REVIEW OF LANGHANA THERAPY- THE BOON OF AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda the ancient science of life describes various types of treatments in context of healthy individual and also diseased one. Amongst them shadvidhopkrama bears a lot of significance in today's life. Shadvidhopkrama means combinations of six types of treatments, viz. Langhana-Bruhana, Swedana-Stambhana, Rukshana-Snehana. These are the shadvidhopkrama. The ultimate result of all of them is Dosha saamyata. Whatesoever may be the modality of treatment main objective is to achieve dosha saamyata since Doshas are basic principle of Ayurveda. Here special efforts are taken to study Langhanaopkrama with special context to its definition, types, indications and contraindications.

KEYWORDS: Langhana, apatarpana, autophagy.

INTRODUCTION

Taking into consideration today's lifestyle and various disorders rising due to it, langhana is best remedy for them. Disturbed daily schedule like late night sleeping, getting up late in the morning, excessive consumption of junk food, excessive stress all are responsible for these disorders. Since they affect the digestion and disturb the digestive power and hence aamadosha the root cause of all diseases according to Ayurveda is generated and thus one becomes a diseased person.
Since langhana is one of the important opkrama in reparing vitiated doshas and establishing dosha saamyata this is the most important chikitsa opkrama included in day today clinical practice.

The word langhana is derived from the word laghu which means light(opposite to heavy). the purpose of langhana is to make the body light by relieving heaviness.[1]

Acharya charaka states: the modalities or treatment or lifestyle or medicine or panchkarma therapies that bring about lightness and thinness to body is called langhana.[2] Whereas acharya vagbhat’s diwidhopkrama includes shadvidhopkrama under the two modalities.[3]

Santarpana, Apterpana. According to this classification langhana comes under the aptarpana modality of treatment. This classification holds good because diseases too are classified as santarpanajanya and apatarpanjanya vyadhis.

Vagbhata correctly defines langhana as treatment which is useful in lightening in the body.[4] Thus the procedures which create lightness in the body are called langhana. the substances that carry out function of langhana have the following properties; Charaka states them as follows:[5]

Laghu(light):herbs or medicines, diet which predominantly have lightness as its quality.

Teekshna (sharp): the purpose of langhana is to open channels or blockages hence medicines or remedies with sharpness are choosen which enter the minute channels and eliminate the morbid matter and open the channels.

Vishada (clear or pure):helps to clear channels by taking away stickiness.

Ushana(hot):since hot substances are light in nature they are usually used.

Rooksha (dry):dryness brings lightness. Hence substances with rookshaguna are used.

Sookshma (minute):helps the medicine to enter each and every channel of the body and brings lightness.

Khara (rough) and Sara (mobility):relieves the obstruction. eliminates morbid matter from the channels helps to clear channel and ensuring movement of body fluid in normal direction.
In Ashtang sangraha bhautik sanghatan of laghu dravyas is stated as: vayu+aakash+agni Doshaprabhava: agnivaatkar and kaphghana.[6]

Types of langhana.

Vagbhat states following two types of langhana as shodhana and shaman.

Shodhana type of langhana includes-niruhabasti, vanama, virechana, murdhavirechana, raktamokshana.

Shaman type of langhana includes-Pachana, deepana, kshudha, trishana, vyayama, aatapa, maruta.

Similarly charaka states four types of shudhi(purifying therapies) told in panchakarma[8] Vamana-vomiting therapy. It is given when bahu dosha shlesma(kapha) is present.

Virechana-purgation given. When pitta dosha is present in excess and disorders related to it accompany.

Niruhbasti-enema made from decoction of herbal medicines is given in various vaatvyadhis.

Nasya –Drugs having purifying agents as its main contents are administered through nasal route.

Subtypes of Shamana type of langhana are stated as below-

Pipasa (thirst control), Maruta (exposure to wind), Atapa (exposure to sun), Pachana (medication helpful in digestion used), Upavasa (fasting), Vyayama (exercise).

All above are the various methods of langhana mentioned in different text.

Acharya Charaka states the use of different types of langhana according to prakruti, strength of disease and strength of diseased one. This can be tabulated as below.[9]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of langhana indicated</th>
<th>Rugnabala</th>
<th>Rogabala</th>
<th>Roga</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Shodhana</td>
<td>Bruhatasharer (balvan)</td>
<td>Balvanarog</td>
<td>Prabhitshlesma-pitta, asra(rakt)malaalong with vaat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Pipasa, Upwas</td>
<td>Alpabala</td>
<td>Alpa</td>
<td>Vami, aatisara, gaurav, hrudrog, visuchika, alasaka,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**DISCUSSION**

Indications for *langhana* therapy  
According to *vagbhata* mehadosha, aamadosha, snehaadhikya, *jwara*, urustambha, *kustha*, visarpa, vidradhi, pleharoga, sheeroroga, kantharog, netra roga are few indications where *langhana* is the foremost given treatment.\(^{[10]}\)  
Similarly *yogratnakar* has stated that *aakshiroga*, *kukshiroga*, pratishaya, *vrana*, *jwara*, can totally be cured by *langhana* therapy within 5days.\(^{[11]}\) thus for a physician it is helpful in today clinical practice.

**Contraindications of *langhana* therapy**  
*Vaidya shodhala* states *avasthavishesh langhananishidha*:  
*Vaatrogi*, shudha, trushanapeedit, Mukha shosha, bhram, bala, vridhha, garbhini, durbala, one who is tiered due to *margparikramana*, *krodha*, shoka, kaam and *kshayajajwara*.\(^{[12]}\)

Its very essential to follow the indications and contraindications during treatment. Since *dosha samyata* is our main objective if don’t follow this then instead of establishing the balance it would vitiate the *doshas*.

**Appropriate time of *langhana***  
*Twak doshi*, pramehi, atisnigadha, abhishyandi, aatisthool, *vaatrogi* should be treated with *langhana* in *shishir aritu*.\(^{[13]}\)

Though it is stated that *vaatrogi* is contraindicated for *langhana*, *acharya charaka* says that it can be done only in *shishira ritu*.

**Signs and Symptoms of proper *langhana***:  
*Vagbhata* states that  
*Vimal indriyas* i.e. cleanliness or freshness of organs.  
Proper defeacation, micturition and sweating.  
Lightness in the body.  
Zest’s hunger or apetite.  
Establishes feeling of hunger and thirst simultaneously.  
Pure form of eructations i.e. shudha udgara.
Decreased strength or intensity of disease.
Feeling of enthusiasm and energetic.
Eliminates fatigue or sluggishness or sleepiness.\textsuperscript{[14]}

Similarly in gadnigraha acharya shodhala states one extra symptom i.e. nirvyartha antaratmani which means no trouble or discomfort from within.\textsuperscript{[15]}

Thus after treating patient with langhana one must look for above signs and symptoms for being a successful physician. Signs and Symptoms of Aatilanghana.

According to shodhala following are the signs and symptoms of aatilanghana-
Severe pain in interphalangeal joints.
Bodyache.
Cough, dryness of mouth.
Loss of apetite, anorexia.
Increased thirst.
Visual and auditory function disturbance.
Unstability of mind.
Loss of strength.
Destruction of digestive power (nashtaagnibala).\textsuperscript{[16]}

Since treatment of complications has always been a major issue for physician knowledge regarding this is important.

Importance of balaraksha in langhana.

Whatever the modality of treatment ultimate end result is dosha saamyata. since according to Ayurveda dosha saamyata is the state of wellbeing. Acharaya shodhala in his gadanigraha states that: langhana should be done in that quantity in which it would be BALAAVIRODHI.
Which means it wont be harmful to bala of individual. Since bala is base of health and langhana etc are the modalities we use for health maintenance. Thus its essential to have knowledge regarding balaraksha in langhana.\textsuperscript{[17]}
Importance of langhana

Langhana digests aamadosha and increase digestive power and establishes dosha saamyata. Langhana leads to decrease in intensity dosha increases digestive fire and brings lightness in the body. Thirst and hunger develop well accordingly.

Langhana eliminates: aamadosha yukta vaat in seven days.
Aamadosha yukta pitta in ten days.
Aamadosha yukta kapha in twelve days.

In saanipaathavastha of jwara langhana becomes important modality since it leads into Arogyadarshana.\[18\]

Medicines used for langhana- after studying rasa, veerya, veepaka, prabhava, panch bhautikatva, few medicines that bring lightness in the body are listed below - Amalaki, mudga, kulatha, shunthi, guduchi, muta, triphala, vidanga, lohabhasma, kshara, yavachurna, brihat panchmoola, madhu, madhoodaka etc.

As like Ayurveda modern science too states the theory of autophagy which resembles langhana according to Ayurveda.

What is autophagy

The word autophagy is derived from greek word “auto” meaning self and “phagy” meaning eating. Autophagy is normal physiological process in the body that deals with cell destruction in the body, it maintains homeostasis or normal functioning by protein degradation and turnover of the destroyed cell organelle for new cell formations. During cellular stress the process of autophagy is upscaled and increased, cellular stress is caused when there is deprivation of nutrients or growth factors.

Hence autophagy may provide an alternative source of intracellular building blocks and substrates that may generate energy to enable continuous cell survival. Autophagy degrades damaged organelles, cell membranes and proteins. Failure autophagy is the main reason for accumulation of cell damage and aging.\[20\]

CONCLUSION

Langhana is important therapy in Ayurveda since it can be used in all types of patients by various means viz, under the title shodhana and shaman.
Whenever *aamadosha* increases in the body it disturbs the *doshas*, blocks the body channels, and leads to heaviness. In such condition *langhana* is best modality of treatment whereby it helps in removing blockages of channels and brings lightness in body.

*Langhana* helps in purifying body channels.

Increases digestive power and boosts up hunger and thirst.

Thus *langhana* according to *Ayurveda* and autophagy according to modern science maintain good state of health.

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