

Therapeutic Aspects of Agnikarma and its Importance in Current Ayurvedic Practice

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Abstract: Ayurveda is the everlasting supreme science of medicine, because it deals with promotion of health and curing the disease. Acharya Shushrut known as father of surgery has described various surgical procedures along with some para surgical measure in different disease condition. Agnikarma is one amongst these para surgical procedure. Agnikarma is one of the superior para surgical techniques mentioned in Ayurveda. In Agnikarma therapeutic burning with special tools are done on specific on specific sites. Agnikarmahas been given special place in surgery by Shushrut and it is believed that disease treated by Agnikarma never reoccurs. In modern time also it is used and termed as therapeutic burns or cauterisation. In this paper attempt is being made to review various aspects of Agnikarma and principles of Agnikarma in management of various disease. This study concludes that Agnikarma is very effective easy and simple procedure that can employed as outpatient procedure.

Keywords: Agnikarma, Dagdha, Dahanopakaran

1. Introduction

Shalyatantra is one of the eminent branch of Ayurveda, Acharya Shushrut has mentioned different methods of management of disease such as bhesaja karma, ksharkarma, Agnikarma, shashtra karma and raktamokshan. Agnikarma means application of Agni directly or indirectly with the help of different materials to relieve the patient from disease. Agnikarma is the prime para surgical procedure to treat chronic diseases, which are mostly difficult to manage because of antagonist property of doshas, like diseases caused by vata and kapha. Atharva veda has identified Agni as god and treatment for disease. It is clear that Agni was used to protect the body from invading microorganisms. Now a days also the sterilisation by healing process can be interpreted as the above idea of atharvaVeda.

Classification of Agnikarma

It can be classified on various basis as below:-

1) According to Akriti-^[1]

- A) **Valaya**-circular shape, encircling the root of the diseased portion.
- B) **Bindu**-dots made with the tip of shalaka.
- C) **Vilekha**-Straight curved or horizontal lines drawn with shalaka.
- D) **Pratisaran**-rubbing with the side of shalaka.

Acharya Vagbhata in Ashtang Sangraha mention that it can be also be of^[2]

- A) **Ardhachandra**-semilunar, crescent shape.
- B) **Swastika**-Swastika shaped.
- C) **Ashtapada**-directed in eight directions.

2) According to Dravya used-^[3]

- A) **Snigdha Agnikarma**-performed by means of madhu, gritha, tailam, used for Agnikarma to treat diseased situated in sira, snayu, sandhi, asthi.

- B) **Ruksha Agnikarma**-performed by means of pippali, shara, shalaka, godanta, used for Agnikarma to treat diseases situated in twaka and mamsa dhatu.

3) According to site-

- A) **Sthanika** (local)-as in vicharchika, arsha, kadara.
- B) **Sthanantariya**-as in visuchika, apachi, grudhrasi.

4) According to Dhatus-^[4]

- A) **Twak dagdha**
- B) **Mamsa dagdha**
- C) **Sira dagdha**
- D) **Sandhi asthi dagdha**

Dahnopakarana used for Agnikarma-^[5]

In classics, there are different dahanopakarana have been described during the description of diseased cured by Agnikarma. Dahanopakarana means accessories like drugs, articles, and substance used for Agnikarma each of them is having their own peculiarity.

Twaka dagdha-for superficial diseases involving skin pippali, Ajashakrut, Godanta, Shara, Shalaka.

Mamsa dagdha-for disease involving muscles jambavaushta and other metals like kansya, Rajat, Tamra etc. should be used.

Sira, Snayu, Asthi, Sandhigata dagdha-Madhu, Guda, Sneha should be used.

Indication-^[6]

Agnikarma is indicated in many diseases like Arsha, Granthi, Arbuda, Bhagandara, Apachi, Antravridhi, Shlipad, Nadivrana, Upadamsa, Gulma, Shirorog, tilkalak, excessive pain in twak, mamsa, sira, snayu, sandhi and asthi. Snayu, Asthi and sandhigata vata vikara. excessive bleeding from sandhi, siracheda.

Contraindications

According to *Acharya sushrut* internal haemorrhage, rupture of internal organs, bleeding disorders, perforation, retained foreign body it should not be practiced. Fearful persons, old aged, debilitated and children are also exempted because of their mental health. In person with dominant *pitta* traits and the persons contraindicated for *swedana* are contraindicated for *Agnikarma* as it causes further vitiation of *pitta*.^[7]

According to *charaka* *Agnikarma* should not be done in the *vra* of *snayu*, *marmā*, *netra*, *kushtha* and *vra* with *visha* and *Shalya*.^[8]

According to *Ashtangasangraha* *Agnikarma* should not be done in the patient who takes *virechana*, suffering from *atisaar*, who has *Shalya* in his body, who has boils on body, who is contraindicated for *Ksharkarma*.^[9]

Agnikarma kala-^[10]

Agnikarma can be done in all seasons except *sharad* and *grishma* due to increase ease in *pitta*, which generated out of the excessive hot climate. but in emergency *Agnikarma* can be done in any season.

As per *dhatu*s features of proper *Agnikarma*-^[11]

Twaka dagdha-Production of crackling sound, foul smell, contraction of skin

Mamsa dagdha-Ashy dark grey colour (like pigeon), less swelling and pain, dry contracted wound

Sira Snayu dagdha- Black colour, elevation of site, stoppage of discharge.

Sandhi asthi dagdha-dryness, dark red discolouration, roughness and stability of part.

Procedure of *Agnikarma*

Preoperative – Before going to any surgical or para surgical procedure complete assessment should be carried out regarding all the factors, instruments required for *Agnikarma* like *pippali*, *shalaka*, *plota*, *pichu*, *grita*, *madhu*, source of *agni* should be kept ready. *pichhilaanna* should be given before the procedure.^[12] Patient should be empty stomach in case like obstructed labour, fistula in ano, urolithiasis, abdominal disease, piles and diseases of oral cavity.^[13]

Operative-Before performing *Agnikarma* chanting of *mantras* should be done. The patient kept in suitable position, by keeping head in the east direction and hold by expert assistant to avoid movements. exact site of *Agnikarma* should be marked, cleaned and then it is performed at the expected site as per the condition and up to the optimum sign of cauterisation (*samyakdagdha lakshan*).

Post operative-After completion of *Agnikarmamadhu* and *gritha* apply on the part where *Agnikarma* has done for *ropana* of *dagdha vana*.^[14]

Effects and Superiority

Acharya Shushrut and *Acharya Vagbhat* have both given superior place to *Agnikarma* than *bheshaja*, *ksharkarma* and *shashtra karma*. chances of recurrence not present.^[15] Disease which cannot be cured with medicine, *kshar* and surgery can be cured with *agni*.^[16]

Also have effects of sterilization, *Agnikarma* eradicates disease from its roots. It shows *shamyak* effects on both *vata* and *kapha*. Its causes coagulation and closure of bleeding vessels and thus helps in haemostasis.

Mode of action of *Agnikarma*

Agnikarma (Ushna, tikshna, sukshmaguna)

Activate *dhatvagni* and digest the aggravated doshas

It release of *sangha* (obstruction) of *vayu* and pacifies *vata* and decrease the pain.

It stimulate *dhatvagni* (stimulate tissue metabolism)---remove *awarana*---*Amapachana*.

It stimulate *sirasankochana*---helps for *raktastambhan* (haemostasis)

2. Conclusion and Result

Agni karma is pain management procedure described in ayurved. From ancient period this procedure performed in different name. the technique and equipment's have become advance but the basic principles are still the same. This procedure is superior than others.

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