma [1]. Arsha is the condition associated with Mans and RaktaDhatu Dushti [2] and characterized by Mansakur (Protruding Mass), Rakta-Strava (per rectal Bleeding), and Panduta (Pallar) [3]. Arsha occurs in Gudabhaga, which is undoubtedly a Marma, and it is well known for its chronicity and difficulty in treating.

Ayurveda, though being an ancient science, the great Ayurvedic surgeon Sushruta Acharya, 2000 years back has described the fourfold treatment in the management of hemorrhoids. Acharya Sushruta has mentioned four lines of management such as Aushadha, Kshara, Agni, Shastra [4]. Apparently, this approach seems to be graded based on particular symptom complex of the disease but compared to Aushadha chikitsa rest of the three have got important and practical approaches in the present time too.

चतुर्विधोऽर्शसां साधनोपायः I
तद्यथा भेषजं क्षारोऽग्निः शस्त्रमिति II

सु.सं.चि ६/३

Arsha can be compared with Haemorrhoids. Hemorrhoids or piles are dilated veins within the anal canal in the subepithelial region formed by radicles of superior, middle, and inferior rectal veins.

Bhaishjya Chikitsa: Medicinal treatment Kshar

Chikitsa: Chemical cauterization Agni

Chikitsa: Cauterization

Shastra Chikitsa: Surgical intervention

2. Materials and Method

A literature study for Arsha and Haemorrhoids is done referring to both Ayurvedic and Modern medicine books.

Ayurvedic Perspective: Vyutpatti (Etymological derivation of Arsha). The term Arsha can be derived by 'Hrugatau' Dhatu with the suffix of San gives the meaning of 'as violent as enemy' [5].

Nirukti (Definition of Arsha): According to Acharya Charaka only the mass at gudavali is termed as Arsha and those at other places than Gudavali are called Adhimamsa [6].

Synonyms of Arsha

Vagbhata - Hatnama, Mansakilaha, Mansankura.

Sushruta- Arsha, Mansarsha

Charak- Mulvyadhi, Gudakeela, Durnama

Etiology of Arsha (Hetu)

In Charak Samhita (Chikistasthan 14/7), in Sushruta Samhita (Nidanasthan 2/4), in Madhavidana (madhukoshtika 3/4), Ashtanghruday (sutrasthan 9/19) aharaj and viharajhetu are described in detail.

Aharaj Nidan

Guru, SheetaAnna	Paryushitanna
VidahiAnna	PootiAnna
Virudhanna	Krusha, Shushka, PootiMamsa
Ajeerna	Sankeernanna
Pramitaashana	

Viharaj Nidan

Asamshodhnaat	Sukha Shayana, Aasana, SthanSevanam
Bastikarmavibhramaat	Utkat, Kathina, VishamaAasana
Avyayaamaat	Gudakshananaat
Avyayaayat	Pratataadi -Nirvaahanaat
Diwaaswapnaat	Vegodeeranaat
Udbhrantayaanaat	Samudeernavega -Vinigrahaat

Samprapti [7]

Samprapti Ghatakas [8]

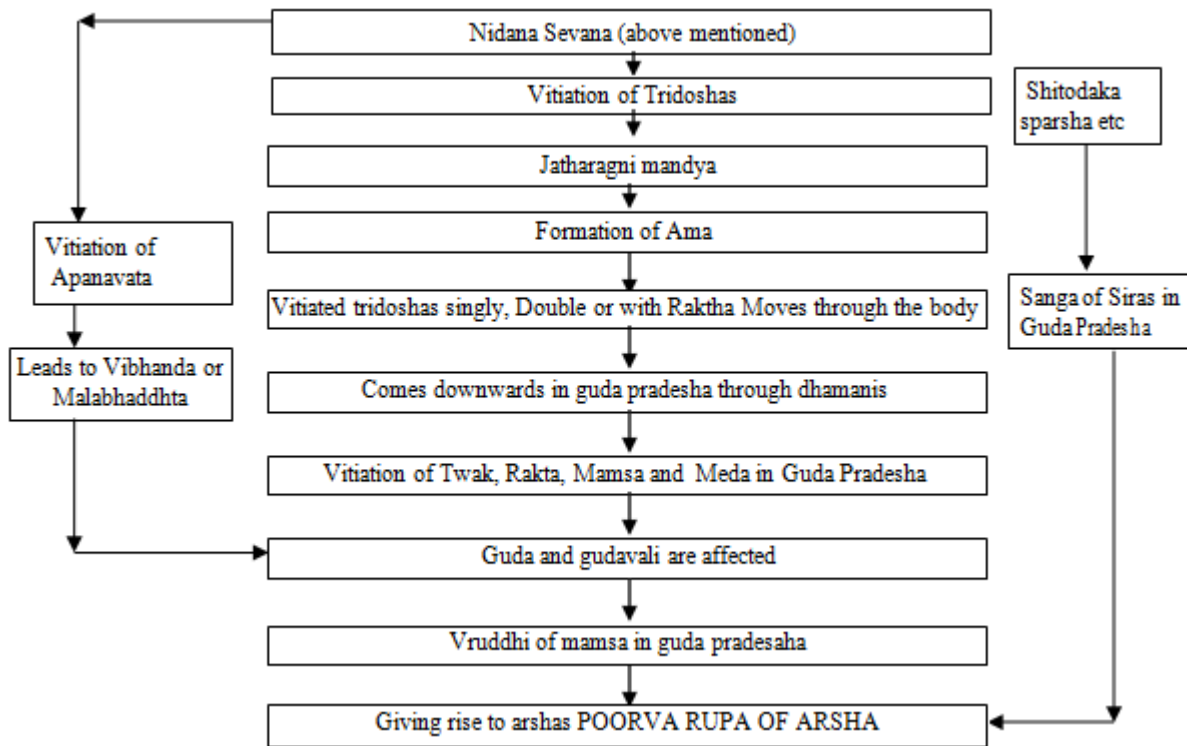
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Dosha: Tridoshaja, **Dooshya:** Tvak, mamsa, medas, rakta, **Srotas:** Raktavaha, mamsavaha, **Srotodushti:** Sanga, siragranthi, **Udbhavasthana:** Amapakvasayotbhava,

Vyaktastana: Gudavalitraya, **Rogamaarga:** Bhahya and Abhyantara, **Agni:** Jataragnimandhya.



Purvarupa: Gudparikartanam, Tandra, Nidra, Indriyadaurbalya

Rupa: Vataj: Parisushka (Dry), hard, rough, Visham (irregular surface), Vivarna (of various colors of fleshy masses), various shapes, blackish in appearance, sashulam Samhatamupveshyate (frequently associated with constipation, and painful defecation) which is radiating in nature.

Pittaj: Usually small in size, the passage of blood mixed with stool (Sarudhiram Atisaryate), may cause severe burning sensation during defecation which may lead to thirst, faintness, and shock.

Kaphaj: Mahamoola (Wide based), smooth, oval, fixed, fleshy masses which generally do not bleed or suppurate and are accompanied by severe pruritus (Kandu) and mucous discharge.

Raktaja: Fleshy masses which give immense blood loss during defecation. Sannipataj: Mixed Lakshana of all Doshas

Types of Arsha

In various Ayurvedic Samhita, Ashra is classified on different criteria:

Criteria	Charak Samhita	Ashtanga Hridaya	SushrutaSamhita
1) Origin	Sahaja Jaatasyottarkaaliya	Sahaja Jaatasyottarkaaliya	Six types
2) Strava	Shushka Strvai Arsha Vaatoibana Kapholbana	Shushka Strvai Arsha a)Vaataj b) Kaphaj	Vaataj Pittaj Kaphaj Raktaj Sannipatik
3) Dosha	Vaataj Pittaj Kaphaj Dwandwaj Tridoshaj	Vaataj Pittaj Kaphaj Dwandwaj Tridoshaj	Dwidoshaj Tridoshaj

Sadhyasadyatva [9]

The sadyasadyata of Arshas depends on the site of origin, dosha involvement, and chronicity. All types of Arshas can be classified into the following prognostic groups.

Saadhya	Kruchrasaadhya	Yapya	Asaadhya
Ekadoshaja	Dvidoshaja	Tridoshaja with alpalakshanas	Tridoshaja Sahaja
Bahayavali	Madhyamavali		Antarvali
Less than 1 year	More than 1 year		Upadravayukta

Treatment

Acharya Charaka and Acharya Sushruta have mentioned four types of treatment for Arshas viz. Beshaja chikitsa, Kshara karma, Agni karma & Sastra karma. Medical line of treatment advised by Acharya Sushruta is as under [10].

Types of Arsha	Measures
Vataja Arshas	Snehana, svedana, vamanavirechana & vasti.
Pittaja Arshas	Virechana
Raktaja Arshas	Samshamana karma
Kaphaja Arshas	The administration of Shunti & Kulattha
Sannipataja Arshas	Uses of Tridoshaghnavas

In the case of Raktarshas if it is Vatanubandha, should be treated with Snigdha and Shita drugs as well as the dietetic regimens having similar qualities. Kaphanubandha Raktarshas should be treated with Ruksha and Shita drugs along with similar dietetic regimens [11]. In the patients of Raktarshas, if Vata vitiation is more and Pitta, Kapha vitiation is less administration of Snehapana, Snehabyanga and Sneha Basti should be done [12].

Vataja and Kaphaja Arshas should be treated with Ksharakarma and Agnikarma; whereas Pittaja and Raktaja Arshas should be treated only with Mridu Ksharakarma [13]. Special emphasis has been given to the administration of Bhallataka in Shuskarshas and Kutaja Twak in Sravi Arshas. Takrapana is common for both varieties of Arshas [14].

Para-Surgical Treatment: Those patients who are not relieved by medical treatment should be treated on lines of parasurgical methods. These are Ksharakarma, Agnikarma and Raktamokshana [15].

- 1) **Ksharakarma:** According to Acharya Sushruta, soft, extensive, deeply situated, and projecting pile mass is curable by the Kshara karma. The caustics should be applied by either a ladle, a brush, or a rod.
- 2) **Agnikarma:** Agnikarma is also indicated for the treatment of Arshas. Rough, firm, thick, and hard pile mass are curable by Agnikarma. This procedure is done with hot Shalaka.
- 3) **Raktamokshana:** In addition to all such measures mentioned by Acharya Sushruta, Acharya Vagbhatta has advised Raktamokshana to be done with the help of Jalauka, Suchi, and Kurcha, in those pile masses which are of hard consistency, elevated and whenever the vitiated blood is accumulated in the piles.
- 4) **Surgical Treatment:** The total excision of the pile mass is done, followed by the cauterization of the bleeding points by hot Shalaka. The pile, which has a narrow pedicle that, projecting and moist should be treated by Shastrakarma.

Modern Perspective: Definition of Haemorrhoids

Hemorrhoids or piles are dilated veins within the anal canal in the subepithelial region formed by radicles of superior, middle, and inferior rectal veins.

Etiology: Primary or Idiopathic causes:

- 1) Hereditary factors-It is seen in the members of the same family.

- 2) Anatomical Factors-It has long been suggested that internal pile is a natural consequence of adaptation of erect posture by mankind.
- 3) Exciting causes-Parks suggested that straining to expel constipated stool causes dilatation of the venous plexus.
- 4) Morphological causes in humans, the weight of a column of blood unsupported by the valves produces a high venous pressure to the lower rectum which leads to hemorrhoids.
- 5) Physiological causes-Some surgeons recently have regarded the extensive venous plexus of the upper anal canal as physiological.
- 6) Diet -Low roughage diet may excite hemorrhoids
- 7) Sedentary habits-Prolonged standing and sitting increase the rectal pressure thereby precipitate piles.

Secondary causes for Haemorrhoids: Haemorrhoids may be secondary to few conditions, which must be excluded before the treatment is decided.

- 1) Chronic constipation
- 2) Pregnancy
- 3) Abdominal tumors
- 4) CA of the rectum
- 5) Straining during Micturition

1) Portal Obstruction

Pathogenesis: Lord (1969) believes that hemorrhoids constitute a reversible condition and that they are caused by a narrowing of the lower rectum and/or anal canal. The narrowing interferes with the normal process of defaecation and leads to an abnormal raising of the intrarectal pressure during the act causing venous congestion and hence hemorrhoids.

Classification of Haemorrhoids According to the site of origin: Internal Haemorrhoids, External Haemorrhoids, Intero external Haemorrhoids

According to Pathological Anatomy: Primary hemorrhoids, Secondary Haemorrhoid

According to prolapsed:

- 1) 1st degree Hemorrhoids
- 2) 2nd-degree hemorrhoids
- 3) 3rd-degree hemorrhoids
- 4) 4th-degree hemorrhoids
- 5) Vascular Haemorrhoids
- 6) Mucosal Haemorrhoids Arterial pile

Clinical Features: Bleeding, Prolapse, Discharge, and pruritisani, Pain, Anemia

Specific Features According to Type of Pile**1) External Haemorrhoids**

Signs: Bluish, soft bulging vessels covered by the skin may be seen.

Symptoms: It may cause minimal discomfort to severe pain if they are thrombosed. Bleeding may occur if the clot erodes through the skin.

2) Internal Haemorrhoids

Signs: The perineum may appear normal if there are non-prolapsed internal hemorrhoids. Bluish, soft bulging vessels

covered by mucosa may be seen on examination

Symptoms: Depends on the severity or grade of the hemorrhoids.

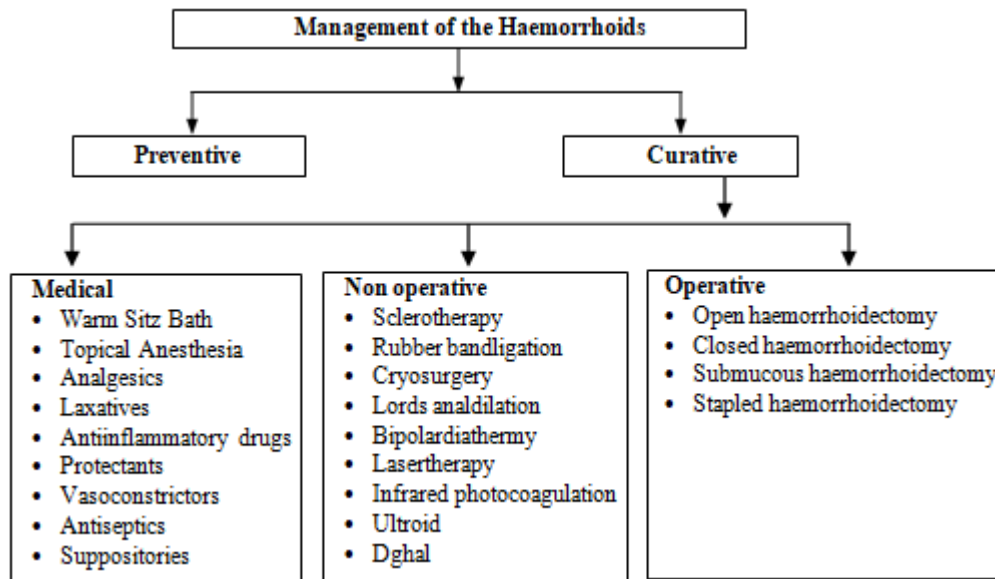
Grade 1: Painless bleeding

Grade 2: Mild discomfort, bleeding

Grade 3: Pain, bleeding, mucosal discharge

Grade 4: Pain, bleeding, possible thrombosis, and strangulation

Treatment



Condition	Management
First degree	Exclusion of other causes of bleeding, diet, rubber band ligation, infrared coagulation, bipolar electrocoagulation, sclerotherapy, DGHAL
Second degree	Rubber band ligation, infrared coagulation, sclerotherapy, DGHAL
Third degree	Rubber band ligation, infrared coagulation, bipolar electrocoagulation, haemorrhoidectomy
Fourth degree	Haemorrhoidectomy
Prolapsed, strangulated hemorrhoids	Emergency haemorrhoidectomy
Thrombosed external hemorrhoids	Excision

As the definition of Arshas itself says, These are fleshy projections (growths) that obstruct anal passage, kills life like an enemy (A.H.Ni. 7/1).

So we can include other growths than hemorrhoids like Anapithelioma, Polyps, Hypertrophied papillae, Sessile, Sentinel tags, Carcinoma of the rectum, etc.

As the classics say, the valis are sites of Arshas so new growths of the rectum and that of 3 rectal folds can be included in Arshas. Symptoms of hemorrhoids are limited but those of Arshas include all haemorrhoidal symptoms with many more.

3. Discussion

Arsha is one of the Asthamahagadas and is difficult to cure. The fact that Arshas is difficult to cure is everywhere emphasized in Ayurveda. Enumeration of a vast number of etiological factors including dietic ingredients, habits, acts, indulgences and systematic description of its pathogenesis are itself indicative of our Acharyas' keen observation, deep insight, and scientific knowledge of the disease.

Mandagni is the chief causative factor of the disease. Malavibandha, Kandu, and Raktasrava are some of the classical features of Arshas. Having gone through all these theories, which are discussed in previous pages one will certainly admit that Ayurvedic physicians of ancient times were scientific in their observation

All hemorrhoids are Arshas but all Arshas are not hemorrhoids. Arshas include hemorrhoids with other anorectal growths.

4. Conclusion

Arsha is one of the Ashtamahagadas. The location of Arsha is in the Guda region which is Sadyapranahara Marma. Erect posture in humans makes them more prone to this disease. It is estimated that 50% of the population above the age of fifty has minimal or significant piles. Arsha is very hard to treat and needs long-term treatment. Bleeding, Prolapse, Discharge, and pruritis Ani, Pain, and Anaemia are the cardinal symptoms of Hemorrhoids.

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