

## MANAGEMENT OF CHRONIC COUGH THROUGH AYURVEDA: A CASE STUDY

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### ABSTRACT

Cough is the most common symptom of respiratory system that has been experienced by almost every person at sometimes in their life. It can be correlated to the disease *Kasa* in *Ayurveda* which comes under the diseases afflicting *Pranavaha Srotas*. Cough can be acute or chronic and can be with or without expectoration. In the present study, A 31 year old female patient came to OPD of our institute with complaints of recurrent cough with expectoration of white sputum since 3 months. The patient had already taken allopathic medicines and various *Ayurveda* formulations also. But she didn't get satisfactory relief. In the end she was given *Amragandhi Haridra* milk and

*Dalchini* powder. With this she got complete relief in 15 days and there was no recurrence of cough in the follow up of 2 months. Thus *Ayurveda* medicines have the potential of healing an ailment completely if their quality is not hampered and used in their pure and original form.

**KEYWORDS:** *Kasa*, Chronic cough, *Amragandhi Haridra*, *Dalchini*.

### INTRODUCTION

Cough is a very common symptom of respiratory system disorders. It is a protective reflex to keep the throat and airway clear but it can be very annoying if it is changed into an ailment. Reflex of cough arises due to stimulation of mechano- or chemoreceptors present in the throat and respiratory passages or stretch receptors present in the lungs. Cough can be either acute or chronic. Chronic cough lasts more than 8 weeks and can be caused by postnasal drip,

allergies, chronic bronchitis, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), smoking and some medications.<sup>[1]</sup> Cough simulates with *Kasa* in *Ayurveda* and comes under *Pranavaha srotas vyadhi*. It is described both as a symptom, complication, and sequel in various diseases and as a separate disease also. *Aacharya Charaka* has described five types of *Kasa- Vataja, Pittaja, Kaphaja, Kshataja* and *Kshayaja*. All of these types are more stronger respectively and if neglected lead to *Kshaya*.<sup>[2]</sup> It means that early intervention is very much essential in *Kasa* as it is a potential *Nidanarthakara Vyadhi* (disease having tendency to produce secondary disease). Incidences related to respiratory diseases are increasing due to exposure to indoor and outdoor air pollutants, occupational chemicals and dusts, tobacco smoking, allergens, unhealthy diet, obesity and physical inactivity. Cough is the fifth most common symptom for which patients seek medical care.<sup>[3]</sup> In modern science, medicines used for cough are expectorants, mucolytics, and antitussives which include central cough suppressants like codeine, dextromethorphan, antihistamines, and bronchodilators. All these medicines have well known side effects such as respiratory distress, depression, drowsiness, constipation dependency etc. *Ayurveda*, the traditional Indian system of medicine has a lot to offer in this regard and it can prove as a safe, economic and effective alternate treatment option.

### CASE REPORT

A 31 year old female patient came to OPD of *Shalakya Tantra* Department, National institute of *Ayurveda*, Jaipur with complaints of recurrent cough with expectoration of white sputum since 3 months. The cough was so worse that the patient was not able to sleep during night and more at night in comparison to daytime.

**History of present illness** – The patient was healthy 3 months back. Then she developed cough. Initially the cough was dry and mild in intensity but gradually it became more intense with expectoration of thick and white colored sputum. The cough was more at night and it was so much worse that she couldn't sleep even for a while. In the day time also if once the reflex of cough began then she had to leave the work and had to sit if standing. Then she went to a private clinic and the physician prescribed her steam inhalation, cough syrups with some oral medications. But she didn't get much relief. Then she took some *Ayurveda* medicines but not get complete relief and coughing continued. Again she visited to a doctor who prescribed her some cough syrups and tablet montelukast with fexofenadine. She got relief with the tablet. When she took the tablet she felt that she had no any cough and sputum. But even if

she left the tablet for one day she had the same complaints of severe coughing with sputum next day. She took the tablet for a month but later gave up because she had become dependent on it. Then she visited to NIA hospital.

**Associated complaints-** Itching, discomfort and mild pain in the throat due to continuous coughing, reduced appetite and chest congestion.

### **General condition**

Appetite- reduced

Bowel- normal

Micturition- normal

Sleep- disturbed

### **Respiratory system examination**

Inspection: no any scar and no chest wall deformity, Respiratory rate - 16/min.

Palpation: chest expansion- normal, range and symmetry of movements- bilateral normal

Percussion: resonant notes.

Auscultation- bilateral basal crackles heard.

**ENT examination** – revealed normal findings.

**Investigations** – CBC, ESR, Sputum examination and Chest X ray were normal.

### **Treatment advised**

1. *Dalchini Churna* - 3 gm with honey in morning and evening before food for 1 month
2. *Amragandhi Haridra Ksheer* (turmeric milk) in morning and evening for 1 month

### **RESULTS**

By taking the above treatment, she started getting relief after 3<sup>rd</sup> day and by 15<sup>th</sup> day there was no any cough. After 1 month of treatment, there was complete relief in her all complaints. She was followed after every 15 days for two months and there was no recurrence at all. The patient was very happy because she had passed a lot of sleepless nights along with lot of disturbances at her workplace and home due to the cough.

## DISCUSSION

The symptoms of *Kaphaja Kasa* described by *Aacharya Charaka* such as *Snighdham Nistheevati Ghanam Kapham* (spitting of thick and unctuous phlegm), *Vaksha Sampooranmiva* (feeling of chest fullness), *Aruchi* (anorexia) etc.<sup>[4]</sup> were present in the patient. Moreover chronic and persistent nature of cough also shows the co-relation with *Kaphaja Kasa*. *Pratatam Kasamaansh lakshan* of *Pittaja Kasa* described by *Aacharya Charaka* indicates towards the paroxysmal nature of cough which was present in the patient. Thus the patient was diagnosed with *Kaphaja Kasa* with *Pittanubandha*. Traditionally turmeric milk or the golden milk is in use since ages and holds a plethora of qualities from boosting the immunity to treating various diseases. In turmeric milk, *Haridra* (turmeric) is the main ingredient. *Amragandhi Haridra* (*Curcuma amada Roxb.*) is one among the various varieties of *Haridra*. It is indicated in treatment of *Kasa* and has *Laghu, Sara Guna, Kapha – Piitahara, Ruchiprada, Dipana* and *Kanduhara* properties<sup>[5]</sup> that helped in breaking the pathogenesis and pacifying the symptoms. It has proven anti-inflammatory, anti-allergic<sup>[6]</sup> and antihistamine<sup>[7]</sup> effect which helped in cough relief. *Dalchini* (*Cinnamomum zeylanicum*) is an important ingredient in most of the *Ayurveda* formulations described in *Kasa* and *Swasha Chikitsa*. It has *Chedana* (expectorant), *Kanthasudhhikara* (throat clearing), *Ojovardhaka* (immunity boosting), *sleshamhara* and *Kasaghana* (anti-cough) properties<sup>[8]</sup> which helps in reducing the cough. It was given with *Madhu* (honey) having *Dipana, Lekhana, Srotovishodhana, Swarya, Kapha Pitta Shamaka, Kasahara* and *Yogvahi* properties<sup>[9]</sup> which aided in soothing the throat and other associated complaints of the patient along with cough. In a study it was found that honey was more effective than dextromethorphan and no treatment in suppressing nocturnal coughs and improving the sleep quality.<sup>[10]</sup>

## CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that the above mentioned *Ayurveda* formulations have a significant role in reducing cough and may prove very beneficial in various other recurrent and chronic respiratory tract infections. In this case, the herbs were properly collected in their crude form and then made into powder. Milk used for turmeric milk preparation was of the Indian Desi cow and honey was also taken in its pure form. The purpose behind explaining this is that sometimes efficacy of *Ayurveda* medicines becomes questionable. In current scenario of marketing, most of time the reasons behind it are improper collection and storage conditions,

geographical variations, environmental hazards, adulteration and not giving importance to Good manufacturing practices. Therefore efficacy demands quality.

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