

EFFICACY OF VARMAM TREATMENT IN VALIPPU - SEIZURE DISORDER

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ABSTRACT

Seizures called as Valippu in siddha traditional system of medicine is one of the most common serious neurological disorder affecting the neonates and young children. In prevalence, nearly 80% of cases occur in infants and developed countries. Epilepsy is characterized by recurrent, episodic, paroxysmal involuntary clinical events associated with alternation of cerebral function. An epileptic attack is an abrupt and excessive electric discharge of cerebral neurons. Epilepsy is a condition where there is a transient loss of consciousness in the patient which may vary from few seconds to few minutes. The descriptions, etio-pathology and some aspects of treatment of the seizure disorders in Siddha system of medicine mentioned as

‘If more or less, three humors cause disease

The learned count the wind is the first of these.’

- Medicine, Thirukkural

Siddha explains imbalance in the three humors (vata, pitta and kapha) singly or all of them together can cause valippu. Aggravated humors get accumulated in heart and produce the features based upon humoral predominance. Modern anti-epileptic drugs suppress the seizures, but do not cure the disorder and are having adverse effects, contraindications and sometimes requires life-time treatment. On the other hand, siddha varmam believes in balancing and re-energizing the lost nerve functions and normalize the brain activity. Varmam is a siddha science that aims to fulfil the cultural, spiritual and medical needs of

humanity. Life energy circulates human body in three forms vata, pitta and kapha. The resting or dwelling places of life energy is called varmam points. When we stimulate the varmam points with appropriate pressure (maathirai), it produces a clear therapeutic effect.

KEYWORDS: Seizures; Varmam; Valippu; Siddha system of medicine.

HIGHLIGHTS

Seizure disorder; management through varmam treatment.

INTRODUCTION

உடலுயிர் நாடிதன்னில் உந்திடும் வாசியதாம்

ஊனுடல் மருவியே ஊடாடும் நிலையே வர்மம்

(வர்ம சர நூல் 7/16)

“Wherever vaasi touches there is varmam”

“Wherever breath reaches there is varmam”

Generally, varmam points are 108 in number. If we stimulate the varmam points with appropriate maathirai (pressure) depending upon the age, severity of illness and nature of the body condition, we can produce therapeutic effect. Varmam therapy is capable of effective drugless therapy.

A seizure can be defined as the occurrence of signs and symptoms due to abnormal, excessive or synchronous neuronal activity in the brain. Epilepsy is the tendency to have unprovoked seizures. Epilepsy can occur both in neonates and children.

In most siddha texts, epilepsy has been mentioned as valippu and has been described as one of the earliest diseases known (diagnosed) that can be controlled only with medical therapies and can sometimes be incurable and remain uncontrolled.

Epilepsy is a condition where there is a transient loss of consciousness in the patient for a certain period of time which may vary from few seconds to few minutes with or without falling down.

Siddha explains epilepsy as valippu as the imbalance in three humors (vata, pitta and kapha) singly or all of them together can cause valippu. Aggravated humors get accumulated in heart and produce the features based upon humoral predominance, which cause illusion of the mind and visual hallucination and seizures (tonic spasms and clonic jerks). Often it is presented with protruding tongue, deviation of the eyes, drooling of saliva with froth, tonic and clonic movements of limbs.

ETIO-PATHOLOGY

According To Modern Science

In the normally functioning cortex, recurrent and collateral inhibitory circuits limits synchronous discharge amongst neighbouring groups of neurons. Epileptic cerebral cortex exhibits hyper-synchronous repetitive discharges involving large groups of neurons. Intracellular recordings shows bursts of rapid action potential firing, with reduction of trans-membrane potential.

Hyper synchronization means that a hyper excitable neuron will lead to excessive excitability of a large group of surrounding neurons excessively fired leading to clinical manifestations of seizure. Cells undergoing repetitive epileptic discharges undergo morphological and physiological changes which make them more likely to produce subsequent abnormal discharges (kindling). It is likely that both reduction in inhibition systems and excessive excitation play a part in genesis of seizures activity.

Hyper-excitability results due to increased excitatory neuro-transmission, decreased inhibitory neuro-transmission. Alteration in voltage gated ionic-channels, intra-extracellular ionic alternations in favour of excitation.

Excitatory neuro-transmitters: Glutamate

Inhibitory neuro-transmitters: GABA - two types: A & B.

ACCORDING TO SIDDHA MEDICINE

Siddha explains that the reason for valippu is because of the humor kapha getting distributed all over the body, especially in the chest region and trachea and affects the pancha-pulungal (taste, vision, sense, sound and smell) leading to disturbance of actions of hands, legs, anus, vagina and mouth.

CAUSES

According To Modern Science

IDIOPATHIC: In primary generalized seizures, simple partial seizures, focal motor seizures of childhood the cause is unknown. Some genetic predisposition may be a factor.

SECONDARY CAUSES: Seizures occur due to cerebral disorder or non-cerebral disorder i.e.

- Infective causes
 - Encephalitis
 - Cerebral malaria
 - Aseptic
 - Tubercular pyogenic meningitis
 - Intracerebral abscess
 - Neurocysticercosis
 - Toxoplasmosis
 - HIV
- Metabolic disorders
 - Hypoglycemia
 - Hyponatremia
 - Hypocalcemia
 - Hypokalemia
 - Hypomagnesimia and hepatic encephalopathy
 - Ketoacidosis, Non-ketotic hyperosmolar coma
- Cerebro-vascular disorders
 - Cerebral infarction
 - Cerebral haemorrhage
- Vasculitis syndrome
- Tumours
- Asphyxia
- Trauma (including neuro-surgery).

ACCORDING TO SIDDHA SCIENCE

வலிப்பு -நோய் தோன்றும் வழி

காணவே மேகத்தின் காங்கை யாலும்
 கடிதான வழிநடக்கை கோபத்தாலும்
 பூணவே பிரமாலயம் தேவா லயங்கள்
 புகழான வேரிகுளம் பின்னஞ் செய்தோர்
 நாணவே பெண்டிர்கற் பழித்த லாலும்
 நலமான போகங்கள் மிஞ்ச லாலும்
 தோணவே காலபேத நடக்கை யாலும்
 துலையாத வடைக்கலத்தைப் பரித்தோர்க் காமே

பொது மருத்துவம்

The above siddha literature explains that cause of increase in kapha as follows:

- Increased body heat
- Walking for a long distance
- Angeriness
- Bad behaviour and worse thoughts
- Not following the seasonal regimen
- Taking food against humoral equilibrium

CHARACTERISTICS

The characteristic features of seizures are commonly:

- Loss of consciousness
- Feeling of entering into darkness and hallucination
- Falling down suddenly
- Protruding tongue
- Deviation of eyes
- Drooling of saliva
- Tonic-clonic movements of the limbs

This stage may last for few seconds to few minutes till dhoshas are present in the vitiated places and then passes to relaxation phase when they diminish.

Epilepsy In Children

Classification According To Modern Science

1. Generalised seizures
2. Focal seizures
3. Febrile seizures

Of these, febrile seizures are the most often occurring in 3% of children; have genetic predisposition. It occurs between 6 months to 6 years of age which is generalised tonic-clonic seizures occurring with a rapid onset of fever.

Classification According To Siddha Science

Valippu in children according to siddha science is mainly classified into four types namely:

1. Maandha vali
2. Kakkai vali
3. Allu vali
4. Pura vali

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was based on 12 special children affected by seizure associated with other disorders who were under regular follow-up at Thirumoolar Varmam Research and Therapy Centre (Unit of Arts Research Institute), Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India.

These children had recurrence of seizure episodes frequently on treatment of allopathic drugs. They were given varmam points along with allopathic treatment.

S.no	Consanguinous Parents	1 st / 2 nd Child	Normal Delivery / lscs	Birth History		Associated Disorders
				Birth Weight (kg)	Birth Cry	
1	Yes	1 st Child	FTND	2.80	Immediate	Squint GDD SD
2	No	2 nd Child	FTND	3.00	Immediate	GDD SD
3	No	1 st Child	FTND	2.10	Delayed	GDD SD Vision Impairment Microcephaly
4	Yes	1 st Child	LSCS	2.75	Immediate	GDD SD Haemophilia B

5	No	3 rd Child	LSCS	2.36	Immediate	MR GDD SD
6	No	1 st Child	FTND	2.50	Delayed	GDD SD
7	No	1 st Child	LSCS	3.00	Immediate	SD
8	Yes	1 st Child	LSCS	3.00	Immediate	-
9	Yes	2 nd Child	LSCS	2.60	Immediate	Thyroid
10	No	1 st Child	Preterm baby	1.70	Immediate	GDD
11	No	1 st Child	FTND	3.00	Immediate	Hypoxic Ischemic Brain Damage (HIE)
12	No	1 st Child	FTND	2.50	Immediate	Cerebral Palsy

FTND: Full term normal delivery

LSCS: Lower segment caesarean section

GDD: Global development delay

SD: Speech delay

MR: Mentally retarded

VARMAM POINTS

The special children affected by seizure disorder were treated with the below mentioned varmam points. They were stimulated twice a week for six months. They are still under varmam therapy at the Thirumoolar Varmam Research and Therapy Centre.

1. Porchai Kaalam

2. Kavuli Kaalam

பேர்பெறவே கவுளிதன்னில் அமர்த்திப்பாரு

பெரிய பேரான சன்னியால் சன்னி நிற்கும்

(கை மாத்திரை திறவுகோல் -72)

This verse deals with kavuli adangal in the web of thumb and index finger and indicates that when stimulated the patient will gain consciousness.

3. Komberi Kaalam

DISCUSSION

Varmam points mentioned above were given to the special children affected by seizure disorder and the response to treatment was categorized as good, moderate and poor.

- A good response is one in which there is good improvement of the children who had given varmam points along with allopathic treatment and gradually decreased the dose of drugs.

- A moderate response is one in which the children who had given varmam points along with allopathic drugs and the frequency of seizure episodes was reduced.
- A poor response is one in which the children were given varmam points along with allopathic drugs and the recurrence was controlled but still present.

After 6 months of continuous varmam therapy, out of 12 children:

- Good response was observed in 5 children.
- Moderate response was observed in 6 children.
- Poor response was observed in 1 child.

CONCLUSION

From the above study, it was observed that varmam therapy has induced improvement in children affected by seizure disorder. Modern epileptic drugs suppress the seizure, but do not cure the disorder and requires life time treatment. Siddha varmam believes in re-energising the lost nerve functions and normalize the brain activity.

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